

## 6. Beginning of Freedom Movement

English education made mixed effects on the Indian society. The seeds of nationalism were sown by the reforms of newly educated society. Due to various movements in different parts of India a favourable situation was created to build a political organisation on an all India level which will bring together the various provincial political organisations, different groups of politically aware people and to express the aspiration of the nation by diverting the public attention towards the questions of the nation.

**Centralisation of administration during British rule :** Due to the British administration, its implementation on India brought the nation under one roof in its true sense. Due to identical reforms all over the country and equality before law, the feeling of nationalism developed among the people. For the convenience of administration and swift movement of the army the British built network of roads and railways. But these facilities benefited the Indians as well. People from different parts of India came in contact of each other, there was increase in communication and the feeling of nationalism grew up.

**Economic exploitation :** The Indian wealth was flowing towards England by all means. Due to the imperialist policy of England there was beginning of economic exploitation of India. Farmers were compelled to take cash crops, burden of land taxes, continuous famines all this broke down the backbone of Indian agriculture. Traditional industries declined which led to rise in unemployment. The Capitalists exploited the worker class. Various new taxes were imposed on the middle class. This led to growth of discontent among the people.

**Western Education :** Due to spread

of western education, new ideas such as Justice, Liberty, Equality, Democracy etc. were introduced to the Indians. Rationalism, Scientific attitude, humanity, nationalism these principles were accepted by the Indians. Therefore there inculcated a feeling that we are capable of carrying out the work of the country and its progress is possible by following these principles. India is a country of diverse languages but with the introduction of English language India got a new medium of communication.

### Study of Ancient Indian History :



**Dr. Bhau Daji Lad**

The 'Asiatic Society' was established at Kolkata by the British. Many Indian and western scholars started study of Indian culture. The manuscripts in Sanskrit, Persian and other languages were examined and research was published.

Indian scholars like Dr. Bhau Daji Lad, Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar made intensive study of ancient Indian culture. After understanding that we are blessed with glorious ancient tradition, the Indians were awakened with a sense of Identity. The 'Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute' is working since last 100 years in Pune.



**Dr. R. G. Bhandarkar**

**Contribution of Newspapers :** During this period, English and Vernacular newspapers and periodicals came to be published. Through these newspapers, political and social awakening took place.

Newspapers like Darpan, Prabhakar, Hindu, Amrit Bazar Patrika, Kesari, Mahratta started criticising the Government.

### **Establishment of Indian National Congress :**

On 28 December 1885, the first session of Indian National Congress was held at Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit School in Mumbai. 72 delegates from different provinces of India participated in this session. Wyomesh Chandra Banerjee, a renowned lawyer from Kolkata, was the President of this session. In this session they established the Indian National Congress. Allan Octavian Hume, a British officer, took lead in the establishment of the Indian National Congress. Increased proportion of Indians in the administration, reduction of military expenses by the British government such statements were sent to the British.

**Objectives of the Indian National Congress :** To make the people from different parts of India forget the differences in religion, race, caste, language, geographical territories and bring them on a common platform, to understand each others problems and views, to increase the feeling of oneness among the people, to take efforts for the development of the country were the objectives of the Indian National Congress.

**Moderate Phase (1885-1905) :** The early ten years after establishment of Indian National Congress their contribution was very slow but consistent. The leaders of Indian National Congress were realistic and highly educated. They were aware that through organised work a strong foundation needs to be built up. Western thinker's, philosophy of liberalism, freedom, equality, fraternity these values had an impact on them. They believed in constitutional



**Wyomesh Chandra Banerjee**

methods. They had a hope that if we demand through constitutional methods then the British will give justice to our demands. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Ferozshah Mehta, Surendranath Banerjee were all moderate leaders.

In the session of Indian National Congress different resolutions were put forward by them such as, to get representation in provincial legislature, jobs for educated Indians, cutting down the increasing expenses on military, Legislature and Judiciary should be separated for safeguarding legal rights of Indians etc.

To cause a split in the national movement the British implemented the policy of 'Divide and rule'.



**Lokmanya Tilak**

### **Extremist Phase (1905-1920) :**

All Indian leaders who were politically aware kept aside their differences of caste, religion, language, province and gathered on a single platform of Indian National Congress. There were unanimous decisions regarding the objectives of the Congress and taking forward the movement by constitutional means, but there were differences regarding the working system. These were ideological differences. From these differences two main political groups were formed. The Moderates who advocated peaceful and constitutional manners and the Extremist who believed in severe struggle for attainment of freedom. Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal were believed to be extremist leaders.

In the early period, the Extremist leaders, for bringing political awakening among the Indians used methods like newspapers, national festivals and national education. 'Kesari' and 'Maratha' were

the newspapers through which Lokmanya Tilak made severe criticism on the suppressive policy of the British. In Bengal province, 'Amrit Bazar Patrika' was a mouthpiece of extremist ideology. By forgetting the internal differences people should come together and exchange their ideas, common people should get inspiration from contribution of national personalities, with these objectives Tilak started organising of Shiv Jayanti and Ganesh Utsav. For political reasons if people come together then government will ban them, but for religious reasons if people come together the government will not ban them was his opinion. In the Mandalay prison, Tilak wrote 'Geeta-rahasya'. Its core was philosophy of karmayoga and stressed that people should always be in action. The extremist leaders established education institutions for creating a generation concerned about own language and tradition. The extremist leaders were of the opinion that if lakhs of people take part in the freedom movement and challenge the British government by struggling against them only then success will be achieved. They unanimously believed that the movement should be made more severe. But they did not adopt the means of armed revolution rather insisted for an extensive public agitation. The moderates laid the foundation of freedom movement and the extremists carried forward the movement.

In 1897, in Pune, the epidemic of Plague had spread on a large scale. Hundreds of people died due to it. An officer named Rand was appointed. The plague patients were searched out and oppressive measures were adopted. As a revenge, the Chapekar brothers assassinated Rand. The government tried to connect relation of Lokmanya Tilak with this conspiracy. After being unsuccessful the government imprisoned Tilak with revenge.

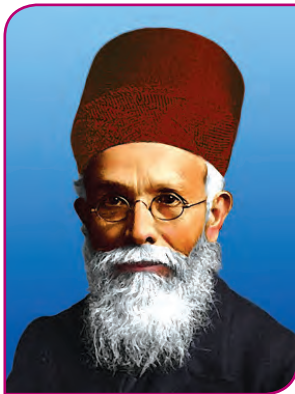
**Partition of Bengal :** The British decided to use the policy of 'Divide and Rule' to create a rift between Hindu-Muslim community. The then Viceroy Lord Curzon contributed to it. Bengal was a very large province. To carry out the work of this province was difficult from administrative point of view. By putting up this reason, in 1905, he declared the partition of Bengal province. With this partition, arrangement was made such that majority Muslims will remain in East Bengal and West Bengal for majority of Hindus. The hidden strategy of the British was, if the Hindu-Muslims were divided, due to partition, then the freedom movement will be weakened.

**Anti Partition Movement :** There was public awakening against partition not only in Bengal but all over India. 16 October, the day of partition was observed as National Mourning Day. All over India there were protest meetings to condemn the Government's decision. 'Vande Mataram' came to be sung everywhere. As a symbol of unity, 'Raksha Bandhan' programmes were held. Students in large number boycotted government schools and colleges and participated in the movement. The leadership of this movement was in the hands of Surendranath Banerjee, Anand Mohan Bose, Rabindranath Tagore and such other leaders. The extent of Indian National Congress increased due to the anti partition movement. It became a national movement. Owing to the severity of dissatisfaction, the British annulled the partition of Bengal.

**Four point programme of Indian National Congress :** Gopal Krishna Gokhale was the President of Indian National Congress session of 1905. He supported the anti partition movement. Dadabhai Nowrojee was the President of 1906 session. For first time he pronounced the word 'Swaraj' from the stage. In his Presidential speech he gave the message that remain united, try sincerely and fulfill



the aim of Swaraj, so that today we will be able to save lakhs of people suffering from poverty, hunger, diseases and India will get a respectable position among developed countries.



**Dadabhai Nowrojee**

In the same session Swaraj, Swadeshi, National Education and Boycott, this 4 point programme was unanimously accepted by the Indian National Congress. Due to Swadeshi movement we will be self sufficient. To follow the path of Swadeshi we need to bring together capital, resources, manpower and such other forces and from this the benefit of the country could be achieved. It was decided that boycotting of foreign goods is the first step and boycott of foreign rule will be the next step. Due to boycott we will be able to attack the roots of British imperialism, was the opinion of some of the leaders.



### Do you know?

Gopal Krishna Gokhale founded the 'Servants of India Society' in 1905. To create love for the country, teach them sacrifice of self interest, differences between religion and caste should be destroyed and to create social harmony, spread of education were the main objectives of the servants of India society.



**Gopal Krishna Gokhale**

**Differences between Moderates and Extremists :** The differences between the ideologies of Indian National Congress rose to great extent in the Surat session in 1907. The moderates were trying to keep aside the resolution of swadeshi and boycott. The

extremist trying that this opposition should not be successful. Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Surendranath Banerjee, Ferozshah Mehta such moderate leaders blamed that the extremist leaders are trying to capture the Indian National Congress. Lala Lajpat Rai tried to act as a mediator. As per Tilak's opinion, Indian National Congress was a national platform, hence it should not be divided. During the session the tension increased and since no compromise was possible finally there was a split in the Indian National Congress.

**Suppression of the British :** After anti partition movement, the government was disturbed looking at the influential public protest. To control this movement, the Government used the policy of suppression. Holding of public meetings was legally banned. Strict punishments were given to those who broke the law. School children were also beaten up. Many restrictions were imposed on newspapers. Many printing press were confiscated on grounds of blame of criticising the government. Writers and editors were imprisoned. Strict actions were taken against the extremist leaders. This led to a severe reaction in Bengal. The revolutionaries adopted, the means of firing, bomb blasts etc. These bomb attacks were advocated through Kesari newspaper by Lokmanya Tilak. The charge of sedition was put on



**Lal-Bal-Pal**

Lokmanya Tilak for which he was sent to Mandalay jail at Myanmar for 6 years imprisonment. Bipin Chandra Pal was sentenced to jail and Lala Lajpat Rai was deported from Punjab.

### **Establishment of Muslim League :**

The British became very disturbed looking at the overwhelming response to the Indian National Congress in the anti partition movement. The British once again followed the policy of 'divide and rule'. They started using the propaganda that for safeguarding the interest of Muslims they should have a separate political organisation. Due to the motivation of the British government a committee of upper class Muslims under the leadership of Aga Khan met Governor General Lord Minto. Due to the motivation from Lord Minto and other British officers, the Muslim League was established in 1906.

**Morley-Minto Act :** There was dissatisfaction among the Indians regarding the work of British government. The Indians felt that the reason of poverty in India was the economic policy of the British. Oppressive policy of Lord Curzon, exclusion of educated Indians in government services, unjust behaviour towards Indians in Africa, all this added to the dissatisfaction of the Indian people. As a temporary remedy on the discontent among Indians, the Morley Minto Reform Act of 1909 was passed. According to this act, it increased the number of Indian members in the Legislative Assembly and provision of inclusion of some elected Indian representatives in Legislative Assembly was made. In the same act separate electorates were provided to the Indian Muslims. Due to this conspiracy of the British the seeds of division in India were sown.

**Lucknow Pact :** In the Lucknow session of Indian National Congress in

1916, under the leadership of Lokmanya Tilak, an attempt was made to resolve the dispute in the Indian National Congress. In the same year there was an agreement between Indian National Congress and Muslim League known as the 'Lucknow Pact'. According to this pact, the Indian National Congress agreed to separate electorates to Muslims and Muslim League agreed to support the Indian National Congress in its work for getting political rights to India.



**Dr. Annie Besant**

**Home Rule Movement :** In 1914, when Lokmanya Tilak was released from the Mandalay Jail, the first world war had begun in Europe. The direct consequences of this war had to be borne by India as well. The rates of basic necessary commodities increased.

Many restrictions were put up on the Indians by the British government. This led to increased dissatisfaction in the minds of Indians. In these circumstances, Dr. Annie Besant and Lokmanya Tilak started the Home Rule movement. Home Rule means self government. Such movement also began in Ireland against Colonialism. On similar lines, Home Rule movement demanded right of self government in India. Annie Besant and Lokmanya Tilak made extensive tour in different parts of the country and the demand for self government reached the common people. Tilak firmly stated that, 'Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it'.

**First World War and India :** The war atmosphere in Europe, growing dissatisfaction in the minds of Indians, popularity of Home Rule movement; in such conditions it was necessary for the British to get cooperation from the Indians.

The British government decided to provide some political rights to the Indians. In 1917, Montague, Secretary of State for India, declared that step by step Indians will be given the right to self government and responsible political system. Tilak also declared that if the government is going to show sympathy and considerable attitude towards the demands of the Indians, only then Indian public is ready to co-operate the British. This policy of Lokmanya Tilak is known as 'Responsive Cooperation'.

### **Montague Chelmsford Reform Act :**

In 1919, the British Parliament passed another act to bring constitutional reforms in India. This act is known as 'Montague

Chelmsford Reform Act'. According to this Act, less important departments were transferred to the Indian ministers, whereas the important departments like Finance, Home affairs and Revenue were under the control of the Governor. The 1919 Act did not give much exposure to the demand for Responsible Government of Indians. Everybody was disappointed due to this act. Tilak criticised the act in following words, 'This is neither Swaraj nor its foundation'. The Indians understood that if they have to subdue the British government then the agitation needs to be more rigorous. India got prepared for a new movement.

## **Exercise**

### **1. (A) Rewrite the statements by choosing the appropriate options.**

- (1) The Servants of India Society was founded by ..... .
  - (a) Ganesh Vasudev Joshi
  - (b) Bhau Daji Lad
  - (c) M.G.Ranade
  - (d) Gopal Krishna Gokhale
- (2) The first session of Indian National Congress was held at ..... .
  - (a) Pune
  - (b) Mumbai
  - (c) Kolkata
  - (d) Lucknow
- (3) ..... wrote the Geeta Rahasya.
  - (a) Lokmanya Tilak
  - (b) Dadabhai Nowrojee
  - (c) Lala Lajpat Rai
  - (d) Bipinchandra Pal

### **(B) Write the names**

- (1) Moderate leaders \_\_\_\_\_
- (2) Extremist leaders \_\_\_\_\_

### **2. Explain the following statements with reasons.**

- (1) In the struggle for independence, a sense of identity was awakened among the Indians.
- (2) Two groups were formed in the Indian National Congress.
- (3) Lord Curzon decided to partition Bengal.

### **3. Write Short Notes.**

- (1) Objectives of Indian National Congress
- (2) Anti Partition Movement
- (3) Four point program of Indian National Congress

### **4. Explain the background behind the establishment of Indian National Congress with the help of following points.**

- Centralisation of administration
- Economic exploitation
- Western education
- Study of Ancient Indian History
- Role of newspapers

### **Project**

Collect additional information about the leaders of early phase of Indian National Congress with the help of internet.

