

**UNIT-1**  
**INTRODUCTION**

1. Early Contacts of India with Europeans: Portuguese; Dutch; English and French – their activities; East India Company, French and others.
2. Establishment of British power in Bengal
3. Clive.
4. Warren Hastings
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**EARLY CONTACTS OF INDIA WITH EUROPEANS**

**"In 1497, Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese navigator reached the western coast of India at Calicut in the South Indian state of Kerala. He was received by the ruler of Calicut who permitted establishment of trading centres at Calicut, Cochin and Cannanore."**

**European Contacts with Indians**—Indian introduction to the Europeans was because of the discovery of a sea-route to India, though the old trade routes existed since the ancient times. Opening of new trade routes, through Afghanistan, Central Asia and the Caspian Sea until the Black Sea was the cause facilitating the arrival of the Europeans into India. There was also a trade route through Persia and Syria until Alexandria on the Mediterranean Coast of Egypt. The route through the Arabian Sea, Persian Gulf and the Sea was the most suitable for trading purpose. Through these routes goods from India were taken to Europe and these routes in turn also facilitated bringing of goods there from.

**The Portuguese**— It was because of the existing favourable position of Calicut concerning access to sea and its experiences in sea faring; a new sea to India through West of Africa was revealed. In 1497, Vasco da Gama, a Portuguese navigator reached the Western Coast of India at Calicut in Kerala. The ruler of Calicut permitted the Portuguese to establish trading centres at Calicut Cochin and Cannanore. Under the instigation of the Arabs, the ruler of Calicut invaded the Portuguese though he was defeated. The Portuguese thus became supreme in the West Coast.

Almeida, the first Portuguese Governor in India was determined to make Calicut powerful at sea. Albuquerque, the second Governor of the Indian Territory held by Portugal, targeted occupying places for trade and developing a group of intermixed population who would rightfully claim possession of the Portuguese territory in India. He also strengthened position of Portugal through mg of forts in India. In 1510, he conquered Goa from the sultan of Bijapur. He established a factory at Colombo in Ceylon and fort at Cochin. Thus, his efficient administration helped in the establishment of the Portuguese influence in India.

**The Dutch**— After the arrival and establishment of the Portuguese in India, the Dutch emerged powerful through the settlement at Nagapatnam and Cinsura in Bengal. The Dutch East India Company could not survive for long under the pressure from English. The British navy was much superior to the Dutch and finally the English controlled the Dutch possessions in India.

**English East India Company**—In the sixteenth century, the English started trade with the east. The English had to pay high prices for goods bought from the east. Attracted by the Portuguese profits, the English too wished to have their share of wealth and profit. Attaining power in this area would result in getting goods at prices they decided. In 1500, a group of merchants under the Chairmanship of Lord Mayor formed an association in London to trade with India. In 1600 Queen Elizabeth granted a charter to a company of merchants to trade freely with the countries of the east.

**French East India Company**—The Portuguese, the Dutch and the English were on their mission for contacts with India. At about the same time, the France which had a sort of rivalry with England on many counts also started developing wading contacts with India and the east. In 1611, Louis XII granted monopoly to a company to pursue its quest but did not achieve any progress. In 1664, Louis XIV wanted another permission to develop trading links with India. Pondicherry was the hub of French settlements; the other settlements being at Masulipatanam, Karikal, Mahi, Surat and chandernagore.

The struggle for establishing supremacy in trade resulted in wars between the English and the French in the Deccan, The first Carnatic war was fought between 1746-48. The second Carnatic war was fought between 1748-54 and the third Carnatic war was fought between 1758-63, which sealed the fate of the French possessions in India.

Owing to the commercial superiority and better financial position, private ownership of the English company and support by the British government, the East India Company achieved a thriving success in India. A very high-class administrative efficiency of the English officers the superior English navy and the impact of English domination in Bengal, the recall of Duplex and the blunders of Count de Lally contributed to the French failure in India. Thus, the struggle for colonial supremacy resulted in the English overcome the European obstacles.

### **Battle of Plassey**

**Battle of Plassey**—The Battle of Massey took place on June 23, 1757, on the banks of the Bhagirathi River, about 150 km north of Calcutta. The battle was between Siraj-ud-Daula, the last independent Nawab of Bengal and the forces of the British East India Company. The great significance of this battle was because its outcome heralded the age of colonialism not only in the Indian sub-continent but also in Asia as a whole.

Siraj-ud-Daula's army commander had defected to the British, causing his army to collapse. After this defeat, the entire province of Bengal passed to the company and this battle is today seen as one of the pivotal battles leading to the British Empire in India. The enormous wealth gained from the Bengal treasury after its victory in the battle allowed the company to considerably strengthen its military capacity.

The battle was waged when the British and the French governments were fighting the Seven Year's War in Europe (1756-1763). The French East India Company (La Compagnie des Indes Orientales) sent a small contingent to fight against the British East India Company. The British victory abolished the French competition in India and resulted in a treaty arrangement with the Moughal Empire that left the East India Company de facto ruler of the province of Bengal. Thereafter, the company set about extending effective rule over the whole of the Indian sub-continent.

**Causes behind the Battle of Plassey**—The ostensible reason for the battle was Siraj-ud-Daula's earlier attack and capture of Fort William, Calcutta during June 1756, but the battle is today seen as part of the geopolitical ambition of the East India Company and the larger dynamics of colonial conquest This conflict was precipitated by a number of disputes as following—

- a. **The British not paying taxes**—The Moughal Imperial export 'trade permits' granted to the British in 1717, for engaging in internal trade within India. The British cited this permit as their excuse for not paying taxes to the Nawab of Bengal.
- b. **Support to Ghaseti Begum**— There was British interference in the Nawab's court and particularly their support for one of his aunts, Ghaseti Begum. The son of Ghaseti's treasurer had sought refuge in Fort William and minded his return.
- c. **Fortification of Fort William** —There was additional fortifications with mounted guns William without the consent of the Nawab.

- d. **Black Hole Incident**—During the capture of Fort William in June 1756. It event occurred that came to be known as the Black Hole of Calcutta. A narraive by one John Zephaniah Holwell, plus the testimony of another survivor. Cooke, to a select committee of the House of Commons, coupled with subsequent verification by Robert Orme, placed 146 British prisoners into a room measuring 18 by 15 feet with only 23 surviving the night. The story was amplified in colonial literature, but the facts are widely disputed. As the forces for the battle were building up, the British settlement at Fort William sought assistance from Presidency of Fort St. George at Madras which sent Colonel Robert Clive and Admiral Charles Watson. They recaptured Calcutta on January 1757, but the Nawab marched again on Calcutta on February 5, 1757. He was surprised by an attack by the British, resulting in the Treaty of Alinagar.
- e. **Growing French influence**—Growing on the sidelines was the French influence, on the urging of French Governor General Joseph Francois Dupleix, in the court of the Nawab. This was resulting in increasing French trade in Bengal. They lent the Nawab some French soldiers to operate heavy artillery.
- f. **Abdali's involvement in conflicts**—Siraj-ud-Daula was facing conflicts on two fronts. On his western border was the advancing army of the Afghan Ahmad Shah Abdali who had captured and looted Delhi in 1756. Although he was humiliated by the treaty, Siraj-ud-Daula sent the better part of his troops under the command of his General Raja Ram Narain.
- g. **Court intrigue** – There was an ongoing court intrigue at Siraj-ud-Daula's court at Murshidabad. Siraj was not a particularly well loved ruler. Young by age, as he succeeded his father in April 1756 at the age of 27, and impetuous, he was prone to quickly make enemies. The most dangerous of these was his wealthy and influential aunt Ghaseti Begum who wanted another nephew Shawkat Jang installed as Nawab. Mir Jafar, commander-in-chief of the army, was also uneasy with Siraj. Eventually, through the connivance of traders such as Amichand, who had suffered because of the siege of Calcutta and William Watts, Mir Jafar was brought into the British fold.
- h. **Company policy**—The company had long decided that a change of regime would be conducive to their interests in Bengal. In 1752, Robert Orme, in a letter to Clive, noted that the company would have to remove Siraj's grandfather, Alivardi Khan, in order to prosper.

**Conclusion**—The Battle of Plassey was one of the major steps that brought England to dominate and conquer India. It was not only a battle with local authorities but pan of the rivalry with France over available markets. However, European colonial expansion was a part of an even bigger phenomenon that united the people and cultures of the world together through dissemination of technology and sharing among cultures. In years to come, it brought the western colonialists to some awareness of their spiritual responsibility for other nations—for example, no matter how wide the gap was between the rich and poor in the west; in the cast, it was even wider. In this respect, the Battle of Plassey can be seen as one step in a sad but necessary process. However, the method of colonial conquest cannot be accepted in this age, when the people of the world recognize their interdependence and the need to establish a world of mutual prosperity and shared values by peaceful means.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF BRITISH POWER IN BENGAL

Clive had to face one of the trickiest tests of diplomacy: that of where to stop. Though, there was nothing to prevent him from Shah Maui II to Delhi and ruling North India in his name, he decided to limit the company's commitments to Bengal and Bihar."

**Conquering of Bengal**—The Moughal Empire, by the middle of century had become divided into numerous successor states. After the death of the Moughal Emperor Auranezeb in 1707, the power had gradually fallen into the hands of his provincial viceroys or subahdars. The prominent of them being the Asaf Jahan, the Nizam of the Deccan; Murshid Quil Khan, the Nawab of Bengal; and Saadat Ali Khan, the Nawab of Oudh.

**Class – B.A.LL.B (HONS.) II SEM.**

**Subject – History-II**

Though the European trading companies still recognized the sovereignty or at Delhi, yet their relations with the above regional rulers were importance. Since the late seventeenth century, the European traders raised armies to protect their commercial interests and to influence to their benefit. Gathering of military power had become as Un-commercial wisdom in securing India's precious trade, and increasingly it was also the means of securing riches by another route—the right to collect land revenue.

After Clive's arrival, the rich lands of the Coromandel Coast were con-the French Governor General Joseph Francois Dupleix and the British. This enmity included the British and the French supporting several of Nawabs of the remaining parts of the Moughal Empire. Clive was the first of the "Soldiers - political" who assisted the British gain dominance in India.

The fall and recapture of Calcutta (1756-1757)— Early in 1756, Siraj-ud-Daula had succeeded his grandfather Alivardi Khan as Nawab of Bengal. In received news that the new Nawab had attacked the English at and shortly afterwards on June 20, he had captured the fort at Calcutta. The losses to the East India Company due to the fall of Calcutta were to the tune of 20.00,000. Those British who were captured were allegedly placed in a punishment cell that became infamous as **the Black Hole incident of Calcutta** and, in the stifling summer heat, the majority of the captives suffocated. The Black Hole incident became notorious in Britain. It is controversial whether the Nawab was aware of the incident, or if it took place as described, since the description may very well have been fabricated.

By Christmas 1756, there was no response to the diplomatic letters to the Nawab. Therefore, Admiral Charles Watson and Clive were sent to invade the army of Nawab and remove him from Calcutta. Their first target was the fortress of Baj-Baj, which Clive approached by land while Admiral Watson bombarded it from the sea. The fortress was, in no time, brought under control with very little British casualties. Shortly afterwards on January 2, 1757, Calcutta itself was captured with similar ease.

On February 3, 1757, Clive encountered the army of the Nawab. For two days, the army marched past dive's camp to take up a position at East of Calcutta. The British forces attacked on February 5, 1757, and after an initial assault during which around one tenth of the British attackers were killed, the Nawab sought to make terms with Clive and surrendered control of Calcutta.

**Conquering of Oudh**—The British, in the form of the East India Company based in Calcutta, wanted to take hold over the riches of Oudh. Excuses for intervention in the province were not tough to find. And the excuse came when Shuja-ud-Daula invaded Bengal and in fact even for a short seized Calcutta However, the British military completely routed the Nawab and Oudh lost lo of territory. Nevertheless, the enemies became friends and the Nawab was praised in the British Parliament as the principal supporter of the East India Company in India.

In order to pay for the protection of British forces and assistance in w a Oudh gave up first the fort of Chunar, then the districts of Benaras and Ghazipur and finally the fort at Allahabad. Even the cash subsidy that the Nawab had to pay to the company kept on growing regularly. In 1773, the critical step taken by the Nawab of accepting a British Resident at Lucknow and surrendering to the company all control over foreign policy. Soon the Resident became the real ruler.

The assassination of a British Resident in 1798 in Benaras by the deposed Wazir Ali gave further excuse for interference. By the treaty of 1801, Nawab had to give up his own army and pay huge amount for a British-led army in its place. The Southern Doab (Rohilkhand) was ceded and the rest the district of Allahabad and other areas became part of British India. In next thirty years, Oudh had lost half of its territory to the British. The Nawab demanded in return for these concessions that he should have free hand in governing his remaining territory, without there being any interference of the British. However, he was badly incapacitated by the fact that had to rely on British troops to execute his orders. Wellesley had another t up his sleeve —a clause of the treaty by which the Nawab undertook to establish a system



of administration "by the advice of and acting in conformity the counsel of the officers of the Honourable Company" which should be conducive to the prosperity of his subjects. Initially, it did not appear a detrimental clause, but in fact, this was the way whereby the British in due course annexed Oudh. Thus, from 1819 onwards, the state of affairs supported their cause in Oudh. Saadat Ali's son Ghazi-ud-Din occupied the throne and was for invested with the title of King by the British. However, the declaration of kingship coincided with a period of almost complete reliance on the British. He lent two millions of rupees to the British for the Nepal War and, at its close got the Nepalese Terai, a marshy forest extending along the foot of the Himalayas, in liquidation of half the debt. Some might have thought it a poor bargain, but in fact, the Terai eventually produced sonic very valuable timber.

After Ghazi-ud-Din, his son Nasir-ud-Din succeeded to the throne. When he died, there was another disputed succession and the British persisted on Mohammed Ali, another son of Saadat Ali, to occupy the throne. Mohammed Ali was a just and admired ruler and under him, Lucknow regained its grandeur for a brief spell. When he died in 1842, his son Arnjad Ali succeeded to the throne. He was a man more inclined towards religion and spirituality, leading to the neglect of governance.

Wajid Ali Shah, a poet singer and passionate supporter of the arts and lover of Lucknow,, succeeded Arnjad Ali. There were charges of mismanagement levied against Wajid Ali Shah and if they were true, the British were as much accountable for this as the Nawab. They were more in control of administration and finances Ouudh since the 1780's than the Nawab. In addition, Oudh had been impoverished by the incessant cash demands of the British on the Nawabs. The final excuse for the British came in the guise of charges of mismanagement and they invoked the clause of the 1801 Treaty through Governor General Lord Dalhousie in 1856. Oudh was annexed and Wajid Ali Shah was sent to virtual imprisonment in Matiyaburj in Calcutta. Though this was not on the British programme, the stage was set for the greatest rebellion to date against their power in India. One of Wajid Ali Shah's wives, the Begum Hazrat Mahal, remained in Lucknow and when the mutiny came in 1857, she put herself at the head of those fighting for freedom. The Begum never did surrender, she died in Nepal in 1879.

### **ROBERT CLIVE**

Robert Clive, also known as Clive of India, was the commander who established the domination of the East India Company in Southern India and Bengal. He is widely regarded as the main authority in the establishment of British India and of the consolidation of British imperial ambition.

**Administrative reforms of Robert Clive**—Clive's diplomacy falls into three parts - external policy, the settlement of Bengal, and the reform of the company's service.

- a. **Clive's External policy** – In his external policy, Clive had to face one of the trickiest tests of diplomacy and that being of knowing where to stop. Though, there was nothing to prevent him from restoring Shah Alam II to Delhi and ruling north India in his name, he wisely decided to limit the company's commitments to Bengal and Bihar. Oudh was returned to Shuja-ud-Daula a buffer state between Bengal and the chaotic northwest. The emperor was solace with an annual tribute, and, in return, he conferred the revenue administration of Bengal on the East India Company. This grant formed the key to Clive's second achievement—the Settlement of Bengal.
- b. **Settlement of Bengal**— This settlement authorized the company to collect the revenues from Bengal and Bihar, sending the emperor only his annual tribute. The administration of the revenue was organized through a deputy Nawab appointed by the company. The police and magisterial powers were still exercised by the Nawab of Bengal as the emperor's deputy, but he in turn nominated the company's deputy to act for him. This was Clive's so-called dual system, which made the company, the virtual ruler of India's two richest provinces.

- c. **Reform of Company's service**—Clive's third task was the reform of the company's service. Within two days of landing, he superseded the Calcutta Council and reestablished discipline by accepting all resignations, enforcing others and bringing replacements from Madras. The servants of the company were required to sign covenants not to receive presents worth more than 100 rupees without there being the consent of the governor. Private trading by them had also been declared forbidden. However, the measure could not succeed fully because the company's officials were not adequately paid and had other means of livelihood. Clive tried to sort out the issue by forming a trading company that administered the salt monopoly and in which the servants received shares according to their rank. These two measures, only partially successful, marked the end of nearly 10 years' reckless plunder in Bengal. Clive also dealt with the army with equal rigour by reducing down swollen allowances and faced with dauntless courage the White Mutiny of discontented officers, when for a time he stood almost alone in Bengal.

**Dual System**—In 1764, the native princes of Bengal and Oudh combined and tried to eject the British but Clive crushed their revolt. Thus, company extended its influence over the province of Oudh. Clive's next was to settle Bengal's own status. The Mughal Emperor still had much influence but little power. Clive's solution was to obtain from Shah Alam, the revenue-collecting power in Bengal and Bihar. The Nawab was left in charge of the judiciary and magistracy, but he was helpless because he had no army could get money only from the company. This was Clive's system of "dual government."

Under this system of 'dual government', the actual administration remained in Indian hands and for superintendence. Clive appointed a deputy dewan, Muhammad Rida Khan, who was at the same time appointed Nawab's deputy. The chain was thus complete. The company, acting in the name of the emperor and using Indian personnel and the traditional app of government, now ruled Bengal. Their agent was Rida Khan; the success of the experiment turned on his efficiency and the extent of the Governor's power.

**Role of Lord Clive** – In 1743, at the age of 18, young Clive was sent to Madras in the service of the English East India Company. The first British Administrator of Bengal, Lord Clive was one of the architects of the British power in India. In his first governorship (1755-60), he won the Battle of Plassey and became master of Bengal. In his second governorship (1764-67), he reorganized the colony.

**Administrative skills of Lord Clive**—Conflict between the English and the French East India companies and their competitive support of rival Indian princes drew Clive into military service and gave him a chance to display his ability. In 1751, Chanda Sahib, an ally of the French, was besieging his British ally, Muhammad Ali, in the fortress of Trichinopoly. Clive offered to lead a slim force against Chanda's base at Arcot. With 200 Europeans and 300 Indians, he seized Arcot on August 31 and then survived a 53-day siege by Chanda's son. This feat proved to be the turning point in a contest with the French commander, Joseph-Francois Dupleix.

**Involvement in Bengal affairs**—In June 1756, Clive became involved in the affairs of Bengal. Previously Bengal had been ruled by viceroys of the figurehead Mughal Emperor and it was under their protection that the English East India Company carried on its trade. The Calcutta had come to rival Madras as a trading centre and its commerce was the most valuable in India. In 1756, a dispute with the British about fortifying the city caused the new Nawab of Bengal Siraj-ud-Daula to attack and capture the fort there.

**Clive conquering Bengal**—News of the fall of Calcutta reached Madras August 1756. Clive advanced on October 16, 1756; with 900 British and 1,500 Indian soldiers and recaptured Calcutta on January 2, 1757. He also compelled the Nawab to reinstate company's privileges, pay compensation and allow the British to fortify Calcutta.

Determined to take advantage of dissatisfaction within the Nawabs regime, he supported a new ruler in order to ensure conditions agreeable to the fly's trade. He supported the candidature of Mir Jafar, an elderly general who was as clandestinely antagonistic to Siraj-ud-Daula. Clive broke with Siraj-ud-Daula and defeated him at the Battle of Plassey on June 23. This victory made Clive, the virtual master of Bengal. Clive's first government lasted until February 1760. Confirmed as governor by the company, he moved to strengthen Air's influence and at the same time keeping him under control. A challenge from the Moughal crown prince was repulsed at Patna in 1759.

**Clive defeating the Dutch**—The Dutch, who sought to play on the Nawab's displeasure at Clive's restraints, sent a force to their settlement at Chinsura, but through a series of dexterous moves, Clive shattered this force even though England was at peace with the Netherlands. In addition, by the a force under Colonel Francis Forde in 1758, Clive secured the Northern Sarkars from the French garrison. By 1760, Mir Jafar's influence was noticeable throughout Bengal and Bihar and his subservience to the company was absolute.

**Estimate of Clive's Administration**—Though stained by corruption and duplicity, Clive's first government was remarkable for generalship and statecraft. He had snatched the richest province of India out of the hands of his political superiors and with the authority of the Moughal regime. He returned to England in February 1760, where he was given an Irish peerage as Baron Clive of Plassey in 1762 and was knighted in 1764. Clive was described by William Pitt as "a heaven-born general."

In 1764, Clive's protege Mir Jafar had been toppled in favour of Mir Qasim, who in turn had been deposed in 1763. Shah Alam II, the Moughal Emperor, attacked again, and the company seemed to be on the brink of disaster. Clive was again appointed governor and commander in chief of Bengal with power to override the council. Arriving in Calcutta for the second time on May 3, 1765, he found that the decisive Battle of Buxar had already been won, Shuja-ud-Daula, the Nawab of Oudh, was in flight and the emperor had joined the British camp.

Clive's second government was his crowning achievement, but he had made many enemies. An active group, supported by Lord Chatham, feared corrupting influence of Indian wealth on English public life. In 1772, when the company appealed to the government to save it from bankruptcy, it appeared that Clive's system of government in Bengal had not been as successful as had been hoped. Two parliamentary committees exposed the facts of corruption among the company's servants, and this set off an attack on Clive as the instigator of the whole process. He defended himself in Parliament (1773) with characteristic vigour and confidence, complaining of being treated like a thief and declaring, "I stand astonished at my own moderation." In 1777 Parliament declared that he did "render great and meritorious services to country." This triumph was his last.

With his already traumatized health, the strain on his despondent temperament was too great. In November 1774, he died at his house in London. Clive's talents were exceptional. His character was no more dishonest than that of many men of his days. His administration marked the real beginning of the British Empire in India.

### **WARREN HASTINGS**

Warren Hastings (1732-1818) was the first Governor General of British India. He established the system of civil administration that was the basis of Anglo-Indian security and prosperity. The influence of Warren Hastings in laying the foundation of Britain's empire is second only to that of Clive. While Clive made his mark primarily in the military realm, Hastings' contribution was administrative. Hastings' tenure of office was marked by regular discord in his council and in England. He faced continual opposition to his policies. Yet by strength of character, firmness of resolve and sense of duty, he overcame all the impediments.

**Class – B.A.LL.B (HONS.) II SEM.**

**Subject – History-II**

**Reforms**—Hastings carried out an aggressive policy of administered judicial and fiscal reforms to improve government and eliminate abuse as following -

**Administrative reforms** – Hastings suppressed banditry in the country and was instrumental in putting down a serious Maratha conspiracy supported by the French. He re-established British prestige, which had declined after Clive's departure. He used military forces throughout India to prevent the disintegration and dissolution of British power. He vigorously maintained his authority over subordinate provincial governors despite objections to what at times seemed like his autocratic or dictatorial control.

Hastings also fostered education, encouraged the codification of Hindu law, promoted the study of Sanskrit by European scholars, founded Mohammedan College in Calcutta and an Indian institute in London, opened a trade route to Tibet, sponsored a survey of Bengal and organized expeditions to explore the seas.

Throughout his governorship, Hastings was a generous patron of arts and of learning. He took a particular pride in the translation of the Bhagvat Gita by Charles Wilkins, for which he wrote a preface. His interests laid the foundations for the creation of the Bengal Asiatic Society in 1784. Warren Hastings ensured the liberty of press which was restricted during the time of Wellesley. He was also instrumental in the publication of the first vernacular newspaper called Samachar Darpan.

**Judicial reforms**—In the matter of administration of justice, Hastings made native courts in the interior entirely under the control of the head revenue officers, with a chief court for criminal appeals at the seat of government under native chief justice. A court of civil appeal was also established in Calcutta, the whole being controlled in the last resort by the governor in council. In those cases where both parties were the British subjects, English law was administered in the 'mayor's court'. There was also a court of small causes for Calcutta. Hastings suggested the setting up of more courts to decide the case quickly.

The peculiar code of the Sunnites or orthodox Muslims had already been put into a digest under the emperor Aurangzeb. However, the Hindu law was based on a number of Sanskrit textbooks of various dates and authority. Hastings, therefore, directed the experts and charged them with the compilation of a volume of which he afterwards caused an English translation by Nathaniel Brassey Halhed.

In 1775 Hastings attempted to make gang-robbery, the subject of special legislation. However, the opposition in his council objected to the punishment of harbourers and the scheme collapsed.

In 1814, Lord Hastings provided a munsif for every Thana appointed by the judges of the Diwani Adalat. There was the appointment of sadar amins in every district. The powers of the registrars were increased and magistrates were given the Power of imprisonment.

Bengal was a naturally rich province with a highly productive agriculture and skilled manufacturers that had suffered misgovernment under its previous Indian rulers and during the British take-over. It had been afflicted in 1770 by a very severe famine. The new regime's job was to facilitate recovery to take place. In the years after 1772, Hastings developed a unique point of view on how this should be achieved. He believed that Bengal must be governed in ways to which its people were familiar and that Indian methods of government and Indian laws must be preserved. In his views, the British should aim "to rule the people with ease and moderation according to their own ideas, manner and prejudices".

**Fiscal reforms**—In order to introduce reforms in the affairs of revenue Warren Hastings introduced a five-year settlement of land revenue in 1772. However, owing to several defects, this system was



scrapped in 1776. Cornwallis resorted to the system of annual settlement under the supervision by a Committee of Revenue. In the matters of revenue, Hastings suggested a permanent settlement in the northwestern provinces. The representatives of each village community had to adjust the share of the individual cultivators. Besides this the Bengal Tenancy Act was passed in 1822 by which the cultivators had hereditary right of possession of land as long as they paid the rent.

**Warren Hastings and Marathas**—Hastings wanted to maintain the then existing Bengal dominion intact and avoid entanglements with the Indian powers. The company's primary object was still trade and trade required peace. In 1774, Hastings's first endeavour was to lend a brigade to facilitate the ruler of Oudh to suppress the disorderly Rohillas to the west of his dominions." object was to defend the buffer state of Oudh from Maratha attack but process laid Hastings open to the charge that he was interfering in the affair an Indian state.

Hastings problem was the Marathas who were revitalizing after the upheaval of Panipat. However, in 1772, the promising young Peshwa died and the Poona government was pitched into a series of succession struggles. In 1774, the Peshwa's brother was murdered with the connivance of his uncle Raghunath Rao. However, he was driven away by a party supporting the Peshwa's posthumous son. Bombay supported Raghunath and was overruled by Hastings who was in turn overruled by the Directors of the British Council. They capped their former censures of interference in weak states by authorizing interference in a strong one. Before a force from Bengal could reach Bombay after a brilliant march across India, the Bombay army had been trapped and forced to surrender on its way to Poona at Wadgaon in 1779. The war dragged on for three more years until Hastings was able to make peace at Salbai in 1782.

**The British Wars with Marathas**—The Marathas were originally a small Hindu tribe based in the Western Deccan. By the end of the Carnatic Wars (1763), the Britain was on good terms with some of the Marathas. Britain had established herself as the chief European power in India, but the amount of territory that she directly governed was still very small, consisting mainly of Bengal and the principality directly surrounding Madras. In the beginning, the British aspiration was to make coalition with existing princes, rather than to rule directly. The East India Company was far more concerned about making a profit than governing India. Hence, it was not following a policy of expansion, but was rather attempting to increase its influence over various tribes in order open up more trading opportunities and also to prevent any other foreign power from gaining a grip.

The manner in which the Britain and other European powers gained influence over a region in India was to offer their military services to one side of an ongoing dispute between princes, in return for the promise of trading privileges and in this way gain commercial advantages without actually governing region. Eventually this proved to be an impossible goal, but it was the diplomacy that led to Britain's involvement in the first two Maratha wars. By the time, the British became involved with the Marathas, they were a loose alliance of live ruling families including the Peshwas of Pune, the Sindhias of Gwalior, the Holkars of Indore, the Gaekwads of Baroda and the Bhonsles of Nagpur.

**First Maratha War (1775-1783)**—The first Maratha War arose from a dispute between two candidates for a vacant Peshwa—the hereditary position of Prime Minister. One of the claimants sought help from the British stationed bay and received the promise of aid, in return for the promise of territories revenues, should he regain his position. An inconclusive war was fought and the company at Calcutta opposed any further interference and sought to abolish arrangement. It almost seemed as though further war could be, avoided until the opposing claimant granted the French, who were currently at Britain, a port on the Western Coast.

At this point, the situation became very grim for Britain, resolving to, Meet the Marathas in battle. The first confrontation at Wadgaon did not go in favour of the British. Consequently, they agreed to relinquish all of the territory gained so far. Warren Hastings, however, declined sanctioning the treaty

and, instead, greatly stepped up the war effort. In the following year, the Britain emerged victorious and the Marathas agreed to a new treaty, which essentially restored the status quo. The Britain and the Marathas agreed to maintain peace for twenty more years.

**Second Maratha War (1802 - 1803)**—The second war with the Marathas was caused, like the first one, because of the power struggle within the Maratha government. The Baji Rao II, the then Peshwa, had lost an important battle to one of his enemies and fled to Britain for protection, promising territory and favourable term for Britain in return for their help. Even this time, Britain's motives were complicated by fear of the French, who had sent advisors and supplies to support the Marathas. This happened during the early years of the Napoleonic War, when France was vigorously trying to increase its colonial possessions at British expense. The Marathas were shocked at this act of treachery on the Peshwa and equipped themselves for war. This time, the Britain was ready and knew how to light the Marathas successfully. The war was short and crucial and the Marathas sued for peace after only one year. They were allowed to keep much of their territory, but were required to dismantle their standing army and to take the British as overlords.

**Third Maratha War (Pindari War: 1817-1818)** – The third Maratha War is better known as the Pindari War. The campaign against the Pindaris was elaborately deliberated and involved local soldiers from adjacent provinces. The Pindaris were to be surrounded out all sides, or they would escape into the open country and return as soon as the army withdrew from the battleground. The leaders who had protected the Pindaris were forced to pull out their support and cooperate in their destruction. Several of the troublesome leaders were given pension by the British and even more of the Maratha possessions fell into the British hands.

#### **LORD CORNWALLIS**

The first Governor-General under the Pitt's India Act was Lord Cornwallis who occupied office between 1786 and 1793, representing the British Government and accountable to the Board of Control. He was able to embark upon the mercenary interests of the East India Company when they were inconsistent with state policy.

**Administrative reforms**—Lord Cornwallis reorganized the administration both at the centre as well as at district level. A Board of Revenue endowed with wide range of powers and with one of the members of the Council as its president was set up to lead his development programmes. The district officials were placed under the direct supervision and control of the Board Revenue. A new authority, called Board of Trade, was recognized to look after the trading activities of the company free of civil administration.

Sirajul Islam writes that, "Cornwallis's efforts for reform and restructuring various branches of his administration were influenced by one abiding consideration: making the administration efficient and corruption free. However, in doing that he followed a racist path. He resolved to keep the administration all-white affair. The Civil service and the lower services were made exclusive preserves for the Europeans. The local people were left with only minister and semi-ministerial jobs."

"Cornwallis was led to believe that both the Anglo-Indians and the natives, were corrupt, but the latter group was incorrigibly so. Therefore, he thought it prudent to exclude the natives from all responsible positions in the interest of establishing honesty and efficiency in the administration. He ignored the fact that hitherto all rulers had shared powers and privileges with the local elite. Even during the early British rule, the native participation in administration was quite extensive. Not unexpectedly that Cornwallis' racist system of administration has drawn attention of modern scholars who describe his exclusion measure unprecedented, unwarranted and dehumanizing."

**Land Reforms (Permanent Settlement)** – In the history of Bengal, Cornwallis is mainly known for his Permanent Settlement, though the idea of the system was not his own. The idea of Permanent Settlement was, in fact, first imagined and developed by Sir Philip Francis, a member of the Council during Warren Hastings' administration. However, it was then put aside on the ground of its 'absurdity'. The failure of the recurring revenue experiments from 1773 and their impacts on the economy had persuaded the policy makers to vote the idea of Philip. Under the Pitt's India Act (1784), it was peculiarly revealed that land in Bengal ought to be settled with zamindars on a permanent basis.

After a prolonged debate among the policy makers, the Permanent Settlement was finally accomplished in March 1793. Lord Cornwallis worked out the institutional particulars of the system in the form of many regulations, which cleared the Permanent Settlement System.

1. Under the rules of the Permanent Settlement, zamindars and other landholders were established as absolute proprietors of land.
2. As private property, the zamindari land was made freely transferable and inheritable according to Hindu and Muslim laws of inheritance.
3. The government revenue demand on the landholders as assessed at the time of the decennial settlement with them in 1790 was acknowledged to be fixed in perpetuity.
4. The lands of the defaulting zamindars were made liable to be sold in public auction for recovery of arrears.

Lord Cornwallis initiated the Permanent Settlement in the anticipation system would impel the zamindars becoming improved landlords like their counterparts in England. It was anticipated that in their own interest, the Zamindars would support agriculture and the interests of royats. He affectionately that the course of the Permanent Settlement would result in an industrial revolution through an agricultural transformation in the country a transformation never occurred and the state of affairs remained as abandoned and poor as they were earlier.

**Judicial reforms**—Lord Cornwallis gave highest priority to the administration of justice and police. A four-tiered judiciary was established, commencing with the munsif adalat, at the lowest level and the sadr adalat at the top. The two in-between courts were zila adalat and the court of circuit. Every court had two wings – diwani adalat or civil court and nizamat adalat or criminal court. The highest court had thus two divisions – sadr diwani adalat and sadr nizamat adalat. A regular police system was developed to help the judiciary in administering justice and to maintain law and order in the country.

### **LORD WELLESLEY**

**Role of Lord Wellesley in British expansion**—Lord Wellesley was the Governor General of Bengal. Under his rule, he extended the authority of the British in India. During his early period, he had to deal with the French sway in Mysore, Hyderabad and Gwalior. He introduced the Subsidiary Alliance system to diminish the French influence and bring the Indian states under the tory, of the British Jurisdiction. By 1805, the East India Company's territory in India extended from Sind to the West Coast of Cape Comorian and to the North-East along the Bay of Bengal to Burma. In Northern India, the company exercised control over Bengal, upper Sind and Punjab. The princely states of Oudh, Nagpur, Gwalior, Indore, Baroda. Hyderabad and Mysore also formed parts of the East India Company's territories.

**Administrative reforms**—The administrative reforms of Wellesley were as following

- a. **Reformation of civil service**—Wellesley acknowledged the significance of improving the recruits of the civil service. Hence, he framed a wide-ranging scheme for the founding of a college in Fort William at Calcutta, in which the young civil servants sent out from England were to be educated. He pointed out that, "the members of the Indian Civil Service could no longer be regarded as the agent of a commercial concern; that they would have to discharge the functions of magistrates, judges, ambassadors and governors of provinces and would require to be educated in those branches of

literature and science which form the basis of the education of persons destined to perform similar duties in Europe, added to which they should acquire an intimate acquaintance with the history, languages and customs of the people of India, with the Muslim and Hindu codes of law and religion and with the political and commercial interests and relation of Great Britain in Asia."

The scheme did not find favour of the court of directors, who pronounced it to be too vast and too expensive. It led some years later to the formation of a college in England for the education of Indian civil servants, first at Hertford and afterwards transferred to Haileybury, until the appointments to the service were made open to Public competition under the Act of 1853.

- b. **Practical experience to civil servant**—The other method, which Wellesley adopted for Improving the civil service, although necessarily carried out on a very limited scale, was to gather round him some of the younger members of the service and employ them at government house in drafting dispatches under his orders and making writing to his own dictation. Under Wellesley, these young men enjoyed an amazing opportunity of learning how public affairs of the highest importance were carried on.
- c. **Declaration of Sunday As holiday**—The observance of the Sunday in India was a matter to which Wellesley attached considerable importance. Hence, he directed by a public notification the observance of Sunday as a day of rest.
- d. **Censoring seditious publication**—The seditious character of many of the publications of the native press was a matter, which caused some anxiety. Wellesley dealt with it by introducing a mild censorship.
- e. **Reforms in financial matters**—Wellesley was not himself a financier, but he speedily realized the importance of placing the finances in a sound condition. He selected Henry St. George Tucker, a Bengal civil servant, who executed the duty with discernible success.

**System of Subsidiary Alliance**—A subsidiary alliance is an alliance between a dominant nation and a nation that it dominates. The leading feature of Wellesley's foreign policy in India was the System of Subsidiary Alliances which enabled the British Government to establish a dominating influence in the native states without actually annexing them.

According to this doctrine, Indian rulers under British protection was pended their native armies and started maintaining British troops within their states. They surrendered control of their foreign affairs to the British. In return, the East India Company protected them from the attacks of their rivals.

In 1798, the Nizam of Hyderabad accepted it, followed by the Nizam of Oudh and Mysore. Pehwa Baji Rao also accepted this treaty after his defeat at the hands of Holkar. The rulers of the Baroda and many Rajputs accepted this system.

This Subsidiary Alliance System increased the resources of the company besides increasing its territory. The company had the right to exercise its military power in the affairs of the native states which made them dependent on the company and ended foreign influence on the native rulers. Thus, Lord Wellesley gave up the policy of the non-invention followed by Sir John Shore.

**Principles of Subsidiary Alliance**—The main principles on which the System of Subsidiary Alliance rested were as following—

- a. Under the Subsidiary Alliance System, the ruler who accepted the system had to recognize the company, which in return had to guarantee protection of the territory.
- b. Any Indian ruler accepting Subsidiary Alliance with the British had to keep the British forces within his territory and agree to pay for their maintenance.
- c. In lieu of the payments, some of the ruler's territory was ceded the British.
- d. The rulers not accepting it were forced to keep a British official at their court called the Resident.



**Criticism of the System**—It must be noted that Subsidiary Alliance system was not altogether free from objection. Sir Thomas Munro, who was at first enthusiast of the system, ended by disparaging its further extension. His opinion was that the presence of a British force in a native state, by supporting the prince on his throne against any foreign or domestic enemy, would act as a sort of support to misgovernment.

Sir Arthur Wellesley also had doubts as to the efficacy of the system. In June 1803, he wrote that such treaties entirely 'annihilated the military power of the governments with which we contracted them,' and that he would 'preserve the existence of the state and guide its actions by the weight of British influence rather than annihilate it.' However, after one year, he acknowledged that the subsidiary treaties bestowed 'enormous benefits' upon the British Government – "The consequences of them have been that in this war with the Marathas, which it is obvious must have occurred sooner or later, the company's territories have not been invaded and the evils of war have been kept at a distance from the sources of our wealth and our power. This fact alone, unsupported by others which could be enumerated as benefits resulting from these alliances, would be sufficient to justify them."

#### **LORD WILLIAM BENTINCK**

Lord William Bentinck was the Governor General of India. In 1803, he was nominated as the Governor of Madras.

**Administrative reforms**—Bentinck planned means of reducing the expenses in every branch of administration, which was liable of reduction. He appointed to commissions to look into the expenditure, both civil and military. He threw open to native posts hitherto filled by Englishmen at a larger cost and gave effect to orders of the court, which had been twice reiterated, for the reduction of an allowance which, under the name of 'batta' had for many years been given to the European officers of the army in addition to their pay.

#### **Judicial reforms-**

- Bentinck also recognized a separate Board of Revenue for the northwestern provinces at Allahabad.
- In the Judicial department, the provincial courts of appeal and circuit, which had become proverbial for the dilatoriness and vagueness of their decisions, were brought to an end and there was substituted for them a civil and session judges in each district, the whole of the original civil business being transferred to native judicial officers. The northwestern provinces were at the same time provided with it separate chief court of appeal.
- The other reforms introduced by Bentinck included suppression of Thugs, an alteration of the law of inheritance securing to converts from Hinduism and Islam their right of property.

**Fiscal reforms** – Fiscal reductions were not, however, the most important reforms which distinguished Bentinck's administration as Governor General. In the northwestern provinces, the settlement of the land revenue was very unsatisfactory. Bentinck, after carefully examining the question, introduced a settlement carried on under the direction of Robert Merttins Bird and brought the same to a completion in nine years, which was a mammoth development on the previous state of things. The result of Bentinck's financial measures was that the deficit was altered into a surplus, amounting at the time his retirement to two million a year.

**Educational reforms**—The education of the natives also occupied Bentinck's attention. In this regard, acting upon the suggestion of Macaulay, he issued a resolution towards raising a class of natives educated in western literature and science. The resolution arranged that, without peremptorily closing down the institutions for advancing oriental learning, all other available funds should be employed in imparting knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of English language.

**Social reforms**—The most important reform associated with Bentinck's tenure is the abolition of sari, or widow burning, which by a regulation passed on 4 December 1829 was made punishable as culpable homicide. In arriving at this decision, Bentinck was supported by a strong body of official opinion. It was by no means a light responsibility that he incurred in resolving upon a measure of this nature which none of his predecessors had ventured to carry into effect.

**Employment of local people**—Bentinck was the first Governor General who seriously dealt with the question of providing employment to the natives of India in the public service. He treated it in a liberal and comprehensive spirit and by his measures for the employment of natives upon duties and in positions not previously entrusted to them, he greatly raised the slants of the native official hierarchy throughout Bengal. Nor was he less zealous in promoting the settlement of unofficial Europeans in India and the application of European capital for the development of the resources of the country.

**Liberty of press**—Bentinck's views about the Indian press would seem either to have been misunderstood, or to have varied at different periods: The common impression is that, although he left it to his successor Sir Charles Metcalfe, to pass the law which formally conferred freedom upon the Indian press, he fully shared the opinions upon which that measure was founded. It must be noted that during Bentinck's government, there was no sort of interference in Bengal with the liberty of the press. It must also be noted that in one of his latest minutes, written on 13 March 1835, when he was on the point of leaving India, he described the spread of knowledge and the operation of the press as among the dangers which threatened British rule in India.

**Conclusion**—Bentinck's administration must be regarded as an era in the history of Indian progress. He was the first British diplomat who declared and acted upon the policy of governing India in the interests of the people of this country; of his plentiful reforms, some were improved upon by his successors, but none had been discarded. There were two essential traits-perfect in difference to popular applause and high moral courage that he possessed in an eminent degree. Singularly simple and unostentatious in his habits, irreproachable in his private life, he and Lady William Bentinck set an example which coming from persons placed in the high offices which they filled in India, could not fail to inspire respect.

### **LORD DALHOUSIE**

Lord Dalhousie was the Governor General of India from 1848 to 1856. Though then hardly thirty-six and of ill health, he had a commanding voice and domineering temper. A strong believer of western supremacy in every sense, his administration marked the expansion of British Indian Territories. Dalhousie fought the Second Sikh War (1848-49) and annexed the Punjab. He annexed a portion of Sikkim in 1850 and towards the end of 1852, his army fought the Second Burmese War and conquered lower Burma.

**Doctrine of Lapse**—Lord Dalhousie was instrumental in the introduction of the doctrine of Lapse. According to the Doctrine, any princely state or territory under the supremacy of the British East India Company as a vassal state under the British Subsidiary System, would automatically be annexed, if the ruler was either "manifestly incompetent or died without a direct heir". The Doctrine, thus, displaced the long-established right of an Indian sovereign without an heir to choose a successor. In addition, the British had to determine whether potential rulers were competent enough. The Indians considered the doctrine and its application as illegitimate.

The policy of annexation was a deadly weapon of occupation which was based on the forfeiture of the right to rule in the absence of a natural heir. Applying the policy, the State of Satara was annexed in 1848; in 1849, the state of Sambhalpur and in 1853 Jhansi was also annexed. After the death of the Raja of Nagpur in 1853, the policy claimed yet another sufferer. By 1854 owing to the failure to have a natural heir, Nagpur was also annexed.

The other method of annexation, which the British employed, was through conquest. In 1849, Punjab was annexed after the Second Anglo Sikh War. In 1852, Lower Burma known as Pegu was annexed. In 1850, part of the State of Sikkim was annexed on the pretext of ill-treatment of English officials. Similarly the other territories were annexed on the grounds of misgovernment. To this policy fell the territories of Berar in 1853 and Oudh in 1856.

**Impact of the Doctrine**—Dalhousie's policy of annexations and reforms only appealed to the English interests in India which in due course created the ground for a rise of the Indian opposition resulting in the mutiny of 1857. Though started by the sepoys of the Indian army, it gave an opportunity for the Indian rulers to express their disgruntlement.

Before the revolt of 1857, several revolts preceded reflecting the Indian opposition to the British supremacy. They included the Sanyasi revolt of 1770, the Chuar and Ho rebellion of Midnapur in 1768, 1820-22 and 1831. They continued their stand against the British until 1837. The Santhals of Rajmahal hills rebelled in 1855. In 1828 and 1830, the Ahoms in Assam rebelled against the company followed by the Khasi's in the Jaintia and Garo hills.

In 1817-19, the Bhils of the Western Ghats revolted and continued their struggle in 1831 and 1846. The rulers of the Kutch, the Wagheras of Okha Mandal and the Ramosis also revolted against the British. In South India, the Raja of Vizianagram, the Poligars of Dindigul and Malabar rose in 1856. The imposition of the Subsidiary Alliance of 1805 on the ruler of Travancore led to the rise of Diwan Velu Tampi with the Nair battalion.

**Criticism of the Doctrine**—It is said about the application of Dalhousie's Doctrine of Lapse that when heirs were lacking, he abolished titles; when they were plentiful, he made abolition a condition of recognition of family headship against rival claimants. Dalhousie, thus, changed the political map of the subcontinent within eight years of his rule. Dalhousie's vision was to create a westernized India and probably for that, he went 'too far and too fast'. Though he left behind a contented Punjab, provided the benefits of railways, roads and telegraphs but he ignored completely the feelings of those who were affected by his policy of territorial expansion and of creative reforms. Ultimately, the British had to pay the penalty in the form of Revolt of 1857.

**IMPORTANT QUESTIONS**

1. Discuss the early contact of India with Europeans with special reference to Portuguese, English, Dutch and French.
2. Write a note on establishment of British power in Bengal.
3. Discuss the role of the following in strengthening the role of

Renaissance  
Law College



**UNIT-2**

**FIRST WAR OF INDEPENDENCE AND RENAISSANCE**

1. Revolt of 1857: Causes, Results and Nature of Revolt
2. Renaissance: Social and Religious Reforms
3. Brahmo Samaj
4. Arya Samaj
5. Prarathana Samaj
6. Theosophical Society
7. Ramakrishna Mission

**REVOLT OF 1857**

**Causes of the Revolt**—The main causes of the revolt of 1857 can be discussed under the following heads—

- a. **Dalhousie's policy of annexations**—Dalhousie's policy of annexations, particularly the application of the 'Doctrine of Lapse' had created fear and uneasiness throughout India. The annexation of Hindu states like Satara and Nagpur were resented by the Hindus. The annexation of Oudh whose ruler had been a friend and an ally of the English East India Company for about a century were resented not only by the Muslims but also by the other rulers of India. The British Government had ordered that on the death of the last Mughal Emperor, his successor was to give up his ancestral palace.

Again, certain unguarded remarks made by some high British officials created an impression that the government had made up its mind to put an end to the existence of Native States. Sir Charles Napier had stated thus—"Were I the Emperor of India for twelve years... no Indian Prince should exist, the Nizam should be no more heard of, Nepal should be ours." By stopping the pension to Nana Saheb, the adopted son of Baji Rao II, the British made him their deadly enemy.

- b. **The domination of Bengal high-caste in the army**—The sepoys were a combination of Muslim and Hindu soldiers. Just before the rebellion of 1857, there were over 200,000 Indians in the army compared to about 40,000 British. The forces were divided into three presidency armies: the Bombay; the Madras and the Bengal. The Bengal army recruited higher castes, such as, Rajputs and Brahmins, mostly from the Oudh and Bihar region and even restricted the enlistment of lower castes in 1855. In contrast, the Madras and Bombay armies were "more localized, caste-neutral armies" that "did not prefer high-caste men." The domination of the Bengal high-caste in the army has been blamed in part for the sepoys mutiny of 1857.
- c. **Encouragement of high-caste rituals in army**—In 1772, when Warren Hastings was appointed the first Governor General of the company's Indian territories, one of his first undertakings was the rapid expansion of the company's army. Since the available soldiers, or sepoys, from Bengal — many of whom had fought against the company in the Battle of Plassey — were now suspect in British eyes, Hastings recruited high-caste rural Rajputs and Brahmins of Oudh and Bihar. However, in order to forestall any social friction, the company also took pains to adapt its military practices to the requirements of their religious rituals. Consequently, these soldiers dined in separate facilities; in addition, overseas service, considered polluting to their caste, was not required of them and the army soon came officially to recognize Hindu festivals. This encouragement of high caste ritual status, however, left the government vulnerable to protest, even mutiny, whenever the sepoys detected infringement of their prerogatives.
- d. **Sepoys losing perquisites**—After the annexation of Oudh by the East India Company in 1856, many sepoys were disquieted both from losing their perquisites and from the anticipation of any increased land-revenue payments that the annexation might augur.

- e. **Soldiers losing livelihood**—The annexation of a Native State not only deposed a king, but also resulted in the growing unemployment of his hundreds of officials. Bentinek's resumption of rent-free lands brought a lot of money to the government but reduced many landowners to poverty. During five years before the outbreak of revolt, the Imam Commission in Bombay, appointed by Lord Dalhousie to investigate the title deed of the landowners, confiscated some 20,000 estates in the Deccan. In Oudh, the Nawab's capital was occupied by the Chief Commissioner, his officials were dismissed and his army was disbanded. Around 60,000 professional soldiers lost their livelihood. This resulted in wide spread discontent and intrigue in Oudh.
- f. **Changing terms of service**—With East India Company victories in wars or with annexation, as the extent of company jurisdiction expanded, the soldiers were now expected to serve in less familiar regions such as in Burma in the Anglo-Burmese Wars in 1856. They were also deprived of the "foreign service" remuneration had previously been their due. Another financial grievance stemmed from the General Service Act, which denied retired sepoys a pension; whilst this only applied to new recruits, it was suspected that it would also apply to those already in service. In addition, the Bengal army was paid less than the Madras and Bombay armies. There were also grievances over the issue of promotions, based on seniority. This, as well as the increasing number of European officers in the battalions, made promotion difficult.
- g. **Economic ruin of peasants**—The zamindari system introduced by Lord Cornwallis, brought economic ruin to the Indian peasants. As a result of the Industrial Revolution in England, industrial goods like textiles were flooded in Indian markets. Indian industries perished. Several thousands of Indian artisans lost their jobs.
- h. **Presence of missionaries**—Others have stressed that by 1857, some Indian soldiers, misreading the presence of missionaries as a sign of official intent, were persuaded that the East India Company was masterminding mass conversions of Hindus and Muslims to Christianity. Although earlier in the 1830s, evangelists such as William Carey and William Wilberforce had successfully clamored for the passage of social reform such as the abolition of sati and allowing the remarriage of Hindu widows, there is little evidence that the sepoys' allegiance was affected by this.
- i. **Fear of coming under western influence**—The conservative section of Indian population was alarmed by the rapid speed of western culture in India. The abolition of sati and female infanticide was considered interference in the customs and traditions of the Hindus. The Hindu law of property was changed to enable a Christian convert to receive his share of ancestral property and to encourage the Hindu to convert to Christianity. Further, the statement of Mr. Mangles made in the House of Commons aroused the fear among the people that the government intended to convert everyone to Christianity. Mangles had said, "Providence has entrusted the extensive empire of Hindustan to England, in order that the banner of Christ should wave triumphant from one end of India to the other." Even the introduction of the railways and telegraphs was regarded as an attempt to westernize the Indians.
- j. **Pattern 1853 Enfield Rifle**—The final spark was provided by the reaction of company officers to the controversy over the ammunition for new Pattern 1853 Enfield Rifle. In order to load the new rifle, the sepoys had to bite the cartridge open. It was believed that the paper cartridges were greased with pork fat which was regarded as unclean by Muslims, or beet' fat, regarded as anathema to Hindus. On January 27, Colonel Richard Birch, the Military secretary, ordered that all cartridges issued from depots were to be free from grease and that sepoy could grease them on their own using whatever mixture "they may prefer". This however, merely caused many sepoys to be convinced that the rumours were true and that their fears were justified.

### **History of the Revolt of 1857**

It was the morning of 11 May 1857 when a band of sepoys from Meerut, who had defied and killed the European officers the previous day, crossed the river Yamuna in Delhi, set the toll house on fire and marched to the Red Fort. They entered the Red Fort through the Raj Ghat gate; along with huge crowd, to appeal to Bahadur Shah II, the Mughal Emperor and a pensioner of the British East India Company. Who possessed nothing but the name of the mighty Mughals to become their leader, thus, gave legitimacy to their cause. Initially, Bahadur Shah hesitated as he was neither sure of the intentions of the sepoys nor of his own ability to play an effective role. He was however persuaded, if not coerced, to give in and was proclaimed the Shahenshah-e-Hindustan. The sepoys then set out to capture and control the imperial city of Delhi. Simon Fraser, the Political Agent and several other Englishmen were killed; the public offices were either occupied or destroyed. This was the starting of the Revolt of 1857.

**The background of the Revolt**—The Revolt of 1857 was the most dramatic instance of India's struggle against foreign rule. Nevertheless, it was no sudden occurrence. It was the culmination of a century long resistance to domination by the British whose scale, duration and intensity of plunder were unprecedented in Indian history.

In Bengal, for example, in less than thirty years land revenue collection was raised to nearly double the amount collected under the Mughals. The old Zamindars were deposed and replaced by new men of money merchants and moneylenders who pushed rents to ruinous heights and evicted their tenant in case of non-payment. The economic decline of the peasantry was reflected in twelve major and numerous minor famines from 1770 to 1857. The very first one, soon after East India Company secured political control of Bengal in 1757 killed about 10 million people, the scale of death unknown in the history of India until then.

Not only was the old ruling elite displaced and the peasantry pauperized the artisan class was annihilated. Indian goods, much valued in Britain, had to face imposition of duties as high as 80 percent so that the mills of Paisley and Manchester could keep running. The British manufacturers, on the contrary, had virtually a free entry into India.

The tribal people, who had depended on the forest for food, fuel and had practiced shifting cultivation, witnessed the destruction of their livelihood and identity as they were brought into the ambit of colonialism. The colonial administration usurped forest lands and introduced the triumvirate of trader, moneylender and revenue farmer to exploit the tribal. The tribal uprising were numerous, all marked by immense courage and sacrifice on their part and brutal suppression and veritable butchery on the part of the rulers.

**Spread of the Revolt**—As said, the discontent against the British had been accumulating for a hundred years. By 1857, the material for a mass upheaval was ready, only a spark was needed to set it afire. The episode of greased cartridges provided this spark for the sepoys and their mutiny provided the general populace, the occasion to revolt.

The new Enfield rifle had been first introduced in the army. Its cartridges had a greased paper cover whose end had to be bitten off before the cartridge was loaded into the rifle. The grease was in some instances composed of beef and pig fat. The sepoys, Hindus as well as Muslim, were enraged. Many believed that the Government was deliberately trying to destroy their religion. The time to rebel had come.

The Revolt began at Meerut, 36 miles from Delhi, on 10 May 1857 and rapidly, it cut across Northern India like a sword. It soon embraced a vast area from the Punjab in the North and the Narmada in the South to Bihar in the East and Rajputana in the West.

Even before the outbreak at Meerut, Mangal Pande had become a martyr at Barrackpore. Mangal Pande, a young soldier, was hanged on 29th March 1857 for revolting and attacking his officers. On 24<sup>th</sup> April, ninety men of Third Native Cavalry refused to accept the greased cartridges. On 9 May, 85 of them were dismissed, sentenced to 10 years imprisonment and put into fetters. This spark of a general mutiny among the Indian soldiers stationed at Meerut. The next day, on 10<sup>th</sup> May, they released their imprisoned comrades, killed their officers and unfurled the banner of revolt. They set off for Delhi after sunset. When Meerut soldiers appeared in Delhi the next morning, the local infantry joined them, killed their own European officers and seized the city.

The entire Bengal Army soon rose in revolt which spread quickly. Avadh, Rohilkhand, the Doab, the Bundelkhand, Central India, large parts of Bihar and the East Punjab all shook off British authority. In many of the princely states, rulers remained loyal to their British overlord but the soldiers revolted or remained on the brink of revolt. Many of Indore's troops rebelled and joined the sepoys. Similarly, over 20,000 of Gwalior's troops went over to Tantia Tope and the Rani of Jhansi. Many small chiefs of Rajasthan and Maharashtra revolted with the support of the people. Local rebellions also occurred in Hyderabad and Bengal.

The tremendous sweep and breadth of the Revolt was matched by its depth. Everywhere in Northern and Central India, the mutiny of the sepoys was followed by popular revolts of the civilian population. After the sepoys had destroyed British authority, the common people rose-up in arms often fighting with spears and axes, bows and arrows, lathis and scythes and crude muskets. In many places, however, the people revolted even before the sepoys did or even when no sepoy regiments were present. It is the wide participation in the revolt by the peasantry and the artisans which gave it real strength as well as the character of a popular revolt, especially in areas at present included in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Here the peasants and zamindars gave free expression to their grievances by attacking the moneylenders and new zamindars that had displaced them from land. They took advantage of the revolt to destroy moneylenders' account books and records of debts. They also attacked the British-established law courts, revenue offices (tehsils) and revenue records and thanas. It is of some importance to note that in many of the battles, commoners far surpassed the sepoys in numbers. According to one estimate, of the total number of about 150,000 men who died fighting the English in Oudh, over 100,000 were civilians.

**Centers of Revolt**—The main centers of the Revolt of 1857 were at Delhi, Kanpur, Lucknow, Bareilly, Jhansi and Arrah in Bihar.

**Main Participants**—At Delhi, the nominal and symbolic leadership belonged to the Emperor Bahadur Shah, but the real command lay with a group of soldiers headed by General Bakht Khan who had led the revolt of the Bareilly troops and brought them to Delhi. In the British army, he had been an ordinary subedar of artillery. After the British occupation of Delhi in September 1857, he went to Lucknow and continued to fight the British until he died in a battle on 13 May 1859. The Emperor Bahadur Shah was perhaps the weakest link in the chain of leadership of the revolt. He had little sympathy for the humble sepoys who in turn did not trust him fully.

At Kanpur, the revolt was run by Nana Sahib, the adopted son of Baji Rao II, the last Peshwa. Nana Sahib expelled the English from Kanpur with the help of sepoys and proclaimed himself the Peshwa. At the same time, he acknowledged Bahadur Shah as the Emperor of India and declared himself his Governor. The chief burden of fighting on behalf of Nana Sahib fell on the shoulders of Tantia Tope, one of his most loyal servants. Azimullah was another loyal servant of Nana Sahib. He was an expert in political propaganda.

The revolt at Lucknow was led by Begum of Oudh who had proclaimed her younger son, Birjis Kadr, as the Nawab of Oudh. Helped by the sepoys at Lucknow and by the zamindars and peasants of Oudh, the



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Begum organised an all-out attack on the British. One of the great leaders of the revolt of 1857 was the young Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi who joined the rebels when the British refused to acknowledge her right to adopt an heir to the Jhansi, annexed her state and threatened to treat her as an instigator of the rebellion of the sepoys at Jhansi. She fought like a true heroine and captured Gwalior with the help of Tantia Tope and her trusted Afghan guards. The brave Rani died fighting on 17 June 1858.

**Kunwar Singh**, a ruined and discontented zamindar of Jagdishpur near Arrah, was the chief organizer of the revolt in Bihar. Though nearly 80 year old, he fought the British in Bihar and, later joining hands with Nana Sahib's forces, he campaigned in Oudh and Central India. Racing back home, he defeated the British in Bihar forces near Arrah. However, this proved to be his last battle. He has sustained a fatal wound in the battle and he died on 27 April 1858 in his ancestral house in the village of Jagdishpur.

**Maulvi Ahmadullah** of Faizabad was another outstanding leader of the revolt. He was a native of Madras where he had started preaching armed rebellion. In January 1857, he moved towards the North to Faizabad where he fought a large-scale battle against a company of British troops sent to stop him from preaching sedition. When the general revolt broke out in May, he emerged as one of its acknowledged leaders in Oudh. After the defeat at Lucknow, led the rebellion in Rohilkhand where he was treacherously killed by the Raja of Puwain who was paid Rs. 50,000 as a reward by the British.

The greatest heroes of the revolt were, however, the sepoys many of whom displayed great courage in the field of battle and thousands of whom unselfishly laid down their lives.

**Participation; whether absolute**—Even though spread over large territory and widely popular among the people, the revolt of 1857 could not embrace the entire country or all the groups and classes of Indian society.

Most rulers of the Indian states and the big zamindars, selfish to the core and fearful of the British might, refused to join in. On the contrary, the Sindhia of Gwalior, the Holkar of Indore, the Nizam of Hyderabad, the Raja of Jodhpur and Rajput rulers, the Nawab of Bhopal, the rulers of Patiala, Nabha, Jind and Kashmir, the Bairns of Nepal, and many other ruling chiefs, and a large number of big zamindars gave active help to the British in suppressing the revolt.

Madras, Bombay, Bengal and Western Punjab remained undisturbed, even though the popular feeling in these provinces favored the rebels. In fact, no more than one per cent of the chiefs of India joined the revolt.

**Consequences of the Revolt**—The revolt ultimately failed for the simple reason of lacking central authority and coordination, a unified and forward looking program. Modern weaponry and unable to unite all classes and all regions behind it. The rebels were dealt an early blow when the British captured Delhi on 20 September 1857 after a long and harsh fighting. The aged Emperor Bahadur Shah was made prisoner. The Royal Princes were captured and butchered on the spot. The Emperor was tried and where he died in 1862.

With the fall of Delhi, the central point of the revolt disappeared. One by one, all the great leaders of the revolt fell. Nana Sahib was defeated at Kanpur and he escaped to Nepal early in 1859, never to be heard of again.

Tantia Tope escaped into the jungles of Central India where he carried on bitter and brilliant guerrilla warfare until April 1859 when he was betrayed by a zamindar friend and captured while asleep. He was put to death after a hurried trial on 15 April 1859.

The Rani of Jhansi had died on the field of battle on 17 June 1858.

By 1859, Kunwar Singh, Bakht Khan, Khan Bahadur Khan of Bareilly, Rao Sahib, brother of Nana Sahib, Maulavi Ahmadullah were all dead, while the Beguin of Oudh was compelled to hide in Nepal.

By the end of 1859, British authority in India was fully reestablished; but the revolt had not been in vain. It was the first great struggle of the Indian people for freedom from British imperialism. It became a source of inspiration for the later freedom struggles and its heroes became household names in the country.

**Failure of the Revolt**—Various causes led to the failure of the revolt of 1857 as following—

- a. **No unity of purpose**—There was no unity of purpose among the rebels. The sepoys of Bengal wanted to revive the ancient glories of the Moughals while Nana Saheb and Tania Tope tried to establish the Maratha power. Rani Lakshmi Bai fought to regain her lost state.
- b. **A localized rising**—Secondly, this rising was not widespread. It was localized to north and central India. Even in the north, the Punjab, Sind and Rajputana remained quiet. The British managed to get the loyalty of the Madras and Bombay regiments and the Sikhs, Afghans and Gurkhas. The Gurkhas actually helped the British in suppressing the mutiny.
- c. **Lock of resources**—The lack of resources both in men and money made the rebels give up the struggle on many occasions. The telegraphic system and postal communication helped the British to speed up their operation. Indian leaders lacked organisation and planning. The rebel leaders were no match to the British Generals. Lakshmi Bai, Tania Topi and Nana Saheb were courageous but were not good Generals. Finally, the English mastery of the sea enable them to get timely help from England.

**Results of the Revolt**—Though the Great Revolt failed to achieve its aim, it certainly produced far-reaching results—

- It put an end to the company's rule in India. Administration of India was directly taken over by the British Crown. By a special Act, both the Board of control and the Board of Directors were abolished and the office of the Secretary of State for India was created with an Indian Council of 15 members to assist the Governor General and Viceroy of India.
- The Indian army was thoroughly reorganized.
- The policy of ruthless conquests in India was given up and the Indian princes were given the assurance that their states would not be annexed.
- The right of adoption was also given to the Indian rulers.
- Full religious freedom was guaranteed to Indians.
- Indians were also given the assurance that high posts would be given to them without any discrimination.

### **The Queen's Proclamation, 1858**

The Queen's Proclamation is described as the "Magna Carta" of the people. It confirmed the earlier treaties of the East India Company with the Indian Princes; promised to pay due regard to the ancient rites and customs of India and granted general pardon to all offenders except those who had directly taken part in the murder of the British subjects.

### **The Government of India Act, 1858**

The Government of India Act, 1858 actually entitled an Act for the better Government of India, was an Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom passed on August 2, 1858. Its provisions called for the liquidation of the British East India Company, which had up to that time been ruling British India under the auspices of Parliament and the transference of its functions to the British Crown. Lord Palmerston, the then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, introduced a Bill for the transfer of control of the

Government of India from the East India Company to the Crown, referring to the grave defects in the existing system of the Government of India.

### **Main Provisions**

The main provisions of the Bill were as following

- The Company's territories in India were to be vested in the Queen, the company ceasing to exercise its power and control over these territories. India was to be governed in the Queen's name.
- The Queen's Principal Secretary of State received the powers and duties of the company's Court of Directors. A council of fifteen members was appointed to assist the Secretary of State for India. The council became an advisory body in Indian affairs. For all the communications between British and India, the Secretary of State became the real channel.
- The Secretary of State for India was empowered to send some secret dispatches to India directly without consulting the Council. He was also authorized to constitute special committees of his Council.
- The Crown was empowered to appoint a Governor General and the Governors of the Presidencies.
- There was provision for the creation of an Indian Civil Service under the control of the Secretary of State.
- All the property of the East India Company was transferred to the Crown. The Crown also assumed the responsibilities of the company as they related to treaties, contracts and so forth.

The Act ushered in a new period of Indian history, bringing about the end of company's rule in India.

### **The Indian Councils Act, 1861**

The Indian Councils Act was a piece of legislation passed by the Parliament of the Great Britain in 1861 that transformed the Viceroy of India's executive council into a cabinet run on the portfolio system. This cabinet had six "ordinary members" who each took charge of a separate department in Calcutta's government: home, revenue, government, law, finance and (after 1874) public works. The military command in chief sat in with the council as an extraordinary member. The Viceroy was allowed, under the provisions of the Act, to overrule the council on affairs if he deemed it necessary, as was the case in 1879, during the tenure of Lord Lytton.

The advantages of this Act were that the members of the legislative council could discuss legislation and put forward suggestions, however the drawbacks of this were that they could not actually enact any legislation. The Secretary of State for India at that time, Sir Charles Wood, believed that this Act was of immense importance, being of the view that, "The Act is a great experiment. That everything is changing in India is obvious enough and that the old autocratic government cannot stand unmodified is indisputable".

### **RENAISSANCE: SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS REFORMS**

In the early nineteenth century many educated Indians began to feel that western culture and the rising tide of Christianity posed a challenge to their age-old traditions and beliefs. In their attempt to remedy the situation, many reformers became critical of the past and began to look for ways to rid the society of its evils, such as caste distinction, purdah system and the custom of sati. They wanted a new social order in keeping with the traditional values and modern development. Many Indians were impressed by progress made by science as well as the doctrine of reason and humanism of the west. The social conditions of the 19th century led to socio-religious reform movements. One of them was Brahmo Samaj.

### **BRAHMO SAMAJ**

**Raja Rammohan Roy**—The Brahmo Samaj or the Society of the God was founded in 1828 by Raja Rammohan Roy. He was a scholar and was well-versed in Sanskrit, Persian, English, Hindi and Bengali. He made an intensive study of Christianity and other religions. After that, he came to the conclusion that the Hindu society needed reform and India had to learn a lot from the west.

Raja Rammohan Roy was not in favour of idol worshipping. This approach of him was condemned not only by orthodox Hindus, but also by his father and became so infuriated that he prohibited his son entering the house. This did not disturb Raja Ram Mohan Roy anymore and he went to Tibet and became indulged in the study of Buddhism. Even in Tibet, the Buddhists became angry of him for the reason that Raja Rammohan Roy opposed some of their rituals which he found having no scientific basis.

In 1818, he started working for the abolition of the evil custom of sati. It was because of his sincere efforts that Lord William Beatinck declared the custom of sati as illegal. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was also a journalist and started a Bengali magazine the Samvad Kumudi in 1921 and one Persian magazine, Miraut-ul-Akhbar. He also started one Hindi magazine called Brahmanical, Magazine. In 1825, he started Vedanta College and Maha Pathshala. In 1827, he formed British India Unitarian Association. In 1828, he founded Brahmo Samaj, though it was formally opened in 1830.

Raja Rammohan Roy was firmly convinced that there were so many evils in Hindu religion. He had even denounced numerous social evils and abuses. He was of the view that the only way of abolition of social maladies was making the people rationale.

In 1830, Raja Rammohan Roy got the opportunity of visiting England where he met the distinguished persons like Bentham and Lord Brougham. Bentham praised him for his services of humanity. He died on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1833 in Bristol.

**Ideals of Brahmo Samaj**—The ideals of Brahmo Samaj have their origin in the synthesis of the Vedic religion and the Christian humanism. The main ideals of Brahmo Samaj may be mentioned as following—

- Brahmo Samaj advocated that there is one God, who is present everywhere and is without shape and form. His worship lies in intense devotion.
- It believed in the brotherhood of man and treated all men as equal. It started a magazine entitled Samvad Kaumudi, to teach people love of mankind.
- It supported the introduction of English in schools with the belief that the study of English would open the door to modern sciences
- It condemned social evils such as casteism, untouchability, child marriage and the sati system. It was due to the efforts of Raja Rammohan Roy that Lord William Bentick abolishes sati system in 1829 by declaring it an offence.
- It advocated freedom of the press and condemned any restriction imposed on it by the government.
- It supported widow-remarriage and the education of girls. Raja Rammohan Roy was the first to agitate for getting women their rightful place.

**Religious Ideas**—Raja Rammohan Roy never appreciated the Hindu system of idol worship, rituals having no reasonable basis and superstitions. He never considered the system of idol worshipping as a pan of Hindu religion. He firmly believed that there should be worshipping of one God. He considered the system of worshipping as defective for many reasons. In his own words, "I regret to say that the present system of religion adhered to by the Hindus is not well-calculated to promote their political interests. The distinctions of caste introducing innumerable divisions and sub-divisions among them



have entirely deprived them of political feeling and the multitude of religious rites and ceremonies and the loss of purification have totally disqualified if them from understanding any difficult enterprise".

**Social Ideas**—Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a social reformer and wanted to abolish so many evil customs of his days, the custom of sati being at the top. The other evil customs of his days were the caste system, unequal treatment to women, ban on crossing the ocean by the Hindus and the practice of polygamy. Though he wanted to abolish evil customs that had become deeply rooted in Hindu religion, yet he never criticized Hindu religion itself and considered it as noblest of religions. It was because of his ceaseless efforts that Lord William Bentinck enacted a law declaring the custom of sad as illegal. He was of the view that the women were in no way inferior to man. He also raised his voice against caste system and child marriage. He favoured remarriage of widow, inter-caste marriages and inter-caste dining. He stressed upon the need of the people of all castes coming close to each other. His progressive views helped to change Hindu society but these views were bitterly opposed by the orthodox Hindus.

**Opposition to the custom of sati**—One of his greatest achievements was the uplift of the position of women in India. First of all, he tried to give women proper education in order to give them better social status in society. His effort in the abolition of sati made him immortal as a social reformer. Sati was an ancient Hindu custom, according to which a wife immolated herself at the funeral pyre of her husband. In 1811, Roy witnessed his brother's widow being burned alive on her husband's funeral pyre. Three years later, he retired and concentrated on campaigning against the practice of women dying as satis. Raja Rammohan Roy was the first Indian to protest against this custom. In spite of protests from orthodox Hindus, he carried on his propaganda against the custom. Finally, he won the cause when Lord William Bentinck, the Governor General of India passed a law in 1829 abolishing the custom of sati. According to this law, the custom of sari became illegal and punishable as culpable homicide.

**Supporter of western system of education**—Raja Rammohan Roy supported western education, including learning of English and the knowledge of science and philosophy. He, along with David Hare, a missionary, founded schools to impart English education to Indian children. He established the Hindu college which finally developed into the Presidency College in Calcutta.

Raja Rammohan Roy did not want the Indians to imitate the West. He based his teachings on the philosophy of the Vedas and Upanishads and tried to bring about a synthesis of the Vedic religion and the Christian humanism. This very synthesis formed the basis of the Ramakrishna Math which was later formed by Swami Vivekananda. Raja Rammohan Roy focused the attention of the British government to such demands as appointing Indians to higher posts. He protested against restrictions on the freedom of the press. His social reforms made him the "first modern man" in India.

Up to 1813, the East India Company had followed the traditional pattern of governmental patronage to Indian learning. There was Warren Hastings College of Arabic and Persian Studies in Calcutta and Jonathan Duncan's Sanskrit college in Bearas. In 1813, the Charter Act sanctioned the annual sum of 10,000 towards 'the revival and improvement of literature and the encouragement of the learned natives of India and for the introduction and promotion of knowledge of the sciences among the inhabitants of the British territories of India'.

It was not until 1823 that a Committee of Public Instruction was formed to give effect to this provision. It immediately perceived the ambiguity between the promotion of oriental learning and the other western learning and plunged into a lively controversy. This was the situation which Bentinck found of on his arrival and which he took advantage.

In Calcutta, he found a forward looking group of intellectuals led by Raja Rammohan Roy who had helped to found a college for western learning and advocated its introduction. In 1834, he received a powerful English reinforcement in the arrival of the law member, Thomas Babington Macaulay. The

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result was the decision to launch English education and western knowledge into India. Macaulay declared in 1835 'that, the great objects of the British Government ought to be the promotion of European literature and science' and the available funds should 'be henceforth employed in imparting to the native population knowledge of English literature and science through the medium of English language.'

From this time, the government began to set up schools and colleges imparting western knowledge in English medium. To this was added another measure of greatest importance. English replaced Persian as the official state language and the medium of higher courts of law, local languages replacing Persian in the lower courts.

Western science was specifically introduced in the form of western medicine, of which the Calcutta Medical College was the first institution. Science also received attention in both schools and colleges. Western technology spread through engineering works like roads, canals and later in 1853 by the introduction of railways. The process was hastened by the increase in the number of Indian officers entering the administration because of Bentinck's policy of Indianization.

### **ARYA SAMAJ**

**Dayanand's Childhood** – Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of Arya Samaj was born in 1824 at Tankara in Gujarat. His childhood name was Mulshankar. He belonged to a family having religious bent of mind. Family's visit to the temple was regular. Even Swami Dayanand Saraswati used to go to the temple everyday along with his parents. His father had a deep faith in Lord Shiva.

Life turning experience – during one Shivratri (The Festival of Lord Shiva), Dayanand and his family members observed fast and went to the temple where they and many other worshipers had to worship Lord Shiva for whole of the night. With the passing of time during night, the worshipers started going back to their houses. Even the few worshippers, who had remained in the temple itself, were overpowered by the sleep by mid-night. Dayanand, though he was just highly curious, continued to remain awake. He found a mouse close to the idol of Lord Shiva nibbling and eating all that the worshippers had offered in the service of their Lord. Suddenly, an idea struck his mind that if Lord Shiva, the omnipotent and omniscient could not protect him from this tiny mouse, how would he protect millions of his worshippers. He recited the incident to his father, but he could not satisfy the curiosity of Dayanand. This incident made Dayanand thinking that idol worship was futile. When he also came to know that Lord Shiva lives in Himalayas, he thought of going to Himalayas for the realization of the truth.

Dayanand had a sister who was very dear to him. But when she was just sixteen years old, she died. The death of his sister shook the tender mind of Dayanand and he started thinking that one day he would die like him. Thus, there were questions after questions coming into the mind of Dayanand, but none was providing him any satisfying answer. His experiences were making him even more religious and detached from this material world. Finding changes in their son, Dayanand's parents thought of arranging his marriage. Dayanand never approved the idea of marriage; therefore, at the age of 21, he left his home forever.

**Searching of God**—Dayanand, in search of Lord Shiva wandered at Himalayas and several other religious places. It was to his utter surprise, he found all such places full of deceptive saints, merged in mere show. Their blind devotion for God could not move Dayanand. Consequently, they could not satisfy the curious mind of Dayanand. In the course of his visit, he found rich section of society living a highly luxurious life, and untouchables and widows living a life full of pity.

Sufferings of the people of India during their struggle for freedom in 1857 had perturbed his mind. He found large number of rulers remaining neutral, while other Indians were being brutally killed by the British forces.

**Meeting of a Teacher**—At the age of 24, Dayanand met Purnanand Dandi Swami. Pumanand Dandi Swami changed his name from Mulshankar to Swami Dayanand Saraswati. The knowledge and curiosity of Dayanand had impressed Pumanand Dandi a lot. But Pumanand Dandi was very old. Besides he had also very actively participated in India's struggle for freedom along with the revolutionaries. Pumanand Sawmi had a disciple in Mathura named Dandi Swami Birjanand. He directed Dayanand to gain knowledge under the tutelage of Dandi Swami Birjanand.

In November 1861, Dayanand came to Medium and met Swami Birjanand Dayanand also became his disciple and started studying ancient religious scriptures. Swami Birjanand was a man of very rigid discipline which he taught even to Dayanand. Dayanand remained under his tutelage for 14 long years and studied with extreme devotion. Pumanand taught him to apply whole of his life in the service of his motherland for awakening Indians from the deep slumber to which they had gone. In 1875, Dayanand left his teacher's place for spreading his teacher's message.

**Foundation of Arya Samaj**—On 104 April 1875, Dayanand founded Arya Samaj at Bombay. In 1877, he founded Arya Samaj in Lahore and in at 1878, in Delhi. He also wrote Satyaarth Prakash. Arya Samaj was open for all whatever the religion. He had a great reverence for cow. In order to protect cows, he even founded Gaurakshani Sabha. He wrote a book titled as Gau Karuna Nidhi, containing his thoughts on the protection of cows. Thereafter, Dayanand started visiting different places preaching about Arya Samaj and opposing Idol worship. There were several rulers who became his disciple. Native rulers, more particularly, inure particularly Maharana Sajjan Singh of Udaipur, Rav Nahar Singh of Shahpura and Majharaj Ajit Singh of Jodhpur had a great regard for him.

It is said that a few of his opponents feeling jealous on his place among the rulers and his fame entered into a conspiracy and served him a glass of poisonous milk, a result of which he died on 30 October, 1933, on the day of Diwali.

**Dayanad's teachings**—At the time Swami Dayanand emerged on the scene, the Indian society had almost degenerated. Everywhere, the society was in the clutches of Christian missionaries. The Hindus were becoming converted to other religions. Economically and politically, the country was highly backwards. The rulers were thinking only in terms of collecting revenue and never caring for the welfare of the common man. Socially, the society had become superstitious. The people were being deceived in the name of religion. Educational system was serving the purposes of the British ruler and not producing the patriots.

It was under these circumstances, Dayanand thought of saving the society from any further degeneration and for spreading the message of Arya Samaj in the following manner –

- a. **Attack over social evils**— Indian society of that time was very much superstitious. There prevailed so many superstitious like child –marriage, untouchability, illiteracy, lack of freedom for woman and many others.

Dayanand experienced that if Indians were to revive their lost honour, they would have to be aware and cautious. He was never in favour of any foreign power ruling over India. He declared that it was because of illiteracy, mutual conflicts and social vices of Indians that they were under foreign rule. He emphasized that politically and culturally, India was far ahead than Britain. The Indians, he suggested, should advance further by leaving their mutual conflicts behind.

- b. **Spread of Indian Culture** – Dayanand exposed his thoughts before the people at large at the time when they were under British rule. The people under foreign rule felt inferior in matters of religion, culture and social values. The British rulers used to impose upon Indian people that the British religion, culture and social values were superior to Indian religion, culture and social values. Dayanand declared such views as baseless and proved that Vedic knowledge and values are supreme. He also infused feelings of honour in the heart of Indians for the richness of Indian culture.

He made a scientific interpretation of Vedas and other religious scriptures. He emphasized that the Indians can revive their self-esteem only by following the teachings of Vedas.

Dayanand said in very clear terms that the main cause of India being under the subjugation of foreign power was non-following of the teachings of, Vedas by its people. Dayanand was not in favour of the Christian missionaries converting Indians towards Christianity.

- c. **Thoughts about India's Freedom**—Expressing his thoughts about India's freedom, Dayanand said that it was imperative for India to be freed from the clutches of foreign rule. He always criticised that India was under foreign rule. He emphasized that Indians should conduct in such a manner that foreign rule came to an end. It was because of the foreign rule that India was in the chains of slavery and had to bear so many troubles. According to him, the foreign rule had also caused huge loss to India's culture and that the British rule in no way could be beneficial for India.
- d. **Stress upon sound character**—Dayanand stressed that it is only through sound character and fearlessness that the people can make their nation at great. The Indians should fearlessly struggle and try to become stronger in order to gain justice. In his view, if one cannot oppose injustice one should not call him a man. Dayanand raised his voice against the English rulers and the injustices committed by them. Despite there being troubles and obstacles, one should talk for justice. The Indians would regain their honour by enhancing the level of character.
- e. **Concept of Swadeshi** — Dayanand criticized those Indians who blindly imitated western goods and their ways of life. In his saying, adopting western educational system, western goods and culture by avoiding Indian good, Indian system of education and Indian culture was an indication of mental slavery. Dayanand stressed upon using of swadeshi goods.
- f. **Thoughts about Hindi**—Dayanand was of the view that there would be emotional unity, if the people of India express their thoughts in Hindi. Though Dayanand's language was Gujarati, he always preached in Hindi so he could be understood by large number of Indians.
- g. **Emphasis on education**—In the society of his time, educational pattern was suitable for the British administrators. The education system was in no way conducive for Indian conditions. Dayanand pleaded to run educational system on Gurukul pattern. In this kind of system, every student was to remain in Gurukul upto the age of 25 years and gain his education. He was to be imparted education, not only of the subjects like arithmetic and science, but also of Indian culture and civilization, Vedas and Upnishads. Education, in his days, was meant only for boys. There was no education imparted to the women. Only the rich people used to make educational arrangements for their daughters. But Dayanand advocated for the education of women even. He was also in favour of co-education. He suggested that education should develop the sense of oneness and, therefore, there should be common dress for every student. There should be no distinction between the students on the ground of untie background.
- h. **Opposed to caste-system**—The people of his days were divided into numerous castes and sub-castes. But in his views, caste system had no religious sanction and, therefore, he rejected the same. The caste-system, as he observed was merely an arrangement introduced by influential people to suit their convenience. He suggested varn vibhajan on the basis of the qualities of person and not on the basis of his or her birth. He expressed that through excellence and moral and intellectual qualities, even a shut can gain the status of a brahmin and if the Brahmin is of evil character, he can degenerate to the status of the shudra.
- i. **Opposed to child marriage and dowry**—The parents, in his days were arranging the marriages of their wards in very early age. Dayanand opposed such child marriage. In his views, the boys should not marry before 25 years of age and the girls before 16 years of age. He was against the custom of dowry.
- j. **Support for widow re-marriage**—Dayanand said that there was no fault of a marriage woman becoming widow. It was because of her fate. Therefore, he supported the idea of remarriage of widow.



### **PRARATHANA SAMAJ**

**Prarthana Samaj**, or "Prayer Society" in Sanskrit, was a movement for religious and social reform in Bombay based on earlier reform movements. Prarthana Samaj is founded by Dr. Atmaram Pandurang in 1867 with an aim to make people believe in one God and worship only one God. The main reformers were the intellectuals who advocate reforms of the social system of the Hindus.

The movement was started as a movement for religious and social reform in Maharashtra and can be seen much more alike Brahmo Samaj. The precursor of the Prarthana Samaj in Mumbai was the Paramahansa Sabha, a secret society for the furtherance of liberal ideas by Ram Balkrishna Jaykar and others in Mumbai. . It was secret in order to avoid the wrath of the powerful and orthodox elements of society. Meetings were for discussion, the singing of hymns, and the sharing of a communal meal prepared by a low-caste cook. Members ate bread baked by Christians and drank water brought by Muslims.

### **Religious reform**

By comparison with the parallel Brahmo Samaj of Bengal, and the ideals of rational or theistic belief and social reform, the Prarthana Samaj(ists) were followers of the great religious tradition of the Maratha Sant Mat like Namdev, Tukaram. The Brahmo Samaj founders examined many world religions, including ancient Vedic texts, which subsequently were not accepted to be infallible or divine. Although the adherents of Prarthana Samaj were devoted theists, they also did not regard the Vedas as divine or infallible. They drew their nourishment from the Hindu scriptures and used the hymns of the old Marathi "poet-saints" in their prayers.<sup>[2]</sup> Their ideas trace back to the devotional poems of the Vitthalas<sup>[3]</sup> as part of the Vaishnava bhakti devotional movements of the thirteenth century in southern Maharashtra.<sup>[4]</sup> The Marathi poets had inspired a movement of resistance to the Mughals. But, beyond religious concerns, the primary focus of the Prarthana Samaj was on social and cultural reform.

### **Social reform**

Prarthana Samaj critically examined the relations between contemporary social and cultural systems and religious beliefs and gave priority to social reform as compared with the political changes already initiated by the British government. Their comprehensive reform movement has led many impressive projects of cultural change and social reform in Western India, such as the improvement of the lot of women and depressed classes, an end to the caste system, abolition of child marriages and infanticide, educational opportunities for women, and remarriage of widows. Its success was guided by Sir Ramakrishna Gopal Bhandarkar, a noted Sanskrit scholar, Dr. Atmaram Pandurang, Narayan Chandavarkar, and Justice Mahadev Govinda Ranade. Ranade emphasized that "the reformer must attempt to deal with the whole man and not to carry out reform on one side only".

### **THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY**

The **Theosophical Society** is an organization formed in 1875 to advance theosophy. The original organization, after splits and realignments, currently has several successors.

### **Formation**

The Theosophical Society was officially formed in New York City, United States, in November 1875 by Helena Blavatsky, Henry Steel Olcott, William Quan Judge and others. Its initial objective was the "study and elucidation of Occultism, the Cabala etc." After a few years Olcott and Blavatsky moved to India and established the International Headquarters at Adyar, in Madras (Chennai). They were also interested in studying Eastern religions, and these were included in the Society's agenda. After several iterations the Society's objectives evolved to be:

1. To form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste, or colour.
2. To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy, and science.
3. To investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

The Society was organized as a non-sectarian entity. The following was stated in the *Constitution and Rules of the Theosophical Society*:

**ARTICLE I: Constitution**

4. The Theosophical Society is absolutely unsectarian, and no assent to any formula of belief, faith or creed shall be required as a qualification of membership; but every applicant and member must lie in sympathy with the effort to create the nucleus of an Universal Brotherhood of Humanity

**ARTICLE XIII Offences**

1. Any Fellow who shall in any way attempt to involve the Society In political disputes shall be immediately expelled.
2. No Fellow, Officer, or Council of the Theosophical Society, or of any Section or Branch thereof, shall promulgate or maintain any doctrin[e] as being that advanced, or advocated by the Society.

The Society reformulated this view in a resolution passed by the *General Council of the Theosophical Society* on December 23, 1924.

**The Hidden Masters**

One of the central philosophical tenets promoted by the Society was the complex doctrine of The Intelligent Evolution of All Existence, occurring on a Cosmic scale, incorporating both the physical and non-physical aspects of the known and unknown Universe, and affecting all of its constituent parts regardless of apparent size or importance. The theory was originally promulgated in the Secret Doctrine, the 1888 magnum opus of Helena Blavatsky. According to this view, Humanity's evolution on Earth (and beyond) is part of the overall Cosmic evolution. It is overseen by a hidden Spiritual Hierarchy, the so-called Masters of the Ancient Wisdom, whose upper echelons consist of advanced spiritual beings.

Blavatsky portrayed the Theosophical Society as being part of one of many attempts throughout the millennia by this hidden Hierarchy to guide humanity – in concert with the overall Intelligent Cosmic Evolutionary scheme – towards its ultimate, immutable evolutionary objective: the attainment of perfection and the conscious, willing participation in the evolutionary process. These attempts require an earthly infrastructure (such as the Theosophical Society) which she held was ultimately under the inspiration of a number of Mahatmas, members of the Hierarchy.

**Schisms**

After Helena Blavatsky's death in 1891, the Society's leaders seemed at first to work together peacefully. This did not last long. Judge was accused by Olcott and then prominent Theosophist Annie Besant of forging letters from the Mahatmas; he ended his association with Olcott and Besant in 1895 and took most of the Society's American Section with him. The original organisation led by Olcott and Besant remains today based in India and is known as the Theosophical Society - Adyar. The group led by Judge further splintered into a faction led by Katherine Tingley, and another associated with Judge's secretary Ernest Temple Hargrove. While Hargrove's faction no longer survives, the faction led by Tingley is today known as the Theosophical Society with the clarifying statement, "International Headquarters, Pasadena, California". A third organization, the United Lodge of Theosophists or ULT, in 1909 split off from the latter organization.

In 1902, Rudolf Steiner became General Secretary of the German/Austrian division of the Theosophical Society. He maintained a Western-oriented course, relatively independent from the Adyar headquarters. After serious philosophical conflicts with Annie Besant and other members of the International leadership on the spiritual significance of Christ and on the status of the young boy Jiddu Krishnamurti (see section below), most of the German and Austrian members split off in 1913 and

formed the Anthroposophical Society. The latter remains active today and has branches in several countries, including the US and Canada.

### **The "World Teacher"**

In addition to the stated objectives, as early as 1889 Blavatsky publicly declared that the purpose of establishing the Society was to prepare humanity for the reception of a *World Teacher*: according to the Theosophical doctrine described above, a manifested aspect of an advanced spiritual entity (the Maitreya) that periodically appears on Earth in order to direct the evolution of humankind. The mission of these reputedly regularly appearing emissaries is to practically translate, in a way and language understood by contemporary humanity, the knowledge required to propel it to a higher evolutionary stage.

If the present attempt, in the form of our Society, succeeds better than its predecessors have done, then it will be in existence as an organized, living and healthy body when the time comes for the effort of the XXth century. The general condition of men's minds and hearts will have been improved and purified by the spread of its teachings, and, as I have said, their prejudices and dogmatic illusions will have been, to some extent at least, removed. Not only so, but besides a large and accessible literature ready to men's hands, the next impulse will find a numerous and *united body* of people ready to welcome the new torch-bearer of Truth. He will find the minds of men prepared for his message, a language ready for him in which to clothe the new truths he brings, an organization awaiting his arrival, which will remove the merely mechanical, material obstacles and difficulties from his path. Think how much one, to whom such an opportunity is given, could accomplish. Measure it by comparison with what the Theosophical Society actually *has* achieved in the last fourteen years, without *any* of these advantages and surrounded by hosts of hindrances which would not hamper the new leader.

This was repeated by then prominent Theosophist Annie Besant in 1896, five years after Blavatsky's death. Besant, who became President of the Society in 1907, thought the appearance of the *World Teacher* would happen sooner than the time-frame in Blavatsky's writings, who had indicated that it would not take place until the last quarter of the 20th century.

### **Controversy and racial beliefs**

Blavatsky had posited that humanity evolved through a series of stages called Root Races, the present, the Aryan, being the Fifth Root Race (of seven). The *Root Races* do not refer to ethnicities. They represent evolutionary stages the whole humanity is engaged in, each new Root Race being more advanced than the previous one. She taught that the earlier stage of evolution took place in Atlantis during the Fourth Root-Race. The Aryan Root Race was then only one more step in the evolutionary progression, to be eventually superseded by a more spiritual Root Race, the Sixth.

Regarding the concept of race as defined – in a comparatively more limited manner – by Anthropology, Sociology, and other disciplines, Blavatsky did not encourage superiority by any person or group, promoting the idea of the common origin and destiny of all humanity, and establishing the principle of universal brotherhood as the First Object of the Theosophical Society. She also proclaimed religious tolerance and inclusiveness stating, "Theosophists, collectively, respect the Bible as much as they do the sacred scriptures of other people, finding in it the same eternal truths as in the Vedas, the Zend-Avesta, the Tripitakas, etc." Conversely, Austrian/German ultra-nationalist Guido von List and his followers such as Lanz von Liebenfels, later selectively mixed parts of Blavatsky's occult philosophy with nationalistic and fascist ideas; this system of thought became known as Ariosophy. Some researchers, tracing the links between Ariosophy and Theosophy, stated that the latter relies mostly on "intellectual expositions of racial evolution". However in *The Key to Theosophy*, Blavatsky had stated that "The Society is a philanthropic and scientific body for the propagation of the idea of brotherhood on *practical* instead of *theoretical* lines."

**Class – B.A.LL.B (HONS.) II SEM.**

**Subject – History-II**

The **Theosophy Society - Adyar** is the name of a section of the Theosophical Society founded by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and others in 1875. Its headquarters moved with Blavatsky and president Henry Steel Olcott to Adyar, an area of Chennai in 1883. The designation 'Adyar' is added to make it clear that this is the Theosophical Society headquartered there, after William Quan Judge was separated by Besant and formed his own organization, known as the "Theosophical Society - Pasadena", with its International Headquarters in Pasadena, California.

The US National Section of this organization is called the Theosophical Society in America located in Wheaton, Illinois.

### **The garden**

Known as the "Huddleston Gardens," the Theosophical Society garden lies on the south bank of the Adyar River and covers 260 acres. The garden has migratory birds, fruit bats, snakes, jackals, wild cats, mongooses, hares and a variety of spiders. Trees include the rare mahogany and other trees from across the globe. The garden also has a 450-year-old banyan tree, known locally as *Adyar aala maram*, whose aerial roots cover some 60,000 sq m.

### **Founders**

H.P. Blavatsky standing behind Henry Steel Olcott (middle seated) and Damodar Mavalankar (seated to his left). Bombay 1881

H.P. Blavatsky, Henry Steel Olcott, William Quan Judge and others founded the Theosophical Society on 17 November 1875 in New York City. The American Section split off with William Quan Judge as its leader. Henry Steel Olcott remained president till his death in 1907.

### **Aims & ideals**

1. To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or color.
2. To encourage the study of Comparative Religion, Philosophy and Science.
3. To investigate unexplained laws of Nature and the powers latent in man.

### **Monastic / Non-monastic**

The Theosophical Society is open to anybody who supports its three objects, regardless of belief, social custom or marriage status. Celibacy is neither encouraged nor discouraged, each member being free to decide his/her own way of life.

### **General philosophical outlook**

- Universal Brotherhood
- Belief in theory of Karma
- Belief in Reincarnation
- There exists a Consciousness (Logos), Universal and Individual
- Immortality of Man

### **Spiritual discipline**

The practice of brotherhood regardless of race, creed, sex, color, or any other difference is recommended. Nothing is mandatory. Members are free to have any or no spiritual practice at all.

### **Administrative set-up**

The organization has a highly autonomous setup in that lodges and sections are fully autonomous. The President gets involved in National Section matters only when there is some dispute between them. Otherwise the President does not interfere in the matters of the sections or lodges. The President is nominated by the members of the General Council and then elected by members all over the world. The President holds office for seven-year period. The Vice-President acts on behalf of the President as



necessary and assists him or her in various ways. The Secretary handles worldwide correspondence, maintains records including statistics of the worldwide membership of the Society, its Lodges and Sections, and is responsible for producing an annual report. He/she is also the Secretary of the General Council and the Executive Committee of the Society. This Committee, which meets a number of times each year, implements the decisions of the General Council and makes financial and administrative decisions relating to the Society's Headquarters. The Treasurer is responsible for the finances of the Society and prepares an annual financial report.

Locally, members are organized in lodges. When a country has at least seven lodges, these can be gathered in a national section. Lodges and sections have a democratic organisation in which chairperson, secretary, treasurer and optional other officers are elected. Similarly, officers of the national sections are directly elected by the members of that section in a business meeting.

### **Activities**

#### **Religion & spirituality**

The Theosophical Society is organised in lodges and national sections. These organise meetings for religious study and lectures. Members individually practice any kind of meditation or other spiritual practice they choose.

#### **Social field**

- The Olcott Education Society
- The Olcott Memorial School
- The Olcott Memorial High School
- The Theosophical Order of Service

Olcott Memorial High School provides free education, uniforms, books, and two daily meals to impoverished rural children in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India.

#### **Cultural field**

- Theosophical Publishing House

#### **Relief activities**

When a Tsunami hit South India on 26 December 2004 and many of the people living near the Adyar-compound were affected, the Theosophical Society, through the Theosophical Order of Service, helped them survive and later helped (and is still helping) to reclaim their lives. Similar activities were undertaken after the Hurricane that destroyed much of New Orleans in 2005.

#### **Province of its influence**

The influence of the Theosophical Society has been major, especially considering its small size. The new age movement reflected many of its main characteristics, especially holism and eclecticism. In Modern Art, the artists Kandinsky and Mondriaan were both influenced by theosophy.

#### **Theosophical Society and Jiddu Krishnamurti**

The leadership of the Theosophical Society at Adyar was responsible for promoting young Jiddu Krishnamurti as the new "World Teacher" during the first few decades of the 20th century. Charles Webster Leadbeater, one of the Society's leaders at the time, had "discovered" fourteen-year-old Krishnamurti in 1909, and considered him the likely "vehicle" for the expected reappearance of the Maitreya. However, as a young man in 1929, Krishnamurti disavowed his expected "mission" and disassociated himself from the Theosophical Society and its doctrines and practices. Over the next six decades he pursued an independent course, becoming widely known as an original, influential thinker and speaker on philosophical and religious subjects.

It is remarkable that many members of the Theosophical Society are ardent students of his philosophy.

### **RAMAKRISHNA MISSION**

Swami Vivekanand was born on 12th February 1863 in a reputed family to Calcutta. His childhood name was Narendranath Dutta. His mother had a philosophic bent of mind. Since his childhood, he was under the influence of his mother which reflection we find even in his ideas. Narendranath possessed a very healthy physique and attractive personality.

His reading of the philosophers like Kant, Hume, Darwin and Mill had made his approach critical and analytical. In the beginning, he was influenced by the preaching of Brahmo Samaj, but because of his scientific and analytical inclination, he had lost faith in God. For a long time, he kept on roaming in search of some teacher who could make him realizing the existence of God. In November 1881, he met Swami Ramkrishna Paramhans. He became very much impressed by the philosophical thoughts of Swami Ramkrishna Paramhans. Narendranath questioned him, if he had seen God. Swami Ramkrishna paramhans replied that yes he has seen the God and I am seeing the God as I am seeing you. Thereafter, Swami Ramkrishna Paramhans touched the body of Narendranath which awakened his soul. After mental turmoil of a few days, Narendranath accepted Swami Ramkrishna Paramhans as his teacher and assumed his name as Vivekanand.

Vivekanand's teacher Swami Ramkrishna Paramhans wanted him working for the welfare and uplift of mankind. In 1886, when his teacher died, he took the vow of spreading the message of his teacher all through his life. He traveled far wide and studied the life and the living conditions of the people of India. He felt very much disturbed on seeing the poverty and plight of the masses. He at once decided to work for their betterment.

Western thinkers were highly critical of Hindu religion. This used to disturb Vivekanand very much. This also made him determined to raise India's voice before the world. In 1892, Vivekanand reached America to attend the Parliament of Religion to be held at Chicago. While delivering his address, he captivated the minds of the people gathered there. He was recognised as the most distinguished and learned scholar from the East. On his return from America, Vivekanand went to England. It is to be noted that though he never appreciated British rule in India, he never exposed any towards the people of Britain. He also visited France, German and Switzerland and returned to India after about four years.

Vivekanand, after returning India, founded Ramakrishna Mission in Vellore near Calcutta. In 1898, Vivekanand again went to Europe and established Shanti Ashram and Vedanta Society in San Francisco. Vivekanand also attended the Congress of Religions at Paris in 1900 and was a distinguished participant in some of its deliberations.

He died at an early age of 39 years on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1902.

Swami Vivekanand—Swami Vivekanand was keenly interested in social welfare activities. He felt very sad on witnessing social vices like child marriage, untouchability and opposition to widow-remarriage etc. The contribution of Swami Vivekanand as a social reformer may be studied as under –

- a. **Opposed to caste system**—Vivekanand raised his voice against the then prevailing caste-system. He stressed upon adopting the positive aspects of castes and said that caste did not mean being high or low. He wanted that the obnoxious ideas of class and caste superiority should be no more. They have resulted in the disintegration of the Hindu society. Caste, according to him, in its original form was most glorious social institution. But he rejected caste system in its degenerate state. He writes that, "As there are sattva, rajas and tamas—one or the other of these gunas—more or less, in every man, so the qualities which make a Brahmin, kashtriya, vaishya and shudra are inherent in every man, more or less. But at times, one or the other of these qualities predominates in him in varying degrees and is manifested accordingly. Take a man in his different pursuits, for example, when he is

engaged in serving another for pay, he is in shudrahood; when he is busy transacting some piece of business for profit, on his account, he is a vaishya; when he fights to right a wrong then the qualities of a Kshatriya come out in him; and when he meditates on God or passes his time in conversation about Him, he is a Brahmin. Naturally, it is quite possible for one to be changed from one caste into another. Otherwise, how did become a brahmin and Parshuram a kshatriya? Caste should not go, but it should be readjusted occasionally".

- b. **Opposed to untouchability**—Vivekananda was opposed to untouchability. He desired that there should be the spreading of religious spirit of self-realization, self-abnegation and good of the community. He always felt sad on seeing that one section of society was ill-treating the other section of society. He again and again preached for removing the concept of untouchability and caste superiority from the society. In his views, it was because of this practicing of untouchability that Indian society had become divided.
- c. **Uplift downtrodden**—Vivekanand was very much sympathetic towards the poor and the downtrodden. All his thoughts indicated his positive approach towards them. He used to say that all the poor and the downtrodden should go to Ramakrishna. He felt very sad on seeing the wide scale exploitation of the common man. In his views, the day the poor and the downtrodden are awakened, none can stop them. He believed in their power and desired that the educated class should work for their male betterment.
- d. **Empower Women**—As a social reformer, Vivekanand emphasized on improving conditions of women. The social status of the women of his time was very poor. Never in the history of India were the women treated with such an inequality as in his time. It was his view that the women should be treated at par with their male counterpart.
- e. **Education should uplift moral standards**—Vivekanand realised that the then prevailing educational system was not introducing the students with the realities of life. The educational system of that time was neither marking the students educated in the real sense nor was it generating patriotic citizens. Contrarily, it was producing such citizens who after the completion of their education were blindly imitating western culture. Education, in his views, was not merely gathering of facts and knowing of alphabets. It was something to enhance internal power of human beings. Therefore, education should be such as would make the people morally advanced. It should be capable of improving the character of them.
- f. **Opposition of child marriage**—Vivekanand was against child marriage. He was not prepped to follow the custom which allowed marriage of young children. In his views, girls in her early age are not capable of giving birth to a child. The numbers of widows are also increasing because of the marriages during childhood. Hence, he suggested that boys and girls should enter the institution of marriage only when they are properly grown.
- g. **Opposed to communalism**—Vivekanand was opposed to the narrow outlook of the people following different religions. He stressed for cordial relations between all the people belonging to whatever the religion. He opposed the widening gap between the Hindus and the Muslims. All the people should exchange their views and should frequently come in touch with each other so that universal brotherhood is developed.
- h. **Opposed to blind imitation of western culture**—Vivekanane was against blind imitation of western culture. In his views, one should lead the path of advancement according to one's nature. There cannot be any advancement, if one is imposing the life-style of others. He said that if we blindly follow western culture, our own culture and civilization would come to an end. If Europeans cannot leave their culture, why should we leave our culture? It should not be taken as though he

was opposed to other cultures. He simply meant that their culture was good for them and our culture is good for us.

In his words, "We must grow according to our nature. Vain is to attempt the lines of action that foreign societies have engrafted upon us. It is impossible. We cannot be twisted and tortured into the shape of other nations. I do not condemn the institutions of other races; they are good for them, but not for us. With other sciences, other institutions and other traditions behind them they have got their present system. We, with our traditions, with thousands of years of karma behind us, naturally can only follow our own bent, run in our own grooves and that we shall have to do. We cannot become western. Therefore, imitating the western is useless. Suppose you can imitate the western, that moment you will die, you will have no more life in you. A stream is taking its rise, away beyond where time began, flowing through millions of age of human history. Do you mean to get hold of that stream and push back to its source, to a Himalayan glacier? Even if that were practicable, it would not be possible for you to become Europeanized. If you find it is impossible for the European to throw off the few centuries of old culture which there is in the West, do you think it is possible for you to throw off the culture of shining scores of centuries. It cannot be. To Europeanize India is, therefore, an impossible and foolish task".

**Vivekanand's views on education**—Vivekanand's views a education may be understood as following—

- a. **Gurukul system of education**—Vivekanand considered gurukul system of education as most suitable under Indian circumstances, where the students can gain education by remaining in close touch of their teachers. Religious texts, in his views, are the essential part of educational curriculum. He also talks about the necessity of the knowledge of English language. Education should be such as would maintain religious tolerance. He also feels the need of studying spiritualism besides science and other subjects. The students should be imparted such education which besides enhancing their mental standard, would also contribute in the formation of their character. It is only through education that one can become self-dependent.
- b. **Developing inner capacities**—Vivekanand viewed education as not merely the means of gathering facts and gaining knowledge of alphabets. Education, according to him, helps in developing inner capacities of human beings. The chief aim of education is developing such characteristics as would help in moral advancement of man mind. It is through education that one can express this thoughts existing in his personality.
- c. **Spiritual empowerment**—Education, according to Vivekanand, is whereby man can attain his spirituality. It is through education that one can discern what is true and what is false. Education helps in the formation of character and improving of conduct. It also helps in moral advancement of mankind.
- d. **Social changes possible**—Education has its social importance as well. In his view, only education can bring desired changes in society. Education can be the basis of advanced social structure. It is only through education, we can find solutions for all the social, economic and political vices. It helps in developing such human beings who can contribute in the removal of social vices. Only that education is the real education which helps in the formation of character and making us human beings.
- e. **Educate women**—No society, according to Vivekanand, can be progressive if its women are not progressive. Free and important role of women should be given high priority, if society is to be of superior class. One of the important factors for social degradation is that the women of society are not being given due honour. There should be proper arrangement for the education of women. The



women themselves should come forward for the removal of social vices such as child marriage, the customs of purara and sari.

- f. **Shuddhi movement**—The socio-political movement, derived from ancient rite of shuddhikaran or purification was started by Arya Samaj, and its founder Swami Dayanand Saraswati and his followers like Swami Shraddhanand, who also worked on the Sangathan consolidation aspect of Hinduism, in, North India, especially Punjab in early 1900s, though it gradually spread across India. Shuddhi had a social reform agenda behind its belligerent rationale and was aimed at abolishing the practice of untouchability by converting outcasts from other religions to Hinduism and integrating them into the mainstream community by elevating their position and instilling self-confidence and self-determination in them. The movement strove to reduce the conversions of Hindus to Islam and Christianity, which were underway at the time.
- g. In 1923, Swami Shraddhanand founded the 'Bhartiya Hindu Shuddhi Mahasabha' (Indian Hindu Purification Council) and pushed the agenda of re-conversion peacefully, but ultimately created a flashpoint between Hindus and Muslims as it offended Muslim exceptionalists, who argued that Hindus, being dhimmis, do not have rights to convert others to their faith unlike the Muslims, who are munim. The main point of contention was the reconversion of Malkana Rajputs in Western United Province. Subsequently the movement became controversial and antagonized the Muslims populace to no end and also led to the martyrdom of the leader of the movement, Swami Shraddhanand in 1926. Gradually the movement faded away especially with the rise of nationalistic fervor during the Civil Disobedience movement of Mahatma Gandhi in the 1930s.

**Social Reforms that took place during the British Rule in India:**

In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the British social policy was one of patience and caution. They first attacked the abuses, which were considered to violate the universal moral law.

- a. **Abolition of infanticide**—In 1803, Lord Wellesley considered infanticide, i.e., sacrifice of the children at the mouth of the Ganges in fulfillment of religious vows. As the birth of female child was considered ominous, that in human practice of putting them to death either at birth or at infancy was extensively practiced. It was widely common among the Jharija Rajputs in Cutch and Gujarat in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Several British officials like Duncan and Walker struggle to put an end to this offensive practice. In August 1853, Lord Dalhousie rules that killing of a female child was murder and decreed harsh punishment in case of conviction.
- b. **Abolition of Sati** – The abolition of sari or the practice of a wife burning herself on the funeral pyre of her husband was the most beneficial measure of the company. The main areas where this evil practice flourished were Punjab, Rajputana, Madura and the Ganges valley. Since 1789, the English had tried to stop this evil practice. However, they hesitated from doing so for fear of opposition by the Hindus. Raja Rammohan Roy dedicated all his energies to save women from this cruel custom. He proposed a memorandum to the Government in August 1818 in which he vehemently challenged the argument that sati was a religious ceremony. During 1818- 19, the Raja wrote a series of articles in Bengali and English to show that the Hindu Shastras had nowhere enjoyed the practice of sail. He argued that Manu, the greatest law giver of the Hindus had suggested an austere life for the widows and not the ritual of self-immolation.

Rammohan's movement against sad gathered impetus and Lord Hastings' Government accepted its importance. In the decade 1817-26, the number of widow burning varied from 500 to 850 annually. However, Bentinck was determined to abolish this nasty practice and consulted Rammohan Roy, the great champion of anti-sari movement. On December 2, 1829, he declared the customs of sati illegal and punishable by law. The courts were sanctioned to pass the death sentence on persons held

responsible for sati. The opposition led by Raja Radhakanta Deb was of no avail and an appeal to the Privy Council was dismissed in 1833.

- c. **Female education**—The steps for female education in the first half of the nineteenth century made modest progress. The Female Juvenile Society made the pioneer effort for female education in 1819. In 1845, the British Indian Society recommended the need of female education. However, it was John Elliot Bethune, a member of the Governor General's Council and President of the Council of Education, who gave great momentum to the cause of female education. He started the Calcutta Female School on May 7, 1849 with only 11 pupils. In this effort, Bethune availed the energetic collaboration of Ramgopal Ghosh, Dakshinaranjan Mukherjee, Vidyasagar and Madanmohan Tarkalankar. The school was afterward known as the Bethune Female School.

- d. **Widow Remarriage**—Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar, the great Sanskrit scholar and social reformer embarked on a crusade for widow remarriage. On July 26, 1856, an Act was passed which legalised widow remarriage and gave legitimacy to the children of the married widows. Through Vidyasagar's efforts, twenty-five widow remarriage were performed between 1855 and 1860.

Jotiba Phule also launched the widow remarriage movement in Maharashtra. Another well-known activist in this field was Karsondas Mulji who promoted widow remarriage through Satya Prakash in Gujarati in 1852. A Widow Remarriage Association was started in Bombay in 1866.

- e. **Abolition of slavery**—In 1807, the British Parliament abolished trading in slave and in 1811; the importation of slave into India from outside was declared illegal. Slavery was abolished in Britain in 1833 and the Character act of 1833 directed the company to take appropriate action for its elimination. Consequently, there was the passing of the Act V of 1843, which made slavery unlawful in India. However, it was only in 1860 that slave holding became an offence under the Indian Penal Code.

- f. **Abolition of human sacrifice**—The abolition of the practice of human sacrifice in the hill tracts of Orissa, Madras and then the Central Provinces was another benevolent act of the company. It was in 1845 during the administration of Lord Harding that this detestable practice was ultimately put to an end.

Reform movements were soon extended to other parts of India. In Maharashtra, Students' Literacy and Scientific Society provided the guidance in 1848. The Society structured lectures on popular science and social questions. It endeavoured to advance the cause of female education. In 1851, Jotiba Phule and his wife started a girl's school at Pune. An exceptional supporter of new learning and social reforms in Maharashtra was Copal Hari Deshmukh, known as Lokahitawadi.

#### IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the nature, cause and results of the Revolt of 1857?
2. Write a note on Indian Renaissance (Socio Religious Reform Movements in India).
3. Write Short Notes on:
  - a) Brahmo Samaj
  - b) Arya Samaj
  - c) Prarathana Samaj
  - d) Theosophical Society
  - e) Ram Krishna Mission

**UNIT-3  
NATIONAL MOVEMENT**

1. National Movement
2. Rise of National Movement
3. Impact of European Liberal Thoughts
4. Establishment of INC
5. A brief history of India with reference to Lord Lytton, Ripon and Curzon.

**RISE OF NATIONAL MOVEMENT**

At the beginning of the 19th century India was regarded as one of the few countries with least possibilities for the rise of nationalism or the growth of national movement. The main reason for such assumptions was that the vast population of India was not only politically and backward but also disunited by barriers of language, religion, culture etc. The dearth of unifying sense of nationalism and patriotic feelings was one of the cogent contributing factors to the foundation and consolidation of the British rule in India. Certain colonial scholars did not even regard India as a nation. But India, throughout the course of her history had enjoyed inherent unity in diversity. This unity in diversity greatly helped in the rise and growth of Indian National Movement. The 19th and early 20th centuries were an age of democratic, liberal and nationalist ideas. The American War of Independence, the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution of 1917 etc., greatly inspired the rise and growth of the National Movement in India. No doubt all these external events, internal turmoils and self-realisation together inspired the rise and growth of the Indian National Movement.

India's National Movement was truly Indian in the respect that it was world's first struggle for freedom based on truth and non-violence and its foundations was laid by the socio-religious reform movement of the 19th century.

**Causes of Indian National Movement:**

Among the many causes responsible for the rise of the national movement the following deserve special mention:

1. The Macaulavian system of education though conceived in the interests of efficient administration opened to the newly educated Indians the floodgates of liberal European thought. The liberal and radical thoughts of European writers inspired the Indian intelligentsia with the ideals of liberty, nationality and self-government. The spread and expansion of the English language gave to the Indians living in different linguistic regions a common language-lingua franca.
2. In the nineteenth century the development of vernacular languages was also phenomenal. The neo-educated class conveyed their ideas of liberty and equality to the masses through the media of these vernaculars. The vernacular literature greatly helped in arousing Indian nationalism.
3. Socially, British Imperialism destroyed the old, order of society in India. After the Rebellion of 1857 and the British administrators realised that the reactionary and feudal elements of society could serve as strong props of Imperialism. This change in policy exposed the hollowness of British professions and drove the English Administrators and the progressive elements in opposite camps.
4. The development of the various socio-religious movements prepared the ground for the growth of national movements and watered the plant of patriotism. The reform movements sought an all-round improvement of the Indian society. They gave the people a sense of pride in Indian culture and heritage and taught them the gospel of patriotism.
5. The economic policy pursued by the British in India had resulted in a lopsided development of Indian economy and impoverishment of the people. The economy of India was geared to the

production of raw materials needed for the developing machine industry of England. Such a policy also made India as a growing market for English manufactured goods. The cumulative effect of British economic policies had resulted in chroministry and found expression in mass unrest. Periodical famines became a regular feature of Indian economy.

6. The natural process of conquest and consolidation brought the whole of India under a single political set-up. A network of roads and railways linked the bigger towns and the country with the world market. The setting up of efficient posts and telegraphs system and the accompanying developments gave India the appearance of unity and fostered the spirit of one-mindedness.
7. The growth of the modern press and with it the public opinion was an offshoot of the English rule in India. Despite the numerous restrictions imposed on the press from time to time, Indian journalism made rapid strides. The Indian press created a strong public opinion opposed to imperialist policies, and played no insignificant role in fostering patriotism and developing nationalism.
8. The short-sighted acts and policies of Lord Lytton acted like catalytic agents. The maximum age limit for the I.C.S. examination was reduced from 21 years to 19 years, thus making it impossible for Indians to compete for it. Lytton put o the statute book two obnoxious measures the Vernacular Press Act and Indian Arms Act (1878). Lytton's unpopular acts provoked a great storm of opposition in the country and led to the organisation of various political associations for carrying on anti- Government propaganda in the country.
9. One unfortunate legacy of the Rebellion of 1857 was the feeling of racial bitterness between the rulers and the ruled. The Anglo-Indian bureaucracy developed an attitude of arrogance and contempt towards the Indians. The Indians were dubbed as belonging to an inferior race and no longer worthy of any trust. This narrow approach evoked a reaction in the Indian mind and put the educated Indians on the defensive.
10. ILLBERT BILL (1883 CONTROVERSY): In 1880, there was a change of Government in England, and the Liberal Party under Gladstone came into power. He was known for his liberal ideas and was a believer in moral principles. "Good Government" he pronounced, "was no substitute for self-government", "It is our weakness and calamity", he said that we have not been able to give India the blessing of free institutions". He sent Lord Ripon, a close friend and follower, to "reform the structure of the Indian Government. The new Governor-General repealed the Vernacular Press Act of 1878, commenced industrial legislation by passing the first Factories Act, and took steps to promote local self-government in big cities and towns.

Ripon also sought to remove the individual distinction existing at that time between the European and Indian members of the judiciary. Indian sessions judges and magistrates were not re-empowered to try European offenders, and this was a cause of great annoyance to the educated community of the country. In 1883, the Law Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, Sir Courtenay Illbert, introduced in the Imperial Legislature a Bill, known after his name as Illbert Bill, designed to remove "The disability of Indian judges. The Anglo-Indian community opposed the enactment of the Bill vehemently, and asserted that the Indian judges were not fit to administer justice to a White offender. The European Defence Association, with branches in important cities of India, was formed to organize a campaign against the Bill. There were protest meetings and agitation, and it was proposed to kidnap Ripon and hold him to ransom. Even in England, the Government was under fire, Ripon had to bow to the storm and a compromise was made which provided that European and British subjects were to have a right to claim trial by Jury of twelve, atleast seven of whom, must be Europeans or Americans.

This manifestation of the British sense of racial superiority acted as a spark to the power magazine; it acted as an eye-opener to Indians. They learnt the lesson that they would have to undergo a long period



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**Subject – History-II**

of sacrifice and discipline if they wanted justice and equality in their own country. The educated class of people noted the extra-ordinary force of a minority when organized and directed by a single aim, and they applied the inference to their own situation. Demands began to arise for a national organization by means of which the grievances of the people against the British rule could be ventilated. A few thoughtful men, both Indians and English were not slow to measure the trends in the country and they took steps to organize the mass discontentment into a peaceful channel.

11. Certain external factors like home-rule movement in Ireland, Unification of Germany, Italy; Victory of Japan over an European power Russia in 1905 also produced nationalist and revolutionary feelings among the Indians.

12. Repressive and Reactionary Policies of Lord Curzon virtually made the Indian National Movement Militant. Some of his most denounced utterances and actions were:

- a. Curzon went back on Queen Victoria's proclamation.
- b. Calcutta Town Hall speech of Curzon "Indians are cheats" greatly injured the Indian conscience.
- c. Bitter speeches at Dacca and to divide Hindus and Muslims.
- d. Partition of Bengal in 1905, became the basis of militant nationalism in India. The nationalist came to the conclusion that the constitutional agitation will not help in undoing the wrongs.

It is from here that Swadeshi and Boycott became political weapons. It is here that the Bengali youth learnt the cult of Gita and Grenade 'to live in bondage is negation of life. We want end of British Rule'. The beginning of the Indian National Movement is rightly regarded with the foundation of the Indian National Congress in 1885, which united the Indian nationalists of all shades and opinions into a common front of the nationalists and soon the roots of national struggle for freedom spread to all parts of the country.

**Indian National Congress**—The foundations of the Indian National Movement were laid by Surendranath Banerjee with the formation of Indian Association at Calcutta in 1876. The aim of the Association was to represent the views of the educated middle class and inspire the Indian community to understand the value of united action. The Indian Association was, in a way, the forerunner of the Indian National Congress, which was founded with the help of AO Hume, a retired British official. The birth of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885 marked the entry of new educated middle class into politics and transformed the Indian political horizon. The first session of the Indian National Congress was held in Bombay in December 1885 under the president ship of Womesh Chandra Banerjee.

India got Independence on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947. It was primarily the result of the Indian National Movement led by the Indian National Congress. British the Indian National Congress, there were other organizations also that made their contributions to this movement.

**Reasons that caused the emergence of Indian National Congress –**

Though the Indian National Congress was founded in 1885, its origin can be traced from the various forces at work since the mid-nineteenth century. They can be summarized as follows—

- a. **Effects of the First War of Indian Independence (1857)** – In this war of independence, for the first time rulers, soldiers and leaders from different parts of India came in close contact with each other. Though it failed in achieving its main goal due to lack of resources, coordination and appropriate planning, it helped in generating national consciousness throughout India.
- b. **Impact of the socio-religious movements**—The socio religious movements of the nineteenth century, such as Arya Samaj founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Brahmo Samaj founded by Raja Rammohan Roy, Ramakrishna Mission founded by Swami Vivekanand and the Theosophical Society founded by Madame Blavatsky and Olcott played a very vital role creating a new awakening

amongst the people of India. They became proud of their splendid past and looked ahead for renaissance in India.

- c. **Effects of the British Rule** – Though the foreign rule of the British was Unresponsive to the sentiments of the people, it proved to be a blessing in disguise. The network of railways and telegraphs aroused and fostered a feeling of Unity amongst the people hailing from different parts of India.
- d. **Western education**—The spread western education brought the people in touch with the philosophies of the western thinkers with their emphasis on nationalism, democracy and scientific outlook.
- e. **Economic exploitation**—The policies of the British Government in India were based on economic exploitation. They purchased raw materials from India at very cheap rates and sent them to England to feed the needs of the British Industries. The readymade goods of the British industries were sold in India at very high rates. The government discouraged cottage industries of India and dumped the Indian market with goods manufactured in England.
- f. **Oppressive agricultural policy**—The British Government charged heavy land revenues on the poor peasants of India who heavily depended on the vagaries of nature. This caused a lot of resentment amongst Indian peasants against the British rule.
- g. **Severe famines**—In the first half of the nineteenth century, there occurred seven famines, with an estimated total of one million deaths while in the second half, there were twenty-four famines resulting in twenty million deaths. The British Government did not come out with any substantial help to relieve the suffering people.
- h. **Vernacular press**—When the people of India noted that the English newspapers were hostile to the cause of Indians, they started newspapers in Indian Languages. These newspapers began to expose the anti-people policies of the British Government. This led the Government to enact Vernacular Press Act that restricted the freedom of local newspapers. This provoked a lot of resentment both in India and in England. This resulted in its revocation. However the British Government adopted other measures to deny freedom of speech and expression to the people of India.
- i. **Repressive measures of Lord Lytton**—During the Governor Generalship of Lord Lytton, steps were taken which caused bitter feelings against the British Government. While there was a severe famine in India in 1876, which took away toll of thousands of Indian life, Lord Lytton held a durbar at Delhi in 1877 to announce that Queen Victoria had assumed the title of the Empress of India. Lord Lytton forced India into an Afghan war that caused enormous loss in the form of men and money. He imposed heavy penalties on Indians for bearing arms without licence, there was no such restriction on the Europeans.
- j. **Ilbert Bill Controversy**—According to the then existing law, an Indian Magistrate was not empowered to try and punish Europeans. The Ilbert Bill wanted to remove this discrimination against the Indians. The European Community organized such a strong opposition against it that it was eventually withdrawn. This rooted a feeling in the minds of the Indian people that they could not get justice from the British Government.

**Birth of Indian National Congress**—It is understandable from the above that there was a lot of restlessness against the British Government in India. It was felt by some observers that if this discontent was not restricted in time, it might lead to another outbreak like the uprising of 1857. A O

Hume belonged to this school of thought. He felt that it would be immensely beneficial for the country, if leading Indian politicians could be collectively brought once a year to converse social matters. He discussed this idea with Lord Dufferin, the then Governor General of India and got an encouraging response. Accordingly, a meeting was summoned in Bombay on December 28, 1885, that was presided over by WC Banned'. This meeting decided to form an All India organization by the name of Indian National Congress. In the very first meeting, the Congress passed resolutions demanding various political and economic reforms in India. Though Hume wanted the Congress to confine itself to social reforms only, yet it emphasized political and economic reforms. Thus, in 1885, a firm foundation was laid for an organized Indian National Movement.

### **MODERATES AND EXTRIMISTS**

Formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 was the first organized step to manifest the need for a nationalist movement. The initial years of the Congress were marked by the learning of the democratic methods. Until the beginning of the twentieth century, the methods of the nationalist leaders continued to be highly democratic and courteous in nature. These methods were developed under the bonafide belief of the leaders that the British Government was reactive towards diverse needs and suggestions of the people of India and eager to make positive changes as requested by them from time to time. However, gradually the people began to get disheartened with this method of nationalism. It was comprehended that on most of the issues, the British Government adopted lagging diplomacy and avoided taking any resolution. Most of the requests in due course bore no results.

**Moderates**—The Congress leaders who still believed in pursuing courteous and democratic methods were referred to as the moderate leaders. The moderates failed to generate any results. The moderate leaders like Surendranath Banerjee and Gopal Krishan Gokhale failed to lead the masses and could not compel the British Government to take any step towards the well-being of the people of the country.

**Extremists**—Within the Congress, certain new generation leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chander Pal and Bal Gangadhar Tilak began to disagree with the methods of the moderate leaders. They formed a new group within the congress willing to diverge from the conventional methods of written protests and petition and aiming direct action in the form of agitations and protests. This group of the nationalist leaders was not satisfied with the claim for dominion status and wanted total independence from the British rule. These leaders came to be known as the extremists.

Slowly, but surely, the people could measure the futility of the moderates. The extremist Congress leaders with their ideal of expelling the British from India could get more support from the masses. The ideology and methods of the extremist leaders got a boost and revived nationalist movement under the support of the masses. With fitting direction to the movement, capable leadership and numerous agitations, the masses became involved in the nationalist movement. They also started believing that it was only the aggressive and non-violent policy of agitation that could result in ultimate independence for the country.

**(b) Differences between the liberals or moderates and the extremists** – The moderates believed in the just sense of the British people. They felt that the British people were not aware of the wretched conditions of the Indian people and felt that once the British people came to know of their tribulations, they would be resolved. They, therefore, believed in submitting petitions, prayers, sending delegations, writing articles in newspapers etc.

The extremists, on the other hand, believed that when a foreign power rules over another people, it is not in the interest of the people ruled but the rulers themselves. According to them, the basis of the British rule was mistreatment and exploitation of the local people. It is through processions, protest meetings, boycott of foreign goods, strikes, picketing, use of Swadeshi goods and demanding Swarajya that a foreign government could be forced to concede their demands.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale led the moderates. Bal Gangadhar Tilak the extremists. The two groups had different manners and thoughts of attaining the results. The difference in the approach between the two evidently brings out the difference between the moderates and the extremists. In the words of Pattabhi Sitaramayya –

“Gokhale’s plan was to improve the existing condition; Tilak’s was to reconstruct it; Gokhale had necessity to work with the bureaucracy, Tilak had necessity fight it; Gokhale stood for co-operation, wherever possible and opposition wherever necessary, Tilak inclined towards a policy of obstruction; Gokhale’s ideal was love and service, Tilak’s was service and suffering; Gokhale’s method sought to win the foreigner. Tilak’s to replace him; Gokhale’s objective was self government which the people have to fit themselves by an swering tests prescribed by the English, Tilak’s objective was Swaraj which was the birthright of every Indian and which he should have without hindrance from the foreigner; Gokhale was on the level of his age, Tilak was in advance of his time.”

### THE INDIAN COUNCILS ACT OF 1892

In 1892, another Act was passed to further expand and strengthen the legislative councils. The main features of the Act were as follows—

- The strength of the central and provincial legislative councils was expanded by adding 8-20 new members.
- Two-fifth of the new additional members were to be non-officials’ and
- The Governor General in Council was authorized to make rules subject to the sanction of the Secretary of State in Council, for discussion of annual financial statements and for asking questions.

### PARTITION OF BENGAL

**Circumstances prior to the partition of Bengal**—The nationalist is movement had entered a new phase and the nationalists were no longer satisfied with merely sending petitions to the British Government. Indians now conscious of the notion of nationalism were eager for some stronger political action.

- Changing notion of the masses**—The early stage of the nationalist movement had been characterized by nationalists having the conviction that the British could be reformed from within. However, now people realized that there was little possibility for advancement under the imperialistic rule of the British. They knew that economically India had been adversely affected because of becoming a British colony and the only way it could thrive again was if they were governed by the Indian people. The wish to co-operate with the British grew less, for the Indian nationalists were treated with disdain and their demands were hardly met.
- British policies**—The British approach had disappointed large number of people in India, for instead of reforming their policies, they were making them even more repressive. Even the early good will that the British enjoy because of the spread of education and new technology was now thinning lo these fields had languished over the years. Nationalists also were annoyed the policy of the British to divide Indians on communal lines and realized the devastating implications of sustained British rule.
- More confident leaders**—This phase of nationalists saw more optimistic leaders who had trust in their ideas and of Indians being talented enough to run their own country. These leaders would extend the idea of nationalism to wider sections of the Indian society realizing that the only way India could attain independence was if it launched a massive movement carried on by the masses of India.
- Emergence of radical thought**—The extremists who believed in measures that were more direct in order to achieve freedom dominated this phase. The reader should not to be confused with another smaller group called the militant nationalists, being dissimilar to them; the extremists did



not sponsor aggressive means. The methods of the extremists were extreme in relation to those of the moderates. The extremists believed in actions like public rallies, protest marches, the promotion of swadeshi (self-reliance) and the boycott of foreign goods. Such measures were considered extreme, because their fore-runners, the moderates had espoused a conciliatory and co-operative policy with the British.

- e. **Divide and rule policy**—The British had become disconcerted by the growing level of nationalism in the country and began to take steps to curb it. They started relying on the divide and rule policy that had initially helped them conquering the country. Hence, the British took steps to make certain the growth of communalism, as this would divide the nationalist movement.

**The Partition of Bengal**—The partition of Bengal, into East Bengal and West Bengal was done on communal line, with the eastern half dominated by Muslims and the western half dominated by Hindus. India and the people of Bengal, who despite different religions had shared a common culture and had lived harmoniously since centuries, resented this partition on communal line. The nationalist movement now gathered more support and soon massive pro-tests were held in opposition to this decision.

Partitioning Bengal was first considered in 1903. There were also additional proposals to separate Chittagong and the districts of Dhaka and Mymensingh from Bengal and attaching them to the province of Assam. In a similar way, Chhota Nagpur was to be incorporated with the central provinces.

The government officially published the idea in January 1904 and, in February, Lord Curzon made an official tour to eastern districts of Bengal to assess public opinion on the issue of partition of Bengal. He consulted with leading personalities and delivered speeches at Dhaka, Chittagong and Mymensingh explaining the government's stand on partition. The idea was opposed by Henry John Stedman Cotton, Chief Commissioner of Assam. The partition of Bengal in 1905, was made on October 16, by the then Viceroy of India. Lord Curzon.

**The British Argument for Partition**—The British argument in support of partition of Bengal was that "Partition was promoted for administrative reasons; Bengal was as large as France was but with a significantly larger population. The eastern region was thought to be neglected and under-governed. By splitting the province, an improved administration could be established in the east where, subsequently, the population would benefit from new schools and employment opportunities."

**Aftermath Partition**—The partition, however, stimulated an anti-British movement nation-wide that involved non-violent and violent protests, boycotts and even an assassination attempt against the Governor of the new province of West Bengal.

- The leaders realized that they would have to take some stronger actions in order to have real results. They hit the very backbone of the British power in India, its economic interests. Swadeshi was encouraged and foreign goods, were boycotted. In some cases, extreme measures like the burning of foreign goods also took place. Instead of humiliating the national movement, the partition of Bengal gave it even more vigor.
- The nationalists were able to give the freedom struggle a new outlook. No longer was it supposed as a half-hearted endeavour by a group of intellectuals but truly a struggle of the Indians. This advanced the environment for the final stage of nationalism.
- Partition barely lasted half a decade, before it was annulled in 1911. Britain's policy of divide et impera which lay behind partition, however, continued to impact on the re-united province. In 1919, separate elections were conducted for Muslims and Hindus. Before this, many members of both communities had advocated national solidarity of all Bengalis. However, thereafter, distinctive communities developed, with their own political agendas.
- Muslims, too, dominated the Legislature, due to their overall numerical strength of roughly twenty two to twenty eight million.

- Nationally, Hindus and Muslims began to demand the creation of two independent states, one to be formed in majority Hindu and one in majority Muslim areas with most Bengali Hindus now supporting partitioning Bengal on this basis. The Muslims wanted the whole province to join the Muslim state, Pakistan.

### **LORD CURZON (1899-1905)**

Lord Curzon became the Viceroy of India in 1899. "There was no part of the administration, from the rent assessment at village level to the expenditures in the vice regal household, into which Lord Curzon did not look over", says Sirajul Islam.

**Internal administration**—Lord Curzon undertook a complete overhaul of the entire bureaucratic machine. Sirajul Islam writes that. "As preludes to reform, he tried to identify weaknesses and defects of office management, department by department. Regular delay in office attendance, slow movement of files, uncalled-for lengthy noting on files, writing long minutes in flamboyant style, endless and purposeless movement of files up and down the desks, taking the stereotype as the model, dependence on the subordinates for even a trifling matter etc. fomented him. He had a very poor opinion of Indian Civil Service. Therefore, he took the most unprecedented steps by personally supervising the office improvement measures. Even the offices of the ICS officials came under his scrutiny. He asked them to take initiatives in good governance."

The civilians coldly received Curzon's paternalistic outlook, but finally they gave in and followed him as faithfully as the British bureaucracy followed the Prime Minister. Based on the police report of 1903, Curzon reorganised the Indian and provincial police services. He brought changes in dilatory office procedures.

**Land reforms**—Curzon's dealing with the land related issues was extraordinary. Some of the steps taken by him were as following –

- Curzon noticed that the rent rate of royals cultivating khas (government owned) land was much higher than that of the zamindari peasants. He issued orders to scale down rent for Alms land.
- He introduced the Punjab Land Alienation Act which aimed at protecting cultivators from eviction from their lands for debt and prohibiting non-agricultural people to take control of land.
- He created an agricultural department to promote scientific agriculture. An experimental farms and research institute was set-up at Pusa in Bihar.
- A more positive measure was the establishment of co-operative societies whose aim was to emancipate the peasantry from the bondage of the moneylenders.
- He also pushed forward irrigation works with equal vigour. He set-up a Scott-Moncrieff Commission which planned extension of irrigation works through an investment of Rs 40 million.

**Industrial reforms and Enlargement of Railways**—Curzon's idea of improvement was rooted in the balanced development of agriculture, industry and communication. By the end of the 19th century, India had 27,000 miles of railways. Curzon added 6,000 miles more of railways. an extraordinary development in terms of growth rates. For better management, railways were transferred from the public works department to a newly established Railway Board, which operated the state railways and made plans for their development. A new department of commerce and industry was created to exclusively deal with the commercial and industrial matters.

**Educational reforms**—Curzon's glorious administrative record was largely marred by two controversial policies. One was the education policy illustrated by the University Act, 1904. The Act aimed at reforming the University of Calcutta and its relations with other educational institutions. The Calcutta University, until then, had been operating only as an examining and affiliating body without any educational agenda of its own. Curzon's reform had introduced post-graduate department in the university. This reform in educational branch was certainly constructive.

However, bitter criticisms were raised on account of his other reforms affecting management of schools and colleges. Under the Universities Act, government nominees were made predominant on the governing bodies of schools and colleges. Affiliations and grants-in-aid were subjected to many rigorous conditions. Curzon's educational reforms were obviously interpreted by the nationalists as an attempt to keep the educational institutions under rigid colonial control.

**Partition of Bengal**—The most controversial reform measure adopted by Curzon was the partition of Bengal. In the name of improving the efficiency of the traditionally neglected Bengal province, Curzon divided it into two as West Bengal and East Bengal. The nationalists again interpreted this measure as a mission of imperialistic control that was increasingly coming under threat from the Bengali nationalists. The Congress branded it as a policy of 'Divide and Rule'. The resistance to the partition measure practically shook the foundation of the British Empire in India.

### INDIAN COUNCILS ACT OF 1909

In 1906, Lord Morley, the Secretary of State for Indian Affairs, announced in the British Parliament that his government wanted to introduce new reforms for India, in which the locals were to be given more powers in legislative affairs. With this, a series of correspondence started between him and Lord Minto, the then Governor General of India. A committee was appointed by the Government of India to propose a scheme of reforms. The committee submitted its report and after the endorsement of Lord Minto and Lord Morley, the Act of 1909 was passed by the British Parliament. The Act of 1909 is usually known as the Minto-Morley Reforms.

**Main features**—The main features of the Act of 1909 were as following—

- a. The number of the members of the Legislative Council at the Center was increased from 16 to 60.
- b. The number of the members other Provincial Legislatures was also increased. It was fixed as 50 in the provinces of Bengal, Madras and Bombay and for the rest of the provinces, it was 30.
- c. The members of the Legislative Councils, both at the center and in the provinces, were to be of four categories, i.e., ex-officio members (Governor General and the members of their Executive Councils), nominated official members (those nominated by the Governor General and were government officials), nominated non-official members (nominated by the Governor General but were not government officials) and elected members (elected by different categories of Indian people).
- d. The right of separate electorate was conferred upon the Muslims.
- e. At the Center, the official members were to form the majority, but in provinces, non-official members were to be in majority.
- f. The members of the Legislative Councils were permitted to discuss the budgets, suggest the amendments and even to vote on them: excluding those items that were included as non-vote items. They were also entitled to ask supplementary questions during the legislative proceedings.
- g. The Secretary of State for India was empowered to increase the number of the Executive Councils of Madras and Bombay from two to four.
- h. Two Indians were nominated to the Council of the Secretary of State for Indian Affairs.
- i. The Governor General was empowered to nominate one Indian member to his Executive Council.

### LAL, BAL, PAL

Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal formed triumvirate who, in 1907, launched the swadeshi movement stressing upon the boycott of all imported goods and the use of indigenous goods.

The last years of the nineteenth century, saw a radical sensibility emerge among some Indian intellectuals. Lal-Bal-Pal mobilized Indians across the country against the Bengal partition and the demonstrations, strikes and boycotts of English goods that began in Bengal soon spread to other regions as a sort of protest against the British Raj. The trio advocated adoption of extremist means to

get their messages across to the British, like boycotting the British manufactured goods, burning western clothes made in the mills of Manchester and Strikes and lockouts of the British owned businesses and industrial concerns.

**Lala Lajpat Rai**—Lajpat Rai was born in the Ferozepore district of Punjab in a respectable Hindu family. He studied law in Lahore and in two years passed the first examination, which qualified him to practice. While still a student, he became active in the nationalist and revivalist Arya Samaj Society of Swami Dayanand. Rai, joined the Samaj in 1882. He also taught at the Anglo-Vedic College, run by the Samaj. His fiery nationalism was largely the product of this involvement.

In 1905, Lajpat Rai went as a Congress delegate to London, where he was influenced by the Hindu revolutionary Shyamji Krishna Varma. Later, in the 1905 Congress Session, Lajpat Rai joined Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal in support of a militant program around boycott, swadeshi and 'swaraj (self-rule) for India. In 1906, he tried to play the role of mediator between the moderates and the extremists in the Congress. The following year, the Punjab Government arrested and transported him without trial to Burma. During the 1907 meeting of the Indian National Congress, when Tilak backed him for the presidency, Lajpat Rai refused to accept the office for fear of a split in the party.

Lajpat Rai lived in the United States from 1914 until 1920. He founded the Indian Home Rule League in New York and published several articles discussing Indian problems. Soon after his return to India, he was elected president of the Calcutta Session of the Congress. In 1925, he entered the Imperial Legislature as a member of the muralist group. In 1926, he broke with the leaders of the swarajist group and formed his own Nationalist Party within the legislature. In 1928, Lajpat Rai led the demonstration against the Simon Commission. However, he was injured by the police in the course of demonstration and died a few weeks later.

**Bal Gangadhar Tilak**—Tilak was a nationalist, philosopher, social reformer and a very popular leader of the Indian Independence Movement. Reverently addressed as Lokmanya, he was a scholar of Indian History, Sanskrit, Hinduism, Mathematics, Law and Astronomy. He was one of the strongest proponents for swaraj (complete independence) for India. His famous quote, "swaraj is my birthright, and shall have it" is remembered in India even today. In 1881, he established two newspapers, the Kesari published in Marathi and The Mahratta, published in English to generate political consciousness amongst the masses.

Tilak joined the Indian National Congress in the 1890s, but soon opposed its liberal-moderate approach towards the fight for self-government. At that time, the nationalist movement in India was largely confined to the upper classes. Tilak sought to popularize it amongst the common people. He organized two important festivals, Ganesh, in honor of the elephant-headed god worshiped by all Hindus, in 1893; and Shivaji, in 1895, to remember Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha state, who was the first Hindu hero to fight against Muslim power in India. The celebrations of these festivals were intended to generate nationalist sentiments and to promote the unity of people of all castes and sects.

In 1897, when bubonic plague spread from Bombay to Pune, the government became panicky. The Assistant Collector of Pune, Rand, and his associates employed severe and brutal methods to stop the spread of the disease, destroying even "clean homes." People who were not infected were carried away and in some cases, the carriers even looted the property of the affected people. When the authorities turned a blind eye to all these excesses, an angry Tilak took up the people's cause by publishing inflammatory articles in his paper, Kesari, quoting the Hindu scripture, the Bhagvat Gita, to say that no blame could be attached to anyone who killed an oppressor without any thought of reward. After the publication of these articles, on June 27, Rand and his assistant were assassinated. Tilak was charged with incitement to murder and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment. It was for the first time in



British history that intellectuals in England, including the great orientalist, Max Muller intervened on his behalf and convinced the British Government that the trial was unfair. On his release from the prison, he emerged as a national hero and adopted a new slogan, "swaraj (self-rule) is my birth right and I will have it." The trial and sentence earned him the title Lokmanya (Beloved Leader of the People).

Tilak opposed the moderate views of Gopal Krishna Gokhale. In his opposition to Moderate views, nationalist leaders like **Bipin Chandra Pal** in Bengal and Lala Lajpat Rai in Punjab supported him. In 1907, in the annual session of the Congress in Surat, trouble broke out between the moderate and the extremist factions of the party over the selection of the new president of the Congress. The party became split into the Garam Dal or the extremists, led by Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lajpat Rai, and the Naram Dal or the moderates. Tilak and Gopal Krishna Gokhale both termed this as a catastrophe for the nationalist movement.

**Bipin Chandra Pal**—A teacher, journalist, orator, writer and librarian, Bipin Chandra Pal was one of the triumvirate of three militant patriots of the Congresses—the "Pal" of Lal Bal Pal. The trio was responsible for starting the first popular upsurge against British policy of the 1905 partition of Bengal, even before the initiation of Gandhi into Indian politics. Pal was also the founder of the nationalistic journal *Bande Mataram*.

When Bal Gangadhar Tilak was arrested and the British Government started repression of the masses in 1907, he left for England, where he became associated with the India House and founded a journal titled as *Swaraj*.

Bipin Chandra Pal was also a critique of Gandhi. His criticism of Gandhi was persistent beginning with Gandhi's arrival in India. In 1921 session of the Indian National Congress, in his presidential speech, he raised a severe criticism of Gandhi's ideas as based on magic rather than logic. Addressing Gandhi, he said—"You wanted magic. I tried to give you logic. But logic is in bad odour when the popular mind is excited. You wanted *mantaram*, I am not a Rishi and cannot give *Mantaram*....I have never spoken a half-truth when I know the truth....I have never tried to lead people in faith blind-folded."

**Imprisonment and Home Rule League**—On April 30, 1908, Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose in Muzzafarpur hurled a bomb on the carriage of the then District Judge Douglass Kenford, attempting to kill him, but instead killed some women traveling in it. Chaki committed suicide when caught but Bose was tried and awarded death sentence. The British papers raised voice for retribution and even more vehemently when police raids discovered a cache of arms at Calcutta. However, Tilak, in his paper *Kesari* defended the revolutionaries and called for immediate *swaraj*. He was soon arrested, tried for sedition and convicted. In order to prevent a national uprising, the judgment was delivered at midnight and Tilak was deported to Mandalay, Burma (present Myanmar, which was also under the British control), where he was imprisoned from 1908 to 1914.

By the time Tilak completed his six-year prison term in 1916, he had become the undisputed leader of the Indians. On his release, Tilak joined with his fellow nationalists and the Indian National Congress. He also established the All India Home Rule League in 1916-18, supported by Annie Beasant and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. In 1916, he signed the historic Lucknow Pact, a Hindu-Muslim accord, with Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the future founder of Pakistan.

In 1918, Tilak visited England as president of the Indian Home Rule League and formed relationship with the leaders of the Labour Party. When Tilak returned home in 1919, in order to attend the meeting of the Congress at Amritsar, his approach had changed in the sense that he opposed Gandhi's policy of boycotting the elections to the legislative councils established by the Montague-Chelmsford reforms. Tilak was in support of the policy of "responsive cooperation" which introduced Indian participation in regional government to some extent. Tilak also launched a movement, visiting village to village, making people aware of the aims of the Home Rule League. He died on August 1, 1920. Paying homage, Mahatma Gandhi called him "the Maker of Modern India" and Jawaharlal Nehru called him, "the Father of the Indian Revolution."

**Revolutionary movements for independence**—The nationalist people thinking in terms of armed revolution against the ruling British formed themselves in revolutionary groups. The fundamental philosophy of the revolutionary groups generated largely against the partition of Bengal in 1905. The revolutionaries more often than not considered Gandhi a hero, though their manner of thinking and working was moderately different.

The Indian revolutionary underground began gathering thrust through the first decade of 1900s, with groups arising in Maharashtra, Bengal, Orissa; Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab and the then Madras Presidency including what is now called South India. More groups were spread around India. Predominantly notable movements arose in Bengal, especially around the partition of Bengal in 1905, and in Punjab. In the case of Bengal, it was the educated, intelligent and dedicated youth of the urban middle class Bhadrak community that came to form the "Classic" Indian revolutionary, while Punjab had an immense base in the rural and military society of the region.

**Anushilan Samiti**—Anushilan Samiti was established by Pramath Nath Mitra in Kolkata in 1902 which became one of the most organized revolutionary associations, especially in the Eastern Bengal where the Dhaka Anushilan Samiti had several branches and carried out major activities.

**Jugantar**—Jugantar was initially formed by an inner circle of the Kolkata Anushilan Samiti. In the 1920s, the Kolkata group supported Gandhi in the Non-Cooperation Movement and many of the leaders held high posts in Congress. The headquarters of Jugantar was located at Balthazar Street, Kolkata, Barin Ghosh and Bagha Jatin was the top leader in Jugantar. Bagha Jatin was also arrested, along with several other leaders, in connection with the Howrah conspiracy case.

Jugantar, along with other revolutionary groups and aided by Indians abroad, planned an armed revolt against the British rulers during the First World War. This plan came to be known as the Indo-German Plot but it did not materialize.

After the First World War, Jugantar supported Gandhi in the Non-Cooperation Movement. However, the group continued its revolutionary activities, a notable event being the Chittagong armoury raid.

**Bengal Volunteers**—Bengal Volunteers was a group formed by Subhash Chandra Bose during the Kolkata Session of Indian National Congress in 1928, to help the organisation of the session. However, afterwards the group turned into a revolutionary group with notable revolutionaries like Benoy, Badal and Dinesh being its members.

**Hindustan Republican Association**—Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) was established in October 1924 in Kanpur by revolutionaries like Ramprasad Bismil, Jogesh Chatterjee, Chandrashekhar Azad, Yogendra Shukla and Sachindranath Sanyal. The aim of the party was to organize armed revolution to end the colonial rule and establish a Federal Republic of the United States of India. The Kakori train robbery was a notable act of mutiny by this group. The Kakori case led to the hanging of Ashfaqullah Khan, Ramprasad, Bismil, Roshan Singh, Rajendra Lahiri which was a major set-back for the group.

However, the group was soon reorganized under the leadership of Chandrashekhar Azad and with members like Bhagat Singh, Bhagwati Charan Vohra and Sukhdev. The group was now christened Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). In Lahore on 17 December 1928, Bhagat Singh, Azad and Rajguru assassinated Saunders, a police official involved in deadly lathi-charge on Lala Lajpat Rai. Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw a bomb inside the Central Legislative Assembly. In the Assembly Bomb Case trial, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were hanged in March 1931.

**Revolutionary Movements in South India**—The uprising against the British was also seen at Halagali (Mudhol taluk of Bagalkot district). The prince of Mudhol, Ghorpade had accepted British supremacy. Nevertheless, the Bedas (hunters), a marshal community, was seething with dissatisfaction under the new dispensation. The British proclaimed the Disarming Act of 1857 whereby men possessing firearms had to register them and secure a license before November 10, 1857. Babaji Nimbalkar, a soldier thrown out of job from Satara Court, advised these people not to lose their hereditary right to own arms and rise in revolt against the British.

**India House**—The India House existed in London between 1905 and 1910. Initially begun by Shyamji Krishna Varma as a residence in Highgate, in North London, for Indian students to promote nationalist views and work, the House became a centre for intellectual political activities. The House soon developed into an organisation that became a meeting ground for radical nationalists among Indian students in Britain at the time and one of the most prominent centres for revolutionary Indian nationalism outside India.

The Indian Sociologist published by the House was a noted platform for anti-colonial work and was banned in India as "seditious literature". The India House was the beginnings of a number of noted Indian revolutionaries and nationalists, most famously VD Savarkar, as well as others like VN Chatterjee, Lala Hardayal, VVS Iyer, MPT Acharya who were, over the next decades, key members of revolutionary activities in India.

**Ghadar Party**—Ghadar party was a predominantly Sikh organization that started operating abroad in 1913, aiming to uproot the British rule in India. The party collaborated with revolutionaries inside India and helped them get arms and ammunition. Lala Hardayal was a prominent leader of the party. The Komagata Maru incident in 1914 inspired several thousand Indians residing in the USA to sell their businesses and rush home in order to participate in the anti-British activities in India. The party had active members in India, Mexico, Japan, China, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Malaya, Indo-China and Eastern and Southern Africa. During World War I, it was amongst the chief participants of the Hindu German Conspiracy.

**Berlin Committee** – The "Berlin Committee for Indian Independence" was established in 1915 by Virendra Nath Chattopadhyaya, including Bhupendra Nath Dutt and Lala Hardayal under Zimmerman Plan with the full backing of German Foreign Office. Their objective was to mobilize Indian revolutionaries abroad; incite rebellion among Indian troops stationed abroad; send volunteers and arms to India and to organize an armed invasion of British India to liberate the country.

**IMPORTANT QUESTIONS**

- 1) Discuss the rise of Nationalism in India with the causes of its rise. Also mention the impact of western liberal thoughts in the rise of nationalism in India.
- 2) Write a brief note on establishment of Indian National Congress.
- 3) Write a brief history of India with reference to Lrd Lytton, Lord Ripon and Lord Curzon.

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**UNIT-4**  
**NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT**

1. Role of Mahatma Gandhi in National Movement and some important movements.
2. Non-Cooperation Movement
3. Civil Disobedience Movement
4. Khilafat Movement
5. Quit India Movement
6. Partition of India and Indian Independence.

**ALL INDIA MUSLIM LEAGUE**

The All India Muslim League was founded by the All India Muhammadan Educational Conference at Dhaka (now Bangladesh), in 1906, in the context of the circumstances that were generated over the partition of Bengal in 1905. Being a political party to secure the interests of the Muslim diaspora in British India, the Muslim League played a decisive role during the 1940s in the Indian independence movement and developed into the driving force behind the creation of Pakistan in the Indian subcontinent. But when Muslim League passed Pakistan resolution based on Two Nation theory of Jinnah, Nationalist leaders like Maulana Azad and others stood against it. All-India Jamhur Muslim League was formed parallel to Muslim League with Raja of Mahmoodabad (a close associate of Jinnah) as its president and Dr. Maghfoor Ahmad Ajazi its general secretary.

In 1906, Muhammad Ali Jinnah joined the Indian National Congress, which was the largest Indian political organization. Like most of the Congress at the time, Jinnah did not favour outright independence, considering British influences on education, law, culture and industry as beneficial to India. Jinnah became a member on the sixty-member Imperial Legislative Council. The council had no real power or authority, and included a large number of un-elected pro-Raj loyalists and Europeans. Nevertheless, Jinnah was instrumental in the passing of the *Child Marriages Restraint Act*, the legitimization of the Muslim waqf (religious endowments) and was appointed to the Sandhurst committee, which helped establish the Indian Military Academy at Dehra Dun.<sup>[26]</sup> During the First World War, Jinnah joined other Indian moderates in supporting the British war effort, hoping that Indians would be rewarded with political freedoms.

**FIRST WORLD WAR**

The First World War began with an unprecedented outpouring of love and goodwill towards the United Kingdom from within the mainstream political leadership, contrary to initial British fears of an Indian revolt. India contributed massively to the British war effort by providing men and resources. About 1.3 million Indian soldiers and labourers served in Europe, Africa and the Middle East, while both the Indian government and the princes sent large supplies of food, money and ammunition. However, Bengal and Punjab remained hotbeds of anti colonial activities. Nationalism in Bengal, increasingly closely linked with the unrests in Punjab, was significant enough to nearly paralyse the regional administration.

None of the overseas conspiracies had significant impact on Indians inside India, and there were no major mutinies or violent outbursts. However, they did lead to profound fears of insurrection among British officials, preparing them to use extreme force to frighten the Indians into submission.

**Nationalist response to war**

In the aftermath of the First World War, high casualty rates, soaring inflation compounded by heavy taxation, a widespread influenza epidemic and the disruption of trade during the war escalated human suffering in India.

The pre-war nationalist movement revived as moderate and extremist groups within the Congress submerged their differences in order to stand as a unified front. They argued their enormous services to the British Empire during the war demanded a reward, and demonstrated the Indian capacity for self-rule. In 1916, the Congress succeeded in forging the Lucknow Pact, a temporary alliance with the Muslim League over the issues of devolution of political power and the future of Islam in the region.

### **British reforms**

The British themselves adopted a "carrot and stick" approach in recognition of India's support during the war and in response to renewed nationalist demands. In August 1917, Edwin Montagu, the secretary of state for India, made the historic announcement in Parliament that the British policy for India was "increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." The means of achieving the proposed measure were later enshrined in the Government of India Act 1919, which introduced the principle of a dual mode of administration, or diarchy, in which both elected Indian legislators and appointed British officials shared power. The act also expanded the central and provincial legislatures and widened the franchise considerably. Diarchy set in motion certain real changes at the provincial level: a number of non-controversial or "transferred" portfolios, such as agriculture, local government, health, education, and public works, were handed over to Indians, while more sensitive matters such as finance, taxation, and maintaining law and order were retained by the provincial British administrators.

### **GANDHI ARRIVES IN INDIA**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (Mahatma Gandhi) had been a prominent leader of the Indian nationalist movement in South Africa, and had been a vocal opponent of basic discrimination and abusive labour treatment as well as suppressive police control such as the Rowlatt Acts. During these protests, Gandhiji had perfected the concept of *satyagraha*, which had been inspired by the philosophy of Baba Ram Singh (famous for leading the Kuka Movement in the Punjab in 1872). In January 1914 (well before the First World War began) Gandhiji was successful. The hated legislation against Indians was repealed and all Indian political prisoners were released by General Jan Smuts. What Gandhi had done that nobody had accomplished before, was getting the people of India to unite against the British. The tactics he used were all non-violent as he preached and were usually boycotting, protest marches and fasts.

Gandhi returned to India, on 9 January 1915 and initially entered the political fray not with calls for a nation-state, but in support of the unified commerce-oriented territory that the Congress Party had been asking for. Gandhi believed that the industrial development and educational development that the Europeans had brought with them were required to alleviate many of India's problems. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, a veteran Congressman and Indian leader, became Gandhi's mentor. Gandhi's ideas and strategies of non-violent civil disobedience initially appeared impractical to some Indians and Congressmen. In Gandhi's own words, "civil disobedience is civil breach of unmoral statutory enactments." It had to be carried out non-violently by withdrawing cooperation with the corrupt state. Gandhi's ability to inspire millions of common people became clear when he used *satyagraha* during the anti-Rowlatt Act protests in Punjab. Gandhi had great respect for Lokmanya Tilak. His programmes were all inspired by Tilak's "Chatusutri" programme.

Gandhi's vision would soon bring millions of regular Indians into the movement, transforming it from an elitist struggle to a national one. The nationalist cause was expanded to include the interests and industries that formed the economy of common Indians. For example, in Champaran, Bihar, Gandhi championed the plight of desperately poor sharecroppers and landless farmers who were being forced to pay oppressive taxes and grow cash crops at the expense of the subsistence crops which formed their food supply. The profits from the crops they grew were insufficient to provide for their sustenance.

The positive impact of reform was seriously undermined in 1919 by the Rowlatt Act, named after the recommendations made the previous year to the Imperial Legislative Council by the Rowlatt Commission. The Rowlatt Act vested the Viceroy's government with extraordinary powers to quell sedition by silencing the press, detaining the political activists without trial, and arresting any individuals suspected of sedition or treason without a warrant. In protest, a nationwide cessation of work (*hartal*) was called, marking the beginning of widespread, although not nationwide, popular discontent.

The agitation unleashed by the acts led to British attacks on demonstrators, culminating on 13 April 1919, in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre (also known as the Amritsar Massacre) in Amritsar, Punjab. The British military commander, Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer, blocked the main, and only entrance-cum-exit, and ordered his soldiers to fire into an unarmed and unsuspecting crowd of some 15,000 men, women and children. They had assembled peacefully at Jallianwala Bagh, a walled courtyard, but Dyer had wanted to execute the imposed ban on all meetings and proposed to teach all Indians a lesson the harsher way. A total of 1,651 rounds were fired, killing 379 people (as according to an official British commission; Indian officials' estimates ranged as high as 1,499 and wounding 1,137 in the massacre. Dyer was forced to retire but was hailed as a hero in Britain, demonstrating to Indian nationalists that the Empire was beholden to public opinion in Britain, but not in India. The episode dissolved wartime hopes of home rule and goodwill and opened a rift that could not be bridged short of complete independence.

### **ROLE OF MAHATMA GANDHI IN NATIONAL MOVEMENT**

The third and last phase of the national movement began in 1919 when the era of popular mass movement was initiated. During the First World War, the Allies had declared that the War was being fought in defence of democracy and the right of nations to self-determination. But after their victory they showed little willingness to end colonial rule. While the British Government made half-hearted attempt at constitutional reform, it also made it clear that it had no intention to part with political power. Instead of democratic progress had come further restrictions of civil liberties. The Rowlatt Act came like a sudden blow. Unrest spread in the country and a powerful agitation against the Act arose. During this agitation a new leader, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, took command of the nationalist movement.

Gandhiji was born in a well to do Hindu family of **Porbander** in Gujarat on October 2, **1869**. He went to England for studies in 1881 and qualified for bar. He returned to India in 1891 and began his practice in Bombay High Court. In 1893 he went to South Africa. He stayed there up to 1914 with two breaks in between. He had evolved in his struggle against racialism [apartheid] in South Africa a new form of struggle- non cooperation- and a new technique of struggle- satyagraha- which could be practiced against the British in India. He would accept sufferings willingly in the course of struggle against the wrong-doer. He would never bow down before evil whatever the consequences. In Gandhi's eyes non-violence was not a weapon of the weak and the cowardly. Only the strong and brave could practise it.

Another important aspect of Gandhi's outlook was that he would not separate thought and practice, belief and action. Gandhiji had an immense faith in the capacity of the common people to fight. Gandhiji returned to India in 1915 at the age of 46. In 1916 he founded the Sabarmathi Ashram at Ahmedabad where his friends and followers were to learn and practise the ideas of truth and non-violence. He also set out to experiment with his new method of struggle.

### **Champaran Satyagraha [1917]**

Gandhiji's first experience in satyagraha came in 1917 in Champaran, a district in Bihar. The peasantry on the indigo plantations was excessively oppressed by the European planters. They were compelled to grow indigo on at least 3\20<sup>th</sup> of their land and to sell it at prices fixed by the planters.

Having heard of Gandhi's campaigns in South Africa, several peasants of Champaran invited him to come and help them. Gandhiji reached Champaran in 1917 and began to conduct a detailed inquiry into the conditions of the peasantry. The district officials ordered him to leave Champaran, but he defied the order and was willing to face trial and imprisonment. This forced the Government to cancel its earlier order and to appoint a committee of inquiry on which Gandhiji served as a member. Ultimately the disabilities from which the peasantry was suffering were reduced and Gandhiji had won his first battle of civil obedience in India.

#### **Ahmedabad Mill Strike[1918]**

In 1918, Gandhiji intervened in a dispute between the workers and mill-owners of Ahmedabad. He advised the workers to go on strike and to demand a 35% increase in wages. He insisted that the workers should not use violence against the mill-owners during the strike. He undertook a fast unto death to strengthen the workers resolve to continue the strike. His fast put pressure on the mill-owners who relented on the fourth day and agreed to give the workers a 35% increase in wages.

#### **Kheda Peasant Struggle[1918]**

In 1918 crops failed in the Kheda district in Gujarat but the government refused to reduce land revenue and insisted on its full collection. Gandhiji supported the peasants and advised them to withhold payment of revenue till their demand for its remission was met. The struggle was withdrawn when it was learnt that the government had issued instructions that revenue should be recovered only from those peasants who could afford to pay. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel became Gandhiji's follower during this struggle.

These experiences brought Gandhiji in close contact with the masses whose interests he actively exposed all his life. In time he became the symbol of poor India, nationalist India and rebellious India. Three causes were very dear to Gandhiji's among the masses. Thousands of peasants in U.P and Bengal responded to the call of non-co-operation. In the Punjab the Sikhs were leading a non-violent movement known as **Akali movement**, to remove corrupt mahants from the Gurudwaras heart. The first was Hindu-Muslim unity, the second, the fight against untouchability, and the third, the raising of the social status of women in the country.

**The Government of India Act, 1919**—This was an Act of the Parliament of the United Kingdom which was enacted on the basis of the reforms recommended in Montague-Chelmsford Report. It was passed to expand participation of the natives in the Government of India. The Act embodied the reforms recommended in the report of the Secretary of State for India, Sir Edwin Montague and the Viceroy Lord Chelmsford.

In World War I, the British claimed that they stood for the protection of democracy around the world. Thus, the Indians, who fought for them in this war, demanded that democracy should also be introduced in their country. In his famous August Declaration presented before the House of Commons on August 20, 1917, Montague, the Secretary of State for Indian Affairs said that in order to satisfy the local demands, his government was interested in giving more representation to the natives in India. New reforms had to be introduced in the country to meet this objective. He came to India and stayed here for six months. During this period, he held meetings with different government and non-government people. Finally, in cooperation with the Governor General Lord Chelmsford, Montague presented a report on the constitutional reforms for India in 1918. The report was discussed and approved by the British Parliament and then became the Government of India Act of 1919. This Act is also commonly known as Montague-Chelmsford Reforms.

**Main features of the Act**—We may summarize the main features of the Act as following—

- a. The Council of the Secretary of State was to comprise of eight to twelve people. Three of them had to be Indian, and at least half of them had to have spent at least ten years in India.



- b. The Secretary of State was supposed to follow the advice of his council.
- c. Part of the expenses of the office of the Secretary of State was to be met by the British Government.
- d. The Secretary of State was not allowed to interfere in administrative matters of the provinces concerning the 'Transferred Subjects' and also in the matters on which Governor General and his Legislature were in agreement.
- e. The Governor General had the power to nominate as many members to his Executive Council as he wanted.
- f. The members appointed to the Executive Council were to have served in India for at least 10 years.
- g. The Central Legislature was to consist of two Houses i.e. the Council of the State (Upper House) and the Legislative Assembly (Lower House).
- h. The council of the State was to consist of 60 members out of which 33 were to be elected and 27 nominated by the Governor General.
- i. The Legislative Assembly was to consist of 144 members out of which 103 were to be elected and 41 to be nominated by the Governor General.
- j. The franchise was limited.
- k. The tenure of the Upper house was five years and of the Lower House was three years.
- l. Both the Houses had equal legislative powers. In case of a tie, the Governor General was to call a joint meeting where the matter was to be decided by majority vote.
- m. The Executive Council was not responsible to the Legislature and the Governor General had the right to refuse its advice.
- n. The Provincial Legislatures were supposed to be unicameral.
- o. Seventy percent members of the Provincial Legislative Councils were to be elected and thirty percent were to be nominated.
- p. The Governors were given 'Instrument of Instructions' which guide them in carrying out their administrative affairs.
- q. The System of Dyarchy was introduced in the provinces.
- r. Besides Muslims, other minorities including Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Christians and Europeans were also given the right of separate electorate.
- s. New reforms were to be introduced after ten years.

The Montague-Chelmsford reforms were not accepted by most quarters in India as they fell far short of the Indian natives' expectations. The Indian National Congress was unhappy at these reforms and termed them as 'disappointing.' A special session was held in Mumbai under Hasan Imam and the reforms were condemned. However, leaders such as Surendranath Banerjee were inclined to accept the reforms, so they left the Congress and formed the Indian Liberal Federation, which played a minor role in subsequent affairs.

### **The Rowlatt Act[1919]**

While trying to appease the Indians, the Government of India was ready with repression. The Government decided to arm itself with more far-reaching powers, which went against the accepted principles of rule of law, to be able to suppress those nationalists who would refuse to be satisfied with the reforms. In March 1919, it passed the Rowlatt Act. This Act authorized the Government to imprison any person without trial. The Act would enable the Government to suspend the right of Habeas Corpus which had been the foundation of civil liberties in Britain.

### **Satyagraha Against the Rowlatt Act**

Gandhiji was aroused by the Rowlatt Act. In February 1919 he founded the **Satyagraha Sabha**. Its members took a pledge to disobey the Act and thus to court arrest. Here was new method of struggle. Big meetings and demonstrations, refusal to cooperate with the government, boycott of foreign cloth and schools or individual acts of terrorism were the only forms of political work known to the

nationalists. Satyagraha immediately raised the movement to a higher level. Nationalists could now act, instead of merely agitating and giving only verbal expression to their dissatisfaction and anger.

Gandhiji asked the nationalist workers to go to the villages. That is where India lives, he said. He increasingly turned the face of nationalism towards the common man and the symbol of this transformation was to be Khadi, which soon became the uniform of the nationalists. The people responded magnificently to Gandhi's call. March and April 1919 witnessed a remarkable political awakening in India. There were hartals, strikes, and demonstrations. The entire country was electrified.

### **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre[1919]**

The Government was determined to suppress the mass agitation. Gandhiji gave a call for a mighty hartal on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1919. The people responded with unprecedented enthusiasm. The government decided to meet the popular protest with repression, particularly in the Punjab. At this time was perpetrated one of the worst crimes in modern history.

A large but unarmed crowd had gathered on 13 April 1919 at Amritsar in the Jallianwala Bagh, to protest the arrest of their popular leaders, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal. General Dyer, the military commander of Amritsar decided to terrorise the people of Amritsar into complete submission. Jallianwala Bagh was a large open space which was enclosed on three sides by buildings and had only one exit. He surrounded the Bagh with his army unit, closed the exit with his troops, and then ordered his men to shoot into the trapped crowd with rifles and machine-guns. Thousands were killed and wounded. After this massacre, martial law was proclaimed throughout the Punjab and the people were submitted to the most uncivilized atrocities. Popular shock was expressed by Rabindranath Tagore who renounced his knighthood in protest.

### **Khilafat Movement:**

The last year of the second decade of twentieth century found India highly discontented. The Rowlatt Act, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and martial law in Punjab. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, announced towards the end of 1919, satisfied few. The Indian Muslims were incensed when they discovered that their loyalty had been purchased during the War by assurances of generous treatment of Turkey after the War - a promise British statesman had no intention of fulfilling. Even those who were willing to treat the happenings at Jallianwala Bagh and other places in Punjab as aberrations that would soon be 'corrected', were disillusioned when they discovered that the Hunter Committee appointed by the Government to enquire the Punjab disturbances was an eye wash and that the House of Lords had voted in favor of General Dyer's action.

By the end of the first quarter of 1920, all the excuses in favor of the British Government were fast running out. The Khilafat leaders were told quite clearly that they should not expect anything more and the Treaty of Sevres signed with Turkey in May 1920 made it amply clear that the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire was complete. In February 1920, he suggested to the Khilafat committee that it adopt a programme of non-violent non-cooperation to protest the Government's behaviour. On 9 June 1920, the Khilafat committee at Allahabad unanimously accepted the suggestion of non-cooperation and asked Gandhiji to lead the movement.

The movement was launched formally on 1 August 1920, after the expiry of the notice that Gandhiji had given to the Viceroy in his letter of 22nd June, in which he had asserted the right recognized 'From time immemorial of the subject to refuse to assist a ruler who misrules.' Lokamanya Tilak passed away in the early hours of 1 August; and the day of mourning and launching of the movement merged as people all over the country observed hartal and took out processions. Many kept a fast and offered prayers.

The Congress met in September at Calcutta and accepted 'non-cooperation as its own. The main-opposition, led by C.R. Das, was to the boycott of legislative councils elections to which were to be held

very soon. But even those who disagreed with the idea of boycott accepted the Congress discipline and withdrew from the elections. The voters, too, largely stayed away.

### **The Non-Cooperation Movement**

The first satyagraha movement urged the use of Khadi and Indian goods as substitutes for those shipped from Britain. It also urged people to boycott British educational institutions and law courts; resign from government employment; refuse to pay taxes; and abandon British titles and honours. Although this came too late to influence the framing of the new Government of India Act of 1919, the movement enjoyed widespread popular support and the consequent unparalleled magnitude of disorder presented a serious challenge to foreign rule. However, Gandhi called off the movement following the Chauri Chaura incident, which saw the killing of twenty-two policemen by the irritated mob.

The Congress met in a special session in September 1920 at Calcutta. The Congress supported Gandhi's plan for non-cooperation with the government till the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs were removed and swaraj was established. The people were asked to boycott government educational institutions, law courts and legislatures, to give up foreign cloth and to practise hand-spinning and hand-weaving for producing khadi. Congressmen immediately withdrew from elections, and the voters too largely boycotted them.

The non co-operation resolution was endorsed in the Nagpur Session of the Congress held in Dec 1920. The annual session of the Congress was held at Nagpur in December 1920. The Nagpur session also made changes in the constitution of the Congress. Provincial Congress Committees were reorganized on the basis of linguistic areas. The Congress was now to be led by a Working Committee of 15 members. The Congress now changed its character. It became the leader of the masses in their national struggle for freedom from foreign rule. Moreover, Hindus and Muslims were marching shoulder to shoulder.

The years 1921 and 1922 were to witness an unprecedented movement of the Indians. Thousands of students left schools and colleges and joined national schools and colleges. It was at this time that the Jamia Millia Islamia [National Muslim University] of Aligarh, the Bihar Vidyapith, the Kashi Vidyapith and the Gujarat Vidyapith came into existence. The Jamia Millia later shifted to Delhi. Hundreds of lawyers including Chittaranjan Das, popularly known as Deshabandhu, gave up their legal practice. The Tilak Swaraj Fund was started to finance the Non Co-operation movement and within six months over a crore of rupees were subscribed. Women showed great enthusiasm and freely offered their jewellery. Boycott of foreign cloth were organized all over the land. Huge bonfires of foreign cloth were organized all over the land. Khadi soon became the symbol of freedom.

The Government took recourse to repression. The activities of the Congress and Khilafat workers were declared illegal. By the end of 1921 all important nationalist leaders, except Gandhiji, were behind bars. In November 1921 huge demonstrations greeted the Prince of Wales, heir to the British throne, during his tour of India. In Bombay government tried to suppress the demonstration killing 53 persons.

The movement had spread deep, their places of worship. On 1<sup>st</sup> February 1922, Mahatma Gandhi announced that he would start mass civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes, unless within seven days the political prisoners were released and the Press freed from government control.

### **The Chauri-Chaura Incident [1922]**

On 5<sup>th</sup> February 1922 a Congress procession of 3000 peasants at Chauri-Chaura, a village in U.P. was fired upon by the police. The angry crowd attacked and burnt the police station causing the death of 22 policemen. Other incidents of violence by crowds had occurred earlier in different parts of the country. Gandhiji was convinced that the nationalist workers had not yet properly understood nor learned the

practice of non-violence without which, he was convinced, civil disobedience could not be a success. He believed that the British would be able to easily crush a violent movement, for people had not yet built up enough strength to resist massive government repression. He therefore decided to suspend the non-cooperation movement.

The Congress Working Committee met at **Bardoli** on 12 February passed a resolution stopping all activities which would lead to breaking of laws. It urged the Congressmen to donate their time to the constructive programme. The Government arrested Mahatma Gandhi and charged him with spreading disaffection against the government.

Very soon the Khilafat question also lost relevance. The people of Turkey rose under the leadership of Mustafa Kamal Pasha and deprived sultan of his political power. Mustafa Kamal Pasha abolished the Caliphate and separated the state from religion. He nationalized education, granted women extensive rights, introduced legal codes based on European models and took steps to introduce modern industries. All these steps broke the back of the Khilafat agitation.

The Non Co-operation movement had far reaching results. Nationalist movement had now reached the remotest corners of the land. Millions of peasants, artisans and urban poor had been brought into the national movement. Women had been drawn into the movement. It is this politicization of millions of men and women that imparted a revolutionary character to the Indian national movement.

### **SIMON COMMISSION**

The Government of India Act of 1919 was essentially transitional in character. Under Section 84 of the said Act, a Statutory Commission was to be appointed at the end of ten years, to determine the next stage in the realization of self-rule in India. The British Government appointed a Commission under Sir John Simon in November 1927. The Commission, which had no Indian members, was being sent to investigate India's constitutional problems and make recommendations to the government on the future Constitution of India.

The Congress decided to boycott the Simon Commission and challenged Lord Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India, to produce a constitution acceptable to the various elements in India. There was a clear split in the Muslim League. Sir Muhammad Shafi, who wanted to cooperate with the Commission, decided to convene a Muslim League session in Lahore in December 1927.

The Government of India Act of 1919 had introduced the system of dyarchy to govern the provinces of British India. However, the Indian public clamoured for revision of the difficult dyarchy form of government and the Government of India Act 1919 itself stated that a Commission would be appointed after 10 years to investigate the progress of the governance scheme and suggest new steps for reform. In the late 1920s, the Conservative Government then in power in Britain feared imminent electoral defeat at the hands of the Labour Party and also feared the effects of the consequent transference of control of India to such an "inexperienced" body. Hence, it appointed seven MPs (including Chairman Simon) to constitute the Commission that had been promised in 1919 that would look into the state of Indian constitutional affairs.

**Fate of the Commission—**The people of the Indian sub-continent were outraged and insulted, as the Simon Commission, which was to determine the future of India, did not include a single Indian member in it. The Indian National Congress; at its December 1927 meeting in Chennai, resolved to boycott the Commission and challenge Lord Birkenhead, the Secretary of State for India, to draft a constitution that would be acceptable to the Indian populace. A faction of the Muslim League, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, also decided to boycott the Commission.

An All-India Committee for Cooperation with the Simon Commission was established by the Council of India and by selection by the Viceroy Lord Irwin. The members of the committee were Sir C Sankaran



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Nair (Chairman), Sir Arthur Froom, Rajah Nawab Ali Khan, Sardar Shivdev Singh Uberoi, Nawab Sir Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Sir Hari Singh Gour, Sir Abdullah Al-Mamun Suhrawardy, Kikabhai Premchand and Rao Bahadur MC Rajah.

In Burma (Myanmar), which was included in the terms of reference of the Simon Commission, there was strong suspicion either that Burma's un-popular union with India would continue, or that the constitution recommended for Burma by the Simon Commission would be less generous than that chosen for India; these suspicions resulted in tension and violence in Burma leading to the rebellion of Soya San.

**Large Scale Protest**—Almost immediately with its arrival in Mumbai on February 3, 1928, the Simon Commission was confronted by throngs of protestors. The entire country observed a hartal (strike), and many people turned out to greet the Commission with black flags. Similar protests occurred in every major Indian city that the seven British MPs visited.

However, one protest against the Simon Commission would gain infamy above all the others. On October 30, 1928, the Simon Commission arrived in Lahore where, as with the rest of the country, its arrival was met with massive number of protestors. The Lahore protest was led by Indian nationalist Lala Lajpat Rai, who had moved a resolution against the Commission in the Legislative Assembly of Punjab in February 1928. In order to make way for the Commission, the local police force began beating protestors with their lathis (sticks). The police were particularly brutal towards Lala Lajpat Rai, who later that day declared, "The blows which fell on me today are the last nails in the coffin of British imperialism." On November 17, Lajpat Rai died of his injuries on his head.

**Report of the Commission**—The Commission published its 17-volume report in 1930. It proposed the abolition of dyarchy and the establishment of representative government in the provinces. It also recommended that separate communal electorates be retained, but only until tensions between Hindus and Muslims had died down.

Noting that educated Indians opposed the Commission and also that communal tensions had increased instead of decreased, the British Government opted for another method of dealing with the constitutional issues of India. Before the publication of the report, the British Government stated that Indian opinion would henceforth be taken into account and that the natural outcome of the constitutional process would be dominion status for India.

**The outcome of the Simon Commission**—The outcome of the Simon Commission was the Government of India Act 1935, which established representative government at the provincial level in India and is the basis of many parts of the Indian Constitution. In 1937, the first elections were held in the provinces, resulting in Congress Governments being returned in almost all provinces. In September 1928, Motilal Nehru presented his Nehru Report to counter British charges that Indians could not find a constitutional consensus among themselves, advocating that India be given dominion status of complete internal self-government

**Boycott of the Simon Commission**

The Simon Commission, formed in November 1927 by the British Government to prepare and finalize a constitution for India and consisting of members of the British Parliament only was boycotted by all segments of the Indian social and political parties as an 'All-White Commission'.

The resistance to the Simon Commission in Bengal was amazing. In protest against the Commission, a ban was observed on 3 February 1928 in different parts of the province. Massive protests were held in Calcutta on 19 February 1928, the day of Simon's arrival in the city. On 1 March 1928, meetings were

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held simultaneously in all thirty-two wards of Calcutta urging people to replenish the movement to boycott the British goods.

Subsequent to the refusal of the recommendations of the Simon Commission by the Indians, an All-Party Conference was held at Bombay in May 1928 under the president ship of Dr MA Ansari. The Conference appointed a drafting committee under Motilal Nehru to draw up a Constitution for India.

All segments of Indian society barring a section of Indian Muslims approved the Nehru Report. In December 1928, the Indian National Congress pressed the British Government to accept the Nehru Report as a whole. The Calcutta Session of the Indian Congress, in December 1928, virtually gave an ultimatum to the British Government that if dominion status was not approved by December 1929, a nationwide Civil Disobedience Movement would be commenced. The British Government, however, affirmed in May 1929 that India would get dominion status within the empire very soon.

The national Congress decided to boycott the Commission. The Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha decided to support the Congress decision. On 3 February 1922, the day the Commission reached Bombay, an all India hartal was organized. Wherever the Commission went, it was greeted with hartals and black flag demonstrations under the slogan Simon Go Back. The government used brutal suppression and police attacks to break the popular opposition. Lala Lajpat Rai succumbed to the injuries which he received in the police lathi charge at Lahore.

### **Nehru Report**

After the failure of Simon Commission, there was no option before the British Government, but to ask the Indian people to outline a constitution for themselves. The British Government was aware of the fact that the Congress and Muslim League were the two main parties and that they both had vital differences of opinion. Birkenhead, the Secretary of State for Indian Affairs asked the Indian politicians to draw a draft of the forthcoming Act on which both the Hindus and the Muslims could concur.

The Indian leaders accepted the challenge and for this reason, an All Parties Conference was held at Delhi in January 1928. More than a hundred delegates of almost all the parties of the sub-continent assembled and participated in the conference. Unfortunately, the leaders were not able to come to any conclusion. The biggest barrier was the issue of the rights of minorities.

The second meeting of the All Parties Conference was held in March 1928, but the leaders still had their variations and again could not reach a conclusion. The only work done in this conference was the appointment of two sub-committees. Nevertheless, due to the mutual differences between the Hindus and the Muslims, the committees failed to produce any optimistic result.

When the All Parties Conference met for the third time in Bombay on May 19, 1928, there was hardly any hope of an agreed constitution. It was then decided that a small committee should be appointed to work out the details of the constitution. Besides Motilal Nehru, the head of this committee, there were nine other members including two Muslims, Syed Ali Imam and Shoaib Qureshi.

The committee worked for three months at Allahabad and its memorandum was called the "Nehru Report". The Nehru Report recommended that a Declaration of Rights should be inserted in the constitution assuring the fullest liberty of conscience and religion.

**Recommendations of the report**—The Nehru Report advanced the following recommendations—

- a. India should be given the status of a dominion.
- b. There should be federal form of government with residuary powers vested in the center.
- c. India should have a parliamentary form of government headed by a Prime Minister and six ministers appointed by the Governor General.

- d. There should be bi-cameral legislature.
- e. There should be no separate electorate for any community.
- f. The system of weight age for minorities was as bad as that of separate electorates.
- g. The reservation of Muslim seats could be possible in the provinces where Muslim population was at least ten percent, but this was to be in strict proportion to the size of the community.
- h. The Muslims should enjoy one-fourth representation in the Central Legislature.
- i. The Sindh should be separated from Bombay only if the committee certified that it was financially self-sufficient.
- j. The N W IT should be given full provincial status.
- k. A new Kanarese-speaking province Kamatic should be established in South India.
- l. The Hindi should be made the official language of India.

**Fate of the report**—The Nehru Committee's greatest blow was the rejection of separate electorates. If the report had taken into account the Delhi Proposals, the Muslims might have accepted it. However, the Nehru Committee did not consider the Delhi Proposals at all while preparing the report. The Muslims were asking for one-third representation in the center while Nehru Committee gave them only one-fourth representation. It is true that two demands of Muslims were considered in the Nehru Report, but both of them were incomplete. It was said that the Sindh should be separated from Bombay but the condition of self-economy was also put forward. It demanded constitutional reforms in NWFP but the Baluchistan was overlooked in the report.

There were two Muslim members in the Nehru Committee; Syed Ali Imam could attend only one meeting due to his illness and Shoaib Qureshi did not approve views of the Committee on the issue of Muslim representation in legislature. Thus, the Nehru Report was nothing else than a Congress document and, thus, was entirely opposed by the Muslims of the sub-continent. The Hindus under Congress threatened the government with a disobedience movement, if the Nehru report was not converted into the Act by December 31, 1929. This Hindu stance proved to be a landmark in the freedom movement of the Muslims. The Nehru Report also proved to be a turning point in the life of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who, after reading it, announced a 'parting of the ways'.

### **Lahore Congress and Poorna Swaraj**

Gandhi came back to active politics and attended the Calcutta session of the Congress in 1928. He now began to consolidate the nationalist ranks. The first step was to reconcile the militant left-wing of the Congress. Jawaharlal Nehru was now made the President of the Congress at the historic Lahore session of 1929.

The Lahore session of the Congress gave voice to the new, militant spirit. It passed a resolution declaring Poorna Swaraj [Complete Independence] to be the Congress objective. On 31 December 1929 the newly adopted tricolour flag of freedom was hoisted. 26 June 1930 was fixed as the first Independence Day. The Congress session also announced the launching of a civil disobedience movement. But it did not draw up a programme of struggle. That was left to Mahatma Gandhi.

### **The Civil Disobedience Movement**

The Lahore Congress had left the choice of the methods of non-violent struggle for Poorna Swaraj to Gandhi. He placed 11 points of administrative reforms before the British government. His important demands were [a] Salt tax should be abolished, [b] salaries of the highest grade services should be reduced, [c] Military expenditure should be reduced, and [d] All political prisoners should be discharged.

The government response to Gandhi's demands was negative. The Civil Disobedience Movement was started by Gandhi on 12 March 1930 with his famous Dandi March. Together with 78 chosen followers, Gandhi walked nearly 375 km from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi, a village on the Gujarat sea coast. On 6

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April Gandhiji reached Dandi, picked up a hand full of salt and broke the salt law as a symbol of the Indian people's refusal to live under British made laws.

The movement spread very quickly. Violation of salt laws all over the country was followed by defiance of forest laws in Maharashtra, Karnataka and the Central Provinces. And refusal to pay the chaukidatri tax in Eastern India. Every where in the country people joined in hartals, demonstrations, and the campaign to boycott foreign goods and to refuse to pay taxes. Lakhs of Indians offered satyagraha. A notable feature of the movement was the wide participation of women. Thousands of them left the seclusion of their homes and offered satyagraha. They took active part in picketing shops selling foreign cloth or liquor. They marched shoulder to shoulder with men in processions.

The movement stirred the brave and hardy pathans of north-western India. Under the leadership of Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, popularly known as the Frontier Gandhi. The Pathans organized the society of Khudai Khidmadgars [or Servants of God] known popularly as Red Shirts. They were pledged to non-violence and the freedom struggle. Two platoons of Garhwali soldiers refused to open fire on non-violent mass demonstrators. This episode showed that nationalism was beginning to penetrate the Indian army. In the eastern corner of India the Manipuris took a brave part in the movement. Nagaland produced a brave heroine, Rani Gaidilieu, who at the age of 13 responded to the call of Congress and raised the banner of rebellion against the foreign rule. The Rani was captured in 1932 and sentenced to life imprisonment.

The Government tried to crush the movement through ruthless repression, lathi charges and firing on unarmed crowds of men and women. Over 90000 satyagrahis, including Gandhiji, were imprisoned. The Congress was declared illegal. The nationalist press was gagged through strict censorship of news. The police often beat up men just for wearing khadi or Gandhi caps.

**Civil Disobedience Movement called off**—The Second Round Table Conference ended in failure in December 1931. Gandhi came back to India without realizing his objective. Meanwhile the Government of India renewed its strategy of political movements. Gandhi was quite appalled at the stance of the British Government and decided to recommence the Civil Disobedience Movement in January 1932. The British Government, on its part, lost no time in taking penalizing actions. Well-known Congressmen were arrested. The Congress was declared unlawful. In spite of the callous oppression, the Civil Disobedience Movement continued and within a short period nearly 120,000 people courted arrest. However, as time passed, the leaders who had always been active were imprisoned. The brutal action of the British Government slowed down the movement. As a result, the movement was suspended for three months in May 1933 and in due course, it ended in April 1934.

**Outcome of the Civil Disobedience Movement**—The Civil Disobedience Movement ended without any result. It could neither bring swaraj nor complete independence to India. It had virtually no noteworthy contribution towards the process of constitution making which culminated in the Government of India Act, 1935. Nevertheless, it was a significant march in the Indian struggle for independence. It generated political perception among the Indian masses. Nonetheless, it failed to bring about communal accord between the Hindus and the Muslims, the two major communities of India. It is noteworthy that the Muslims of India, as a community, kept themselves detached from the movement. Only a few Muslim leaders became involved in it. Gandhi never succeeded in improving the position among the Muslims, which he had won during the days of the Khilafat Movement.

**First Round Table Conference [1930]: The First Round Table Conference**—It was held in November 1930 and was attended by eighty-nine delegates from different religious and political groups and princely states. The Indian National Congress, then engaged in civil disobedience, was not represented. Lacking representation from the Congress and preoccupied with problems of federation, the first conference was adjourned in January 1931, without having made appreciable progress on the



issue of communal representation. Sardar Patel was released after the Gandhi-Irwin pact of March 1931. Gandhi signed the Pact on behalf of the Congress and Lord Irwin on behalf of the British Government. The terms of the agreement included the immediate release of all political prisoners not convicted for violence, the remission of all fines not yet collected, the return of confiscated lands not yet sold to third parties and lenient treatment for those government employees who had resigned. The British Government also conceded the right to make salt for consumption to villages along the coast, as also the right to peaceful and non-aggressive picketing. That year Sardar Patel presided over the Congress Session in Karachi.

**Gandhi-Irwin Pact[1931]:** The Government made attempts to negotiate an agreement with the Congress so that it would attend the Round Table Conference. Finally, Lord Irwin and Gandhiji negotiated a settlement in March 1931. The Government agreed to release those political prisoners who had remained non-violent and conceded the right to make salt for consumption as also the right to peaceful picketing of liquor and foreign cloth shops. The Congress suspended the Civil Disobedience Movement and agreed to take part in the Second Round Table Conference.

**Second Round Table Conference:** Gandhiji went to England in September 1931 to attend the Second Round Table Conference. The British Government refused to concede the basic nationalist demand for freedom on the basis of the immediate grant of Dominion Status.

The Government prepared to crush the Congress. Government repression succeeded in the end, helped as it was by the differences among Indian leaders on communal and other questions. The Congress officially suspended the movement in May 1933 and withdrew it in May 1934. Gandhiji once again withdrew from active politics. The movement had succeeded in further politicizing the people, and in further deepening the social roots of the freedom struggle.

**The Third Round Table Conference—**It began on November 17, 1932. It was short and unimportant. The Congress and the Labor Party in the British Parliament were both absent, but the reports of various committees were scrutinized. The conference ended on December 25, 1932.

**The Communal Award:** The Government arrested Gandhiji in January 1932 and unleashed a reign of terror. The communal problem gripped the nation's attention. In August 1932 Ramsay Macdonald, the British Prime Minister announced the proposal on minority representation known as the Communal Award. It recommended to double the existing seats in provincial legislatures, to retain a system of separate electorates for minorities, to grant weightage to Muslims in provinces where they were in minority and to recognize depressed class as minority and make them entitled to the right of separate electorates.

**The Poona Pact:** Gandhiji reacted strongly to the proposal of granting the right of separate electorate to the depressed classes. He regarded them as an integral part of the Hindu society. He resorted to a fast unto death. In an anxiety to save his life the Poona Pact was signed between Gandhiji and Ambedkar. The main provisions of the Poona Pact were:

- 1) It was agreed to allot 148 seats to the depressed classes in the provincial legislatures as against 71 promised by the communal award.
- 2) It was promised that a certain percentage of seats allotted to the general non Muslim electorate would be reserved for the depressed classes.
- 3) The principle of joint electorate was accepted.

**Government of India Act, 1935—**

After the failure of the Third Round Table Conference, the British Government gave the Joint Select Committee the task of formulating a new Act for India. The Committee was comprised of 16 members each from the House of Commons and House of Lords, 20 representatives from British India and 7 from

the princely states. Lord Linlithgow was appointed as the president of the committee. After a year and a half of discussions, the committee at last came out with a draft Bill on February 5, 1935. The Bill was discussed in the House of Commons for 43 days and in the House of Lords for 13 days and finally, after being signed by the Crown, was enforced as the Government of India Act, 1935, in July 1935.

**The main features of the Act—**The main features of the Act of 1935 were as following—

- a. A Federation of India was promised for, comprising both provinces and states. The provisions of the Act establishing the federal central government were not to go into operation until a specified number of rulers of states had signed Instrument of Accession. Since, this did not happen; the central government continued to function in accordance with the 1919 Act and only at the part of the 1935 Act dealing with the provincial governments went into operation.
- b. The Governor General remained the head of the central administration and enjoyed wide powers concerning administration, legislation and finance.
- c. No Finance Bill could be placed in the Central Legislature without the consent of the Governor General.
- d. The Federal Legislature was to consist of two Houses, the Council of State (Upper House) and the Federal Assembly (Lower House).
- e. The Council of State was to consist of 260 members, out of whom 156 members were to be elected from the British India and 104 members to be nominated by the rulers of princely states.
- f. The Federal Assembly was to consist of 375 members out of which 250 were to be elected by the Legislative Assemblies of the British Indian provinces while 125 were to be nominated by the rulers of princely states.
- g. The Central Legislature had the right to pass any Bill, but the Bill required the approval of the Governor General before it was to become a law. On the other hand, the Governor General had the power to frame ordinances.
- h. The Indian Council was abolished. In its place, few advisers were nominated to help the Secretary of State for India.
- i. The Secretary of State was not expected to interfere in matters that the Governor dealt with, with the help of Indian ministers.
- j. The provinces were given autonomy with respect to the subjects delegated to them.
- k. Dyarchy, which had been established in the provinces by the Act of 1919, was to be established at the center. However, it came to an end in the provinces.
- l. Two new provinces, namely, Sindh and Orissa were created.
- m. Reforms as were in the other provinces were also introduced in NWFP.
- n. Separate electorates were continued as before.
- o. One-third Muslim representation in the Central Legislature was guaranteed.
- p. Autonomous provincial governments in 11 provinces, under ministries responsible to legislatures, were to be set-up.
- q. Burma and Aden were separated from India.
- r. The Federal Court was established in the center.
- s. The Reserve Bank of India was established.

Both the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League opposed the Act, but participated in the provincial elections held in 1936-37, conducted under stipulations of the Act. At the time of independence, the two dominions of India and Pakistan accepted the Act of 1935, with few amendments, as their provisional constitution.

**The Working of the Act—**Lord Linlithgow, the new Viceroy was sent by the British Government to bring the Act into effect. In 1937, Provincial Autonomy was started. Until the declaration of war in 1939, Linlithgow tried to launch the Federation. However, he received only the weakest support from the home government and the idea of Federation was rejected. After that, Linlithgow declared that India

was at war with Germany in 1939. Although Linlithgow was constitutionally correct, he was somewhat hateful to Indians' opinions. As a result, the Congress resigned and it drove another nail into the coffin of Indian unity. The Government of India Act 1935, which proposed a federal structure for Indian Government never, came into operation, although it was adopted as the basic constitutional structure for India and Pakistan following partition.

**Conclusion—**The Government of India Act 1935 was one of the most significant events in the history of India. Because of numerous earlier Government of India Acts and Round Table Conferences, the Government of India Act 1935' was finally introduced. It changed the Federation of India in the aspects of the structure of government, legislation and so on. It granted Indian provinces autonomy and provided for the establishment of Indian Federation. Direct elections were introduced and the right to vote was increased. The Government of India Act 1935 established a grip tower& the modern India and is deemed important since it is one of the foundation stones of the current Republic of India.

**The Congress Ministries:** The Congress ministries could not change the basically imperialist character of the British administration in India. But they did try to improve the condition of the people within the narrow limits of the powers given to them under the Act of 1935. The Congress ministries reduced their own salaries. Most of them traveled second or third class on the railways. They set up new standards of honesty and public service. They promoted civil liberties, repealed restrictions on the press and radical organizations, permitted trade unions and kisan organizations to function and released political prisoners including a large number of revolutionary terrorists. The Congress governments introduced prohibition in selected areas, undertook Harijan uplift, and paid grater attention to primary, higher and technical education and public health. Support was given to khadi and other village industries.

### **National Movement during the Second World War**

**Resignation of Congress Ministries:** The Second World War broke out in September 1939. The Congress urged the government to declare war aims. The British authorities issued contradictory statements about the war aims. The British government involved in the war without consulting the national leaders. The Viceroy assumed emergency powers under the defence of India rules. Protesting against such policies of government, the Congress ministries in the provinces resigned in October 1939.

The National Congress was in full sympathy with the victims of fascist aggression. It was willing to help the forces of democracy in their struggle against fascism. But, the Congress leaders asked, how was it possible for an enslaved nation to aid others in their fight for freedom? T6hey therefore demanded that India must be declared free or at least effective power put in Indian hands before it could actively participate in the War.The government reused to accept this demand and tried to pit the religious minorities and Prices against the Congress. Therefore, the Congress asked its ministries to resign.

**August Offer:** In August 1940 the Viceroy announced an offer which proposed the expansion of Governor General's Council with representation of the Indians and establishing a war advisory council. The Viceroy promised the Muslim League that the British government would never agree to a constitution or government in India which did not enjoy their support. The Congress was wholly disappointed with the August Offer.

**Individual Satyagraha:** In October 1940, Gandhi gave a call for a limited satyagraha by a few selected individuals. The satyagraha was kept limited so as not to embarrass Britain's war effort by a mass upheaval in India. Vinoba Bhave was the first to offer satyagraha. By 15 May 1941, more than 25000 satyagrahis had been jailed.

### **Japanese Threat and the Cripps mission.**

Two major changes in world politics occurred in 1941. Germany attacked Soviet Union and Japan attacked Pearl Harbour, an American fleet. Japan occupied Rangoon in March 1942. This brought the

war to India's doorstep. The Congress leaders denounced Japanese aggression and once again offered to cooperate in the defence of India and the Allied cause if Britain transferred the substance of power to India immediately and promised complete independence after the war.

The British government now desperately wanted the active cooperation of Indians in the war effort. To secure this cooperation it sent to India in March 1942 a mission headed by a Cabinet Minister, Sir Stafford Cripps. Important proposals of Cripps were:

- a) dominion status would be granted to India immediately after the war with the right to secede,
- b) immediately after the cessation of hostilities a constitution making body would be set up,
- c) The constitution so framed after the war would be accepted by the British government on the condition that any Indian province could, if so desired, remain outside the Indian union, and
- d) the actual control of defence and military operations would be retained by the British government.

The British government refused to accept the Congress demand for immediate transfer of effective power to Indians. The Indian leaders could not be satisfied with mere promises for the future. Gandhiji termed the Cripps Mission as a post dated cheque on a crashing bank. The Cripps mission failed to pacify Indians.

#### **The Cripps Mission—**

In March 1942, faced with an increasingly dissatisfied sub-continent only reluctantly participating in the war and deteriorations in the war situation in Europe and South East Asia and with growing dissatisfactions among Indian troops, especially in Europe and among the civilian population in the sub-continent, the British Government sent a delegation to India under Stafford Cripps, in what came to be known as the Cripps Mission.

**The purpose of the Cripps Mission—**The main purpose of the Cripps Mission was to discuss with the Indian National Congress a deal to acquire total co-operation during the war, in return of progressive devolution and distribution of power from the Crown and the Viceroy to elected Indian legislature.

**Background—**With the Battle of Britain and the entry of the US, the World War II was becoming even more grave and critical for the future survival of the Britain and European nations. The British Government desired full cooperation and support of Indian political leaders in order to employ more Indians into the British Indian Army, which fought Imperial Japan in South East Asia and Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany in Europe and North Africa alongside the British Army and its Australian, New Zealander and American allies.

In 1939, Lord Linlithgow had declared India a belligerent state on the side of the allies without discussing Indian political leaders or the elected provincial representatives. This caused considerable anger in India and provoked the resignation en masse of elected Congress Party Provincial Governments, giving rise to the prospect of public uprising and political chaos in India. The British feared a destabilizing revolt in India, which could be deadly to their campaign against the Japanese, as well as harmful in the matter of obtaining much-needed resources and manpower to engage in war in Europe as well.

**Debate over cooperation or protest—**The Congress was divided on the issue of India's entry into World War II. Annoyed over the decision made by the Viceroy of India, some Congress leaders favored starting a popular revolt against the British despite the gravity of the war in Europe, which threatened Britain's own freedom.

Gandhiji was opposed to Indian participation in the war and doubtful of British intentions, believing that the British were not sincere about Indian ambitions for freedom. However, Rajagopalachari,



supported by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulana Azad and Jawaharlal Nehru held talks with Cripps and offered full support in return for immediate self-government and ultimate independence.

The leader of the Muslim League, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, supported the war effort and condemned the Congress strategy. Insisting on a separate Muslim state, he even opposed the Congress calls for pan-Indian cooperation and instant independence.

**Failure of the Mission—**Upon his arrival in India, Cripps held talks with Indian leaders.

He began by offering India full Dominion Status at the end of the war, with the chance to break away from the Commonwealth and go for absolute independence. Privately, Cripps also promised to get rid of Linlithgow and grant India Dominion Status with immediate effect, keeping only the Defence Ministry for the British. However, in public, he failed to deliver any tangible proposal for greater self-government in the short-term, except a hazy commitment to enhance the number of Indian members of the Viceroy's Executive Council.

Cripps spent much of his time in motivating the Congress leaders and Jinnah to come to a common public agreement in support of the war and government. However, the Congress leaders were of the view that whatever Cripps might say, his political masters were not desirous of conferring complete Indianisation of the Viceroy's Executive Council, its conversion into a Cabinet with collective responsibility, or Indian control over defence in wartime. There was too little reliance between the British and the Congress at this stage and both sides sensed that the other was hiding its true plans.

The proposals brought by Cripps were not earnestly received by any section of Indian opinion. Gandhi and the other Congress leaders opposed it as they were of the view that the Britain had already lost the war and that it had nothing to offer for the future of India. Therefore, the Indian leaders looked to Japan and other Axis powers that appeared to them to have the key to their future.

The Muslim League too discarded Cripps' proposals and expressed gratification that the possibility of Pakistan was "recognized by implication" but stated that, "the only solution of India's constitutional problem is the partition of India into independent zones; and it will therefore be unfair to Muslims to compel them to enter such a constitution-making body whose main object is the creation of a new Indian Union."

The Congress suspended talks with Cripps and, guided by Gandhiji, the national leadership insisted immediate self-government in return for war support. When the British remained unresponsive to Indian demand, Gandhi and the Congress began planning a major public revolt, the Quit India Movement, which demanded immediate British withdrawal from India.

### **The Quit India Movement**

The Quit India Movement i.e. Bharat Chhodo Andolan was a civil disobedience movement launched in August 1942 in answer to Gandhi's call for immediate independence of India and against sending Indians to the World War II. At the occurrence of war, the Congress Party had during the Wardha meeting of the working-committee in September 1939, passed a resolution conditionally supporting the fight against fascism, but they were rebuffed when they asked for independence in return.

**The aim of the Quit India Movement—**The aim of the movement was to bring the British Government to the negotiating table. On 8 August 1942, the Quit India resolution was passed at the Bombay Session of the All India Congress Committee (AICC). The draft declared that if the British did not assent to the demands, a massive Civil Disobedience Movement would be launched. However, it was a tremendously controversial decision.

At Gowalia Tank, Mumbai, Gandhi urged Indians to follow a non-violent Civil Disobedience Movement. Gandhi told the people to act as a free nation and not to follow the commands of the British. The British, already alarmed by the advance of the Japanese army to the India-Burma border, responded the next day by imprisoning Gandhi at the Aga Khan Palace in Pune. The members of the Congress Party's Working Committee were arrested and imprisoned at the Ahmednagar Fort. They also banned the party altogether.

Large-scale protests and demonstrations were held all over the country. Workers remained absent en masse and strikes were called. The movement also saw widespread acts of sabotage. Indian underground organizations carried out bomb attacks on allied supply convoys, government buildings were set on fire, electricity lines were disconnected and transport and communication lines were severed. The Congress had lesser success in gathering other political forces, including the Muslim League under a single mast and movement. However, it succeeded in obtaining a passive support from a substantial Muslim population at the peak of the movement. The movement soon became a leaderless act of insubordination, with a number of acts straying away from Gandhi's principle of non-violence. In large parts of the country, the local underground organizations took over the movement. However, by 1943, Quit India Movement was over.

### **Cabinet Mission Plan**

Early in 1946, the Labour Government dispatched an all-party parliamentary delegation to India to meet Indian leaders and persuade them of the British desire for an early settlement of the Indian constitutional issue. However, it was only in March 1946 that with the arrival of three Cabinet Ministers, Lord Pethick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander, a crucial stage was reached in the discussions between the British Government and the Indian political parties.

The negotiations were conducted on behalf of the Congress by Abul Kalam Azad who was assisted by Nehru and Patel. Gandhi was, however, frequently consulted. The negotiations were bogged down on the basic question whether India was to remain united or to be split up to gratify the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan. The Congress opposed the partition of the country, but was all set to go to the extreme limit in conceding cultural, economic and regional autonomy to diverse regions. A conference at Simla failed to determine the Congress-League differences.

**The three-tier constitution**—The Cabinet Mission then offered a negotiation plan through a three-tier constitutional structure for India. On the top was to be a Union of India embracing British India as well as the Indian States, but dealing only with foreign affairs, defence and communications. The intermediate tier was to comprise "groups" to be funded by provinces (if they chose) to deal with certain common subjects. The bottom tier was to consist of provinces and states in which were to vest all residuary powers.

The Muslim League affirmed acceptance of the Cabinet-Mission Plan, but this acceptance was more apparent than real. The League and its leaders made no secret of their optimism and design that the new constitution would be used to shape a partition of the country. "Let me tell you," Jinnah told the Muslim League Council on June 5, 1946 "that Muslim India will not rest content until we have established full, complete and sovereign Pakistan."

It was this noticeable disagreement in the League's stand, which made Gandhi and his colleagues in the Congress anxious about the "grouping of provinces", which the League wanted to make unavoidable and a stepping-stone to Pakistan. The controversy on this issue ruined the Cabinet Mission Plan.

**Proposals of the Cabinet Committee**—The Cabinet Mission Plan was a compromise but it did not really bring the two parties together. The result was that questions presumed to have been settled by the Cabinet Mission were reopened soon after the return of its three members to England. Controversy

rose to a fever pitch on two critical issues, that of the "grouping" of provinces and the composition of the "interim government". The Cabinet Committee, for that reason, met leaders of different political parties and then offered its proposals. On May 16, 1946, it announced its suggestion for a long-term settlement and on June 16, 1946, it outlined a procedure for the formation of Interim Government.

**Proposals for long-term settlement**—The main provisions of the long-term proposals were as follows—

- a. There should be a Union of India comprising provinces and the princely states.
- b. The Union should have jurisdiction on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Communication and should have necessary powers to raise finances.
- c. The Union should have an executive and a legislature consisting of representatives of both the provinces and princely states.
- d. Any question relating to a major communal issue in the legislature should be decided by a majority of members present and voting belonging to that community as well as a majority of all the members of the legislature present and voting.
- e. Provinces should be free to form groups and each group could determine the provincial subjects to be taken in common.
- f. The Constitution of the Union and of the groups should contain a provision whereby any province could, by a majority vote of the Legislative Assembly, call for a reconsideration of the terms of the constitution after an initial period of ten years and at ten yearly intervals thereafter.

**Proposals for Constitution making machinery**—The main provisions of the proposals for constitution making machinery were as following—

- a. A Constituent Assembly should be constituted, consisting of 389 members, 296 representing the provinces and 93 the princely states. Each province was to be allotted a number of seats proportional to its population. The total number of seats allotted to a province was to be divided among the main communities (General, Muslims and Sikhs) in proportion to their population and were to be elected by members of the same community in the Legislative Assembly. The number of seats allotted to each princely state was also to be fixed on the basis of population but the mode of choosing their representatives was to be settled in consultation with a Negotiating Committee.
- b. The members of the Constituent Assembly, so constituted, would be divided into the following three groups:
  - i. Provinces not claimed for and representing Hindu majority regions, viz., Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa.
  - ii. Territories claimed for Pakistan and representing the North-Western Muslim majority regions; viz., Punjab, North-Western Frontier Province. Sindh and British Baluchistan.
  - iii. Territories claimed for Pakistan and representing the North-Eastern Muslim majority regions, viz., Bengal and Assam.
- c. Each group was to settle the constitution of the provinces included in it and also whether any constitution for the group as a whole was to be set-up and, if so, the extent of its powers.
- d. After the group constitutions were settled, the groups were to assemble together to settle the Union Constitution.
- e. After the first general election under the new constitution, it was open to any province to come out of any group, in which it was placed, by a resolution of its legislature.

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**British Indian Treaty**—A treaty was to be negotiated between the Constituent Assembly and the United Kingdom to provide for certain matters arising out of the transfer of power. It was, however, hoped that India would decide to remain a member of the Commonwealth. However, at the same time, she was given the right to go out of Commonwealth, if so desired.

**Recommendation for Short-Term**—Certain short-term recommendations of the Cabinet Mission were as following—

- There was to be immediate setting up of an Interim Government in order to carry on administration while the constitution making was in progress. The interim government was to have 14 members: 6 Congressmen, 5 Muslim Leagues, 1 Indian Christian, 1 Sikh and 1 Parsee.
- In the Interim Government, all the portfolios were to be held by the Indians and the British Government was to give full co-operation in the accomplishment of the tasks that confronted the Interim Government.

**Evaluation of the Plan**—All the major political parties accepted the above plan, with all its drawbacks; and elections were held for a Constituent Assembly. However, differences arose between the Congress and the League regarding the interpretation of the plan. Though the plan ruled out Pakistan in name, it definitely conceded in substance. This caused trouble and on July 10, 1946, the League withdrew its acceptance.

**Interim Government and Direct Action**—On August 14, 1946, an Interim Government was formed under the leadership of Jawahar Lal Nehru. The Muslim League did not join it. The League declared August 16, 1946 as 'Direct Action Day'. On that day, a systematic killing and looting of the Hindus began which lasted for four days. While the carnage continued in Calcutta, Noakhali, Bihar and other places, attempts were continued to bring the League in the Interim Government. As a result, League joined the Interim Government on October 13, 1946. This Government remained in office until the partition of India in August 1947.

**Mountbatten Plan**—As per the Cabinet Mission Plan, the Constituent Assembly was at work framing the constitution, but the League members boycotted it. This made the British Government's task of transferring power to Indian hands difficult. Though it declared June 1948 to be the deadline for the transfer of power, it was felt that it would not be appropriate for it to transfer power to an Assembly that was not fully representative.

In order to work out a formula, acceptable to all sections of people, the British Government appointed Mountbatten as the Governor General of India, who reached India on March 24, 1947. While on the one hand, Mountbatten was negotiating with the leaders of different parties for developing a formula, a strong protest was started for the partition of Bengal and Punjab in the wake of communal riots and violence on a large scale. This gave an opportunity to Mountbatten to pronounce his plan for working out the problem.

**Declaration of the Plan**—Mountbatten declared that partition of India was the only probable explanation of the Indian problem. The three disputed provinces viz. Assam, Bengal and Punjab would also be partitioned. A referendum would be held in the North West Frontier Province to determine whether that province would like to join Pakistan or India. A referendum would also be held in the



Syllhat Division of Assam to determine whether it would like to stay part of Assam or join East Bengal that would be a part of Pakistan. The plan signified a readiness of the British Government to transfer power before June 1948. As the plan was accepted by all the major parties of India, a Bill was introduced in the Parliament viz. Indian Independence Bill, 1947, that was passed by it and it became the Indian Independence Act, 1947.

### **Indian Independence Act, 1947**

On 3 June 1947, Lord Louis Mountbatten, the last British Governor General of India, declared his plan for scrapping the Cabinet Mission Plan and partitioning of the country into India and Pakistan. The Mountbatten Plan was finally approved by the two leading parties in India and also the British Government. Accordingly, the Indian Independence Act was passed by the British Parliament on 18th July, 1947, providing for the setting up of a Dominion of India and Dominion of Pakistan and making them independent and free. Thus, power was transferred to the Indian hands on 15 August 1947. Sovereignty of the British Parliament over these territories and the domination of the British over the Indian States lapsed. As a result, the British Empire in India ceased to exist. Ever since then, 15 August is celebrated as India's Independence Day.

**Two Nation Theory:** The boundaries of Pakistan emerged on the map of the world in 1947. This was achieved on the basis of the Two-Nation Theory. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was the first proponent of the Two-Nation Theory in the modern era. He believed that India was a continent and not a country and that among the vast population of different races and diverse creeds, Hindus and Muslims were the two major nations on the basis of nationality, religion, way-of-life, customs, traditions, culture and historical conditions.

Pakistan came into existence as a dominion within the Commonwealth on 14 August 1947, with Jinnah as Governor General and Liaquat Ali Khan as Prime Minister. With West and East Pakistan separated by more than 1,000 miles of Indian Territory and with the major portion of the wealth and re-sources of the British heritage passing to India, Pakistan's survival seemed to be uncertain. Of all the well-organized provinces of British India, only the comparatively backward areas of Sindh, Baluchistan and the North West Frontier Province came to Pakistan intact. The Punjab and Bengal were divided and Kashmir became a disputed territory.

Thus, the historical, cultural, religious and social differences between the two nations hastened the pace of political developments, lastly causing the division of British India into two separate, independent states, Pakistan and India, on August 14 and 15, 1947, respectively.

**Main Provisions—**The main provisions of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 are as follows—

- a. The Act provided for the creation of two independent dominions, viz., India and Pakistan.
- b. It provided for the partition of Punjab and Bengal and separate boundary commissions to demarcate the boundaries between them.
- c. Besides West Punjab and East Bengal, Pakistan was to comprise territories of Sindh, North West Frontier Province. Sylhet division of Assam, Bhawalpur, Khairpur, Baluchistan and 8 other relatively minor princely states in Baluchistan.
- d. The paramount authority of the British Crown over the princely states was to lapse and they were free to join the Dominion of India or Pakistan.

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- e. The British Government was not to exercise any authority in future over the tribal areas and any treaty or agreement in force, at the time of passing of the Act, between the British Government and any tribal authority was also to lapse.
- f. Both the Dominions of India and Pakistan were to have Governor Generals appointed by the British King. The Act also provided for one common Governor General, if both the Dominions so agreed.
- g. The Constituent Assemblies of both the Dominions were free to frame the constitution for their respective countries without any limitation what so-ever. They were also free to withdraw from the British Commonwealth.
- h. For the time being, until the new constitutions were framed, each of the Dominions and all the provinces were to be governed in accordance with the Government of India Act, 1935, with such modifications, omissions or additions as may be done by the Governor General in Council.
- i. In each of the Dominions, the powers of the legislature of the Dominion were to be exercisable in the first instance by the Constituent Assembly of that Dominion.
- j. The British Government would no longer possess any control over the Dominions, provinces or any part thereof after independence.
- k. The Governor Generals would become the constitutional heads, empowered to give assent to any Bill on behalf of the Crown.
- l. The Governor General was invested with adequate powers until March 1948, to issue orders for the effective implementation of the provisions of the Indian Independence Act, 1947 and the division of assets between the two dominions and to make suitable changes in the Government of India Act, 1935 to remove any difficulty that might arise in the transitional period.
- m. Those persons who had been appointed by the Secretary of State or Secretary of State-in-Council to a civil service under the Crown in India before 15 August 1947 would continue in that service after independence.

### **Rise of Communalism**

**Meaning of communalism**—The literal meaning of the word 'communalism' is 'altruistic passion attached to one's commune'. The term is referred to in its negative connotation indicating the tendency of socio-religious groups to attempt to maximize its economic, social and political strength at the cost of the other groups. In this logic, we may define the term 'communalism' as 'the political functioning of individuals or groups for the selfish interests of particular religious groups or sects, by hook or by crook.'

Historically, India had been a melting pot of different cultures which were able to co-exist for centuries. India had a number of religions and they were more or less able to peacefully co-exist side by side. When the Europeans arrived in our country, Hinduism and Islam were the two main religions; the former being in majority. Politics usually prevailed over religion; hence, kings rose to the throne because of their political strength and not of their religious orientation. That IS the reason why we in India may find a king from a religious minority ruling over the majority community. It is surprising, why the country finally split into two, when it won independence, into the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

**Communist groups by religion**—In order to understand why the Muslim community in India wished to form a separate nation, one has to first understand what really communalism is and what led

to its rise during the British rule. Communalism is the idea that religion is a most important distinction between people. Hence, a communalist would group people by the religion and not by their cultural or geographical background. This idea in itself is illogical, because people that live amongst each other will naturally be more or less similar regardless of what religion they follow. For instance, a Hindu from Bengal and a Muslim from Bengal would have far more in common, then a Muslim in Bengal and a Muslim in the Punjab. Hence, the idea of overriding regional characteristics in favour of uniting under a religion is a flawed idea.

**Belief that followers of same religion have the same interests—**Communalism believes that the people of different religions have different interests in political and economic matters, regardless of whether they belong to the same nation or province. This idea essentially suggests that a country cannot be a union of people of different religions but instead can only be a union of the people of one religion. Hence, the idea of a separate nation for Muslims was born out of this viewpoint.

Bipan Chandra in "Communalism, A Primer" writes about communalism as— a belief that people who follow the same religion have common secular interest i.e. common political, economic, social and cultural interest. In a multi-religious society like India, the secular interests such as social, cultural, economic and political of one religion are dissimilar with the followers of other religions and communalism raises its head when the interest of different religions are seen as mutually incompatible, hostile and antagonistic.

"Communal ideology, in its first stage, starts when persons or groups believe that people of the same religion have the same socio-economic interest. The second stage is reached when a person or a group believes and practices communal politics. Though at this stage of communalism, one holds the view that different religion-based communities have their own special interests and these interests can be reconciled and accommodated. The third stage is reached when the religious differences are converted into secular differences and are seen as incompatible with each other. At this notorious stage, there is always a tendency to use violence of language, deed, behaviour and enmity against the "opponents". Movements of linguism, casteism, regionalism and separatism most often accompany this stage. Needless to add at this stage, the idea of a separate nation or "two nation's theory" was put forward and pursued in India in 1940s.

**Communalism takes communities as inimical entities—**Khan Yasir writes in Radiance Vievesweekly—Communalism is a perception of other religions and communities as inimical entities arranged with an unfriendly, antagonistic and belligerent equation to one another. The most glaring manifestation of this is communal violence or riots. It has developed in certain areas and sections of society due to their failure to develop the new national consciousness. It is amongst one of the major developments during the national movement, which ultimately led to the partition of India.

**'Divide and Rule' policy—**During the revolt of 1857, Hindus and the Muslims fought side by side united in their purpose of defeating a common enemy. The British noticed this unity and realized that their survival rested on being able to keep the people divided, for they had managed to establish their rule because politically India had been a divided country at the time of their entry.

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The British were consummate in using their policy of 'divide and rule' to use natives against natives. The reaction of the British conquest on the mindset of the Muslims and the Hindus was bound to be different. The Hindus well corned the British rule in India and regarded it as a benign act of providence, which brought them deliverance from the tyranny of the Muslim rule. On the other hand, the hostility of the Muslims towards the English was unbounded. They regarded them as their bitterest foes, since they had seized their political authority.

**British distortion of history**—The British also contaminated education with communal ideas. They invented history to divide the Hindus and the Muslims. Zia-ul-Hasan Faruqui comments, "... scores of empire scholars... went on to produce a synthetic Hindu versus Muslim history of India and their lies became history. The goal of this history was to legitimize the British policy of divide and rule".

**Religious movements**—Movements of religious revivalism also accentuated communal politics. It is said that the Wahabi movement left behind a trail of communal consciousness in Muslims. An aggressive form of Hindu revivalism emerged, particularly under the Arya Samaj movement whose sangathan and shuddhi further sharpened communal disharmony between the Hindus and the Muslims.

**Discriminatory policies**—The British began implementing policies that promoted the activities of communal forces and divided the national struggle. The Muslim community had embraced, western education and thought, a little later than some of the others. As a result, when the British Government opened up the administration of the country to Indians, they were not able to land as many jobs as some of the other communities. Consequently, they began to feel left out of the administration. Even the British policies after the revolt were discriminatory against this community, which made participation in the administration a difficult proposition. The seeds of division were sown during this period, with several Muslim leaders demanding a special reservation for Muslim in the government.

Rafiq Zakarin also stresses this line of thought in his Rise of Muslims in Indian Politics: -"They (Muslims) detested the 'cross' because it has replaced (the 'crescent'." With the onset of colonization in India, the British started adopting a continuous policy of suppression towards Muslims. With the new policy of land settlement, the Muslim nobility and official class came to a position of social degradation. The British policy aimed at destroying indigenous Indian crafts and handicraft had a crushing effect on the millions of Muslim weaver and other artisans.

Nehru expressed his anguish over this development in his Discovery of India saying that, "Where they to go? Their old profession was ruined; the way to a new one was totally barred. They could die of course.... They did actually die in tens of millions." The social degradation and poverty especially of the Muslim community as against the gradual but persistent rise of Hindu nobility officials, moneylenders etc. certainly was not a positive development for the future politics in India.

**Bengal partitions a device**—As said, the government had changed a lot the first manifestation of which was the partition of Bengal. The partition was used as a major device by Lord Curzon to drive a wedge between the Hindus and the Muslims. In the name of Islam and its ascendancy, he inflamed the sentiments of Muslims, who were originally against any kind of division. Curzon promised them "partition would invest Mohammedans of Eastern Bengal with a unity which they had not enjoyed since the days of Muslim kings." To keep Muslims away from the swadeshi and boycott movements,



propaganda was unleashed that these campaigns will only benefit industrialists who were prominently Hindus. After having kindled the flames of communalism, partition was annulled. This gave a rude shock to Muslims; they felt once again betrayed. They believed that the Hindus have forced the government to abolish partition. This led the Muslims to think that without organization, the sufferings and sacrifices nothing could be achieved from the government.

**Hindi-Urdu controversy**—A magnanimous contribution in the evolution of naked communalism was by Hindi-Urdu controversy. It originally started at Benaras in 1867, when Hindus organized a movement to replace Urdu by Hindi and the Persian script by the Devnagari script. Immediately after the anti-Urdu campaign, Syed Ahmed Khan told his superior officer Mr. Shakespeare that he was convinced after the anti-Urdu agitation of the pro-Hindi Hindus that there was no hope of any kind of joint action by the Hindus and Muslims. The Muslims, he said, had to organize themselves on their own to safeguard their heritage. Apparently, the adoption of the Devnagari and the Hindi language had greatly injured educated Muslims in both official and private life. The attitude of leaders like Lajpat Rai who opposed the use of Urdu and expressed his conviction that the political solidarity of the Hindus demanded the development of Hindi into the national language of India, further aggravated situation. The aggressively communal stand of many newspapers fomented the already strained feelings between the two communities. Muslims registered violent protests. They could have somehow swallowed the abolition of Urdu in Bihar, but the abolition of it in the united provinces - the very home of Urdu - was too severe a blow.

**Formation of Muslim League**—In 1916, a new political party was formed, known as the Muslim league, which played a crucial role in the freedom struggle and the eventual partition of the country. The Muslim League, like the Indian National Congress in its initial years, took some time before it was able to gather mass support and was initially confined to the educated class. However, by this time, the Indian National Congress was a mass based movement and in fact had many young radical Muslims who supported it. Interestingly, one of the Muslim League members who was instrumental in the creation of Pakistan, Mohammed Ali Jinnah was a member of the Indian National Congress until about 1920. The Muslim League, which considered itself as the representative of the Muslim community began to feel increasingly sidelined since the Indian National Congress was the most active political force in the country. As a result, when the provincial assemblies were opened up to Indians for direct voting, the League would invariably get less seats than the Indian National Congress. They were able to negotiate separate electorates for the Muslims from the British, but since they were a minority community, this did little to increase their share of the power. By the 1940's, the move towards partition had gathered tremendous momentum and although secular nationalists tried right till the end to keep the country united, but sadly the country could not stay united and its people were divided into two separate nations. It was a sad event, because the people had lived together for centuries without any discord, for India had always been a country of assimilation and integration. The partition of the country resulted in one of the largest movements of all time of people across the borders of the two countries and sparked off terrible communal riots.

MN Das in his India under Morley and Minto asserts, "Minto's policy saw its culmination when the Muslim League fought for the recognition as the sole representative body of the Indian Musalmans and finally it was to split India into two parts."

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Thus, the above were some of the factors, which contributed to the growth of communalism in India.

**Important Questions**

- 1) Discuss the role of Mahatma Gandhi in National Movements for Indian Independence.
- 2) Write a short note on:
  - a) Non-Cooperation Movement
  - b) Civil Disobedience Movement
  - c) Khilafat Movement
  - d) Quit India Movement
- 3) Discuss the path to Indian Independence and its partition.

Renaissance  
Law College

**UNIT-5  
EAST INDIA COMPANY**

1. Legal and Judicial Systems and reforms during East India Company from 1765-1857.

**LEGAL AND JUDICIAL SYSTEMS AND REFORMS DURING EAST INDIA COMPANY FROM 1765-1857**

The old system of justice was very simple as zamindars decided all petty cases. This was open to abuses and gave enough scope for the rich to oppress the poor.

**Judicial System of Warren Hastings** – Hastings set himself to reform the judicial system and established two courts in each district, the Diwani Adalat to decide civil cases and the Faujdari Adalat to try criminal cases. In the Diwani Adalat, the Collector was to preside, assisted by his 'native' dewan. The Faujdari Adalat was to be presided over by the Qazi or Mufti of the district and two maulavis subject to the supervision of the Collector. In addition to these, two superior courts were established at Calcutta – Sardar Diwani Adalat, as a court of appeal in civil cases and Sardar Nizamat Adalat to hear criminal appeals.

In 1774, the district courts were placed in charge of Indian officers called Amins. In the same year, the Sardar Diwani Adalat discontinued and the Sardar Nizamat Adalat was transferred to Murshidabad. The Regulating Act brought in a Supreme Court in Calcutta in 1774 which administered English law but whose jurisdiction was undefined. The Act of 1781 restricted English law of the English and defined the court's jurisdiction.

In 1780, Hastings revived the Sardar Diwani Adalat and Sir Elijah Impey, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, accepted to discharge the functions of the head of this court. In 1781, he created a number of new district courts. Covenanted servants who were designated as judges decided civil cases. Judicial proceedings from these district courts were submitted to Sardar Diwani Adalat.

Chief Justice Impey framed some regulations for the conduct of judicial business in the district judicial courts. The necessity of administering justice according to the law of the land was duly recognized and a Code of Hindu Law was compiled and translated into English and a translation of Muslim Law was also made available. After the recall of Chief Justice Impey in 1782, the Governor General and Council began to function as the Court of Sardar Diwani Adalat.

**Judicial System of Cornwallis** – In the legal sphere, Cornwallis made a thorough change. He had found that the administration of criminal justice was left largely in Indian hands. In a minute of 3 December 1789, he expressed his opinion saying that, 'we ought not, I think, to leave the future control of so important a branch of government to the sole discretion of any native, or indeed, of any single person whatsoever'. Muhammad Reza Khan who presided over the chief criminal court was removed from office in 1790. The court was shifted to Calcutta and the Governor General and members of the Supreme Council presided over it. In addition to a central criminal court in Calcutta, four circuit courts were established at Calcutta, Murshidabad, Dacca and Patna. Two covenanted servants presided over each of them, assisted by Indian advisers, who were to tour twice a year through their divisions.

Cornwallis divested collectors of magisterial power. Diwani Adalats renamed as District or Zillah courts were established in 23 districts. These courts, presided over by English judges, dealt with both civil and revenue cases. Above them were established, like the criminal courts, four Provincial Courts of Appeal at the same centres – Calcutta, Dacca, Patna and Murshidabad. At the top of the hierarchy was the Sardar Diwani Adalat at Calcutta, presided over by the Governor General and Councilors. The three judges who presided over the four Provincial Courts of Appeal were also required to reside over the

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criminal circuit courts stationed at the same towns. Thus, the same judicial officer united both the civil and criminal powers.

The system was regular and imposing. However, the judges were European who was quite often influenced by their expert advisers. The legal process was at first cumrous as, although the procedures of the new courts were British, the law administered was either Hindu or Muhammadan. Cornwallis deprived the Indians of any real power in the administration of criminal justice over which they had formerly almost absolute control. He also deprived the zamindars of the responsibility of maintaining peace within their jurisdiction and their duties were entrusted to a number of darogas in every district, each working under the direct supervision of the magistrate.

Cornwallis framed an elaborate code of Regulations known as the Cornwallis Code of 1793 for the guidance of officers of the new judicial system. Cornwallis held a favourable opinion of the working of the new courts of justice which was far from the truth. It might have removed some abuses of the old order, but it was yet by no means perfect. Justice did not at once become cheap and immediate effects were seen in the multiplication of suits.

**Judicial System of Bentinck** – Bentinck found that the courts had become ‘resting places for those members of the service who were deemed unfit for higher responsibilities’. He abolished the four Provincial Courts of Appeal and transferred their duties to the commissioners of revenue. In addition to these, the commissioners were to supervisors the work of the collectors, magistrates and judges. This was too much for a single individual to bear and the duties of the sessions judges were transferred to the district judge. For hearing civil cases, a new post of Principal Sadar Amin was created, from whose decisions, in certain cases, an approval could be made to the Sardar Diwani Adalat.

**Judicial Reform of Macaulay** – Racial discrimination was vigorously maintained. Until 1836, European British subjects were under the control of the Supreme Court alone for both civil and criminal matters. However, liberal minded Macaulay partially succeeded in breaking this racial superiority by Act XI of 1836 commonly known as Macaulay’s Black Act. As far as civil matters were concerned, the continued to enjoy immunity in criminal cases which were tried only in the Supreme Court.

Calcutta Review of 1816 observed – ‘unrestrained in their actions, with large sums at their command... and forgetful of their god, they (the British European subjects) had been known to equal the worst zamindars in cruelty and oppression.’ The Indians protested strongly against this glaring inequity and pleaded for the abolition of the special privileges enjoyed by the British born subjects. A minimum concession was given in September 1861 to satisfy the Indian aspirations. The British born subjects henceforth could not claim any special privileges but they could not be tried by any officer of Indian birth, in company’s administration, justice became quite expensive and cases were not decided even during the lifetime of the suitors. Poor people had to suffer during this long drawn legal battle as the rich could turn the laws in their favour. The protracted litigation and widespread prevalence of corruption in the administrative machinery often led to the denial of justice.

**The Privy Council** – the role of the Privy Council has been a great unifying force and the instrument and embodiment of the rule of law in India. The Judicial committee of the Privy Council was a Statutory Permanent Committee of legal experts to hear appeals from the British Colonies in the year 1833 by an Act passed by the British Parliament. Thus, the Act of 1833 transformed the Privy Council into a great imperial court of unimpeachable authority.

**The Supreme Court** – In order to bring about better management of the affairs of the East India Company, the Regulating Act of 1773 was promulgated by the king. This Act subjected the East India Company to the control of the British Government and made a provision of His Majesty by Charters or Letters Patent to establish the Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William at Calcutta, superseding the



then prevalent judicial system. A Letter Patent issued on March 26, 1774, established the Supreme Court of Judicature at Fort William. This court, as a court of record, had full power and authority to hear and determine all complaints against any of His Majesty's subjects in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Two more supreme Courts, conceived along the same lines as that of the Supreme Courts of Calcutta, were established at Madras and Bombay by King George III through Charters issued on 26 December 1800 and on 8 December 1823 respectively.

**The High Court** – The Indian High Court Act 1861 reorganized the then prevalent judicial system in the country by abolishing the Supreme Courts at Fort William, Madras and Bombay Sadar Adalat in the Presidency Towns. The High Courts were established having civil, criminal, admiralty, vice-admiralty, testimony, interstate and matrimonial jurisdiction, as well as original and appellate jurisdiction.

**The Federal Courts** – Provincial autonomy was established in India with the establishment of the Government of India Act, 1935, which introduced responsibility at the provincial level. As a federal system depends largely upon a just and competent administration of the law between governments themselves, the 1935 Act provided for the establishment of the Federal Court, forerunner of the Supreme Court of India. The Federal Court was the second highest court in the judicial hierarchy in India.

The Federal Court was the first constitutional court and also the first all India court of extensive jurisdiction. It had original jurisdiction in matters where there was dispute between the provinces or federal states. It was also the appellate court for the judgments, decrees, or final orders of the High Courts. Thus, the Federal Court of India and original, appellate and advisory jurisdiction.

#### **EAST INDIA COMPANY AND ITS ADMINISTRATION**

**East India Company**—The British East India Company was a joint stock company which was granted an English Royal Charter by Elizabeth I on December 31, 1600, with the intention of favouring trade privileges in India. In due course, the company was transformed from a commercial trading venture to one which virtually ruled India as it acquired auxiliary governmental and military functions, until its dissolution in the year 1858. This followed the First War of Indian Independence, after which the British Government decided would be more appropriate.

Increasingly, the company had been compelled to promote the material and moral progress of its Indian subjects, as, while trade remained the main goal of the empire, the British started to justify imperialism by speaking of a duty to civilize and educate the Indian people.

The company started as a moneymaking, commercial activity but increasingly re-conceived itself as a moral enterprise. This was arrogant but it resulted in many initiatives, such as educational provisions and measures aimed at creating social equality. The eminent British historian, Thomas Babbington Macaulay (1800-1859) advised in his 1835 Minute on Indian Education that officials found should only be spent on English and western education in India to produce a class of persons who would be racially Indian, "but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect." Such people, as he thought, would also be loyal to the British out of recognition of their superior moral worth.

**Regulation of Company's affairs**—Though the company was ambitious in putting down resisting states, it was becoming clearer day by day that the company was incapable of governing the vast expanse of the captured territories. The Bengal Famine of 1770, in which one-sixth of the local population died, set the alarm bells ringing in Britain. Military and administrative costs mounted beyond control in British administered regions in Bengal due to the ensuing drop in labor productivity. At the same time, there was commercial stagnation and trade depression throughout Europe following the lull in the post-Industrial Revolution period.

**Regulation of Company's affairs**—The affairs of the company were regulated through the provisions of the following Acts and Charters—

1. **Regulating Act of 1773**—With the expansion of political power of the company, it was felt in England that the affairs of the company needed some regulation. As a result, the Regulating Act of 1773 came into being. Some of the salient features of the Act were as follows—
  - a. It set up a government in Calcutta Presidency consisting of a Governor-General and a Council of four members who exercised their authority jointly
  - b. The governments of the Presidencies of Bombay and Madras were subordinated to the government in Calcutta; and
  - c. It empowered the British Crown to establish a Supreme Court in Bengal with jurisdiction over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

The Act subjected the legislative authority of the Governor-General and the Council to certain limitations—

- a. The rules and regulations made by them were not to be repugnant to the laws of England;
- b. They required registration by the Supreme Court which was given the power to veto them;
- c. There could be an appeal against them to the British Government; and
- d. The Governor-General and the Council were under a duty to forward all such rules and regulations to England and the King-in-Council was competent to disapprove them at any time within two years.

2. **East India Company Act (Pitt's India Act) 1784**—This Act has two key aspects —

- a. **Relationship to the British Government**—The Act clearly differentiated the political functions of the East India Company from its commercial activities. The Act directly subordinated the East India Company to the British Government for its political transactions. In order to achieve the objective, the Act created a Board of Commissioners for the affairs of India, usually referred to as the Board of Control. The members of the Board of Control were the Secretary of State, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and four Privy Counsellors nominated by the King. The Act specified that the Secretary of State "shall preside at and be President of the said Board."
- b. **Internal Administration of British India**—The Act laid the foundation of the British centralized bureaucratic administration of India which reached its peak at the beginning of the twentieth century.

Pitt's Act was deemed a failure because the boundaries between government control and the company's powers were vague and highly subject to interpretation. The government also felt obliged to answer humanitarian voices pleading for better treatment of natives in the British occupied territories. Edmund Burke (1729-1797), the politician and philosopher, a former East India Company shareholder and diplomat, felt compelled to relieve the situation and introduced before Parliament a new Regulating Bill in 1783. The Bill was defeated due to intense lobbying by company loyalists and accusations of nepotism in the Bill's recommendations for the appointment of councillors.

3. **Act of 1786**—This Act enacted the demand of Lord Cornwallis, that the powers of the Governor General be enlarged to empower him, in special cases, to override the majority of his council and act on his own responsibility. The Act also enabled the offices of the Governor General and the Commander-in-Chief to be jointly held by the same official.

This Act clearly demarcated borders between the Crown and the company. Thereafter, the company functioned as a regularized subsidiary of the crown, with greater accountability for its actions and reached a stable stage of expansion and consolidation. Having temporarily achieved a state of truce with the crown, the company continued to expand its influence to nearby territories through threats and coercive actions. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the company's rule extended across

most of India, Burma, Singapore and Hong Kong and mid one-fifth of the world's population came under its trading influence.

**4. Character Act 1813** – The aggressive policies of Lord Wellesley and the Marquis of Hastings led to the company gaining control of all India, except for the Punjab, Sind and Nepal. The Indian Princes had become vassals of the company. However, the expense of wars leading to the total control of India strained the company's finances to the breaking point. The company was forced to petition Parliament for assistance. This was the background to the Charter Act of 1813 which, among others, contained the following provisions—

- The Act asserted the sovereignty of the British Crown over the Indian territories held by the company;
- The Act renewed the charter of the company for a further twenty years but deprived the company or its Indian trade monopoly except for trade in tea and the trade with China required the company to maintain separate and distinct commercial and territorial accounts; and
- The Act opened India to missionaries which were called the “-pious clause.” Previously missionaries could not legally operate within company territory, although several did, including the pioneer Baptist missionary William Carey by pursuing a trade or profession as a cover. The company was also required to spend money for the material and moral improvement of India. As a result of the, “pious clause,” India became a major field of missionary endeavour. Missions established schools, hospitals and clinics as well as churches. The company's officials who were staunch Christians often worked closely with the missionaries.

**5. Charter Act 1833** – The Industrial Revolution in Britain, the consequent search for markets and the rise of laissez-faire economic ideology formed the background to this Act, among others, contained the following provisions –

- Divested the company of its commercial functions;
- Renewed the company's political and administrative authority for another twenty years;
- Invested the Board of Control with full power and authority over the company;
- Carried further, the ongoing process of administrative centralization through investing the Governor General in Council with full power and authority to superintend and through controlling the presidency governments in all civil and military matters;
- Initiated a machinery for the codification of laws;
- Established that no Indian subject of the company would be debarred from holding any office under the company due to his religion, place of birth, descent, or color. However, this remained a dead letter well into the twentieth century.

**6. Charter Act 1853**—This Act provided that British India would remain under the administration of the company in trust for the Crown until Parliament should decide otherwise.

The Charter Act of 1853, which also marked the stage in the evolution of the Legislatures, made the Law Member of the Governor-General in Council a full member and enlarged the Governor General's Council for legislative purposes by the addition of the Chief justice of Bengal, one other Supreme Court Judge and one paid representative of each Presidency or Governor's Province. In all the Governor General in Council consisted of 12 Members. This enlarged Council paved the way for establishing the first legislative body in India. From 1833 to 1861, the Governor General in Council was the administrative as well as the legislative authority.

The efforts of the company in administering India emerged as a model for the civil service system in Britain, especially during the nineteenth century. Deprived of its trade monopoly in 1813, the company wound up as a trading enterprise. In 1858, the company lost its administrative functions to the British Government following the 1857 uprising by the company's Indian soldiers, usually called the Sepoy Mutiny. One cause of this was the company's policy annexing princely states with which they enjoyed a treaty relationship when they decided that the ruler was corrupt, or because

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they did not recognize the heir to the throne such as an adopted son, who could succeed under Hindu but not under British law.

**Important Questions**

- 1) Discuss the legal and judicial systems in India during the rule of East India Company.
- 2) Discuss the various reforms introduction by English East India Company.

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**Unit-4 (A)**  
**Lord Lytton, Ripon and Curzon**

**Lord Lytton (1876-1880)**

Main events of his time period were :

1. Famine in 1876-1878; Famine Commission was appointed in 1878 headed by **General Richard Strachey**.
2. The Delhi Durbar, January 1, 1877, was held to decorate Queen Victoria with the title *Kaiser-i-Hind*.
3. The Vernacular Press Act, 1878 was passed, putting several curbs on the vernacular newspapers.
4. Indian Arms act, 1878 forbade the Indian people from keeping or dealing in arms with the permission of the Government.
5. Foundation of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College was laid by Lord Lytton in 1877 at Aligarh.
6. Statutory Civil Service in 1879. It was also laid down that the candidates had to appear and pass the civil services examination which began to be held in England. The maximum age for these candidates were reduced from 21 to 19 years.

**Lord Ripon (1880-1884)**

Important events during Ripon's stint as viceroy were as follows:-

1. Repeal of Vernacular Press act, 1882.
2. Resolution in 1882 for institution of local self-government in India.
3. Constitution of the Hunter commission on education (1882).
4. The maximum age of admission to civil services raised to 21.
5. Introduction of the Ilbert Bill which would authorize India judges to hear cases against the Europeans as well.

**Lord Curzon (1899-1905)**

Highlights of his period were as follows:

1. Lord Curzon set up a Famine Commission.
2. The Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900, prohibited the sale of agricultural lands for its attachment in execution of a decree.
3. Agricultural banks were established.
4. In 1904, the cooperative credit societies act was passed.

5. The Department of agriculture was established in 1901.
6. He founded on agriculture research Institute at Pusa.
7. Commission was appointed in 1901 to consider the problems of education.
8. In order to preserve and protect ancient monuments of India, he passed the Ancient Monuments Protection Act, and Archaeological Department was established in 1901.
9. The setup of Police Commission under the Chairmanship of Sir Andrew Frazer in 1902.
10. A Criminal Investigation Department was opened in each district. In 1901 the Imperial Cadet Corps was set up.

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