

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **National Movement-1905-1918**

#### **WHY MILITANT NATIONALISM GREW?**

- A radical trend of a militant nationalist approach to political activity started emerging in the 1890s and it took a concrete shape by 1905.
- As an adjunct to this trend, a revolutionary terrorist wing also took shape.

#### **But why did this militant trend emerge?**

##### **1. Recognition of the True Nature of British Rule:**

- Having seen that, the Government was not conceding any of their important demands, the more militant among those politically conscious got disillusioned and started looking for a more effective mode of political action.
- Also, the feeling that only an Indian Government could bring India on a path of progress started attracting more and more people.
- The economic miseries of the 1890s further exposed the exploitative character of colonial rule.
- Severe famines killed 90 lakh persons between 1896 and 1900.
- Bubonic plague affected large areas of the Deccan.
- There were large-scale riots in the Deccan.
- The nationalists were wide awake to the fact that instead of giving more rights to the Indians, the Government was taking away even the existing ones.
- 1892 The Indian Councils Act was criticised by nationalists as it failed to satisfy them.
- 1897 —The Natu brothers were deported without trial and Tilak and others, imprisoned on charges of sedition.
- 1898 — Repressive laws under IPC Section 124 A were further amplified with new provisions under IPC Section 156 A 1899 —Number of Indian members in Calcutta Corporation were reduced.
- Official Secrets Act curbed freedom of press.
- Indian Universities Act ensured greater government control over universities, which it described as factories producing political revolutionaries.
- Also, British rule was no longer progressive—socially and culturally.
- It was suppressing the spread of education, especially mass and technical education.

##### **2. Growth of Confidence and Self-Respect:**

- With this grew the faith in self-effort.
- Tilak, Aurobindo and Bipin Chandra Pal repeatedly urged the nationalists to rely on the character and capacities of the Indian people.
- A feeling started gaining currency that only the masses were capable of making the immense sacrifices needed to win freedom.

##### **3. Growth of Education:**

- While, on the one hand, the spread of education led to an increased awareness among the masses,

- on the other hand, the rise in unemployment and underemployment among the educated drew attention to poverty and the underdeveloped state of the country's economy under colonial rule.
  - This added to the already simmering discontent among the more radical nationalists.
- 4. International Influences:**
- Remarkable progress made by Japan after 1868 and its emergence as an industrial power opened the eyes of Indians to the fact that economic progress was possible even by an Asian country without any external help.
  - The defeat of the Italian army by Ethiopians (1896), the Boer wars (1899-1902) where the British faced reverses and Japan's victory over Russia (1905) demolished myths of European invincibility.
  - Also, the nationalists were inspired by the nationalist movements worldwide—in Ireland, Russia, Egypt, Turkey, Persia and China.
  - The Indians realised that a united people willing to make sacrifices could take on the mightiest of empires.
- 5. Reaction to Increasing Westernisation:**
- The new leadership felt the stranglehold of excessive westernisation and sensed colonial designs to submerge the Indian national
- 6. Dissatisfaction with Achievements of Moderates:**
- The younger elements within the Congress were dissatisfied with the achievements of the Moderates first 15-20 years.
  - They were strongly critical of the methods of peaceful and constitutional agitation, popularly known as the "Three 'P's"—prayer, petition and protest—and described these methods as 'political mendicancy'.
- 7. Reactionary Policies of Curzon:**
- A sharp reaction was created in the Indian mind by Curzon's seven-year rule in India which was full of missions, commissions and orrussions.
  - He refused to recognise India as a to Indian nationalists and the intelligentsia by describing their activities as "ie-. He spoke derogatorily of Indian character in general.
  - Administrative measures adopted during his rule— the Official Secrets Act, the Indian Universities Act, the calcration Act and, above all, the partition of Bengal—left no doubts in Indian minds about the basically reactionary nature of British rule in India.
- 8. Existence of a Militant School, of Thought**
- By the dawn of the twentieth century, a band of nationalist thinkers had emerged who advocated a more militant approach to political work.
  - These included Raj Narain Bose, Ashwini Kumar Datta, Aurobindo Ghosh and Bengal; Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar and Tilak in Maharashtra;
  - and Lala Lajpat Rai in Punjab. as the most outstanding representative of this school of thought.

- The basic tenets of this school of thought were: hatred for foreign rule; since no hope could be derived from it, Indians should work out their own salvation;
- swaraj to be the goal of national movement; direct political action required; belief in capacity of the masses to challenge the authority;
- personal sacrifices required and a true nationalist to be always ready for it.

#### 9. A Trained Leadership Had Emerged

- This leadership could provide a proper channelisation of the immense potential for political struggle which the masses possessed and, as the militant nationalists thought, were ready to give expression to.
- This energy of the masses got a release during the movement against the partition of Bengal, which acquired the form of the swadeshi agitation.

### THE SWADESHI AND BOYCOTT MOVEMENT

- The Swadeshi Movement had its genesis, in the anti-partition movement which was started to oppose the British decision to partition Bengal.
- The Government's decision to partition Bengal had been made public in December 1903.
- The official reason given for the decision was that Bengal with a population of 78 million (about a quarter of the population of British India) had become too big to be administered.
- This was true to some extent, but the real motive behind the partition plan was the British desire to weaken Bengal, the nerve centre of Indian nationalism.
- This it sought to achieve by putting the Bengalis under two administrations by dividing them:
  - (i) on the basis of language (thus reducing the Bengalis to a minority in Bengal itself as in the new proposal Bengal proper was to have 17 million Bengalis and 37 million Hindi and Oriya speakers), and
  - (ii) on the basis of religion, as the western half was to be a Hindu majority area (42 million out of a total 54 million) and the eastern half was to be a Muslim majority area (18 million out of a total of 31 million).
- Trying to woo the Muslims, Curzon, the viceroy at that time, argued that Dacca could become the capital of the new Muslim majority province, which would provide them with a unity not experienced by them since the days of old Muslim viceroys and kings.
- Thus, it was clear that the Government was up to its old policy of propping up Muslim communalists to counter the Congress and the national movement.

#### **Anti-Partition Campaign Under Moderates (1903-05)**

- During this period, the leadership was provided by men like Surendranath Banerjee, K.K. Mitra and Prithwishchandra Ray.
- The methods adopted were petitions to the Government, public meetings, memoranda, and propaganda through pamphlets and newspapers such as Hitabadi, Sanjibani and Bengalee.
- Their objective was to exert sufficient pressure on the Government

through an educated public opinion in India and England to prevent the unjust partition of Bengal from being implemented.

- The Announcement Ignoring a loud public opinion against the partition proposal, the Government announced partition of Bengal in July 1905.
- Within days, protest meetings were held in small towns all over Bengal.
- It was in these meetings that the pledge to boycott foreign goods was first taken.
- On August 1905, with the passage of Boycott Resolution in a massive meeting held in the Calcutta Town hall, the formal proclamation of Swadeshi Movement was made.
- After this, the leaders dispersed to other parts of Bengal to propagate the message of boycott of Manchester cloth and Liverpool salt.
- October 16, 1905, the day the partition formally came into force, was observed as a day of mourning through out Bengal.
- People fasted, bathed in the Ganga and walked barefoot in processions singing Bande Mataram (which almost spontaneously became the theme song of the movement).
- People tied rakhis on each other's hands as a symbol of unity of the two halves of Bengal.
- Later in the day, Surendranath Banerjee and Ananda Mohan Bose addressed huge gatherings (perhaps the largest till then under the nationalist banner).
- Within a few hours of the meeting, Rs 50,000 were raised for the movement.
- Soon, the movement spread to other parts of the country—in Poona and Bombay under Tilak, in Punjab under Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh, in Delhi under Syed Haider Raza, and Madras under Chidambaram Pillai.

### **The Congress's Position**

- The Indian National Congress, meeting in 1905 under the presidentship of Gokhale, resolved to
  - (i) condemn the partition of Bengal and the reactionary policies of Curzon, and
  - (ii) support the anti-partition and Swadeshi Movement of Bengal.
- The militant nationalists led by Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Aurobindo Ghosh wanted the movement to be taken outside Bengal to other parts of the country and go beyond a boycott of foreign goods to become a full-fledged political mass struggle with the goal of attaining swaraj.
- But the Moderates, dominating the Congress at that time, were not willing to go that far.
- However, a big step forward was taken at the Congress session held at Calcutta (1906) under the presidentship of Dadabhai Naoroji, where it was declared that the goal of the Indian movement was 'selfgovernment or swaraj like the United Kingdom or the colonies.
- The Moderate-Extremist dispute over the policy of the movement and techniques of struggle reached a deadlock at the Surat session of the Indian National Congress (1907) where the party

split with serious consequences for the Swadeshi Movement.

### **THE MOVEMENT UNDER MILITANT LEADERSHIP**

- After 1905, the Extremists acquired a dominant influence over the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal.

There were three reasons for this:

1. The Moderate-led movement had failed to yield results.
2. The divisive tactics of the Governments of both the Bengals had embittered the nationalists.
3. The Government had resorted to suppressive measures, which included atrocities on students—many of whom were given corporal punishment; ban on public singing of Bande Mataram; restriction on public meetings; prosecution and long imprisonment of swadeshi workers; clashes between the police and the people in many towns; arrests and deportation of leaders; and suppression of freedom of the press.

- The Extremist Programme Emboldened by Dadabhai Naoroji's declaration at the Calcutta session (1906) that selfgovernment or swaraj was to be the goal of the Congress, the Extremists gave a call for passive resistance in addition to swadeshi and boycott which would include a boycott of government schools and colleges, government service, courts, legislative councils, municipalities, government titles, etc. so as to, as Aurobindo put it, "make the administration under present conditions impossible by an organized refusal to do anything—which will help either the British commerce in the exploitation of the country or British officialdom in the administration of The militant nationalists tried to transform the antipartition and Swadeshi Movement into a mass struggle and gave the slogan of India's independence from foreign rule.
- "Political freedom is the lifebreath of a nation," declared Aurobindo.
- Thus, the Extremists gave the idea of India's independence the central place in India's politics.
- The goal of independence was to be achieved through self sacrifice.

### **New Forms of Struggle**

- The militant nationalists put forward several fresh ideas at the theoretical, propaganda and programme levels.
- Among the several forms of struggle thrown up by the movement were Boycott of foreign goods: This included boycott and public burning of foreign cloth, boycott of foreign made salt or sugar, refusal by priests to solemnise marriages involving exchange of foreign goods, refusal by washermen to wash foreign clothes.
- This form of protest met with great success at the practical and popular level.

### **Public meetings and processions:**

- These emerged as major methods of mass mobilisation and simultaneously as forms of popular expression.

### **Corps of volunteers or 'samitis':**

- Samitis such as the Swadesh Bandhab Samiti of Ashwini Kumar Dutta (in Barisal) emerged as a very popular and powerful method of mass

mobilisation. These samitis, generated political consciousness among the masses through magic lantern lectures, swadeshi songs, physical and moral training to their members, social work during famines and epidemics, organisation of schools, training in swadeshi crafts and arbitration courts.

#### **Imaginative use of traditional popular festivals and melas:**

- The idea was to use such occasions as a means of reaching out to the masses and spreading political messages. For instance, Tilak's Ganapati and Shivaji festivals became a medium of swadeshi propaganda not only in western India, but also in Bengal. In Bengal also, the traditional folk theatre forms were used for this purpose.
- Emphasis given to self-reliance or 'atma shakti':
- This implied re-assertion of national dignity, honour and confidence and social and economic regeneration of the villages. In practical terms, it included social reform di-id campaigns against caste oppression, early marriage, dowry system, consumption of alcohol, etc.
- Programme of swadeshi or national education: Bengal National College, inspired by Tagore's Shantiniketan was set up with Aurobindo Ghosh as its principal.
- Soon national schools and colleges sprang up in various parts of the country.
- On August 15, 1906, the National Council of Education was set up to organize a system of education—literary, scientific and technical—on national lines and under national control.
- Education was to be imparted through the medium of vernaculars.
- A Bengal Institute of Technology was set up for technical education and funds were raised to send students to Japan for advanced learning.

#### **Swadeshi or indigenous enterprises**

- The swadeshi spirit also found expression in the establishment of swadeshi textile mills, soap and match factories, tanneries, banks, insurance companies, shops etc. These enterprises were based more on patriotic zeal than on business acumen.

#### **Impact in the cultural sphere**

- The nationalists of all hues took inspiration from songs written by Rabindranath Tagore, Rajnikartt Sen, Dwijendralal Ray, Mukunda Das, Syed Abu, Mohammad and others. Tagore's 'Amar Sonar Bangla' written on this occasion was later to inspire the liberation struggle of Bangladesh and was adopted by it as its 'national' anthem.

#### **In painting,**

- Abanindranath Tagore broke the domination of Victorian naturalism over Indian art and took inspiration from Mughal, Ajanta and kajput paintings.
- Nandlal Bose, who left a major imprint on Indian art, was the first recipient of a scholarship offered by the Indian Society of Oriental Art, founded in 1907.

#### **In science,**

- JagdishChandrla Bose, Prafullachandra Roy and others pioneered original research which was praised the world over.

#### **EXTENT OF MASS PARTICIPATION**

- Students came out in large numbers to propagate and practice swadeshi, and to take a lead in organising picketing of shops selling foreign goods.
- Police adopted a repressive attitude towards the students.
- Schools and colleges whose students participated in the agitation were to be penalised by disaffiliating them or stopping of grants and privileges to them.
- Students who were found guilty of participation were to be disqualified for government jobs or for government scholarships, and disciplinary action— fine, expulsion, arrest, beating, etc — was to be taken against them.
- **Women**, who were traditionally home-centred, especially those of the urban middle classes, took active part in processions and picketing.
- From now onwards, they were to play a significant role in the national movement.
- Some of the **Muslims participated**—Barrister Abdul Rasul, Liaquat Hussain, Guznavi, Maulana Azad (who joined one of the revolutionary terrorist groups)—but most of the upper and middle class Muslims stayed away or, led by Nawab Salimullah of Dacca, supported the partition on the plea that it would give them a Muslim-majority East Bengal.
- Thus, the social base of the movement expanded to include certain sections of the zamindars, the students, the women, and the lower middle classes in cities and towns.
- An attempt was also made to give political expression to economic grievances of the working class by organising strikes in British-owned concerns such as Eastern Indian Railways.
- But the movement was not able to garner support of the Muslims, especially the Muslim peasantry, because of a conscious government policy of divide and rule helped by overlap of class and community at places.
- To further government interests, the All India Muslim League was propped up in 1907 as an anti-Congress front and reactionary elements like Nawab Salimullah of Dacca were encouraged.

#### **ALL INDIA ASPECT**

- Movements in support of Bengal's unity and the swadeshi and boycott agitation were organized in many parts of the country.
- Tilak, who played a leading role in the spread of the movement outside Bengal, saw in this the ushering in of a new chapter in the history of the national movement.
- He realised that here was a challenge and an opportunity to organize popular mass struggle against the British rule to unite the country in a bond of common sympathy.

### **CANCELLATION OF PARTITION**

- It was decided to annul the partition of Bengal in 1911 mainly to curb the menace of revolutionary terrorism.
- The annulment came as a rude shock to the Muslim political elite.
- It was also decided to shift the capital to Delhi as a sop to the Muslims, as it was associated with Muslim glory, but the Muslims were not pleased.
- Bihar and Orissa were taken out of Bengal and Assam was made a separate province.

### **WHY DID THE SWADESHI MOVEMENT FIZZLE OUT?**

- By 1908, the open phase (as different from the underground revolutionary phase) of the movement was almost over
- This was due to many reasons-
  1. There was severe government repression.
  2. The movement failed to create an effective organization or a party structure. It threw up an entire gamut of techniques that came to be associated with Gandhian politics—noncooperation, passive resistance, filling of British jails, social reform and constructive work—but failed to give these techniques a disciplined focus.
  3. The movement was rendered leaderless with most of the leaders either arrested or deported by 1908 and with Aurobindo-Ghosh and Bipin Chandra Pal retiring from active politics.
  4. Internal squabbles among leaders, magnified by the Surat split (1907), did much harm to the movement.
  5. The movement aroused the people but did not know how to tap the newly released energy or how to find new forms to give expression to popular resentment.
  6. The movement largely remained confined to the upper and middle classes and zamindars, and failed to reach the masses—especially the peasantry.
  7. Non-cooperation and passive resistance remained mere ideas.
  8. It is difficult to sustain a mass-based movement at a high pitch for too long.

### **ASSESSMENT**

- Despite its gradual decline into inactivity, the movement was a turning point in modern Indian history.
- 1. It proved to be a "leap forward" in more ways than one. Hitherto untouched sections—students, women, some sections of urban and rural population—participated. All major trends of the national movement, from conservative moderation to political extremism, from revolutionary terrorism to incipient socialism, from petitions and prayers to passive resistance and non-cooperation, emerged during the Swadeshi Movement.
- 2. The richness of the movement was not confined to the political sphere alone, but encompassed art, literature, science and industry also.
- 3. People were aroused from slumber and now they learned to take bold political positions and participate in new forms of political work.
- 4. The swadeshi campaign undermined the hegemony of colonial ideas and institutions.



5. The future struggle was to draw heavily from the experience gained.

**Thus, with the coming of Swadeshi and Boycott Movement, it became clear that the Moderates had outlived.**

### **Differences Between Moderates and Extremists**

#### **Moderates**

1. Social base—zamindars and upper middle classes in towns.
2. Ideological inspiration—western liberal thought and European history.
3. Believed in England's providential mission in India.
4. Believed political connections with Britain to be in India's social, political and cultural interests.
5. Professed loyalty to the British Crown.
6. Believed that the movement should be limited to middle class intelligentsia; masses not yet ready for participation in political work.
7. Demanded constitutional reforms and share for Indians in services.
8. Insisted on the use of constitutional methods only.
9. They were patriots and did not play the role of a comprador class.

#### **Extremists**

1. Social base educated middle classes in towns and lower middle class.
2. Ideological inspiration—Indian history, cultural heritage and Hindu traditional symbols.
3. Rejected 'providential mission theory' as an illusion.
4. Believed that political connections with Britain would perpetuate British exploitation of India.
5. Believed that the British Crown was unworthy of claiming Indian loyalty.
6. Had immense faith in the capacity of masses to participate and to make sacrifices.
7. Demanded swaraj as panacea for Indian ills.
8. Did not hesitate to use extraconstitutional methods like boycott and passive resistance to achieve their objectives.
9. They were patriots who made sacrifices for the sake of the country.

- Their utility and their politics of petitions and speeches had become obsolete.
- They had not succeeded in keeping pace with time, and this was highlighted by their failure to get the support of the younger generation for their style of politics.
- Their failure to work among the masses had meant that their ideas did not take root among the masses.
- Even the, propaganda by the Moderates did not reach the masses.
- No all-India campaigns of the scale of Swadeshi and Boycott Movement had been organized earlier by the Moderates and, in this campaign, they discovered that they were not its leaders, which was rather natural.
- The Extremist ideology and its functioning also lacked consistency.

- Its advocates ranged from open members and secret sympathisers to those opposed to any kind of political violence.
  - Its leaders—Aurobindo, Tilak, B.C. Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai—had different perceptions of their goal.
  - For Tilak, swaraj meant some sort of self-government,
  - while for Aurobindo, it meant complete independence from foreign rule.
  - But at the politico-ideological level, their emphasis on mass participation and on the need to broaden the social base of the movement was a progressive improvement upon the Moderate politics.
  - They raised patriotism from a level of 'academic pastime' to one of 'service and sacrifice for the country'.
  - But the politically progressive Extremists proved to be social reactionaries.
  - They had revivalist and obscurantist undertones attached to their thoughts.
  - Tilak's opposition to the Age of Consent Bill (which would have raised the marriageable age for girls from 10 years to 12 years, though his objection was mainly that such reforms must come from people governing themselves and not under an alien rule), his organizing of Ganapati and Shivaji festivals as national festivals, his support to anti-cow killing campaigns., etc. portrayed him as a Hindu nationalist.
  - Similarly B.C. Pal and Aurobindo spoke of a Hindu nation and Hindu interests.
- Though the seemingly revivalist and obscurantist tactics of the Extremists were directed against the foreign rulers, they had the effect of promoting a very unhealthy relationship between politics and religion, the bitter harvests of which the Indians had to reap in later years.

### **THE SURAT SPLIT**

- The Congress split at Surat came in December 1907,
- Around the time when revolutionary terrorism had gained momentum. The two events were not unconnected.

### **Run-up to Surat**

- In December, 19 at the **Benaras session** of the Indian National Congress presided over by Gokhale, the Moderate-Extremist differences came to the fore.
- The Extremists wanted to extend the Boycott and Swadeshi Movement to regions outside Bengal and also to include all forms of associations (such as government service, law courts, legislative councils, etc.) within the boycott programme and thus start a nationwide mass movement.
- The Extremists wanted a strong resolution supporting their programme at the Benaras session.
- The Moderates, on the other hand, were not in favour of extending the movement beyond Bengal and were totally opposed to boycott of councils and similar associations.
- They advocated strictly constitutional methods to protest against

the partition of Bengal.

- As a compromise, a relatively mild resolution condemning the partition of Bengal and the reactionary policies of Curzon and supporting the swadeshi and boycott programme in Bengal was passed.
- This succeeded in averting a split for the moment.
- At the **Calcutta session** of the Congress in December 1906, the Moderate enthusiasm had cooled a bit because of the popularity of the Extremists and the revolutionary terrorists and because of communal riots.
- Here, the Extremists wanted either Tilak or Lajpat Rai as the president, while the Moderates proposed the name of Dadabhai Naoroji, who was widely respected by all the nationalists.
- Finally, Dadabhai Naoroji was elected as the president and as a concession to the militants, the goal of the Indian National Congress was defined as swarajya or self-government like the United Kingdom or the colonies'.
- Also a resolution supporting the programme of swadeshi, boycott and national education was passed.
- The word swaraj was mentioned for the first time, but its connotation was not spelt out, which left the field open for differing interpretations by the Moderates and the Extremists.
- The Extremists, emboldened by the proceedings at the Calcutta session, gave a call for wide passive resistance and boycott of schools, colleges, legislative councils, municipalities, law courts, etc.
- The Moderates, encouraged by the news that council reforms were on the anvil, decided to tone down the Calcutta programme.
- The two sides seemed to be heading for a showdown.
- The Extremists thought that the people had been aroused and the battle for freedom had begun.
- They felt the time had come for the big push to drive the British out and considered the Moderates to be a drag on the movement.
- They concluded that it was necessary to part company with the Moderates, even if it meant, a split in the Congress.
- The Moderates thought that it would be dangerous at that stage to associate with the Extremists whose anti-imperialist agitation, it was felt, would be ruthlessly suppressed by the mighty colonial rule.
- The Moderates saw in the council reforms an opportunity to realise their dream of Indian participation in the administration.
- Any hasty action by the Congress, the Moderates felt, under Extremist pressure was bound to annoy the Liberals in power in England then.
- The Moderates were no less willing to part company with the Extremists.
- The Moderates did not realise that the council reforms were meant by the Government more to isolate the Extremists than to reward the Moderates.
- The Extremists did not realize that the Moderates could act as their outer line of defence in face of state repression.
- Both sides did not realise that in a vast country like India

ruled by a powerful imperialist country, only a broad-based nationalist movement could succeed.

- The **Extremists wanted the 1907 session to be held in Nagpur (Central Provinces) with Tilak or Lajpat Rai as the president** and reiteration of the swadeshi, boycott and national education resolutions.
- The **Moderates wanted the session at Surat in order to exclude Tilak from the presidency**, since a leader from the host province could not be session president (Surat being in Tilak's home province of Bombay).
- Instead, they wanted Rashbehari Ghosh as the president and sought to drop the resolutions on swadeshi, boycott and national education.
- Both sides adopted rigid positions, leaving no room for compromise.
- The split became inevitable, and the Congress was now dominated by the Moderates who lost no time in reiterating Congress commitment to the goal of selfgovernment within the British Empire and to constitutional methods only to achieve this goal.
- The Government launched a massive attack on the Extremists.
- Between 1907 and 1911, five new laws were enforced to check anti-government activity.
- These legislations included
  - \* the Seditious Meetings Act, 1907;
  - \* Indian Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act, 1908;
  - \* Criminal Law Amendment Act, 1908; and
  - \* the Indian Press Act, 1910.
- Tilak, the main Extremist leader, was sent to Mandalay (Burma) jail for six years. Aurobindo and B.C. Pal retired from active politics.
- Lajpat Rai left for abroad.
- The Extremists were not able to organize an effective alternative party to sustain the movement.
- The Moderates were left with no popular base or support, especially as the youth rallied behind, the Extremists.
- After 1908, the national movement as a whole declined for a time.
- In 1914, Tilak was released and he picked up the threads of the movement.

#### **THE GOVERNMENT STRATEGY**

- The British Government in India had been hostile to the Congress from the beginning.
- Even after the Moderates, who dominated the Congress from the beginning, began distancing themselves from the militant nationalist trend which had become visible during the last decade of the nineteenth century itself, government hostility did not stop.
- This was because, in the Government's view, the Moderates still represented an anti-imperialist force consisting of basically patriotic and liberal intellectuals.
- With the coming of Swadeshi and Boycott Movement and the emergence

of militant nationalist trend in a big way, the Government modified its strategy towards the nationalists.

- Now, the policy was to be of 'rallying them' (John Morley— the secretary of state) or the policy of 'carrot and stick'.
- It may be described as a three-pronged approach of repression, conciliation, suppression.
- In the first stage, the Extremists were to be repressed mildly, mainly to frighten the Moderates.
- In the second stage, the Moderates were to be placated through some concessions, and hints were to be dropped that more reforms would be forthcoming if the distance from the Extremists was maintained. This was aimed at isolating the Extremists.
- Now, with the Moderates on its side, the Government could suppress the Extremists with its full might. The Moderates could then be ignored.
- Unfortunately, neither the Moderates nor the Extremists understood the implications of the strategy.
- The Surat split suggested that the policy of carrot and stick had brought rich dividends to the Government.

#### **REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISM**

- Revolutionary terrorism was a by-product of the process of the growth of militant nationalism in India.
- It acquired a more activist form as a fallout of the Swadeshi and Boycott Movement.
- After the decline of the open movement, the younger nationalists who had participated in the movement found it impossible to disappear into the background.
- They looked for avenues to give expression to their patriotic energies, but were disillusioned by the failure of the leadership, even from the Extremists, to find new forms of struggle to bring into practice the new militant trends.
- The Extremist leaders, although they called upon the youth to make sacrifices, failed to create an effective organisation or find new forms of political work to tap these revolutionary energies.
- The youth, finding all avenues of peaceful political protest closed to them under government repression, thought that if nationalist goals of independence were to be met, the British must be expelled physically.

#### **The Revolutionary Terrorist Programme**

- The revolutionary terrorists considered but did not find it practical at that stage the options of creating a violent mass revolution throughout the country or, of trying to subvert the loyalties of the Army.
- Instead they opted to follow in the footsteps of Russian nationalists or the Irish nationalists.
- This methodology involved individual heroic actions, such as organising assassinations of unpopular British officials and of traitors and informers among the revolutionaries themselves; conducting swadeshi dacoities to raise funds for revolutionary activities; and (during the First World War) organising military conspiracies with expectation of help from the enemies of Britain.
- The idea was to strike terror in the hearts of the rulers, arouse

- people and remove the fear of authority from their minds.
- The revolutionaries intended to inspire the people by appealing to their patriotism, especially the idealist youth who would finally drive the British out.
- The Extremist leaders failed to ideologically counter the revolutionaries by not highlighting the difference between a revolution based on activity of the masses and one based on individual terrorist activity, thus allowing the individualistic terrorist activities to take root.

## **A Survey of Revolutionary Terrorist Activities**

- Following is a brief survey of revolutionary terrorist activities in different parts of India and abroad before the First World War.

### **Bengal**

- By the 1870s, Calcutta's student community was honeycombed with secret societies, but these were not active.
- The first revolutionary groups were organized in 1902 in Midnapore (under Jnanendranath Basu) and in Calcutta (the Anushilan Samiti founded by Promotha Mitter, and including Jatindranath Banerjee, Barindra Kumar Ghosh and others.)
- But their activities were limited to giving physical and moral training to the members and remained insignificant till 1907-08.
- In April 1906, an inner circle within Anushilan (Barindra Kumar Ghosh, Bhupendranath Dutta) started the weekly Yugantar and conducted a few abortive 'actions'.
- By 1905-06, several newspapers had started advocating revolutionary terrorism.
- For instance, after severe police brutalities on participants of the Barisal Conference, the Yugantar wrote "The remedy lies with the people.
- The 30 crore people inhabiting India must raise their 60 crore hands to stop this curse of oppression.
- Force must be stopped by force."
- Rashbehari Bose and Sachin Sanyal had organized a secret society covering far-flung areas of Punjab, Delhi and United Provinces while some others like Hernachandra Kanungo went abroad for military and political training.
- In 1907, an abortive attempt was made on the life of the very unpopular West Bengal Lt. Governor, Fuller, by the Yugantar group.
- In 1908, Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose threw a bomb at a carriage supposed to be carrying a particularly sadistic white judge, Kingsford, in Muzaffarnagar.
- Two ladies, instead, got killed.
- Prafulla Chaki shot himself dead while Khudiram Bose was tried and hanged.
- The whole gang was arrested including the Ghosh brothers, Aurobindo and Barindra, who were tried in the Alipore conspiracy case.
- During the trial, Narendra Gosain, who had turned approver, was shot dead in jail.
- In February 1909, the public prosecutor was shot dead in Calcutta and in February 1910, a deputy superintendent of police

met the same fate while leaving the Calcutta High Court.

- In 1908, Barrah dacoity was organized by Dacca Anushilan under PulinDas.
- Rashbehari Bose and Sachin Sanyal staged a spectacular bomb attack on Viceroy Hardinge while he was making his official entry into the new capital in a procession through Chandni Chowk in Delhi in December 1912.

**The newspapers and journals advocating revolutionary terrorism included Sandhya and Yugantar in Bengal, and Kalin Maharashtra.**

- In the end, revolutionary terrorism emerged as the most substantial legacy of swadeshi Bengal which had a spell on educated youth for a generation or more.
- But, an overemphasis on religion kept the Muslims aloof while it encouraged quixotic heroism.
- No involvement of masses was envisaged, which, coupled with, the narrow upper caste social base of the movement in Bengal, severely limited the scope of the revolutionary terrorist activity.
- Lacking a mass base, it failed to withstand the weight of state repression.

#### **Maharashtra,**

- **The first of the revolutionary activities here was the organisation of the Ramosi Peasant Force by Vasudev Balwant Phadke in 1879,** which aimed to rid the country of the British by instigating an armed revolt by disrupting communication lines.
- It hoped to raise funds for its activities through dacoities.
- It was suppressed prematurely.
- During the 1890s, Tilak propagated a spirit of militant nationalism, including use of violence through Ganapati and Shivaji festivals and his journals Kesari and Maratta.
- Two of his disciples—the Chapekar brothers, Damodar and Balkrishna—murdered the Plague Commissioner of Poona, Rand, and one Lt. Ayerst in 1897.
- Savarkar and his brother organized Mitra Mela, a secret society, in 1899 which merged with Abhinav Bharat (after Mazzinni's 'Young Italy') in 1904.
- Soon Nasik, Poona and Bombay emerged as centres of bomb manufacture.
- In 1909, Jackson, the district magistrate of Nasik, was killed.

#### **Punjab,**

- The Punjab extremism was fuelled by issues such as frequent famines coupled with rise in land revenue and irrigation tax, practice of 'begar' by zamindars and by the events in Bengal.
- Among those active here were Lala Lajpat Rai who brought out Punjabee (with its motto of self-help at any cost) and Ajit Singh (Bhagat Singh's uncle) who organized the extremist Anjurnan-i-Mohisban-i-Watan in Lahore with its journal, Bharat Mata.
- Before Ajit Singh's group turned to extremism, it was active in urging non-payment of revenue and water rates among Chenab colonists and Bari Doab peasants.
- Other leaders included Aga Haidar, Syed Haider Raza, Bhai Parmanand and the radical Urdu poet, Lalchand Falak'.

- Extremism in the Punjab died down quickly after the Government struck in May 1907 with a ban on political meetings and the deportation of Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh.
- After this, Ajit Singh and a few other associates— Sufi Ambaprasad, Lalchand, Bhai Parmanand, Lala Hardayal— developed into full-scale revolutionary terrorists.

### **Abroad,**

- The need for shelter, the possibility of bringing out revolutionary literature that would be immune from the Press Acts and the quest for arms took Indian revolutionaries abroad.
- Shyamji Krishnavarma had started in London in 1905 an Indian Home Rule Society— 'India House'—as a centre for Indian students, a scholarship scheme to bring radical youth from India, and a journal The Sociologist.
- Revolutionaries such as Savarkar and Hardayal became the members of India House.
- Madanlal Dhingra of this circle assassinated, the India office bureaucrat Curzon Wylie in 1909.
- Soon London became too dangerous for the revolutionaries, particularly after Savarkar had been extradited in 1910 and transported for life in the Nasik conspiracy case.
- New centres emerged on the continent— Paris and Geneva—from where Madam Bhikaji Cama, a Parsi revolutionary who had developed contacts with French socialists and who brought out Bande Mataram, and Ajit Singh operated.
- And after 1909 when Anglo-German relations deteriorated, Virendranath Chattopadhyaya chose Berlin as his base.

### **MORLEY-MINTO REFORMS-1909**

- The Morley-Minto Reforms, so named after Morley, the secretary of state, and Minto, the viceroy at that time, were preceded by two important events.
- In 1906, a group of Muslim elites called led by the Agha Khan, met Lord Minto and demanded separate electorates for the Muslims and representation in excess of their numerical strength in view of 'the value of the contribution' Muslims were making to the defence of the empire'.
- The same group quickly took over the Muslim League, initially floated by Nawab Salimullah of Dacca along with Nawabs Mohsin-ul-Mulk and Waqar-ul-Mulk in December 1906.
- Muslim League intended to preach loyalty to the empire and to keep the Muslim intelligentsia away from the Congress.

### **The Reforms**

- The number of elected members in the Imperial Legislative Council and the Provincial Legislative Councils was increased.
- In the Provincial Councils, non-official majority was introduced, but since some of these non-officials were nominated and not elected, the overall non-elected majority remained.
- In the Imperial Legislative Council, of the total 68 members, 36 were to be the officials and of the 32 non-officials, 5 were to be nominated. Of the 27 elected non-officials, 8 seats were reserved for the Muslims



under separate electorates (only Muslims could vote here for the Muslim candidates), while 6 seats were reserved for the British capitalists, 2 for the landlords and 13 seats came under general electorate.

➤ The elected members were to be indirectly elected.

- The local bodies were to elect an electoral college, which in turn would elect members of provincial legislatures, who in turn would elect members of the central legislature.

- Besides separate electorates for the Muslims, representation in excess of the strength of their population was accorded to the Muslims.

- Also, the income qualification for Muslim voters was kept lower than that for Hindus.

- Powers of legislatures both at the centre and in provinces were enlarged and the legislatures could now pass resolutions (which may not be accepted), ask questions and supplementaries, vote separate items in the budget but the budget as a whole could not be voted upon.

➤ One Indian was to be appointed to the viceroy's executive council (**Satyendra Sinha was the first to be appointed in 1909**).

### Evaluation

- The reforms of 1909 afforded no answer and could afford no answer to the Indian political problem.
- Lord Morley made it clear that colonial self-government (as demanded by the Congress) was not suitable for India, and he was against introduction of, parliamentary or responsible government in India.
- He said, "If it could be said that this chapter of reforms led directly or indirectly to the establishment of a parliamentary system in India, I, for one, would have nothing at all to do with it."

➤ The 'constitutional' reforms were, in fact, aimed at dividing the nationalist ranks by confusing the Moderates and at checking the growth of unity among Indians through the obnoxious instrument of separate electorates.

➤ The Government aimed at rallying the Moderates and the Muslims against the rising tide of nationalism.

➤ The officials and the Muslim leaders often talked of the entire community when they talked of the separate electorates, but in reality it meant the appeasement of a small section of the Muslim elite only.

➤ Besides, the system of election was too indirect and it gave the impression of infiltration of legislators through a number of sieves. And, while parliamentary forms were introduced, no responsibility was conceded, which sometimes led to thoughtless and irresponsible criticism of the Government.

➤ Only some members like Gokhale put to constructive use the opportunity to debate in the councils by demanding universal primary education, attacking repressive policies and drawing attention to the plight of indentured labour and Indian workers in South Africa.

➤ The reforms of 1909 gave to the people of the country a shadow rather than substance.

➤ The people had demanded self-government but what they were given was

'benevolent despotism'.

### **FIRST WORLD WAR AND NATIONALIST RESPONSE**

- In the First World War (1914-1919), Britain allied with France, Russia, USA, Italy and Japan against Germany Austria Hungary and This period saw the maturing of Indian nationalism.
- The nationalist response to British participation in the War was three-fold:
  - (i) the Moderates supported the empire in the War as a matter of duty;
  - (ii) the extremists, including Tilak (who was released in June 1914), supported the war efforts in the mistaken belief that Britain would repay India's loyalty with gratitude in the form of self-government;
  - (iii) the revolutionaries decided to utilise the opportunity to wage a war and liberate the country.
- The Indian supporters of British war efforts failed to see that the imperialist powers were fighting precisely to safeguard their own colonies and markets.

### **Revolutionary Activity during First World War**

- The revolutionary activity was carried out through the Ghadr Party in North America, Berrin Committee in Europe and some scattered mutinies by Indian soldiers, such as the one in Singapore.
- In India, for revolutionaries striving for immediate complete independence, the War seemed a heaven-sent opportunity, draining India of troops (the number of white soldiers went down at one point to only 15,000), and raising the possibility of financial and military help from Germany and Turkey—the enemies of Britain.

### **The Ghadr**

- The Ghadr Party was a revolutionary group organized around a weekly newspaper
- The Ghadr with its headquarters at San Francisco and branches along the US coast and in the Far East.
- These revolutionaries included mainly ex-soldiers and peasants who had migrated from the Punjab to the USA and Canada in search of better employment opportunities.
- They were based in the US and Canadian cities along the western (Pacific) coast.
- Pre-Ghadr revolutionary activity had been carried on by Ramdas Puri, G.D. Kumar, Taraknath Das, Sohan Singh Shukla and Lala Hardayal who reached Tifin.
- Finally in 1913, the Ghadr was established.
- To carry out revolutionary activities, the earlier activists had set up a 'Swadesh Sevak Home' at Vancouver and 'United India House' in Seattle.
- The Ghadr programme was to organize assassinations of officials, publish revolutionary and anti-imperialist literature, work among Indian troops stationed abroad, procure arms and bring about a simultaneous revolt in all British colonies.
- The moving spirits behind the Ghadr Party were Lala Hardayal, Ramchandra, Bhagwan Singh, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Barkha Bhai Parmanand.
- The Ghadr intended to bring about a revolt in India.

- Their plans were encouraged by two events in 1914—the Maru incident and the outbreak of the First World War.

### **Komagata Maru Incident**

- The importance of this event lies in the fact that it created an explosive situation in the Punjab.
  - Komagata Maru was the name of a ship which was carrying 370 passengers, mainly Sikh and Punjabi Muslim would-be immigrants, from Singapore to Vancouver.
  - They were turned back by Canadian authorities after two months of privation and uncertainty.
  - It was generally believed that the Canadian authorities were influenced by the British Government.
  - The ship finally anchored at Calcutta in September 1914.
  - The inmates refused to board the Punjab-bound train.
  - In the ensuing with the police at Budge Budge near Calcutta, 22 persons died.
- Inflamed by this and with the outbreak of the War, the Ghadr leaders decided to launch a violent attack on British rule in India.
  - They urged fighters to go to India.
  - Kartar Singh Saraba and Raghubar Dayal Gupta left for India.
  - Bengal revolutionaries were contacted; Rashbehari Bose and Sachin Sanyal were asked to lead the movement.
  - Political dacoities were committed to raise funds.
  - The Punjab political dacoities of January-February 1915 had a somewhat new social content.
  - In at least 3 out of the 5 main cases, the raiders targeted the moneylenders and the debt records before decamping with the cash.
  - Thus, an explosive situation was created in Punjab.
  - The Ghadrites fixed 1915 as the date for an armed revolt in Ferozepur, Lahore. and The plan was foiled at the last moment due to treachery.
  - The authorities took immediate action, aided by the Defence of India Rules, 1915.
  - Rebellion regiments were disbanded, leaders arrested and deported and 45 of them hanged.
  - Rashbehari Bose fled to Japan from where he and Abani Mukherji made many efforts to return while Sachin Sanyal was transported for life.
  - The British met the wartime threat by a formidable battery of repressive measures—the most intensive since 1857—and above all by the Defence of India Act passed, in March 1915 primarily to smash the Ghadr movement.
  - There were large scale detentions without trial, special courts giving extremely severe sentences, numerous court-martials of army men.
  - Apart from the Bengal terrorists and the Punjab Ghadrites, radical pan-Islamists—Ali brothers, Maulana Azad, Hasrat Mohani—were interned for years.

### **Evaluation of Ghadr**

- The achievement of the Ghadr movement lay in the realm of

ideology.

- It enreached militant nationalism with a completely secular approach. But and militarily, it failed, to achieve much because it lacked an organized and sustained leadership, underestimated the extent of preparation required at every level—organisational, ideological, financial and tactical strategic—and perhaps Lala Hardayal was unsuited for the job of an organiser.

### **Revolutionaries in Europe**

- The Berlin Committee for Indian Independence was established in 1915 byadhyay, Bhupendranath Dutta, Lala Hardayal and foreign office under Zimmerman Plan'.
- These revolutionaries the Indian settlers abroad to send volunteers and arms to India to incite rebellion arngng indian troops there and to even organize an armed invasion of British India to liberate the country.
- The Indian revolutionaries in Europe sent missions to Baghdad, Persia, Turkey and Kabul to work among Indian troops and the Indian prisoners of war (POWs) and to incite anti-British feelings among the people of these countries.
- One mission under Raja Mahendra PratapSitarkatullah and Obaidullah Sindhi went to Kabul to organize a rovisional Indianguvernment there with the help of crown prince.

### **Mutiny in Singapore**

- Among the scattered mutinies during this period, the most notable was in Singapore on February 15, 1915 by Punjabi Muslim 5th Light Infantry and the 36th Sikh battalion under Jamadar Chisti Khan, Jamadar Abdul Gani and Subedar Daud Khan.
- It was crushed after a fierce battle in which many were killed. Later, 37 persons were executed and 41 transported for life.

### **Revolutionary Activity in India during War**

- The revolutionary activity in India in this period was concentrated in Punjab and Bengal,
- The Bengal plans were part of a far-flung conspiracy organized by Rashbehari Bose and Sachin Sanyal in cooperation with returned Ghadriles in Punjab.
- In August 1914, the Bengal revolutionaries reaped a rich haul of 50 Mauser pistols and 46,000 rounds of ammunition from the Rodda firm in Calcutta through a sympathetic employee.
- Most Bengal groups were organized under Jatin Mukherji (or Bagha Jatin) and planned disruption of railway lines, seizure of Fort William and landing of German arms.
- These plans were ruined due to poor coordination, and Bagha Jatin died a hero's death near Balasore on the Orissa coast in September 1915.
- There was a temporary respite in revolutionary activity after the War because the release of prisoners held under the Defence of India Rules cooled down passions a bit;
- there was an atmosphere of conciliation after Montagu's August 1917statement and the talk of constitutional reforms; and the coming of Gandhi on the scene with the programme of nonviolent non-cooperation promised new hope.

## **HOME RULE LEAGUE MOVEMENT**

- The Home Rule Movement was the Indian response to the First World War in a less charged but a more effective way than the response of Indians living abroad which took the form of the romantic Ghadr adventure.
- The Indian Home Rule Leagues were organized on the lines of the Irish Home Rule Leagues and they represented the emergence of a new trend of aggressive politics.
- Annie Besant and Tilak were the pioneers of this new trend.

## **Factors Leading to the Movement**

Some of the factors were as follows:

- (i) A section of nationalists felt that popular pressure was required to attain concessions from the Government.
- (ii) The Moderates were disillusioned with the Morley-Minto reforms.
- (iii) People were feeling the burden of wartime miseries caused by high taxation and a rise in prices, and were ready to participate in any aggressive movement of protest.
- (iv) The War, being fought among the major imperialist powers of the day and backed by naked propaganda against each other, exposed the myth of white superiority.
- (v) Tilak was ready to assume leadership after his release in June 1914, and had made conciliatory gestures to reassure the Government of his loyalty and to the Moderates that he wanted, like the Irish Home Rulers, a reform of the administration and not an overthrow of the Government. He also said that the acts of violence had only served to retard the pace, of political progress in India. He urged all Indians to assist the British Government in its hour of crisis.
- (vi) Annie Besant, the Irish theosophist based in India since 1896, had decided to enlarge the sphere of, her activities to include the building of a movement for Home Rule on the lines of the Irish Home Rule Leagues.

## **The Leagues**

- Both Tilak and Besant realised that the sanction of a Moderate-dominated Congress as well as full cooperation of the Extremists was essential for the movement to succeed.
- Having failed at the 1914 session of the Congress to reach a Moderate-Extremist rapprochement, Tilak and Besant decided to revive political activity on their own.
- By early 1915, Annie Besant had launched a campaign to demand self-government for India after the war on the lines of white colonies.
- She campaigned through her newspapers, New India and Commonweal, and through public meetings and conferences.
- At the annual session of the Congress in 1915 the efforts of Tilak and Besant met with some success.
- It was decided that the Extremists be admitted to the Congress.
- Although Besant failed to get the Congress to approve her scheme of Home Rule Leagues, the Congress did commit itself to a programme of educative propaganda and to a revival of local-level Congress committees.
- Not willing to wait for too long, Besant laid the condition that if the Congress did not implement its commitments, she would be free to

set up her own League— which she finally had to, as there was no response from the Congress.

- Tilak and Annie Besant set up their separate leagues to avoid any friction.
  - Tilak's League was set up in April 1916 and was restricted to Maharashtra (excluding Bombay city), Karnataka, Central Provinces and Berar.
  - It had six branches and the demands included swarajya, formation of linguistic states and education in the vernacular. Languages.
- Besant's League was set up in September 1916 in Madras and covered the rest of India (including Bombay city).
  - It had 200 branches, was loosely organized as compared to Tilak's League and had George Arundale as the organising secretary.
  - Besides Arimdale, the main work was done by B.W. Wadia and C.P. Ramaswamy Aiyar.
  - The Home Rule agitation was later joined by Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Bhulabhai Desai, Chittaranjan Das, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Mohammad Ali jinnah, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Lala Lajpat Rai.
  - Some of these leaders became heads of local branches.
  - Many of the Moderate Congressmen who were disillusioned with Congress inactivity, and some members of Gokhale's Servants of India Society also joined the agitation.
  - However, Anglo-Indians, most of the Muslims and nonbrahmins from South did not join as they felt Home Rule would mean rule of the Hindu majority, mainly the high caste.

### The Home Rule League Programme

- The League campaign aimed to convey to the common man the message of Home Rule as self-government.
- It carried a much wider appeal than the earlier mobilisations did and also attracted the hitherto 'politically backward' regions of Gujarat and Sindh.
- The aim was to be achieved by promoting political education and discussion through public meetings, organising libraries and reading rooms containing books on national politics, holding conferences, organising classes for students on politics, propaganda through newspapers, pamphlets, posters, illustrated post-cards, plays, religious songs, etc., collecting funds, organising social work, and participating in local government activities.
- The **Russian Revolution of 1917 proved to be an added advantage for the Home Rule campaign.**

### Government Attitude

- The Government came down with severe repression, especially in Madras where the students were prohibited from attending political meetings.
- A case was instituted against Tilak which was rescinded by the High Court.
- Tilak was barred from entering the Punjab and Delhi.
- In June 1917, Annie Besant and her associates, B.P. Wadia and George Arundale, were arrested. This invited nationwide protest. In

a dramatic, gesture, Sir S. Subramaniya Aiyar renounced his knighthood while Tilak advocated a programme of passive resistance.

- The repression only served to harden the attitude of the agitators and strengthen their resolve to resist the Government.
- Montagu, the secretary of state, commented that "Shiva cut his wife into fifty-two pieces only to discover that he had fifty-two wives.
- This is what happens to the Government of India when it interns Mrs Besant." The Government released Besant in September 1917.

### **Why the Agitation Faded Out by 1919**

- (i) There was a lack of effective organisation.
- (ii) Communal riots were witnessed during 1917-18.
- (iii) The Moderates who had joined the Congress after Besant's arrest were pacified by talk of reforms (contained in Montagu's statement of August 1917 which held selfgovernment as the long-term goal of the British rule in India) and Besant's release.
- (iv) Talk of passive resistance by the Extremists kept the Moderates off from activity from September 1918 onwards.
- (v) Montagu-Chelmsford reforms which became known in July 1918 further divided the nationalist ranks.
- (vi) Tilak had to go abroad (September 1918) in connection with a case while Annie Besant vacillated over her response to the reforms and the techniques of passive resistance. With Besant unable to give a positive lead and Tilak away in England, the movement was left leaderless.

### **Positive Gains**

- i. The movement shifted the emphasis from the educated elite to the masses and permanently deflected the movement from the course mapped by the Moderates.
- ii. It created an organisational link between the town and the country, which was to prove crucial in later years when the movement entered its mass phase in a true sense.
- iii. It created a generation of ardent nationalists.
- iv. It prepared the masses for politics of the Gandhian style.
- v. The August 1917 declaration of Montagu and the Montford reforms were influenced by the Home Rule agitation.
- vi. Tilak's and Besant's efforts in the Moderate-Extremist reunion at Lucknow (1916) revived the Congress as an effective instrument of Indian nationalism.
- vii. It lent a new dimension and a sense of urgency to the national movement.

### **LUCKNOW SESSION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS-1916**

#### **Readmission of Extremists to Congress**

- The Lucknow session of the Indian National Congress, presided over by a Moderate, Ambika Charan Majumdar, finally readmitted the Extremists led by Tilak to the Congress fold.
- Various factors facilitated this reunion:

- i. Old controversies had become meaningless now.
- ii. Both the Moderates and the Extremists realised that the split had led to political inactivity.
- iii. Annie Besant and Tilak had made vigorous efforts for the reunion. To allay Moderate suspicions, Tilak had declared that he supported a reform of administration and not an overthrow of the Government. He also denounced acts of violence.
- iv. The death of two Moderates, Gokhale and Pherozshah Mehta, who had led the Moderate opposition to the Extremists, facilitated the reunion.

#### **Lucknow Pact between Congress and Muslim League**

- Another significant development to take place at Lucknow was the coming together of the Muslim League and the Congress and the presentation of common demands by them to the Government.
- This happened at a time when the Muslim League, now dominated by the younger militant nationalists, was coming closer to the Congress objectives and turning increasingly anti-imperialist.
- There were many reasons for this shift in the League's position:
  - (i) Britain's refusal to help Turkey (ruled by the Khalifa who claimed religio-political leadership of all Muslims) in its wars in the Balkans (1912-13) and with Italy (during 1911) had infuriated the Muslims.
  - (ii) Announcement of cancellation partition of Bengal in 1911 had annoyed those sections of Muslims who had supported the partition.
  - (iii) The refusal of the British Government in India to set up a university at Aligarh with powers to affiliate colleges all over India also alienated some Muslims.
  - (iv) The younger League members were turning to bolder nationalist politics and were trying to outgrow the limited political outlook of the Aligarh school. The Calcutta session of the Muslim League (1912) had committed the League to "working with other groups for a system of selfgovernment suited to India, provided it did not come in conflict with its basic objective of protection of interests of the Indian Muslims". Thus, the goal of self-government similar to that of the Congress brought both sides closer.
  - (v) Younger Muslims were infuriated by the government repression during the War. Maulana Azad's Al Hilal and Mohammad Ali's Comrade faced suppression while the Ali brothers, Maulana Azad and Hasrat Mohani faced internment. This generated anti-imperialist sentiments among the "Young Party".
- While the League agreed to present joint constitutional demands with the Congress to the Government, the Congress accepted the Muslim League's position on separate electorates.  
The joint demands were—
  - \* Government should declare that it would confer selfgovernment on Indians at an early date.
  - The legislative councils should be further expanded with an elected majority and more powers be given to them.
  - Half the members of the viceroy's executive council should be Indians.



### **Negative Fallout**

- While the effort of the Congress and the Muslim League to put up a united front was a far-sighted one, the acceptance of the principle of separate electorates by the Congress implied that the Congress and the League came together as separate political entities.
- This was a major landmark in the evolution of, the two-nation theory by the Muslim League.
- Secondly, while the leaders of the two groups came together, efforts to bring together the masses from the two communities were not considered.

### **Positive Gains**

- Despite being a controversial decision, the acceptance of the principle of separate electorates represented a serious desire to allay minority fears of majority domination.
- Secondly, there was a large amount of enthusiasm generated among the people by this reunion.
- Even the Government decided to placate the nationalists by declaring its intention to grant self-government to Indians, as contained in Montagu's August 1917 declaration.

### **MONTAGU'S STATEMENT-AUGUST 1917**

- "The government policy is of an increasing participation of Indians in every branch of administration and gradual development institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government and of the importance of Montagu's Statement
- From now onwards, the demand by nationalists for self-government or Home Rule could not be termed as seditious since attainment of self-government for Indians now became a government policy, unlike Morley's statement in 1909 that the reforms were not intended to give self-government to India.

### **Indian Objections**

The objections of the Indian leaders to Montagu's statement were two-fold-(i) No specific time frame was given.

- ii. The Government alone was to decide the nature and the timing of advance towards a responsible government, and the Indians were resentful that the British would decide what was good and what was bad for Indians.

### **Summary**

#### **WHY MILITANT NATIONALISM GREW**

1. Realisation that the true nature of British rule was exploitative, and that the Government, instead of conceding more, was taking away even what existed.
2. Growth of self-confidence and self-respect.
3. Impact of growth of education-increase in awareness and unemployment.
4. International influences and events which demolished the myth of white/European supremacy.
5. These included – emergence of Japan-an Asian country-as an industrial power – Abyssinia's (Ethiopia) victory over Italy. –

- Boer Wars (1899-1902) in which the British faced reverses. –  
Japan's victory over Russia (1905). – nationalist movements worldwide.
6. Reaction to increasing westernisation.
  7. Dissatisfaction with the achievements of Moderates.
  8. Reactionary policies of Curzon such as the Calcutta Corporation Act (1899), the Official Secrets Act (1904), the Indian Universities Act (1904) and partition of Bengal (1905).
  9. Existence of a militant school of thought.
  10. Emergence of a trained leadership.

#### **THE EXTREMIST IDEOLOGY**

- i. Hatred for foreign rule
- ii. Belief in the capacity of masses
- iii. Swarajya as goal
- iv. Advocacy of direct political action and self-sacrifice.

#### **THE SWADESHI AND BOYCOTT MOVEMENT**

- Began as a reaction to partition of Bengal which became known in 1903, was formally announced in July 1905 and came into force in October 1905.
- The motive behind partition was to weaken Bengal which was the nerve centre of Indian nationalist activity; the official reason given for the partition was that Bengal had become too big to administer—which was true but only to some extent.
- Moderate-led anti-partition movement (1903-05) was under Surendranath Banerjee, K.K. Mitra, Prithwishchandra Ray. Methods included public meetings, petitions, memoranda, propaganda through newspapers and pamphlets. The movement under Extremists (1905-08) was led by Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lajpat Rai, Aurobindo Ghosh.
- Methods included boycott of foreign cloth and other goods, public meetings and processions, forming corps of volunteers or samitis, use of traditional popular festivals and metres for propaganda, emphasis on self-reliance or atma shakti, launching programme of swadeshi or national education, swadeshi or indigenous enterprises, initiating new trends in Indian painting, songs, poetry, pioneering research in science and later calling for boycott of schools, colleges, councils, government service, etc.
- Extremists took over because of the failure of the Moderates to achieve positive results, divisive tactics of Governments of both Bengals, severe government repression.
- Extent of mass participation—students, women, certain sections of zamindari, some lower middle and middle classes in towns and cities participated for the first time while the Muslims generally kept away.
- Annulment of Partition mainly to curb the 'menace' of revolutionary terrorism.

#### **Why Swadeshi Movement fizzled out by 1908?**

##### **Severe government repression.**

- Lack of effective organisation and a disciplined focus.
- With arrest, deportation of all leaders, the movement left leaderless.
- Split in nationalist ranks.

- Narrow social base.

### **Achievements**

- "A leap forward" because hitherto untouched sections participated, major trends of later movement emerged;
- richness of the movement extended to culture, science and literature;
- people educated in bolder form of politics;
- colonial hegemony undermined.

### **MAJOR CAUSE OF MODERATE-EXTREMIST SPLIT AT SURAT (1907)**

- Moderates wanted to restrict the Boycott Movement to Bengal and to a boycott of foreign cloth and liquor.
- Extremists wanted to take the movement to all parts of the country and include within its ambit all forr; of association with the Government through a boycott of schools, colleges, law courts, legislative councils, government service, municipalities etc.

### **GOVERNMENT ACTS FOR REPRESSION OF SWADESHI MOVEMENT**

Seditious Meetings Act (1907)

Criminal, Law (Amendment) Act (1908)

Indian Newspapers (Incitement to Offences) Act (1908)

Explosive Substances Act (1908)

Indian Press Act (1910)

### **REVOLUTIONARY TERRORISM**

Reasons for emergence

Younger elements not ready to retreat after the decline of open phase.

Leadership's failure to tap revolutionary energies of the youth.

Government repression left no peaceful avenues open for protest.

### **Ideology**

Assassinate unpopular officials, thus strike terror in hearts of rulers and arouse people to expel the British physically; based on individual heroic actions on lines of Irish nationalists or Russian nihilists and not a mass-based countrywide struggle.

### **REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY BEFORE FIRST WORLD WAR**

Bengal 1902-First revolutionary groups in Midnapore and Calcutta (The Anushilan Samiti)

1906-Yugantar, the revolutionary weekly started By

1905-06-Several newspapers started advocating revolutionary terrorism.

1907-Attempt on life of governor of East Bengal.

1908-Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose attempt to murder Muzaffarpur Magistrate, Kingsford.

Alipore conspiracy case involving Aurobindo. Ghosh, Barindra Kumar Ghosh and others.

1908-Barrah dacoity by Dacca Anushilan.

1912-Bomb thrown at Viceroy Hardinge by Rashbehari Boss and Sachin Sanyal

Sandhya, Yugantar-newspapers advocating revolutionary activity.

### **Maharashtra**

1879-Ramosi Peasant Force by Vasudev Balwant Phadke.

1890s-Tilak's attempts to propagate militancy among the youth through

Shivaji and Ganapati festivals, and his journals Kesari and Maharatta.  
1897—Chapekar brothers kill Rand, the plague commissioner of Poona and Lt. Ayerst.

1899—Mitra Mela—a secret society organized by Savarkar and his brother.

1904—Mitra Mela merged with Abhinav Bharat.

1909—District Magistrate of Nasik—Jackson—killed.

### **Punjab**

Revolutionary activity by Lala Lajpat Rai, Ajit Singh, Aga Haidar Syed Haidar Raza, Bhai Parmanand, Lalchand 'Falak', Sufi Ambaprasad.

### **Abroad**

1905—Shyamji Krishnavarma, set up Indian Home Rule Society and India House and brought out journal The Sociologist in London.

1909—Madan Lal Dhingra murdered Curzon-Wyllie.

Madame Bhikaji Cama operated from Paris and Geneva and brought out journal Bande Mataram. Ajit Singh also active.

### **MORLEY-MINTO REFORMS**

Number of elected members in Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils increased—elected non-officials still in minority.

Separate electorates, introduced for Muslims.

Elected non-officials to be elected indirectly—thus elections introduced for the first time.

Legislatures could pass resolutions, ask questions and supplementaries, vote separate items of the budget.

One Indian to be on viceroy's executive council.

Aimed at dividing the nationalist ranks and at rallying the Moderates and the Muslims to the Government's side.

No responsibility entrusted to legislators—this resulted in thoughtless criticism sometimes.

System of election was too indirect.

### **REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITY DURING FIRST WORLD WAR**

- In North America, the Ghadr was organized by Lala Hardayal, Ramchandra, Bhawan Singh, Kartar Singh Saraba, Barkatullah, Bhai Parmanand.
- The Ghadr Programme Assassinate officials.
- Publish revolutionary literature.
- Work among Indian troops abroad and raise funds.
- Bring about a simultaneous revolt in all colonies of Britain.
- Attempt to bring about an armed revolt in India on February 21, 1915 amidst favourable conditions created by the outbreak of First World War and the Komagata Maru incident (September 1914). The plan was foiled due to treachery.
- Defence of India Act, 1915 passed primarily to deal with the Ghadrites.
- In Europe Berlin Committee for Indian Independence established by Virendranath Chattopadhyay and others.
- Missions sent to Baghdad, Persia, Turkey, Kabul.

- In India Bagha Jatin organized revolutionary activity in Bengal and died in an encounter (1915) in Balasore.

### **HOME RULE LEAGUE MOVEMENT**

Manifestation of a trend of aggressive politics in national movement; was pioneered by Tilak and Annie Besant on lines of a similar movement in Ireland.

### **Factors Favouring the Movement**

1. Need being felt for popular pressure to attain concessions.
2. Disillusionment with Morley-Minto Reforms.
3. Wartime miseries—public ready to protest.
4. Tilak, Besant ready to assume leadership.

### **Aim of the Movement**

- To convey to the common man the concept of Home Rule as self-government.
- Tilak's League—Started in April 1916 and operated in Maharashtra, Karnataka, Central Provinces and Berar; had six branches.
- Besant's League—Started in September 1916 and operated in rest of India; had 200 branches.
- Later, the leagues were joined by others including Moderate Congressmen.

### **Methods used**

Organising discussions, reading rooms, propaganda through public meetings, newspapers, pamphlets, posters, etc.

Positive Gains Emphasis shifted to the masses permanently; organisational link established between town and country; prepared a generation of ardent nationalists, influenced Moderate-Extremist reunion at Lucknow (1916).

### **LUCKNOW SESSION OF INC-1916**

Extremists readmitted to Congress League-Congress put up joint demands under Lucknow Pact. Congress accepted League's position on separate electorates.