

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **NATIONAL MOVEMENT-1919-1939**

#### **Era of Mass Nationalism**

- Towards the end of the First World War, various forces were at work in India and on the international scene.
- After the end of the war, there was a resurgence of nationalist activity in India and in many other colonies in Asia and Africa.
- The Indian struggle against imperialism took a decisive turn towards a broad-based popular struggle with the emergence of Mohandas Karanchand Gandhi on the Indian political scene.

#### **WHY NATIONALIST RESURGENCE NOW**

##### **1. Post-War Economic Hardships**

- All Indians were experiencing hardships on various fronts.
- Industry First, an increase in prices, then a recession coupled with increased foreign investment brought many industries to the brink of closure and loss.
- They now demanded protection against imports besides government aid.

##### **Workers and Artisans:**

- This section of the populace faced unemployment and bore the brunt of high prices.
- Peasantry Faced with high taxation and poverty, the peasant waited for a lead to protest.
- Soldiers Soldiers who returned from battlefields abroad gave an idea of their wide experience to the rural folk.

##### **Educated Urban Classes:**

- This section was facing unemployment.
- These hardships coupled with high expectations of political gains from the Government created a charged atmosphere in the country.

##### **2. Nationalist Disillusionment with Imperialism**

- Worldwide The Allied powers, to rally the colonies to their side during the war, had promised them an era of democracy and self-determination after the war.
- During the war, both sides had launched vicious propaganda to malign each other and expose each other's uncivilised colonial record.
- But Soon it became clear from the Paris Peace Conference and other peace treaties that the imperialist powers had no intention of loosening their hold over the colonies; in fact they went on to divide the colonies of the vanquished powers among themselves.
- All this served to erode further the myth of the cultural and military superiority of the whites.
- As a result the post-war period saw a resurgence of: militant nationalist activity throughout Asia and Africa, in Turkey, Egypt, Ireland, Iran, Afghanistan, Burma, Malaya, Philippines, Indonesia, Indo-China, China and Korea.

##### **3. Impact of Russian Revolution (November 7, 1917)**

- The Bolshevik Party of workers overthrew the Czarist regime and founded the first socialist state, the Soviet Union, under the

leadership of V.I. Lenin.

- The Soviet Union unilaterally renounced the Czarist imperialist rights in China and the rest of Asia, gave rights of self-determination to former Czarist colonies in Asia and gave equal status to the Asian nationalities within its borders.
- The October Revolution brought home the message that immense power lay with the people and the masses were capable of challenging the mightiest of tyrants provided they were organized, united and determined.
- The Government, not prepared to part with or even share its power with the Indians, once again resorted to the policy of 'carrot and stick'.
- The carrot was represented by the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, while measures such as the Rowlatt Act represented the stick.

#### **MONTAGU-CHELMSFORD REFORMS AND GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1919**

- In line with the government policy contained in Montagu's statement (August 1917), the Government announced further constitutional reforms in July 1918, known as Montagu Chelmsford or Montford Reforms.
- **Based on these, the Government of India Act, 1919 was enacted.**

**The main features of the Montford Reforms were as follows.**

- (i) Provincial Government-Introduction of Dyarchy Executive: Dyarchy, i.e., rule of two-executive councillors and popular ministers was introduced. The governor was to be the executive head in the province.
- (ii) Subjects were divided into two lists: "reserved" which included subjects such as law and order, finance, land revenue, irrigation, etc., and "transferred" subjects such as education, health, local government, industry, agriculture, excise, etc. The "reserved" subjects were to be administered by the governor through his executive council of bureaucrats, and the "transferred" subjects were to be administered by ministers nominated from among the elected members of the legislative council.
- (iii) The ministers were to be responsible to the legislature and had to resign if a no-confidence motion was passed against them by the legislature, while the executive councillors were not to be responsible to the legislature.
- (iv) In case of failure of constitutional machinery in the province the governor could take over the administration of "transferred" subjects also.
- (iv) The secretary of state and the governor-general could interfere in respect of "reserved" subjects while in respect of the "transferred" subjects, the scope for their interference was restricted.
- (v) **Legislature**
  - (i) Provincial Legislative Councils were further expanded-70% of the members were to be elected.
  - (ii) The system of communal and class electorates was further consolidated.

- (iv) Women were also given the right to vote.
- (iv) The Legislative Councils could initiate legislation but the governor's assent was required. The governor could veto bills and issue ordinances.
- (v) The Legislative Councils could reject the budget but the governor could restore it, if necessary.
- (vi) The legislators enjoyed freedom of speech.
- (vii) Central Government—Still Without Responsible Government

### **Executive**

- (i) The governor-general was to be the chief executive authority.
- (ii) There were to be two lists for administration—central and provincial.
- (iii) In the viceroy's executive council of 8, three were to be Indians.
- (iv) The governor-general retained full control over the "reserved" subjects in the provinces.
- (v) The governor-general could restore cuts in grants, certify bills rejected by the Central Legislature and issue ordinances.

### **Legislature**

- (i) A bicameral arrangement was introduced. The lower house or Central Legislative Assembly would consist of 144 members (41 nominated and 103 elected—52 General, 30 Muslims, 2 Sikhs, 20 Special) and the upper house or Council of State would have 60 members (26 nominated and 34 elected—20 General, 10 Muslims, 3 Europeans and 1 Sikh).
- (ii) The Council of State had a tenure of 5 years and had only male members, while the Central Legislative Assembly had a tenure of 3 years.
- (iii) The legislators could ask questions and supplementaries, pass adjournment motions and vote a part of the budget, but 75% of the budget was still not votable.
- (v) Some Indians found their way into important committees including finance.

### **Drawbacks**

The reforms had many drawbacks

- Franchise was very limited.
- At the centre, the legislature had no control over the governor-general and his executive council.
- Division of subjects was not satisfactory at the centre.
- Allocation of seats for Central Legislature to provinces was based on 'importance' of provinces—for instance, Punjab's military importance, and Bombay's commercial importance.
- At the level of provinces, division of subjects and parallel administration of two parts was irrational and hence unworkable.
- The provincial ministers had no control over finances and over the bureaucrats, leading to constant friction between the two. Ministers were often not consulted on important matters too; in fact, they could be overruled by the governor on any matter that the latter considered special.
- On the home government (in Britain), front the Government change—; the secretary state was henceforth to be out of the British exchequer.

### **Views**

- When the Cabinet used the expression 'ultimate self-government' they probably contemplated an intervening period of 500 years.

Lord Curzon.

- The Government of India Act, 1919 forged fresh fetters for the people. Subhash Chandra Bose.
- The Montford Reforms were only a method of further draining India of her wealth and of prolonging her servitude. M.K. Gandhi.
- The dyarchy of the double executive was open to almost every theoretical objection that the armoury of political philosophy can supply. P.E. Roberts.

### **Congress' Reaction**

- The Congress met in a special session in August 1918 at Bombay under Hasan Imam's presidency and declared the reforms to be "disappointing" and "unsatisfactory" and demanded effective self-government instead.

### **ROWLATT ACT**

- In March 1919, it passed the Rowlatt Act even though every single Indian member of the Central Legislative Council opposed it.
- This Act authorised the Government to imprison any person without trial and conviction in a court of law, thus enabling the Government to suspend the right of habeas corpus which had been the foundation of civil liberties in Britain.

### **EMERGENCE OF GANDHI**

#### **Early Career and Experiments with Truth in South Africa**

- Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869 in Porbandar in the princely state of Kathiawar in Gujarat.
- His father was a diwan (minister) of the state.
- Having studied law in England, Gandhi had gone to South Africa in relation with a case involving his client, Dada Abdullah.
- In South Africa he witnessed the ugly face of white racism and the humiliation and contempt to which Asians who had gone to South Africa as labourers were subjected.
- He decided to stay in South Africa to organise the Indian workers to enable them to fight for their rights.
- He stayed there till 1914 after which he returned to India.

#### **Indians in South Africa consisted of three categories—**

- the indentured Indian labour, mainly from had migrated to South Africa after 1890 to work on sugar plantations;
- the merchants—mostly Meman Muslims who had followed the labourers; and
- the ex-indentured labourers who had settled down with their children in South Africa after the expiry of their contracts.
- These Indians were mostly illiterate and had little or no knowledge of English.
- They accepted racial discrimination as a part of their daily existence.
- The disabilities these Indian immigrants had to suffer were many.
- They were denied the right to vote.
- They could reside only in prescribed locations which were insanitary and congested.

- In some colonies, Asians and Africans could not stay out of doors after 9 PM nor could they use public footpaths.

### **Moderate Phase of Struggle (1894-1906)**

- During this phase, Gandhi relied on sending petitions and memorials to the authorities in South Africa and in Britain, hoping that once the authorities were informed of the plight of Indians, they would take sincere steps to redress their grievances as the Indians were, after all, British subjects. To unite different sections of Indians, Indian Congress and started

### **Phase of Passive Resistance or Satyagraha (1906-1914)**

- The second phase, which began in 1906, was characterised by the use of the method of passive resistance or civil disobedience, which Gandhi named satyagraha.

### **Satyagraha against Registration Certificates (1906)**

- A new legislation in South Africa made it compulsory for Indians thereto carry at all times certificates of registration with their fingerprints.
- The Indians under Gandhi's leadership decided not to submit to this discriminatory measure.
- Gandhi formed the Passive Resistance Association to conduct the campaign.
- The Government jailed Gandhi and others who refused to register themselves.
- Later, the authorities used deceit to make these defiant Indians register themselves.
- The Indians under the leadership of Gandhi retaliated by publicly burning their registration certificates.

### **Campaign against Restrictions on Indian Migration**

- The earlier campaign was widened to include protest against a new legislation imposing restrictions on Indian migration.
- The Indians defied this law by crossing over from one province to another and by refusing to produce licences.
- Many of these Indians were jailed.

### **Setting up of Tolstoy Farm**

- As it became rather difficult to sustain the high pitch of the struggle, Gandhi decided to devote all his attention to the struggle.
- The Tolstoy Farm was meant to house the families of the satynd to give them a way to sustain themselves.

### **Campaign against Poll Tax and Invalidation of Indian Marriages**

- A poll tax of three pounds was imposed on all ex-indentured inclusion of demands for the abolition of poll tax (which was too much for the poor ex-indentured Indians who earned less than ten shillings a month) in the ongoing struggle further widened the base of the campaign.
- Fuel was added to the fire by a Supreme Court order which invalidated all marriages not conducted according to Christian rites and by the registrar of marriages.

- By implication, Hindu, Muslim and Parsi marriages were illegal and children born out of such marriages, illegitimate.
- The Indians treated this judgement as an insult to the honour of their women and many women were drawn into the movement because of this indignity.
- The Indians protested by illegally migrating from Natal into Transvaal.
- The Government held these Indians in jails.
- Miners and plantation workers went on a lightning strike.
- In India, Gokhale toured the whole country mobilising public opinion in support of the Indians in South Africa.
- Even the viceroy, Lord Hardinge, condemned the repression and called for an impartial enquiry.
- Eventually, through a series of negotiations involving Gandhi, Lord Hardinge, C.F. Andrews and General Smuts, an agreement was reached by which the Government of South Africa conceded the major Indian demands relating to the poll tax, the registration certificates and marriages solemnised according to Indian rites, and promised to treat the issue of Indian immigration in a sympathetic manner.

#### **Gandhi's Experience in South Africa**

- (i) Gandhi found that the masses had immense capacity to participate in and sacrifice for a cause that moved them.
- (ii) He was able to unite Indians belonging to different religions and classes, and men and women alike under his leadership.
- (iii) He also came to realise that at times the leaders have to take decisions unpopular with their enthusiastic supporters.
- (iii) He was able to evolve his own style of leadership and politics and new techniques of struggle on a limited scale, untrammelled by the opposition of contending political currents.

#### **Gandhi's Technique of Satyagraha**

- Gandhi evolved the technique during his stay in South Africa. It was based on truth and non-violence.
- Its basic tenets were—
- A satyagrahi was not to submit to what he considered as wrong, but was to always remain truthful, non-violent and fearless.
- He should be ready to accept suffering in his struggle against the evil doer.
- This suffering was to be a part of his love for truth. Even while carrying out his struggle against the evil doer, a true satyagrahi would love the evil-doer; hatred would be alien to his nature. A true satyagrahi would never bow before the evil, whatever the consequence.
- Only the brave and strong could practise satyagraha, which was not for the weak and cowards. Even violence was preferred to cowardice. Thought was never to be separated from practice.

#### **GANDHI IN INDIA**

- Gandhi returned to India in January 1915.
- His efforts in South Africa were well known not only among the educated but also among the masses.
- He decided to tour the country the next one year and see for himself the condition of the masses.

- He also decided not to take any position on any political matter for at least one year.
- As for the political currents prevalent at that time in India, he was convinced about the limitations of moderate politics and was also not in favour of Home Rule agitation which was becoming popular at that time.
- He thought that it was not the best time to agitate for Home Rule when Britain was in the middle of a war.
- He was convinced that the only technique capable of meeting the nationalist aims was a non-violent satyagraha.
- He also said that he would join no political organisation unless it too accepted the creed of non-violent satyagraha.
- During 1917 and 1918, Gandhi was involved in three struggles—in Champaran, Ahmedabad and Kheda—before he launched the Rowlatt Satyagraha.

### **Champaran Satyagraha (1917)—First Civil Disobedience**

- Gandhi was requested by Rajkumar Shukla to look into the problems of the indigo planters, of Champaran in Bihar.
- The European planters had been forcing peasants to grow indigo on 3/20 of the total land (called tinkathia system).
- Whentowards the end of the nineteenth century German synthetic dyes replaced indigo, the European planters demanded high rents and illegal dues from the peasants in order to maximize their profits before the peasants could shift to other crops.
- Besides, the peasants were forced to sell the produce at prices fixed by the Europeans.
- When Gandhi, joined now by Rajendra Prasad, Mazharul-Haq, Mahadeo Desai, Narhari Parekh, J.B. Kripalani, reached Charnparan to probe into the matter, the authorities ordered him to leave the area at once.
- Gandhi defied the order and preferred to face the punishment.
- This passive resistance or civil disobedience of an unjust order was a novel method at that time.
- Finally, the authorities retreated and permitted Gandhito make an enquiry.
- Now, the Government appointed a committee to go into the matter and nominated Gandhi as a member.
- Gandhi was able to convince the authorities that the tinkathia system should be abolished and that the peasants should be compensated for the illegal dues extracted from them.
- As a compromise with the planters, he agreed that only 25 per cent of the money taken should be compensated.
- Within a decade, the planters left the area.
- Gandhi had won the first battle of civil disobedience in India.

### **Ahmedabad Mill Strike (1918)—First Hunger Strike**

- Gandhi now intervened in a dispute between mill owners of Ahmedabad and the workers over the issue of discontinuation of the plague bonus.
- Gandhi asked the workers to go on a strike and demand a 35 per

cent increase in wages.

- The employers were willing to concede a 20 per cent bonus only.
- Gandhi advised the workers to remain non-violent while on strike.
- He undertook a fast unto death to strengthen the workers' resolve, but the fast also had the effect of putting pressure on mill owners who finally agreed to give the workers a 35 per cent increase in wages.

#### **Kheda Satyagraha (1918)–First Non-Cooperation**

- Because of drought in 1918, the crops failed in Kheda district of Gujarat.
- Revenue Code, if the yield was less than one-fourth the normal produce, the farmers were entitled to remission.
- The authorities refused to grant remission.
- Gandhi supported the peasants' cause and asked them to withhold revenue.
- The authorities, not willing to openly concede the peasants' demands, issued secret instructions that only those who could afford to pay should pay.
- During the Kheda Satyagraha, many young nationalists such as Sardar Patel and Indulal Yagnik became Gandhi's followers.

#### **GAINS FROM CHAMPARAN, AHMEDABAD AND KHEDA**

- Gandhi demonstrated to the people the efficacy of his technique of satyagraha.
- He found his feet among the masses and came to have a surer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the masses. He acquired respect and commitment of many, especially the youth.

#### **SATYAGRAHA AGAINST THE ROWLATT ACT–FIRST MASS STRIKE**

- Just when the nationalists were expecting post-War constitutional concessions, the Government came out with the repressive Rowlatt Act which the nationalists took as an insult.
- Gandhi called for a nationwide protest in February 1919.
- But soon, having seen the constitutional protest fail, Gandhi organised a Satyagraha Sabha and roped in younger members of Home Rule Leagues and the Pan Islamists.
- The forms of protest finally chosen included observance of a nationwide hartal (strike) accompanied by fasting and prayer, and civil disobedience against specific laws, and courting arrest and imprisonment.

There was a radical change in the situation by now–

- i. The masses had found a direction; now they could "act" instead of just giving verbal expression to their grievances.
- ii. From now onwards, peasants, artisans and the urban poor were to play an increasingly important part in the struggle.
- iii. Orientation of the national movement turned to the masses permanently. Gandhi said that salvation would come when masses were awakened and became active in politics.

- Satyagraha was to be launched on April 6 1919 but even before that there were large-scale violent, anti-British demonstrations in Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi, Ahmedabad, etc.



- Especially in Punjab, the situation had become very explosive due to wartime repression, forcruitments and ravages of disease, and the Army had to be called in April 1919 saw the biggest and the most violent anti-British upsurge since 1857.

#### **JALLIANWALA BAGH MASSACRE (APRIL 13,1919)**

- On Baisakhi day, a large, crowd of people mostly from neighbouring villages, unaware of the prohibitory orders in the city, had gathered in this small park to protest against the arrest of their leaders, Saifuddin Kitchlew and Satyaal.
- The Army surrounded the aring unmoor orders from General Dyer and blocked the only exit point and opened fire on the unarmed crowd killing around 1000.
- The incident was followed by uncivilised brutalities on the inhabitants of Amritsar.
- The entire nation was stunned.
- Rabindranath Tagore renounced his knighthood in protest.
- Gandhi by atmosphere of violence and withdrew the movement on April 18,1919.

#### **KHILAFAT AND NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT**

- During 1919-22, the British were opposed through two mass movements—the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation.
- Though the two movements emerged from separate issues, they adopted a common programme of action—that of non- violent noncooperation.
- The Khilafat issue was not directly linked to Indian politics but it provided the immediate background to the movement and gave an added advantage of cementing Hindu-Muslim unity against the British'.

#### **Background**

- The background to the two movements was provided by a series of events after the First World War which belied all hopes of the Government's generosity towards the Indian subjects.
- The year 1919, in particular, saw a strong feeling of discontent among all sections of Indians for various reasons-

1. The economic situation of the country in the post-War years had become alarming with a rise in prices of commodities, decrease in production of Indian industries, increase in burden of taxes and rents etc.
2. Almost all sections of society suffered economic hardship due to the war and this strengthened the anti-British attitude.
3. The Rowlatt Act, the imposition of martial law in Punjab and the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre exposed the brutal and uncivilised face of the foreign rule.
4. The Hunter Commission on thee Punjab atrocities proved to be an eyewash. In fact, the House of Lords (of the British Parliament) endorsed General Dyer's action and the British public showed solidarity with General Dyer by helping The Morning Post collect 30,000 pounds for him.
4. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms with their illconceived scheme of dyarchy failed to satisfy the rising demand of the Indians for self-government.

**The post-First World War period also saw the preparation of the ground for common political action by Hindus and Muslims–**

- (i) the Lucknow Pact (1916) had stimulated Congress Muslim League cooperation;
  - (ii) the Rowlatt Act agitation brought Hindus and Muslims, and also other sections of the society, together; and
  - (iii) Radical nationalist Muslims like Mohammad Ali, Abul Kalam Azad, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Hasan Imam had now become more influential than the conservative Aligarh school elements who had dominated the League earlier. The younger elements advocated militant nationalism and active participation in the nationalist movement. They had strong anti-imperialist sentiments.
  - (iv) In this atmosphere emerged the Khilafat issue around which developed the historic Non-Cooperation Movement.
- In February 1920, Gandhi announced that the issues of the Punjab, wrongs and constitutional advance had been overshadowed by the Khilafat question and that he would soon lead a movement of non-cooperation if the terms of the peace treaty failed to satisfy the Indian Muslims.

**May 1920**

- The Treaty of Sevres with Turkey, signed in May 1920, completely dismembered Turkey.

**June 1920**

- An all-party conference at Allahabad approved a programme of boycott of schools, colleges and law courts, and asked Gandhi to lead it.

**August 01, 1920**

- The Khilafat Committee started a campaign of non-cooperation and the movement was formally launched. (Tilak had, incidentally, breathed his last on August 1, 1920.)

**September 1920**

- At a special session in Calcutta, the Congress approved a non-cooperation programme till the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs were removed and swaraj was established.
- The programme was to include–
- boycott of government schools and colleges;
  - boycott of law courts and dispensation of justice through panchayats instead;
  - boycott of Legislative Councils; (there were some differences over this as some leaders like C.R. Das were not willing to include a boycott of councils, but bowed to Congress discipline; these leaders boycotted elections held in November 1920 and the majority of the voters too stayed away);
  - boycott of foreign cloth and use of khadi instead; also practice of hand-spinning to be done;
  - renunciation of government honours and titles;
- the second phase could include mass civil disobedience including

resignation from government service, and non-payment of taxes.

- During the movement, the participants were supposed to work for Hindu- Muslim unity and for removal of untouchability, all the time remaining non-violent.

### **December 1920**

At the Nagpur session of the Indian National Congress—

- i. the programme of non-cooperation was endorsed;
  - ii. an important change was made in Congress creed: now, instead of having the attainment of self-government through constitutional means as its goal, the Congress decided to have the attainment of swaraj through peaceful and legitimate means, thus committing itself to an extraconstitutional mass struggle;
  - iii. some important organisational changes were made: a Congress Working Committee (CWC) of 15 members was set up to lead the Congress from now onwards; Provincial Congress Committees on linguistic basis were organised; ward committees were organised; and entry fee was reduced to four annas;
  - iv. Gandhi declared that if the non-cooperation programme was implemented completely, swaraj would be ushered in within a year.
  - v. Many groups of revolutionary terrorists, especially those from Bengal, also pledged support to the Congress programme.
  - vi. At this stage, some leaders like Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Annie Besant, G.S. Kharpade and B.C. Pal left the Congress as they believed in a constitutional and lawful struggle while some others like Surendranath Banerjee founded the Indian National Liberal Federation and played a minor role in national politics hence forward.
- The adoption by the Congress of the non-cooperation movement initiated, earlier by the Khilafat Committee gave it a new energy, and the years 1921 and 1922 saw an unprecedented popular upsurge.

### **Spread of the Movement**

- Gandhi accompanied by the Ali brothers undertook a nationwide tour.
- About 90,000 students left government schools and colleges and joined around 800 national schools and colleges which cropped up during this time.
- These educational institutions were organized under the leadership of Acharya Narendra Dev, C.R. Das, Lala Lajpat Rai, Zakir Hussain, Subhash Bose (who became the principal of National College at Calcutta) and included Jamia Milli at Aligarh, Kashi Vidyapeeth, Gujarat Vidyapeeth and Bihar Vidyapeeth.
- Many lawyers gave up their practice, some of whom were Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, C.R. Das, C. Rajagopalachari, Saifuddin Kitchlew, Vallabhbhai Patel, Asaf Ali, T. Prakasam and Rajendra Prasad.
- Heaps of foreign cloth were burnt publicly and their imports fell by half.
- Picketing of shops selling foreign liquor and of toddy shops was undertaken at many places.
- Tilak Swaraj Fund was oversubscribed and one crore rupees collected.
- Congress volunteer corps emerged as the parallel police.

- In July 1921, the Ali brothers gave a call to the Muslims to resign from the Army as that was unreligious.
- The Ali brothers were arrested for this in September.
- Gandhi echoed their call and asked local Congress committees to pass similar resolutions to that effect.
- Now, the Congress gave a call to local Congress bodies to start civil disobedience if it was thought that the people were ready for it.
- Already, a no-tax movement against union board taxes in Midnapore (Bengal) and in Guntur (Andhra) was going on.
- In Assam, strikes in tea plantations, steamer services, Assam-Bengal Railways had been organised. J.M. Sengupta was a prominent leader in these strikes.
- In November 1921, the visit of the Prince of Wales to India invited strikes and demonstrations.
- The spirit of defiance and unrest gave rise to many local struggles such as Awadh Kisan Movement (UP), Eka Movement (UP), Mappila Revolt (Malabar) and the Sikh agitation for the removal of mahants in Punjab.
- Government Response Talks between Gandhi and Reading, the viceroy, broke down in May 1921 as the Government wanted Gandhi to urge the Ali brothers to remove those portions from speeches which suggested violence.
- Gandhi realised that the Government was trying to drive a wedge between him and the Khilafat leaders and refused to fall into the trap.
- In December, the Government came down heavily on the protestors.
- Volunteer rcorps were declared illegal, public meetings were banned, the press was gagged and most of the leaders barring Gandhi were arrested.

### **The Last Phase of the Movement**

- Gandhi was now under increasing pressure from the Congress rank and file to start the civil disobedience programme and the Ahmedabad session in 1921 (presided over, incidentally, by C.R. Das while still in jail; Hakim Ajmal Khan was the acting president) appointed Gandhi the sole authority on the issue.
  - On February 1, 1922 Gandhi threatened to launch civil disobedience from Bardoli (Gujarat) if
    - (1) political prisoners were not released, and
    - (2) press controls were, not removed.
- The movement had hardly begun before it was brought to an abrupt end.

### **Chauri Chaura Incident**

- A small sleepy village named Chauri-Chaura (Gorakhpur district, UP) has found a place in history books due to an incident of violence on February 5, 1922 which was to prompt Gandhi to withdraw the movement.
- The police here had beaten up the leader of a group of volunteers campaigning against liquor sales and high food prices, and then opened fire on the crowd which had come to protest before the police station.
- The agitated crowd torched the police station with policemen inside who had taken shelter there; those who tried to flee were hacked to death and thrown back into the fire.

- Twenty-two policemen were killed in the violence.
- Gandhi, not happy with the increasingly violent trend of the movement, immediately announced the withdrawal of the movement.
- The CWC met at Bardoli in February 1922 and resolved to stop all activity that led to breaking of law and to get down to constructive work, instead, which was to include Potilarisation of jchail national r temperance, for mitouchabilitv.
- Most of the nationalist leaders including C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru, Subhash Bose, Jawaharlal Nehru, however, expressed their bewilderment at Gandhi's decision to withdraw the movement.
- In March 1922 Gandhi was arrested and sentenced to six years in jail.
- He made the occasion memorable by a magnificent court speech: "I am here, therefore, to invite and submit cheerfully to the highest penalty that can, be inflicted upon me for what in law is deliberate crime, and what appears to me to be the highest, duty of a citizen."

#### **Why Gandhi Withdrew the Movement**

- Gandhi felt that people had not learnt or fully understood the method of nonviolence.
- Incidents like Chauri-Chaura could lead to excitement and fervour, turning the movement generally violent.
- A violent movement could be easily suppressed by the colonial regime who could use the incidents of violence as an excuse to use the armed might of the state against the protestors.
- The movement was also showing signs of fatigue.
- This was natural as it is not possible to sustain any movement at a high pitch for very long.
- The Government seemed to be in no mood for negotiations.
- The central theme of the agitation—the Khilafat question—also dissipated soon.
- In November 1922, the people of Turkey rose under Mustafa Kamal Pasha and deprived the Sultan of political power.
- Turkey was made a secular state.
- Thus, the Khilafat question lost its relevance.
- A European style of legal system was established in Turkey and extensive rights granted to women.
- Education was nationalised and modern agriculture and industries developed.
- In 1924, the caliphate was abolished.

#### **Evaluation of Khilafat Non-Cooperation Movement**

- The movement brought the urban Muslims into, the national movement, but at the same time it communalised the national politics to an extent.
- Although Muslim sentiments were a manifestation of the spread of a wider anti-imperialist feeling, the national leaders failed to raise the religious political consciousness of the Muslims to a level of secular political consciousness.
- With the Non-Cooperation Movement, nationalist sentiments reached every nook and corner of the country and politicised every strata of population—the artisans, peasants, students, urban poor, women,

traders etc.

- It was this politicisation and activisation of millions of men and women which imparted a revolutionary character to the national movement.
- Colonial rule was based on two myths—one, that such a rule was in the interest of Indians and two, that it was invincible.
- The first myth had been exploded by the economic critique by Moderate nationalists.
- The second myth had been challenged by satyagraha through mass struggle.
- Now, the masses lost the hitherto all-pervasive fear of the colonial rule and its mighty repressive organs.

### **SWARAJISTS AND NO-CHANGERS**

#### **Beginning of Congress-Khilafat Swarajya Party**

- After Gandhi's arrest (March 1922), there was disintegration, disorganisation and demoralisation among nationalist ranks.
- A debate started among Congressmen on what to do during the transition period, i.e., the passive phase of the movement.
- One section led by C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru and Ajmal Khan wanted an end to the boycott of legislative councils so that the nationalists could enter them to expose the basic weaknesses of these assemblies and use these councils as an arena of political struggle to arouse popular enthusiasm
- They wanted, in other words, to 'end or mend' these councils, i.e., if the Government did not respond to the nationalists' demands, then they would obstruct the working of these councils.
- Those advocating entry into legislative councils came to be known as the Swarajists, while the other school of thought led by Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, C. Rajagopalachari and M.A. Ansari came to be known as the 'No-changers'.
- The 'No-changers' opposed council entry, advocated, concentration on constructive work, and continuation of boycott and noncooperation, and quiet preparation for resumption of the suspended civil disobedience programme.
- The differences over the question of council entry between the two schools of thought resulted in the defeat of the Swarajists' proposal of 'ending or mending' the councils at the Gaya session of the Congress (December 1922).
- C.R Das and Motilal Nehru resigned from the presidentship and secretaryship respectively of the Congress and announced the formation of Congress-Khilafat Swarajya Party, with C.R. Das as the president and Motilal Nehru as one of the secretaries.

#### **Swarajists' Arguments**

- The Swarajists argued that entering the councils would not negate the non-cooperation programme; in fact, it would be like carrying on the movement through other means—opening a new front.
- In a time of political vacuum, council work would serve to enthuse the masses and keep up their morale.
- Entry of nationalists would deter the Government from stuffing the councils with undesirable elements who may be used to provide legitimacy to government measures.

➤ Their only intention was to use the councils as arena of political struggle; they had no intention to use the councils as organs for gradual transformation of colonial rule.

### **No-Changers' Arguments**

- The No-Changers argued that parliamentary work would lead to neglect of constructive work, loss of revolutionary zeal and to political corruption.
- Constructive work would prepare everyone for the next phase of civil disobedience.
- But at the same time both sides wanted to avoid a 1907 type split and kept in touch with Gandhi who was in jail.
- Both sides also realised the significance of putting up a united front to get a mass movement to force the Government to introduce reforms, and both sides accepted the necessity of Gandhi's leadership of a united nationalist front.
- Keeping these factors in mind, a compromise was reached at a meeting in Delhi in September 1923.
- The Swarajists were allowed to contest elections as a group within the Congress.
- The Swarajists accepted the Congress programme with only one difference—that they would join legislative councils.
- The elections to the newly constituted Central Legislative Assembly and to provincial assemblies were to be held in November 1923.
- The Swarajist Manifesto for Elections Released in October 1923, the manifesto took a strong anti-imperialist line.
- It said— the guiding motive of the British in governing India is to secure selfish interests of their own country; the so-called reforms are only a blind to further the said interests under the pretence of granting a responsible government, the real objective being to continue exploitation of the unlimited resources of the country by keeping.
- Indians permanently in a subservient position to Britain; the Swarajists would present the nationalist demand of self-government in councils.
- if this demand was rejected, they would adopt a policy of uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction within the councils to make governance through councils impossible; councils would thus be wrecked from within by creating deadlocks on every measure.

### **Gandhi's Attitude**

- Gandhi was initially opposed to the Swarajist proposal of council entry.
- But after his release from prison on health grounds in February 1924, he gradually moved towards a reconciliation with the Swarajists because
  1. he felt public opposition to the programme of council entry would be counter-productive;
  2. in the November 1923 elections, the Swarajists had managed to win 42 out of 141 elected seats and a clear majority in the provincial assembly of Central Provinces and, in legislatures, had joined hands with the Liberals and the independents like Jinnah and Malaviya; the courageous and uncompromising manner in which the Swarajists functioned convinced

him that they would not become just another limb of colonial administration;

3. there was a government crackdown on revolutionary terrorists and the Swarajists towards the end of 1924; this angered Gandhi and he expressed his solidarity with the Swarajists by surrendering to their wishes.

### **Swarajist Activity in Councils**

- By 1924, the Swarajist position had weakened because of widespread communal riots, split among Swarajists themselves on communal and Responsivist-Non-responsivist lines, and the death of C.R. Das in 1925 weakened it further.
- The Responsivists among Swarajists—Lala Lajpat Rai, Madan Mohan Malaviya and N.C. Kelkar—advocated cooperation with the Government and holding of office wherever possible to protect the so-called Hindu interests.
- They accused the Non-responsivists like Motilal Nehru of being anti-Hindu and a beef-eater.
- Thus, the main leadership of the Swarajya Party reiterated faith in mass civil disobedience and withdrew from legislatures in March 1926, while another section of Swarajists went into the 1926 elections as a party in disarray, and did not fare well.
- In 1930, the Swarajists finally walked out as a result of the Lahore Congress resolution on purna swaraj and the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-34).

### **Their Achievements**

1. With coalition partners, they outvoted the Government several times, even on matters relating to budgetary grants, and passed adjournment motions.
2. They agitated through powerful speeches on selfgovernment, civil liberties and industrialisation.
3. Vithalbhai Patel was elected speaker of Central Legislative Assembly in 1925.
4. A noteworthy achievement was the defeat of the Public Safety Bill in 1928 which was aimed at empowering the Government to deport undesirable and subversive foreigners (because the Government was alarmed by the spread of socialist and communist ideas and believed that a crucial role was being played by the British and other foreign activists being sent by the Comintern).
5. By their activities, they filled the political vacuum at a time when the national movement was recouping its strength.
6. They exposed the hollowness of the Montford scheme.
7. They demonstrated that the councils could be used creatively.

### **Their Drawbacks**

1. The Swarajists lacked a policy to coordinate their militancy inside legislatures with the mass struggle outside. They relied totally on newspaper reporting to communicate with the public.
2. An obstructionist strategy had its limitations.
3. They could not carry on with their coalition partners very far because of conflicting ideas, which further limited their effectiveness.
4. They failed to resist the perks and privileges of power and office.
5. They failed to support the peasants' cause in Bengal and lost support among Muslim members who were propeasant.



### **Constructive Work by 'No-Changers**

1. Ashrams sprang up where young, men and women worked, among tribals and lower castes (especially in Kheda and Bardoli areas of Gujarat), and popularised charkha and khadi.
2. National schools and colleges were set up where students were trained in a non-colonial ideological framework.
3. Significant work was done for Hindu-Muslim unity, removing untouchability, boycott of foreign cloth and liquor, and for flood relief.
4. The constructive workers served as the backbone of civil disobedience as active organisers.

### **A Critique of Constructive Work**

- National education benefited the urban lower middle classes and the rich peasants only.
- Enthusiasm for national education surfaced in the excitement of the movement only. In passivity, the lure of degrees and jobs took the students to official schools and colleges.
- Popularisation of khadi was an uphill task since it was costlier than the imported cloth.
- While campaigning about the social aspect of untouchability, no emphasis was laid on the economic grievances of the landless and agricultural labourers comprising mostly the untouchables.
- Although the Swarajists and the No-changers worked in their separate ways, they kept on best of terms with one another and were able to unite whenever the time was ripe for a new political struggle.

### **EMERGENCE OF NEW FORCES DURING THE 1920s**

- The third decade of the twentieth century is a watershed in modern Indian history in more ways than one.
- While, on the one hand, this period marked the entry of Indian masses into the national movement, on the other hand, this period saw the basic crystallisation of the main political currents on the national scene.
- These diverse political currents owed their origin partly to the coming on the scene of the Gandhian philosophy of satyagraha based on truth and non-violence, as they embodied a positive or negative reaction to it.
- The international influence on Indian political thinkers during this phase was also more pronounced than before.
- The new forces to emerge during the 1920s included:

#### **1. Spread of Marxism and Socialist Ideas**

- These ideas inspired many socialist and communist groups to come into existence and resulted in the rise of a left wing, within the Congress, represented by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Bose.
- These young nationalists, inspired by the Soviet Revolution and dissatisfied with Gandhian ideas and political programme, began advocating radical solutions for economic, political and social ills of the country;
- These younger nationalists—

\* were critical both of Swarajists and No-changers, advocated a more

consistent anti-imperialist line in the form of a slogan for purna swarajya (complete independence).

\*were influenced by art awareness, though still vague, of international currents, stressed the need to combine nationalism and antiimperialism with social justice and simultaneously raised the question of internal class oppression by capitalists and landlords.

- Among the communist groups, **the Communist Party of India (CPI) was formed in 1920 in Tashkent** (now, the capital of Uzbekistan) by **M.N. Roy, Abani Mukherji** and others after the second Congress of Comintern.
- M.N. Roy was also the first to be elected to the leadership of Comintern.
- In 1924, many communists—S.A. Dartge, Muzaffar Ahmed, Shaukoa Usmani, Nalini Gupta—were jailed in the Kanpur Bolshevik conspiracy case.
- In 1925, the Indian Communist Conference at Kanpur formalised the foundation of the CPI.
- In 1929, the Government crackdown on communists resulted in the arrest and trial of 31 leading communists, trade unionists and left-wing leaders who were tried at Meerut in the famous Meerut conspiracy case.
- Workers' and peasants' parties were organised all over the country and they propagated Marxist and communist ideas.
- All these communist groups and workers' and peasants' parties remained an integral part of the national movement and worked within the Congress.

## **2. Activism of Indian Youth**

- All over, students' leagues were being established and students conferences were being held.
- In 1928, Jawaharlal Nehru presided over the All Bengal Students' Conference.

## **3. Peasants' Agitations In the United Provinces**

- These agitations were for revision of tenancy laws, including lower rents, protection against eviction and relief from indebtedness. Similar peasant agitations took place in the.
- Rampa region of Andhra, in Rajasthan, in ryotwari areas of Bombay and Madras.
- In Gujarat, the Bardoli Satyagraha was led by Patel (1928).

## **4. Growth of Trade Unionism**

- The trade union movement was led by All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) founded in 1920.
- Lala Lajpat Rai was its first president and Dewan Chaman Lal its general secretary.
- Tilak was also one of the moving spirits.
- The major strikes during the 1920s included those in Kharagpur Railway Workshops, Tata Iron and Steel Works (Jamshedpur), Bombay Textile Mills (this involved 1,50,000 workers and went on for 5 months), and Buckingham Carnatic Mills.

- In 1928, there were a number of strikes involving 5 lakh workers. In 1923, the first May Day was celebrated in India in Madras.

### **5. Caste Movements**

- As in earlier periods, the varied contradictions of the Indian society found expression in caste associations and movements.
- These movements could be divisive, conservative and at times potentially radical, and included:
  - Justice Party (Madras) Self-respect movement (1925) under "Periyar"—E.V. Ramaswamy Naicker (Madras)
  - Satyashodhak activists in Satara (Maharashtra)
  - Bhaskar Rao Jadhav (Maharashtra)
  - Mahars under Ambedkar (Maharashtra)
  - Radical Ezhavas under K. Aiyappan and C. Kesavan in Kerala
  - Yadavs in Bihar for improvement in social status
  - Unionist Party under Fazl-i-Hussain (Punjab).

### **6. Revolutionary Terrorism with a Turn towards Socialism**

- This line was adopted by those dissatisfied with the nationalist strategy of the political struggle with its emphasis on non-violence.
- In this also, two strands developed—
  - Hindustan Republican Association (H.R.A.)—in PunjabUP-Bihar
  - Yugantar, Anushilan groups and later Chittagong Revolt Group under Surya Sen—in Bengal

## **REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISM DURING THE 1920s**

### **Why Attraction for Revolutionary Terrorism after Non-Cooperation Movement**

- The revolutionaries had faced severe repression during the First World War.
- But in early 1920, many were released by the Government under a general amnesty to create a harmonious environment for the Montford Reforms to work.
- Soon, Gandhi launched the Non-Cooperation Movement.
- Under the persuasion of Gandhi and C.R. Das, many terrorist groups either agreed to join the non-cooperation programme or suspended their activities to give the nonviolent Non-Cooperation Movement a chance.
- But the sudden withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement left many of them disillusioned; they began to question the basic strategy of nationalist leadership and its emphasis on non-violence and began to look for alternatives.
- But since these younger nationalists were not attracted to the parliamentary work of the Swarajists or to the patient, undramatic, constructive work of the No-changers, they were drawn to the idea that violent methods alone would free India.
- Thus, revolutionary terrorism was revived.
- Nearly all major leaders of revolutionary terrorist policies had been enthusiastic participants in the Non-Cooperation Movement and included Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee, Surya Sen, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Chandrasekhar Azad, Shiv Verma, Bhagwaticharan Vohra, Jaidev Kapur and Jatin Das.

- Two separate strands of revolutionary terrorist groups emerged during this period—one operating in Punjab-UP-Bihar and the other in Bengal.

### **Major Influences**

1. Upsurge of working class trade unionism after the War; the revolutionaries wanted to harness the revolutionary potential of the new emergent class for nationalist revolution.
2. Russian Revolution (1917) and the success of the young Soviet state in consolidating itself.
3. Newly sprouting communist groups with their emphasis on Marxism, socialism and the proletariat.
4. Journals publishing memoirs and articles extolling the self-sacrifice of revolutionaries, such as Atmasakti, Sarathi and Bijou
5. Novels and books such as Bandi Jiwan by Sachin Sanyal and Maher Dabi by Sharatchandra Chatterjee (a Government ban only enhanced its popularity).

### **In Punjab-UP-Bihar**

- The revolutionary terrorist activity in this region was dominated by the Hindustan Republican Association/Army or HRA (later renamed Hindustan Socialist Republican Association or HSRA).
- The HRA was founded in October 1924 in Kanpur by Ramprasad Bismil, Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee and Sachin Sanyal, with an aim to organise an armed revolution to overthrow the colonial government and establish in its place a Federal Republic of United States of India whose basic principle would be adult franchise.

### **Kakori Robbery (August 1925)**

- The most important "action" of the HRA was the Kakori robbery.
- The men held up the 8-Down train at Kakori, an obscure village near Lucknow, and looted its official railway cash.
- Government crackdown after the Kakori robbery led to arrests of many, of whom 17 were jailed, four transported for life and four—Bismil, Ashfaqullah, Roshan Singh and Rajendra Lahiri—were hanged.
- Kakori proved to be a setback.
- The HSRA Determined to overcome the Kakori setback, the younger revolutionaries, inspired by socialist ideas, set out to reorganize
- Hindustan Republic Association at a historic meeting in the ruins of Ferozshah Kotla in Delhi (September 1928).
- The participants included Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Bhagwaticharan Vohra from Punjab and Bejoy Kumar Sinha, Shiv Verma and Jaidev Kapur from UP.
- The HSRA decided to work under a collective leadership and adopted socialism as its official goal.

### **Saunders' Murder (Lahore, December 1928)**

- Just when the HSRA revolutionaries had begun to move away from individual heroic action and terrorism, the death of Sher-i-Punjab Lala Lajpat Rai due to lathi blows received during a lathi-charge on an anti-Simon Commission procession (October 1928) led them once again to take to individual assassination.

- Bhagat Singh, Azad and Rajguru shot dead Saunders, the police official responsible for the lathicharge in Lahore.
- The assassination was justified in these words:
- "The murder of a leader respected by millions of people at the unworthy hands of an ordinary police officer was an insult to the nation.
- It was the bounden duty of young men of India to efface it we regret to have had to kill a person but he was part and parcel of that inhuman and unjust order which has to be destroyed."

#### **Bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly (April 1929)**

- The HSRA leadership now decided to let the people know about its changed objectives and the need for a revolution by the masses.
- Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt were asked to throw a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly on April 8, 1929 against the passage of the Public Safety Bill and Trade Disputes Bill aimed at curtailing civil liberties of citizens in general and workers in particular.
- The bombs had been deliberately made harmless and were aimed at making 'the deaf hear'.
- The objective was to get arrested and to use the trial court as a forum for propaganda so that people would become familiar with their movement and ideology.
- Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were tried in the Lahore conspiracy case. Many other revolutionaries were tried in series of other cases.
- In jail, these revolutionaries protested against the horrible conditions through a fast, and demanded honourable and decent treatment as political prisoners.
- Jatin Das became the first martyr on the 64th day of his fast.
- Defence of these young revolutionaries was organised by Congress leaders.
- Bhagat Singh became a household name.
- Azad was involved in a bid to blow up Viceroy Irwin's train near Delhi in December 1929.
- During 1930 there were a series of terrorist actions in Punjab and UP towns (26 incidents in 1930 in Punjab alone).
- Azad was killed in a police encounter in a park in Allahabad in February 1931.
- Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were hanged on March 23, 1931.
- In Bengal During the 1920s many revolutionary groups reorganised their underground activities, while many continued working under the Congress, thus getting access to the masses and providing an organisational base to the Congress in towns and villages.
- Many cooperated with C.R. Das in his Swarajist work.
- After Das's death (1925), the Bengal Congress broke up into two factions—one led by J.M. Sengupta (Anushilan group joined forces with him) and the other led by Subhash Bose (Yugantar group backed him).
- The actions of the reorganised groups included an assassination

attempt on the notorious Calcutta Police  
Charles Tegart. another man named Day got  
Gopinath Saha in 1924.

Commissioner,  
killed) by

- The Government, armed with a new ordinance, came down heavily on revolutionaries. Many including Subhash Bose were arrested. Gopinath Saha was hanged.
- Because of government repression and factionalism among the revolutionaries, revolutionary activity suffered a setback, but soon many of them started regrouping.
- Among the new "Revolt Groups", the most active and famous was the Chittagong group under Surya Sen.
- Chittagong Armoury Raid (April 1930) Surya Sen had participated in the Non-Cooperation Movement and had become a teacher in the national school in Chittagong.
- He was imprisoned from 1926 to 1928 for revolutionary activity and afterwards continued working in the Congress.
- He was the secretary of the Chittagong District Congress Committee.
- He used to say "Humanism is a special virtue of a revolutionary." He was a lover of poetry and an admirer of Tagore and Qazi Nazrul Islam.
- Surya Sen decided to organise an armed rebellion along with his associates—Anant Singh, Garish Ghosh and Lokenath Baul to show that it was possible to challenge the armed might of the mighty British Empire.
- They had planned to occupy two main armouries in Chittagong to seize and supply arms to the revolutionaries to destroy telephone and telegraph lines and to dislocate the railway link of Chittagong with the rest of Bengal.
- The raid was conducted in April 1930 and involved 65 activists under the banner of Indian Republican Army—Chittagong Branch.
- The raid was quite successful; Sen hoisted the national flag, took salute and proclaimed a provisional revolutionary government.
- Later, they dispersed into neighbouring villages and raided government targets.
- Surya Sen was arrested in February 1933 and hanged in January 1934, but the Chittagong raid fired the imagination of the revolutionary-minded youth and recruits poured into the revolutionary terrorist groups in a steady stream.

#### **Official Reaction**

- There was panic at first and then severe government repression. Armed with 20 repressive Acts, the Government let loose the police on the revolutionaries.
- In Chittagong, several villages were burned and punitive fines imposed on many others.
- In 1933, Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested for sedition and given two years' sentence because he had condemned imperialism and praised the heroism of the revolutionaries.

### **Ideological Rethinking**

- A real breakthrough was made by Bhagat Singh and his comrades in terms of the revolutionary ideology, forms of revolutionary struggle and the goals of revolution.
- The rethinking had begun in the mid-1920s.
- The Founding Council of HRA had decided to preach revolutionary and communist principles, and the HRA Manifesto (1925) declared that the "HRA stood for abolition of all systems which made exploitation of man by man possible".
- HRA's main organ Revolutionary had proposed nationalisation of railways and other means of transport and of heavy industries such as ship building and steel.
- HRA had also decided to start labour and peasant organisations and work for an "organized and armed revolution".
- During their last days (late 1920s). These revolutionaries had started moving away from individual heroic action and terrorism towards mass politics.
- Bismil, during his last days, appealed to the youth to give up pistols and revolvers, not to work in revolutionary conspiracies and instead work in an open movement.
- He urged the youth to strengthen Hindu-Muslim unity, unite all political groups under the leadership of the Congress.
- Bismil affirmed faith in communism and the principle that "every human being has equal rights over the products of nature".
- The famous statement of the revolutionary position is contained in the book The Philosophy of the Bomb written by Bhagwaticharan Vohra.
- Even before his arrest, Bhagat Singh had moved away from belief in terrorism and individual heroic action to Marxism and the belief that a popular broad-based movement alone could lead to a successful revolution.
- In other words, revolution could only be "by the masses, for the masses".
- That is why Bhagat Singh helped establish the Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha (1926) as an open wing of revolutionaries to carry out political work among the youth, peasants and workers, and it was to open branches in villages.
- Bhagat and Sukhdev also organised the Lahore Students' Union for open, legal work among students.
- Bhagat and his comrades also realised that a revolution meant organisation and development of a mass movement of the exploited and the suppressed sections by the revolutionary intelligentsia.
- Bhagat used to say, "real revolutionary armies are in villages and factories."

### **What then was the need for individual heroic action?**

- Firstly, because of the rapidity of change in thinking, effective acquisition of new ideology is a prolonged and historical process.
- Secondly, these young intellectuals faced the classic dilemma of how to mobilise people and recruit them.
- Here, they decided to opt for propaganda by deed, i.e., through individual heroic action and by using courts as a forum for revolutionary propaganda.

### **Redefining Revolution**

- Revolution was no longer equated with militancy and violence.
- Its objective was to be national liberation—imperialism was to be overthrown but beyond that a new socialist order was to be achieved, ending "exploitation of man by man".
- As Bhagat Singh said in the court, "Revolution does not necessarily involve sanguinary strife, nor is there a place in it for personal vendetta.
- It is not the cult of bomb and pistol. By revolution we mean the present order of things, which is based on manifest injustice, must change".
- Bhagat fully accepted Marxism and the class approach to society— "Peasants have to free themselves not only from the foreign yoke, but also from the yoke of landlords and capitalists.
- " He also said, "The struggle in India will continue; so long as a handful of exploiters continue to exploit labour of common people to further their own interests.
- It matters little whether these exploiters are British capitalists, British and Indian capitalists in alliance, or even purely Indians.
- " He defined socialism scientifically as abolition of capitalism and class domination.
- Bhagat was fully and consciously secular—two of the six rules drafted by Bhagat for the Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha were that its members would have nothing to do with communal bodies and that they would propagate a general feeling of tolerance among people, considering religion to be a matter of personal belief.
- Bhagat also saw the importance of freeing people from the mental bondage of religion and superstition—"to be a revolutionary, one required immense moral strength, but one also required criticism and independent thinking".

### **Aspects of the New Phase of Terrorist Movement in Bengal**

**Some noteworthy aspects were as follows.**

- There was a large-scale participation of young women especially under Surya Sen.
  - These women provided shelter, carried messages and fought with guns in hand. Prominent women revolutionaries in Bengal during this phase included Pritilata Waddadar, who died conducting a raid; Kalpana Dutt who was arrested and tried along with Surya Sen and given a life sentence; Santi Ghosh and Suniti Chandheri, school girls of Comilla, who shot dead the district magistrate. (December 1931); and Bina Das who fired point blank at the Governor while receiving her degree at the convocation (February 1932).
- There was an emphasis on group action aimed at organs of the colonial state, instead of individual action. The objective was to set an example before the youth and to demoralise the bureaucracy.
- Some of the earlier Hindu religiosity was shed, and there were no more rituals like oath-taking, and this facilitated participation by Muslims.



- Surya Sen had Muslims such as Satar, Mir Ahmed, Fakir Ahmed Mian and Tunu Mian in his group.

### **Some Drawbacks**

- The movement retained some conservative elements. It failed to evolve broader socio-economic goals. Those working with Swarajists failed to support the cause of Muslim peasantry against zamindars in Bengal.

### **GROWTH OF COMMUNALISM**

#### **Characteristic Features of Indian Communalism**

Communalism is basically an ideology which evolved through three broad stages in India—

- (i) Communal Nationalism: the notion that since a group or a section of people belong to a particular religious community, their secular interests are the same, i.e., even those matters which have got nothing to do with religion affect all or them equally.
- (ii) Liberal Communalism: the notion that since two religious communities have different religious interests, they have different interests in the secular sphere also (i.e., in economic, political and cultural spheres).
- (iii) Extreme Communalism: the notion that not only different religious communities have different interests, but these interests are also incompatible i.e., two communities cannot co-exist because the interests of one community come into conflict with those of the other.

- There is nothing unique about Indian communalism.
- It was the result of the conditions which have, in other societies, produced similar phenomena and ideologies such as Fascism, anti-Semitism, racism, the Catholic-Protestant conflict in Northern Ireland and the Christian-Muslim conflict in Lebanon.
- Bypassing basic economic interests, the communalists claim to protect interests which do not exist.
- Communalism is a modern phenomenon—rooted in modern social, economic and political colonial structure—that emerged out of modern politics based on mass mobilisation and popular participation.
- Its social roots lay in the rising middle classes who propagated imaginary communal interests to further their own economic interests—communalism was a bourgeois question par excellence.
- Communalists were backed in their communal campaign by the colonial administration.
- Communalism was the channel through which colonialists expanded their social base.
- Communalists and colonialists were helped in their sinister motives by the fact that often socio-economic distinctions in Indian society coincided with religious distinctions.
- The inherent class contradictions were given a post-facto communal colouring by the vested interests.
- Conservative social reactionary elements gave full support to communalism.
- Religiosity itself did not amount to communalism but in a country where lack of education and low awareness of the outside world was a sad reality, religion had the potential of becoming, and was used as, a vehicle of communalism

### **Reasons for Growth of Communalism**

- Communalism was rooted in modern economic, political and social institutions where new identities were, emerging in a haphazard manner even as the old, pre-modern identities had not ;liminished.
- A clash of this fundamental dichotomy gave rise to a communal ideology.

### **Socio-economic reasons**

- The professional classes and the bourgeoisie emerged later among the Muslims than among the Hindus.
- There was rivalry for jobs, trade and industry between the two communities.
- The Muslim bourgeoisie used all the lower middle classes of the Muslims against the Hindu bourgeoisie to further their class interests.
- Because of the economic backwardness of India and rampant unemployment, there was ample scope for the colonial government to use concessions, favours and reservations to fuel communal and separatist tendencies.
- Also, modern political consciousness was late in developing among the Muslims and the dominance of traditional reactionary elements over the Muslim masses helped a communal outlook to take root.

### **British' policy of divide and rule**

- Muslims were generally looked upon with, suspicion initially, especially after the Wahabi and 1857 revolts, and were subjected to repression and discrimination by the Government.
- Also, the introduction of English education had undermined. Arabic and Persian learning which added further to the economic backwardness and exclusion of the Muslims from service.
- After the 1870s, with signs of the emergence of Indian nationalism and growing politicisation of the educated middle classes, the Government reversed its policy of repression of Muslims and, instead, decided to rally them behind it through concessions, favours and reservations, and used them against nationalist forces. The Government used persons like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan to counter the growing influence of the Congress.
- Sir, Syed Khan had a broadminded and reformist outlook initially but latei he started supporting the colonial government, exhorting the Muslim masses to stay away from the Congress and not to get politicised.
- He also started talking of separate interests of Hindus and Muslims.

### **Communalism in history writing**

- Initially suggested by imperialist historians and later adopted by some chauvinist Indian historians, the communal interpretation of Indian history portrayed the ancient phase as the Hindu phase and the medieval phase as the Muslim phase.
- The conflicts of ruling classes during the medieval phase were distorted and exaggerated as Hindu-Muslim conflicts.

### **Side-effects of socio-religious reform movements**

- Reform movements such as Wahabi Movement among Muslims and Shuddhi among Hindus with their militant overtones made the role of religion more vulnerable to communalism. Reforms, at times, were seen as a process of insulating one community from the influence of another religious community.

#### **Side-effects of militant nationalism**

- The early nationalists made conscious efforts to remove minority fears. Dadabhai Naoroji, presiding over the second Congress session (1886), declared the intentions of the Congress not to raise socioreligious questions in its forums.
- In 1889 the Congress decided not to take up any issue opposed by the Muslims. But later, with the coming of militant nationalism, a distinct Hindu nationalist tinge was palpable in the nationalist politics.
- For instance, Tilak's Ganapati and Shivaji festivals and anti-cow slaughter campaigns created much suspicion.
- Aurobindo's vision, of an Aryanised world, Swadeshi Movement with elements like dips in the Ganga and revolutionary terrorism with oath-taking before goddesses were hardly likely to enthuse Muslims into these campaigns in a big way.
- The communal element in the Lucknow Pact (1916) and the Khilafat agitation (1920-22) was too visible to be of insignificant consequences.

#### **Communal reaction by majority community**

- Naturally, the minority communalism met with a reaction from the majority community which set up militant organisations like the Hindu Mahasabha (established in 1915) and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS— established in 1925).
- The resultant one-upmanship of different versions of communal tendencies was one factor which deterred any effective counter-offensive against communalism.

#### **Evolution of the Two-Nation Theory**

- The development of the two-nation theory over the years is as follows: 1887: There was a frontal attack on the Congress by Dufferin, the viceroy, and Colvin, the Lt. Governor of the United Provinces.
- Syed Ahmed Khan and Raja Shiv Prasad of Banars were propped up as an anti-Congress front by the Government.
- Syed Ahmed Khan appealed to the educated Muslims to stay away from the Congress, although some
- Muslims did join the Congress. These included Badruddin Tyabji, Mir Musharraf A. Bhimji and Hamid Ali Khan.

#### **1906:**

- Agha Khan led a Muslim delegation (called the Shimla delegation) to the viceroy, Lord Minto, to demand separate electorates for Muslims at all levels and that the Muslim representation should be commensurate not only with their numerical strength but also with their "political importance and their contribution to the British Empire".
- Minto assured them of special communal representation in excess of

their population for their "extraordinary service" to the empire.

**1907:**

- The All India Muslim League was founded by Agha Khan, Nawab Salimullah of Dacca, Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Nawab Waqar-ul-Mulk to preach loyalty to the British Government and to keep the Muslim intelligentsia away from the Congress.

**1909:** Separate electorates were awarded under Morley-Minto Reforms.

**1909:** Punjab Hindu Sabha was founded by U.N. Mukherji and Lal Chandra.

**1915:** First session of All India Hindu Mahasabha was held under the aegis of the Maharaja of Qasim Bazar.

**1912-24:** During this period, the Muslim League was dominated by younger Muslim nationalists such as Mohammad Ali, Maulana Azad and Jinnah. But their nationalism was inspired by a communal view of political questions.

**1916:** The Congress accepted the Muslim League demand of separate electorates and the Congress and the League presented joint demands to the Government. But the Congress and the League came together as separate political entities and the Congress gave political legitimacy to the existence of the Muslim League.

**1920-22:** Muslims participated in the Rowlatt and Khilafat Non-Cooperation agitations but there was a communal element in the political outlook of Muslims.

**1920s:**

- The shadow of communal riots loomed large over the country. The Arya Samajists started Shuddhi (purification) and Sangathan (organisation) movements.
- The Shuddhi movement was aimed at reconverting to Hinduism the converts to Islam. The Muslims started the Tabligh and Tanzeem movements in retaliation.
- Some nationalists also turned communal. The Swarajists were divided along communal lines and the Responsivists among them joined the Hindu Mahasabha.
- The Ali brothers, after having put up a spectacular united front with the Congress, accused the Congress of protecting only Hindu interests.
- The Congress failed to evolve a suitable strategy to counter the rise of communalism.

**1928:**

- The Nehru Report on constitutional reforms as suggested by the Congress was opposed by Muslim hardliners and the Sikh League.
- Jinnah proposed fourteen points demanding separate electorates and reservation for Muslims in government service and self-governing bodies.
- By negotiating with the Muslim League, the Congress made a number

of mistakes:

1. It gave legitimacy to the politics of the League, thus giving recognition to the division of society into separate communities with separate interests.
2. It undermined the role of secular, nationalist Muslims.
3. Concessions to one community prompted another community to demand similar concessions.
4. This diverted attention from launching all-out attack on communalism.

#### **1930-34:**

- Some Muslim groups, such as Jamaat-i-ulernai-Hind, State of Kashmir and Khudai Khidmatgars participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement but overall the participation of Muslims was nowhere near the level of Khilafat agitation.
- While the Congress stayed away from two of the three round table conferences held in London to discuss further constitutional reforms, the communalists attended all three of them.

**1932:** Communal Award accepted all Muslim communal demands contained in the 14 points.

#### **After 1937:**

- After the Muslim League performed badly in the 1937 provincial elections, it decided to resort to extreme communalism.
  - There began a tendency to project the Muslims, not as a minority but as a separate nation (in the early 1930s this idea of a separate Muslim nation was proposed by a young Muslim intellectual Rahrnat All and later developed further by poet Iqbal).
  - From now onwards, communalism was organised as a mass movement with its base among middle and upper classes.
  - Vicious propaganda was launched against the Congress by Z.A. Suleri, F.M. Durrani, Fazl-ul-Haq, etc.
  - Extreme communalism was based on fear, hatred and violence of word and deed.
  - Till 1937 there had been liberal communalism, centred around safeguards and reservations.
  - It was communal while upholding certain liberal, democratic, humanistic and nationalistic values and the notion that these diverse communities could be welded together into one nation in one national interest.
  - The extreme communalism of Muslims found its echo in militant communal nationalism of Hindus represented by organisations such as the Hindu Mahasabha and RSS and thoughts of leaders like Golwalkar.
  - There were several reasons for the advent of extreme communalism.
1. With increasing radicalisation, the reactionary elements searched for a social base through channels of communalism.
  2. The colonial administration had exhausted all other means to divide nationalists.
  3. Earlier failures to challenge communal tendencies had emboldened the communal forces.

### 1937-39:

- Jinnah blocked all avenues for conciliation by impossible demand that the Congress should forward the League as the sole representative of the Indian Muslims. declare itself

### March 24, 1940:

- The 'Pakistan Resolution' was passed at the Lahore session of the Muslim League calling for "grouping of all geographically contiguous Muslim majority areas (mainly north-western and eastern India) into independent states in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign,

### History of Freedom Movement of Pakistan

- The independent sovereign nation of Pakistan was born in the Muslim University of Aligarh.
- Agha Khan and adequate safeguards to Muslims in other areas where they are in a minority".
- During Second World War The British Indian Government a virtual veto to the League on political settlement.
- The League made full use of this privilege and stuck to its demand of a separate Pakistan throughout the negotiations under the August Offer, Cripps' proposals, Shimla Conference and Cabinet Mission Plan.
- Finally, it got what it had aspired for—an independent Pakistan comprising Muslim majority areas of Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, North-West Frontier Province and Bengal in 1947.

### ANTI-SIMON COMMISSION UPSURGE

- There was a chorus of protest by all Indians against the appointment of an all-white, seven-member Indian Statutory Commission, popularly known as the Simon Commission (after the name of its chairman Sir John Simon), on November 8, 1927.
- The commission was to recommend to the Government whether India was ready for further constitutional reforms and on what lines. (Although constitutional reforms were due only in 1929, the Conservative Government, then in power in Britain, feared defeat by the Labour Party and thus did not want to leave the question of the future of Britain's most prized colony in "irresponsible Labour hands".)
- The Conservative Secretary of State, Lord Birkenhead, who had constantly talked of the inability of Indians to formulate a concrete scheme of constitutional reforms which had the support of wide sections of Indian political opinion, was responsible for the appointment of the Simon Commission.
- The Indian response against the commission was immediate and nearly unanimous.
- What angered the Indians most was the exclusion of Indians from the commission and the basic notion behind the exclusion that foreigners would discuss and decide upon India's fitness for self-government.
- This notion was seen as a violation of the principle of self-determination, and a deliberate insult to the self-respect of Indians.

### **Congress Response**

- The Congress session in Madras (December 1927) meeting under the presidency of M.A. Ansari decided to boycott the commission "at every stage and in every form". Meanwhile Nehru succeeded in getting a snap resolution passed at the session, declaring complete independence as the goal of the Congress.
- Those who decided to support the Congress call of boycott included the Liberals of the Hindu Mahasabha and the majority faction of the Muslim League under Jinnah.
- Some others, such as the Unionists in Punjab and the Justice Party in the south, decided not to boycott the commission.

### **Public Response**

- The commission landed in Bombay on February 3, 1928. On that day, a countrywide hartal was organised and mass rallies held. Wherever the commission went, there were black flag demonstrations, hartals and slogans of 'Simon Go Back'.
- A significant feature of this upsurge was that a new generation of youth got their first taste of political action.
- They played the most active part in the protest, giving it militant flavour.
- The youth leagues and conferences got a real fillip. Nehru and Subhash emerged as leaders of this new wave of youth and students. Both travelled extensively, addressed and presided over conferences.
- This upsurge among the youth also provided a fertile ground for the germination and spread of new radical ideas of socialism reflected in the emergence of groups such as the Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha, Workers' and Peasants' Parties and Hindustani Sewa Dal (Karnataka).

### **Police Repression**

- The police came down heavily on demonstrators; there were lathicharges not sparing even the senior leaders.
- Jawaharlal Nehru and G.B. Pant; were beaten up in Lucknow.
- Lala Lajpat Rai received severe blows on his chest in October 1928 which proved fatal and he died on November 17, 1928.

### **Impact of Appointment of Simon Commission**

- The impact of the appointment of the Simon Commission on Indian politics was two-fold:
  - (i) It gave a stimulus to radical forces demanding not just complete independence but major socio-economic reforms on socialist lines.
  - (ii) The challenge of Lord Birkenhead to Indian politicians to produce an agreed constitution was accepted by various political sections, and thus prospects for Indian unity seemed bright at that point of time.

### **NEHRU REPORT**

- As an answer to Lord Birkenhead's challenge, an All Parties Conference met in February 1928 and appointed a subcommittee under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru to draft a constitution.
- This was the first major attempt by the Indians to draft a

constitutional framework for the country.

- The committee included Tej Bahadur Sapru, Subhash Bose, M.S. Aney, Mangal Singh, Ali Imam, Shuab Qureshi and G.R. Pradhan as its members.
- The report was finalised by August 1928. The recommendations of the Nehru Committee were unanimous except in one respect—while the majority favoured the "dominion status" as the basis of the Constitution, a section of it wanted "complete independence" as the basis, with the majority section giving the latter section liberty of action.

### **Main Recommendations**

The Nehru Report confined itself to British India, as it envisaged the future link-up of British India with the princely states on a federal basis. For the dominion it recommended:

1. Dominion status on lines of self-governing dominions as the form of government desired by Indians (much to the chagrin of younger, militant section—Nehru being prominent among them).
2. Rejection of separate electorates which had been the basis of constitutional reforms so far; instead, a demand for joint electorates with reservation of seats for Muslims at the centre and in provinces where they were in minority (and not in those where Muslims were in majority, such as Punjab and Bengal) in proportion to the Muslim population there with right to contest additional seats.
3. Linguistic provinces.
4. Nineteen fundamental rights including equal rights for women, right to form unions, and universal adult suffrage.
5. Responsible government at the centre and in provinces—
  - The Indian Parliament at the centre to consist of a 500-member House of Representatives elected on the basis of adult suffrage, a 200-member Senate to be elected by provincial councils; the House of Representatives to have a tenure of 5 years and the Senate, one of 7 years; the central government to be headed by a governor-general, appointed by the British Government but paid out of Indian revenues, who would act on the advice of the central executive council responsible to the Parliament.
  - Provincial councils' to have a 5-year tenure, headed by a governor acting on the advice of the provincial executive council.
6. Full protection to cultural and religious interests of Muslims.
7. Complete dissociation of state from religion.

### **The Muslim and Hindu Communal Responses**

- Though the process of drafting a constitutional framework was begun enthusiastically and unitedly by political leaders, communal differences crept in and the Nehru Report got involved in controversies over the issue of communal representation.
- Earlier, in December 1927, a large number of Muslim leaders had met at Delhi at the Muslim League session and evolved four proposals for Muslim demands to be incorporated in the draft constitution.
- These proposals, which were accepted by the Madras session of the Congress (December 1927), came to be known as the 'Delhi Proposals'.



- These were
  - \* joint electorates in place of separate electorates with reserved seats for Muslims;
  - \* one-third representation to Muslims in Central Legislative Assembly;
  - \* representation to Muslims in Punjab and Bengal in proportion to their population;
  - \* formation of three new Muslim majority provinces— Sindh, Baluchistan and North-West Frontier Province.
- However, the Hindu Mahasabha was vehemently opposed to the proposals for creating new Muslim-majority provinces and reservation of seats for Muslims majorities in Punjab and Bengal (which would ensure Muslim control over legislatures in both).
- It also demanded a strictly unitary structure. This attitude of the Hindu Mahasabha complicated matters.
- In the course of the deliberations of the All Parties Conference, the Muslim League dissociated itself and stuck to its demand for reservation of seats for Muslims, especially in the Central Legislature and in Muslim majority provinces.
- Thus, Motilal Nehru and other leaders drafting the report found themselves in a dilemma: if the demands of the Muslim communal opinion were accepted, the Hindu communalists would withdraw their support, if the latter were satisfied, the Muslim leaders would get estranged.

The concessions made in the Nehru Report to Hindu communalists included the following:

1. Joint electorates proposed everywhere but reservation for Muslims only where in minority;
2. Sindh to be detached from Bombay only after dominion status was granted and subject to weightage to Hindu minority in Sindh;
3. Political structure proposed was broadly unitary, as residual powers rested with the centre.

#### **Amendments Proposed by Jinnah**

- At the All Parties Conference held at Calcutta in December 1928 to consider the Nehru Report, Jinnah, on behalf of the Muslim League, proposed three amendments to the report:
  1. One-third representation to Muslims in the Central Legislature
  2. Reservation to Muslims in Bengal and Punjab legislatures proportionate to their population, till adult suffrage was established
  3. Residual powers to provinces.
- These demands not being accommodated, Jinnah went back to the Shafi faction of the Muslim League and in March 1929 gave fourteen points which were to become the basis of all future propaganda of the Muslim League.

#### **Jinnah's Fourteen Demands**

1. Federal Constitution with residual powers to provinces.
2. Provincial autonomy.
3. No constitutional amendment by the centre without the concurrence of the states constituting the Indian federation.
4. All legislatures and elected bodies to have adequate representation

of Muslims in every province without reducing a majority of Muslims in a province to a minority or equality.

5. Adequate representation to Muslims in the services and in self-governing bodies.

6. One-third Muslim representation in the Central Legislature.

7. In any cabinet at the centre or in the provinces, one-third to be Muslims.

8. Separate electorates.

9. No bill or resolution in any legislature to be passed if three-fourths of a minority community consider such a bill or resolution to be against their interests.

10. Any territorial redistribution not to affect the Muslim majority in Punjab, Bengal and NWFP.

11. Separation of Sindh from Bombay.

12. Constitutional reforms in the NWFP and Baluchistan.

13. Full religious freedom to all communities.

14. Protection of Muslim rights in religion, culture, education and language.

- Not only were the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Sikh communalists unhappy about the Nehru Report, but the younger section of the Congress led by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Bose were also angered.
- The younger section regarded the idea of dominion status in the report as a step backward, and the developments at the All Parties Conference strengthened their criticism of the dominion status idea.
- Nehru and Subhash Bose rejected the Congress' modified goal and jointly set up the Independence for India League.

#### **THE RUN-UP TO CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT**

##### **Calcutta Session of Congress (December 1928)**

- Here, the Nehru Report was approved but the younger elements led by Nehru, Subhash and Satyamurthy expressed their dissatisfaction with the dominion status as the goal of Congress.
- Instead, they demanded that the Congress adopt purna swaraj or complete independence as its goal.
- The older leaders like Gandhi and Motilal Nehru wished that the dominion status demand not be dropped in haste, as consensus over it had been developed with great difficulty over the years.
- They suggested that a two-year grace period be given to the Government to accept the demand for a dominion status.
- Later, under pressure from the younger elements, this period was reduced to one year.
- Now, the Congress decided that if the Government did not accept, a constitution based on dominion status by the end of the year, the Congress would not only demand complete independence but would also launch a Civil Disobedience Movement to attain its goal.

#### **Political Activity during 1929**

- Gandhi travelled incessantly during 1929 preparing people for direct political action—telling the youth to prepare for the fiery ordeal, helping to organise constructive work in villages and redressing specific grievances (on lines of Bardoli agitation of 1928).
- The Congress Working Committee (CWC) organised a Foreign

Cloth Boycott Committee to propagate an aggressive programme of foreign cloth boycott and public burning of foreign cloth.

- Gandhi initiated the campaign in March 1929 in Calcutta and was arrested. This was followed by bonfires of foreign clothes all over the country.
- Other developments which kept the political temperature high during 1929 included the Meerut Conspiracy Case (March), bomb explosion in Central Legislative Assembly by Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt (April) and the coming to power of the Labour Government led by Ramsay MacDonald in England in May.
- Irwin's Statement (October 31, 1929) "It is implicit in the 1917 declaration (Montagu's statement) that the natural issue of India's progress, as contemplated there, is the attainment of dominion status."
- He also promised a Round Table Conference when the Simon Commission submitted its report.

### **Delhi Manifesto**

- On November 2, 1929, a conference of prominent national leaders issued a "Delhi Manifesto" which demanded
    1. that the purpose of the Round Table Conference (RTC) should be to formulate a scheme for implementation of the dominion status (thus acting as a constituent assembly) and the basic principle of dominion status should be immediately accepted;
    2. that the Congress should have majority representation at the conference;
    3. amnesty and a general policy of conciliation;
- Viceroy Irwin rejected these demands on December 23, 1929. The stage of confrontation was to begin now.

### **Lahore Congress and Purna Swaraj**

- Jawaharlal Nehru, who had done more than anyone else to popularise the concept of purna swaraj, was nominated the president for the Lahore session of the Congress (December 1929) mainly due to Gandhi's backing, (15 out of 18 Provincial Congress Committees had opposed Nehru).
- Nehru was chosen because of the appositeness of the occasion (Congress' acceptance of complete independence as its goal), and to acknowledge the upsurge of youth which had made the anti-Simon campaign a huge success.
- Nehru declared in his presidential address, "We have now an open conspiracy to free this country from foreign rule and you, comrades, and all our countrymen and countrywomen are invited to join it" Further explaining that liberation did not mean only throwing off the foreign yoke, he said "I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican, and am no believer in kings and princes, or in the order which produces the modern kings of industry, who have greater power over the lives and fortunes of men than even the kings of old, and whose methods are as predatory as those of the old feudal aristocracy." Spelling out the methods of struggle, he said, "Any great movement for liberation today must necessarily be a mass movement, and mass movements must essentially be peaceful, except in times of organised revolt".

The following major decisions were taken at the Lahore session-

1. the RTC to be boycotted;
2. complete independence declared as the aim of the Congress;
3. CWC authorised to launch a programme of civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes and all members of legislatures asked to resign their seats;
4. January 26, 1930 fixed as the first Independence Day, to be celebrated everywhere.

- December 31, 1929 **At midnight on the banks of River Ravi, the newly adopted tricolour flag of freedom was hoisted amidst slogans of Inquilab Zindabad.**
- January 26, 1930 Public meetings were organised all over the country in villages and towns and the independence pledge was read out in local languages and the national flag was hoisted. This pledge made the following points:
  - It is the inalienable right of Indians to have freedom.
  - The British Government in India has not only deprived us of freedom and exploited us, but has also ruined us economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. India must therefore sever the British connection and attain purna swaraj or complete independence.
  - We are being economically ruined by high revenue, destruction of village industries with no substitutions made, while customs, currency and exchange rate are manipulated to our disadvantage.
  - No real political powers are given—rights of free association are denied to us and all administrative talent in us is killed.
  - Culturally, the system of education has torn us from our moorings.
  - Spiritually, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly.
  - We hold it a crime against man and God to submit any longer to British rule. We will prepare for complete independence by withdrawing, as far as possible, all voluntary association from the British Government and will prepare for civil disobedience through non-payment of taxes. By this an end of this inhuman rule is assured.
  - We will carry out the Congress instructions for purpose of establishing purna swaraj.

## **CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT**

### **Gandhi's Eleven Demands**

- To carry forward the mandate given by the Lahore Congress, Gandhi presented eleven demands to the Government and gave an ultimatum of January 31, 1930 to accept or reject these demands.
- The demands were as follows.

#### Issues of General Interest

1. Reduce expenditure on Army and civil services by 50 per cent.
2. Introduce total prohibition.
3. Carry out reforms in Criminal Investigation Department (CID).
4. Change Arms Act allowing popular control of issue of firearms licences.
5. Release political prisoners.
6. Accept Postal Reservation Bill.

#### Specific Bourgeois Demands

7. Reduce rupee-sterling exchange ratio to 1s 4d
8. Introduce textile protection.
9. Reserve coastal shipping for Indians.

#### Specific Peasant Demands

10. Reduce land revenue by 50 per cent.

11. Abolish salt tax and government's salt monopoly.

### **February 1930**

- With no positive response forthcoming from the Government on these demands, the Congress Working Committee invested Gandhi with full powers to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) at a time and place of his choice. By February-end, Gandhi had decided to make, salt, the central formula for the CDM.

### **Why Salt was Chosen as the Central Formula?**

- As Gandhi said, "There is no other article like salt, outside water, by taxing which the Government can reach the starving millions, the sick, the maimed and the utterly helpless. It is the most inhuman poll tax the ingenuity of man can devise."
1. Salt in a flash linked the ideal of swaraj with a most concrete and universal grievance of the rural poor (and with no socially divisive implications like a no-rent campaign).
  2. Salt afforded a paltry but psychologically important income, like khadi, for the poor through self-help.
  3. Like khadi, again, it offered to the urban adherents the opportunity of a symbolic identification with mass suffering.

### **Dandi March (March 12-April 6, 1930)**

- On March 2, 1930, Gandhi informed the viceroy of his plan of action. According to this plan (few realised its significance when it was first announced), Gandhi, along with a band of seventy-eight members of Sabarmati Ashram, was to march from his headquarters in Ahmedabad through the villages of Gujarat for 240 miles.
- On reaching the coast at Dandi, the salt law was to be violated by collecting salt from the beach.
- Even before the proposed march began, thousands thronged to the ashram. Gandhi gave the following directions for future action.
- Wherever possible civil disobedience of the salt law should be started. Foreign liquor and cloth shops can be picketed.
- We can refuse to pay taxes if we have the requisite strength. Lawyers can give up practice.
- Public can boycott law courts by refraining from litigation.
- Government servants can resign from their posts.
- All these should be subject to one condition—truth and non-violence as means to attain swaraj should be faithfully adhered to.
- Local leaders should be obeyed after Gandhi's arrest.
- The historic march, marking, the launch of the Civil Disobedience Movement, began on March 12, and Gandhi broke the salt law by picking up a handful of salt at Dandi on April 6.
- The violation of the law was seen as a symbol of the Indian people's resolve not to live under British-made laws and therefore under British rule.
- The march, its progress and its impact on the people was well covered by newspapers.
- In Gujarat, 300 village officials resigned in answer to Gandhi's appeal. Congress workers engaged themselves in grassroot level organisational tasks.

### **Spread of Salt Disobedience**

- Once the way was cleared by Gandhi's ritual at Dandi, defiance of

the salt laws started all over the country.

- In Tamil Nadu, C. Rajagopalachari led a march from Tiruchirapally to Vedaranniyam. In Malabar, K. Kelappan led a march from Calicut to Poyannur.
- In Assam, satyagrahis walked from Sylhet to Noakhali (Bengal) to make salt.
- In Andhra, a number of sibirams (camps) came up in different districts as headquarters of salt satyagraha.
- Nehru's arrest in April 1930 for defiance of the salt law evoked huge demonstrations in Madras, Calcutta and Karachi.
- Gandhi's arrest came on May 4, 1930 when he had announced that he would lead a raid on Dharsana Salt Works on the west coast.
- Gandhi's arrest was followed by massive protests in Bombay, Delhi, Calcutta and in Sholapur, where the response was the fiercest.
- After Gandhi's arrest, the CWC sanctioned:
  - non-payment of revenue in Ryotwari areas;
  - no chowkidara tax campaign in zamindari areas; and
  - violation of forest laws in the Central Provinces.

### **Other Forms of Upsurge**

Other areas in the country showed different forms of protest.

#### **Chittagong,**

- Surya Sen's Chittagong Revolt Group carried out a raid on two armouries and declared the establishment of a provisional government.

#### **Peshawar,**

- Here, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan's educational and social reform work among the Pathans had politicised them. Gaffar Khan, also called Badshah Khan and Frontier Gandhi, had started the first Pushto political monthly Pukhtoon and had organised a volunteer brigade 'Khudai Khidmatgars', popularly known as the 'Red-Shirts', who were pledged to the freedom struggle and non-violence.
- On April 23, 1930, the arrest of Congress leaders NWFP led to mass demonstrations in Peshawar which was virtually in the hands of the crowds for more than a week till order was restored on May 4.
- This was, followed by a reign of terror and martial law. It was here that a section of Garhwal Rifles soldiers refused to fire on an unarmed crowd. This upsurge in a province with 92 per cent Muslim population left the British Government nervous.

#### **Sholapur,**

- This industrial town of southern Maharashtra saw the fiercest response to Gandhi's arrest.
- Textile workers went on a strike from May 7 and along with other residents burnt liquor shops and other symbols of government authority such as railway stations, police stations, municipal buildings, law courts, etc.
- The activists established a virtual parallel government which could only be dislodged with martial law after May 16.

#### **Dharsana,** On May 21, 1930,

- Sarojini Naidu, Imam Sahib and Manila (Gandhi's son) took up the unfinished task of leading a raid on Dharsana Salt Works.

- The unarmed and peaceful crowd was met with a brutal lathicharge which left 2 dead and 320 injured.
- This new form of salt satyagraha was eagerly adopted by people in Wadala (Bombay), Karnataka (Sanikatta Salt Works), Andhra, Midnapore, Balasore, Puri and Cuttack.

#### **Bihar,**

- A campaign was organised for refusal to pay chowkidara tax and a call was given for resignation of chowkidars and influential members of chowkidari panchayat who appointed these chowkidars.
- This campaign was particularly successful in Monghyr, Saran and Bhagalpur. The Government retaliated with beatings, torture and confiscation of property.

#### **Bengal,**

- Anti-chowkidara tax and anti-union board tax campaign here was met with repression and confiscation of property.

#### **Gujarat,**

- The impact was felt in Anand, Borsad and Nadiad areas, in Kheda district, Bardoli in Surat district and Jambusar in Bharuch district.
- A determined no-tax movement was organised here which included refusal to pay, land revenue. Villagers crossed the border into neighbouring princely states (such as Baroda) with their families and belongings and camped in the open for months to evade, police repression.
- The police retaliated by destroying their property and confiscating their land.

Maharashtra, Karnataka, Central Provinces, These areas saw defiance of forest laws such as grazing and timber restrictions and public sale of illegally acquired forest produce.

#### **Assam,**

- A powerful agitation was organised against the infamous 'Cunningham circular' which forced parents, guardians and students to furnish assurances of good behaviour.

#### **United Provinces,**

- A no revenue campaign was organised; a call was given to zamindars to refuse to pay revenue to the Government. Under a no rent campaign, a call was given to tenants against zamindars. Since most of the zamindars were loyalists, the campaign became virtually a no rent campaign. The activity picked up speed in October 1930, especially in Agra and Rai Bareilly.

#### **Manipur and Nagaland,**

- These areas took a brave part in the movement. At the young age of thirteen, Rani Gaidinliu of Nagaland raised the banner of revolt against foreign rule. She was captured in 1932 and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Mobilisation of masses was also carried out through prabhat pheries, vanar senas, manjari senas, secret patrilcas and magic lantern shows.

### Impact of Agitation

1. Imports of foreign cloth and other items fell.
2. Government income from liquor, excise and land revenue fell.
3. Elections to Legislative Assembly were largely boycotted.

### Extent of Mass Participation

- Several sections of the population participated in the movement.
- **Women** Gandhi had specially asked women to play a leading part in the movement. Soon, they became a familiar sight, picketing outside liquor shops, opium dens and shops selling foreign cloth. For Indian women, the movement was the most liberating experience and can truly be said to have marked their entry into the public sphere.
- **Students** Along with women, students and youth played the most prominent part in boycott of foreign cloth and liquor.
- **Muslims**
- The Muslim participation was nowhere near the 1920-22 level because of appeals by Muslim leaders to Muslim masses to stay away from the movement and because of, active government encouragement to communal dissension. Still, some areas such as the NWFP saw an overwhelming participation.
- Middle class Muslim participation was quite significant in Senhatta, Tripura, Gaibandha, Bagura and Noakhali.
- In Dacca, Muslim leaders, shopkeepers, lower class people and upper class women were active. The Muslim weaving community in Bihar, Delhi and Lucknow were also effectively mobilised.

### Merchants and Petty Traders

- They were very enthusiastic. Traders' associations, and commercial bodies were active in implementing the boycott, especially in Tamil Nadu and Punjab.

### Tribals

- Tribals were active participants in Central Provinces, Maharashtra and Karnataka.

### Workers

The workers participated in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Sholapur, etc.

Peasants were active in UP, Bihar and Gujarat.

### Government Response—Efforts for Truce

- The Government's attitude throughout 1930 was ambivalent; it was puzzled and perplexed.
- It faced the classic dilemma of 'damned if you do, damned if you don't—if force was applied, the Congress cried 'repression', and if little was done, the Congress cried 'victory'.
- Either way the hegemony of the Government was eroded. Even Gandhi's arrest came after much vacillation.
- But once the repression began, the ordinances banning civil



liberties were freely used, including gagging of the press. Provincial governments were given freedom to civil disobedience organisations.

- The CWC was, however, declared illegal till June. Lathicharge and firing on unarmed crowds left several killed and wounded, while 90,000 satyagrahis including Gandhi and other Congress leaders were imprisoned.
- The government repression and publication of the Simon Commission Report, which contained no mention of dominion status and was in other ways also a regressive document, further upset even moderate political opinion.
- In July 1930 the viceroy suggested a round table conference (RTC) and reiterated the goal of dominion status.
- He also accepted the suggestion that Tej Bahadur Sapru and M.R. Jayakar be allowed to explore the possibility of peace between the Congress and the Government.
- In August 1930 Motilal and Jawaharlal Nehru were taken to Yeravada Jail to meet Gandhi and discuss the possibility of a settlement.
- The Nehrus and Gandhi unequivocally reiterated the demands of:
  1. right of secession from Britain;
  2. complete national government with control over defence and finance; and
  3. an independent tribunal to settle Britain's financial claims.Talks broke down at this point.

#### **FIRST ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE (NOVEMBER 1930-JANUARY 1931)**

- This was the first ever conference arranged between the British and the Indians as equals.
- While the Congress and most business leaders' boycotted the First RTC, the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Liberals and princes attended it. Virtually every delegate reiterated that a constitutional discussion to which the Congress was not a party was meaningless.
- Also, at the conference, the British Prime Minister hinted at an olive branch to the Congress and expressed the hope that the Congress would attend the next RTC.

#### **GANDHI-IRWIN PACT**

- On January 25, 1931 Gandhi and all other members of the CWC were released unconditionally.
- The CWC authorized Gandhi to initiate discussions with the viceroy.
- As a result of these discussions, a pact was signed between the viceroy, representing the British Indian Government, and Gandhi, representing the Indian people, in Delhi on February 14, 1931.
- This Delhi Pact, also known as the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, placed the Congress on an equal footing with the Government.

#### **Irwin on behalf of the Government agreed on**

1. immediate release of all political prisoners not convicted of violence;
2. remission of all fines not yet collected;
3. return of all lands not yet sold to third parties;

4. lenient treatment to those government servants who had resigned;
5. right to make salt in coastal villages for personal consumption (not for sale);
6. right to peaceful and non-aggressive picketing; and
7. withdrawal of emergency ordinances.

The viceroy, however, turned down two of Gandhi's demands—

- (i) public inquiry into police excesses, and
- (ii) commutation of Bhagat Singh and his comrades' death sentence to life sentence.

Gandhi on behalf of the Congress agreed—

- (i) to suspend the civil disobedience movement, and
- (ii) (ii) to participate in the next RTC on the constitutional question around the three Finch-pins of federation, Indian responsibility, and reservations-and safeguards that may be necessary in India's interests (covering such areas as defence, external affairs, position of minorities, financial credit of India and discharge of other obligations).

#### **EVALUATION OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT**

##### **Was Gandhi-Irwin Pact a Retreat?**

Gandhi's decision to suspend the civil disobedience movement as agreed under the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was, not a retreat, because:

- (i) mass movements are necessarily short-lived;
- (ii) capacity of the masses to make sacrifices, unlike that of the activists, is limited; and
- (iii) there were signs of exhaustion after September 1930, especially among shopkeepers and merchants, who had participated so enthusiastically.

- No doubt, youth were disappointed.
- They had participated enthusiastically and wanted the world to end with a bang and not with a whimper.
- Peasants of Gujarat were disappointed because their lands were not restored immediately (indeed, were restored only during the rule of the Congress ministry in the province).
- But vast masses of people were jubilant that the Government had to regard their movement as significant and treat their leader as an equal, and sign a pact with him.
- The political prisoners when released from jails were given a hero's welcome.

##### **Compared to Non-Cooperation Movement**

1. The stated objective this time was complete independence and not just remedying two specific wrongs and a vaguely-worded swaraj.
2. The methods involved violation of law from the very beginning and not just non-cooperation with foreign rule.
3. There was a decline in forms of protests involving the intelligentsia, such as lawyers giving up practice, students giving up government schools to join national schools and colleges.
4. Muslim participation was nowhere near the NonCooperation Movement level.
5. No major labour upsurge coincided with the movement.
6. But massive participation of peasants and business groups compensated

for decline of other features.

7. The number of those imprisoned was about three times more this time.

8. The Congress was organisationally stronger.

### Views

- India is one vast prison-house. I repudiate this law. M.K. Gandhi to Lord.
- Gandhi was the best policeman the British had in India. Ellen Wilkinson.
- Dandi March is the kindergarten stage of revolution' based on the notion that King Emperor can be unseated by boiling water in a kettle. Brailsford, an English journalist.

### KARACHI CONGRESS SESSION 1931

- In March 1931, a special session of the Congress was held at Karachi to endorse the Gandhi-Irwin or Delhi Pact.
- Six days session (which was held on March 29) Bhagat Singh, before the Sukhdev and Rajguru had been executed.
- Throughout Gandhi's route to Karachi, he was greeted with black flag demonstrations by the Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha, in protest against his failure to secure commutation of the death sentence for Bhagat and his comrades.

### Congress Resolutions at Karachi

➤ While disapproving of and dissociating itself from political violence, the Congress admired the "bravery" and "sacrifice" of the three martyrs.

The Delhi Pact was endorsed.

➤ The goal of purna swaraj was reiterated. Two resolutions were adopted—one on Fundamental Rights and the other on National Economic Programme— which made the session particularly memorable. The resolution on Fundamental Rights guaranteed—

- \* free speech and free press
- \* right to form associations
- \* right to assemble
- \* universal adult franchise
- \* equal legal rights irrespective of caste, creed and sex
- \* neutrality of state in religious matters
- \* free and compulsory primary education
- \* protection to culture, language, script of minorities and linguistic groups

The resolution on National Economic Programme included—

- \* substantial reduction in rent and revenue
- \* exemption from rent for uneconomic holdings
- \* relief from agricultural indebtedness
- \* control of usury
- \* better conditions of work including a living wage, limited hours of work and protection of women workers
- \* right to workers and peasants to form unions
- \* state ownership and control of key industries, mines and means of transport.

\* This was the first time the Congress spelt out what swaraj would mean

for the masses—"in order to end exploitation of masses, political freedom must include economic freedom of starving millions."

- \* The Karachi Resolution was to remain, in essence, the basic political and economic programme of the Congress in the next few years.

### **SECOND RTC AND SECOND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT**

- \* The Second Round Table Conference, which the Congress had agreed to attend under the Delhi Pact, was held in London in December 1931.
- \* Not much was expected from the conference because of the following reasons.
  1. The Right Wing in Britain led by Churchill strongly objected to the British Government negotiating with the Congress on an equal basis. They, instead, demanded a strong government in India. The Labour Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald headed a Conservative-dominated cabinet with a weak and reactionary secretary of state, Samuel Hoare.
  2. An overwhelming majority of RTC delegates were conservative, loyalist, reactionary and communal, men who had been used by the colonial government to assert that the Congress did not represent all Indians vis-a-vis imperialism, and to neutralise Gandhi and his efforts.
  3. The session soon got deadlocked on the question of the minorities. Separate electorates were being demanded by the Muslims, depressed classes, Christians and Anglo-Indians. All these came together in a "Minorities' Pact". Gandhi fought desperately against this concerted move to make all constitutional progress conditional on the solving of this issue.
  4. Princes were also not as enthusiastic about a federation, especially after the possibility of the formation of a Congress government at the centre had receded after the suspension of civil disobedience movement.

The session ended with MacDonald's announcement of:

- (i) two Muslim majority provinces—NWFP and Sindh;
- (ii) the setting up of Indian Consultative Committee;
- (iii) three expert committees—finance, franchise and states; and
- (iv) the prospect of a unilateral British Communal Award if Indians failed to agree.

- The Government failed to concede the basic Indian demand of freedom. Gandhi returned to India on December 28, 1931.
- On December 29, the CWC decided to resume the civil disobedience movement.
- During Truce Period (March-December 1931), Some activity during this period kept alive the spirit of defiance. In the United Provinces, the Congress had been leading a movement for rent reduction and against summary evictions.
- In the NWFP, severe repression had been unleashed against the Khudai Khidmatgars and the peasants led by them who were agitating against the brutal methods of tax-collection by the Government.
- In Bengal, draconian ordinances and mass detentions had been used, in the name of fighting terrorism.
- In September 1931, there was a firing incident on political prisoners in Hijli Jail.

### **Changed Government Attitude**

- The higher British officials had drawn their own lessons from the Delhi Pact which had raised the political prestige of the Congress and the political morale of the people and had undermined British prestige.
- They were now determined to reverse this trend.
- There were three main considerations in British policy:
  1. Gandhi would not be permitted to build up the tempo for a mass movement again.
  2. Goodwill of the Congress was not required, but the confidence of those who supported the British against the Congress-government functionaries, loyalists, etc.—was very essential.
  3. The national movement would not be allowed to consolidate itself in rural areas.
- After the CWC had decided to resume the civil disobedience movement, the new Viceroy Willingdon refused a meeting with Gandhi on December 31.
- On January 4, 1932, Gandhi was arrested.

### **Government Action**

- A series of repressive ordinances were issued which ushered in a virtual martial law, though under civilian control, or a "Civil Martial Law".
- Congress organisations at all levels were banned; arrests were made of activists, leaders, sympathisers; properties were confiscated; Gandhi ashrams were occupied.
- Repression was particularly harsh on women. Press was gagged and nationalist literature, banned.

### **Popular Response**

- People responded with anger. Though unprepared, the response was massive. In the first four months alone, about 80,000 satyagrahis, mostly urban and rural poor, were jailed.
- Other forms of protest, included picketing of shops selling liquor and foreign cloth, illegal gatherings, non-violent demonstrations, celebrations of national days, symbolic hoistings of national flag, non-payment of chowkidara tax, salt satyagraha, forest law violations and installation of a secret radio transmitter near Bombay.
- This phase of the civil disobedience movement coincided with upsurges in two princely states—Kashmir and Alwar.
- But this phase of the movement could not be sustained for long because
  - (i) Gandhi and other leaders had no time to build up the tempo; and
  - (ii) the masses were not prepared.
- Finally in-April 1934, Gandhi decided to withdraw the civil disobedience movement.
- Though people had been cowed down by superior force, they had not lost political faith in the Congress—they had won freedom in their hearts.

### **COMMUNAL AWARD AND POONA PACT**

- The Communal Award was announced by the British Prime Minister,

Ramsay MacDonald, in August 1932.

- This was yet another expression of British policy of divide and rule.
- The Muslims, Sikhs and Christians had already been recognised as minorities.
- The Communal Award declared the depressed classes also to be minorities, and entitled them to 'separate electorates'.
- Congress Stand Though opposed to separate electorates, the Congress was not in favour of changing the Communal Award without the consent of the minorities.
- Thus, while strongly disagreeing with the Communal Award, the Congress decided neither to accept it nor to reject it.
- The effort to separate the depressed classes from the rest of the Hindus by treating them as separate political entities was vehemently opposed by all the nationalists.

### **Gandhi's Response**

- Gandhi saw the Communal Award as an attack on Indian unity and nationalism.
  - He thought it was harmful to both Hinduism and to the depressed classes since it provided no answer to the socially degraded position of the depressed classes.
  - Once the depressed classes were treated as a separate political entity, he argued, the question of abolishing untouchability would get undermined, while separate electorates would ensure that the untouchables remained untouchables in perpetuity.
  - He said that what was required was not protection of the so called interests of the depressed classes but root and branch eradication of untouchability
  - Gandhi demanded that the depressed classes be elected through joint and if possible a wider electorate through universal franchise, while expressing no objection to the demand for a larger number of reserved seats.
  - And to press for his demands, he went on an indefinite fast on September 20, 1932 Now leaders of various persuasions, including B.R.Ambedkar, M.C. Rajah and Madan Mohan Malaviya got together to hammer out a compromise contained in the Poona Pact.
- \* **Poona Pact** was **Signed by B.R. Ambedkar** on behalf of the depressed classes in September 1932, the Pact abandoned separate electorates for the depressed classes.
  - \* But the seats reserved for the depressed classes were increased from 71 to 147 in provincial legislatures and 18 per cent of the total in the central legislature.
  - \* The Poona Pact was accepted by the Government as an amendment to the Communal Award.

### **GANDHI'S HARIJAN CAMPAIGN**

- Determined to undo the divisive intentions of the Government's divide and rule policy, Gandhi gave up all his other preoccupations and launched a whirlwind campaign against untouchability—first from jail and after his release in August 1933 from the outside.
- While in jail, he had set up the All India AntiUntouchability

League in September 1932 and had started the weekly Harijan in January 1933.

- After his release, he shifted to the Satyagraha Ashram in Wardha as he had vowed in 1930 not to return to Sabarmati Ashram unless swaraj was won.
- Starting from Wardha, he conducted a Harijan tour of the country in the period from November 1933 to July 1934, covering 20,000 km, collecting money for his newly set up Harijan Sevak Sangh, and propagating removal of untouchability in all its forms.
- He urged political workers to go to villages and work for social, economic, political and cultural upliftment of the Harijan. He undertook two fasts— on May 8 and August 16, 1934—to convince his followers of the seriousness of his effort and the importance of the issue.
- These fasts created consternation in nationalist ranks throwing many into an emotional crisis.
- Throughout his campaign, Gandhi was attacked by orthodox and reactionary elements.
- These elements disrupted his meetings, held black flag demonstrations against him and accused him of attacking Hinduism.
- They also offered support to the Government against the Congress and the Civil Disobedience Movement.
- The Government obliged them by defeating the Temple Entry Bill in August 1934.
- Orthodox Hindu opinion in Bengal was against the acceptance of permanent caste Hindu minority status by the Poona Pact.

### **Gandhi's Thoughts on Caste**

- Throughout his Harijan tour, social work and fasts, Gandhi stressed on certain themes:
- He put forward a damning indictment of Hindu society for the kind of oppression practised on Harijans.
- He called for the root and branch eradication of untouchability symbolised by his plea to throw open temples to the untouchables.
- He stressed the need for caste Hindus to do "penance" for untold miseries inflicted on Harijans. For this reason he was not hostile to his critics such as He said, "Hinduism dies if untouchability lives, untouchability has to die if Hinduism is to live."
- His entire campaign was based on principles of humanism and reason. He said that the shastras do not sanction untouchability, and if they did, they should be ignored as it was against human dignity.
- Gandhi was not in favour of mixing up the issue of removal of untouchability with that of inter-caste marriages and inter-dining because he felt that such restrictions existed among caste Hindus and among Harijans themselves, and because the all-India campaign at the time was directed against disabilities specific to Harijans.
- Similarly, he distinguished between abolition of untouchability and abolition of caste system as such. On this point he differed from Ambedkar who advocated annihilation of the caste system to remove untouchability.
- Gandhi felt that whatever the limitations and defects of the

varnashram system, there was nothing sinful about it, as there was about untouchability.

- Untouchability, Gandhi felt, was a product of distinctions of high and low and not of the caste system itself.
- If, it could be purged of this distinction, the varnashram could function in a manner whereby each caste would be complementary to the other rather than being higher or lower.
- Anyway, that believers and critics of the caste system should come together in the fight against untouchability, the opposition to which is common to both, was his message.
- He believed that the removal of untouchability would have a positive impact on communal and other questions since opposition to untouchability meant opposing the notion of highness and lowness.
- He was opposed to using compulsion against the orthodox Hindus whom he called sanatanis.
- They were to be won over by persuasion, by appealing to "their reason and their hearts".
- His fasts were aimed at inspiring friends and followers to redouble their anti-untouchability work.
- Gandhi's Harijan campaign included a programme of internal reform by Harijans covering education, cleanliness, hygiene, giving up eating of beef and carrion and consumption of liquor, and removing untouchability among themselves.

### **Impact of the Campaign**

- Gandhi repeatedly described the campaign as not a political movement but as being primarily meant to purify Hinduism and Hindu society.
- Gradually, the campaign carried the message of nationalism to Harijans who also happened to be the agricultural labourers in most parts of the country, leading to their increasing participation in the national and peasant movements.

### **STRATEGIC DEBATE**

- Following the withdrawal of the civil disobedience movement
- There was a two-stage debate on the future strategy of the nationalists—firstly, what course the national movement should take in the immediate future,
- i.e., during the phase of nonmass struggle (1934-35), and secondly, in 1937, over the question of office acceptance in the context of provincial elections held under the autonomy provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935. (The first stage is discussed below.

### **THE FIRST STAGE DEBATE**

- At this stage three perspectives were put forward. The first two were traditional responses, while the third one represented the rise of a strong leftist trend within the Congress.
  - The three perspectives were as follows.
1. There should be constructive work on Gandhian lines. There should be constitutional struggle and participation in elections to the Central Legislature (due in 1934) as advocated by M.A. Ansari, Asaf Ali, Bhulabhai Desai, S. Satyarnurthy and B.C. Roy among others. They argued that:



- in a period of political apathy, elections and council work could be utilised to keep up the political interest and morale of the people;
- participation in elections and council work did not amount to faith in constitutional politics;
- another political front would help build up Congress and prepare the masses for the next phase; this approach would give the Congress a certain amount of prestige and confidence, and a strong presence in councils would serve as an equivalent to the movement.
- A strong leftist trend within the Congress represented by Nehru was critical of both constructive work and council entry in place of the suspended civil disobedience movement as that would sidetrack political mass action and divert attention from the main issue of struggle against colonialism.
- Instead, this section favoured resumption and continuation of non-constitutional mass struggle, because the situation was still revolutionary owing to continued economic crisis and thereadiness of the masses to fight.

#### **Nehru's Vision**

- Nehru said, "The basic goal before Indian people as before people of the world is abolition of capitalism and establishment of socialism!"
- He considered the withdrawal of the civil disobedience movement and council entry "a spiritual defeat", "a surrender of ideals" and "a retreat from revolutionary to reformist mentality".
- He suggested that the vested interests be revised in favour of the masses by taking up economic and class demands of peasants and workers, and landlords and capitalists, organising masses in their class organisations—kisan sabhas and trade unions.
- He argued that these class organisations should be allowed to affiliate with the Congress, thus influencing its policies and activities.
- There could be no genuine antiimperialist struggle, he said, without incorporating the class struggle of the masses.

#### **Nehru's Opposition to Struggle-Truce-Struggle Strategy**

- A large number of Congressmen led by Gandhi believed that a mass phase of movement (struggle phase) had to be followed by a phase of reprieve (truce phase) before the next stage of mass struggle could be taken up.
- The truce pbiroid, it was argued, would enable the masses to recoup their strength to fight and also give the Government a chance to respond to the demands of the nationalists.
- The masses could not go on sacrificing indefinitely. If the Government did not respond positively, the movement could be resumed again with the participation of the masses.
- This was the Struggle Truce-Struggle or S-T-S strategy.
- Criticising the S-T-S strategy, Nehru argued that the Indian national movement had reached a stage, after the Lahore Congress call for purna swaraj programme, in which there should, be a continuous confrontation and conflict with imperialism

till it was overthrown. He advocated maintenance of a "continuous direct action" policy by the Congress and without the interposition of a constitutionalist phase.

- Real power, he said, cannot be won by two annas and four annas.
- Against an S-T-S strategy, he suggested a Struggle-Victory (S-V) strategy.
- Finally, Yes to Council Entry Nationalists with apprehension and British officials with hope expected a split in the Congress on Surat lines sooner or later, but Gandhi conciliated the proponents of council entry by acceding to their basic demand of permission to enter the legislatures.
- He said, "Parliamentary politics cannot lead to freedom but those Congressmen who could not, for some reason, offer satyagraha or devote themselves to, constructive work should not remain unoccupied and could express their patriotic energies through council work provided they are not sucked into constitutionalism or self-serving."
- Assuring the leftists, Gandhi said that the withdrawal of the civil disobedience movement, did not mean bowing down before opportunists or compromising with imperialism
- In May 1934, the All India Congress Committee (AICC) met at Patna to set up a Parliamentary Board to fight elections under the aegis of the Congress itself.
- Gandhi was aware that he was out of tune with powerful trends in the Congress.
- A large section of the intelligentsia favoured parliamentary politics with which he was in fundamental disagreement.
- Another section was estranged, from the Congress because of Gandhi's emphasis on the spinning wheel as the "second lung of the nation".
- The socialists led by Nehru also had differences with Gandhi.
- In October 1934, Gandhi announced his resignation from the Congress to serve it better in thought, word and deed.
- Nehru and the socialists thought that the British must first be expelled before the struggle for socialism could be waged, and in an anti-imperialist struggle unity around the Congress, still the only anti-imperialist mass organisation, was indispensable.
- Thus it was better, they felt, to gradually radicalise the Congress than to get isolated from the masses.
- The right wing was no less accommodating. In the elections to the Central Legislative Assembly held in November 1934, the Congress captured 45 out of 75 seats reserved for Indians.

#### **GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1935**

- Amidst the struggle of 1932, the Third RTC was held in November, again without Congress participation.
- The discussions led to the formulation of the Act of 1935.

#### **Main Features**

- The Government of India Act was passed by the British Parliament in August 1935.
- Its main provisions were as follows.

##### **1. An All India Federation**

It was to comprise all British Indian provinces, all chief

commissioner's provinces and Indian states. The federation's formation was conditional on the fulfilment of two conditions:  
 (i)-states with allotment of 52 seats in the proposed Council of States should agree to join the federation;  
 (ii) aggregate population of states in the above category should be 50 per cent of the total population of all Indian states.

- Since these conditions were not fulfilled, the proposed federation never came up. The Central Government carried on upto 1946 as per the provisions of Government of India Act, 1919.

## **2. Federal Level Executive**

- Governor-general was the pivot of the entire Constitution.
- Subjects to be administered were divided into reserved and transferred subjects. Reserved subjects—foreign affairs, defence, tribal areas and ecclesiastical affairs—were to be exclusively administered by the governor-general on the advice of executive councillors. Executive councillors were not to be responsible to the Central Legislature: Transferred subjects included all other subjects and were to be administered by the governor-general on the advice of ministers elected by the legislature. These ministers were to be responsible to the federal legislature and were to resign on losing the confidence of the body.
- Governor-general could act in his individual judgement in the discharge of his special responsibilities for the security and tranquillity of India.

## **Legislature**

- The bicameral legislature was to have an upper house (Council of States) and a lower house (Federal Assembly).
- The Council of States was to be a 260-member house, partly directly elected from British Indian provinces and partly (40 per cent) nominated by the princes.
- The Federal Assembly was to be a 375-member house, partly indirectly elected from British Indian provinces and partly (one-third) nominated by the princes. Oddly enough, election to the Council of States was direct and that to the Federal Assembly, indirect.
- Council of States was to be a permanent body with one-third members retiring every third year. The duration of the assembly was to be 5 years. The three lists for legislation purposes were to be federal, provincial and concurrent.
- Members of Federal Assembly could move a vote of no-confidence against ministers. Council of States could not move a vote of no-confidence.
- The system of religion-based and class-based electorates was further extended.
- 80 per cent of the budget was non-votable.
- Governor-general had residuary powers. He could
  - (a) restore cuts in grants,
  - (b) certify bills rejected by the legislature,
  - (c) issue ordinances and
  - (d) exercise his veto.

## **3. Provincial Autonomy**

- Provincial autonomy replaced dyarchy.
- Provinces were granted autonomy and separate legal identity.
- Provinces were freed from "the superintendence, direction" of the

secretary of state and governor-general. Provinces henceforth derived their legal authority directly from the British Crown. Provinces were given independent financial powers and resources. Provincial governments could borrow money on their own security.

#### **Executive**

- Governor was to be the Crown's nominee and representative to exercise authority on the king's behalf in a province.
- Governor was to have special powers regarding minorities, rights of civil servants, law and order, British business interests, partially excluded areas, princely states, etc.
- Governor could take over and indefinitely run administration.

#### **Legislature**

- Separate electorates based on Communal Award were to be made operational.
- All members were to be directly elected. Franchise was extended; women got the right on the same basis as men. Ministers were to administer all provincial subjects in a council of ministers headed by, a premier.
- Ministers were made answerable to and removable by the adverse vote of the legislature.
- Provincial legislature could legislate on subjects in provincial and concurrent lists. 40 per cent of the budget was still not votable.
- Governor could
  - (a) refuse assent to a bill,
  - (b) promulgate ordinances,
  - (c) enact governor's Acts.

#### **Evaluation of the Act**

- Numerous 'safeguards' and 'special responsibilities' of the governor-general worked as brakes in proper functioning of the Act.
- The process of constitutional advance in India is determined by the need to attract, Indian colonial rulers in Raj.
- In provinces, the governor still had extensive powers.
- The Act enfranchised 14 per cent of British Indian population.
- The extension of the system of communal electorates and representation of various interests promoted separatist tendencies which culminated in partition of India.
- The Act provided a rigid Constitution with no possibility of internal growth. Right of amendment was reserved with the British Parliament.

#### **Views**

- \* We framed the Act of 1935 because we thought that was the best way of maintaining British influence in India. Lord Linlithgow, viceroy (1936-43). We are provided with a car, all brakes and no engine. Jawaharlal Nehru.

#### **The Long-Term British Strategy**

- Suppression could only be a short-term tactic. In the long run, the strategy was to weaken the movement and integrate large segments of the movement into colonial, constitutional and administrative structure.
- Reforms would revive political standing of constitutionalist liberals and Moderates who had lost public support during the Civil Disobedience

Movement.

- Repression earlier and reforms now would convince a large section of Congressmen of the ineffectiveness of an extra-legal struggle.
- Once Congressmen tasted power, they would be reluctant to go back to politics of sacrifice.
- Reforms could be used to create dissensions within Congress—right wing to be placated through constitutional concessions and radical leftists to be crushed through police measures.
- Provincial autonomy would create powerful provincial leaders who would gradually become autonomous centres of political power. Congress would thus be provincialised and central leadership would get weakened.

### **Nationalists' Response**

- The 1935 Act was condemned by nearly all sections and unanimously rejected by the Congress.
- The Congress demanded, instead, convening of a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of adult franchise to frame a Constitution for independent India.

### **THE SECOND STAGE DEBATE**

- In early 1937, elections to provincial assemblies were announced and once again the debate on the future strategy to be adopted began.
- Everyone agreed that the 1935 Act was to be opposed root and branch but it was not clear how it was to be done in a period when a mass movement was not yet possible.
- There was full agreement that the Congress should fight these elections on the basis of a detailed political and economic programme, thus deepening, the anti-imperialist consciousness of the people.
- But what to do after the elections was not yet clear.
- If the Congress got majority in a province, was it to agree to form a government?
- There were sharp differences over these questions among the nationalists. The two sides of the debate soon got identified with the emerging ideological divide along the left and right lines.
- Nehru, Subhash, Congress socialists and communists were opposed to office acceptance and thereby in the working of the 1935 Act because they argued that it would negate the rejection of the Act by the nationalists.
- It would be like assuming responsibility without power. Also, it would take away the revolutionary character of the movement as constitutional work would sidetrack the main issues of freedom, economic and social justice, and removal of poverty.
- As a counter-strategy, the leftists proposed entry into the councils with an aim to create deadlocks, thus making the working of the Act impossible (older Swarajist strategy). And, as a long-term strategy, they advocated an increased reliance on workers and peasants, integration of their class organisations into the Congress, thus imparting a socialist direction to the Congress and preparing for the resumption of a mass movement.
- The proponents of office acceptance argued that they were equally committed to combating the 1935 Act, but working legislatures was to

be only a short-term tactic since option of a mass movement was not available at the time, and mass struggle alone was capable of winning independence.

- Capture or rejection of office was not a matter of socialism but of strategy.
- They agreed that there was a danger of being sucked in by wrong tendencies, but the answer was to fight these tendencies and not to abandon offices.
- The administrative field should not be left open to pro-government reactionary forces.
- Despite limited powers, provincial ministries could be used to promote constructive work.

### **Gandhi's Position**

- He opposed office acceptance in the CWC meetings but by the beginning of 1936, he was willing to give a trial to the formation of Congress ministries.
- In its sessions at Lucknow in early 1936 and Faizpur in late 1937, the Congress decided to fight elections and postpone the decision on office acceptance to the post-election phase.
- In February 1937, elections to the provincial assemblies were held.

### **Congress Manifesto for Elections**

- The Congress manifesto reaffirmed total rejection of the 1935 Act, and promised release of prisoners, removal of disabilities on the basis of gender and caste, radical transformation of the agrarian system, substantial reduction of rent and revenue, scaling down of rural debts, cheap credit and right to form trade unions and to strike.
- Gandhi did not attend a single election meeting. Congress' Performance
- The Congress contested 716 out of 1161 seats. It got a majority in all provinces, except in Bengal, Assam, Punjab, Sindh and NWFP, and emerged as the largest party in Bengal, Assam and NWFP.
- Because of this performance, the prestige of the Congress rose and Nehru reconciled to the dominant strategy of S-T-S.

### **28 MONTHS OF CONGRESS RULE IN PROVINCES**

- Congress ministries were formed in Bombay, Madras, Central Provinces, Orissa, United Provinces, Bihar and later in NWFP and Assam also.

### **Gandhi's Advice**

- Gandhi advised Congressmen to hold these offices lightly and not tightly.
- The offices were to be seen as 'crowns of thorns' which had been accepted to see if they quickened the pace towards the nationalist goal.
- Gandhi advised that these offices should be used in a way not expected or intended by the British.
- There was great enthusiasm among the people; suppressed mass energy had got released.
- There was an increase in the prestige of the Congress as it had

showed that it could not only lead people but could also use state power for their benefit.

- But the Congress ministries had some basic limitations: they could not, through their administration, change the basic imperialist character of the system and could not introduce a radical era.

### **Work Under Congress Ministries**

#### **Civil Liberties**

The Congress ministries did much to ease curbs on civil liberties:

- Laws giving emergency powers were repealed.
  - Ban on illegal organisations, such as the Hindustan Seva Dal and youth Leagues, and on certain books and journals was lifted.
  - Press restrictions were lifted. Newspapers were taken out of black lists.
  - Confiscated arms and arms licences were restored.
  - Police powers were curbed and CID stopped shadowing politicians.
  - Political prisoners, and revolutionaries were released, and deportation and internment orders were revoked.
  - In Bombay lands confiscated during the civil disobedience movement were restored.
  - Pensions of officials associated with civil disobedience movement were restored.
- 
- Gandhi urged Congressmen to prove that the Congress could rule with least assistance from the police and the Army.
  - But there were certain blemishes in the performance of the Congress ministries regarding civil liberties.
  - Yusuf Maheraly, a socialist, was arrested by the Madras Government for inflammatory speeches and later released.
  - S.S. Batliwala, a socialist, was arrested by the Madras Government for seditious speech and given six months' sentence.
  - Then, K.M. Munshi, the Bombay Home Minister, used the CID against communists and leftists.

#### **Agrarian Reforms**

- There were certain basic constraints before the Congress ministries could undertake a complete overhaul of the agrarian structure by completely abolishing zamindari. These constraints were
    - i. The ministries did not have adequate powers.
    - ii. There were inadequate financial resources as a lion's share was appropriated by the Government of India.
    - iii. Strategy of class adjustments was another hurdle since zamindars, etc had to be conciliated and neutralised.
    - iv. There was constraint of time since the logic of Congress politics was confrontation and not cooperation with colonialism.
    - v. War clouds had started hovering around 1938.
    - vi. The reactionary second chamber (Legislative Council) dominated by landlords, moneylenders and capitalists in United Provinces, Bihar, Bombay, Madras and Assam had to be conciliated as its support was necessary for legislations.
    - (vii) The agrarian structure was too complex and complicated.
- In spite of these constraints, the Congress ministries managed to legislate a number of laws relating to land reforms, debt relief, forest

grazing fee, arrears of rent, land tenures, etc.

- But most of these benefits went to statutory and occupancy tenants while sub-tenants did not gain much.
- Agricultural labourers did not benefit as they had not been mobilised.

### **Attitude Towards Labour**

- The basic approach was to advance workers' interests while promoting industrial peace.
- This was sought to be achieved by reducing strikes as far as possible and by advocating compulsory arbitration prior to striking before the established conciliation machinery.
- Goodwill was sought to be created between labour and capital with mediation of ministries, while at the same time efforts were made to improve workers' condition and secure wage increases for them.
- The ministries treated militant trade union protests as law and order problems, and acted as mediators as far as possible.
- This approach was largely successful but not so in Bombay.
- Also, leftist critics were not satisfied by this approach. Generally, the ministries took recourse to Section 144 and arrested the leaders.
- Nehru was unhappy about these repressive measures, but in public supported the ministries to protect them from petty and petulant criticism.
- Although Gandhi was against militant and violent methods, he stood for political education of the masses.
- He felt that the popular base of the Congress should not erode.
- He appealed to Congressmen against frequent resort to colonial laws and machinery.

### **Social Welfare Reforms**

These included the following— Prohibition imposed in certain areas.

- Measures for welfare of Harijans taken—temple entry, use of public facilities, scholarships, an increase in their numbers in government service and police, etc.
- Attention given to primary, technical and higher education and to public health and sanitation.
- Encouragement given to khadi through subsidies and other measures.
- Prison reforms undertaken.
- Encouragement given to indigenous enterprises.
- Efforts taken to develop planning through National Planning Committee set up under Congress President Subhash Bose in 1938.

### **Extra-Parliamentary Mass Activity of Congress**

Such activities included—

- launching of mass literacy campaigns,
- setting up of Congress police stations and panchayats,
- Congress Grievance Committees presenting mass petitions to Government, and
- states peoples' movements.

### **Evaluation**

- Though by 1939 internal strifes, opportunism and hunger for power



had started surfacing among Congressmen, yet they were able to utilise council work to their advantage to a great extent.

- The 28-month Congress rule was also significant for the following reasons. The contention that Indian self-government was necessary for radical social transformation got confirmed.
- Congressmen demonstrated that a movement could use state power to further its ends without being co-opted.
- The ministries were able to control communal riots.
- The morale of the bureaucracy came down.
- Council work helped neutralise many erstwhile hostile elements (landlords, etc).
- People were able to perceive the shape of things to come if independence was won.
- Administrative work by Indians further weakened the myth that Indians were not fit to rule.
- Congress ministries resigned in October 1939 after the outbreak of the Second World War.

#### Summary

##### ➤ WHY NATIONALIST UPSURGE AT END OF

WAR? Post-War economic hardship.

Nationalist disillusionment with imperialism worldwide.

Impact of Russian Revolution.

MONTAGU-CHEILMSFORD REFORMS Dyarchy in provinces. Two lists—reserved and transferred—for administration. Reserved subjects to be administered by governor through executive council and transferred subjects to be administered by ministers from legislative council. Extensive powers to governor, governor-general and secretary of state for interference. Franchise expanded, powers also extended. Governor-general to administer with an executive council of 8—three to be Indians. Two lists for administration—central and provincial. Bicameral central legislature—Central Legislative Assembly as the lower house and Council of States as the upper house.

#### Drawbacks

Dyarchy arrangement too complex and irrational to be functional.

Central

Executive not responsible to legislature.

Limited franchise.

##### ➤ GANDHI'S ACTIVISM IN SOUTH AFRICA (1893-1914) Set up Natal

Indian Congress and started Indian Opinion.

Satyagraha against registration certificates.

Campaign against restrictions on Indian migration.

Campaign against poll tax and invalidation of Indian marriages.

Gandhi's faith in capacity of masses to fight established; he was

able to evolve

his own style of leadership and politics and

techniques of

struggle.

##### ➤ GANDHI'S EARLY ACTIVISM IN INDIA

Champaran Satyagraha (1917)—First Civil Disobedience.

Ahmedabad Mill Strike (1918)—First Hunger Strike.

Kheda Satyagraha (1918)—First Non-Cooperation.

Rowlett Satyagraha (1918)—First mass-strike.

#### ➤ KHILAFAT-NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT

##### ➤ Three demands-

1. Favourable treaty for Turkey
2. Redressal of Punjab wrongs
3. Establishment of swaraj.

##### Techniques used

Boycott of government-run schools, colleges, law courts, municipality and government service, foreign cloth, liquor; setting up of national schools, colleges, panchayats and using khadi; second stage to include civil disobedience by nonpayment of taxes.

Nagpur Congress Session (December 1920)—Congress goal changed to attainment of swaraj through peaceful and legitimate means from attainment of self-government through constitutional means.

Chauri-Chaura Incident (February 5, 1922) Violence by agitated mob—prompted Gandhi to withdraw movement.

#### ➤ SWARAJISTS AND NO-CHANGERS

Swarajists advocated council entry after withdrawal of NonCooperation Movement with an aim to end or mend the councils. No-changers advocated constructive work during transition period.

#### ➤ EMERGENCE OF NEW FORCES DURING 1920S

1. Spread of Marxism and socialist ideas
2. Activism of Indian youth
3. Peasants' agitations
4. Growth of trade unionism
5. Caste movements
6. Revolutionary terrorism with a tilt towards socialism.

➤ ACTIVITIES OF HRA HSRA Established-1924 Kakori robbery-1925  
Reorganised-1928Saunders' murder-1928 Bomb in Central Legislative  
Assembly-1929 Bid to blow up viceroy's train-1929 Azad killed in  
police encounter-1931 Bhagat Singh, Rajguru,  
Sukhdev hanged-1931.

##### Summary

REVOLUTIONARIES IN BENGAL Attempt on life of Calcutta police commissioner-1924 Surya Sen's Chittagong Revolt Group and Chittagong robberies1930.

##### REASONS FOR GROWTH OF COMMUNALISM

1. Socio-economic backwardness concessions used as a tool to fuel communalism by colonial rulers.
2. British policy of divide and rule.
3. Communalism in history writing.
4. Chauvinist elements of socio-religious reform movements.
5. Side-effects of militant nationalism.
6. Communal reaction by majority community.

SIMON COMMISSION Came in 1928 to explore possibility of further constitutional advance. Boycotted by Indians because no Indian represented in the commission.

NEHRU REPORT (1928) First Indian effort to draft constitutional scheme. Recommended—

- \* dominion status
- \* not separate electorates, but joint electorates with reserved seats for minorities.
- \* linguistic provinces.
- \* 19 fundamental rights.
- \* responsible government at centre and in provinces.

CALCUTTA CONGRESS SESSION (DECEMBER 1928) One year ultimatum to Government to accept dominion status or else civil disobedience to be launched for complete independence.

LAHORE CONGRESS SESSION (DECEMBER 1929) Congress adopted complete independence as its goal. Congress decided to launch a civil disobedience movement. January 26, 1931 celebrated as the first Independence Day all over the country.

DANDI MARCH (MARCH 12-APRIL 6, 1930). Led by Gandhi; resulted in spread of salt satyagraha to Tamil Nadu, Malabar, Andhra, Assam, Bengal.

Spread of the movement

Khudai Khidmatgars active in NWFP.

Textile workers active in Sholapur.

Summary

Salt satyagraha in Dharsana. No-chowkidara tax campaign in Bihar.

Anti-chowkidara and anti-union-board tax in Bengal. No-tax movement in Gujarat. Civil disobedience of forest laws in Maharashtra, Karnataka and Central Provinces. Agitation against "Cunningham Circular" in Assam. No rent campaign in UP.

Mass participation of women, students, some sections of Muslims, merchants and petty traders, tribals, workers and peasants.

➤ FIRST RTC (NOVEMBER 1930-JANUARY 1931) Congress did not attend.

➤ GANDHI-IRWIN PACT (MARCH 1931) Congress agreed to attend Second RTC and to withdraw CDM.

➤ KARACHI CONGRESS SESSION (MARCH 1931) Endorsed Delhi Pact between Gandhi and Irwin. Passed resolutions on economic programme and fundamental rights.

➤ SECOND RTC (DECEMBER 1931) Right wing in Britain against concessions to Indians. Session got deadlocked on question of safeguards to minorities. December 1931 - April 1934 Second phase of CDM.

➤ COMMUNAL AWARD (1932) Provided separate electorates to depressed classes. Nationalists felt this to be a threat to national unity. Gandhi's fast unto death (September 1932) led to Poona Pact which abandoned separate electorates for depressed classes in favour of increased reserved seats for them.

➤ GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1935 Proposed—an All India Federation;

bicameral legislature at the centre; provincial autonomy; three lists for legislation—federal, provincial and concurrent. At centre, subjects to be administered divided into reserved and transferred categories. Provincial legislators to be directly elected. Early 1937—elections to provincial assemblies held. Congressministries formed in Bombay, Madras, Central Provinces, United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, Assam and NWFP.