

COLONIALISM AND NATIONALISM IN INDIA

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Colonialism and Nationalism in India

UNIT - I

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the meaning and nature of colonialism in India.
2. To study the arrival of European powers such as the Portuguese, Dutch, French and English.
3. To examine the causes and course of the Anglo-French conflict in India.
4. To analyse the circumstances leading to the British acquisition of Bengal.
5. To understand the relationship between the British and other Indian states.
6. To study the methods of British expansion and imperialism in India.
7. To evaluate the political and economic impact of British rule.
8. To develop knowledge about the growth of colonial power in India.

Course Outcomes

1. Students understand the concept of colonialism and European expansion in India.
2. Students explain the role of Portuguese, Dutch, French and English settlements.
3. Students analyse the Anglo-French rivalry in India.
4. Students describe the acquisition of Bengal by the British.
5. Students understand the relations between the British and Indian rulers.
6. Students identify the policies of British imperialism in India.
7. Students assess the political and economic impact of British rule.
8. Students gain knowledge about the establishment of British supremacy in India.

Colony is as the Oxford English Dictionary defines it a country or area under the full and partial control of another country typically a distant one and occupied by settlers from that country. The Collins English Dictionary also seems to support the exploitative aspect of colonialism by defining colonialism as “the policy of acquiring and maintaining colonies, especially for exploitation.” The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy adopts a historical approach and “uses the term colonialism to describe the process of European settlement and political control over the rest of the world, including Americas, Australia, and parts of Africa and Asia.” There is not a very clear difference between colonialism and imperialism. In the present scenario, we can look into colonialism from an Indian historical perspective where India was been colonialized for more than 200 years. The British can be said to have exploited the political weakness of the Mughal state, and, tried to bring

change the traditional society and economy by incorporating various administrative majors.

Let us find the difference between Colonialism and imperialism. So, colonialism is a bit different than imperialism. Imperialism is driven by the ideology of the superiority of center with the assertion and expansion of state power across the globe. Colonialism is normally a pragmatic state of activity at the periphery or colonies.

Let us discuss various aspects of imperialism forms of imperialism. Imperialism generally related to the activities of some dominant nations in the world. Sometime its related to Pax Britannica and now may be its called as neo imperialism propagated by America. Somehow it is relationship of effective domination or political and economic control over other nations across globe. Imperialism can be propagated by direct and indirect intervention of imperialist powers like Portugal, Fence and Britain .The significant forms of imperialism can be identified in the history during sixteenth and seventeenth century European states.

Lenin had applied the Marxist interpretation of imperialism, which he said “ is the highest stage of capitalism”. The combined contributions of Rosa Luxemburg, Hilferding and Nekolai Bhukharin have made their own contribution to Marxist theory of imperialism. This approach is later been enriched by Paul Baran, Paul Swezzey and Harry Magoffin.

Harry Magoffin in *The Age of Imperialism* (1969) traced the pattern of new imperialism and a new period in world capitalism. He distinguished between the old and new imperialism. To him new imperialism marks a new period in the United States of America, Germany, France and Japan to challenge England. The power of monopoly capitalism has shifted to small, integrated industrial and financial firms-the multinationals (MNCs), which have become especially predominant since the Second World War.

Consequences of Colonialism

Colonialism had both positive and negative effects on Indian growth and development. According to Rupert Emerson, a few salient features of colonialism can be drawn and put forward as a conclusion:

1. Colonialism imposes alien and authoritarian regimes on subordinate societies. The regimes trained a few of their subjects in bureaucratic management and required passive submission.

2. It had a major purpose to exploit colonies economically. Colonies were used as sources and suppliers of raw materials and markets of the finished good.

3. In course of time, the core that is the UK became economically powerful and developed, and India as a periphery remained underdeveloped.

4. The authoritative attitude of the British Raj stimulated national liberation movements in India. However, colonialism remained a historical agent of change and transformation as well as spread liberal educational ideologies (Vermani:33).

Nationalism can be said to be the expression of collective identity by a group of people living in a certain geographical territory who socially, culturally and economically, and politically identify themselves as one nation to be governed as such and by themselves. Nationalism emphasizes the collective identity were to be a nation a group of people must be autonomous politically, united significantly and substantially, and express a single national culture to a large extent. However, some nationalists have argued individualism can be an important part of that culture in some nations and thus be central to that nation's national identity. In the modern world national flags (like the tri-color in India), national anthems, and other symbols of national identity are very often regarded as sacred as if they were religious rather than political symbols. The psychological aspect of feeling; unity and in also depicts the idea of nationalism within us. There are mainly three perspectives to understanding Colonialism and Nationalism in India

- Liberalism
- Marxism

- Post colonialism.

The liberal perspective generally accepts that colonialism is a normal phase of economic and political relationships which is rational. It brings changes in colonies which perhaps promote freedom, life, and liberty and protect individual rights in colonies. Many of the world's political systems are based on the values and concepts evident in liberalism.

The Europeans made their appearance on the Coast of Tamilnadu during the Vijayanagar period. With the advent of the European powers, the first to reach were the Portuguese and they were followed by the Dutch, the Danes, the English and the French. They presented problems because they could expect no single authority to deal with and no order in the land as to permit them to carry on their trade in a peaceful atmosphere. The British adopted various means and strategies in getting favours and privileges from the native powers which resulted in the establishment of several European settlements. Because of favourable factors like cheap labour, enormous availability of commodities and their demand in the international market, the Europeans found themselves actively engaged in an effective trade. This trend led to the extension of British power over other European countries. The design of British extension of power confronted with other local powers. On the conquest of the local powers, they consolidated their power applying the techniques of wars, alliances and diplomacy. Having consolidated their power in the Tamil country, the British framed their administrative policy to suit the existing political condition.

The Portuguese

During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the Europeans -the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes and the French established their settlements. Among the various factors which favoured them for brisk trade were Anglo-French rivalry in Europe, abundance of goods and its international demand and inexpensive labour and the political necessity. The renaissance and keen nationalism led to a contest for Company expansion. The ecclesiastical enthusiasm of the Christian missionaries, the invention of the mariners

compass and the availability of sailing charts and maps boosted the work of exploration. The publication of Marcopoli's Travelogue provided the Europeans with the needed information about the East and fascinated them to its fabulous wealth. It resulted in the discovery of many sea routes to Asia and the formation of many colonies which ultimately led to the establishment of European settlements and flourishing of trade.

The Portuguese were the pioneers among the Europeans traders in the field of explorations. The geographical discoveries for navigation led to the establishment of companies and trading posts. They were the first modern Europeans to establish settlements and gain political authority in India. Zamorin, the Hindu ruler warmly welcomed Vasco-da-Cama. The exploration of Vasco-da-gama opened new prospects for the Portuguese in pursuit of their political, commercial and proselytizing activities. Thereafter he returned home in 1499. Vasco-da-Gama's fleet for the second time reached Calicut in 1502 and Zamorin again welcomed him. In 1503 Alphonse-de-Albuquerque, Governor of Portuguese sailed towards the East and established Portuguese influence in India. They extended their power in Cochin in 1503 and Goa in 1510 in the West Coast. Albuquerque made Goa his headquarters in India. Its acquisition led to the establishment of settlements along the East Coast at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The European merchants were originally in the position of supplicants before the native rulers in India.

The Portuguese formed a settlement at San Thome near Madras in 1522. To begin with their interest was religious, for they wanted to build church near the place where St. Thomas was believed to have been killed. They founded factories in 1605 at Masulipatnam and at Pulicot in 1610. Afterwards they setup factories at Surat, Chinsura, Quilon and Nagapatnam and few other places. They occupied Nagapattinam and other places by 1658 and gained control of the market and coast. They enjoyed the patronage of the Emperor of Vijayanagar and had a flourishing trade with that Empire till their monopoly was taken over by the Dutch.

The conflicts of the Portuguese with the Nayaks and the Dutch changed their position and their influence began to decline. The forces of Vijayanagar attacked their settlement in the fishery coast. Raghunatha Nayak (1600-1634) of Tanjore undertook an expedition towards the Portuguese in support of the ruler of Jaffna, his ally. Though the expedition ended in failure, the Portuguese lost their influence on Tanjore. Consequently the Dutch occupied Nagapatnam and other settlements in 1658 and brought the East Coast including Tuticorin under their control. These developments caused the decline of the Portuguese sway in the Tamil country and led to the influence of the Dutch and the Danes on the east coast. Emerging as bitter rivals to the Portuguese, the Dutch and the Danes sought their fortunes on the coast. Motivated by commercial considerations, the Dutch challenged the Portuguese sovereignty into alliances with the Asiatic powers. They underwent experiments early in the Tamil country; but were bitter and disappointing. However, they took determined effort and stamped their influence in several regions.

The Dutch

In 1609 the Dutch founded a factory at Pulicat and they made it their stronghold in 1610. They took Nagapatnam from the Portuguese in 1658 and it became their chief settlement on the Coromandal Coast. In 1689 they made Nagapatnam the capital of their empire in India. They fortified their settlements maintained their finances efficiently and gained large profits. Later on, as they involved in slave trade and hatched plots in the courts, they became unpopular. Owing to the opposition of the British in India and the scope for profitable trade in the East Indies, they slowly withdrew from the Tamil country and moved to the East Indies. In India, they established factories at Surat, Machillipatnam and Petapoli and the other settlements were at Nagapatnam, Bengal, Masulipatnam, Bimilipatnam and Jaganathapuram. In the eighteenth century most of the Dutch settlements had declined due to the rivalry between the French and the English.

The Danish

Flushed by the success of other European traders in the Tamil country, Denmark also founded settlements there. King Christian IV of Denmark sent the Danes to Tanjore in 1620 and Raghunatha Nayaka of Tanjore granted the port of Tranquebar (Taran-gambadi) to them. Encouraged by commercial and religious motivations, they indulged in trade and established the Danish Lutheran Mission. Constructing many churches, the mission began to pose threat to the Jesuit Missionary activities. However, when the supply of money and advent of ships from their home country became irregular, the Dutch lost their interest and influence. The Danes thus were not able to prosper in commerce and religion in the Tamil land.

The English

The English were the most fortunate of the European powers that came to this Tamil region. The English East India Company was granted a charter by Queen Elizabeth I on 31 December 1600. By 1612 they had obtained the settlement at Surat from Emperor Jahangir, consequent on their demonstration of superior sea power by defeating the Portuguese of Surat. The Madras settlement was started in 1639 where later on Fort St. George was built. Thereupon the English established a series of settlements all along the Coast as that area provided them with what they demanded. Negotiations were opened between Thomas Yale, Governor of Fort St. George and Raja Ram, the Maratha ruler of Senji for the acquisition of Tegnapatam (Fort St. David). He liberally paid tribute to the Brahmin minister and received a grant for Fort. St. David at Cuddalore. Located beside Pondicherry, this fort evolved into a hopeful settlement. The British exhibited a great interest to erect factories in Tanjore, but gave up the scheme as the local rulers became jealous and European rivalry seemed possible. The British strengthened their trade through their efficient administrative set up which they carried out victoriously in the form of contract between the East India Company and the merchants. They meted out severe punishments to their employees who had no interest in their works and neglected their obligations. They even annulled the licence of the merchants and contractors while found guilty and disloyal to

the English East India Company. Under these effective service conditions, the British strengthened their trade. As trade enhanced in volume and profits exceeded, the British developed their political ambitions. The Tamil country underwent certain changes when their commercial policy turned into political.

The French

The French were the last European power to come to the Tamil country, followed by the Portuguese, the Dutch, the Danes and the English. During the period of Louis XIV of France (1643-1715), his minister Colbert took the initiative for trade with the East through the French East India Company formed in 1664. They founded trading centres at Surat in 1665, at Masulipatnam in 1669, at Pondicherry in 1674 and Chandrangore in 1690. Pondicherry became the headquarters and developed into a prosperous settlement under Francis Martin in 1674.

English Company in Madras Presidency

Like other Europeans, Englishmen also were desirous of getting the things produced in India and the Far East. After their victory over the Spanish Armada in 1588, their desire to trade directly began to increase. In September 1599, a resolution was passed under the chairmanship of Lord Mayor to form an association to trade directly with India. The English East India Company emerged from a humble beginning marked by hardship and distress of great magnitude at Home and abroad to a height of opulence and power. The ascending came into existence when Queen Elizabeth on 31 December 1600, granted a Charter to some 220 gentlemen and merchants to engage in trade “as one body corporate and politic by the name of the Governor and Company merchants of London trading to the East Indies”.

In the eighteenth century the Mughal power started to decline and it presented a situation where Indian powers that were adverse to the English East India Company, could take power. In order to protect its interests and profit making the Company needed to fill this power vacuum and expand beyond the traditional activities of a trading market share. Over the time, the responsibilities they assumed resembled a governing power more than a

trading company. Originally the Company got concessions from the Mughal Emperors in Delhi and from local Indian rulers to set up a couple of trading settlements along the coast. This arrangement allowed to conduct a lucrative trade and to have Indians to mind their own business and to maintain peaceful access to the exchange of markets for both Indian and British parties. The struggle for supremacy in the Deccan between the English and the French resulted in a number of conflicts till finally Madras became an English dominion, thus marking the turning point both in the history of Madras and that of the British in India. The officials of the British East India Company, who came here as traders, used Madras as a resourceful spring board for the conquest of Bengal which symbolised the conquest of the whole of India.

The Madras Presidency had its beginnings in a few isolated trading settlements along the coast. Trade was their primary and only concern in the early period of their establishments. Since 1608, the English made attempts to secure a foot-hold on the Coromandel Coast. Their attempt to build a factory at Pulicot was defeated by the Dutch who had obtained exclusive rights from the ruler of Carnatic to trade in his dominions. However in 1611, they could establish a factory at Masulipatnam, the chief port of Golkonda. For some years, the factory flourished; but after 1624 declined due to the Dutch rivalry. In 1628 once again the English made it their trade centre. Their position at Masulipatnam was improved by the Sultan of Golkonda in 1632. The firman gave the English freedom of trade in the ports of the kingdom for an annual payment of 500 pagodas. With the acquisition of Madras Presidency, the British strengthened their position by way of revenue and judicial administration.

Both the French and the English East India Companies were the products of the rise. Of mercantile capitalism in Europe. This phase of capitalism is regarded as a preparatory phase when trade with Asiatic and Latin American countries was carried on to help in the process of accumulation. Trade was carried on in goods which were manufactured in India and for which there was a heavy demand in Europe. However. The way

in which the two Companies took advantage of trade with the East differed greatly. While the English Company had a vastly superior infrastructure with much larger fleets, the French was deficient even in their knowledge of commerce. The English Company was, the wealthier body and conducted more frequent voyages. In comparison with the French Company it had a more continuous history of trading with the East. To appreciate the qualitative difference in the two Companies we must take into account the nature of their origins. While the French Company was the offspring of state patronage whose revenues were largely drawn from monopoly of the tobacco trade. The English EIC was a great private corporation founded and maintained by individual enterprise not dependent in any way on the state. In fact the state was in its debt. The impact of these differences was very great, as will be seen later in the course of events. The French EIC was formed in 1664 whereas the English Company had been formed in 1600 and had begun trade in cloth and calicoes with India in 1613 by an Imperial firman received from Emperor Jahangir. However, they had obtained the right to trade only on the Western coast at Surat, Ahmadabad, Cambay and Goa. The French Company also established their first factory at Surat in 1668. But this did not pose a serious threat to the English Company since they failed to "buy cheap & sell dear" and all they succeeded in doing was to reduce the price of European goods and increase that of Indian goods. The factory at Surat was succeeded by one at Masulipatam in 1669. Then in 1674 François Martin founded Pondicherry, which was to become the future capital of the French in India. It was a rival to Madras. It grew in size and strength and became as impressive as the English settlement at Madras-but it could not match the latter in the extent and variety of its commerce. Between 1690 and 1692 a factory was set up at Chandernagore in the East. It proved no challenge to the British settlement in Calcutta. Fortunes of the French East India Company declined in the beginning of the 18th century and the factories at Surat, Bantam and Masulipatam had to be abandoned. However that was only a temporary setback and by the 1720 the French Company had staged a

cornerback with the revival of interest on 'the part of the French 1 mercantile bourgeoisie in the company: The Company was reconstituted; it adopted a new name and was now known as 'Perpetual Company of the Indies'. French naval power was greatly improved -a base being established at Mauriti. It was also reported tha~ 10 to 12 ships were being built in England for the 7 ranch Company. In 1725 the French established themselves at Mahe on the Malabar Coast and in 1739 at Karaikal on 'the East Coast.

Carnatic wars

A severe tug of war continued between the English and the French for about twenty years (A.D 1744-1763). At last the French were defeated in this war. Both the enemies faced each other in the Carnatic region. It was a small kingdom, the capital of which was Arcot. The Nawab of Carnatic was under the supremacy of the Nizam of Hyderabad but he ruled as an independent ruler. There was great instability in Carnatic region in about AD 1746 which led to fight with each other for trade monopoly and political influence. These wars were called Carnatic wars, which passed through there stages – the first Carnatic war, the second Carnatic war and the third Carnatic war.

History of Anglo-French Conflict in India

India was a land that many foreign powers to war to have control over. And having control over an extremely fertile Carnatic region is like hitting a jackpot. But before even coming to India, the French and English had a long history of power struggle and rivalry. Let us look into this background so that we can have a better understanding of their rivalry after coming to India i.e. Anglo-French Conflict in India.

Background of Anglo-French Conflict in India

All of it began with the commercial and political rivalry between the English and French in India and the political rivalry in Europe. Till the 17th century, the French stakes in India were not enough to be threatening to the British. So, they declared to be neutral and went on with the trading. But slowly the stakes of both the powers become considerable in India. In the period between 1720 and 1740, the value of French trade multiplied by 10

times. Similarly British were engaged in extensive trade with China in goods like saltpetre, indigo, cotton, silk etc. It was so big that this trade value was 10% of the total revenue of the British.

War of Austrian Succession

The annexation of Silesia by Frederick the Great of Prussia in 1740 created the need for intervention. Britain and France were on opposing sides of different coalitions in the ensuing War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748). These conflicts, which had a purely European basis, constituted the political tipping point in modern India's history.

South India's political landscape was unclear and unstable in 1740. Nizam Asaf Jah of Hyderabad was elderly and completely engaged in fighting the Marathas in the western Deccan. While others under him speculated about the ramifications of his death. The Coromandel coast, which lay to the south of his realm, lacked a strong leader to preserve the balance of power. The fall of Hyderabad signified the end of Muslim expansionism. The English explorers prepared their strategies accordingly. The Austrian War of Succession broke out in 1740 upon the death of Emperor Charles VI. It was the immediate cause of the end of the neutrality between the French and English in India.

Why is Anglo-French Conflict in India Called Carnatic Wars?

Europeans referred to the Coromandel coast and its hinterland as "Carnatic." The majority of these conflicts took place in the Indian regions that the Nizam of Hyderabad controlled up to the Godavari Delta. The Carnatic serves as the battleground for the first two Carnatic Wars. In the second conflict, it will also be important to see the expansion of French influence in the Deccan. The third conflict sees a brief scene change to Bengal before returning to the Carnatic.

First Carnatic war

The first Carnatic war was the result of the conflict between England and France in Europe. The outbreak of Austrian war of succession put them

into rival camps. The spirit of rivalry between the British and the French spread to India. The British navy under Barnett reached India to help the British authorities. But, Dupleix the French Governor at La Bourdounai's approached the French Governor of Mauritius for help. Dupleix himself set out from Pondicherry with an army day land route. On 21st September, 1746 the French attacked the British and occupied Madras.

At this critical juncture, the English sought the help of the ruler of Carnatic, Nawab Anwaruddin. The Arcot forces attacked the French but French Commander Paradis defeated the Nawab's forces in the battle of Adyar. Madras remained in the hands of the French. As the treaty of Aix – la – Chapelle was concluded in Europe in 1748 AD, the war between the English and the French came to an end in India. According to the terms of the treaty of Aix – la – Chapelle, the French had to return Madras to the English.

The second Carnatic war – 1749 – 1754 AD

Though outwardly, France and England were at peace with each other, yet rival ambitions could not let them at peace for a long time. Dupleix, the Governor of the French company was an ambitious person and he had decided to take active part in the political affairs of India in order to establish his rule in India. The developments at Hyderabad and Arcot provided opportunities for the French interference.

In 1748, the Nizam of Hyderabad, Nizam – ul – Mulk, died and a civil war broke out between his son Nasir Jung and grandson Muzaffar Jung. During the same time, Chanda Sahib, a son – in – law of the late Nawab of Arcot, Dost Ali, began to conspire against Anwaruddin, who had been appointed Nawab by the Nizam. Chanda Sahib sought the help of Dupleix in order to get the throne of Arcot. Dupleix promised his solitary assistance to Chanda Sahib and Muzaffar Jung.

Muzaffar Jung and Chanda Sahib succeeded to the thrones of Hyderabad and Carnatic respectively. Muzaffar left Pondicherry in 1751 along with a French force under the leadership of General Busy, to Hyderabad. Muzaffar Jung was killed near Kadapa on his way to Hyderabad. However,

Bussy reached Hyderabad with the army, and made Salabat Jung, the younger brother of Nasir Jung, as the new Nizam. Salabath gave the French the Northern Circars. The French power became dominant both in the Carnatic and the Hyderabad.

Mohammad Ali, son of Nawab Anwaruddin, sought shelter in Trichinopoly after the defeat of his father in the battle of Ambur. Chandra Sahib marched towards Trichinopoly with his forces to kill Mohammad Ali. At this juncture, Robert Clive, the British officer, changed the entire situation. He laid siege to the fort of Arcot. As a result, Chandra Sahib and the French forces withdrew from the siege of Trichinopoly and fought with Clive in the battle of Arcot. This success of the English was a severe blow to the French.

The French disaster at Trichinopoly sealed the fate of Dupliex. Duplex was called back in 1754 AD and Godhieu was appointed in his place. With Godhieu treaty with the British Salabath Jung was recognized as the Nizam of Hyderabad. Mohammad Ali became the Carnatic Nawab. Malleson wrote that his treaty was a dishonour to the French and it was completely against the interests of the French people

Third Carnatic war – 1756-63 AD

The seven year war broke out in Europe between England and France and it led to rivalries between the two companies in India. In 1758 AD, the French government sent Count – de – Lally to India as Governor and the commander – in – chief of the French forces. Lally made a plan to establish his control over Madras. To strengthen his forces, he called Bussy along with army from Hyderabad. This was a great mistake of Lally, as Bussy's departure from Hyderabad weakened the French position there. A decisive battle was fought at Wandiwash in 1760 AD, when the English commander Sir Eyre Coote, defeated the combined forces of Lally and Bussy. Pondicherry was captured by the British. The French position in India declined completely.

The seven years war came to an end in Europe in 1763 with the treaty of Paris. According to the terms of this treaty Pondicherry, Chandranagor and Mahi were again given to France. But as a consequence of this battle the

political power of the French ended for ever even in India and there remained only the English. The English established their supremacy over Indian trade by getting rid of all European rivals.

British occupation of Bengal

In 1756, Ali Vardhi Khan, the Nawab of Bengal died and was succeeded by his grandson namely Siraj – ud – Daula. The British at that time made some fortification at Calcutta. So Siraj – ud – Daula launched an offensive against the English. After the attack on Calcutta, several British people were captured by the Nawab army and as many as 146 men were dumped in a dark cell of 18 feet long and 14 feet wide. On 20th June 1756, the English historians spread the story that out of them only 23 survived the next morning. When the prison room was opened, the rest were perished due to suffocation. This incident known familiarly as “Black Hole Tragedy” is considered by many as a pure myth created by J.I. Holwell. The contemporary historians do not mention this even at all.

No doubt, the British were defeated by Siraj – ud – Daula in the beginning but they were very strong. On the other hand, the condition of Siraj – ud – Daula weakened with the passage of time.

Battle of Plassey, 1757 AD

Calcutta was re-conquered in the beginning of 1757, and the Nawab was compelled to agree to all the demands of the British. Robert Clive wanted to enthrone some puppet ruler in place of Siraj – ud – Daula. So he planned to make Mir Jaffer, the commander – in – chief as the Nawab. Aminchand, a Punjab money lender, played an important role in arriving at a secret understanding with Mir Jaffer.

The British under Clive fought with the Nawab’s armies at Plassey on 23rd June 1757. On account of the treachery of Mir Jaffer Siraj was defeated. Mir Jaffer was proclaimed as the Nawab of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The English East India Company received Zamindari of 24 paraganas. Clive was rewarded with Rs. 2,34,000 by the Nawab.

The Battle of Plassey laid foundation for the British Empire in India. The military weakness and inefficiencies of the local rulers were revealed to the outside world. In 1758, Robert Clive was appointed Governor of Bengal. After the Battle of Plassey, the British virtually monopolized the trade and commerce of Bengal.

Battle of Buxar, 1764

Robert Clive went to England in 1760, after serving as the Governor of Bengal for two years. Vansittart was appointed as Governor. Mir Jaffar was not able to meet the heavy demands of money made on him by the company. Therefore Vansittart deposed Mir Jaffar and placed his son – in – law, Mir Khasim, on the throne at Murshidabad. The new Nawab granted the English, the districts of Burdwan, Midnapore and Chittagong. Mir Khasim increased the revenues and improved the province. He abolished the trade privileges to the English. So the English deposed him in 1763 and enthroned Mir Jaffar again as the Nawab of Bengal.

Mir Khasim fled to Oudh and sought the help of Nawab of Oudh and the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam. The combined armies of the three powers met the English army commanded by Major Munroe on 22nd October, 1764. The combined armies were completely defeated and Mir Khasim ran away from the battle field. In this battle, the English got victory not only against the Nawab of Bengal but also against the Mughal emperor.

Meanwhile, Mir Jaffar died and his son Nizam – ud – Daula became the Nawab of Bengal. He not only conferred trade rights on the East India Company but also distributed costly presents among the English employees. Clive was reappointed Governor of Bengal in 1765, who concluded treaty of Allahabad with the Nawab of Oudh and the Mughal emperor. Accordingly, the English got the right of collecting land revenue in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, called 'Diwani'. The Nawab was entrusted with the responsibility of administration, known as 'Nizamat'. As there was distribution of power between the company and the Nawab, this government came to be called as 'Dual Government'.

Major Events of Britain's Imperialism

17th Century – Britain's Imperialism is said to have been started around the start of the 18th century i.e. in 1707 when Britain joined Scotland and Wales and latter Ireland forming the United Kingdom of Britain. However, in India the East India Company had already been formed, it took over East India & regions like Bombay, Madras in the south. Simultaneously, Caribbean islands like Bahamas, Barbados, Jamaica, Guiana and many small islands. Also, strong control was established in East Africa. All these major events had happened within the 17th century and the seeds of Britain's Dominion on the World.

18th Century – The start of the 18th century can be considered magnificent for Britain as it joined 3 surrounding kingdoms of Scotland, Wales and Ireland into one known as 'The United Kingdom of Britain'. In 1713, several territories were gained in the Mediterranean Sea. In the later half of the century, there were constant discussions of Britain and France on the boundaries in North America. Around 1763, the rising tensions between the top European powers resulted in them signing a treaty known as 'The Treaty of Paris'. The Treaty of Paris made an impact on Britain's imperial holdings as Lower Canada, India, Mississippi, Florida, and Senegal remained with Britain and areas such as Cuba and Manila were returned to Spain. Tensions were also rising in the British American colonies regarding taxation. In 1773, an American political protest popularly known as 'The Boston Tea Party' occurred. This caused violence and revolt in America and two years later, The American War of Independence got started, and was fought until 1783. Therefore, the war resulted in Britain being forced to grant independence to 13 American colonies. Though huge land was lost at the near end of the 18th century, it can be considered as the best century for the British.

19th Century – The Battle of Trafalgar fought at the start of the century in 1805 between France and Britain that was eventually won by the British assured Britain's supremacy in the oceans as well. Whereas in India, The East India Company was slowly losing its monopoly in the Indian markets and

slavery got abolished. The political and social unrest in India caused a rebellion war known as 'Indian Rebellion of 1857'. Post the war, due to its poor decision making, East India Company got dissolved. Thus, the government of India was taken over by Queen Victoria in 1857. Queen Victoria titled herself 'Empress of India', made changes in the financial system, military, and overall administration. The 19th century indeed went on to be more disastrous for the British as the Two Boer wars and South African Republic lead to a political instability for the British.

20th Century – The 20th century in general was the biggest roller coaster ride for the British Empire. Nationalism had grown countrywide among the Indians that resulted in Nationalised movements such as 'Swadeshi movement' and 'Home rule movement' and revolutionary movements. In 1914, The first World War broke out for the British when they declared war on Germany on 4th August, 1914. The war impacted Britain hugely, though territorial and political gains were made, the economy was hampered because of the extraordinary war effort that was put. After a slow and steady recovery, in 1921, it is said that the British Empire was at its peak. Not too late, due to the Great Depression, trade and economic infrastructure was again frozen. Thereafter, Adolf Hitler's Nazi Luftwaffe airplanes again destroyed cities, colonies, ports, and factories In World War 2. As soon as the Second World War got over, Britain had already lost its supremacy in the world. India was declared as independent country and Bruisers were forced back to Europe. The decade of 1940-50 seemingly put an end to the British Empire's dominion and Imperialism that lasted over 350 years of dominance and impacted the world with a tremendous magnitude not only during its years of rule but also on modern times.

Impacts of British Imperialism on Different Fields (sectors)

Political Impacts

India: Before the arrival of the British, India was majorly ruled by Mughals, Marathas and the Rajputs. The British established control in India with the help of the army of the East India Company which was led by Robert

Clive. British East India Company took control in the East India mainly in Bengal and spread its control all over the Indian subcontinent. With the course of time, East India Company lost its Monopoly in the market. Therefore, it was nationalized by the crown in 1857 and hence the then Queen Victoria took the title 'Empress of India' naming herself ruler of India as well.

Australia

Australia was a continent lived on by the Aborigines who have been living there for more than 50,000 years and has one of the oldest cultures there ever was. On the arrival of the British, it was discovered that they do not really have a ruler to govern the people and administrate the society. Therefore, the British set up their colonies there and started to rule the native Australians. Due to this, Britain got access to the unlimited resources and a huge landmass of the continent of Australia.

The Caribbean Islands

Britain was in competition mainly with France in terms of power. Britain sailed overseas for exploring land for mining and crop production. The Caribbean was a place rich for mining and crop production and no powerful ruler had already ruled there. Islands like Barbuda and Antigua, Barbados, Bahamas, Jamaica were the main colonial islands under British rule. Britain's impact on the common people of Caribbean was considerably big with respect to administration.

British Empire

Taking over different countries not only added power to the British Empire but it also gave it control of nearly a quarter of the world's land. The British Empire kept on expanding and people who lived in the British colonies and countries under English control were added to the Royal Army. The British Imperialism fuelled the Industrial revolution which ultimately added more power to not only the British Empire but also other western European countries such as France and Germany.

Economic Impacts

India

The British East India Company took over India and restricted the existing Indian industries and increased 50% taxes that they took back to England. Hence, economic conditions of native Indians were unhealthy at the time. Britain grew richer and cultivated Indian lands to strengthen their economy. The East India Company got stronger by trading cotton, spices, and tea and transporting them to England. As a result of the British exploitation, India which had a share of Global industrial output of 25% in 1750 had a decline in it as it was reduced to 2% in 1900. India, a place formerly known for its wealth was reduced to a subcontinent full of plunder.

Australia

The economic impact on Australian land was plain and simple. Australia was a land where no ruler ruled; the Aborigines had been living there for more than 50,000 years. When the British arrived and took over the rule of Australia, they focused mainly on farming and making colonies. The Aborigines were not included in the new settlements and were pushed back into the forest and the British also took their children with them believing that they would get improved if they join the White society of the English people.

The Caribbean islands

The British traded sugarcane, tea, silk, paintings, art, jewellery, sugar, cotton, and tobacco from the Caribbeans. The major colonised islands such as Bahamas, Barbuda and Antigua, Barbados were rich in terms of natural resources. The British took advantage of this and traded as much as they could to get richer. Slave trade also played a role in British Empire's rise.

British Empire

The British Empire grew larger and richer as it got at its peak in 1921. Its practice of Imperializing of different parts of the world that was being carried out from the past two centuries or more benefited it by making British Empire the biggest, richest and the most powerful country in the world. The British Empire's economy also got mightier as it received taxes from all the territorial acquisitions it had made throughout the world. Global trade that it carried out insured its economic strength. Slave trade was also a huge factor

that made gains for the British however, it was abolished by the crown in 1883. The Industrial Revolution also impacted in a great way for the British growth as an economy.

Social Impacts

India

Before the exploitation from the British, the Indian society was habited to its traditional methods. After the arrival of the British, the East India company started exploiting economically as well as socially by suppressing the Indian social sentiment, not providing Indians with jobs, stripping them of Human rights and Liberty to carry their traditional methods. This led to a huge social instability among the Indians which resulted several revolts such as ‘The Indian rebellion of 1857’ and later in the 20th century ‘Home movement’. However, the British built many schools and hospitals that benefited the Indians after the British left India.

Australia

The British and the Aborigines did not have a good and healthy relationship. The reason behind this was the bad behaviour of the British towards the native people and mainly because they took the land under their rule without any agreement of the natives. Various diseases were brought by the British along with them in Australia. British colonised Australia and started to build their own societies nurturing them according to the British traditions.

The Caribbean islands

Along with the natural resources being plundered, people who lived under the British rule in the Caribbean were also exploited to a quiet greater extent. They were treated and traded as slaves and were also sent to Britain’s other acquired nations to work as laborers. Whenever required, the able-bodied young men were also initiated into the war effort. Most known fact is that the Caribbean’s made a huge impact with their contributions in the RAF (Royal Air Force) during the Second World War. The one thing that British

did that proved to be useful for the Caribbean people was building schools and hospitals.

British Empire

Britain had travelled all over the world seeking for new lands, resources and ways to strengthen the crown's power. The English society enjoyed Britain's expansion added value to the British crown as well as increased the standard of living for the civilians of UK. Unemployment rate hardly rose during British Empire's rule over other nations. The colonies that had been established by the British played a vital role in managing Britain's rapid growing population. The new machineries, commercialization, and Industrial growth during the Industrial Revolution led to rapid urbanization in Britain.

Cultural Impacts

India

While looking at the impacts of British rule on India with respect to culture, one can see negatives as well as positive impacts. British made several good changes such as abolishing the practice of 'sati' and 'baal vivah', attempted to demolish Untouchability and female feticide and other rubbish age-old traditions in the Indian society. Though the railways were constructed for the purpose of transporting goods to the coast so that ships carry them to England, the Railways ultimately helped the Indians for the sake of transport. Nationalism began to rise in India with the motivation of gaining freedom and being independent. Whereas, India which once used to be rich in natural resources and living standards was now in a state of misery because of the 200 years of non-stop plunder done by the British Empire. Also, many Indians irrespective of their religion were forced to convert themselves and follow Christianity. Overall, it can be seen that the British tried to suppress and erase the Indian culture by making Imperialistic writings about Indians and imposing their styles, designs of art and literature.

Australia

Though the native aboriginals of Australia were pushed back into the forests in mountains by the British colonialists, they did not follow the British methods, culture. Hence, almost all the Aboriginal population kept faith in their own religion and did not convert to Christianity. Thus, the British colonialists that remained on Australian soil carried the British culture forward.

The Caribbean islands

Britain exploited the Caribbean people in many ways, culturally as well. The native Samoan, Hopi and Taíno tribal culture were not valued by the British. Although majority of the native population was taken into slavery, these cultures somehow managed to survive themselves throughout the British rule.

British Empire

Due to Imperialism, some parts of Indian, Chinese, Middle eastern cultures had become a part of British culture. The British had gathered thousands of artefacts, ornaments, documents of human history and many such objects that resembled different cultures. The English culture had spread all over the world, their methods for administration, trade, military, education system, industrialization, etc. were partially adopted by the people of not only the Britain but of every single acquired territory of the British Empire. The Imperialism practiced by Britain can be considered as the main cause for the spread of Christianity in the world.

S.N.	Questions (5 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Explain the nature of colonialism in India.	CO1	PO1	K2
2	Write a short note on the Portuguese settlements in India.	CO2	PO1	K1
3	Describe the role of the Dutch in Indian trade.	CO2	PO1	K2
4	Write a brief note on the French settlements in India.	CO2	PO1	K1
5	Explain the establishment of English settlements in India.	CO2	PO1	K2
6	What were the causes of the Anglo-French conflict in India?	CO3	PO2	K2
7	Explain the relationship between the British and Indian states.	CO5	PO3	K2
S.N.	Questions (8 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Discuss the meaning and features of colonialism in India.	CO1	PO1	K2
2	Explain the establishment and expansion of Portuguese power in India.	CO2	PO1	K3
3	Analyse the role of the Dutch in the commercial activities of India.	CO2	PO2	K3
4	Examine the growth of French settlements in India.	CO2	PO2	K3
5	Describe the rise of the English East India Company in India.	CO2	PO3	K4
6	Discuss the causes and results of the Anglo-French conflicts in India.	CO3	PO3	K4
	Explain the circumstances that led to the British acquisition of Bengal.	CO4	PO3	K3
8	Analyse the relationship between the British and other Indian states.	CO5	PO3	K4
9	Examine the methods of British imperialism in India.	CO4	PO4	K4
10	Assess the impact of British imperialism on India.	CO5	PO4	K4

UNIT - II

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the early manifestations of discontent against British rule.
2. To study the causes and nature of the Poligar Revolt and South Indian Rebellion.
3. To examine the significance of the Vellore Revolt of 1806 and the Revolt of 1857.
4. To analyse the role of peasant uprisings and tribal resistance movements.
5. To understand the causes and impact of early civil rebellions.
6. To study the contribution of socio-religious reform movements.
7. To identify the predecessors of the Indian National Congress.
8. To analyse the factors leading to the origin of Indian National Movement.

Course Outcomes

1. Students understand the early resistance against British rule in India.
2. Students explain the causes and nature of the Poligar Revolt and South Indian Rebellion.
3. Students describe the significance of the Vellore Revolt and the Revolt of 1857.
4. Students analyse the role of peasant and tribal movements.
5. Students identify the causes and impact of early civil rebellions.
6. Students understand the contribution of socio-religious reform movements.
7. Students recognise the role of organisations that preceded the Indian National Congress.

Nationalism: Origin & Meaning

It may surprise you to learn that the history of this idea is not more than 200 years old. Nationalism, in the sense in which we use it today, did not exist in India before the 19th century. It may also surprise you to learn that the roots (origins) of this idea do not lie in the Indian history but in the history of Modern Europe. In fact it is possible to talk of Indian nationalism as distinctly different from its European counterpart.

In order to know this difference it is important to have an idea of the circumstances under which nationalism took roots in Europe. In Europe the development of nationalism was the result of the fundamental changes that were taking place in society and economy around the 18th century. The beginning of the industrial revolution produced goods and materials and created wealth at an unprecedented (unprecedented means like never before)

level. This led to the need for the creation of a unified and large market where these goods could be sold. The creation of a large market led to a political integration of villages, districts and provinces into a larger state. In this large and complex market different people were required to perform different roles for which they needed to be trained in different skills. But above all they needed to communicate with each other. This created the need for uniform educational centres with focus on one language. In the pre-modern times majority of the people learnt language and other skills in their local environments which differed from each other. But now, because of the new changes brought about by modern economy, a uniform system of training and schooling came into being. Thus modern English language in England, French in France and German in Germany became the dominant language in those countries.

Uniformity in communication systems resulted in the creation of a 'national culture' and reinforced national boundaries. People living within those boundaries began to associate themselves with it. Culturally they also began to perceive themselves as one people and as members of one large community, i.e. Englishmen began to identify with each other and with the geographical boundaries of England. Similarly it happened to German and French people. This was the beginning of the idea of nationalism

Let us understand this differently. Nationalism was the result of the emergence of nations and nation states (large culturally homogenous territories with a uniform political system within) in Europe. These nation states did not always exist. The early societies, with simpler forms of human organizations and without an elaborate division of labour, could easily manage their affairs without a state or a central authority to enforce law and order. State, as a central authority, came into being after the beginning of organized agriculture. People generally found it difficult to manage their lives without a central authority to regulate their lives. This need for a state became even greater with the onset of industrialization and a modern world economy. An elaborate system of communication and a uniform system of education

with focus on one standardized language created conditions for cultural and political uniformity. Thus came into being modern nation states. These nation states, in order to sustain and perpetuate themselves, needed the allegiance and loyalty of the people residing in their territories. This was the beginning of nationalism. In other words, an identification by a people or community with the boundary of the Nation, state and its high culture gave rise to what we know as nationalism.

But this was not how the idea of nationalism developed in India. The conditions in India were very different at a time when the idea of nationalism was taking roots in Europe. Industrialization occurred here at a very limited scale. When Europe was getting rapidly industrialized, India was still largely an agrarian economy. Different people spoke different languages. Though the feeling of patriotism, (patriotism: love and a feeling of loyalty for one's territory and culture like the one that existed among the Marathas for Marathwara or among the Rajputs for Rajputana) certainly existed in India in pre-modern times. But nationalism as we understand it (unified system of administration, common language, a shared high culture and political integration) did not exist in India until about the middle of the 19th century

Nationalism in India developed primarily as a response to the British rule. British rule, as you know, came to the Indian soil in 1757 with battle of Plassey and gradually established here by defeating the native rulers. As you are aware, the arrival of the British as rulers was resented by many of the native rulers and people also. It was clear that they all wanted to oppose and fight against the British presence in India.

But initially they did not do it together or as one people. Different groups had their specific grievances against the British and therefore they fought for the redressal of their specific grievances. For instance the native rulers did not want the British to take over their territories (as it happened to the rulers of Awadh and Jhansi in present day U.P.). Similarly peasants, artisans and tribals suffered at the hands of the British rulers and often stood up in revolt against them. (You have read about this in Module 3 of this

Book). But merely the opposition to the British rule or a fight against them did not bring about a feeling of nationalism in India. Although different sections of the population got united because of common exploitation at the hands of the British, a feeling of identification with the entire country and its people did not come about. Even the great revolt of 1857, in which many sections of the population fought together (like native rulers, soldiers, zamindars and peasants) did not produce a feeling of nationalism or an all-India unity. The idea that the people of India, in spite of many differences among themselves, had many things in common amongst them had not, as yet, taken roots. Similarly the realization that the British rule was foreign and an alien rule which wanted to subjugate the entire people and bring them under its control, had also not occurred.

The essence of nationalism in India, or Indian nationalism, was the realization that all the Indian people had a common nationality and that it was in their collective interests to resist the British rule. To put it simply, a combined opposition to British rule and a desire to achieve national unity lay at the heart of Indian nationalism. The objective conditions for the development of nationalism were indeed fulfilled by the arrival of the colonial rulers and their penetration into Indian society and economy. However, these conditions in themselves, did not create an awareness of nationalism among the people. The consciousness of the idea of nationalism took a long time to mature and made its presence gradually in the fields of culture, economy and politics. In the following section we shall look at them separately.

Manifestation of Discontent against British Rule: Study Material

The British rule in India led to widespread discontent across various sections of society. This discontent manifested in various forms, including revolts, movements, and the expression of grievances by different social, economic, and political groups.

1. Early Resistance to British Rule

a. Tribal Revolts:

- **Santhal Rebellion (1855-56):** The Santhal community rebelled against the exploitative practices of the British, particularly in the areas of land revenue and moneylending.
- **Munda Rebellion (1899-1900):** Led by Birsa Munda, this rebellion was a reaction against British land policies that disrupted the traditional Munda socio-economic system.

b. Peasant Movements

- **Indigo Rebellion (1859-60):** Peasants in Bengal revolted against the oppressive Indigo planters, supported by the British.
- **Deccan Riots (1875):** Farmers in the Deccan region revolted against the moneylenders and the British authorities who supported them.

c. Sepoy Mutiny of 1857:

- Often referred to as the First War of Indian Independence, the mutiny was a culmination of various grievances among Indian soldiers (sepoys) against the British, including religious and cultural insensitivity, pay disparities, and general discontent.

2. Socio-Religious Reform Movements

a. Brahmo Samaj (Founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy):

- Advocated for the abolition of practices like Sati and child marriage, and promoted women's rights and education, reflecting discontent with British cultural policies.

b. Arya Samaj (Founded by Swami Dayananda Saraswati)

- Focused on returning to the Vedic traditions, opposing Western influence, and promoting social reform.

c. Theosophical Society (Founded by Madam Blavatsky and Col. Olcott)

- Played a significant role in promoting Indian culture and philosophy, and resisting British cultural dominance.

3. Economic Discontent

a. Drain of Wealth Theory

- Propounded by Dadabhai Naoroji, it criticized the economic policies of the British, which led to the systematic exploitation and impoverishment of India.

b. Famines and Economic Policies

- The British economic policies, including heavy taxation and the emphasis on cash crops, led to frequent famines, such as the Great Famine of 1876-78, causing widespread suffering and discontent.

4. Political Movements

a. Formation of Indian National Congress (1885)

- Initially a platform for moderate demands, the Congress gradually became the voice of Indian aspirations, leading to widespread discontent against British rule.

b. Partition of Bengal (1905)

- Lord Curzon's decision to partition Bengal led to massive protests and the Swadeshi Movement, which called for the boycott of British goods and institutions.

c. Home Rule Movement (1916)

- Led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Annie Besant, the movement demanded self-government and greater Indian participation in governance.

5. The Gandhian Era

a. Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22)

- Mahatma Gandhi's call for non-violent resistance against British rule, including the boycott of British goods, schools, and services.

b. Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-34)

- Marked by the Salt March, this movement focused on the refusal to obey unjust British laws.

c. Quit India Movement (1942)

- A mass protest demanding an end to British rule in India, characterized by widespread participation and intense repression by the British.

6. Revolutionary Movements

a. Indian National Army (INA) and Subhas Chandra Bose

- Bose's efforts to form the INA and fight against the British from outside India galvanized nationalistic sentiments.

b. Revolutionary Organizations

- Groups like the Ghadar Party, Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA), and individuals like Bhagat Singh and Chandrashekhar Azad represented the armed struggle against British rule.

Poligar Revolt

The victory of the British in the acquisitions and consolidation of their power in Madras strengthened their political power. After defeating the French and their Indian allies in the three Carnatic Wars, the East India Company began to consolidate and extend its power and influence. However, local kings and feudal chieftains resisted this. The first resistance to East India Company's territorial aggrandizement was from PuliThevar of Nerkattumseval in the Tirunelveli region. This was followed by other chieftains in the Tamil country such as Velunachiyar, Veerapandiya Kattabomman, Marudhu brothers, and Dheeran Chinnamalai. Veerapandiya Kattabomman lifted the banner of local resistance against the British imperialism. Between 1799 and 1802 formed one of anti-British outbreaks in Tamilnadu, the growing unrest in Ramanathapuram, Madurai and Tirunelveliculminated in the Poligar uprising of 1799.

Palayams and Poligars

Poligar war refers to the wars fought between the poligars of former Madurai kingdom in Tamilnadu and the English East India Company forces between March 1799 to May 1802. The word "Palayam" means a domain, a military camp, or a little kingdom. Poligars in Tamil refers to the holder of a little kingdom as a feudatory to a greater sovereign. Under this system, palayam

was given for valuable military services rendered by any individual. This type of Poligars system was in practice during the rule of Pratapa Rudra of Warangal in the Kakatiya kingdom. The system was put in place in Tamil Nadu by Viswanatha Nayaka, when he became the Nayak ruler of Madurai in 1529, with the support of his minister Ariyanathar. Traditionally there were supposed to be 72 Poligars. The Poligars were free to collect revenue, administer the territory, settle disputes and maintain law and order. Their police duties were known as Padikaval or Arasu Kaval. On many occasions the Poligars helped the Nayak rulers to restore the kingdom to them. The personal relationship and an understanding between the King and the Poligars made the system to last for about two hundred years from the Nayaks of Madurai, until the takeover of these territories by the British. Veerapandya Kattabomman, Dheeran Chinnamalai and Marudu brothers were some of the most notable Poligars who rose up in revolt against the British rule in South India. With a view to suppressing the Poligars, the Company either under the authority of the Nawab or of its own sent frequent expeditions.

Divisions of Palayams

Among the 72 Poligars, created by the Nayak rulers, there were two blocs, namely the prominent eastern and the western Palayams. The eastern Palayams were Sattur, Nagalapuram, Ettayapuram, and Panchalamkurichi and the prominent western palayams were Uthumalai, Thalavankottai, Naduvakurichi, Singampatti, Seithur. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the Poligars dominated the politics of Tamil country. They functioned as independent, sovereign authorities within their respective Palayams.

Revenue Collection

The Nawab of Arcot had borrowed money from the East India Company to meet the expenses he had incurred during the Carnatic Wars. When his debts exceeded his capacity to pay, the power of collecting the land revenue dues from southern Poligars was given to the East India Company. Claiming that their lands had been handed down to the mover sixty

generations, many Poligars refused to pay taxes to the Company officials. The Company branded the defiant Poligars as rebels and accused them of trying to disturb the peace and tranquility of the country. This led to conflict between the East India Company and the Palaykars which are described below.

Revolt of Puli Thevar (1755–1767)

In March 1755 Mahfuzkhan (brother of the Nawab of Arcot) was sent with a contingent of the Company army under Colonel Heron to Tirunelveli. Madurai easily fell into their hands. Thereafter Colonel Heron was urged to deal with Puli Thevar as he continued to defy the authority of the Company. Puli Thevar wielded much influence over the western Poligars. For want of cannon and of supplies and pay to soldiers, Colonel Heron abandoned the plan and retired to Madurai. Heron was recalled and dismissed from service.

Confederacy against the British

Three Pathan officers, Nawab Chanda Sahib's agents, named Mianah, Mudimiah and Nabikhan Kattak commanded the Madurai and Tirunelveli regions. They supported the Tamil Poligars against Arcot Nawab Mohamed Ali. Puli Thevar had established close relationships with them. Puli Thevar also formed a confederacy of the Poligars to fight the British. With the exception of the Poligars of Sivagiri, all other Maravar Palayams supported him. Ettayapuram and Panchalamkurichi also did not join this confederacy. Further, the English succeeded in getting the support of the rajas of Ramanathapuram and Pudukottai. Puli Thevar tried to get the support of Hyder Ali of Mysore and the French. Hyder Ali could not help Puli Thevar as he was already locked in a serious conflict with the Marathas.

Kalakadu Battle

The Nawab sent an additional contingent of sepoys to Mahfuzkhan and the reinforced army proceeded to Tirunelveli. Besides the 1000 sepoys of the Company, Mahfuzkhan received 600 more sent by the Nawab. He also had the support of cavalry and foot soldiers from the Carnatic. Before Mahfuzkhan could station his troops near Kalakadu, 2000 soldiers from Travancore joined

the forces of PuliThevar. In the battle at Kalakadu, Mahfuzkhan's troops were routed.

Yusuf Khan and Puli Thevar

The organized resistance of the Poligars under Puli Thevar gave inopportunity to the English to interfere directly in the affairs of Tirunelveli. Aided by the Raja of Travancore, from 1756 to 1763, the Poligars of Tirunelveli led by Puli Thevar were in a constant state of rebellion against the Nawab's authority. Yusuf Khan (also known as Khan Sahib or, before his conversion to Islam, Marudhanayagam) who had been sent by the Company was not prepared to attack Puli Thevar unless the big guns and ammunition from Tiruchirappalli arrived. As the English were at war with the French, as well as with Hyder Ali and Marathas, the artillery arrived only in September 1760. Yusuf Khan began to batter the Nerkattumseval fort and this attack continued for about two months. On 16th May 1761 Puli Thevar's three major forts (Nerkattumseval, Vasudevanallur and Panayur) came under the control of Yusuf Khan. In the meantime, after taking Pondicherry the English had eliminated the French from the picture. As a result of this the unity of Poligars began to breakup as French support was not forthcoming. Travancore, Seithur, Uthumalai and Surandais wrenched their loyalty to the opposite camp. Yusuf Khan who was negotiating with the Poligars, without informing the Company administration, was charged with treachery and hanged in 1764.

Defeat of Puli Thevar

After the death of Khan Sahib, Puli Thevar returned from exile and recaptured Nerkattumseval in 1764. However, he was defeated by Captain Campbell in 1767. Puli Thevar escaped and died in exile. The British finally won after carrying out long and difficult protracted jungle campaigns against the Poligar armies and finally defeated them

Velunachiyar (1730–1796)

Born in 1730 to the Raja Sellamuthu Sethupathy of Ramanathapuram, Velunachiyar was the only daughter of this royal family. The king had no male heir. The royal families brought up the princess Velunachiyar, training

her in martial arts like valari, stick fighting and to wield weapons. She was also adept in horse riding and archery, apart from her proficiency in English, French and Urdu. At the age of 16, Velunachiyar was married to Muthu Vadugar, the Raja of Sivagangai, and had a daughter by name Vellachinachiar. In 1772, the Nawab of Arcot and the Company troops under the command of Lt. Col. Bon Jour stormed the Kalaiyar Kovil Palace. In the ensuing battle Muthu Vadugar was killed. Velunachiyar escaped with her daughter and lived under the protection of Gopala Nayakar at Virupachi near Dindigul for several years. During her period in hiding, Velunachiyar organised an army and succeeded in securing an alliance with not only Gopala Nayakar but Hyder Ali as well. Dalavay (military chief) Thandavarayanar wrote a letter to Sultan Hyder Ali on behalf of Velunachiyar asking for 5000 infantry and 5000 cavalry to defeat the English. Velunachiyar explained in detail in Urdu all the problems she had with East India Company. She conveyed her strong determination to fight the English. Impressed by her courage, Hyder Ali ordered his Commandant Syed in Dindigul fort to provide the required military assistance. Velunachiyar employed agents for gathering intelligence to find where the British had stored their ammunition. With military assistance from Gopala Nayakar and Hyder Ali he recaptured Sivagangai. She was crowned as Queen with the help of Marudhu brothers. She was the first female ruler or queen to resist the British colonial power in India.

Rebellion of Veerapandya Kattabomman (1790-1799)

Veerapandya Kattabomman became the Palayakkarar of Panchalamkurichi at the age of thirty on the death of his father, Jagavira Pandya Kattabomman. The Company's administrators, James London and Colin Jackson, had considered him a man of peaceful disposition. However, soon several events led to conflicts between Veerapandya Kattabomman and the East India Company. The Nawab, under the provisions of a treaty signed in 1781, had assigned the revenue of the Carnatic to the Company to be entirely under their management and control during the war with Mysore Sultan. One-sixth of the revenue was to be allowed to meet the expenses of

Nawab and his family. The Company had thus gained the right to collect taxes from Panchalamkurichi. The Company appointed its Collectors to collect taxes from all the palayams. The Collector humiliated the Poligars and adopted force to collect the taxes. This was the bone of contention between the English and Kattabomman.

Conflict with Jackson

The land revenue arrear from Kattabomman was 3310 pagodas in 1798. Collector Jackson, an arrogant English officer, wanted to send an army to collect the revenue dues but the Madras Government did not give him permission. On 18 August 1798, he ordered Kattabomman to meet him in Ramanathapuram. But Kattabomman's attempts to meet him in between proved futile, as Jackson refused to give him audience both in Courtallam and Srivilliputhur. At last, an interview was granted and Kattabomman met Jackson in Ramanathapuram on 19th September 1798. It is said that Kattabomman had to stand for three hours before the haughty Collector Jackson. Sensing danger, Kattabomman tried to escape, along with his minister Sivasubramanianar. Oomaithurai suddenly entered the fort with his men and helped the escape of Kattabomman. At the gate of the Ramanathapuram fort there was a clash, in which some people including Lieutenant Clarke were killed. Sivasubramanianar was taken prisoner.

Appear in the Madras Council

On his return to Panchalamkurichi, Kattabomman represented to the Madras Council about how he was ill-treated by the collector Jackson. The Council asked Kattabomman to appear before a committee with William Brown, William Oram and John Casamajor as members. Meanwhile, Governor Edward Clive, ordered the release of Sivasubramanianar and the suspension of the Collector Jackson. Kattabomman appeared before the Committee that sat on 15th December 1798 and reported on what transpired in Ramanathapuram. The Committee found Kattabomman was not guilty. Jackson was dismissed from service and a new Collector S.R. Lushing took

appointed. Kattabomman cleared almost all the revenue arrears leaving only a balance of 1080 pagoda.

Kattabomman and the Confederacy of Poligars

In the meantime, Marudhu Pandiyar of Sivagangai formed the South Indian Confederacy of rebels against the British, with the neighboring Poligars like Gopala Nayak of Dindigul and Yadul Nayak of Aanamalai. Marudhu Pandiyar acted as the leader. The Tiruchirappalli Proclamation had been made. Kattabomman was interested in this confederacy. Collector Lushington prevented Kattabomman from meeting the Marudhu Brothers. But Marudhu Brothers and Kattabomman jointly decided on confrontation with the English. Kattabomman tried to influence Sivagiri Poligars, who refused to join. Kattabomman advanced towards Sivagiri.

But the Poligars of Sivagiri were a tributary to the Company. So the Company considered the expedition of Kattabomman as a challenge to their authority. The Company ordered the army to march on to Tirunelveli. In May 1799, Lord Wellesley issued orders from Madras for the advance of forces from Tiruchirappalli, Thanjavur and Madurai to Tirunelveli. Major Bannerman commanded the troops. The Travancore troops too joined the British. On 1st September 1799, an ultimatum was served on Kattabomman to surrender. Kattabomman's "evasive reply" prompted Bannerman to attack his fort. Bannerman moved his entire army to Panchalamkurichi on 5 September. They cut off all the communications to the fort. Bannerman deputed Ramalinganar to convey a message asking Kattabomman to surrender. Kattabomman refused. Ramalinganar gathered all the secrets of the Fort, and on the basis of his report, Bannerman decided the strategy of the operation. In a clash at Kallarpatti, Sivasubramanianar was taken prisoner.

Execution of Kattabomman

Kattabomman escaped to Pudukottai. The British put a prize on his head. Betrayed by the rajas of Ettayapuram and Pudukottai Kattabomman was finally captured. Sivasubramanianar was executed at Nagalapuram on the 13th September. Bannerman made a mockery of a trial for Kattabomman in front

of the Poligars on 16th October. During the trial Kattabomman bravely admitted all the charges leveled against him. Kattabomman was hanged from a tamarind tree in the old fort of Kayathar, close to Tirunelveli, in front of the fellow Poligars. Thus ended the life of the celebrated Poligars of Panchalamkurichi. Many folk ballads on Kattabomman helped keep his memory alive among the people.

The Marudhu Brothers

Periya Marudhu or Vella Marudhu (1748–1801) and his younger brother Chinna Marudhu (1753-1801) were able generals of Muthu Vadugar of Sivagangai. After Muthu Vadugar's death in the Kalaiyar Kovil battle Marudhu brothers assisted in restoring the throne to Velunachiyar. In the last years of the eighteenth century Marudhu Brother organized resistance against the British. After the death of Kattabomman, they worked along with his brother Oomathurai. They plundered the granaries of the Nawab and caused damage and destruction to Company troops.

Rebellion of Marudhu Brothers (1800–1801)

Despite the suppression of Kattabomman's revolt in 1799, rebellion broke out again in 1800. In the British records it is referred to as the Second Palayakkar War. It was directed by a confederacy consisting of Marudhu Pandyan of Sivagangai, Gopala Nayak of Dindugal, Kerala Varma of Malabar and Krishnaappa Nayak and Dhoondaji of Mysore. In April 1800 they meet at Virupachi and decided to organise an uprising against the Company. The uprising, which broke out in Coimbatore in June 1800, soon spread to Ramanathapuram and Madurai. The Company got wind of it and declared war on Krishnappa Nayak of Mysore, Kerala Varma of Malabar and others. The Palayakars of Coimbatore, Sathyamangalam and Tarapuram were caught and hanged. In February 1801 the two brothers of Kattabomman, Oomathurai and Sevathaiah, escaped from the Palayamkottai prison to Kamudhi, from where Chinna Marudhu took them to Siruvayal his capital. The fort at Panchalamkurichi was reconstructed in record time. The British troops under Colin Macaulay retook the fort in April and the Marudhu brothers sought

shelter in Sivagangai. The English demanded that the Marudhu Pandyarsh and over the fugitives (Oomathurai and Sevathaiah). But they refused. Colonel Agnew and Colonel Innes marched on Sivagangai. In June 1801 Marudhu Pandyars issued a proclamation of Independence which is called Tiruchirappalli Proclamation.

1801 Proclamation

The Proclamation of 1801 was a nearly call to the Indians to unite against the British, cutting across region, caste, creed and religion. The proclamation was pasted on the walls of the Nawab's palace in Tiruchirappalli fort and on the walls of the Srirangam temple. Many Poligars of Tamil country rallied together to fight against the English. Chinna Marudhu collected nearly 20,000 men to challenge the English army. British reinforcements were rushed from Bengal, Ceylon and Malaya. The rajas of Pudukkottai, Ettayapuram and Thanjavur stood by the British. Divide and rule policy followed by the English spilt the forces of the Poligars soon.

Fall of Sivagangai

In May 1801, the English attacked there bels in Thanjavur and Tiruchirappalli. There bels went to Piranmalai and Kalayarkoil. They were again defeated by the forces of the English. In the end the superior military strength and the able commanders of the English Company prevailed. The rebellion failed and Sivagangai was annexed in 1801. The Marudhu brothers were executed in the Fort of Tirupathur near Ramanathapuram on 24th October 1801. Oomathurai and Sevathaiah were captured and beheaded at Panchalamkurichi on 16th November 1801. Seventy-three rebels were exiled to Penangin Malaya. Though the Poligars fell to the English, their exploits and sacrifices inspired later generations. Thus the rebellion of Marudhu brothers, which is called South Indian Rebellion, is a landmark event in the history of Tamil Nadu.

The Treaty of Carnatic (1801)

The suppression of the Poligars rebellions of 1799 and 1800–1801 resulted in the liquidation of all the local chieftains of Tamil Nadu. Under the

terms of the Carnatic Treaty of 31st July 1801, the British assumed direct control over Tamilagam and the Palayakaras system came to an end with the demolition of all forts and disbandment of their army.

Dheeran Chinnamalai (1756–1805)

Born as Theerthagiri in 1756 in the Mandradiarroyal family of Palayakottai Dheeran was well trained in silambam, archery, horse riding and modern warfare. He was involved in resolving family and land disputes in the Kongu region. As this region was under the control of the Mysore Sultan, tax was collected by Tippu's Diwan Mohammed Ali. Once, when the Diwan was returning to Mysore with the tax money, Theerthagiri blocked his way and confiscated all the tax money. He let Mohammed Ali go by instructing him to tell his Sultan that "Chinnamalai", who is between Sivamalai and Chennimalai, was the one who took away taxes. Thus he gained the name "Dheeran Chinnamalai". The offended Diwan sent a contingent to attack Chinnamalai and both the forces met and fought at the Noyyal riverbed. Chinnamalai emerged victorious. Trained by the French, Dheeran mobilised the Kongu youth in thousands and fought the British together with Tippu. After Tippu's death Dheeran Chinnamalai built a fort and fought the British without leaving the place. Hence the place is called Odanilai. He launched guerrilla attacks and evaded capture. Finally the English captured him and his brothers and kept them in prison in Sankagiri.

The Poligars went down fighting against alien imperialism. Ultimately a combination of adverse developments rendered their fall inevitable. The Company's ascendancy eclipsed the European and Mysore powers and the Poligars could gain no assistance from any quarter. If the existence of the Poligari system presented certain difficulties to the working of the central government, it equally so presented certain opportunities to the country. The leaders were executed or condemned to ignominious imprisonment and villagers were deprived of the means of repelling the predatory incursion, commanding this period. The repressive policy in consequence prepared the minds of the people for a more determined struggle. The suppression of the

Poligar uprising resulted in the liquidation of the influence of the chieftains. Under terms of the Carnatic treaty of 1801, the Company assumed direct control over Madras. The Company mobilised its strength to suppress all rebellious activities and a large number of them were subjected to capital punishment. It led to the establishment of internal order and peace. The English East India Company assumed full sovereignty over the territories in 1800-1802. The position of the Company was solid and there was a conducive atmosphere for a settlement.

South Indian Rebellion

The victory over Tipu and Kattabomman had released British forces from several fronts to target the fighting forces in Ramanathapuram and Sivagangai. Thondaiman of Pudukottai had already joined the side of the Company. The Company had also succeeded in winning the support of the descendent of the former ruler of Sivagangai named Padmattur Woya Thevar. Woya Thevar was recognised by the Company as the legitimate ruler of Sivagangai. This divisive strategy split the royalist group, eventually demoralizing the fighting forces against the British.

In May 1801 a strong detachment under the command of P.A. Agnew commenced its operations. Marching through Manamadurai and Partibanur the Company forces occupied the rebel strongholds of Paramakudi. In the clashes that followed both sides suffered heavy losses. But the fighters' stubborn resistance and the Marudu brothers' heroic battles made the task of the British formidable. In the end the superior military strength and the able commanders of the British army won the day. Following Umathurai's arrest Marudu brothers were captured from the Singampunary hills, and Shevathiah from Batlagundu and Doraiswamy, the son of Vellai Marudu from a village near Madurai. Chinna Marudu and his brother Vellai Marudu were executed at the fort of Tirupattur on 24 October 1801. Umathurai and Shevathiah, with several of their followers, were taken to Panchalamkurichi and beheaded on 16 November 1801. Seventy three rebels were banished to Penang in Malaya in April 1802.

Theeran Chinnamalai

The Kongu country comprising Salem, Coimbatore, Karur and Dindigul formed part of the Nayak kingdom of Madurai but had been annexed by the Wodayars of Mysore. After the fall of the Wodayars, these territories together with Mysore were controlled by the Mysore Sultans. As a result of the Third and Fourth Mysore wars the entire Kongu region passed into the hands of the English.

Theeran Chinnamalai was a palayakkarar of Kongu country who fought the British East India Company. He was trained by the French and Tipu. In his bid to launch an attack on the Company's fort in Coimbatore (1800), Chinnamalai tried taking the help of the Marudu brothers from Sivagangai. He also forged alliances with Gopal Nayak of Virupatchi; Appachi Gounder of Paramathi Velur; Joni Jon Kahan of Attur Salem; Kumara Vellai of Perundurai and Varanavasi of Erode in fighting the Company.

Chinnamalai's plans did not succeed as the Company stopped the reinforcements from the Marudu brothers. Also, Chinnamalai changed his plan and attacked the fort a day earlier. This led to the Company army executing 49 people. However, Chinnamalai escaped. Between 1800 and July 31, 1805 when he was hanged, Chinnamalai continued to fight against the Company. Three of his battles are important: the 1801 battle on Cauvery banks, the 1802 battle in Odanilai and the 1804 battle in Arachalur. The last and the final one was in 1805. During the final battle, Chinnamalai was betrayed by his cook Chinnamalai and was hanged in Sivagiri fort.

Vellore Revolt (1806)

Vellore Revolt 1806 was the culmination of the attempts of the descendents of the dethroned kings and chieftains in south India to throw off the yoke of the British rule. After the suppression of revolt of Marudu brothers, they made Vellore the centre of their activity. The organizers of an Anti-British Confederacy continued their secret moves, as a result of which no fewer than 3,000 loyalists of Mysore sultans had settled either in the town of

Vellore or in its vicinity. The garrison of Vellore itself consisted of many aggrieved persons, who had been reduced to dire straits as a sequel to loss of positions or whose properties had been confiscated or whose relatives were slain by the English. Thus the Vellore Fort became the meeting ground of the rebel forces of south India. The sepoy and the migrants to Vellore held frequent deliberations, attended by the representatives of the sons of Tipu.

Immediate Cause

In the meantime, the English enforced certain innovations in the administration of the sepoy establishments. They prohibited all markings on the forehead which were intended to denote caste and religious, and directed the sepoys to cut their moustaches to a set pattern. Added to these, Adjutant General Agnew designed and introduced under his direct supervision a new model turban for the sepoys.

The most obnoxious innovation in the new turban, from the Indian point of view, was the leather cockade. The cockade was made of animal skin. Pig skin was anathema to Muslims, while upper caste Hindus shunned anything to do with the cow's hide. To make matters worse the front part of the uniform had been converted into a cross.

The order regarding whiskers, caste marks and earrings, which infringed the religious customs of both Hindu and Muslim soldiers, was justified on the grounds that, although they had not been prohibited previously by any formal order, it had never been the practice in any well-regulated corps for the men to appear with them on parade.

The first incident occurred in May 1806. The men in the 2nd battalion of the 4th regiment at Vellore refused to wear the new turban. When the matter was reported to the Governor by Col. Fancourt, commandant of the garrison, he ordered a band of the 19th Dragoons (Cavalry) to escort the rebels, against whom charges had been framed, to the Presidency for a trial. The 2nd battalion of the 4th regiment was replaced by the 2nd battalion of the 23rd regiment of Wallajahbad. The Court Martial tried 21 privates (a soldier of lower military rank)– 10 Muslims and 11 Hindus–, for defiance. In pursuance

of the Court Martial order two soldiers (a Muslim and a Hindu) were sentenced to receive 900 lashes each and to be discharged from service.

Despite signals of protest the Government decided to go ahead with the change, dismissing the grievance of Indian soldiers. Governor William Bentinck also believed that the 'disinclination to wear the turban was becoming more feeble.'

Though it was initially claimed that the officers on duty observed nothing unusual during the night of July 9, it was later known that the English officer on duty did not go on his rounds and asked one of the Indian officers to do the duty and Jameder Sheik Kasim, later one of the principal accused, had done it. The leaders of the regiment who were scheduled to have a field day on the morning of 10 July, used it as a pretext to sleep in the Fort on the night of 9 July. The Muslim native adjutant contrived to post as many of his followers as possible as guards within the Fort.

Jamal-ud-din, one of the twelve princes of Tipu family, who was suspected to have played a key role in the revolt, kept telling them in secret parleys that the prince only required them to keep the fort for eight days before which time ten thousand would arrive to their support. He disclosed to them that letters had been written to dispossessed palayakkarars seeking their assistance. He also informed that there were several officers in the service of Purniah (Tipu's erstwhile minister) who were formerly in the Sultan's service and would undoubtedly join the standard.

Outbreak of Revolt

At 2:00 a.m. on 10 July, the sentry at the main guard informed Corporal Piercy saying that a shot or two had been fired somewhere near the English barracks. Before Piercy could respond, the sepoy made a near simultaneous attack on the British guards, the British barracks and the officers' quarters in the Fort. In the European quarters the shutters were kept open, as they were the only means of ventilation from the summer heat. The rebels could easily fire the gun 'through the barred windows on the Europeans, lying unprotected in their beds.' Fire was set to the European

quarters. Detachments were posted to watch the dwellings of the European officers, ready to shoot anyone who came out. A part of the 1st regiment took possession of the magazines (place where gun powder and ball cartridges stored). A select band of 1st Regiment was making their rounds to massacre the European officers in their quarters.

Thirteen officers were killed, in addition to several European conductors of ordnance. In the barracks, 82 privates died, and 91 were wounded.

Major Armstrong of the 16th native infantry was passing outside the Fort when he heard the firing. He advanced to the glacis and asked what the firing meant. He was answered by a volley from the ramparts, killing him instantly. Major Coates, an officer of the English regiment who was on duty outside the Fort, on hearing of the revolt tried to enter the Fort. As he was unable to make it, he sent off an officer, Captain Stevenson of 23rd, to Arcot with a letter addressed to Colonel Gillespie, who commanded the cavalry cantonment there. The letter reached Arcot, some 25 km away, at 6 a.m. Colonel Gillespie set out immediately, taking with him a squadron of the 19th dragoons under Captain Young, supported by a strong troop of the 7th cavalry under Lieutenant Woodhouse. He instructed Colonel Kennedy to follow him with the rest of the cavalry, leaving a detachment to protect the cantonment and to keep up the communication.

When Colonel Gillespie arrived at the Vellore Fort at 9 a.m., he thought it prudent to await the arrival of the guns, since there was continuous firing. Soon the cavalry under Kennedy came from Arcot. It was about 10 o'clock. The gate was blown open with the galloper guns of the 19th dragoons under the direction of Lieutenant Blakiston. The troops entered the place, headed by a squadron of the cavalry under Captain Skelton.

The Gillespie's men were met by a severe crossfire. In the ensuing battle, Colonel Gillespie himself suffered bruises. The sepoys retreated. Hundreds escaped over the walls of the Fort, or threw down their arms and pleaded for mercy. Then the cavalry regiment assembled on the parade ground

and resolved to pursue the fleeing soldiers, who were exiting towards the narrow passage of escape afforded by the sally port. A troop of dragoons and some native horsemen were sent round to intercept the fleeing soldiers. All the buildings in the Fort were searched, and mutineers found in them pitilessly slaughtered. Gillespie's men wanted to enter the building and take revenge on the princes, the instigators of the plot; but Lt. Colonel Marriott resisted the attempt of the dragoons to kill Tipu's sons.

Revolt of 1857

Introduction

By the first half of the 19th century, the East India Company had brought major portions of India under its control, but still it had two purposes or aims : (i) To sustain its conquests and (ii) To exploit in the trade . To fulfill these aims, there was no limit of company's betrayal and avarice. Before 1857 A.D. many of the native domination were annexed to the British Empire forcibly. The British Government was sucking the blood of both, the rulers and the people. Everywhere the revolts were taking place against British East India Company's rule. It was very easy to conquer the new territories but it was very difficult to keep those territories under the control of British East India Company. The East India Company's rule from 1757 to 1857 had generated a lot of discontent among the different sections of the Indian people against the British. The end of the Mughal rule gave a psychological blow to the Muslims many of whom had enjoyed position and patronage under the Mughal and other provincial Muslim rulers. The commercial policy of the company brought ruin to the artisans and craftsman, while the divergent land revenue policy adopted by the Company in different regions, especially the permanent settlement in the North and the Ryotwari settlement in the south put the peasants on the road of impoverishment and misery.

Background

The Revolt of 1857 was a major upheaval against the British Rule in which the disgruntled princes, to disconnected sepoys and disillusioned elements participated. However, it is important to note that right from the

inception of the East India Company there had been several resistance from divergent section in different parts of the sub continent. This resistance offered by different tribal groups, peasant and religious factions remained localized and ill organized. There were series of civil disturbances and local uprising which were scattered, localised and mostly violent. Most of these movements arouse due to popular discontent with the british rule , but some of them were owing to the individual grievences. For about 100 years the people of India had witnessed the enormous lot and plunderr of wealth from India to Britain. The displeased rulers and feudal lords tried to recover their lost ground with the support of their revenue policy, which had created a class of exploitative intermediaries. The Tribals rebelled in resentment against disturbances and dislocation causedthem their exploitation by non- tribals.

There were also non violent religio-political uprising and disturbances against the British East India Company. The Sanyasi and Faquir rebellions in Bengal, The Wahabi movement, the Kukka movement in Punjab etc. belong to this category. Thus revolt of 1857 was not sudden, but the culmination of growing discontent. In certain cases the British could put down these uprisings easily, in other cases the struggle was prolonged resulting in heavy causalities. These disturbances and uprising, though did not succeed in uprooting the British power from India, became the precursors of the major Revolt of 1857. The revolt started as a mutiny of sepoys of East India Company's army on 10 May 1857 in the cantonment of the town of Meerut. Thereafter it spread to upper Gangetic plain and central India in the form of mutinies of the sepoy and civilian rebellions Major conflict zones were confined to present Uttar Pradesh, northern Madhya Pradesh and Delhi region.

Nature and Character of Revolt

The historians have divergent opinion regarding the nature of uprising . The British considered it just a 'A Military Revolt' which had neither the leadership of any of the Indian leaders , nor the cooperation of the people. The Indian patriots considered that uprising as National War of Independence. As

a whole, there are the main following views regarding the nature and character of the Revolt of 1857 A.D.

- a. A Military Revolt
- b. An Attempt for establishing the Mughal Power
- c. Aristocrate Reaction
- d. A Peasant Reaction
- e. A National Revolution
- f. A racial struggle for supremacy between Black and White
- g. A struggled between Oriental and Occidental Civilization and Culture
- h. A National War of Independence

From the above mentioned view, only two of the views are famous:

A Military Revolt

Many Historians have called the Revolt of 1857A.D. as a military revolt. among these historians, Sir John Lawrence and Seely thought it as a Military revolt and nothing. The other British Historians like Kaye, Malletson, Trevelyan Holmes have painted it as 'a mutiny' confined to the army which did not command the support of the people at large. A similar view was held by many contemporary Indians like Munshi Jiwan Lal, Moinuddin (both eye-witness at Delhi) Durgadas Bandopadhyaya (eye witness at Bareilly) Sir Sayyed Ahmed Khan and many others. . In the words of Seely that the Uprising of 1857 was the revolt of those soldiers who were selfish and without the feeling of patriotism, it had neither a leader nor the popular support of the people. P. E. Roberts also supported the views of Sir John Lawrence and wrote that it was purely a military revolt and whose cause was the incident of cartridges. Even the Indian Historian like R.C. Majumdar in his book 'The Sepoy Mutiny and The Revolt of 1857' argues that the revolt of 1857 was not a war of Independence.

All these scholars and historians considered uprising only a military revolt. According to them the revolt had not the support of the people.. These scholars presented many arguments in favour of their view as:

Arguments in favour

- a. The revolt had spread only in some Northern India. It had not spread in southern India and in many areas of North India especially in Punjab.
- b. That revolt started from military cantonment area and its development and influential areas were military centres.
- c. The peasants and other citizens took a very little part in the revolt of 1857.
- d. The revolt did not spread to in the villages and It was limited only to the cities and towns.
- e. It is true that the rulers like Nana Sahib, Bahadur Shah and Rani of Jhansi wanted to take revenge against the British. But they took up the arms against the British when soldiers took up the arms against the British. Otherwise they had no courage to revolt.
- f. If the revolt of 1857 was the National War of Independence, then the small portion of British troops could not suppress that revolt.

First War of Independence

Most of the Indian historians and scholars had called the Revolt of 1857 A.D. as the First War of Independence. Dr. K.M. Panikar has called that revolt as a National Revolution. V.D. Savarkar and Ashok Mehta have called it as the War of Independence. Whereas Jai Chand Vidyalkar and Pandit Nehru accepted the revolt of 1857 A.D. as the First war of Independence. Even Dr. S.N. Sen believes that the rising of 1857 was a war of independence. He contends that revolutionaries are mostly the work of minorities, with the active sympathy of the masses. Here he compares it with the American Revolution of 1775-83 and the French Revolution of 1789.

The contemporary leader of Conservative Party of England, Mr Benjamin Disraeli called it as a National Mutiny and according to him revolt was not the result of any immediate cause instead it was a result of deliberate and organised plan.

Argument in Favour

That revolt was the national mutiny. The following arguments are presented in favour of it:-

1. The revolt of 1857 spread throughout the country and it proves that it was the mutiny of common people in which the belonging to different classes caste made their efforts to expell the British from India.
2. In Kanpur the Labourers and in Allahabad fisherman took an active part in revolt. The native soldiers and native rulers also showed their active participation in that revolt. The common people and Zamindars made their efforts to make the reolt a successful one. Thus from comman man to the Kings all took part in that revolt. Therefore it is called as National Revolt.
3. The revolt began very soon and it remained into force for many months. Only with the support of the common people, a mutiny can remain in force for a long time and also begin very soon. If it was a mutiny of soldiers, then it could not begin so soon and could not have remain in force for a longer period. These two factors prove that revolt was the National Mutiny.
4. It was first time that Hindus and the Muslims had taken part in the revolt jointly against the British. From the declaration by the mutineers in Delhi it was proved that they had not any religious differences. This Hindu- Muslim unity proves that the revolt can be called as the National war of Independence.
5. The people who were punished by the British, most of them were common people and citizens, and they were not the soldiers. If the common people had not taken part in the revolt, then the British could not punish them. That's why the revolt of 1857 was not a military revolt instead it was a National War of Independence.
6. It is true that many rulers did not take part in the revolt but they were waiting for proper and suitable time to revolt against the mighty British power in India.

7. Even during the annexation of different states to the British Government in India Indian masses opposed the British and supported their own rulers. From that fact, it is proved that the feeling of Independence and nationalism had awakened among the Indian masses.
8. Along with men, the women also took active part in that revolt, which proves that it was not a military revolt; instead it was the national war of Independence.

From the above mentioned detailed discussion, we may conclude that :

- i. The Indian people and the Indian rulers were against the British and wanted to get rid of them.
- ii. The common people also took part in that uprising, though they were few in number.
- iii. It is true that the uprising was started by the soldiers but their move was not to achieve their individual concessions, instead they also wanted to expel the British from India.
- iv. It is also true that the uprising did not spread in many parts of India But it does not mean that the people belonging to these parts did not independence. They were waiting for the suitable opportunity, so that they might join the war against the British.
- v. In that uprising the Hindus and Muslims had sacrificed their lives together. They had performed such type of deeds to set India free from the slavery of the British.

The Revolt was more than a mere sepoy Mutiny - S.N. Sen and Dr. R.C. Mujumdar have given an objective and balanced view that the sepoy mutiny assumed the character of a revolt and assumed a political dimension when the mutineers of Meerut after proceeding to Delhi declared the restoration of the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah II, and the landed aristocracy and civil population declared their loyalty in his favor. What began as a right for religion ended in a war of independence, for there is not the slightest doubt

that the rebels wanted to get rid of the alien government and restore the old order of which the Mughal emperor was the rightful representative.

Pandit Nehru has written, "It was much more than a military mutiny and it spread rapidly and achieved the character of a popular rebellion and a war of Indian Independence." Prof. Bipan Chandra is of the view that the revolt of the sepoys was accompanied by a rebellion of the civil population particularly in the Northwestern Provinces and Oudh, the two regions from which the sepoys of the Bengal army were recruited.

The civil rebellion had a broad social base embracing all sections of the society and the revolt of the sepoys thus, resulted in a popular uprising. In spite of the limitations and weaknesses the effort of the sepoys to liberate the country from foreign rule was a patriotic act.

Causes of the revolt of 1857

Although Revolt began as a military rising and it appears to be a great sequel in the long series of a number of mutinies, its causes were deeply rooted in the changing conditions of the times. It drew its strength from several elements of discontent against the British rule. There were several Political, administrative, socio cultural, economic, religious, cultural and immediate causes of the revolt.

Political Causes

Wars and Conquests

The East India Company created a lot of discontent and disaffection among the dispossessed ruling families and their successors by her conquest. A large number of dependents on the ruling families who lost their means of livelihood and other common people were disillusioned and disaffected with the alien rule. Lord Dalhousie annexed the Punjab and added humiliation to the ruling family. Dalip Singh, the minor son of Ranjit Singh, the founder of the Sikh Kingdom of the Punjab, was deposed, and exiled to England. The properties of the Lahor Darbar were auctioned.

Subsidiary Alliance

The British policy of territorial annexations led to the displacement of a large number of rulers and chiefs. The vigorous application of the policies of Subsidiary Alliance and Doctrine of Lapse angered the ruling sections of the society. The subsidiary alliance of Lord Wellesley, played a major role in British expansion in India. According to this alliance, Indian rulers were not allowed to have their independent armed force. They were to be protected by the company, but had to pay for the 'subsidiary forces' that the company was supposed to maintain for the purpose of this protection. As a result, number of Indian rulers under British protection surrendered the control of their foreign affairs to the British. Most subordinate disbanded their native armies, instead maintaining British troops within their states to protect them from attack.

Discontent and dissatisfaction was especially strong in those regions, which were believed to have been lost their independence. As a consequence of Subsidiary Alliance, lakhs of soldiers and officers were deprived of their hereditary livelihood, spreading misery and degradation in the country. Thus the East India company's policy of 'Effective control' and gradual extinction of the Indian native states took a definite shape with the perfection of the Subsidiary Alliance System under Lord Wellesley.

Doctrine of Lapse

The practical application of Doctrine of Lapse of Lord Dalhousie's produced unprecedented discontent in the directly affected states. As a result number of rulers was debarred from adopting any son for the purpose of religious ceremonies after their death. This was considered as a direct encroachment by the British upon their religious practices. The Punjab Pegu, and Sikkim were conquered and annexed to the British Empire. By applying the Doctrine of Lapse, Dalhousie annexed the principalities of Satara, Jaipur, Sambhalpur, Bhagat. Udaipur, Jhansi, and Nagpur. In 1856 Lord Dalhousie annexed the kingdom of Oudh only on the pretext of mismanagement. The dethronement of Wajid Ali Shah sent a wave of resentment and anger of throughout the country. The state was exploited economically and the Nawabs

were reduced to a position of administration of the state, which was used as an excuse by Dalhousie to merge it with the British Empire. The dignities and the royal titles in the case of the rulers of Carnatic and Tanjore were confiscated and Nana Sahib the adopted son of Bajirao II, was deprived of the pension that originally was granted to Peshwa Bajirao II. Thus in the eyes of the Indians, all the ruling princes were in danger and the annexation of all the states in India was considered only a question of some time. It was a General belief amongst the people in India that the native states were being swallowed up. All These actions manifested the lack of sensitivity of the British towards the Indian Rulers.

Humiliating and Rush Policy towards the Successors of the Mughals

British never honoured their written or verbal promises; consequently it was natural to result in hatred and revolts. Since 1803, the Mughal emperors had been living under the British protection. His claims to honour and precedence were recognized. The seal of Governors General bore the inscription humble servant. However, there was a gradual change in the relationship between the Mughal emperor and the governors-general. Amherst made it clear to the emperor, that his Kingship was nominal; it was merely out of courtesy that he was addressed as King. In 1849, Lord Dalhousie announced that the successor of Dalhousie had to leave the Red Fort and stay near Kutub Minar. By this time, Bahadur Shah, the Mughal emperor had become very old and was likely to die any moment was not in favour of the creation of an imperium imperio, he had accepted Fakir Uddin as the successor of the Mughal emperor but he had subjected the new Emperor to very strict conditions. Fortunately or unfortunately Fakruddin died in the year 1856. On his death the then Viceroy Lord Canning proclaimed that the next successor of Fakiruddin would be deprived of even their titular dignities and shadow of sovereignties in Delhi and they would not be allowed to sit on the royal palaces in Delhi. This means that the title sovereignty of the Mughals was also to come to an end. This proclamation on the part of Lord Canning struck a great blow to the ambitions of the Indian Muslims and they became panicky.

They concluded that the British were bent upon subjecting the princes of the dynasty of Timur to great humiliations. Hence they considered the immediate overthrow of the British regime in India as their sacred duty which they wanted to perform in honour of their forefathers as well as in honour of their religion. Thus, it was not surprising that the Muslims and the Hindus, felt resentful at the humiliation of the nominal Mughal emperors in India with the attitude of Dalhousie, Canning and East India Company, they decided to enter into an alliance with the rebels.

India was governed from Foreign Land

Anderson wrote, India was being governed from a foreign country which meant that the rulers of India were carrying on their administration in India while sitting at distance of thousands of miles away from this country, this was another very important political cause which irritated the Indians against the Bruisers. The Turkish and the Mughal who had established their power in India and settled down in country. They spent the revenue collected from the people in the India itself for administration, military, public work and building monuments which provided employment to the Indian natives. Thus in due course of time as such whatever they collected in the form of wealth was spent in India itself. On the other hand British ruled India from England and also drained India's wealth to their country. The resources of India were being spent for the benefit of the English people in England and in India Hence the Indians could not fail to feel this irritation against the Bruisers and consequently, they threw in their lot with the rebels in the Mutiny of 1857.

Suspension of Pension

The Company's Director were keen to increase their dividends, they wanted the the Company's administration in India to follow economy. That led to the reduction and suspension of pensions of some of the Indian chiefs and who were disposed by the company. The annual pension of Rani Jindan the Queen of Maharaja Ranjit Singh was reduced from 15,000 pounds to 1,200 pounds. The pension to Nana Sahib and of Lakshmi Bai, of Jhansi was

suspended. The titular sovereignty of the Nawab of Carnatic and Tanjore was also abolished. This led them to oppose the British.

Administrative Causes

(i) Introduction of New Administrative System:

The British rule altogether introduced a new system of administration, which was faceless, soulless, and without any human touch. The English officials were not only inaccessible but also arrogant and scornful towards the Indians. The new administration was totally different from the traditional administrative system prevailing in the country under the Mughal Empire and therefore it was difficult for the Indians to adjust to the new system of administration introduced by the British in conquered and annexed states.

Loss of Benefits and Privileges

The Indian aristocrats once enjoyed privileges, both economic and social were now deprived of such privileges by the annexation policy of the East India Company. For eg. A large number of pious and learned men as well as educational and religious institutions were granted rent free lands by Indian rulers. By appointing the Inam Commission, The East India Company's government confiscated rent free land on large scale, which led to the ruin of large number of individuals and institutions.(eg. Inam Commission in Bombay itself confiscated about 20,000 estates). Even the landlords were deprived of their traditional rights. Thus in the British administration they lost all hope of regaining their old influence and privileges. It created a lot of inconvenience and frustration among the Indians.

Exclusion of Indians from Higher Administrative posts

In the new administrative machinery Indians were excluded from all the jobs both in civil as well as in military departments. All the Higher posts in British administration were kept reserved for the English people to the exclusion of the Indians. The highest rank that an Indian could get in the Army department was that of a Subhedar whose monthly salary did not exceed rupees 60, or rupees 70 and similarly the highest job that an Indian could get in the Civil department was that of the Amin whose monthly pay did

not exceed rupees 50. Consequently, all the chances for the promotion of the Indians were very much limited. Indians developed a sort of conception that it was a deliberate policy on the part of the Britishers to reduce them to the position of the hewers of saw and the drawers of water. The British were of opinion that the Indians were not suitable for higher posts in their administrative structure. Contempt for Indians and racial prejudice were other reasons why the Indians were denied higher positions in the administration. Thus, the complete exclusion of Indians from all positions of trust and power in the administration brought a discontent and a sense of humiliation among the Indians.

Bitter Test of Rule of Law

The East India Company was feeling boastful that they had introduced and were acting upon the principle of equality amongst the citizens in the judicial administration in India. However, it was found that the principle of civil equality was not applied to Europeans. Many Indians had experienced the bitter taste of law. The British Rule of Laws were complicated and justice was expensive and delaying.

On the other hand, the poorer and the weaker sections did not get any benefit from the new system due to complicated procedure of the British administration. The new judicial system of British in India became an instrument of tyranny oppression in the hands of clever and rich people, because the latter could manage to produce false evidence to prove false cases. Corruption was rampant in the Company's administration, especially among the police, petty officials and lower law courts. Prisons turned into centers of death. The British high-handedness and police brutality proves that the rule of law was a misnomer; The government did not think that the welfare of common man was its own responsibility. It was on account of this reason that a judge of the Agra Sadar Court, Rex, had said: The Indians did not like our judicial system in many ways. When the system of flogging for civil offences was abolished, periods of imprisonment were substituted for them.

These were not approved by the people. Hence it resulted in a lot of discontent against the Britishers and, as such, formed another cause of the Great Mutiny.

Economic Causes

Economic Exploitation of all sections

The only interest of the Company was the collection of maximum revenue with minimum efforts. Owing to their colonial policies of economic exploitation, industry, trade commerce and agriculture languished and India became de-industrialized, impoverished and debt-ridden, while, William Bentinck himself admitted that by 1833-34 “The misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of cotton weavers are bleaching the plains of India”. With the annexations of the Indian states, the Indian aristocrats not only lost their jobs and power but were also deprived of their economic and social position and privileges, The British colonial policy destroyed the traditional economic fabric of the Indian society. Karl Marx point out, “the Indians were victims of both physical and economic forms of class oppression by the British.” The peasants, Taluqdars, artisans, traders and common men, all were the victims of the British policies.

Ruin of the Mercantile Class

The British deliberately crippled Indian trade and commerce by imposing high tariff duties against Indian goods. On the other hand they encouraged the import of British goods to India. As a result by the middle of the nineteenth century Indian exports of cotton and silk goods practically came to an end.

New land revenue system and Discontent Among the Zamindars

By the introduction of new land revenue system in the newly acquired States the English administrators had brought the peasants as well as the British government into direct contact with one another, thus eliminating the middlemen between the two parties. In this way, the great Talukdars and Zamindars, who used to collect land revenue before that, were deprived of their income as well as their position. Those who enjoyed free ships of land were required to submit to the Government the letters of grant given to them

in order to prove the validity of their proprietary rights in that land. Lord Dalhousie appointed the Inam Commission in 1852 to examine the titles deeds of the landlords. But those who failed to produce the documentary proof to prove their proprietary rights, were deprived of their proprietary rights. Their lands were confiscated and were sold in auction to the highest bidder. In western India alone 20,000 estates were thus confiscated. In Awadh the storm centre of the Revolt, 21,000 Taluqdars had their estates confiscated and suddenly found themselves without a source of Income. The policy of Jackson of turning out the Indian soldiers from the army and the strict insistence of the British government demanding the documentary proof to prove their proprietary rights in the soil, made Oudh the centre of rebellion against the Britishers. The newly introduced land revenue system in the newly acquired territories reduced the aristocratic families to an abject poverty.

Destruction of Indian Manufacturers

The British policy of promoting the import of cotton goods to India from England destroyed all Indian manufacturers, in the cotton textile industry. Before the British rule in India villages of India were self-sufficient in every field. The people of villages used to produce the goods of their needs and requirements by themselves. When British goods started flooding in Indian market, it threatened the outright destruction of Indian manufacturers. As these goods which were produced in the Industries of England, were pretty and also cheap as a result Indian people began to use those goods. The handicraft goods of India could not compete with the goods of England. It destroyed the small scale and handicraft Industry of India. The East India Company's government did not make any efforts to prevent the tragedy. Ultimately, it led to the destruction of Indian Manufacturers as well as ruin of village economy. Several Englishmen were of the opinion that free trade and refusal to impose protective duties against machine-made goods of England ruined Indian manufacturers.

Pressure on Land

The ruined of Indian Industry and commerce made several people unemployed and lack of alternate occupational avenues drove a large part of urban population to fall back on the village economy. As a result, millions of ruined artisans and craftsmen, spinners, weavers, smelters, smiths and others from town and villages, had no alternative but to pursue agricultural activity that led to a pressure on land. India was transformed from being a country of agriculture in to an agricultural colony of British Empire.

Exploitation on European Plantations

Due to the Industrial revolution in England, they were in needs of raw material which could not be satisfy from the Industry of England. Therefore, the British settlers in India, monopolized the plantation industries like indigo, jute, tea, coffee etc. In addition to it, they applied different land revenue policies to gain the maximum profit. Thus British government in India made the planters life more difficult. It became difficult for the farmers to make their both ends meet. Specially, the life of Indigo planters. The inhuman treatment and persecution of the Indigo cultivators by the European plantation owners made their life worst.

Economic Drain

The colonial rule of British government in India had such type policy that drained the wealth of India to England through fair or unfair means or methods:-

1. The British employees and officers enjoyed all the privileges in India and used to collect the wealth of India through all the fair and unfair means.
2. ii) The British Soldiers and Civil Officers or employee who worked in India used to get highest salaries. Their savings, pensions, and other earnings from India, they were sending in the form of wealth from India to England.
3. iii) The drain of Indian wealth was carried to England in every possible way. Most of the gold, jewels, silver and silk had been

shipped off to England as tax and sometime sold in open auctions, ridding India of its once abundant wealth in precious stones.

4. The policy of economic exploitation relentlessly pursued by the British had severely affected the common man. In addition to it Poverty, unemployment, famines, disease, starvation and economic distress had made the economic condition deplorable.

Socio - Religious Causes

Social Exclusiveness: The British policy of social exclusiveness and arrogant manner towards the Indians created discontent among the Indians. They were infected with the feeling of racial superiority. The racial arrogance of the British hurt the self respect of the Indians. The British forced every native to salute all Englishmen in the streets. If native was on horseback or in a carriage, he had to dismount and stand in a respectful position until the Englishman had passed him. This was an unwritten law throughout the British India. The British could insult, injure, assault and even kill Indians. In such cases British offenders hardly could get any punishment. Thus British treated the Indians with utter contempt and regarded them as uncultured and barbarian.

Missionary Activities

The political and corporal oppression might be tolerated but when any government begins to interfere in the religion of the people, then the people are prorogated. According to the Charter Act of 1813 missionaries were permitted to enter the Company's territories in India to propagate their religion and spread Western education. The Christian missionaries took every opportunity to expose the abuses in the Hindu as well as the Islamic religion. The missionary society of America established a press at Agra which made every effort to propagate Christianity. The missionaries' denounced idolatry ridiculed the Hindu gods and goddesses and criticized the philosophy and principals of Hinduism and Islam. The teaching of Christian doctrines was made compulsory in educational institutes run by the missionaries. The study of Bible was introduced not only in the missionary institutions but also in

government schools and colleges. Thus, the interference of the British authorities in social customs and practices through social legislation and the encouragement given by the government to Christian missionaries in their proselytizing activities created a sense of apprehension and hatred in the minds Indians. They attempted to convert the young Indians by providing them western and rational education. Many facilities were provided for those who could convert in Christianity.

Many Englishmen openly expressed the view that the conversion to Christianity was the inevitable corollary of Western education. The missionaries were also accused of converting and destitute such as the orphans to Christianity.

Social Legislation

The social legislation passed by the British also became the cause of the Revolt of 1857. The British endeavored to eradicate the social Evils like custom of sati, Infanticide and child marriage. And they also encouraged widow marriage for which they passed various social legislation such as in 1829, Lord William Bentinck abolished the practice of sati, with the support of educated and enlightened Indians such as Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Lord canning enacted the widow Remarriage Act, drafted by Lord Dalhousie in 1856, prohibition of traffic in slaves in 1834, prohibition of the practice of slavery in 1843, passing of the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act in 1856 and the opening of western education for girls. Although these measures were good for the society, this legislation aroused considerable suspicion, resentment and opposition among the orthodox sections. These legislations were viewed by the orthodox sections in the society as interference by the British in their social and religious practice. The two laws of 1832 and 1850, removing disabilities due to change of religion, particularly conferring the right of inheritance to change of religion, particularly conferring the right of inheritance to Christian converts, were quite unpopular among the Hindus. The orthodox people did not like these changes. They looked upon them as

foreign innovations designed to break down the social order to which they were accustomed and which they considered sacred.

The Indian Civilization was endangered by the British

In 1856 A.D. 'The religious Incompetence Law' was enacted, according to which if any person belong to Hindu religion did change his religion, he could remain the heir of his ancestral property. It was a strong rumor set afloat at the time in India that Lord Canning was specifically appointed as the governor general of India to convert the Indians to Christianity. In this inflammatory atmosphere, the introduction of the railways and the telegraph system was regarded by the Indians as an attempt to Europeanise them. The same suspicion was attached to the postal system. In the new schools boys of all castes and religion set together and this was considered to be an attempt to interfere with the religion of the people. The introduction of the teaching of the Bible was considered by the Indians as an attempt by Christians to convert them to Christianity. The Indians did not like the insistence on the female education by the British. Thus the activity of the Christian missionaries and the introduction of female education amongst Indians by Dalhousie convinced them that under the pretext of introducing Western system of education in India the English were really trying to put an end to the Indian civilization and culture.

The Influence of Pandits and Maulanas was Reduced

The Hindu people had great respect and devotion for pandits and the Muslims had such type of respect and devotion for Maulanas. In the religious sphere, they had many privileges. The British did not approve special privileges of pundits and Maulanas and British considered them equal to the common people. Due to the propagation of western education , the respect and honour of the pundits and maulana was decreased. The Pandits and Maulanas thought that the British were responsible for that and therefore they become the bitter enemies of the British Empire.

Military Causes

Gradual weakening of loyalty in the army

As a result of the British disaster in Afghanistan in the first Afghan war, the military discipline in the British army had gone down to its lowest ebb. Lord Dalhousie had written clearly to the authorities in England that the military discipline right from the top to the bottom and from officers to soldiers was weakest and full of shame. The Bengal Army was a great brotherhood whose number used to move as a unit. The army service in Bengal Army had been made hereditary. Most of the Bengal Army consisted of the recruits taken from Oudh and North Western province. Many of them belonged to the high caste Brahmin and Rajput families. These high caste Indian recruits did not like that military discipline of the British authorities in India which treated them as equals to the recruits of the inferior cast be imposed upon them. In this connection, Dr Eswari Prasad says:implicit obedience to the European commanders had been a characteristic of the Indian soldiers. Keen observers, however, had begun to notice a gradual weakening of that obedience roughly dating from the Afgan disaster. That disaster was Nature's punishment for unrighteousness and it was unrighteousness that shook the loyalty of the Indian soldiers to the company. The annexation of Oudh finally snapped it. Individual revolts had proceeded the outburst of Mangal Pandey. The discipline of the Army, wrote Dalhousie to the president of The Board of Control, from top to bottom, officers and men alike, is scandalous. The Indian soldiers began gradually to realise that they were the instruments of English expansion and the degradation of their own people. The recruitment of the Gurkhas and the Sikhs, the Raising of a irregular troops in the Punjab and the frontier tracts- all tended to convince them that their own future was in peril. Even during the days of Lord Dalhousie free small revolts had already taken place one after the other first in 1849 in number 22 regiment and second in 1850 in numbers 60 Regiment and third in 1852 in number 36 regiment. Under these circumstances the commencement of mutinous movement by the military men was only a question of time.

The General Service Enlistment Act (1856)

The Indian soldiers nursed grievances against the British as they were forced to go on expedition to Burma and Afghanistan, which violated their religious scruples. To live among Muslims and to take food and water from them was disliked to their ancient customs. Besides, crossing the seas was prohibited by the religion as the one who crossed the forbidden seas was bound to lose his caste. In order to prevent any kind of resistance from the sepoys against their deployment abroad. In the year 1856, the Lord Canning's government passed the General Service Enlistment Act. According to this, it was decided that no sepoy who was enlisted under the act could refuse to fight across the sea. This act was not applicable in the case of old sepoys. But even then it created a lot of discontentment amongst them against the British people, because in Bengal Army the service had almost become hereditary. Sarkar and Dutta write: this affected the scruples of the Indian sepoys about crossing the sea. It was soon brought in their Minds under the category of the insidious measures aimed at caste. Another of the items accumulating to form an Avalanche.

Disparity in the Indian and British soldiers stationed in India

The disparity between the Indian troops and British troops in India was very high. The number of Indian soldiers were much more in number than the British soldiers. Though the British did not want that but they has to recruit excessive Indian soldiers in order to protect the vast country like India. The Indian army consisted of 2,33,000 troops and 45322 British troops. Although Lord Dalhousie had pointed out the urgency of filling in the gap, the Home Government had slept over in the matter. The distribution of troops in India was also faulty. The strength of the Bengal army was, 151361. About 40,000 troops were in the Punjab. No European force existed in Bengal and Bihar, except at Calcutta and Dinapur near Patna. The Indians were well aware of the weak position of the Company at many places and would like to take advantage of the same. The absence of many British officers had made this difference even greater because with the acquisition of new states most of

them had been stationed on the borders of the states as administrative officers. Apart from this, a great part of the Indian army had gone to take part in the Crimean war, where the disaster of the British forces had considerably demoralized the British soldiers in India. Consequently, the combined effects of all these things was that the Indian soldiers had begun to realise that if they struck the British power in India at that time, it would not be able to stand upon its legs.

Dissimilarity between the salaries of the Indian Soldiers and the British Soldiers

The Indian soldiers were given lowest salaries .With their salaries they could hardly make the both ends meet but on the contrary the salaries of the British soldiers were much more than the Indian soldiers salaries. As Indian soldiers used to get only rupees nine per month as salary, where as the British soldier got rupees sixty to seventy per month as salary. Apart from this, there was no chance for Indian soldiers to get promotion but the British soldiers had many chances to get promotion. The Indian solders made every effort to increases their salaries and allowances but they got nothing except punishments. Therefore they were obliged to revolt.

The highest pay attainable by a sepoy as Subheddar of the infantry was less than the minimum pay of a raw European recruit. Very often there was no promotion of an Indian soldier. He may enter as a Risaldar and retire as a Risaldar.

Indian soldiers impatient of regaining their old privileges

With the expansion and consolidation of the British rule in India the conditions laid down on the new recruitments in their services in the Army department exercised so tight and irritating a control over the soldiers that they could not further tolerate the highhandedness to which they were subjected by the British officers. Whenever the soldiers went on actual war they were paid 'Foreign Service Allowances' known as Bhatta. Even this allowance was stopped. When the soldiers returned from the conquest of sindh in 1843, they were not given any such allowance. The Indian soldiers could

very well remember the old privileges that they used to enjoy in service when the Indian princes used to appreciate their services and rewarded them with gifts and presents. The Indian soldiers also had a free postal facility, where they could send letters free of charge anywhere in India. But in 1854, Lord Dalhousie stopped even this facility. Thus Indian soldiers had to witness bad days, because of the loss of many of the old privileges which they were deprived of. Consequently, they were impatient of gaining all these old privileges which they lost due to the arrival of British government in India. In another words, there was a Universal discontentment among the soldiers on account of the loss of the above privileges. This discontentment led to a great resentment in their minds, which ultimately resulted in the Great Mutiny.

Circulation of mysterious Chapatis

The general unrest was indicated by the mysterious Chapatis or cakes which began to circulate from village to village from 1850 onwards. There was a similar circulation of lotus flowers among the regiments. Although the cause is not known, it created an atmosphere of mystery. The centenary of the Battle of Plassey was to fall on 23rd June, 1857 and the people were looking forward to the end of British rule in India after hundred years. There were meetings of the Indian soldiers against their European officers. They were thinking in terms of revenge against them. Their plan of campaign was simple. They were to strike all over India on the same day, 22nd June, 1857. They were to kill all European officers, break open prisons, take over the Government treasury, cut telegraph wires and railway lines, and capture powder magazines, armories and forts. It was hoped that if all the blows were given at the same time, they were sure to shake this edifice of the foreign Government.

Ruin of the British in the Afghan War

The British during the time of Lord Auckland invaded Afghanistan but that invasion proved very fatal for the British. The British were forced to leave Afghanistan and when the British army retreated only small part of the British army , which were around sixteen thousand in number, could save their lives.

Many historians say that only a single soldier remained alive in that war. That defeat of the British made the Indians realize that they could also defeat the British.

Greased Cartridges - The Immediate Cause

The several mentioned factors prepared a general ground for discontent and disaffection among different section of the Indian people, which required a mere spark to explode into a conflagration. The greased cartridges provided this spark. It was in 1856 when, according to a regulation, the sepoys were required to bite the end of the cartridge before using it. There was a rumour that the cartridges to be used with the new Enfield rifles were greased with the fat of cows and pigs. One of them was sacred to the Hindus, while the other was forbidden to the Muslims. On account of their ignorance, the British Government denied the truth of this allegation. However, on a secret enquiry, it was later on found that actually the fat of cows and pigs had been used.

The result was that the sepoys got infuriated

The fire of vengeance once ablaze could scarcely be quelled by the representations of Lord Canning downwards that the story of the greased cartridges was untrue and was spread by mischief mongers. English historians have themselves admitted that cow's fat and lard were used in the composition of the tallow used in the new cartridges. It is shameful and terrible truth, writes W.H. Lecky in his book, *The Map of Life*, that as far as the fact was concerned, the sepoys were perfectly right in their beliefs but looking back upon it, English writers must acknowledge with humiliation that if the mutiny is ever justifiable no stronger justification could be given than that of the sepoys troops. To the same effect writes Lord Roberts in his, *Forty Years in India*, The recent researches of Mr. Forrest in the records of the Government of India prove that the lubricating mixture used in preparing the cartridges was actually composed of the objectionable ingredients, cow's fat and lard, and that incredible disregard of the soldier's religions prejudices was displayed in the manufacture of these cartridges - Dr. Iswari Prasad.

The native army of Bengal was in a state of restlessness. In April, 1857, some troops refused to use the cartridges supplied to them. They were court marshaled and sentenced to ten years imprisonment. On 9th May, they were publicly degraded and deprived of their uniforms and shut up in a jail. Thus, when the Hindu sepoys were convinced of the fact that the East India Company had turned into Aurangzeb they decided to play the part of Shivaji. This was the commencement of the Great Mutiny of 1857. Thus, we see that the Great Rising of 1857 cannot be attributed to a single chance cause. It was the outcome of social, religious, political and economic causes all combined.

Outbreak of the Revolt Of 1857

In Barrackpur, On 29th March, the soldiers of 34th Native Infantry refused to use the greased cartridges and a sepoy named Mangal Pandey broke the lines and fired at Lieutenant Baugh. Mangal Pandey was arrested and executed. At Behrampur, which also had disobeyed the authorities were disbanded. The First major outbreak that finally led to the Revolt of 1857 occurred at Meerut. Following the court martial of eighty-five sepoys of the Cavalry Regiment for refusing to use the greased cartridges, on 10th May 1857, the sepoys broke out in open rebellion, shot their officers, released their fellow sepoys and marched towards Delhi. On 12th May, the sepoys captured the city of Delhi and occupied the palace proclaimed Bahadur Shah II as the emperor of India.

Within a short period, the revolt spread to Lucknow, Kanpur, Agra, Jhansi, Central India, Bihar, Orissa, and many other places. However, the Indian rulers remained loyal to the British and rendered valuable service in the suppression of the revolt. The British were on the defensive during the early part of the revolt. First of all, they made a sustained effort to recapture Delhi from the sepoys. In September 1857, Delhi was recaptured by the British. Emperor Bahadur Shah II was arrested and exiled to Mandalay, Burma, where he died a few years later. Two of his sons and a grandson were shot dead. Thus, The British ended the Mughal dynasty from the Indian scenario.

The sepoys besieged the Residency at Lucknow. Sir Henry Lawrence and some loyal sepoys lost their lives while defending the Residency. In March 1858, British forces captured Lucknow with the help of the Gurkha Regiments. Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the ex-Peshwa Bajirao II led the sepoys at Kanpur. Nana Sahib was joined by Tantia Toppe. After the recapture of Lucknow, General Campbell occupied Kanpur on 6th December 1857. Tantia Toppe joined Rani Lakshmi Bai the widow of Raja Gangadhar Rao fought against the British. The British under Sir Hugh Rose occupied Jhansi. Rani Lakshmi Bai and Tantia proceeded to Gwalior where the Indian soldiers joined them. The British recaptured Gwalior in June 1858, and the Rani of Jhansi died fighting heroically. Tantia Toppe was captured and put to death a year later. Nana Sahib fled to Nepal where he died in due course. In Rohilkhand, the revolt began at Bareilly in May 1857. Where Muhammad Hasan Khan, led a force of about 10,000. Rana Beni Madho Singh of Saharanpur had a personal following of about 15,000 and Gajadar Singh of Gorakhpur commanded a force of 51,000. All of them attacked British positions in their respective regions and rallied round the Begum, Hazrat Mahal.

Apart from these there were also many minor revolts in Jhansi, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Ropar, Ferozepur and Agra. But by the beginning of 1858 most of these revolts were systematically suppressed by the British. Some of the Indian rulers also cooperated with the British in suppressing the revolt. The ministers of Gwalior, Hyderabad and Nepal also rendered their support to the British. Thus, the first major attempt on the part of the Indians to overthrow the British power could not succeed.

Causes of the failure of the rebellion

The revolt was localised and not country-wide

Though the revolt was formidable and widespread though the revolt was, it was yet to a great extent localised, limited and ill-organised. The mutiny was not universal. Dr. R.C. Mazumdar says: It was never an all-India character but was localised, restricted and poorly-organised. The area affected

was the Punjab, the United Provinces, Rohilkhand, Oudh, the Territory between the Narbada and the Chambal and the Western parts of Bengal and Bihar on the North-East. Afghanistan was friendly under Dost Mohammad. Sindh was quite, Rajputana was loyal. India South of the river Narbada made no movement of importance, though the native regiments mutinied at Kolhapur in the Southern Marathan country and there were also many dangerous outbursts of feelings at Hyderabad, the Nizam's Capital. Central and Eastern Bengal were undisturbed and Nepal rendered the British valuable assistance in putting down the revolt. Thus, the revolt was only local and not nation-wise.

The Revolt began prematurely

The whole programme arranged, as it was, came to nothing on account of the rising taking place prematurely or before the date fixed for the purpose. The date fixed for the simultaneous rising in the country was 31st May, 1857. The date was known only to the leaders of each organisational centre and three officers of each of the regiments. But certain events –

- (i) Mangal Pandey was tried and was ordered to be hanged,
- (ii) The soldiers of 19th and 34th Indian regiments were disbanded,
- (iii) The Subedar of 34th regiment was hanged - made the Indian soldiers impatient for the rebellion and so the revolt began before the appointed day. It began in Meerut on the 10th May. It was a serious suicidal mistake. Dr. Eswari Prasad says: As events proved, the Meerut accident by precipitating the revolt saved the British Raj from the ruin which Nana Sahib and his colleagues had planned. Wilson, White, Mailson, three noted historians of the revolts, agree in regarding the Meerut outbreak as fortunate for the Company and fatal to the revolt. It upset the whole plan of the rebels, deprived them of a concerted action and in many places the local leaders didn't know what to do. This led many to spontaneous and unpremediated action.

Superiority of the English in Many Fields

- i) The resources of the British Imperialism were unlimited. Fortunately for them, the Crimean War and other wars in which the Britishers were involved out of India had come to an end by 1856.
- ii) The British army was excessive in number which was brought into India in large numbers from different parts of the world and many more soldiers were recruited in India itself, for the suppression of the Mutiny.
- iii) The British had superior Weapons than the rebels had. The British had modern guns and rifles. The Indians had canons which were old and few in numbers. They were mostly fighting with swords and spears.
- iv) The British had superior Navy. At the same time British were also supreme in Naval Power.
- v) The Electric System, also contributed in the success of the British. Through that system the British Commander-in-chief got all the information regarding the plans of the rebels and he could make suitable arrangements. Due to these supremacies of the British the Indians remained unsuccessful.

Peasant Movements in India

Introduction

Peasant Struggles:

- In these struggles, the peasants emerged as the main force, fighting directly for their own demands.
- The movements in the period between 1858 and 1914 tended to remain localised, disjointed and confined to particular grievances, contrary to the movements after 1914.

Causes of the Movements:

- **Peasant Atrocities:** The peasants suffered from high rents, illegal levies, arbitrary evictions and unpaid labour in Zamindari areas. The Government levied heavy land revenue.

- **Massive Losses for Indian Industries:** The movements arose when British economic policies resulted in the ruin of traditional handicrafts and other small industries leading to change of ownership and overburdening of agrarian land, and massive debt and impoverishment of peasantry.
- **Unfavourable Policies:** The economic policies of British government used to protect the landlords and moneylenders and exploited the peasants. The peasants rose in revolt against this injustice on many occasions.

Rise of Peasant Organisations:

- Between 1920 and 1940 peasant organisations arose.
- The first organisation to be founded was the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha (1929) and in 1936 the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS).
- In 1936, at the Lucknow session of the Congress, All India Kisan Sabha was formed with Sahajanand as its first president.
 - It later issued a Kisan manifesto which demanded abolition of zamindari and occupancy rights for all tenants.

19th Peasant Movements (Pre-Gandhian Phase)

Indigo Rebellion (1859-62):

- In order to increase their profits, the European planters persuaded the peasants to plant Indigo instead of food crops.
 - The farmers were discontent growing indigo because:
 - Low prices were offered for growing indigo.
 - Indigo was not lucrative.
 - Indigo planting decreased the fertility of the soil.
- The peasants suffered at the hands of the traders and the middleman. Consequently, they launched a movement for non cultivation of indigo in Bengal.
 - They were supported by the press and the missionaries. Harish Chandra Mukherjee, a Bengali Journalist, described the

plight of peasants of Bengal in his newspaper '**The Hindu Patriot**'.

- **Dinabandhu Mitra**, Bengali writer and dramatist, in his play '**Nil Darpan**' depicted the treatment of the Indian peasantry by the indigo planters. It was first published in 1860.
- His play created a huge controversy which was later banned by the East India Company to control the agitation among the Indians.
- The government appointed an **Indigo Commission** and issued an order in November 1860, notifying that it was illegal to force the ryots to cultivate indigo. This marked the victory for the peasants.

Pabna Movement (1870s-80s):

In larger parts of Eastern **Bengal**, landlords forcefully collected rents and land taxes, often enhanced for the poor peasants.

- The peasants were also prevented from acquiring Occupancy Right under Act X of 1859.
- In May 1873 an Agrarian League was formed in the Yusufshahi Pargana of Pabna district, Patna (East Bengal).
- Rent strikes were organised, funds were raised and the struggle spread throughout Patna and to other districts of East Bengal.
- The struggle was mainly legal resistance and little violence.
- The discontent continued till 1885 when the Government by the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885 enhanced the occupancy rights.
- The struggle was supported by **Bankim Chandra Chatterjee**, R.C. Dutt and the Indian Association under **Surendranath Banerjea**.

The Early Popular Resistance Movements against Colonial Rule (1750-1857)

Can you think of a reason why these resistance movements are called popular? Was it because of the large number of people who

participated in them? Or was it because of the success they met with? After reading this section you will be able to arrive at a conclusion.

Causes of Popular Resistance Movements Why do people resist?

They resist when they feel that their rights are being taken away. That means all resistance movements started against some form of exploitation. British rule whose policies had undermined rights, status and economic position of Indians symbolised this exploitation. The protest and resistance was mainly offered by the displaced ruling classes, peasantry and tribals. For example, when Warren Hastings attacked Banaras and imprisoned King Chet Singh to fulfill his unjustified demand of money and army, the people of Banaras rebelled. In Madras Presidency, Poligars rebelled, when the British tried to snatch away their military and land rights. Interference in religious practices was another cause of these popular rebellions. Often these revolts were anti-Christian. This was due to the socio-religious reforms introduced by the British which were unacceptable to the people. In some other rebellions, difference between the religion of the ruler and exploited classes became the immediate cause for the rebellion. This happened in Mappila Rebellion of Malabar region. Here the Muslim peasantry fought against the Hindu landlords and moneylenders. In the next section we shall read about the nature of this movement.

Nature of Popular Resistance Movements

Violence and plunder were the two most popular tools used by the rebels to express their resistance against their oppressors. Lower and exploited classes often attacked their exploiters. They were the Britishers or the zamindars or the revenue collecting officials, wealthy groups and individuals. Santhal Rebellion saw mass scale violence where account books of moneylenders and government buildings were burnt and their exploiters punished. In a previous lesson we read about the land policies of the British. The purpose was to extract as much money as possible from the peasants and tribal people. This caused so much unrest among the peasants and the tribals that they started expressing their resentment against the

British. It is important to know that these popular resistance movements aimed at restoration of old structures and relations which had been done away with by the British. Each social group had its own reasons to raise its voice against the colonial powers. For example, displaced zamindars and rulers wanted to regain their land and estates. Similarly, the tribal groups rebelled because they did not want the traders and moneylenders to interfere in their lives.

Peasant Movements and Tribal Revolts in the 19th Century

You would be surprised to know that beginning with the Sanyasi Rebellion and Chuar Uprising in Bengal and Bihar in the 1760s, there was hardly a year without an armed opposition. From 1763 to 1856 there were more than 40 major rebellions apart from hundreds of minor ones. These rebellions were, however, local in character and effects. They were isolated from each other because each rebellion had a different motive. We will now read more about these movements in the next section of this lesson.

Peasant Revolt

In an earlier lesson you read about the various land settlements and the adverse effects they had on the Indian peasantry. The Permanent Settlement had made the zamindar the owner of the land. But this land could be sold off if he failed to pay the revenue on time. This forced the zamindars and the landlords to extract money from the peasants even if their crops failed. These peasants often borrowed money from the moneylenders, who were also called mahajans. The impoverished peasants could never pay back this borrowed money. This led to many hardships like extreme poverty and being forced to work as bonded labourers. Hence the lower and exploited classes often attacked their exploiters. Failure to pay by the zamindars also meant that the land would be taken away by the British. The British then would auction this land to the highest bidder, who often came from the urban areas. The new zamindars from the city had little or no interest in the land. They did not invest money in seeds or fertilizers to improve the fertility of the land but only cared to collect as much revenue as they could.

This proved destructive for the peasants who remained backward and stagnant

To get out of this situation, the peasants now started producing commercial crops like indigo, sugarcane, jute, cotton, opium and so on. This was the beginning of commercialisation of agriculture. The peasants now depended on merchants, traders and middlemen to sell their produce during harvest time. As they shifted to commercial crops, food grain production went down. Less food stocks led to famines. It was therefore not surprising that the hungry peasants revolted. Lets us read more about some peasants revolts which took place on account of the British policies:

Significance of Peasant Revolt

The aggressive economic policies of the British shattered the traditional agrarian system of India and worsened the condition of peasants. The peasant revolts taking place in various parts of the country were mainly directed at these policies. Though these revolts were not aimed at uprooting the British rule from India, they created awareness among the Indians. They now felt a need to organise and fight against exploitation and oppression. In short, these rebellions prepared the ground for various other uprisings such as Sikh Wars in Punjab and finally the Revolt of 1857.

Resistance is shown by all of us in our day to day life. How is this resistance different from the resistance movements? What makes some resistance movements popular? Discuss these questions with your friends, peer group or family. Write a note of not more than 50 words on the discussion.

Tribal Revolts

Another group of people who revolted against the British rule were the tribals. The tribal groups were an important and integral part of Indian life. Before their annexation and subsequent incorporation in the British territories, they had their own social and economic systems. These systems were traditional in nature and satisfied the needs of the tribals. Each community was headed by a chief who managed the affairs of the

community. They also enjoyed independence regarding the management of their affairs. The land and forests were their main source of livelihood. The forests provided them with basic items which they required for survival. The tribal communities remained isolated from the non-tribals. The British policies proved harmful to the tribal society. This destroyed their relatively self-sufficient economy and communities. The tribal groups of different regions revolted against the Britishers. Their movements were anti-colonial in nature because they were directed against the colonial administration. The tribals used traditional weapons, mainly bows and arrows and often turned violent. The Britishers dealt severely with them. They were declared criminals and anti-social. Their property was confiscated. They were imprisoned and many of them were hanged. The tribal movement in India remained confined to some regions only. But it did not lag behind other social groups as regards participation in the anti-colonial movements. We shall now read about some major tribal revolts that took place against the British rule:

The Santhal Rebellion (1855-57):

The area of concentration of the Santhals was called Daman-i-Koh or Santhal Pargana. It extended from Bhagalpur in Bihar in the north to Orissa in the south stretching from Hazaribagh to the borders of Bengal. The Santhals like other tribes worked hard to maintain their lives in the forests and wild jungles. They cultivated their land and lived a peaceful life which continued till the British officials brought with them traders, moneylenders, zamindars and merchants. They were made to buy goods on credit and forced to pay back with a heavy interest during harvest time. As a result, they were sometimes forced to give the mahajan not only their crops, but also plough, bullocks and finally the land. Very soon they became bonded labourers and could serve only their creditors. The peaceful tribal communities were now up in arms against the British officials, zamindars and money lenders who were exploiting them. Sidhu and Kanu were leading Santhal rebel leaders. They gave a heroic fight to the British government.

Unfortunately, the Santhel Rebellion was crushed in an unequal battle but it became a source of inspiration for future agrarian struggles.

Socio-Religious Reform Movements

Nineteenth century is the period of turmoil in Indian society. The age-old traditions and practices were degraded and these were replaced by many social evils like female infanticide, sati, child-marriage, caste system, purdah system, ban on female education, and widow re-marriage etc. The conquest of India by the British during the 18th and 19th century exposed some serious weaknesses and drawbacks of Indian social institutions. The most distressing was the position of women. The socio-intellectual revolution that took place in the fields of social reforms is often known as Indian Renaissance. An important part of European Renaissance was reforming society from outside, on the basis of Post Enlightenment rationalism. But in Indian context, it implied rediscovering rationalism from within India's past. In India, social reforms did not ordinarily mean a reorganization of the structuring of society at large, as it did in the West, for the benefit of underprivileged social and economic classes. Instead, it meant the infusion into the existing social structure of the new ways of life and thought. The idea was "The society would be preserved, while its members would be transformed." The social reform movement, as a matter of fact, was not an isolated phenomenon; it was loaded with wider national political and economic considerations. In a way, the social reform movement was a prelude to nationalism.

Causes of the Reform Movements

Indian Society in the 19th century was caught in a vicious web created by religious superstitions and dogmas. All religions in general and Hinduism in particular had become a compound of magic, animism, and superstitions. Social Conditions were equally depressing. The most distressing was the position of women. The birth of a girl was unwelcome, her marriage a burden and her widowhood inauspicious. Another debilitating factor was Caste. It sought to maintain a system of segregation,

hierarchically ordained on the basis of ritual status, hampering social mobility and fostered social divisions. The conquest of India by the British during the 18th and 19th century exposed some serious weaknesses and drawbacks of Indian social institutions. The response, indeed, was varied but the need to reform social and religious life was a commonly shared conviction. It also brought in completely new sets of ideas and social world (NIOS, 2018) [5] . The exposure to post Enlightenment rationalism that came to signify modernity brought a change in the outlook of a select group of Indians. The introduction of western education and ideas had the far reaching impact on the Indian Society. Through the glasses of utility, reason, justice, and progress, a select group of individuals began to explore the nature of their own society. There was a gradual emergence of public opinion. The debates between the Orientalists, scholars of Eastern societies like India on one side, and the Utilitarians, Liberals and Missionaries on the other also enabled the penetration of ideas, at least amongst the upper section of society (Chandra, 2020) [2]. The resultant cultural change led to introspection about Indian traditions, institution, and culture.

Social and Religious Reform Movements Social Reform Movement are linked with different ideas including presence of Colonial government, Economic and Social backwardness of society, influence of modern western ideas, rise of intellectual awakening in the middle class and poor position of women in society. British rule in India acted as a catalyst to deep seated social changes. Western culture also influenced the Indian Life and thought in several ways. The most important result of the impact of western culture was the replacement of blind faith in current traditions, (Sarkar, 1975) [6] beliefs, and conventions by a spirit of rationalism. The major social problems which came in the purview of the reforms movements were emancipation of women in which sati, infanticide, child marriage and widow remarriage were taken up, casteism and untouchability, education for bringing about enlightenment in society. In the religious sphere main issues were idolatry, polytheism, religious superstitions, and exploitation by priest.

Important characteristics of Social Reform Movement included leadership by wide emerging Intellectual middle class. Reform movement started in different parts of India in different period but having considerable similarities. They were link with one region or one caste. It was clear to them that without religious reformation, there cannot be any social reformation (NIOS, 2018) [5]. Two Intellectual criteria of social reform movement included- Rationality Religious Universalism Social relevance was judged by a rationalist critique. It is difficult to match the uncompromising rationalism of the early Raja Rammohan Roy or Akshay Kumar Dutta. Rejecting Supernatural explanations, Raja Rammohan Roy affirmed the principle of causality linking the whole phenomenal universe. To him demonstrability was the sole criterion of truth. In proclaiming that 'rationalism is our only preceptor', Akshay Kumar Dutta went a step further. All natural and social phenomena, he held, could be analyzed and understood by purely mechanical processes (NIOS, 2018) [5]. This perspective not only enabled them to adopt a rational approach to tradition but also to evaluate the contemporary socio-religious practices from the standpoint of social utility and to replace faith with rationality. In the Brahmo Samaj, it led to the repudiation of the infallibility of the Vedas. In the Aligarh Movement, was to the reconciliation of the teachings of Islam with the needs of the modern age. Holding that religious tenets were not immutable, Syed Ahmed Khan emphasized the role of religion in the progress of society: if religion did not keep pace with and meet the demands of the time it would get fossilized as in the case of Islam in India (Chandra, 2020). Similarly, while the ambits of reforms were particularistic, their religious perspective was universalistic. Raja Ram Mohan Roy considered different religion as national embodiments of Universal theism. The Brahmo Samaj was initially conceived by him as a Universalist church (NIOS, 2018). He was a defender of the basic and universal principles of all religionsthe monotheism of the Vedas and the Unitarianism of Christianity- and at the same time attacked polytheism of Hinduism and the trinitarianism

of Christianity. Sir Syed Ahmed Khan echoed the same idea: all prophets had the same din (faith) and every country and nation had different prophets.

This perspective found clearer articulation in Kehsub Chandra Sen's ideas saying that our position is not that truths are to be found in all religions, but all established religions of the world are true. He also gave expression to the social implication of this Universalist perspective saying that whosoever worships the True God daily must learn to recognize all his fellow countrymen as brethren. The emphasis was not on the word 'Muslim' but on the word 'tyranny'. This is amply clear from Syed Ahmed Khan's description of the pre- colonial system: 'The rule of the former emperors and rajas was neither in accordance with the Hindu nor the Mohammadan religion (NIOS, 2018) [5]. It was based upon nothing but tyranny and oppression; the law of might was that of right; the voice of the people was not listened to.

The socio religious reform movement, as a whole, was against backward element of traditional culture in terms of both religious and social evils. The focus was on regeneration of traditional institutions including medicine, education, and philosophy and so on. There were differences in methods of those reform movements but all of them were concerned with the regeneration of society through social and educational reforms. Each of these reform movements was confined, by and large, to a region or other and also was confined to a particular caste and religion. In a nutshell, it can be argued that in the evolution of modern India the reform movements have made very significant contribution. They stood for the democratization of the society, removal of superstitions and decadent customs, spread of enlightenment and development of a rational and modern outlook. This led to the national awakening in India.

Raja Rammohan Roy and Brahma Samaj

The central figure of this cultural awakening was Raja Rammohan Roy. Known as the "father of the Indian Renaissance", Rammohan Roy was

a great patriot, scholar and humanist. He was moved by deep love for the country and worked throughout his life for the social, religious, intellectual and political regeneration of the Indians. He started the 'Atmiya Sabha' in 1815 and carried a consistent struggle against the religious and social malpractices. In first philosophical work Tuhfat-ul-Muwahiddin he analyzed major religions of the world in light of reason and social comfort In 1814, Rammohan Roy settled in Calcutta and dedicated his life to the cause of social and religious reform. As a social reformer, Rammohan Roy fought relentlessly against social evils like sati, polygamy, child marriage, female infanticide and caste discrimination. He organised a movement against the inhuman custom of sati and helped William Bentinck to pass a law banning the practice. It was the first successful social movement against an ageold social evil. In August 1828, Roy founded the Brahmo Sabha, which was later renamed 'Brahmo Samaj' (The society of God). Object of the Brahmo Samaj was the worship and adoration of the eternal, unsearchable, Immutable God. It opposed idol worship and stayed away from practice of priesthood and sacrifice. The worship was performed through prayers, meditation, and readings from the Upanishads.

In 1829 Rammohan Roy founded a new religious society known as the Atmiya Sabha which later on came to be known as the Brahmo Samaj. This religious society was based on the twin pillars of rationalism and the philosophy of the Vedas. The role of the Brahmo Samaj as the 'first intellectual movement which spread the ideas of rationalism and enlightenment in modern India' cannot be overemphasized. Its liberal approach to social and religious questions won the approbation of Europeans and Indians alike. Its educational and social reform activities instilled a new confidence which, in turn, contributed to the growth of national movement. A number of Brahmo Samajis were later prominent in the struggle of Independence.

Young Bengal Movement

The establishment of the Hindu College in 1817 was a major event in the history of Bengal. It played an important role in carrying forward the reformist movement that had already emerged in the province. A radical movement for the reform of Hindu Society, known as the Young Bengal Movement, started in the college. Drawing inspiration from the great French Revolution, Derozio inspired his pupils to think freely and rationally, question all authority, love liberty, equality, and freedom, and oppose decadent customs and traditions. The Derozians also supported women's rights and education. Also, Derozio was perhaps the first nationalist poet of Modern India.

The main reason for their limited success was the prevailing social condition at that time, which was not ripe for the adoption of radical ideas. Further, support from any other social group or class was absent. The Derozians lacked any real link with the masses; for instance, they failed to take up the peasants' cause. In fact their radicalism was bookish in character. But, despite their limitations, the Derozians carried forward Roy's tradition of public education on social, economic, and political questions.

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar

The great scholar and reformer, Vidyasagar's ideas were a happy blend of Indian and western thought. He believed in high Moral values, was a deep humanist, and was generous to the poor. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, a towering personality of the mid- nineteenth century, was born in a poor Brahmin family of Bengal in 1820. He was a renowned Sanskrit scholar and became the Principal of the Sanskrit College in 1851. The Sanskrit College conferred on him the title of 'Vidyasagar' because of his profound knowledge of Sanskrit. Vidyasagar started a movement in support of widow remarriage which resulted in legislation of widow remarriage. He was also a crusade against child marriage and polygamy. He did much for the cause of Women's education. As government inspector of schools, he helped organize thirty-five girls' schools, many of which he ran at his own expense.

Vidyasagar was a staunch supporter of women's education and helped Drinkwater Bethune to establish the Bethune School, the first Indian school for girls, in 1849. As Inspector of Schools, Vidyasagar opened a number of schools for girls in the districts under his charge. Soon a powerful movement in favour of widow remarriage was started. At last, after prolonged struggle the Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856. Through his efforts, twenty-five widow remarriages took place. He also spoke vehemently against child marriage and polygamy. Through his writings, Vidyasagar made the people aware of the social problems and thus helped the growth of nationalism in India.

Dayanand Saraswati and Arya Samaj

This was the basic contribution of Mool Shanker an important representative of the religions reform movement in India from Gujarat. He later came to be known as Dayanand Saraswati (1824-1883). He founded the Arya Samaj in 1875. Arya Samaj is a Noble Hindu reform movement in Modern India. The most influential movement of religious and social reform in northern India was started by Dayanand Saraswari. He held that the Vedas contained all the knowledge imparted to man by God and essentials of modern science could also be traced in them. He was opposed to idolatry, ritual and priesthood, particularly to the prevalent caste practices and popular Hinduism as preached by the Brahmins. He favoured the study of western science. The first Arya Samaj Unit was formally set up by him at Bombay in 1875 and later the headquarters of the Samaj were established at Lahore. Swami Dayanand gave the mantra, "Go back to Vedas" as he believed that priestly class and Puranas had perverted Hindu religion. He wrote a book 'Satyarth Prakash', which contains his philosophical and religious ideas. He believed that every person had the right to have direct access to God. It started the Shuddhi Movement to bring back those Hindus who had converted to Islam and Christianity.

A Network of schools and colleges for boys and girls was established throughout northern India to promote the spread of education.

Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School of Lahore, which soon developed into a premier college of Punjab, set the pattern for such institutions. Instruction was imparted through Hindi and English on modern lines. Lala Hansraj played a leading role in this field. In 1902, Swami Shradhananda started the Gurukul near Hardwar to propagate the more traditional ideas of education. This was set up on the pattern of ancient Ashrams. Arya Samaj tried to inculcate the spirit of self-respect and self-reliance among the people of India. This promoted nationalism. At the same time one of its main objectives was to prevent the conversion of Hindus to other religions.

Rama Krishna Paramhansa and Swami Vivekananda

Gadadhar Chattopadhyaya (1836-86) was a poor Brahmin priest who later came to be known as Ramakrishna Paramahansa: His education did not proceed beyond the elementary stage and he had no formal education in philosophy and Shastras. He dedicated his life to God. He believed that there were many roads to God and the service of man was the service of God, because man was the embodiment of God (Jones, 1994) [3]. Hence sectarianism had no place in his teachings. He realised the divinity in humanity and looked upon the service of mankind as a means to salvation.

Narendra Nath Datta (1863-1902) later known as Swami Vivekananda was the most devoted pupil of Ramakrishna Paramahansa who carried the message of his Guru Ramakrishna all over the world, especially in America and Europe. He emerged as the preacher of neo-Hinduism. Certain spiritual experiences of Ramakrishna, the teaching of the Upanishads and the Gita and the examples of the Buddha and Jesus are the basis of Vivekananda's message to the World about human values. He subscribed to the Vedanta, which he considered a fully rational system with a superior approach. The principal feature of Vivekananda's social philosophy was his insistence on the upliftment of the masses. For him, service to the poor and downtrodden was the highest religion. To organise such service, he founded the Ramakrishna Mission in 1897. This Mission to date has played an important role in providing social service in times of

national distress like famine, floods, and epidemic. Many schools, hospitals, orphanages are run by it. He urged his countrymen to work for their own salvation. For this purpose bands of workers devoted to this cause were trained through the Ramakrishan Mission. Thus Vivekananda emphasized social good or social services.

In 1893 he participated in the All World Religious Conference (Parliament of Religions) at Chicago in the United States of America. He argued that Vedanta was the religion of all and not of the Hindus alone. The keynote of his opening address was the need for a healthy balance between spiritualism and materialism. Envisaging a new culture for the whole world, he called for a blend of the materialism of the west and the spiritualism of the East in to a new harmony to produce happiness for mankind.

Theosophical Society

Theosophical society has played an important role in the history of the religion, society and culture of modern India. It was founded in the USA in 1875 by a Russian spiritualist Madame H.P. Blavatsky and an American Col. H.S. Olcott. Its objective was to promote studies in ancient religions, philosophies and science, develop the divine powers latent in man and form a universal brotherhood of man. By 1884, the society had 100 branches in India, apart from several in Europe and America. The movement was revived and revitalized by Annie Besant who came out to India in 1893, after the death of Madame Blavatsky. She succeeded Olcott as the president of society in 1907 and endeared herself to large numbers of People by preaching the wisdom of Krishna and Gita, thus turning theosophy 'into something specifically Hindu' (Jones, 1994) [3] . They helped to impart to the educated Indians a sense of pride in their own country. Annie Beasant's movement was a movement led and supported by westerners who glorified Indian religious and philosophical traditions. This helped Indians to recover their self-confidence. In fact the activities of Annie Besant in the field of education were more significant. She founded the Central Hindu College at Banaras which she later handed over to Madan Mohan Malaviya. He

developed that college into the Banaras Hindu University (Jones, 1994) [3] . Although the Theosophical Movement did not enjoy mass popularity, its work under the leadership of Annie Besant for awakening of the Indians was remarkable. She contributed a great deal to the development of national spirit in Indians. The headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Adyar became a centre of knowledge with a library of rare Sanskrit books. The society opened schools for boys, for women, for the depressed classes and took part in the Boy scouts movements.

M.G. Ranade and Prarthana Samaj

Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842 –1901) was a distinguished Indian scholar, social reformer and author. In 1867, the Prarthana Samaj was started in Maharashtra with the aim of reforming Hinduism and preaching the worship of one God. Mahadev Govind Ranade and R.G. Bhandarkar were the two great leaders of the Samaj. The Prarthana Samaj did in Maharashtra what the Brahmo Samaj did in Bengal. It attacked the caste system and the predominance of the Brahmins, campaigned against child marriage and the purdah system, preached widow remarriage and emphasised female education. In order to reform Hinduism, Ranade started the Widow Remarriage Association and the Deccan Education Society. In 1887, Ranade founded the National Social Conference with the aim of introducing social reforms throughout the country. Ranade was also one of the founders of the Indian National Congress. During his life he helped establish the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha and the Prarthana Samaj, and would edit a Bombay Anglo Marathi daily paper, the Induprakash, founded on his ideology of social and religious reform. A man of varied interest, an economist, politician, historian, and social reformer, Ranade did not let his official work interfere with his duty to the country and its people.

With his friends Dr. Atmaram Pandurang, Bal Mangesh Wagle and Vaman Abaji Modak, Ranade founded the Prarthana Samaj, a Hindu movement inspired by the Brahmo Samaj, espousing principles of enlightened theism based on the ancient Vedas. Prarthana Samaj was started

with inspiration from Keshav Chandra Sen, a staunch Brahma Samajist, with the objective of carrying out religious reforms in Maharashtra. The four point social agenda of Prarthana Samaj were:

1. Disapproval of caste system.
2. Women education.
3. Widow Remarriage.
4. Raising the age of marriage for both males and females

Ranade founded the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha and later was one of the originators of the Indian National Congress. He has been portrayed as an early adversary of the politics of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and a mentor to Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Ranade was a founder of the Social Conference Movement, which he supported till his death, directing his social reform efforts against child marriage, the shaving of widows' heads, the heavy cost of marriages and other social functions, and the caste restrictions on traveling abroad, and he strenuously advocated widow remarriage and female education.

Satya Shodhak Samaj

Jyotiba Phule belonged to the Mali (gardener) community and organized a powerful movement against upper caste domination and Brahminical supremacy. Phule founded the Satyashodhak Samaj (Truth Seekers' Society) in 1873, with the leadership of the Samaj coming from the backward classes, Malis, Telis, Kunbis, Saris, and Dhangars (Jones, 1994)[3]. The main aims of the movement were: Social service Spread of education among women and lower caste people Phule's works, Sarvajanik Satyadharma and Ghulamgin, became source of inspiration for the common masses. Phule used the symbol of Rajah Bali as opposed to the Brahmins' symbol of Rama. Phule aimed at the complete abolition of caste system and socio-economic inequalities. This movement gave a sense of identity to the depressed communities as a class against the Brahmins, who were seen as the exploiters.

Social and Religious Movements in India

Down here is the detailed list of social and religious movements in India listed along with the founder, year and place of the origin.

Muslim Reform Movements

Movements for socio-religious reforms among the Muslims emerged late. Most Muslims feared that Western education would endanger their religion as it was un-Islamic in character. During the first half of the 19th century only a handful of Muslims had accepted English education. The Muhammedan Literary Society, established by Nawab Abdul Latif in 1863, was one of the earliest institutions that attempted to spread modern education. Abdul Latif also tried to remove social abuses and promote Hindu-Muslim unity. They took upon themselves the task of purifying and strengthening Islam resulting in Wahabi and Faraizi Movement. Apart from this, the official Government view on the revolt of 1857 held the Muslims to be the main conspirators. This view was further strengthened by the activities of the Wahabis. Hence the need for a cooperative attitude towards the British to improve the community's social condition was felt by many liberal Muslim. This resulted in Aligarh Movement.

Titu Mir's Movement

Titu Mir was a disciple of Sayyid Ahmed Raebarehvi, the founder of Wahabi Movement. Titu Mir organized the Muslim peasants of Bengal against the Hindu landlords and the British indigo planters. The British records say it was a militant movement which wasn't completely true.

Faraizi Movement

The movement also called the Fara'idi Movement because of its emphasis on the Islamic pillars of faith, was founded by Haji Shariat Allah. Its scene of action was East Bengal, and it aimed at the eradication of social innovations current among the Muslims of the region.

Ahmadiya Movement

This movement was founded by Mirza Ghulam Ahmed in 1889. It was based on liberal principles. It described itself as the standard bearer of

Mohammedan Renaissance, and based itself, like Brahma Samaj, on the principle of Universal religion of all humanity, opposing jihad. The movement spread western liberal education among the Indian Muslims. However, the Ahmadiya Movement, like Bahaism which flourished in the west Asian Countries, suffered from mysticism.

Aligarh Movement

It was organised by Syed Ahmad Khan (1817-1899), a man described as the most outstanding figure among the Muslims. Syed Ahmad Khan was born in 1817 into a Muslim noble family and had joined the service of the Company as a judicial officer. He realised that the Muslims had to adapt themselves to British rule. So Syed Ahmad advised Muslims to embrace Western education and take up government service. In 1862, he founded the Scientific Society to translate English books on science and other subjects into Urdu. He also started an English- Urdu journal through which he spread the ideas of social reform. Through his initiative was established the Mohammedan Oriental College which later developed into the Aligarh Muslim University. It helped to develop a modern outlook among its students. This intellectual movement is called the Aligarh Movement. In pursuit to stimulate a process of growth among Indian Muslims through better education and employment opportunities, a section of Muslims led by Syed Ahmed Khan was ready to allow the official patronage. He argued that Muslim should first concentrate on education and jobs and tries to catch up with their Hindu Counterparts who had gained the advantage of an early start. Syed's progressive social ideas were propagated through his magazine Tahdhib-ul-Akhlaq. The Aligarh Movement emerged as a liberal, modern trend among the Muslim intelligentsia based on Mohammedan AngloOriental College, Aligarh. It aimed at spreading:-

1. Modern education among Indian Muslims without weakening their allegiance to Islam.
2. Social reforms among Muslims relating to purdah, polygamy, widow remarriage, women's education, slavery, divorce, etc.

Deoband Movement

Deoband Movement was established by Mohammad Qasim Nanautavi (1832-1880) and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi (1828- 1916) as a revivalist movement with the twin objectives of propagating pure teachings of Quran and Hadis among Muslims and keeping alive the spirit of jihad against the foreign rule. In contrast to the Aligarh Movement which aimed at the welfare of Muslims through western education and support of the British government, (Sarkar, 1975) the aim of Deoband Movement was moral and religious regeneration of the Muslim community.

The Sikh Reform Movement Religious and social movements among the Sikhs were undertaken by various gurus who tried to bring about positive changes in the Sikh religion. Baba Dayal Das propagated the nirankar (formless) idea of God (Sarkar, 1975) . By the end of the 19th century a new reform movement called the Akali Movement was launched to reform the corrupt management of Gurdwaras. The formation of the two Singh Sabhas at Amritsar and Lahore in the 1870's was the beginning of religious reform movement among the Sikhs (Jones, 1994). The setting up of Khalsa College in Amritsar in 1892 helped promote Gurumukhi, Sikh learning and Punjabi literature.

Ideological Base for the national movement

Introduction to the Ideological Base

The Indian National Movement, which culminated in India's independence in 1947, was deeply rooted in various ideologies that influenced its course. These ideologies were shaped by historical circumstances, intellectual developments, and the interaction between Indian society and the colonial state. Understanding the ideological base is crucial for comprehending the diverse nature of the movement and the strategies adopted by its leaders.

Early Nationalist Thought

- **Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the Reformist Approach:**
 - Considered the father of modern India, Ram Mohan Roy's ideas were influenced by Enlightenment thought.
 - Advocated for social reforms, especially the abolition of practices like Sati.
 - Emphasized the need for education and rationalism, which laid the groundwork for a more modern and progressive India.
- **Dadabhai Naoroji and Economic Nationalism:**
 - His theory of the "Drain of Wealth" highlighted the economic exploitation of India under British rule.
 - Focused on self-governance and economic self-sufficiency.
 - His ideas inspired later leaders to link economic independence with political freedom.
- **Swami Vivekananda and Cultural Nationalism:**
 - Emphasized the revival of Hindu spirituality as the basis for national resurgence.
 - Advocated for the unification of India through a return to its spiritual roots, influencing many nationalist leaders.

The Role of the Indian National Congress (INC)

- **Moderates vs. Extremists:**
 - **Moderates:** Leaders like Gopal Krishna Gokhale believed in constitutional methods, dialogue, and gradual reforms.
 - **Extremists:** Leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, and Bipin Chandra Pal (Lal-Bal-Pal) advocated for more direct action, including Swadeshi and Boycott movements.
- **Surat Split (1907):**

- The ideological divide between Moderates and Extremists led to a split in the INC, highlighting the growing radicalization of the movement.

Influence of International Movements

- **Impact of the Russian Revolution (1917):**
 - Inspired Indian revolutionaries by showcasing the possibility of overthrowing oppressive regimes.
 - Brought socialist ideas into the Indian freedom struggle, influencing leaders like Bhagat Singh.
- **Pan-Islamism and the Khilafat Movement:**
 - Linked Indian Muslims' struggle with the global Islamic community.
 - Gandhi supported the Khilafat cause, which helped in building Hindu-Muslim unity during the non-cooperation movement.

Gandhi and the Philosophy of Non-Violence

- **Satya (Truth) and Ahimsa (Non-Violence):**
 - Gandhi's ideology was rooted in the principles of Satya and Ahimsa, which he derived from various religious and philosophical traditions.
 - Advocated for non-violent resistance through civil disobedience and non-cooperation.
- **Constructive Program:**
 - Emphasized self-reliance, especially through the promotion of Khadi and village industries.
 - His vision of Swaraj was not just political independence but also social and economic self-sufficiency.

Socialist and Communist Influences

- **Formation of the Communist Party of India (CPI):**
 - Marxist ideas began to influence a section of the freedom fighters, particularly after the 1920s.

- The CPI and other leftist groups advocated for a more radical approach to independence, focusing on the rights of workers and peasants.
- **Subhas Chandra Bose and the Forward Bloc:**
 - Bose's ideology combined elements of socialism with strong nationalism.
 - His approach was more militant, as seen in his leadership of the Indian National Army (INA).

The Role of Religious and Caste Movements

- **Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS:**
 - These organizations promoted the idea of Hindu Rashtra (Hindu Nation), which had a significant impact on the ideological landscape of the nationalist movement.
 - Their approach was often at odds with the secular and inclusive vision of leaders like Gandhi and Nehru.
- **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and the Dalit Movement:**
 - Ambedkar's fight against caste oppression and his demand for social justice for Dalits provided an alternative ideological base to the mainstream nationalist movement.
 - His role in drafting the Indian Constitution post-independence was crucial in shaping the new nation.

The Indian National Movement was not monolithic but was driven by a confluence of diverse ideologies. These ranged from liberal and moderate reformism to radical and revolutionary nationalism, from spiritual revivalism to Marxist socialism, and from secularism to religious and caste-based identities. Understanding this ideological diversity is key to grasping the complexity and richness of the struggle for Indian independence.

Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress was formed due to the efforts of a number of people. Presence of number of political associations across the country, and spread of the ideals of patriotism and nationalism prepared the

foundation of the Indian National Congress. It was formed in the year 1885 but its origin is not known. According to Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, its origin is 'shrouded in mystery'. However, many people believe that A.O. Hume laid its foundation under Lord Dufferin. He formed the Indian National Congress to 'provide a 'safety-valve' to the anticipated or actual discontentment of the Indian intelligentsia and to form a quasi-constitutional party similar to Her Majesty's Opposition in England.' According to W.C. Banerjee, the First Congress President, the Indian National Congress was formed by Lord Dufferin, Viceroy of India. He also believed that Lord Dufferin formed it because he wanted a political organization which can understand the 'real wishes' of the people so that the British government could prevent political outbursts in the country.

On 1 March 1883, in an open letter, Hume had appealed to the students of Calcutta University to set up an organization in India. He officially clarified that his objective was 'to form a constitutional method to prevent the spread of dissatisfaction caused by western ideas, education, inventions, and machines and it was essential to take measures for the security and continuity of the British Government'. Some scholars believe that Ripon advised Hume to form an organization of educated Indians. Recently, some scholars analysed Dufferin's correspondence to Hume as well as the activities of the early nationalists, they concluded that the theory of 'safety valve' is a myth.

The Indian National Congress was founded on 28 December 1885 at Sir Tej Pal Sanskrit Vidyalaya, Bombay. It will not be correct to say that it was a sudden event rather it was as Bipan Chandra states, 'the culmination of a process of political awakening that had its beginnings in the 1860s and 1870s and took a major leap forward in the late 1870s and early 1880s'. Also, a lot of attempts were made by Indian Nationalists for the formation of a political organization on all-India scale. For instance, two National Conferences were organized by Indian Association.

A.O. Hume succeeded in forming an All India Party, which was attended by 72 delegates. Most of the Indian leaders could not attend this session as a National Conference was going on in Calcutta at the same time. The objectives of both these organizations were same. The Indian National Conference was later merged into the National Congress. It would be wrong to believe that he laid the foundation of the Indian National Congress single-handedly as many people were involved in its formation. Most of the leaders were able to accept Hume because they felt that he would not be biased towards any region or caste. It is because he did not belong to any of these groups and he had a sincere love for India.

Some of the members of the Indian National Congress were Pherozeshah Mehta, W.C. Banerji, Anandamohan Bose, Badruddin Tyabji, Surendranath Banerji, and Romesh Chandra Dutt. This association was different from others as none of the earlier associations had complete independence as their agenda. The Congress made some demands, which can be divided into three categories: political, administrative and economic.

Political demands

Greater power to the Supreme Council and local Legislative Council

Discussion on budget to be held by the council

Representation of the council through local bodies like Universities and Chambers of Commerce
Creation of Legislative Assembly in Punjab, Awadh (NWP) and NorthWest Frontier Province (NWFP)
Economic demands

The Congress sessions, between 1855 and 1905, regularly passed resolutions for:

Reduction in land revenue

Establishment of agricultural banks

Reduction in home charge and military expenditure

Ending unfair tariffs and excise duties

Enquiring the causes behind India's poverty and famines

Providing more funds for technical education

Development of Indian industries

Better treatment for Indian coolies in foreign countries

Change in forest laws so that tribal can use forest

(iv) Administrative demands

ICS examination in India as well as England

Increase in Indian volunteer force

Understanding of Indian needs on the part of administration

Separation of Judiciary from Executive power and extension of trial

by jury Higher posts in the army for Indians

Objectives of the Congress

The primary objective of the Congress was to make people feel that they belong to a single nation—India. The diversity in India in terms of caste, creed, religion, tradition, language made this a difficult task. However, it was not impossible. Many important people like Pherozshah Mehta, Dadabhai Naoroji, K.T. Telang and Dinshaw Wacha, attended the first session of the Indian National Congress. The objectives of the Congress laid down by W.C. Banerjee, the President of the first session of the Indian National Congress, are as follows:

Promoting personal intimacy and friendship among people who are working for the cause of the country

Eradicating prejudices related to race, creed and provinces through friendly interaction

Consolidating the sentiments of national unity

Maintaining authoritative record of the educated Indians' views on the prominent issues of the day

Determining methods by which native politicians can work towards public interest during the next twelve months

Training and organizing public opinion

Formulating and presenting popular demands before the government through petitions

The Congress was supported by people of all religions. W.C. Banerjee, the first President of the Indian National Congress, was an Indian

Christian. The second President was Dadabhai Naoroji, who was a Parsee. The third President was Badruddin Tayabji who was a Muslim. The fourth and fifth Presidents were George Yule and William Baderburn who were Britishers.

Factors leading to the origin of Indian National Movement

The Indian National Movement was a result of various factors that came together in the 19th and early 20th centuries. These factors include political, economic, social, and cultural influences, which combined to create a sense of national consciousness among the Indian people. Understanding these factors is essential for grasping how the movement evolved and gained momentum, eventually leading to India's independence in 1947.

Political Factors

- **British Colonial Policies:**
 - The expansion of British rule in India and the implementation of repressive laws, such as the Rowlatt Act, created widespread discontent.
 - The exclusion of Indians from higher administrative positions and the racial discrimination by the British rulers fueled resentment.
- **Administrative Unification:**
 - The British administration, with its centralized government, standardized legal systems, and communication networks, inadvertently helped unify diverse regions of India.
 - The introduction of the English language as a medium of instruction created a class of educated Indians who could communicate across regional boundaries and articulate nationalist ideas.

- **Western Political Thought:**
 - Exposure to Western ideas of democracy, liberty, and nationalism through English education influenced Indian intellectuals.
 - The works of thinkers like Rousseau, Locke, and Mill inspired Indian leaders to demand political rights and self-governance.

Economic Factors

- **Economic Exploitation:**
 - The British economic policies led to the deindustrialization of India and the destruction of traditional handicrafts.
 - Heavy taxation, the drain of wealth theory (propounded by Dadabhai Naoroji), and the decline of indigenous industries led to widespread poverty and economic hardship.
- **Impact of Famines:**
 - Recurrent famines in the late 19th century, exacerbated by British indifference and mismanagement, highlighted the exploitative nature of colonial rule.
 - The Great Famine of 1876-78, which resulted in millions of deaths, further intensified anti-British sentiments.
- **Railways and Communication:**
 - While the British developed railways and telegraph networks for their own benefit, these also played a role in uniting the country.
 - Improved communication enabled the spread of nationalist ideas and facilitated the organization of the movement on a larger scale.

Social and Cultural Factors

- **Social Reforms and the Role of Reformers:**
 - Social reform movements led by figures like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Jyotirao Phule, and Swami Vivekananda addressed issues

such as caste discrimination, women's rights, and religious reform.

- These movements contributed to the rise of a national consciousness by challenging the social evils that divided Indian society.

- **Cultural Renaissance:**

- The late 19th century saw a resurgence of interest in India's cultural and historical heritage.
- The rediscovery of ancient Indian texts and the celebration of Indian achievements in fields like science, art, and literature helped instill pride and a sense of unity among Indians.

- **Religious and Caste Movements:**

- Movements like the Arya Samaj and the Aligarh Movement, although different in their focus, contributed to the awakening of a collective identity.
- The assertion of rights by marginalized communities, such as the Dalit movement led by figures like B.R. Ambedkar, added a dimension of social justice to the nationalist struggle.

Influence of International Events

- **Impact of Revolutions:**

- The American War of Independence (1776) and the French Revolution (1789) provided ideological inspiration for Indian nationalists.
- The success of the Italian and German unification movements in the 19th century showed that colonial powers could be challenged and defeated.

- **World Wars:**

- The First World War (1914-1918) created economic and social hardships in India, leading to increased discontent.

- The participation of Indian soldiers in the war, without adequate recognition, also contributed to a growing demand for self-rule.
- **Russian Revolution (1917):**
 - The Russian Revolution inspired many Indian leaders and revolutionaries by demonstrating the possibility of overthrowing oppressive regimes.
 - Socialist and communist ideas began to influence sections of the Indian National Movement, particularly among younger leaders.

Role of Indian Intellectuals and Organizations

- **Formation of Indian National Congress (INC):**
 - Established in 1885, the INC provided a platform for discussing national issues and articulating the demands of Indians.
 - Initially moderate in its demands, the INC gradually adopted a more assertive stance, reflecting the growing national consciousness.
- **The Press and Literature:**
 - The Indian press played a crucial role in spreading nationalist ideas. Newspapers like The Hindu, Amrita Bazar Patrika, and Kesari became vehicles for expressing anti-colonial sentiments.
 - Literature in regional languages, as well as English, also contributed to the growth of a national identity.
- **Role of Intellectuals:**
 - Thinkers like Dadabhai Naoroji, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Aurobindo Ghosh, among others, laid the ideological foundations of the movement.
 - Their writings and speeches inspired a generation of Indians to join the struggle for independence.

The origin of the Indian National Movement was the result of a complex interplay of various factors, including British colonial policies, economic exploitation, social reforms, cultural revival, and the influence of international events. The movement evolved over time, gaining strength from these diverse sources of inspiration and discontent. Understanding these factors helps in appreciating the multifaceted nature of India's struggle for independence.

Self Assessment Questions

S.N.	Questions (5 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Write a short note on the manifestation of discontent against British rule in India.	CO1	PO1	K2
2	Explain the causes of the Poligar Revolt.	CO2	PO2	K2
3	Describe the South Indian Rebellion.	CO2	PO2	K2
4	Write a short note on the Vellore Revolt of 1806.	CO3	PO2	K1
5	Explain the significance of the Revolt of 1857.	CO3	PO3	K2
6	Write a note on peasant uprisings against British rule.	CO4	PO3	K1
7	Describe the tribal resistance movements in India.	CO4	PO3	K2
S.N.	Questions (8 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Explain the early manifestations of discontent against British rule in India.	CO1	PO1	K3
2	Discuss the causes and nature of the Poligar Revolt.	CO2	PO2	K3
3	Examine the causes and results of the South Indian Rebellion.	CO2	PO2	K4
4	Analyse the causes and significance of the Vellore Revolt of 1806.	CO3	PO3	K4
5	Discuss the causes, nature and impact of the Revolt of 1857.	CO3	PO3	K4
6	Examine the role of peasant uprisings in the early resistance against British rule.	CO4	PO3	K4
7	Analyse the causes and nature of tribal resistance movements in India.	CO4	PO3	K4
8	Discuss the causes, nature and impact of early civil rebellions.	CO5	PO3	K4
9	Explain the role of socio-religious reform movements as the ideological base for nationalism.	CO5	PO4	K4
10	Analyse the factors leading to the origin of the Indian National Movement.	CO5	PO4	K4

Unit – III

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the transition from representative politics to the idea of self-rule in India.
2. To study the birth and composition of the Indian National Congress.
3. To examine the methods, policies and demands of the early Congress leaders.
4. To analyse the attitudes of the British towards the national movement.
5. To evaluate the early phase of the Indian National Movement.
6. To understand the rise of extremism and the Swadeshi Movement.
7. To study the growth of revolutionary and Home Rule movements.
8. To analyse the constitutional reforms such as the Morley-Minto Reforms, Montague-Chelmsford Reforms and the Government of India Act 1919.

Course Outcomes

1. Students understand the development of representative politics and the idea of self-rule.
2. Students explain the origin and composition of the Indian National Congress.
3. Students describe the methods and demands of the early national leaders.
4. Students analyse the British response to the national movement.
5. Students evaluate the early phase of the Indian National Movement.
6. Students understand the rise of extremism and the Swadeshi Movement.
7. Students examine the growth of revolutionary and Home Rule movements.
8. Students assess the significance of constitutional reforms up to the Government of India Act 1919.

Representative politics to the idea of Self-rule

The democratic value of self-rule requires people to have control over their own affairs. Modern democracies seek to promote self-rule by adopting strategies such as federalism, decentralisation, minority rights, and arguably, bicameralism. These strategies, however, can engender tensions between self-rule and the principle of equal representation. While equal representation aims to ensure that the vote of each citizen is equally significant, self-rule may demand that sub-state national communities be disproportionately represented in certain instances. This paper examines the failures and potential of federalism and bicameralism as strategies to promote self-rule in India and reconcile it with the ideal of equal representation.

Part B of the paper examines the Indian model of asymmetric federalism in the northeastern parts of India and advances two arguments. First, it provides a brief outline of the nature of Indian federalism to argue that

federalism in India seeks to promote the value of self-rule. Secondly, the asymmetric federalism model under the Constitution of India's sixth schedule fails to realize this objective. Particularly, it fails to alleviate separatist tendencies and integrate tribal communities within India. It also creates institutions based on ethnic identities that disproportionately empower sub-state national communities, simultaneously disempowering other individuals and groups.

Part C then turns to Indian bicameralism. In its limited design, the Indian upper house does little to reduce the fissiparous tendencies of sub-state communities in India. However, if bicameralism reframed as an institutional mechanism to foster self-rule among sub-state communities in fractious countries, a restructured Indian upper house could increase the ability of sub-state communities to participate meaningfully in their own rule.

We provide below a brief background to the peculiar situation in some states in India that will repeatedly find mention in the paper.

India is a union of 28 states and 7 Union Territories. It has a parliamentary system of governance with a bicameral legislature and a constitutional division of powers between the states and the union. All states have democratically elected legislatures in addition to representatives in the Union Parliament. The question of representation of states at the union level has long been controversial: states with smaller populations complain of inadequate representation in the Union. This contributes to persistent resentment against the present constitutional setup. States like Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland, in the north-eastern parts of the country have small, ethnically diverse populations, many of which had minimal cultural and historical connections with the rest of India. These states have also witnessed powerful separatist movements. Prior to independence, Naga and Manipuri leaders refused to join the Indian Union, which subsequently led to armed movements. Currently, a ceasefire operates with the Naga groups. In the valley areas of Manipur, however, military outfits like the People's Liberation Army (PLA operating since 1978), People's

Revolutionary Party of Kangleipak (PREPAK since 1977), and Kangleipak Communist Party (KCP since 1980) continue to operate.

The state of Assam paints a different picture. Here, the roots of separatist demands lie in the rise of Assamese nationalism with demands for Assamese as the state's official language. This nationalism was further fuelled by the Indian states' inability to deal with largescale immigration from Bangladesh. Events took a radical turn with outcries against exploitation of natural resources like oil, with meagre benefits to the state. Ultimately the repression of dissenters by the state brought armed movements to the fore. The United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) is the major armed group with whom the government has presently entered into a ceasefire.

Given this backdrop, matters of federalism and bicameralism assume importance in these areas as both measures were adopted and have the potential to realise the coexistence of different communities within a single Indian state.

Indian Federalism and Self-Rule

The Nature of Indian Federalism

Federalism is one of the “basic features” of the Indian Constitution, which grants it the highest possible constitutional status.⁹ It is one of the supreme values against which the validity of constitutional amendments is tested. We highlight the important features of Indian federalism, with reference to decisions of the Supreme Court of India (‘the Court’). The object is twofold: first, to introduce the basic tenets of Indian federalism; and second, to argue that it is controlled by substantive constitutional values, including that of self-rule.

a. Constitutional division of power between two sets of governments independent in their respective spheres

The hallmark of federalism is the division of powers between two sets of government, each independent of the other in its respective sphere.¹⁰ Since the constitution itself divides the power between the centre and the states, it ensures that the authority of the states is independent of the centre: states are

sovereign in their own sphere. The division of powers is delineated in Lists I, II and III of the Constitution's seventh schedule.¹¹ Matters of national importance are ostensibly for the centre while those of local importance are for the states.¹² Cumulatively, the scheme of the constitution thus reflects the principle of self-rule: people of the states are to control their own affairs.

b. A federal state with a strong centre

According to the Court the Constitution is "both unitary as well as federal according to the requirement of time and circumstances".¹³ This description is nebulous, and reflects a constant tension between instrumental benefits of centralised coordination and the value of self-rule. On the one hand, the Constitution empowers the centre to use emergency provisions, while on the other, the framers hoped that such powers would seldom be used.¹⁴ The Court seeks to reconcile this latent tension by referring to the constitutional logic of division of powers, which reserves local matters for the states.¹⁵ Thereby, the Court is both able to endorse the strong centre model¹⁶ and hold that federalism requires preserving the powers of the states.¹⁷ Ultimately, the Court notes that the Constitution has created a delicate balance between the centre and the states.¹⁸ States are not mere appendages of the centre. They are supreme within their own sphere and can rule themselves on matters that concern them. The Court's decisions recognise that the Constitution of India promotes a strong centre. But because this strong centre is paired with autonomy for the states, it cannot by itself provide normative guidance on how the principle of federalism is to be interpreted. According to the Court, guidance must be sought in the Constitution's other substantive values.

c. Federalism as an instrument to achieve larger substantive goals and values

To provide content to the meaning of federalism, the Court has turned to the substantive goals that federalism is designed to serve: "Federalism implies mutuality and common purpose for the aforesaid process of change with continuity between the centre and the States which ...promote social,

economic and cultural advancement of its people and to create fraternity among the people.”¹⁹ The Court further states that Indian federalism was designed to suit the parliamentary form of government and Indian conditions. It aims to promote the values of justice, equality, and dignity that transcend regional, religious, sectional, and linguistic barriers.²⁰ Finally, the federal structure aims to establish a constitutional culture that promotes national integration and the successful functioning of democratic institutions.²¹ These substantive goals and values, which have remained largely unexplored to date, hold great potential to interpret the requirements of Indian federalism; and the present federal arrangement is to be understood as a strategy adopted to realise substantive values. This follows an interpretivist view: that any strategy or principle adopted must be justified according to the values that the Constitution seeks to uphold, the values in turn complementing and contributing to each other.²² With this requirement in mind, we proceed to evaluate two strategies in the Indian Constitution closely related to federalism: asymmetric federalism and bicameralism. These two strategies seek to address the same overarching issues as those that the constitution sought to tackle through federalism: promoting the coexistence of diverse communities by meeting the demands of self-rule, while uniting these communities at the national level.

Asymmetric Federalism in India: The Sixth Schedule

The discourse on Indian Federalism has primarily focused on centre-state relations. Equally pressing constitutional issues lie in the realm of asymmetric federalism. Asymmetric federalism is defined as an unequal allocation of powers between federal units.²³ In India, this definition would involve a comparison of powers between different states vis-à-vis the centre.²⁴ However, we extend the concept of asymmetric federalism to the constitutional allocation of special powers to both states and special systems of governance applicable to sub-state communities. This is justified because the systems that we examine often exercise powers similar to state governments, both in theory and practice. Moreover, due to the linguistic

reorganisation of states in India, states are proxies for large linguistic communities. Federalism thus becomes a tool to ensure a measure of self-rule for these communities. Similarly, asymmetric federalism measures stem from the logic of ensuring self-rule to distinct sub-state groups, creating an asymmetry in the degree of self-rule available to different communities. The Constitution of India designed different models of asymmetric federalism to ensure peaceful co-existence of diverse communities. Part XXI of the Constitution, called 'Temporary, Transitional, and Special Provisions', provides for such models. Provisions for the state of Kashmir²⁵ and Nagaland²⁶ and the Constitution's sixth schedule, applicable to the states of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram, are examples of such models.²⁷ We focus on the sixth schedule model ('the schedule') and not on Kashmir and Nagaland, because the unique political history of these two states demanded different models of asymmetric federalism tailored to their context. Moreover, the post-independence political scenario in these states unfolded primarily in the context of demands for secession, while that of the schedule areas unfolded in the context of the rise of multiple ethnic identities

Birth of Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress was formed due to the efforts of a number of people. Presence of number of political associations across the country, and spread of the ideals of patriotism and nationalism prepared the foundation of the Indian National Congress. It was formed in the year 1885 but its origin is not known. According to Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, its origin is 'shrouded in mystery'. However, many people believe that A.O. Hume laid its foundation under Lord Dufferin. He formed the Indian National Congress to 'provide a 'safety-valve' to the anticipated or actual discontentment of the Indian intelligentsia and to form a quasi-constitutional party similar to Her Majesty's Opposition in England.' According to W.C. Banerjee, the First Congress President, the Indian National Congress was formed by Lord Dufferin, Viceroy of India. He also believed that Lord Dufferin formed it because he wanted a political organization which can understand the 'real

wishes' of the people so that the British government could prevent political outbursts in the country.

On 1 March 1883, in an open letter, Hume had appealed to the students of Calcutta University to set up an organization in India. He officially clarified that his objective was 'to form a constitutional method to prevent the spread of dissatisfaction caused by western ideas, education, inventions, and machines and it was essential to take measures for the security and continuity of the British Government'. Some scholars believe that Ripon advised Hume to form an organization of educated Indians. Recently, some scholars analysed Dufferin's correspondence to Hume as well as the activities of the early nationalists, they concluded that the theory of 'safety valve' is a myth.

The Indian National Congress was founded on 28 December 1885 at Sir Tej Pal Sanskrit Vidyalaya, Bombay. It will not be correct to say that it was a sudden event rather it was as Bipan Chandra states, 'the culmination of a process of political awakening that had its beginnings in the 1860s and 1870s and took a major leap forward in the late 1870s and early 1880s'. Also, a lot of attempts were made by Indian Nationalists for the formation of a political organization on all-India scale. For instance, two National Conferences were organized by Indian Association.

A.O. Hume succeeded in forming an All India Party, which was attended by 72 delegates. Most of the Indian leaders could not attend this session as a National Conference was going on in Calcutta at the same time. The objectives of both these organizations were same. The Indian National Conference was later merged into the National Congress. It would be wrong to believe that he laid the foundation of the Indian National Congress single-handedly as many people were involved in its formation. Most of the leaders were able to accept Hume because they felt that he would not be biased towards any region or caste. It is because he did not belong to any of these groups and he had a sincere love for India.

Some of the members of the Indian National Congress were Pherozeshah Mehta, W.C. Banerji, Anandamohan Bose, Badruddin Tyabji,

Surendranath Banerji, and Romesh Chandra Dutt. This association was different from others as none of the earlier associations had complete independence as their agenda. The Congress made some demands, which can be divided into three categories: political, administrative and economic.

- A. Political demands Greater power to the Supreme Council and local Legislative Council Discussion on budget to be held by the council Representation of the council through local bodies like Universities and Chambers of Commerce Creation of Legislative Assembly in Punjab, Awadh (NWP) and NorthWest Frontier Province (NWFP)
- B. Economic demands The Congress sessions, between 1855 and 1905, regularly passed resolutions for:
 - Reduction in land revenue Establishment of agricultural banks
 - Reduction in home charge and military expenditure Ending unfair tariffs and excise duties Enquiring the causes behind India's poverty and famines Providing more funds for technical education
 - Development of Indian industries Better treatment for Indian coolies in foreign countries Change in forest laws so that tribal can use forest
- C. Administrative demands ICS examination in India as well as England Increase in Indian volunteer force Understanding of Indian needs on the part of administration Separation of Judiciary from Executive power and extension of trial by jury Higher posts in the army for Indians.

Objectives of the Congress

The primary objective of the Congress was to make people feel that they belong to a single nation—India. The diversity in India in terms of caste, creed, religion, tradition, language made this a difficult task. However, it was not impossible. Many important people like Pherozshah Mehta, Dadabhai Naoroji, K.T. Telang and Dinshaw Wacha, attended the first session of the Indian National Congress. The objectives of the Congress laid down by W.C. Banerjee, the President of the first session of the Indian National Congress, are as follows:

Promoting personal intimacy and friendship among people who are working for the cause of the country

Eradicating prejudices related to race, creed and provinces through friendly interaction

Consolidating the sentiments of national unity

Maintaining authoritative record of the educated Indians' views on the prominent issues of the day

Determining methods by which native politicians can work towards public interest during the next twelve months

Training and organizing public opinion

Formulating and presenting popular demands before the government through petitions.

The Congress was supported by people of all religions. W.C. Banerjee, the first President of the Indian National Congress, was an Indian Christian. The second President was Dadabhai Naoroji, who was a Parsee. The third President was Badruddin Tayabji who was a Muslim. The fourth and fifth Presidents were George Yule and William Baderburn who were Britishers.

Early Nationalists and their Programmes

We have already seen that some of the educated Indians were playing major roles in cultivating a sense of nationalism. Some of the early nationalist, also known as the moderates, were the ones who set up the Indian national Congress. Here are some of the prominent names:

Allan Octavian Hume (1829-1912):

He was of Scottish descent. He joined the Bengal Civil Service in 1849 and made a lot of efforts to remove the social maladies of the country. His superiors did not favour him, thus, he had to retire in 1882. He took initiative to form the Indian National Congress in 1885. In 1889, he helped in setting up the British Committee of the Congress in London as well. This committee started its journal named 'India'

Dadabhai Naoroji (1825-1917):

He was known as 'the Grand Old Man of India'. He was associated with the Indian National Congress right from its inception and became its president thrice: in 1886, 1893 and 1906. He was the first Indian to become a Member of the House of Commons on the Liberal Party's ticket. During his stay in England, from 1855 to 1869, he educated British public on Indian affairs through the London Indian Association and the East India Association. A book by Naoroji Poverty and Un-British Rule in India was published in 1901. This book had statistics to prove that the drain of wealth from India to Great Britain was the cause of growing poverty in India.

Pherozeshah Mehta (1845-1915):

He was born in a middle class Parsi family of Bombay. He was one of the founders of the Bombay Presidency Association and the Indian National Congress. He was also a pioneer of the Swadeshi and founded the famous Bombay Chronicle in 1913.

Surendranath Banerjea (1848-1925):

He was an eminent leader who passed the ICS examination in 1871 and started his career as an Assistant Magistrate at Sylhet. A controversy with the Government led him to leave the job. He was the founder of the Indian Association in 1876. In 1883, he convened a National Conference which was the precursor of the Indian National Congress. He presided over the Congress sessions twice. He was elected the first President of the Indian National Liberal Federation in 1918 and in 1921, he became a minister in Bengal.

Badruddin Tyabji (1844-1906):

He was the first Indian barrister at Bombay High Court and was nominated to Bombay Legislative Council in 1882. He was one of the founders of the Bombay Presidency Association and the Indian National Congress. He was the President at the third Congress session in Madras in 1887. He helped Muslims in the causes of educational advancement and social reforms as the Secretary and then as the President of the Anjumani-Islam of Bombay. He strongly pleaded for the education of women.

Womesh Chander Banerjee (1844-1906):

He represented the Calcutta University in the Bengal Legislative Council. He was the first Congress President at Bombay in 1885. He left India in 1902 to settle in England to practise before the Privy Council. He financed the British Committee of the Congress in London and its journal 'India'.

Madan Mohan Malaviya (1861-1946):

He was born and educated at Allahabad. He started his career as a lawyer and as an able Parliamentarian. He was a member of the Provincial and Central Legislatures for several terms. He promoted the use of indigenous products and helped in organizing the Indian Industrial Conference and the UP Industrial Association at Allahabad in 1907. In 1926, he organized his own Nationalist Party. He also established the Banaras Hindu University and for several years served as its Vice-Chancellor.

Tej Bahadur Sapru (1872-1949):

He was a conscientious and successful lawyer who specialized in constitutional law. He helped Mrs Besant to build up the Central Hindu College at Banaras and to establish the Banaras Hindu University in collaboration with Malaviya. He entered politics during the Home Rule movement and associated in drafting Nehru Committee Report of 1928. He participated in the Round Table conferences as well.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale (1866-1915):

He was a follower of Mahadev Govind Ranade who was popularly known as the Socrates of Maharashtra. He joined the Deccan Educational Society founded by Ranade. He edited the quarterly journal of the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha. He played a great part, officially and unofficially, in the formulation of the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909. His principles attracted Gandhiji, who became Gokhale's pupil. In 1905, he laid the foundation of the 'Servants of India Society' for the training of national missionaries and to promote, by constitutional means, the true interests of the Indian people.

Kashinath Trimbak Telang (1850-1893):

He was a co-founder of the Bombay Presidency Association. He was one of the leading men who founded the Congress and became its first 'hardworking secretary'. He was active in the sphere of social reforms and was the President of the National Social Conference. He rose to the position of a High Court Judge.

Rashbehari Ghose (1845-1921):

After obtaining the Law degree, he enrolled himself as an advocate at the Calcutta High Court. He became a member of the Bengal Legislative Council in 1889. He was the Chairman, Reception Committee of the Congress, in its Calcutta session in 1906. He was also the President-elect for the Surat session of the Congress in 1907. He was deputed by the Congress to proceed with its delegation to England and forward its point of view before the British Government.

Vijayaraghavachariar

Salem C. Vijayaraghavachariar, as he was popularly known, was born on 18 June 1852 in an orthodox Vaishnavite Brahmin family at Pon Vilaindha Kalathur, in Chingleput district, Tamil Nadu. His father being a purohit and steeped in religious lore, was eager to bring up his son according to orthodox traditions. At a very early age, Vijayaraghavachariar was sent to the Veda Pathshala in his village and was brought up in a tradition of memorising the Vedas. This stood him in good stead in later years. His English education began in his twelfth year when he joined the Madras Pachaiyappa High School. He matriculated in 1870. He graduated from the Madras Presidency College in 1875. Appearing privately for the Law examination he began to practice in 1881. He was an able Advocate and a leader of the Bar at Salem.

In 1882, a short time after he set up practice at Salem there was a Hindu-Muslim riot. Vijayaraghavachariar was implicated in the riot and charges were framed against him. He relentlessly fought the charges in the Court of Law and finally came out unscathed. Fighting the case for those

implicated in the Salem riots of 1882 made Vijayaraghavachariar famous overnight. He was called 'The Hero of Salem' and 'Lion of South India'.

When the Indian National Congress was started in 1885 he was one of the special invitees. He was a close associate of A. O. Hume, the founder of the Indian National Congress. He attended the Bombay session of the Congress and in 1887 he was one of the members of the committee which drafted the constitution of the Indian National Congress. From then on Vijayaraghavachariar became an ardent freedom fighter. His counsels and leadership were much sought after by the Congressmen of the early days.

In 1895, he was elected to the Madras legislative Council which he served for 6 years, till 1901. In 1913, he was elected to the Imperial Legislative Council with which he was associated till 1916. When Lord Birkenhead the Secretary of State for India threw out a challenge whether Indians could draw up a Constitution for India Vijayaraghavachariar took up the challenge and drew up the Swaraj Constitution for India.

With the advent of Mahatma Gandhi, there was a rift in the Congress ranks between the old moderates and the new radicals. Even earlier, the ideas of the moderates did not appeal to him. He kept aloof from active party work for a period after the Surat split of the Congress and later joined with redoubled vigour to carry the message of the Mahatma. The climax of his political career came when in 1920 he was elected to preside over the Indian National Congress Session at Nagpur, where Gandhi ji's advocacy of 'Poorna Swaraj' through non - violent non - cooperation was debated and accepted.

He was also in the vanguard of the opposition to the Simon Commission that toured the country in 1929. He took an active part in the Committee that met under Motilal Nehru to frame the Constitution for India.

In many aspects, Vijayaraghavachariar was much ahead of his time. He advocated post -puberty marriage for women and also the right of a daughter to have a share in her father's property. He advocated the much needed change in the Hindu law at a time when any talk about it was a taboo.

He was a champion of the Depressed Classes. He was one of the two Vice Presidents of the Madras Branch of the Passive Resistance Movement. Mahatma Gandhi was its President; the other Vice-President was G. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, Editor of the Hindi.

He lived to the ripe old age of ninety-two. Though the diadem of leadership in South India, passed on from his hands to C. Rajagopalachari, he contented himself with giving periodic advice on matters of public importance through his regular contributions to the Madras journals.

His long life had been a period of relentless struggle against Imperialism and economic and social distress. Though an anti - imperialist, he shared a lifelong friendship with some of its representatives in India, viz., Governors and Viceroys, Lord Ripon, Lord Curzon, Lord and Lady Hardinge. The voice of the Lion of South India was stilled when he passed away on 19 April 1944. After his death, his valuable collections were treasured in the Memorial Library and Lecture Halls specially constructed and named after him. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of a written constitution. Almost all modern countries possessed of a constitutional government have written constitutions. England seems to be the only exception but only a partial exception, for her constitution is made up as well of charters and statutes as of traditions and usages preserved as common law by the line of great judges who contributed to the national freedom of England no less than her great statesmen and soldiers. I venture to submit that it is too late to think of an unwritten constitution.

Dadabhai Naoroji's Drain Theory and Economic Nationalism

Economic history of India is a late discipline. It started with critiques of imperialism and colonialism in the second half of the 19th century. In the 1850s, Karl Marx wrote a series of articles on the economic impact of colonialism. He further developed his critiques in *Capital* in the 1860s. Among the Indian writers, Mahadev Govind Ranade published his essays on economy less as a critique of colonialism than as a blueprint for development of the Indian economy. The most scathing attack on colonialism was

Dadabhai Naoroji's Poverty and Un-British Rule in India in which he argued that India's poverty was mainly due to the drain of wealth by the British government through tribute and home charges. R.C. Dutt, the first Indian ICS, published his Economic History of British India. Other economists like GB Joshi and Prithwis Chandra Ray, more or less on these lines, wrote the history of Indian economy in the British period.

Economic nationalism in India primarily began with the publication of the Drain of Wealth theory in the 19th century. The Drain of Wealth refers to the wealth of the Indian nation, which was exported outside the country in the form of valuable commodities and goods, and this export was not the usual kind of export, which we talk about in contemporary terms. India was not benefiting from this export in any way as there were absolutely no adequate returns that the country was getting out of these exports. The theory of the Drain of Wealth was first proposed by Dadabhai Naoroji. The great intellectual leader, who was also a cotton trader, was better known as the 'Grand Old Man of India'. He was one of the founding fathers of the Indian National Congress.

The Grand Old Man of India was born in the year 1825. He was the first one to expose this drainage of wealth in the paper, which he wrote in the year 1867. The title of the paper was 'English Debt to India'. On 2nd May of the same year, Dadabhai Naoroji read this paper in front of the East India Association as he was invited to a meeting by them. He was quick to present his view and was not afraid of any criticisms from the part of the British administrators. In his own words, 'Our of the revenues raised in India nearly one-fourth goes clean out of the country, and is added to the resources of England.' According to Dadabhai Naoroji, the following items contributed to the drain of wealth from India:

Government purchase of stores manufactured in Britain.

Remittances for the purchase of British goods for the consumption of British employees as well as purchases by them of British goods in India.

Remittances of savings by employees of the Company, since most employees preferred to invest at home.

Remittances to England by European employees for the support of their families and education of children-a feature of colonial system of government.

Interests charges on public debt held in Britain

Thus, the British ruled India and the Indian economy with two principle motives:

To fetch raw materials from India for the growing British industries, and,

To sell British made finished products in the vast Indian markets.

The main features of the economic policy adopted by the British to achieve these motives were:

The British government compelled Indian farmers to change over from the production of food crops to the production of commercial crops like cotton, jute, oilseeds, etc.

As a result of the Land Revenue System adopted by the British Government, the Indian farmers were obliged to sell large parts of their commercial crops in the local market and the same exported to England.

On account of the British policy, Indian handicraft and cottage industries were almost ruined.

As a result of the economic policy of the Britishers, and the British Government, Indian economy degenerated into a poor, static, backward and predominantly agricultural economy. To exploit India for the selfish interest of England was the sole objective of each policy and measure adopted by the British Government.

After the success of the first paper, Dadabhai Naroji further extended his point of views in the papers titled 'The Wants and Means of India', which was written in the year 1870 and 'On the Commerce of India', which was written in the year 1871. In the words of Dadabhai, the British rule was plundering, unrighteous, despotic, destructive and un-British. Many British theorists were of the view that India was actually benefiting from the British rule but Dadabhai called such theories as absolute myths.

As Dadabhai started his campaign, many leaders, reformers and theorists started following him. A famous nationalist was Govind Ranade who started delivering lectures on similar topics. Ranade proposed that more than one-third on the national income of the country was being taken away by the British in some way or the other. Another famous writer was Ramesh Chandra Dutt who wrote a book on this topic. The book was named The Economic History of India. He observes that, 'One half of the net revenue flows annually out of India and the moisture of India blesses and fertilizes other lands.' Thus, there were a stream of writers and nationalists who started joining this campaign delivering lectures, writing papers and books on the topic of the Drain of Wealth. Some of the famous ones included:

P. C. Ray

Gopal Krishna Gokhle

M. M. Malaviya

G. V. Joshi

D. E. Wacha

G. Subramaniam Iyer

Bholanath Chandra

Surendranath Banerjee

The Amrit Bazar Patrika was the newspaper that wrote about the Drain of Wealth out of India on a regular basis. The British theorists gave a point of view that invaders were plundering and looting India far before the coming of the British and further proposed that India was always ruled by the foreign rulers such as the Mughals, the Afghans and the Turks. The theories of the British writers can be debunked on two grounds. Firstly, when they talk about foreign invaders such as Mahmud of Ghazni, Nadir Shah and many more, they forget that these invasions were an attack on properties of individuals and thus the nation was not affected by such attacks. Secondly, the rulers who came to India and ruled over the country made India their home. The wealth accumulated by these rulers thus remained within the country making our nation wealthy and prosperous. It is true that the distribution of wealth was

unequal, but this inequality widened even further during the British Raj when the wealth started being drained out of the country.

The Moderates

Since its inception in 1885 till the time India won its Independence in 1947, the Indian National Congress was the largest and most prominent Indian political organization. In its initial stages, the Indian National Congress was a political unit, however, in due course of time it supported the cause of social reform and human development. The Indian National Congress is said to have also provided impetus to the spirit of nationalism. In its early stages, there was unity in the Indian National Congress and it was marked by the learning of democratic methods and techniques.

The leaders of the INC believed that the British government was responsive to their needs and were willing to make changes accordingly. However, over a period of time, the Indian masses became disillusioned with the concept of nationalism. They suddenly became aware that their petitions were not as fruitful as expected and that the British subtly avoided taking any action. Even in the phase of dissatisfaction, there were some Congress leaders who believed in the methods of the British government and came to be known as moderates. Since these moderate leaders failed to produce desired results, a new stream of leaders came up who were known as the extremists. These extremists disagreed with the traditional methods of moderates that were limited to writing petitions and conducting agitations to get themselves heard. The extremists were not satisfied with a dominion status and demanded complete independence from the British government.

Moderates

Due to the low-level of political awareness, the achievements of moderate nationalists were not immense. However, by 1907, the moderates were pushed to the background with the emergence of an extremist class in the Congress. The failure to produce any results for the welfare of the people resulted in the creation of an extremist group and the division of Congress into two factions. Leaders of moderate phase mainly came from Bombay, Bengal

and Madras. For example, Badruddin Tayabji, Dada Bhai Naoroji, Pherozshah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, K.T. Telang and Govind Ranade were from Bombay. Wumesh Chander Banerji, Anand Mohan Bose. Surendra Nath Banerji and Ramesh Chandra Dutta were from Bengal. Similarly, Subamanya Ayer, Anand Charlu, and Raghavacharya were from Madras. Very few leaders like Madan Mohan Malaviya and Pundit D. P. Dhar came from north India. These moderate leaders treated British rule as a blessing. They sincerely believed that the British rule would make India a developed democratic and liberal country. They had the illusion that the British would introduce modern institutions and remove superstitious belief. They saw England as a source of inspiration and treated English as their political guru. Many of these nationalist leaders had anglicized lifestyle. All they wanted and expected from the British was a 'reform package' for Indians.

The moderates believed in peaceful methods to get their demands across. They believed in writing petitions and peaceful protests. Though the Moderates failed to make the same impact as the extremists, they petitioned a number of reforms during this time.

1. **Constitutional reforms:** The Moderates demanded the expansion and reform of the existing Legislative Councils from 1885 to 1892. They demanded the introduction of the system of direct elections and an increase in the number of members and powers of the Legislative Councils. It is true that their agitation forced the Government to pass the Indian Councils Act of 1892 but the moderates were not satisfied with what was given to the people of India. No wonder, they declared the Act of 1892 as a 'hoax.' They demanded a large share for the Indians in the Legislative Councils. By the beginning of the 20th century, the Moderates put forward the claim for Swarajya or self government within the British Empire on the model of the other self-governing colonies like Australia and Canada. This demand was made from the Congress platform by Gokhale in 1905 and by Dadabhai Naoroji in 1906.

2. **Demand for economic reforms:** The Congress opposed the British attempt to develop in India the basic characteristics of a colonial economy,

namely, the transformation of India into a supplier of raw materials, a market for British manufactures and a field of investment for foreign capital. Moderates took note of all the three forms of contemporary colonial economic exploitation, namely through trade, industry and finance. They organized a powerful all-India agitation against the abandonment of tariff-duties on imports and against the imposition of cotton excise duties. The moderates carried on agitation for the reduction of heavy land revenue payments. They urged the Government to provide cheap credit to the peasantry through agricultural banks and to make available irrigation facilities on a large scale. They asked for improvement in the conditions of work of the plantation labourers. They demanded a radical change in the existing pattern of taxation and expenditure which put a heavy burden on the poor while leaving the rich, especially the foreigners, with a very light load. They demanded the abolition of salt tax which hit the poor and lower middle classes hard. The moderates complained of India's growing poverty and economic backwardness and put the blame on the politics of the British Government. They blamed the Government for the destruction of the indigenous industries like the traditional handicrafts industries in the country. They demanded the rapid development of the modern industries which would help in the removal of India's poverty. They wanted the Government to give tariff protection to the Indian industries. They advocated the use of Swadeshi goods and the boycott of British goods. They demanded that the economic drain of India by England must stop. Most of them opposed the large scale investment of foreign capital in the Indian railways, plantations and industries on the ground that it would lead to the suppression of Indian capitalists and the further strengthening of the British hold on India's economy and polity.

3. Administrative and miscellaneous reforms: Moderates criticized the individual administrative measures and worked hard to reform the administrative system which was ridden with corruption, inefficiency and oppression. They demanded the Indianization of the higher grades of the administrative services; the demand was put forward on economic, political

and moral grounds. Economically, the high salaries paid to the European put a heavy burden on Indian finance, and contributed to the economic drain. Indians of similar qualifications could be employed on lower salaries. Europeans sent a large part of their salaries back to England and also got their pensions in England. That added to the drain of wealth from India. Politically, the European civil servant ignored the needs of the Indians and favoured the European capitalists at the cost of their Indian counterparts. It was hoped that the Indianization of the services would make the administration more responsive to Indian needs. Morally, the existing system dwarfed the Indian character reducing the tallest Indian to permanent inferiority in his own country. Moderates demanded the separation of the judiciary from the executive so that the people might get some protection from the arbitrary acts of police and bureaucracy. They were opposed to the policy of disarming the people of India by the Government. They opposed the aggressive foreign policy against India's neighbours and protested against the policy of the annexation of Burma, the attack upon Afghanistan and the suppression of the tribal people in North-Western India. They wanted the Government to spend more money on the spread of education in the country. They also took up the cause of the Indians who had been compelled by poverty to migrate to the British colonies in search of employment. In many of these foreign lands they were subjected to severe oppression and racial discrimination.

4. **Defense of Civil Rights:** They opposed the restrictions imposed by the government on the modern civil rights, namely the freedom of speech and the press. Almost from the beginning of the 19th century, politically conscious Indians had been attracted to modern civil rights especially the freedom of the press. As early as 1824, Raja Ram Mohan Roy had protested against a regulation restricting the freedom of the press. In the period from 1870 to 1918, the main political task was that of politicization of nationalist ideology. The press was the chief instrument for carrying out this task. Indian newspapers began to find their feet in 1870's. The Vernacular Press Act of 1878, directed only against Indian language newspapers, was conceived in

great secrecy and passed at a single sitting of the Imperial Legislative Council. The act provided for the confiscation of the printing press, paper and other materials of a newspaper if the government believed that it was publishing seditious material and had flouted an official warning. Indian nationalist opinion firmly opposed the Act. Various public bodies and the press also campaigned against the Act. Consequently, it was repealed in 1881 by Lord Ripon. Surendranath Banerjee was the first Indian to go to jail in performance of his duty as a journalist. But, the man who is most frequently associated with the struggle for the freedom of press during the nationalist movement was Bal Gangadhar Tilak. In 1897, B. G. Tilak and many other leaders were arrested and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for condemning the government through their speeches and writings. The Nattu brothers of Poona were deported without trial. The entire country protested against this attack on the liberties of the people. The arrest of Tilak marked the beginning of new phase of the nationalist movement.

Failure of the Moderates

The basic weakness of the moderates lay in their narrow social base. Their movement did not have wide appeal. In fact, the leaders lacked political faith in the masses. The area of their influence was limited to the urban community. As they did not have the support of the masses, they declared that the time was not ripe for throwing out a challenge to the foreign rulers. That was likely to invite mature repression. However, it must not be presumed that moderate leaders fought for their narrow interests. Their programmes and policies championed the cause of all sections of the Indian people and represented nation-wide interests against colonial exploitation.

Critically evaluating the work of the Moderates, it appears that they did not achieve much success. Very few of the reforms advocated by them were carried out. The foreign rulers treated them with contempt. The moderates failed to acquire any roots among the common people and even those who joined the Congress with high hopes were feeling more and more disillusioned. The politics of the moderates was described as 'halting and half-

hearted.’ Their methods were described as those of mendicancy or beggary through prayers and petitions. Moderates failed to keep pace with the yearnings and aspirations of the people. They did not realize that the political and economic interests of the Indians and the British clashed and consequently the British people could not be expected to give up their rights and privileges in India without a fight. Moreover, it was during this period that a movement started among the Muslims to keep away from the Congress and that ultimately resulted in the establishment of Pakistan. In spite of their best efforts, the moderates were not able to win over the Muslims. The social composition of Congress remained, by and large the same till 1905. A. O. Hume tried his best to bring Muslims and peasants into the Congress fold, but with little success.

The Muslim elite, especially from Aligarh, felt that they would lose from the elected councils and that the Hindus would dominate (Hindus were in majority in most places). The Muslim elite also opposed competitive examinations for the recruitment into civil services, as it was based on modern English education and the Muslims were far behind the Hindus in this field.

They feared Hindu domination in the civil services too. All these factors kept Muslims away from the Congress; neither did the Congress give a serious look into inducting Muslims. This was a big mistake, as they realized in later years. Thus, it is clear that the Congress was not only concerned with the issues of zamindars, capitalist and English educated professionals, but it also showed concern for almost all the sections of the society. The objectives of the Congress were never the reason for calling it ‘moderate’, rather its methods and style of functioning. The early Congress leaders believed in the constitutional method of struggle, i.e., through petitions, speeches and articles. One important reason for this was the social composition of early Congress leaders. They came from successful professional background (most of them were lawyers, journalists and academicians) and their personal life-style was anglicised. Perhaps, the first lesson they learned from the British was how to

write applications and give petitions. Moreover, politics, for most of them, remained a part-time affair.

1. Composition of the Indian National Congress (INC)

- **Formation:** The Indian National Congress was founded in 1885 by A.O. Hume, a retired British civil servant, with the aim of providing a platform for educated Indians to discuss and express their concerns about British rule.
- **Early Members:** Initially composed of English-educated elites, lawyers, and professionals, the Congress aimed to represent the interests of the emerging middle class.
 - **Important Founding Figures:** Dadabhai Naoroji, W.C. Bonnerjee, Surendranath Banerjee, and Gopal Krishna Gokhale were key early leaders.
- **Phases of Leadership:**
 - **Moderate Phase (1885-1905):** Dominated by leaders like Gokhale and Naoroji, this phase sought constitutional reforms.
 - **Extremist Phase (1905-1920):** Led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Lala Lajpat Rai, this phase was marked by more assertive demands for self-rule.
 - **Gandhian Phase (1920 onward):** Mahatma Gandhi transformed the Congress into a mass movement, bringing in peasants, workers, and women, expanding its social base.

2. Methods of Work

- **Petitions and Diplomacy (Early Phase):** In its early years, the Congress focused on petitions, resolutions, and appeals to British authorities.
 - **Annual Sessions:** The Congress held annual sessions where members discussed issues like civil rights, political representation, and economic reforms.

- **Moderate Approach:** Leaders sought dialogue with British authorities, hoping to achieve gradual reforms through cooperation.
- **Shift to Mass Mobilization (Post-1915):**
 - **Non-Cooperation Movement (1920):** Gandhi's leadership transformed the Congress, advocating for non-cooperation with British institutions, boycotting goods, schools, and elections.
 - **Civil Disobedience (1930):** Marked by events like the Salt March, the Congress adopted nonviolent resistance as a key strategy.
 - **Quit India Movement (1942):** In response to British refusal to grant India independence during World War II, the Congress launched the Quit India Movement, calling for an end to British rule.

3. Policies and Ideals

- **Demand for Self-Rule:** The Congress initially sought greater political representation and rights for Indians but evolved to demand full independence.
- **Social Reforms:** Congress leaders also focused on social issues such as:
 - **Abolition of Untouchability:** Gandhi's efforts to promote the rights of Dalits and marginalized communities.
 - **Promotion of Swadeshi:** Emphasis on using indigenous products and boycotting British goods to encourage self-reliance.
 - **Emphasis on Non-Violence:** Led by Gandhi, the Congress adopted a policy of non-violence (ahimsa) in its struggle for independence.
- **Economic Policies:**
 - Advocacy for protection of Indian industries from British competition.

- Promotion of rural industries and self-sufficiency through programs like Khadi.

4. Demands of the Congress

- **Moderate Era (1885-1905):**
 - Expansion of the Indian Legislative Council and greater participation of Indians in administration.
 - Reduction in military expenditure and more focus on developmental issues like education, health, and infrastructure.
 - Fair representation of Indians in government services.
- **Extremist Demands (1905-1920):**
 - **Swaraj** (self-rule) became the central demand of the extremists like Tilak.
 - End of the partition of Bengal, which was seen as a deliberate attempt to divide and weaken Indian nationalism.
- **Post-Gandhian Era:**
 - Complete independence (Purna Swaraj) as declared in the 1929 Lahore Session.
 - Economic justice, land reforms, and the end of exploitative colonial economic policies.

5. Attitudes of the British

- **Initial Accommodation:** In its early years, the British tolerated the Congress as they saw it as a platform of elites who posed no threat to colonial rule.
- **Change in Approach:** As Congress shifted towards more assertive demands for self-rule, British attitudes hardened.
 - **Repression of Extremists:** The British government responded to the extremist phase by imprisoning leaders like Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai.
 - **Acts of Repression:**

- The **Rowlatt Act** (1919), which allowed the British government to imprison Indians without trial, triggered widespread protests and unrest.
- The **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre** (1919), where British troops killed hundreds of unarmed civilians, intensified anti-British sentiment.
- **Divide and Rule:** The British employed policies of division by encouraging communal divisions between Hindus and Muslims, especially after the formation of the Muslim League in 1906.
- **Repressive Measures:** During the Quit India Movement, the British arrested most Congress leaders, declared the organization illegal, and used military force to suppress the uprising.

6. Major Developments in Congress Policies

- **Minto-Morley Reforms (1909):** The British introduced limited reforms like separate electorates for Muslims, but Congress was dissatisfied with the token measures.
- **Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms (1919):** Introduced dyarchy in provinces, giving Indians some control over local matters, but retained British dominance in key areas like law and order.
- **Government of India Act (1935):** This introduced provincial autonomy, but Congress rejected the act due to limited self-governance provisions and the retention of significant power by the British.

The Indian National Congress evolved from a moderate group of elites petitioning for political representation into a mass movement demanding full independence. The Congress employed a range of methods, from petitions to mass mobilization, and embraced policies promoting non-violence, self-reliance, and social reform. The British response varied from initial tolerance to harsh repression as Congress's demands for self-rule became more pronounced.

Evaluation of the Early Phase of the National Movement (1885–1905)

The early phase of the Indian National Movement (1885–1905) is often referred to as the **Moderate Phase**. This period was characterized by the formation of the Indian National Congress (INC) and its initial efforts to engage with the British colonial government through petitions, resolutions, and dialogues. The leaders of this phase were committed to constitutional methods of reform, seeking to address grievances while maintaining a belief in the justness of British rule.

1. Leadership and Ideology

- The early nationalists, also called **Moderates**, were predominantly educated, middle-class individuals who were influenced by Western liberal ideas and democratic principles. Leaders like **Dadabhai Naoroji**, **Surendranath Banerjee**, **Pherozeshah Mehta**, **Gopal Krishna Gokhale**, and **Anandamohan Bose** played key roles.
- They believed that British rule could be beneficial if reforms were introduced and if Indian interests were safeguarded. They sought self-governance but within the framework of the British Empire.

2. Methods of Work

The Moderates adopted a policy of **constitutional agitation**. Their methods included:

- **Petitions:** Addressing the British government to redress Indian grievances.
- **Resolutions:** Passing resolutions at annual Congress sessions.
- **Meetings and Delegations:** Meeting British officials and presenting memoranda.
- **Public Campaigns:** Public meetings, articles in the press, and speeches to mobilize public opinion.
- **Moderate Demands:** These included demands for increased Indian representation in the legislative councils, civil rights, and reforms in taxation and administration.

3. Policies and Demands

The early nationalists presented a moderate set of demands to the British government. Key demands included:

- **Greater Indian Representation:** They wanted more Indians to be included in the civil services and legislative councils.
- **Economic Reforms:** They sought a reduction in land revenue and protection of Indian industries from British economic policies that favored British imports.
- **Civil Liberties:** They demanded the protection of civil rights, such as freedom of speech and assembly.
- **Education Reforms:** They emphasized education and the need for universal literacy.

4. Achievements of the Early Phase

The early phase of the national movement, despite its limitations, laid important foundations for later stages of the freedom struggle.

- **Political Awareness:** The Congress created a platform for political expression and a shared identity of Indian nationalism.
- **Economic Critique:** Leaders like **Dadabhai Naoroji** provided a critical economic analysis of British exploitation, famously articulating the theory of the "**Drain of Wealth**" from India to Britain.
- **Social Reforms:** The early leaders promoted education, social reform, and modern ideas like democracy and individual rights.
- **Indian Councils Act of 1892:** While limited in scope, the Act marked a step forward in increasing Indian representation in legislative councils.

5. Limitations of the Moderate Phase

The early phase of the Indian National Movement had certain limitations, which eventually led to dissatisfaction among a younger generation of leaders.

- **Limited Appeal:** The Congress and the Moderates primarily represented the interests of the educated, urban elite. Their influence in rural areas and among the masses was minimal.
- **Gradualism and Faith in British Rule:** The Moderates believed in gradual reforms and often appealed to British goodwill, avoiding direct confrontation with the colonial government.
- **Lack of Mass Mobilization:** The methods of petitions and resolutions lacked the capacity to mobilize the masses, which became a critical component of later phases of the movement.
- **Impact on Government:** The colonial government largely ignored their demands, and meaningful reforms were minimal.

6. Shift to Extremism

By the early 20th century, dissatisfaction with the Moderates' approach led to the rise of the **Extremists** or **Radical Nationalists** within the Congress. Leaders like **Bal Gangadhar Tilak**, **Bipin Chandra Pal**, and **Lala Lajpat Rai** advocated for more assertive methods, including boycotts, swadeshi (self-reliance), and direct action. The partition of Bengal in 1905 further accelerated the shift towards extremism.

7. Evaluation

While the early phase of the national movement did not achieve immediate success in terms of major reforms or independence, it played a crucial role in creating a political consciousness in India. The key contributions include:

- **Political Foundation:** The establishment of the Congress created a political framework for future generations to build on.
- **Economic and Social Awareness:** The economic critique of British policies and the advocacy for social reforms created a deeper understanding of colonial exploitation.
- **Preparation for Future Phases:** The early phase acted as a necessary precursor to the more radical and mass-based phases of the movement, such as the Swadeshi Movement and later Gandhian Movements.

The early phase of the Indian National Movement is significant in Indian history for laying the groundwork for future struggles. It introduced the ideas of self-rule, constitutional reform, **and** Indian unity, even though it did not yield immediate political results. The rise of the Extremists marked a turning point, as the national movement transitioned to more assertive and mass-based forms of protest in the years to come.

Rise of Extremism and its Causes

The closing decade of the nineteenth century and early years of the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of a new and younger group within the Indian National Congress, which was sharply critical of the ideology and methods of the old leadership. These ‘angry young men’ advocated the adoption of Swaraj as the goal of the Congress, which was to be achieved by more self-reliant and independent methods. The new group came to be called the extremists in contrast to the older one which began to be referred to as the moderates.

The militant form of nationalism was first found in the teachings and preaching of Bankim Chandra Chatterjee and Swami Dayananda Saraswati. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee was inspired by the Bhagavad Gita and visualized a united India. Swami Vivekananda, who was called the prophet of nationalism by Bipin Chandra Pal, added spiritual dimension to the idea of nationalism. He inspired the youth of his time, more than anyone else. The root of extremism lies in two important factors—the policies of colonial rule, and the failure of moderate leaders to attract younger generation and common people.

Factors that Led to the Rise of Extremism

Following are the factors led to the rise of extremists:

Enlightenment of the true nature of British rule

Civil Services examinations was disallowed

Partition of Bengal

The Indian Council Act, 1892, failed to introduce an elective element in India and provided for selection of some members

Adoption of the Tariff and Cotton Duties Act of 1894 and 1896 by the Indians Curbing freedom of press (1904) and controlling universities through Indian University Act (1904).

Defeat of Russia (1904-05) by Japan inspired the educated youth Circulation of Vernacular newspaper went up from 2,99,000 in 1885 to 8,17,000 in 1905. Some of the popular journals like Kesari (Marathi) and Bangabhasi (Bengali) opposed the moderate Congress. The famine of Maharashtra in 1896.

Objectives and Methods of Extremists

The new turn in Indian politics found expression in two forms—the formation of the extremist group within the Congress and the growth of revolutionary movement in the country at large. Four prominent Congress leaders— Lokamanya Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai, defined the creed of the new group, gave articulate form to its aspirations and guided its operations. One of the earliest leaders who criticized the moderate politics systematically, in a series of articles titled ‘New Lamps for Old’ was Aurobindo Ghose. He did not like the constitutional method of struggle based on English model and attacked the soft attitude of the Congress. He told them not to take inspiration from England but to take inspiration from French Revolution (1789-99). He also suggested bringing the proletariat (working) class in the national movement. The emerging leaders in the Congress, like Bipin Chandra Pal, Ashwini Kumar Dutta, Lala Lajpat Rai and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, were not happy with the ‘prayers’ and ‘petitions’ methods. They were in favour of self-reliance, constructive work, mass contact through melas, public meetings, use of mother tongue in education and political works. They argued that ‘good government is no substitute for self-government’. The issue of Swadeshi Movement widened the gap between the moderates and the extremists. The extremists wanted to spread the movement in the entire country and complete non-cooperation with the government. Lajpat Rai and Tilak were more aggressive in their ideas and plans.

Lajpat Rai thundered ‘no national is worthy of any political status if it cannot distinguish between begging rights and claiming them’. He further argued that ‘sovereignty rests with the people; the state exists for them and rules in their name’. But the true founder of militant nationalism was Bal Gangadhar Tilak. He criticized the moderates in his unique style– ‘we will not achieve any success in our labours if we croak once a year like a frog’. He was quick to set the political goal of India, i.e., ‘Swaraj’ or self-government instead of reform in administration. He showed greater confidence and ability when he declared ‘Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it’. He was a pioneer in many ways. He used religious symbols and festivals, like Ganesh festival since 1894, to mobilize people and he made patriotic-cum-historical cult through Shivaji festival since 1896 to inspire the youth. He even carried out the no-revenue campaign in 1896–97, during severe famine in Maharashtra. He called upon the government to take those measures of relief, which were provided under law in the Famine Relief Code. Through his paper, Kesari, he made an appeal to the people to refuse to pay taxes. He wrote angrily, ‘Can you not be bold even in the grip of death’. He also started Boycott Movement on the issue of countervailing Cotton Excise Duty Act of 1896. It should be clearly understood that the extremists’ demand for Swaraj was a demand for ‘complete freedom from foreign control and full independence to manage national affairs without any foreign restraints’. The Swaraj of the moderate leaders was merely a demand for colonial self-government within the Empire. The methods employed by the two groups (moderates and extremists) were different in their tempo and approach. The extremists had no faith in the benevolence of the British public or parliament, nor were they convinced of the efficacy of merely holding conferences. The extremists also affirmed their faith in passive resistance, mass agitation and strong will to suffer or make self-sacrifices. The new leadership sought to create a passionate love for liberty, accompanied by a spirit of sacrifice and a readiness to suffer for the cause of the country. They strove to root out from the people’s mind the omnipotence of the ruler, and instead give them self-

reliance and confidence in their own strength. They had deep faith in the strength of the masses and they planned to achieve Swaraj through mass action. They, therefore, pressed for political work among the masses and for direct political action by the masses. The extremists advocated boycott of the foreign goods, use of swadeshi goods, national education and passive resistance.

Revolutionary Activities

Even the reactionary activities of the extremists school of leaders could not satisfy the Indian youth. They opposed the British with the use of violence through pistol and bomb. The revolutionary terrorist movement in India strongly affected the Congress and the British government. Revolutionary terrorist groups restricted their strengths only to remain more agile and effective. The movement, however low the number it attracted, had an impact on India: its people, the Congress and the British rulers.

Revolutionary activities in Maharashtra

The Chapekar brothers (Deodar and Balkrishana Chapeau) shot dead Lt. Ayerst in 1897 at Poona, although Rand, the president of the Plague Committee was the real target. They were arrested, convicted and hanged. Similarly, Bal Gangadhar Tilak was sentenced to jail for provoking terrorism through his writings.

Revolutionary activities in Bengal

Bengal became the hotbed of terrorist activities. In 1908, Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose threw a bomb at Kennedy's carriage assuming it to be that of Kingsford, the judge of Muzaffarpur. Previously, the concerned judge had awarded capital punishment to many youths. Two ladies died in the incident and Prafulla shot himself dead before he could be captured by the police. On the other hand, Khudiram was tried and hanged.

In Calcutta, Aurobindo Ghosh organized the revolutionaries. He tried to strike terror in the minds of the British officials by killing some British officers. In Alipore conspiracy case, Aurobindo, his brother, Barinas and others were captured and tried. Namenda Gosling, the approver in the case,

was shot dead. A similar fate awaited the Public Prosecutor and the Deputy Superintendent of police. Although Aurobindo was acquitted but his brother and the others were deported to Andaman. Sateen Bose and Kanai Dutta, who had killed the approver, were sentenced to death. Another revolutionary named Baghdad Jain was killed in an encounter with police in 1915. He was involved in the Dacca conspiracy case.

Revolutionary activities in Punjab

Punjab also became a centre of revolutionary activities under the leadership of Lala Hardayal, Avado Bihar, Amir Chandra, J.M. Chatterjee, etc. The revolutionary associations like 'Kitty Kinas Party' and 'Naujawan Sabha' were also set up. Chandra Shekhar Azad founded 'Hindustan Republic Association'. It was later rechristened as 'Hindustan Socialist Republic Association'. Its leading members like Bhagat Singh, Raj Guru and Sukh Dev were sentenced to death for their involvement in the Kakori train robbery, bombing the Assembly hall and other terrorist activities. In fact, Punjab became a smouldering volcano for the British government.

The Europeans were attacked at Lahore. Several riots occurred at The Extremists Rawalpindi under the leadership of Ajit Singh.

Revolutionary activities in Madras

The youths of Madras were inspired by the visit of Bipin Chandra Pal to Madras and his inflammatory speech. Chidambaram Pillai demanded total independence for India for which he was arrested. As a protest the crowd turned violent in Tuticorin and Tirunelveli. The police opened fire to disperse the crowd. The officer who had ordered firing was killed by Vanchi Ayer.

Revolutionary activities in the rest of India

At various places in western India, the revolutionary terrorism made its presence felt. In 1909 Jackson, the Magistrate of Nasik was shot dead. He was very unpopular among the general public. The Ahmedabad bomb case and the Satara conspiracy cases were other noteworthy terrorist activities in the region. At Dehradun, a bomb was thrown at Viceroy Lord Harding by Rasbehari Bose. Some of the Viceroy's attendants were killed. In an

encounter with British police in 1931, Chandra Shekhar Azad was shot dead at Alfred Park in Allahabad.

Revolutionary Activities Abroad

Even abroad the revolutionary activities continued in full swing. After the murder of District Magistrate Rand, Shyamji Krishna Verma of Kathiawar went to London and started Home Rule Society in due course of time. In 1906, V.D. Savarkar went to London and joined 'Indian Society'. It promoted revolutionary terrorism. Madan Lal Dhingra, one of the members of this society, killed Sir William Curzon Willy, the ADC to the Secretary of State of India. Among the revolutionary activities abroad, the role of Gadar Party can never be denied. Lala Hardayal, a revolutionary young man from Punjab, established Gadar Party and also published a weekly paper The Gadar.

It aimed at bringing about a revolution in India to set the country free from the British. Lala Hardayal was ordered by the USA government to leave the country due to his engagement in the anti-British propaganda. During the World War I, the Indian revolutionaries abroad approached the German government for help. They further sought help from the Muslims of Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan to overthrow the British empire in India. Sardar Ajit Singh and Sufi Amba Prasad went to the Middle East to unite the defeated Indian soldiers and garner their support. Raja Mahendra Pratap led an Indo-German mission to Afghanistan and set up a free government there.

The Komagata Maru case fanned the fire of revolutionary terrorism. This Japanese ship which took revolutionary Sikhs to Canada was denied anchoring in the port in Canada and returned to Calcutta. The passengers revolted not to board train for Punjab arranged by the British government. Some of them died due to the government's strict action. All these happenings inspired the terrorist movement in Punjab.

The revolutionary terrorists carried out political dacoities at Amritsar, Jullundur and Ludhiana in Punjab. These revolutionary activities lasted abroad till 1945 when Subhas Chandra Bose met a mysterious death. The

revolutionary activities, both inside the country and abroad, could not succeed because these were confined just to the educated middle class people of India.

There were specific causes which were responsible for the failure of revolutionary activities. Some of them are: lack of sympathy from the upper class Indians; various types of organizational and financial problems coming across the revolutionaries; indifference of Indian National Congress towards the militant nationalist thought; tough and repressive measures taken by the government; and last but not the least, the appearance of Gandhiji on the scene

Bhagat Singh, representative of the dissatisfied Indian youth who disapproved of Gandhian policies, offered revolutionary alternatives. He emerged as an extraordinary revolutionary and martyr of the Indian anti-colonial movement. He studied the European revolutionary movement and was particularly attracted to anarchism and communism. Being an out and out atheist, socialist and communist, it was not long before it dawned on him that just overthrowing the British was not enough. He realized that the socialist reconstruction of Indian society was essential, for which the workers needed to seize political power. In the words of Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt:

By Revolution we mean that the present order of things, which is based on manifest injustice must change. Producers or labourers, in spite of being the most necessary element of society, are robbed by their exploiters of their labour and deprived of their elementary rights. The peasant who grows corn for all, starves with his family; the weaver who supplies the world market with textile fabrics, has not enough to cover his own and his children's bodies; masons, smiths and carpenters who raise magnificent palaces, live like pariahs in the slums. The capitalists and exploiters, the parasites of society, squander millions on their whims.

This was their understanding of revolution which they expressed following the (assembly bomb case) on 6th June, 1929. Their argument was that a 'radical change' was required and that it could only be brought about by those who realized that it was necessary to reorganize society on socialist. For this purpose, it was felt necessary to establish the dictatorship of the

proletariat. It is clear from the actions and slogans associated with the Lahore Conspiracy Case that Bhagat Singh and his comrades were followers of Communism. On January 21, 1930, they appeared in court with red scarves. The moment the magistrate was seated they raised the following slogans: 'Long Live Socialist Revolution', 'Long Live the Communist International', 'Long live the people', 'Lenin's name will never die', and 'Down with Imperialism.' The text of the following telegram was read by Bhagat Singh in court:

On Lenin Day we send hearty greetings to all who are doing something for carrying forward the ideas of the great Lenin, we wish success to the great experiment Russia is carrying out. We join our voice to that of the International working class movement. The proletariat will win. Capitalism will be defeated. Death to Imperialism.

Bhagat Singh criticized the individual terrorism that existed among the revolutionary youth of his time. He realized that there was a need for the Communist Party to work towards mass mobilization. Bhagat strongly believed that the party had to organize the workers and the peasantry. The fight for the small economic demands through the labour unions, according to him, was the best means of educating the common masses for a final struggle to achieve political power. He also felt that the Communist Party should shoulder the additional responsibility of organizing a military department.

In his own words: 'I am not a terrorist and I never was, except perhaps in the beginning of my revolutionary career. And I am convinced that we cannot gain anything through these methods. One can easily judge it from the history of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. All our activities were directed towards an aim, i.e., identifying ourselves with the great movement as its military wing. If anybody has misunderstood me, let him amend his ideas. I do not mean that bombs and pistols are useless, rather the contrary. But I mean to say that mere bomb throwing is not only useless but sometimes harmful. The military department of the party should always keep

ready all the war-material it can command for any emergency. It should back the political work of the party. It cannot and should not work independently.'

Swadeshi Movement

The Swadeshi movement was born as a unified reaction against the partition of Bengal in 1905 and continued up to 1908. In fact, it was the most successful of all the pre-Gandhian movements. Primarily, the scheme of partition was opposed through a comprehensive use of conventional 'moderate' means of press campaigns, petitions and several meetings, massive conferences at the Calcutta town hall, etc. When such measures and techniques bailed, it led to a search for new means like boycott of British goods, Rakhi Bandhan and Arandhan.

At the theoretical level, two significant trends can be specified in the Swadeshi movement (i) constructive Swadeshi and (ii) political 'extremism'. The weapon of 'boycott' was used to make Swadeshi movement successful. Constructive Swadeshi comprised self-help through the means of Swadeshi industries, national schools and attempts at village improvement. It found expression through the business ventures of people such as Prafulla Chandra Roy or Nilratan Sarkar; national education movement started by Satishchandra Mukherjee; and development work in villages by reviving the traditional Hindu Samaj outlined by Rabindranath Tagore. Aswini Kumar Datta's Swadesh Bandhav Samity also played a key role in the effort for reconstruction. Rabindranath termed this perspective of development atmashakti (self-strengthening).

However, it appealed little to the excited educated youth of Bengal. They were more drawn to the doctrine of political 'extremism'. Their basic difference with the proponents of constructive Swadeshi was regarding methods. In April 1907, the classic statements were given by Sri Aurobindo Ghosh in this regard in a series of articles. These were later reprinted as the 'Doctrine of Passive Resistance'. He envisioned a programme of 'organized and relentless boycott of British goods, official education, justice and executive administration'. All this was to be backed up by the positive

development of Swadeshi industries, schools and arbitration courts. Moreover, he looked forward to civil disobedience, 'social boycott' of loyalists and the option of waging armed struggle if the British repression crossed the limits of endurance.

There was another controversy over cultural ideas between the modern nationalists and the proponents of Hindu revivalism. In general, the Swadeshi mood was strongly linked to the efforts to associate religious revivalism with politics. The method of Swadeshi vows in temples was first used by Surendranath Banerjee. Usually, the national education plans possessed a very strong revivalist content. Further, 'boycott' was planned to be enforced through traditional caste sanctions. The Extremists Such aggressive brand of Hinduism usually got inextricably reflected in the pages of *Bande Mataram*, *Sandhya* or *Yugantar*. Nonetheless, Brahmo journals such as *Sanjibani* and *Prabasi* were very critical of this view.

The Hindu revivalist tendency, along with the British propaganda that the new province would fetch more jobs for the Muslims, achieved significant success in turning the upper and middle classes of Muslims against the Swadeshi movement. In spite of powerful pleas for communal unity given by an active group of Swadeshi Muslim agitators such as Ghaznavi, Rasul, Din Mahomed, Didar, Liakat Hussain, etc., East Bengal witnessed communal riots. For maintaining Hindu images, a few Hindu zamindars and mahajans started to levy an *Ishvar brtti*. As such a huge section of the Muslim community in Bengal remained detached from the Swadeshi movement. Hindu *bhadralok*, whether believing in moderate or extremist politics, took an active part in the movement.

Rabindranath Tagore and other men of letters realized this limitation of the spontaneity of the movement. Rabindranath, though substantially influenced by revivalism for some time, driven by all the communal strife, in a series of outstandingly perceptive articles in mid 1907 pointed out that just blaming the British for the riots was an oversimplification of the situation.

Along with such cultural limitations, the history of boycott and Swadeshi movement clearly illustrates the limitations of a movement launched by the intelligentsia in the sense that it possessed broadly bourgeois aspirations but had little real bourgeois support. During the initial stages, boycott attained some success. Hence, in September 1906, the Calcutta collector of customs observed a decline in the sales of Manchester cloth. Nonetheless, the decline was more born of a quarrel over trade terms between Calcutta marwari dealers and the British manufacturers. Significantly, the biggest decline was for items such as shoes and cigarettes where the demand was basically from the middle-class Indian gentry.

Despite such limitations, the Swadeshi mood brought about considerable revival in handloom, silk weaving and some other traditional arts and crafts. Further, several attempts were undertaken to promote modern industries. Hence, in August 1906, Banga Lakshmi Cotton Mills was started and there were some reasonably successful ventures in the fields of soap, matches, porcelain, chrome and cigarettes.

A significant diversity is noticeable within the national education efforts in Swadeshi Bengal. It ranges from the schemes for vernacular technical teaching to Santiniketan founded by Rabindranath and the Dawn Society of Satish Mukherjee. These comprised the attempts to combine the traditional and the modern in a plan for 'higher culture' for selected youths. In March 1906, the National Society of Education was set up as a parallel university. National education possessed negligible job prospects and hence failed in attracting the bulk of students, still a few institutions like Bengal National College or Bengal Technical Institute continued their operations.

The appearance of Samitis was an achievement of the Swadeshi times. Most of these Samitis were quite open bodies by 1908 and performed various activities like physical and moral training, social work during religious festivals, propagating the Swadeshi message in various forms, and organizing schools, crafts arbitration courts and village societies, apart from implementing the techniques of passive resistance.

Unfortunately, the Swadeshi movement indirectly alienated the common Muslim public from the mainstream of national politics. They followed a different course which culminated in the formation of the Muslim League (1906) in Dacca. However, it also helped in providing a new dimension to the Indian nationalist movement through giving the Gandhian conception of mass satyagraha without taking a recourse to violence.

Significance of Swadeshi Movement

Although the Swadeshi movement was not immediately successful in unifying the partitioned Bengal, still its significance cannot be underestimated. It is because of the following factors:

The Swadeshi movement was fairly different from the earlier movements conducted by the national leaders. In this movement, a programme of direct political action was undertaken which was opposed to the policy of ‘prayer and petition’.

During the initial stages, the Swadeshi movement tried to bring about the annulment of the partition of Bengal. However, finally its efforts assumed a bigger dimension to incorporate the objective of attaining complete freedom from the foreign domination itself.

The ‘boycott’ aspect of the Swadeshi movement comprised the aim of pressurizing the mill-owners of Manchester economically so that they could bring pressure upon the British government, for the annulment of Partition. However, with the passage of time the ‘boycott’ did not keep limited to the British goods alone. It was applied on a broader scale to incorporate everything that was foreign, specifically British.

The cultural aspect of the Swadeshi movement was also very significant. Bengali literature flourished during the Swadeshi days. The patriotic compositions and creations of Rabindranath Tagore and Rajanikanto Sen magically touched the patriotic sense of the masses.

Role of Students, Women, Muslims and the Masses during Swadeshi Movement

The students of Bengal played a prominent part in the Swadeshi agitation. They propagated and practised Swadeshi and took the lead in organizing picketing of shops selling foreign items. The government on its part tried its best to suppress the students. It issued orders to penalize such schools and colleges whose students were actively involved in the Swadeshi agitation. Their grants- The Extremists in-aid and other privileges were withdrawn. Further, they were disaffiliated and their students were not allowed to compete for scholarships and were restricted from all governmental services.

Penalizing action was taken against students found guilty of participating in the nationalist agitation. A good number of them were fined, expelled from schools and colleges, arrested and at times beaten by the police. However, the students refused to be cowed down.

An amazing aspect of the Swadeshi agitation comprised the active participation of women. Many women belonging to traditionally home-centred urban middle classes took part in processions and picketing. Afterwards, they participated in the nationalist movement at a very active level.

Moreover, many prominent Muslims participated in the Swadeshi movement. These included Abdul Rasul (the famous barrister), Liaquat Hussain (the popular agitator) and Guznavi (the businessman). Maulana Abul Kalam Azad joined one of the revolutionary terrorist groups. However, majority of the middle and upper class Muslims remained neutral. Many others, following the Nawab of Dhaka (who got a loan of 14 lakh from the government), even supported partition under the belief that East Bengal would come to have a Muslim majority.

This kind of communal attitude, as was nurtured by the Nawab of Dhaka and others, was greatly encouraged by the government officials. In a speech made at Dhaka, Lord Curzon stated that one of the reasons for the

partition was 'to invest the Mohammedans in Eastern Bengal with a unity which they have not enjoyed since the days of the old Mussalman Viceroy and Kings.'

Swadeshi Movement began as an anti-partition agitation in Bengal and boycott was first suggested by Krishna Kumar Mitra in Sanjivani. The boycott of British products was followed by the advocacy of Swadeshi and to buy indigenously produced goods as a patriotic duty. The leaders of Bengal felt that mere demonstrations, public meetings and resolutions were not enough and something more concrete was needed and the answer was Swadeshi and boycott. Mass meetings were held all over Bengal and big crowds took the oath of Swadeshi. Patients refused to take foreign medicines and were willing to face the consequences. People burnt foreign clothes and foreign cigarettes. The Swadeshi Movement was an immense success.

Self-reliance meant assertion of national dignity, honour and self-confidence. In the economic field, it meant indigenization of the industry. Many textile mills, soap and match factories, national banks and insurance companies were started. A prominent part was played by the students of Bengal in the Swadeshi agitation. They picketed the shops selling foreign cloth and other foreign goods. Women also joined processions and picketed the shops dealing in foreign goods. The programmes of Swadeshi and boycott went hand in hand. As a consequence of the Swadeshi movement, there was a flowering of nationalist poetry, prose and journalism. The leader of Bengal took up the work of national education in right earnest. National educational institutions were opened by them and literary, technical and physical education was given there. On 15 August 1906, a National Council of Education was set up and Aurobindo Ghose was appointed the first Principal of the National College.

The Muslim League

The British government followed a policy of divide and rule in India. The schism between the Hindus and the Muslims gradually increased. This period also saw the growth of communalism and separatist tendencies. The

early 20th century witnessed the formation of Muslim League as well the split between two factions of the Congress. The rift between the Moderates and the Extremists culminated in the Surat Split of 1907. This unit will discuss the factors that led to these two significant events. The Home Rule Movement will also be discussed in detail.

Formation of Muslim League

Communalism is basically an ideology. It is the belief that in India Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians are from different and distinct communities. Inherent in communalism is the second notion that the social, cultural, economic and political interests of the followers of one religion are dissimilar and divergent from the interests of the followers of another religion. When religious 'communities' are seen to be mutually incompatible, antagonistic and hostile communalism is said to be at its apex. Thus, at this stage, the communalists assert that Hindus and Muslims cannot have common secular interests, and that their secular interests are bound to be opposed to each other.

To look upon the communal problem in India merely as the Hindu-Muslim question or of religious antagonism between the Hindus and the Muslims is misleading. Apart from the Hindus and the Muslims, there was third party in the Communal triangle—the British rulers who interposed themselves between the Hindus and the Muslims and thus, created a communal triangle of which they remained the base.

Anti-Muslim British Policy

The strongest arm of the communal triangle was the British rulers. They were neither the true friends of the Muslims, nor the foes of the Hindus; they were the true friends of British imperialism and acted on the tested and tried maxim divide and rule.

Until the seventies of 19th century, it suited the imperial interest to support the Hindus and they did it. The early British economic and educational policies benefited the Hindus more than the Muslims. The result of these policies was the catastrophe of 1857. Even before the Mutiny of

1857, the Muslims had revolted against the British Government under the Wahabi leaders.

The British Government ruthlessly suppressed the movement; but it manifested itself in the form of the mutiny. The prime movers in the mutiny of 1857 were the Muslim Wahabis. As the British considered the Muslims to be responsible for the Mutiny, they were treated very severely after 1858.

However, a change in British policy is perceptible towards the 1870s. The Hindus, politically more advanced than the Muslims, demanded more share for Indians in higher services, agitated for grant of political rights, introduction of representative government, etc. The Hindu posed a serious menace to the stability of British rule in India than the politically, economically and educationally backward Muslims. This marked the beginning of a change in British policy towards the two communities. W. W. Hunter's book, *The Indian Mussalmans* (published in 1871) described 'the Muslims too weak for Rebellion', pleaded for a change of official attitude towards the Muslims community. Theodore Beck, the first British principal of the newly started Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College at Aligarh, played a notable role in mobilizing Muslim opinion and influencing British policy towards the Muslims. He urged the Muslims to support the British for their safety.

Role of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan

Sayyid Ahmad Khan (Figure 8.1) became a staunch opponent of the Indian National Congress and he fell into line with the British imperialists. Principal Beck was able to convince Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan that 'while an Anglo-Muslim alliance would ameliorate the condition of the Muslim community, the nationalist alignment would lead them once again to sweat, toil and tears.'

Sayyid Ahmad Khan started his political career as an advocate of Hindu-Muslim unity. He had described the Hindus and Muslims as 'two eyes of the beautiful bride that was India.' He had declared in 1884 at Gurdaspur that the Hindus and Muslims should try to become of one heart and soul and

act in unison. 'If united, we can support each other. If not, the effect of one against the other would tend to the destruction and downfall of both,' he said. Contrast with this, Sir Sayyid's speech at Meerut on 16 March 1888, where he maintained that the Hindus and Muslims were not only two nations, but as two warring nations who could never lead a common political life, should ever the British quit India. The Muslim demand for separate electorates almost synchronized with the introduction of the system of election in the constitution of local bodies. Speaking in the Central Legislature in January 1883 on Ripon's Bill for establishment of local selfgovernment in the Central Provinces, Khan referred to the vital difference between different races and religions and the unequal or disproportionate progress of education among different sections of the population. He said that the fear that any system of election, pure and simple, would result in the larger community overriding the interest of the smaller community. A true devotee of the Muslim cause, Sayyid Ahmad Khan was fully aware of Muslim backwardness in the fields of education and politics and came to the conclusion that India was not fit for the introduction of Western political institutions like representative or responsible government, for his community could not get its due share in it. His policy was based on fear of permanent domination of Muslims by Hindus educationally, economically and politically.

The Anglo-Indian administrators were quick to work on Muslim apprehensions and strove to drive a wedge between the Hindus and the Muslims. The three English principals of the Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, Beck, Morrison and Archbold, gave the pro-British and anti-Hindu bias to the Aligarh The Muslim League Movement. The Aligarh Movement worked to instil into the minds of the Muslims a spirit of loyalty towards the British Crown and worked consciously and deliberately to keep them away from the mainstream of Indian political life. In August 1888, Sayyid Ahmad Khan set up the United Indian Patriotic Association with the avowed object of countering the Congress propaganda and policy in England and in India. This was followed a few years later (1893) by the exclusively sectarian

Muhammadan Anglo Oriental Defence Association of Upper India to keep the Muslims aloof from political agitation and to strengthen British rule in India.

Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909 and Communalism

The Morley-Minto Reforms introduced the system of separate electorate under which all Muslims were grouped in separate constituencies from which Muslims alone could be elected. This was done in the name of protecting the Muslim minority. But in reality, this was a part of the policy of dividing Hindus and Muslims and maintaining British supremacy in India. The system of separate electorates was based on the notion that the political and economic interests of Hindus and Muslims were separate. This 'notion was unscientific because religions cannot be the basis of political and economic interest or of political groupings. What is even more important, this system proved extremely harmful in practice. It checked the progress of India's unification, which had been a continuous historical process. It became a potent factor in the growth of communalism in the country. Instead of removing the educational and economic backwardness among the middle class Muslims and integrating them into the mainstream of Indian nationalism, the system of separate electorates tended to perpetuate their isolation from the ebbing nationalist movement. It encouraged separatist agencies. It prevented people from concentrating on economic political problems, which were common to all Indians— Hindu or Muslim.

Communalism: An Interpretation of Indian History

British writers on Indian history also served the imperial cause by initiating, developing and emphasizing the Hindu-Muslim approach in their study of Indian history and development of Indian culture. This communal approach to history also imitated by Indian scholars and fostered the communal way of thinking. For example, the ancient period of a history was described as Hindu Period and the medieval period labelled as Muslim Period of Indian history, implying thereby that religion was the guiding force behind politics throughout the course of Indian history. True, both the rulers and the ruled, not often used religious slogans to suit their material and political

ambitions, but it was certainly a distortion of history to infer that was done by these writers—that all Muslims were the rulers and all Hindus were the ruled. In fact, the Muslim masses as poor, if not more, as the Hindu masses and were thoroughly oppressed and exploited by the Muslim rulers and their Hindu collaborators. All the same, this communal approach Indian history did foster divisive communal tendencies in Indian politics in the last quarter of the 19th century and first of the 20th century.

Militant Nationalism with Communal Overtone

Unfortunately, while militant nationalism was a great step forward in every other respect, it was to some extent responsible for the growth of communalism. The speeches and writings of some of the militant nationalists had a strong religious and Hindu tinge. In their search for national heroes and hero myths, the militant nationalists referred to Maharana Pratap, Shivaji and Guru Gobind Singh as national heroes and the Muslim rulers like Akbar, Shahjahan and Aurangzeb as ‘foreigners’. The straight logic was that Pratap, Shivaji and Gobind Singh were nationalists because they were Hindus, and Mughal emperors were foreigners because they were Muslims. In reality, struggle between Pratap and Akbar or Shivaji and Aurangzeb to be viewed as a political struggle in its particular historical sitting. Besides, it was too much to assume that nationalism of the 20th century existed in the medieval period of Indian history. They emphasised ancient Indian culture to the exclusion of medieval Indian culture. They tried to abandon elements of composite culture. For example, Tilak’s propagation of the Shivaji and Ganapati festivals, Aurobindo Ghosh’s semi-mystical concept of India as mother and nationalism as religion, the terrorists’ oath before goddess Kali and the initiation of the anti-partition agitation with the dips in Ganga could hardly be attached to the Muslims

This does not mean that militant nationalists were anti-Muslim or even wholly communal. Most of them including Tilak, Lajpat Rai, Aurobindo and later Gandhiji were strong believers in Hindu-Muslim unity. True, the references to Hindu theology were intended to involve the politically inert

masses into the nationalist struggle by explaining to them nationalism couched in a language within their comprehension, i.e., religious phraseology, but it did have the undesired effect of rousing Muslim communal susceptibilities-feelings cleverly exploited by the British rulers.

Economic backwardness:

In the absence of any avenues of gainful employment in trade and industry, the British Indian Government remained the biggest employer to which the educated youth, hopefully, looked for their means of livelihood. The rulers to promote rivalry and discord among different sections of society cleverly used this enormous patronage in higher and subordinate service. This led to demoralization and conflict and the government could play one group against the other. Our nationalist leaders were fully aware of the mischievous character of this bait, but the hunger, rather compulsion, for loaves and fishes blinded them to its dangerous potentialities.

Foundation of the Muslim League

The separatist and loyalist tendencies among a section of the Muslim intelligentsia and the big Muslim nawabs and landlords reached a climax on 30 December 1906, when the All India Muslim League was founded under the leadership of the The Muslim League Aga Khan, the Nawab of Dhaka and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk. Founded as a loyalist, communal and conservative political organization, the League made no critique of colonialism, supported the partition of Bengal, raised the slogan of separate Muslim interests, demanded separate electorates and safeguards for Muslims in government services, and reiterated all the major themes of communal politics and ideology enunciated earlier by Sir Ahmad and his followers. The aims of the League were as follows:

From its very inception, the Muslim League was a communal body established to look after the political rights and interests of the Muslim community alone. Its political activities were directed not against the foreign rulers but against the Hindus and the National Congress. It, played into the

hands of the British who announced that they would protect 'special interests' of the Muslims.

To increase its usefulness, the British also encouraged the Muslim League to approach the Muslim masses and to assume their leadership. It is true that the nationalist movement was as also dominated at this time by the educated town dwellers but in its anti-imperialism, it was representing the interests of all Indians rich or poor, Hindu or Muslim. On the other hand, the Muslim League and its upper class leaders had little in common with the interests of the Muslim masses, who were suffering as much as the Hindu masses at the hands of foreign imperialism.

This basic weakness of the League came to be increasingly recognized by the patriotic Muslims. The educated Muslim young men were, in particular, attracted by radical nationalist ideas. The militantly nationalist 'Ahrar Movement' was founded at this time under the leadership of Maulana Mohammed Ali, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Hasan Imam, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and Mazhar-ul-Haq. These young men disliked the loyalist politics of the Aligarh School and the big nawabs and zamindars.

Similar nationalist sentiments were arising among a section of the traditional Muslim scholars led by the Deoband School. The young Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who propagated his rationalist and nationalist ideas in his newspaper Al Hilal, which he brought out in 1912 at the age of 24, was also a prominent Muslim scholar.

In 1911, war broke out between the Ottoman Empire (Turkey) and Italy and during 1912 and 1913, Turkey had to fight the Balkan powers. The Turkish ruler claimed to be the Caliph or religious head of all Muslims; moreover, nearly all of the Muslim holy places were situated within the Turkish Empire. A wave of sympathy for Turkey swept India. A medical mission, headed by Dr. M. A. Ansari, was sent to help Turkey. Since Britain's policy during the Balkan War and after was not sympathetic to Turkey, the pro-Turkey and pro-Caliph or Khilafat sentiments tended to become anti-imperialist. In fact, for several years (from 1912 to 1924), the loyalists among

the Muslims Leaguers were completely overshadowed by nationalist young men.

Unfortunately, with the exception of a few persons like Azad who were rationalists in their thinking, most of the militant nationalists among Muslim young men did not fully accept the secular approach to politics. The result was that instead of understanding and opposing the economic and political consequences of imperialism, they fought imperialism on the ground that it threatened the Caliph and the holy places. Even their sympathy for Turkey was on religious grounds. Moreover, the heroes and myths and cultural traditions they appealed, belonged not to ancient or medieval Indian history but to West Asian history. It is true that this approach did not immediately clash with Indian nationalism. Rather, it made its adherents and supporters anti-imperialist and encouraged the nationalist trend among urban Muslims. But in the long run, this approach too proved harmful, as it encouraged the habit of looking at political questions from a religious point of view. In any case, such political activity did not promote among the Muslim masses a modern, secular approach towards political and economic questions.

The election results were a great disappointment to the Muslim League and Jinnah. It could not gain a majority even in the Muslim-majority provinces of the Punjab and Bengal. Jinnah who had parted company with the Congress in 1928, settled down in London in 1932 to practice law.

He returned to India in 1935 and led the Muslim League to the polls. The poor election results convinced Jinnah that the only way to counteract the Congress was to inflame communal feelings among the Muslims.

In Uttar Pradesh, the Congress rejected a demand for a coalition with the Muslim League, which fanned the fires of Muslim frustration. Some of the Congress leaders in Uttar Pradesh feared that if the Muslim League was brought into the ministry the Congress agrarian programme would suffer. The Uttar Pradesh legislature during the years 1937–46 justified the apprehensions of the Congress leaders. The Congress stood for democracy, socialism and a

common Indian nationality, the League tried to promote the interests of only the Muslims in India.

Jinnah proclaimed that Muslims could not expect any justice or fair play at the hands of the Congress. Throughout the twenty-seven months of the Congress rule in the provinces, the League kept up intense propaganda climaxed by the Pirpur Report in the late 1938, the Shareef Report on Bihar in March 1939 and Fazul Haq's Muslim Sufferings under Congress Rule in December 1939. The charges included failure to prevent encouragement of Hindi at the cost of Urdu and the Wardha Scheme of Basic Education, which was ironically enough devised largely by two eminent Muslim educationists, Zakir Husain and K. G. Saiyidin. The Congress suggested an enquiry by Sir Maurice Gwyer, the Chief Justice of the Federal Court, but the Muslim League turned down the proposal. Jinnah asserted that India was not one nation, and that the Muslims of India constituted a separate nation, and therefore, entitled to a separate homeland of their own.

The Muslim League propaganda gained by the existence of such communal bodies among, the Hindus as Hindu Mahasabha, who, too accepted the two- nation theory. They actively opposed the policy of giving adequate safeguards to the minorities so as to renovate their fears of domination by the minorities. Interestingly enough, the communal groups-Hindu as well as Muslims-did not hesitate to join hands against the Congress.

Another characteristic feature the various communal groups shared was their tendency to adopt pro-government political attitudes. It is to be noted that none of the communal groups and parties, which talked of Hindu and Muslim nationalism, took active part in the struggle against foreign rule. They saw the people belonging to other religions and the nationalist leaders as the real enemies.

The communal groups and parties also shied away from social and economic demands of the common people, which as we have seen above, were being increasingly taken up by the nationalist movement. In this respect, they increasingly came to represent the upper class vested interests.

Communalism also became, after 1937, the only political recourse of colonial authorities and their policy of 'divide and rule'. This was because, by this time, nearly all the other divisions, antagonism and divisive devices promoted and fostered earlier by the colonial authorities had been overcome by the national movement, and had become politically non-viable from the colonial point of view. The NonBrahmin challenge in Maharashtra and South India had fizzled out. The Scheduled Castes and other backward classes could no longer be mobilized against the Congress except in stray pockets. The Right and Left wings of the Congress also refused to split. Inter-provincial and inter-lingual rivalries had exhausted themselves much earlier, after the Congress accepted the validity of linguistic states and the cultural diversity of the Indian people. The effort to pit the zamindars and landlords against the national movement had also completely failed. The elections of 1937 showed that nearly all the major social and political props of colonialism lay shattered. The communal card alone was available for playing against the national movement and the rulers decided to use it to the limit, to stake all on it. They threw all the weight of the colonial state behind Muslim communalism, even though it was headed by a man, M. A. Jinnah, whom they disliked and feared for his sturdy independence and outspoken anti-colonialism.

The outbreak of World War II in September 1939 further strengthened the reliance on the communal card.

Jinnah's Two-Nation Theory

The British Government harped on 'the issue of minorities' and some talked of the unbridgeable gulf between the Congress and the Muslim League. Mahatma Gandhi held that it was a domestic problem, which would disappear if the British withdrew from India. At the Ramgarh session of the Congress, held in March 1940, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the President, emphasized the heritage of a common nationality between the Hindus and the Muslims in India and significantly remarked, 'Whether we like it or not, we have now become an Indian nation, united and indivisible'. Various factors fanned communal bitterness and at its annual session, held at Lahore in March 1940,

the Muslim League enunciated the theory that the Muslims are not a minority but a 'nation' and they must have their separate homeland. It was of the view that 'the areas in which the Muslims were numerically in a majority, as in the north-western and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute independent states in which the constituent units would be autonomous and sovereign'. Indeed, the influence of the Muslim League over the Muslims had increased much by that time. Gandhi's reaction to the Lahore resolution was prophetic, 'I can never be a willing party to the vivisection. I would employ every non-violent means to prevent it. For it means the undoing of centuries of work done by numberless Hindus and Muslims to live together as one nation. Partition means a patent untruth.'

Revolutionary Movements

The revolutionary movements in India were part of the larger freedom struggle against British rule, marked by the desire for immediate and violent overthrow of colonial authority. These movements, primarily active between the late 19th and early 20th centuries, stood in contrast to the constitutional methods of the Indian National Congress. Inspired by the revolutionary ideals of **freedom, nationalism, and anti-colonialism**, they aimed to liberate India through armed struggle and militant actions.

Background and Causes of Revolutionary Movements

- **Failure of Moderate Methods:** The early Congress, through petitions and resolutions, failed to achieve significant concessions from the British government, leading to frustration among the younger nationalists.
- **Partition of Bengal (1905):** The partition of Bengal by Lord Curzon ignited widespread anger and became a rallying point for revolutionary activities.
- **Influence of Global Revolutionary Movements:** Indian revolutionaries were inspired by the revolutionary activities in Europe (especially in Russia), and the ideas of self-sacrifice and violent resistance against oppressive regimes.

- **Economic Exploitation:** British economic policies that drained India's resources and impoverished its people also fueled the rise of revolutionary sentiment.

Major Revolutionary Organizations and Leaders

Revolutionary movements were often organized in secret societies and were active across various regions of India.

A. Anushilan Samiti and Jugantar Party

- **Location:** Bengal
- **Key Leaders:** Aurobindo Ghosh, Barindra Ghosh, Jatin Mukherjee (Bagha Jatin), Prafulla Chaki, and Khudiram Bose.
- **Notable Activities:** The Jugantar Party, a breakaway faction of the Anushilan Samiti, carried out assassinations of British officials, bomb attacks, and armed robberies. Khudiram Bose's attempt to assassinate magistrate Kingsford in 1908 and Prafulla Chaki's role in the Muzaffarpur bombing were significant events.

B. India House and Ghadar Party

- **India House:** Founded in London by **Shyamji Krishna Varma**, it became a hub for Indian students and revolutionaries in Europe. It published "The Indian Sociologist" to spread revolutionary ideas.
- **Key Leaders:** Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, Madan Lal Dhingra (who assassinated Curzon Wylie in 1909 in London), and Shyamji Krishna Varma.
- **Ghadar Party:** Formed in the United States and Canada by Indian immigrants, this organization sought to initiate a revolution in India. Key leaders included **Lala Hardayal**, **Rash Behari Bose**, and **Sohan Singh Bhakna**.

C. Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) and Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA)

- **Location:** Uttar Pradesh and Punjab
- **Key Leaders:** Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan, Bhagat Singh, Chandrasekhar Azad, and Sukhdev.

- **Notable Activities:** The Kakori train robbery in 1925, where revolutionaries looted a British government treasury train, and the subsequent trial and execution of several revolutionaries were significant events. Later, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev were involved in the assassination of police officer **John Saunders** (1928), and the bombing of the Central Legislative Assembly in 1929.

Key Events and Actions of Revolutionary Movements

- **Alipore Bomb Case (1908):** The trial of Aurobindo Ghosh and others in connection with a bomb-making factory in Alipore, Calcutta. Aurobindo was acquitted, but this case symbolized the rise of revolutionary activity.
- **Delhi-Lahore Conspiracy (1912):** An attempt on the life of **Lord Hardinge**, the Viceroy of India, by Rash Behari Bose, who threw a bomb at his procession in Delhi. Although Hardinge survived, the conspiracy heightened the British crackdown on revolutionaries.
- **Komagata Maru Incident (1914):** A ship carrying Indian immigrants was denied entry into Canada, leading to protests. This event further radicalized the Indian immigrant community in North America, contributing to the rise of the Ghadar Party.
- **Kakori Conspiracy (1925):** An armed train robbery by the Hindustan Republican Association to fund revolutionary activities. The subsequent arrest and trial of key members led to the execution of leaders like Ram Prasad Bismil and Ashfaqulla Khan.
- **Saunders Assassination and Assembly Bombing (1928–1929):** Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev assassinated British police officer John Saunders in Lahore as retaliation for the death of Lala Lajpat Rai during a police crackdown. Later, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw non-lethal bombs in the Central Legislative Assembly to protest British policies.

Philosophy and Ideology

- **Armed Struggle:** Revolutionaries believed in violent resistance as the only viable method to overthrow British rule.
- **Nationalism:** Indian revolutionaries were driven by a deep sense of nationalism, seeking not only the expulsion of British rule but also the upliftment of Indian society through independence.
- **Socialism:** The later phase of the revolutionary movement, particularly with the **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA)**, was influenced by socialist ideas. Bhagat Singh and his comrades advocated for an independent India based on equality and social justice.
- **Self-Sacrifice:** Revolutionary leaders like Bhagat Singh saw themselves as martyrs for the cause, willing to sacrifice their lives for the freedom of the nation. Their actions inspired the youth of India.

Impact and Legacy

Although the revolutionary movements did not directly achieve their goal of overthrowing British rule, they had significant long-term impacts on the Indian freedom struggle:

- **Inspiring Patriotism:** The sacrifices of revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh, Chandrasekhar Azad, and others became symbols of bravery and nationalism, inspiring millions.
- **Exposing British Oppression:** The British government's harsh response to revolutionary activities, including brutal repression and public executions, exposed the oppressive nature of colonial rule to a wider audience.
- **Critique of Non-Violent Methods:** The revolutionaries critiqued the non-violent methods of the Congress, arguing that peaceful protests were inadequate in dealing with the British Empire.
- **Bridging the Gap Between Extremists and Moderates:** Though separate from the Congress leadership, revolutionary activities served to hasten the radicalization of the national movement, eventually

leading to a more assertive stance by leaders like Gandhi during the Civil Disobedience and Quit India Movements.

- **Formation of Martyrdom Mythos:** The public executions and martyrdom of revolutionaries created a strong sense of sacrifice and urgency within the Indian population, pushing the struggle forward.

Conclusion

The revolutionary movements represented the militant and radical strand of India's freedom struggle. Their contributions, though not as successful in practical terms as the mass movements led by Gandhi, left an indelible mark on the national consciousness. These movements not only kept the spirit of resistance alive during the early 20th century but also created a tradition of martyrdom and defiance that would influence future generations of Indians in their quest for freedom.

Morley-Minto Reforms

Morley-Minto Reforms (1909) launched the constitutional journey towards the introduction of representative government and eventually the freedom from British rule. As an imperial control system, limited electoral institutions were first introduced at district and municipal levels in the 1880s with a promise to introduce elected legislature in British India. Under the pressure of the Indian nationalist demands and the need for enlisting Indian political support, government introduced very limited electoral system at provincial level under the India Act of 1909, popularly known as Morley-Minto Reforms. This reform Act is linked to India Act of 1892, which strengthened further the nominated elements of the Legislative Council of the Governor General as well as that of the Council of the Provincial governors by increasing the number of non-official nominated members, again with a promise of introducing electoral system soon. Since then the Congress had been clamouring for the introduction of electoral system for the provincial and central legislative councils. In response to the Congress demands, the Governor General Lord Minto (1905-1910) agreed in principle to introduce

some limited electoral system in constituting the provincial and central legislative councils.

The Congress demands for constitutional reforms led the Muslim League to launch a campaign for ensuring separate electorate for the Muslims in view of the relative backwardness of the Muslim society and its socio-cultural differences with the Hindus. The Muslim leadership became worried when it was made clear that the government was contemplating to introduce limited representative government in the provinces. They apprehended that under any electoral system, the Muslim interests were likely to remain ignored because of their social and political backwardness compared to the Hindus. A delegation of Muslim elites headed by Aga Khan met Governor General Lord Minto in October 1906 at Simla, and submitted a memorandum pleading that the Muslims made 'a nation within a nation' in India and that their special interests must be maintained in case of any constitutional reforms to be made in the future. They especially demanded for election of Muslims to the central and provincial councils through separate Muslim electorates. Lord Minto assured the delegation of his support to the idea of a constitutional arrangement of separate electorates for the Muslim community and accordingly he recommended to Morley, the Secretary of State, for considering the idea of introducing separate electorate for the Muslims in the next reform measures.

The reform ideas of Morley and Minto were embodied in the India Act of 1909. The leading features of the Act are the introduction of separate electorate for the Muslims, inclusion of an Indian on the central and provincial councils and also on the council of the Secretary of State for India and introduction of elected members in the provincial and central councils. The reform proposal, however, did not at all intend to create any representative government. Its only object was to make a start towards representative government. This was the most important feature of the Act. The far reaching significance of the Act was the grant of separate electorate for the Muslim community. For the central legislature, it was provided that the elected

members of the provincial councils would elect members for the legislative council of the governor general. But both in the centre and in the province, the elected members made a minority, the majority members were to be nominated by the governor general for the central council and by the governor for the provincial council. Bengal's legislative council was to be consisted of 50 members. The governor general's legislative council consisted of 60 members. As a precedent of the introduction of separate electorate for the Muslims, Morley cited the cases of Cyprus and Bohemia where separate electorates were operative with great success. But the introduction of separate electorate for the Muslims was interpreted by the Congress as a measure of imperial control system by adopting an elective policy of divide and rule.

The Morley-Minto reforms made a land mark towards the development of constitutional government. The Act, however, contributed to the growth of separatist politics in communal line. The Act increased the functions of the legislatures. Now the budgets made by the governor general and provincial governor were to be presented for discussion in the councils. The councils got the power to make recommendations to governor and governor general for making changes in the budgets. But budgets could be discussed, but no resolutions could adopted on it. The members got the privilege to move resolution on matters of public interest. But such resolutions could be adopted only in the form of recommendations. Questions could be asked on the state of affairs of the province, but no resolution could be taken after discussion. The Act also provided for the removal of the Indian capital to a suitable place so as to enable the central government and central legislature to act uninterfered by local circumstances.

Morley-Minto reforms registered a major landmarks towards the growth of constitutional government not immediately, because it did not enact anything very important constitutionally other than introducing separate electorate for the Muslims. The Act of 1909 just paved the way to future constitutional reforms. After the First World War, the state of affairs changed so radically that major constitutional reforms had to be undertaken

immediately, and for that Morley-Minto reforms provided a good background exercises.

Home Rule Movements

The All India Home Rule League was formed in 1916. It was a national political organization which aimed at leading the national demand for self-government. Selfgovernment was termed as Home Rule. Indians wanted to obtain the status of a Dominion within the British empire as enjoyed by Canada, Australia, Newfoundland, South Africa, and New Zealand at that time.

From 1916 to 1918, when the World War I was in its last phase, many prominent Indians decided to organize a national alliance of leagues across India. The aim of these leagues was to demand Home Rule, or self-government within the British Empire throughout India. Some of the prominent Indians, who were a part of this alliance, were Joseph Baptista, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, G. S. Khaparde, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Sir S. Subramania Iyer and Annie Besant.

In one of the sessions of the Congress, Tilak proposed the formation of a working committee which could look after day to day affairs of the organization and take steps for the implementations of resolutions passed in its annual sessions. This proposal by Tilak was rejected by a number of members of the Congress. After some time, Tilak decided the formation of the Home Rule League. The first league was founded by Tilak in Pune, Maharashtra.

Annie Besant proposed that Home Rule League in the country could be modeled on the Irish Home Rule movement in order to spread awareness among the people. During this movement, Tilak said, 'Do not ask for crumbs. Ask for the whole bread' and 'Swaraj is my birth right and I shall have it'. He also demanded education in vernacular language.

The league organized discussions, conducted lecture tours and circulated pamphlets to spread awareness among the people. After the

formation of the league, Mohammad Ali Jinnah became the head of Bombay branch of the league

The main areas of league's activity were Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. The league became popular and a number of members of the Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League joined hands with the league. The leaders of the league delivered speeches at various parts of the country. They took signatures of Indians on various petitions and submitted the petitions to the British government. During the movement, Annie Besant was arrested by the police. After her arrest, the movement spread to many other places of India such as Sindh, Punjab, Gujarat, United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa and Madras. By the end of 1917, Tilak got involved in a libel suit against Valentine Chirol and had to go to England for this case. In the absence of Tilak, Besant was not able to lead the league alone. The movement of the league strengthened during Mahatma Gandhi's civil disobedience movement. His efforts to lead the farmers of Champaran, Bihar and Kheda, Gujarat against the British authorities during tax revolts made him really popular among the masses. Initially, many leaders, such as Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, Annie Besant, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajpat Rai, did not agree with the ideas of Gandhi. Later on, the transformation of Indian politics due to Gandhi's efforts made him popular among these leaders as well.

Before the participation of Gandhi, the Indian National Congress was a body of educated Indians and people from cities. Gandhi's participation made the Congress strong as 15 million people across provinces, towns and villages joined the organization. In 1920, Mahatma Gandhi was elected as the President of All India Home Rule League. Within a year, the league merged with the Congress and formed a united Indian political front.

With the rise of revolutionary movements and extremism, the British government followed a two-edged policy: (i) adopting the policies of repression and dividing the Indians, specifically the Hindus and the Muslims; and (ii) bringing about gradual reforms which resulted in passing of the Act of

1909. The formation of the Muslim League in 1906 and the clause of the communal electorate system in the Act of 1909 discredited the British in the eyes of most of the Indians. Still a lull remained in Indian politics for some time because the moderates grudgingly decided to cooperate with the government for some more time. The outbreak of World War I provided a new impetus to the national movement. When World War I started the Indian National Congress supported the government in its war efforts with the presumption that the British government will bring about some administrative reforms for the benefit of the Indians after the war. However, the extremists viewed it as a God-sent opportunity and took a decision to advance their own cause. They thought that it was the fitting time to force Britain to agree to the Indian demands for extracting political concessions during their time of difficulties. The extremists were basically influenced by the emergence of the Irish Home Rule Movement under the leadership of Issac Butt. B.G. Tilak returned to active politics in 1914 after completing his term of imprisonment. He tried to join hands with the Congress on the issue of demanding 'Home Rule' for India. However, when he did not succeed in this, he founded the Home Rule League on 28 April 1916 with its headquarters at Poona. Due to the British indigestibility for the word 'swaraj', Tilak opted for the term 'Home Rule' in place of 'swaraj' as the main objective of the movement. The main aim of the Home Rule League was to 'attain Home-Rule or self government within the British Empire by all constitutional means and to educate and organize public opinion in the country towards the attainment of the same'.

Annie Besant, an Irish lady, had arrived in India as a member of the Theosophical Society. She later joined the Congress. Further, she had set up a Home Rule League in London in 1914 and ultimately founded a Home Rule League on 15 September 1916. The latter had its headquarters at Adyar near Madras. Both these leagues supported each other and hence, divided their areas of activities among themselves. Tilak's Home Rule League confined its activities to Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Berar, while

Besant's League functioned in the rest of the country. Tilak and Besant toured all over India and propagated the message of the Home Rule among the masses. They used the means of newspapers, mass meetings and distribution of leaflets to spread their message. Tilak used *Young India* to stir the popular sentiments. Besant, on her part, used *New India* and *Common Weal* to educate the masses about the League's objectives. The movement attracted liberal leaders such as Motilal Nehru and Tej Bahadur Sapru who became its members. The Home Rule movement turned a powerful phenomenon during the phase of World War I. The movement strived for the grant of self-government to India within the British dominions. However, it always remained within constitutional limits.

The government put strenuous efforts to suppress the movement through force. Mrs Besant was forced to stop the publication of *New India* and was sentenced to home imprisonment. When action was taken against Mrs Besant and Tilak on their refusal to provide securities and personal bonds, the movement acquired an all-India character. The movement infused the spirit of patriotism, fearlessness, self-respect and sacrifice among the people. Ultimately, the government relented and in 1917 by Montague's declaration was receptive to the idea of selfgovernment for India through a gradual process. Mrs Annie Besant was elected as the Congress President in 1917 and the objective of 'Home Rule' was accepted by the Congress. It was the biggest success of this movement.

However, the movement got weakened after some time. Some of the reasons The Muslim League for this were: the passing of the Government of India Act, 1919; factionalism in the Congress on the issue of the Act; departure of Tilak to London for a legal case; and Besant's consent to the new scheme of reforms of 1919. Although the Home Rule Movement could not achieve its objectives, it kept the fire of nationalism burning among the Indians during the course of the war. It was crucial because during this period the congress had failed to provide any direction to the people. On the issue of the significance of the Home Rule Movement, S.R. Mehrotra states 'The

Home Rule League created a significant impact on the national movement in India. For the first time an agitation had been aroused on a nation-wide scale and a network of political committees covered much of India.’

Montague-Chelmsford Reforms

The year 1919 marked the formal end of the First World War and provided an opportunity to the British government in India to defuse radical and militant Indian nationalists who had challenged colonial rule through acts of political violence. The passage of the Government of India Act of 1919 intended to privilege Indian elites who were politically moderate by creating a road map to allow Indians the ability to eventually govern themselves, but with British supervision. Although colonial officials preferred the language of “responsible government” over self-government, the act proposed limited political changes to promote civic institutions and encourage democratic representation. In addition to the introduction of the Government of India Act of 1919, this chapter examines several measures and reforms that the British government in India instituted after the First World War, particularly the continuation of repressive legislation through the recommendations of the Rowlatt Commission, a reform of jails and prisons through the Jails Commission Report, and a royal amnesty of political prisoners. Focusing on how this series of reforms was shaped and affected by the revolutionary terrorist movement in Bengal, this chapter addresses the simultaneous introduction of constitutional and jail reforms with the restriction of civil liberties. As Edwin Montagu, secretary of state, noted, “... sooner or later there must be peace restored between the Government of India and these men ... Could they not be treated with courtesy and dignity as the honourable but dangerous enemies of Government?”

The political reform of British India developed from a liberal and international vision of territorial sovereignty for all nations. This internationalist discourse put particular pressure on nations with colonies. Systems of international laws to enable cooperation between European nations and the formation of the League of Nations were intended to put a putative

end to colonial occupation as it was heralded in President Wilson's Fourteen Points. Although Britain had long claimed to be at the forefront of humanitarian internationalism, these claims were challenged by its imperial activities. Thus, the end of the war marked particular crises for the British empire as nationalists in Ireland, Egypt, India, and the Khilafat rebelled against British rule. As the British government faced anticolonial challenges, it paradoxically expanded its influence under an internationalist regime in various places, perhaps most notably, the Middle East, where it held the mandate over large parts of the former Ottoman Empire.

The most well-known post-war reform in British India was the passage of the Government of India Act of 1919, or the Montagu–Chelmsford reforms, after the two men who orchestrated its passage. Named after the Viceroy of India, Frederic Chelmsford, and the Secretary of State Edwin Montagu, the act has often been marked as a major turning point in the history of twentieth-century India. The provisions for representative self-government were expanded from a previous set of reforms promulgated in 1909, which had offered minorities, such as Muslims, separate electoral representation. The 1919 reforms are considered unique because they offered Indian nationalists dyarchy, which was a double or split government in which the central and provincial governments were given selected powers. The central assembly was governed by officials elected by Indian elites, and officials appointed by the colonial government; the provincial councils were comprised of appointed officials, both Indian and British. A newly constituted all-India Legislative Assembly required 106 members who were elected from an expanded population of those newly eligible to vote. In addition, 40 members were appointed from official and non-official groups that represented key constituencies, such as chambers of commerce, industrial groups, and universities. Bengal's Legislative Council was enlarged to 139 members, as many more property holders, businessmen, lawyers, and professionals were rendered eligible to vote. Provincial governments were responsible for governing education, public health, public works, and agriculture (the “nation-

building” activities); the central government kept control over the military, revenue, and foreign policy (the “law and order” functions). The Government of India Act was considered a step toward offering Indians the right to govern themselves through elected representatives, an expanded franchise, and involvement in local governance. In spite of provincial devolution and the expansion of the franchise, as many critics noted, the 1919 reforms were limited by the oversight of British administrators. The Governor-General of each province, who was appointed by the India Office, had the right to veto or validate any bill against the wishes of the partially elected council; the viceroy, the presumptive head of state in the Government of India, could override votes made by the Legislative Assembly.

The reforms were meant to be evaluated after a decade and expanded further if the time seemed right. Some members of the Indian National Congress and Home Rule Leagues imagined that this might be a step toward Indian independence, but the majority of members of the Indian National Congress were unsatisfied with the reforms, arguing that Indians should have *purna swaraj*, or complete independence. British officials were divided on the question of complete Indian sovereignty, although there was some agreement that any constitutional change would have to come gradually through slow and incremental change rather than a quick transfer of power.

The Montagu–Chelmsford reforms, which had been under parliamentary discussion for several years before their enactment, expressed a vision that India (and other colonies) would one day govern themselves, perhaps as members of a commonwealth or with dominion status, so that Britain’s links to India’s economy would not be severed. Many in Britain knew by the end of the First World War that continued colonial occupation was politically and economically unsustainable, but creating a plan for how Britain’s colonies would gain some semblance of political independence remained fraught. Politicians from successive Liberal, Labour, Conservative, and coalition governments agreed that India needed self-government and had the right to self-determination, but it was unclear when India and Indians

would be ready to govern themselves. Parties on the political left, such as Labour, tended to support Indian nationalist demands, while British observers across the political spectrum wished to preserve British power and influence in India.

The language of “responsible government” over “self-government” in the text of the Montagu–Chelmsford reforms was calculated to leave the timeline toward self-government and perhaps independence from Britain vague. This ambiguous timeline held Indian ministers accountable, first to their British superiors and secondly to an Indian electorate. But even colonial officials knew that the logic of this timeline varied: Lord Irwin, viceroy from 1926 to 1931, joked that the Earl of Birkenhead, who served as secretary of state for India in that period, believed that India would be ready for self-government in 600 years. From a certain perspective, the Montagu–Chelmsford reforms were a key moment in the historical progress of the colonial government to provide representative institutions for Indians, Indianizing the British civil service, and pragmatically scaling back British involvement in India without giving up sovereignty over Indian territories. But as successive governments in Britain grappled with militant anticolonial resistance from Indians, British politicians revised their views on whether repressive legislation should be a part of constitutional reforms.

The Montagu–Chelmsford reforms are only one part of the accepted narrative of 1919. This chapter turns to several other reforms initiated by the colonial government in India in the interwar period, measures that occurred immediately after the First World War and had a large impact on how the revolutionary terrorist movement unfolded after 1920. Two of these measures, the reform of emergency legislation and the reform of jails, were authorized by commissions who studied the history of these problems under colonial rule and diagnosed possible solutions. These commissions, in the spirit of liberal reforms that animated this period, offered “high-profile promises of public accountability” that identified a reform project and articulated a goal that could be authorized by a multiplicity of political actors.⁷ Even though these

“forms of inquiry” were often symptoms of an insecure government, commissions enlisted experts in making recommendations that would render state actions legitimate. As the constitutional reforms of 1919 got underway, the government attempted to address other reforms that could stand in the way of constitutional change. The provisions of the 1919 reforms were intended to “rally the moderates,” those among India’s political classes who could be expected to govern India on Britain’s behalf. Yet the government had an underlying concern that radical and militant anticolonial resistance would threaten the 1919 reforms and thus, they urged pre-emptive action.

One proposal to limit the influence of radicals and militants was the promulgation of the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, better known as the Rowlatt Act, based on the report produced by the Rowlatt Commission, which recommended the continuation of repressive measures such as limiting the right to a jury trial in the case of certain political offenses and the suspension of habeas corpus through a provision that suspects might be detained because they were suspected of sedition. The provisions of the Rowlatt Act developed from measures in the Defence of India Act of 1915 to detain those who were defined as a threat to the security of the state while it was involved in fighting a war. The Defence of India Act was considered a temporary and “emergency” piece of legislation that was to deal with the extraordinary context of war. Intended as a “preventive” measure that authorized the internment and detention of those who were politically subversive, it was used to detain revolutionaries, terrorists, members of opposition political parties, Germans, and others of suspicious political affiliation.

The language of wartime necessity authorized the expansion of executive powers, even when there was not a war: “wartime works as a shorthand invoking the traditional notion that the times are both exceptional and temporary.”

The act was due to expire six months after the end of the war, yet even before the end of the hostilities, British officials recommended that the

temporary measures in the Defence of India Act be extended with an eye toward making them permanent. The threat of political dissidence in the form of revolutionary terrorism had not died down and the government believed it needed a continuation of extralegal measures.

Thus, in December 1917, the colonial government authorized the formation of a commission to “investigate and report on the nature of the criminal conspiracies connected with the revolutionary movement in India” and to “advise as to the legislations, if any, necessary to enable Government to deal effectively with them.” Headed by Sidney Rowlatt, the commission issued the report in April 1918; it was printed before the formal cessation of hostilities in Europe and while the Defence of India Act was still in place.

This peculiar timing and logic – producing the language and rationale for a permanent executive order to suspend the rule of law in order to replace an existing temporary executive order – was fueled by the anxiety of what might happen to the colonial government if it lost its executive privileges to detain suspects on suspicion of sedition as it did in a time of emergency. By sustaining executive power, or what Walter Benjamin characterized as the “law-preserving” and “law-making” characteristics of the state, the colonial government was able to forestall the kind of political violence it feared from revolutionaries, terrorists, and other political insurgents. The Rowlatt Act was thus framed as a preventive measure that would defend the process of constitutional reforms from those who might threaten it; there was no immediate threat of emergency except by the circular reasoning that the lack of repressive measures might potentially cause the government to face a political emergency.

At the same time as the colonial government considered the provisions of the Rowlatt Act, the Government of India initiated another commission to study the problem of prison reform. This commission was assigned to study the problem of jails in India, and in particular, how to end the practice of transportation as a punishment for those accused of sedition, conspiracy, or

activities intended to overthrow the government. The committee focused on the Andaman Islands prison, which had been reserved for the most violent political offenders, including a large group of gentlemanly terrorists who had been sent there in the 1910s. Among the questions the committee considered was how to treat prisoners of different classes and castes, with the goal of reforming those who might be returned to the larger population. In a moment when reports, commissions, and reforms proliferated, the colonial government in India drew from a wealth of knowledge it had generated about India, depending on a colonial sociology of caste and its relation to criminality, and what could be expected of Indian behavior. The growth of the prison population in India may have been a budgetary concern, but it merged with a growing concern about how to comprehend the large number of Indians who were not members of the “criminal castes and tribes” but who were considered political prisoners. Although colonial officials were reluctant to call these men “political prisoners,” colonial officials were especially concerned with the rehabilitation of those who were willing to go to jail as a form of political protest. For colonial officials, particularly high-ranking liberals such as Edwin Montagu, managing the imprisonment of those in jail for political dissidence was an important problem, largely because these were the groups who were imagined as being central to any future political reform. In debates between different constituencies within the government, the question of how to distinguish between terrorists, militants, radicals, and eventually, nonviolent activists such as the satyagrahis who were influenced by Gandhi and Congress officials, meant that officials were pressed to recognize the difference between crime and insurgency when considering the population of those in jail and whether these populations could be reformed.

The Jails Commission report of 1919 has often been seen as a tangent to the other reforms under discussion here, but I argue that it was linked to the constitutional reforms of that year with the Rowlatt Act, particularly from the perspective of Bengal’s revolutionary terrorists. As the British government attempted to create a framework for “responsible” government in India, it

became invested in the idea of the “responsible” Indian, a person who could represent Indian interests through a constitutional framework. Those considered “political prisoners,” many of them radicals, militants, and terrorists before 1919, represented the class of Indians who could be enlisted in the project of constitutional reform. Because they were politically active, middle-class, educated men and women who had participated in civil (and sometime not-so-civil) protest, some colonial officials believed they could be turned away from radical politics and reformed. The problem of political prisoners intensified for the government after 1919: as Indian nationalists went to jail willingly in the 1920s and onward, the colonial government was pushed to defend its harsh treatment of those who were considered putative subjects of the crown.

The reforms I discuss below speak to the constitutive nature of how a self-consciously liberal and colonial state reformed its governance of a foreign territory so it could present itself as a constitutionally organized state with representative institutions. Thus, a plan of introducing self-government to educated elites in India and improving jail conditions was paralleled by a series of repressive legislation that attempted to discipline the revolutionary and radical activities of those very same educated elites; these measures exemplify a certain measure of the colonial state’s sovereignty over its colonized subjects and its ability to discipline and educate these men and women in the service of the state’s goals. But, perhaps just as crucially, these legislative events remind us how a modern state apparatus was able to reconcile principles of liberal government with repressive colonial tactics.

The Rowlatt Commission’s Report as a History of Terrorism

The promulgation of the Rowlatt bills in March 1919, as every Indian school child knows, provoked a nationwide hartal (work stoppage) organized by Mohandas Gandhi, on April 6, 1919. As its many critics noted at the time, the Rowlatt Act suspended basic principles of rule of law by allowing closed court proceedings against suspected political dissidents. To Indian nationalists and politicians, these measures seemed antithetical to the liberal spirit of the

Montagu–Chelmsford reforms, and the measures were quickly labeled the “Black Acts.” The government repeatedly claimed that the act would affect few Indians. But anticolonial activists, most notably Gandhi, used the occasion as a symbolically important moment because it allowed him to highlight the inconsistencies of British rule, particularly in the government’s application of the rule of law. Indian officials on the Imperial Legislative Council voted unanimously against the measure, but it passed anyway, showing how executive power could be mobilized by the colonial government in a moment of political reform in which democratic institutions were expanding. Gandhi noted with alarm that the act was an “affront to the nation.”

The first nationwide mass action on April 6, 1919, was followed by an army assault on an unarmed crowd in Jallianwala Bagh in the Punjab on April 13, killing several hundred Indians and injuring over a thousand. Subsequently, martial law was imposed in the Punjab because of the “Punjab disturbances” and there was widespread state terrorism against Indians. The Rowlatt bills were never implemented on a national level because of Indian agitation in 1919; many of those detained under martial law in Punjab were released by a royal amnesty later in the year. After the Rowlatt satyagraha brought Gandhi to national and international prominence, he began planning his well-known Non-Cooperation Campaign, in which he urged all Indians to withdraw their labor from British industries, government, and educational institutions.

In this section, I analyze the text and the provisions of the Rowlatt report closely in order to argue that the Rowlatt report mobilized the history of terrorism in Bengal as a way to advocate for the extension of security laws across India. Using historical data and evidence collected from the Intelligence Branch, government reports, and testimony of colonial officials engaged in combatting counterinsurgency in India, the Rowlatt Commission wrote a history of terrorism, one in which the government’s past experience with Indian counterinsurgency provided the grounds to argue for permanent

legislation that could be invoked in times of emergency to limit the legal rights of Indians. The section on Bengal comprised roughly two-thirds of the report, although the recommendations for emergency legislation would apply to all of India. The bulk of historical evidence was drawn from the government's archives in Bengal, by various members of the Intelligence Branch who had thoroughly documented aspects of the movement throughout the 1910s when the movement was seen to be the most active. The repetitive nature of reports on the terrorist movement converted several episodes of the movement into a documented genealogy of causal events, making it appear as if a conspiracy against the British was well organized.

Although the Rowlatt Commission was produced in December 1918, it was a virtual copy of a previous report produced by the Government of Bengal the year before. The first printed report was published in 1917 by J. C. Ker, the Director of the Intelligence Branch, and it was titled *Political Trouble in India, 1907–1917*, marking the decade from the emergence of the revolutionary terrorist movement in 1907 to its putative conclusion in 1917. The report declared that a decade of fighting terrorism had been won by police and intelligence officers through careful surveillance, multi-sited investigation, and the use of extra-legal powers to detain those suspected of sedition. This first report was followed by a half-dozen others, including the publication of the Rowlatt Committee Report, weekly and annual reports from 1920 through the 1930s, and finally, a second version of *Political Trouble in India*, in 1937.

By the later reports, there was an established sequence of acts that was attributed to the development of the revolutionary terrorist movements of the early twentieth century: the 1872 assassination of Lord Mayo at the Andaman Islands by a political prisoner; the 1897 assassination of Lieutenant Rand, the plague commissioner in Pune by the Chapekar brothers, who had been inspired by Tilak, a visible and voluble Indian nationalist. The 1905 victory of the Japanese over the Russians was often noted as an inspiration to the revolutionaries who applauded the success of an Asian power over a European

one. Although the histories were careful to distinguish the differences between different regions of India – Madras seemed to be calm, while Bengal, Maharashtra, and Punjab were always in turmoil – the collection of information into these historical compendium made the crisis of counterinsurgency appear as a violent and coordinated conspiracy across the different regions and provinces against British rule, one that would have to be pacified before the British could hand over the reins of power to moderate political forces and leave India. Although the repetition of these reports bordered on plagiarism, the invocation of the same sequence of historical events made the causes and effects of revolutionary terrorism clear from a colonial perspective – when the government removed repressive tactics, revolutionary terrorism thrived.

Ker's *Political Trouble in India, 1907–1917* laid the groundwork for the ways in which officials would use the history of terrorism to make arguments about how it could be contained. Ker began his career in the capital of British India in Bengal as the personal assistant to the director of the Criminal Intelligence Department in 1907 and rose to becoming one of the first experts on terrorism in Bengal. A member of the Indian Civil Service, Ker had been trained a mathematician and was a fellow of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge; he left this position at the age of 23 to go to India. Ker went on to become Director of Criminal Intelligence, generating weekly reports for officials in India and Britain, by drawing from surveillance and history sheets of those who were under suspicion and the reports of the provincial officials who monitored local revolutionary and politically suspicious activities. In his first few pages, he made his historical method clear: he called his book a “connected account” that synthesized the many records that had been kept by his office in the first decade of its existence. He specified that his account could not be comprehensive – “It would be impossible to follow the ramifications of every conspiracy in detail” – but he tried to explain the reasons they had been included in his report.

Political Trouble spanned over 500 pages, beginning with an account of India in 1907 and ending with chapters such as a “Who’s Who,” of important “political agitators,” a chronology that listed all of the key events and crimes that might be categorized as terrorism, and an appendix that listed the compilations of “history sheets” of important suspects that had been kept by the Criminal Intelligence Division. In the appendix, important historical events in the history of Indian terrorism range from a Coronation tree being sawed in half in the Central Provinces to the murder of Colonel William Curzon Wylie, a high-ranking official, in London in 1909. Each event was classified, either as “political dacoity” or bomb-related action, and the passage of important legislative information was listed in order that readers might link the legislation with certain outcomes. Ker’s account drew from earlier reports produced by those who worked in the intelligence branch of the government, F. C. Daly, R. H. Sneyd-Hutchinson, H. L. Salkeld, among others.

In spite of the volume of materials produced about the history of revolutionary terrorism in Bengal in the 1910s, many in the intelligence services in India concluded, “By 1918, neither the terrorists of Bengal, nor the Indian revolutionaries abroad appeared a threat to the Raj.” The publication of Ker’s volume marked 1917 as an end date for the movement, declaring that Bengal’s terrorism was over because of the effectiveness of detaining suspected terrorists under the terms of the Defence of India Act.

The Defence of India Act had not been initially intended to target revolutionary terrorists. Analogous to the Defence of the Realm Act which was used in the United Kingdom and Ireland during the war, these were temporary pieces of emergency legislation to deal with the extraordinary context of war and intended as a “preventive” measure that authorized the internment and detention of those who were opposed to Britain, particularly Germans. But the Defence of India Act had an additional purpose in the Indian dominions of the British empire; it was used to detain revolutionaries, terrorists, members of opposition political parties, and others of suspicious political affiliation. By and large, it was seen to be successful in suppressing

revolutionary activity in Bengal and yet, police and intelligence forces still felt weakened and pressed for legal measures to continue surveillance and arrest of those who were involved in revolutionary violence. With the end of the war and the end of this legislation looming, many officials feared that there might be a resurgence of radical political activity.

To confront what was perceived by British officials as an ongoing problem, a commission headed by S. A. T. Rowlatt, was convened. The members of the commission worked in the British Government in India; they included three judges (including Rowlatt), and three members of the Indian Civil Service. Because Bengal had been one of the central sites “seditious and anarchical crimes,” the province had assigned two full-time civil servants from the Special Branch to gather information for the commission’s research, which was conducted in Calcutta. In addition, the commission was advised by J. C. Ker, J. C. Nixon, C. Tindall, and J. D. V. Hodge, all of the Indian Civil Service.

Much like J. C. Ker’s report, the Rowlatt report began with revolutionary conspiracies in late nineteenth-century western India. Part I, which was titled “Historical,” comprises the bulk of the text, or about 180 pages; Part II is titled “Difficulties and Suggestions,” and runs about 40 pages with a shorter appendix of judicial summaries of conspiracies that had been prosecuted (unsuccessfully, to the mind of the Rowlatt Committee, because so many had been overturned on appeal or resulted in acquittals). The first 15 pages of the report constructed a lineage that repeated what had appeared in *Political Trouble*. The murders of Curzon Wyllie in London in 1909, followed by the murder of district magistrate in Nasik in western India later that year, were seen to be part of a longer historical progression even though the events took place oceans apart, one in Britain and another in Maharashtra. Coincidentally, Rowlatt had been involved in the prosecution of Curzon Wyllie’s assassin, an Indian engineering student named Madanlal Dhingra.

According to the Rowlatt Committee, the link between these different activities in western India and in Britain was that “All the conspiracies were

Brahmin and mostly Chitpavan.” The chapters that followed established the sequence of these particular events as somehow foundational to the emergence of terrorism in Bengal in eastern India (which was across the subcontinent). This series of events then became the animating reason for the founding of the Criminal Intelligence bureaus in the early 1900s and the subsequent recommendations of the Rowlatt committee in the 1920s. The report provided this candid assessment: “It may be true to say that there was not one conspiracy in the sense that the individual of one group or party could not be held legally responsible for the acts of another group ... But that there was one movement, promoting one general policy of outrage and intimidation and working very largely in concert is, we think, perfectly clear.” The Rowlatt report’s history made the argument that what might have previously been thought of as isolated terrorist attacks should be seen as part of a larger movement.

The bulk of the Rowlatt report – over a hundred pages of the total two hundred – were devoted to the problems faced by the British in Bengal, the region in which the British had centralized their commercial operations in the eighteenth century and their political administration in the nineteenth. As the committee noted, “The bhadrak of Bengal have been for centuries peaceful and unwarlike, but, through the influence of the great central city of Calcutta, were early in appreciating the advantages of Western learning.” Drawing from the language of the “unwarlike” Bengali elite, as a colonial official had done in 1913, the Rowlatt report reiterated a popular stereotype to explain how unusual it was for bhadrak to embrace violence. The report put forward a historical argument based on the progress that British colonial activity had provided, dating to Macaulay’s wish to see Indians educated in English: increased access to western education gave upper-caste Bengali elites an enhanced sense of political possibility. But, as Bengali elites began to imagine social and economic mobility, they found themselves limited by job opportunities. In a narrative that would later resonate for Marxist historians of Bengal in the postcolonial period, the report noted, “Thus

as bhadralok learned in English have become more and more numerous, a growing number have become less and less inclined to accept the conditions of life in which they found themselves on reaching manhood.” The Rowlatt report argued that many of these educated elites were landholders who found their lands sold off, thus, their annual income based on the rents paid by peasant cultivators was shrinking; amid this economic squeeze that limited social mobility – the lack of job and a decline in the worth of their land – they turned to political radicalism.

The Rowlatt report then followed a year-by-year account of political crimes committed in Bengal, from 1906 until 1917, which were accompanied by a foldout map that identified the major centers of sedition and revolution. Following the narrative of Ker’s account from the year before, the movement was reported to be inspired by late nineteenth-century religious ascetics such as Rama Krishna, Swami Vivekanand, and eventually Sri Aurobindo and propelled forward by the ill-judged decision of the viceroy, Lord Curzon, to partition Bengal into two halves in 1905. Although the report did not identify this fact, the brothers of Swami Vivekanand and Sri Aurobindo, Bhupendranath Dutta and Barindra Kumar Ghosh respectively, had been jailed for radical activities and continued to be active in revolutionary circles well into the 1930s. The first partition of Bengal in 1905 provoked the swadeshi movement. Largely nonviolent, the campaign to boycott foreign goods was supported by groups drawn from volunteer societies, secret societies that trained in the martial arts, and college and university groups. The swadeshi call to boycott goods such as machine-made textiles, tobacco, and alcohol became a template for Gandhi’s later movements in the 1920s and 1930s.

In words used by James Ker in *Political Trouble* and echoed in the Rowlatt report, sometime around 1907, the nonviolent swadeshi turned to “rowdyism” and gangs of elite men organized robberies to fund their acts of political violence against high-ranking officials. The targeted officials were chosen because of their involvement in suppressing political violence. On

December 6, 1907, the Lieutenant-Governor's train was derailed by a bomb outside Midnapore, a district that would later become synonymous with political violence. Perhaps most famously, in April 1908, there was an attempt on the life of Douglas Kingsford, the district magistrate of Muzzafarpur, in which two women were mistakenly killed. The Muzzafarpur attack became the seed for prosecuting the Alipore Conspiracy Case, when a home in Calcutta was discovered with the ingredients for the bombs that had killed the two women in Muzzafarpur. The Alipore Conspiracy resulted in the conviction of 15 men, but the killing of an approver by two of the accused showed the lengths to which revolutionary terrorists were willing to go to enforce loyalty within the movement; a public prosecutor and a deputy superintendent involved in prosecuting the case were also killed by the members of the movement.

The repeated attacks against police officials and witnesses who had agreed to testify for the state appeared in the Rowlatt report as explanations for the proposed promulgation of enhanced extra-legal procedures. Rowlatt noted that there was a legal precedent: in December 1908, in the year after the Alipore Conspiracy, the government passed the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act, which authorized trials without juries but by a tribunal of three judges. The act had also allowed the banning of certain revolutionary groups. In 1910, the government passed a censorship act and a prohibition limiting the ability of "seditious" groups to meet, both of which were targeted toward the revolutionaries and terrorists of Bengal. The Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act (1908) was used with limited success in prosecuting a number of cases in Bengal, the Dacca Conspiracy Case and the Barisal Conspiracy Case, as well as elsewhere in India, Lahore, Benaras, and Delhi. By 1913, there were so many attacks on police officials, government buildings such as railway ticket and post offices, and witnesses that "It is unnecessary to describe all the dacoities of the year in detail, since in all respects they conformed to what had by this time become a recognized type of crime." By abandoning what was seen as needless repetition, the logic of the Rowlatt

report was that history showed a pattern of political violence that was well established.

The shortest part of the Rowlatt report was perhaps the most consequential: it ended with a recommendation that the government enact the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, or what became known as the Rowlatt Act. The provisions of the Rowlatt Act were a continuation of many provisions of the Defence of India Act of 1915, although the war was coming to an end. In Part II, which the committee labeled “difficulties and suggestions,” they recommended the extension of what they called “extraordinary powers” in order to successfully jail those accused of trying to bring down the British government. The report acknowledged that measures such as Regulation III of 1818 and the Defence of India Act in 1915 had succeeded because they resorted to measures that were not in line with the ordinary practice of criminal law, which the revolutionary terrorists seemed to flout more easily.

In the process of explaining why extra-judicial measures should continue, the Rowlatt committee noted that few of these conspiracies had been prosecuted under the ordinary criminal law, which called for certain rules of evidence, jury trials, and the guarantee of the right of defendants to hear charges and be present for their trials. Instead, the committee noted that “The main reason why it has not been possible by the ordinary machinery of the criminal law to convict and imprison on a larger scale those guilty of outrages and so put down crime is simply want of sufficient evidence.” Police in local areas were hindered by the lack of enough investigators; the roads were often impassable in the monsoon season and made collecting evidence difficult; and confessions made to the police were often disallowed as evidence. Added to these problems, witnesses were often unreliable or reluctant to come forward for fear of recriminations. Because the trials often took years, and were well publicized, the trials served to recruit more followers, especially if they did not result in convictions. The report noted a grim cause-and-effect: “If they are not convicted, the movement is not checked.”

The final twenty pages of the report offered suggestions to the government “to deal effectively with the difficulties that have arisen in dealing with conspiracies,” by which they meant the inability of the government to successfully prosecute those who had wanted to overthrow the British government. Although the committee was not charged with drafting legislation, they recommended that any changes to the law should be enacted before the movement revived. Anticipating the need for emergency regulations before there was an emergency, the Rowlatt report noted, “The powers which we shall suggest for dealing with future emergencies must be ready for use at short notice. They must therefore be on the statute book in advance To postpone legislation till the danger is instant, is, in our view, to risk a recurrence of the history of the years 1906–1917.” They did not recommend a permanent extension of emergency powers, but rather that the laws should be available in case of emergency: “The powers involved are therefore to be dormant till the event occurs.” These caveats were intended to ensure that these measures would be used for a defined period of time and could be invoked at the discretion of the Governor-General of each province when necessary.

Among other recommendations, the Rowlatt commission argued that seditious crimes be tried by three judges, rather than a jury. This measure had been previously authorized by the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908. They also recommended that suspects should be required to report their movements to the police, that they could be banned from attending meetings of proscribed political groups, write for a journal, or to be complicit in disseminating seditious materials. Among the more extreme measures proposed by the committee was that the executive arm of the government could arrest, search, and confine in “non-penal custody,” anyone they suspected of seditious activity against the government. The principles behind the Rowlatt report allowed the executive branch of government to detain suspected revolutionaries and terrorists without charging them through the

ordinary criminal code – the Indian Penal Code – but rather through the extra-judicial provisions that were inspired by the Defence of India Act of 1915.

Anticipating dissent, the Rowlatt Commission defended the detention of suspected revolutionary terrorists. The report referred to a special report that was issued by Justices Beachcroft and Chandavarkar titled “The situation of the Bengal Detenus under the Defence of India Act and Regulation III of 1818.” Commissioned by the Government of Bengal in the summer of 1918 to answer its critics who were opposed to the large-scale detention of political activists during the war, the two judges investigated the detention of over 800 men in Bengal whose political activism was seen to be subversive and necessitated detention. Of the 806, 702 were detained under the Defence of India, 100 under Regulation III of 1818, and 4 under the restrictions to limit the movement of subversives under the Ingress into India Act. The judges asked for written representations from each person and only 167 detainees responded. Nonetheless, based on written evidence that had been collected by the Bengal police, Beachcroft and Chandavarkar determined that all but 6 of the detainees who remained in detention in August 1918 remained a threat to public safety. These findings were hailed by Bengal’s many lawyers as proof that the detentions remained unlawful; colonial officials in government, including those writing the Rowlatt report, used this report to demonstrate that rule of law had been upheld, even if the detainees had never been charged of any crimes or tried in court.

In March 1919, the legislation that emerged from suggestions in the Rowlatt report was promulgated by the Government of India. The report was quickly equated with the exercise of arbitrary martial law by Indian nationalists, particularly Gandhi, who led a day-long hartal, or work stoppage, to show that he could mobilize a national protest. Ironically, although the legislation targeted those who identified with political violence, the idea that the colonial government could suspend habeas corpus galvanized the nonviolent movement. A week later, a group of armed military led by General Reginald Dyer fired on and killed several hundred unarmed civilians when

they congregated at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar. Martial law was declared in the Punjab, but under provincial legislation, and not under the central legislation proposed by Rowlatt.

Ultimately, the legislation recommended by the Rowlatt report was never enforced on a national level and the legislation was repealed quietly in September 1921. By then, emergency legislation such as the Defence of India Act had expired and other repressive measures – the Indian Press Act of 1910, and the Seditious Meetings Acts of 1908 – were not being enforced. At the end of 1919, those detained under various emergency powers were released under the terms of a royal amnesty. By 1920, what the British called the “terrorist threat,” seemed to have subsided, especially because revolutionary groups were believed to have joined Gandhi’s Congress party and appeared to be following the campaign of nonviolence.

Although the recommendations of the Rowlatt Commission were not adopted and the protests that it generated were seen as a failure for the colonial government, the historical arguments mobilized in the 200-page report documented a pattern that colonial officials would draw from to argue throughout the 1920s and 1930s about the necessity of repressive legislation to combat terrorism.

Indian Jails Committee: Reforms for Political Prisoners

Simultaneous with the Rowlatt commission’s recommendations were the recommendations of another committee that was enjoined by the government to reform the status of prisoners, and in particular, those who had been identified as threats to the security of the state. When the Report of the Indian Jails Committee was presented to Parliament in 1921, it comprised 24 chapters that began with a historical survey about prisons, jails, and reform across the British empire – Hong Kong, Burma, Malaya – and other parts of the world – Japan, the Philippines, England, France, and Germany. Based on both world historical and ethnographic research, the report drew from a global language of prison reform and offered some suggestions with the goal that rehabilitation was a central concern. Key among these suggestions was that a

better system of classification was needed so that prisoners who were likely to be reformed could be targeted early, treated according to their status, and ultimately released into the general population.

The report noted that there were two main groups: “habitual convict and non-habitual convict,” and that the two groups ought to be incarcerated separately. Habitual or “ordinary criminals” were seen to be those whose livelihoods depended on crime, members of the criminal castes and tribes, and those who would be harder to reform. Among the “non-habitual convicts,” were the “well-to-do criminals,” many of whom comprised “persons of good social status.” These distinctions mapped onto the prisons’ regime, and those who were more respectable were seen to be deserving of special dispensations on the question of clothing, diet, and the kind of labor they could be expected to perform.

Informants who were interviewed for the report claimed another category – the “political prisoners” – whose crimes were not motivated by criminal ends, but by patriotism. The members of the Indian Jails Committee objected to the idea of the designation of the political prisoner, noting that it would be difficult to decide whether a criminal act – such as murder, attempted murder, or armed assault – that was motivated by politics was distinct from criminal acts that lacked an explicit political demand. Yet, that the term appeared in the report suggests that it was a salient category for those in the jails and those hoping to reform the jails system. Supporters of this designation noted that the political prisoner was not a habitual convict and should be treated with respect because of their status and patriotism; repeatedly, throughout the period of the committee’s inquiry and afterward, Indian politicians would argue that crimes committed by political prisoners would cease if the cause of their political opposition – the continued British occupation of India – ended.

As the population of those who might be considered political prisoners expanded through the 1920s and 1930s, which were the most active phases of the Indian nationalist movement, the colonial state was repeatedly confronted

with the question of designating the political prisoner as a distinct type of incarcerated person. In the case of revolutionary terrorists, among the key concerns was whether the government's recognition of political prisoners would be seen as legitimizing violence against the state. For this reason, the government was reluctant to use the term "political prisoner" although it agreed to make special provisions for those who were understood to be "non-habitual" criminals. Many of the so-called non-habitual criminals had not been convicted of crimes, but were being held on suspicion of sedition, rendering their status legally anomalous. Officials also hoped that special treatment (although not a designation) would produce reformed prisoners who could one day become model citizens. Thus, the government made provisions that included special diets, the right to wear one's own clothing, the right to read, to correspond with relatives, and, eventually, the guarantee of a bar of Lifebuoy soap to be supplied monthly for bathing.

Shortly after the 1921 Jails Report was published, the Government of India began a series of correspondence with local and provincial governments to determine how each province dealt with prisoners who were in jail because of their political activities and to attempt to homogenize the rules across the different British dominions. There were vociferous debates within the Legislative Assembly, between Indian representatives and colonial officials. Eventually the colonial government convened a conference of relevant officials in Simla in July 1922 to determine a response to the question that was framed as the "Treatment of Political Prisoners." The presumption behind all of these discussions was that those who were in jail for political reasons were middle-class and well-educated, rather than uneducated or members of lower castes and classes. In what represented a peculiar irony, the colonial government was keen to treat political prisoners in a way that was commensurate with their social status, which indirectly provided legal recognition that they were being jailed for political protest rather than what would be considered "ordinary" criminal acts that could be prosecuted by ordinary laws.

Almost all of the colonial officials polled were “opposed to any preferential treatment being accorded to political prisoners, though they recognized that some intermediate form of punishment between ‘simple’ and ‘rigorous’ was desirable.” Although there would be no recognition of the political prisoner, perhaps these prisoners could have the requirement to perform labor that was not “arduous.” Among the suggested forms of labor for gentlemanly terrorists were gardening or envelope making, but that “Strict instructions have been issued that political or special class prisoners of any kind are under no circumstances to be employed on any form of office or clerical labour” lest they use these supplies to produce seditious material.

In the correspondence between officials at the provincial level and those at the central level, liberal officials who hoped to devolve political authority to Indians placed some hope in the possible reform of those in jail for protesting the government. Montagu, the secretary of state, argued with officials both at the level of the central government and at the provinces that political prisoners should be recognized as distinctive: “there are cases in which men who suffer ‘for conscience sake’ should not be treated as ordinary criminals.” Montagu debated Chelmsford, the Viceroy, over this issue:

What I am very much concerned with is the fact that the world should think that we allow political leaders to undergo rigorous imprisonment ... I would repeat that sooner or later there must be peace restored between the Government of India and these men ... Could they not be treated with courtesy and dignity as the honourable but dangerous enemies of Government? Should we not gain more than we lose by letting it be known that we treat these political prisoners with courtesy and recognition of the sincerity of their mistaken and dangerous motives rather than as jail birds.

The tension between the “honourable but dangerous enemies of Government,” encapsulated the tensions between Indian politicians, colonial officials at the provincial level, and central government officials. Secretary of State Montagu, who represented the British government’s position to the colonial government, recognized that incarcerating Indian political activists

and leaders seemed antithetical to the liberal goals of the colonial government; officials in India, such as the Viceroy, were not completely persuaded. As the violence escalated, officials felt more keenly that law and order within India was at risk.

Indian politicians felt that distinctions between the political prisoners and others should be maintained. Provincial assemblies, newly infused with more Indian representatives by the terms of the Government of India Act of 1919, were among the most vocal advocates of making distinctions between those who were in jail for political reasons and those who were in jail for common crimes. Mian Beli Ram, spoke forcefully in the Punjab Legislative Council, "... prisoners should not be mixed up with ordinary culprits because in their case the motives are very different from those of ordinary prisoners. They are not low class people actuated with the love of crime. They generally belong to that class which is known as the patriots. Pandit Nilakantha Das of Bengal demanded that political prisoners "be classed distinctly and separately from other prisoners and should receive treatment in keeping with their honour and respectability," thus allowed to read books and newspapers.

In a report that responded to the Jails Committee's recommendations, those considered politically moderate in the Indian National Congress, B. N. Sharma, M. Shafi, and Tej Bahadur Sapru noted that they would "refrain from going into the larger issue relating to the classification of prisoners ..." but that they hoped that the government would consider using the "Irish rules," and regard political crime as a misdemeanor rather than a capital crime. Sharma, Shafi, and Sapru noted that anyone convicted of murder, attempted murder, manslaughter, wrongful assault, robbery, extortion, rioting, or possession of arms or ammunition would be considered a felon, regardless of their social status. But they hoped that the government understood that it would "stand to gain much and not to lose anything if, when these prisoners come out, they feel that they were not unnecessarily humiliated or put to avoidable discomfort."

Colonial officials from the provinces that had large numbers of political prisoners – Bengal, United Provinces, Punjab, and Central Provinces – refused to label the political prisoner as distinct from other prisoners, but made provisions commensurate to these prisoners’ social status. Most local officials ensured that these prisoners were allowed their own clothes, food, and books; if they could afford it, these prisoners could hire convicts to serve as personal servants to perform menial chores such as laundry. Throughout the process of working out how to treat this new group of prisoners, some officials in the administration such as William Vincent of the Home Department resisted these accommodations and noted that “In Bengal, they live in absolute comfort, and are subject to no discipline, playing games, acting plays, reading books all day and having their food whenever they like.”

When the “Rules for the treatment of special class prisoners,” was published in pamphlet form in 1923, “special-class prisoner” denoted the political prisoner and the rules spelled out the modifications of the Indian Prisons Act of 1894 which had detailed how prisoners should be treated. Among the many provisions that were agreed to – in consultation with British officials at all levels of the colonial government, Indian politicians, and others who sent petitions and letters – were that prisoners of “special class” could import their own food to supplement the prison diet, they could wear their own clothing as long as it did not represent a political symbol (the Gandhi cap was a particular concern), they would be kept separate from the other prisoners, they would have the right to separate latrines, they would be allowed one monthly visit from a family member, and the right to write and receive a letter a month. In recognition of their special status, these prisoners would be expected to stand, but not salute (“raise the hands so as to display the palms”), in the presence of jail authorities such as the Superintendent, Deputy or Assistant Jailer, or medical officers and visitors. Additionally, these prisoners “should not be called on to perform menial duties if he is willing to pay for the services of one other prisoner to serve him.” In spite of its reluctance to label political prisoners as such, the colonial government,

prodded by protests made by some Indian politicians and the encouragement of high-ranking liberal officials such as Edwin Montagu, made a series of distinctions about the conditions of incarceration.

The question of how to categorize “political prisoners” would become a much larger issue in the years after these guidelines were issued. Largely because of the growth of the Gandhian Non-Cooperation Movement in the 1920s, which produced a larger number of Indian politicians who were willing to go to jail, the treatment of “non-habitual prisoners” became a central concern for colonial authorities in Bengal and across India. Echoing Montagu’s concern that “sooner or later there must be peace restored between the Government of India and these men,” the government went to significant lengths to make special provisions for the jailing and detaining of those they considered political opponents, particularly once new legislation was introduced that permitted the government to detain suspected terrorists and keep them under detention without charging them of particular crimes.

The Royal Amnesty

In the final section of this chapter, I want to examine a lesser-known political event of 1919, which was the royal amnesty of political prisoners and revolutionary terrorists that accompanied the release of the Montagu–Chelmsford reforms in December. This reform offered – at least on the surface – a kind of solution to how the colonial state attempted to treat those who had been imprisoned for political offenses but might be persuaded to support the liberal reforms promoted by the Montagu–Chelmsford reforms. While it might seem ironic to have a British monarch involved in a process of constitutional reform in India, the proclamation re-established the presumed connection between the King (a sovereign) and his subjects in India, particularly those who had been agitating for the right to represent themselves. Stemming from a precedent set from the Queen’s proclamation in 1858, a seemingly archaic connection between a monarch and his putative subjects endured in spite of the reforms to expand the role of the constitution in a parliamentary government.

In December 1919, shortly after the colonial government abandoned the Rowlatt Act and decided to close the jail at the Andaman Islands, the King issued a proclamation that had been written with the support of the secretary of state for India, Edwin Montagu. The proclamation granted a royal amnesty to those who had been jailed or detained for political crimes and commuted the sentences of those who had less than a year to serve. Although many of these political prisoners had been jailed for plotting the violent overthrow of the colonial government, the government argued that this group of men might be drawn into a new political formation, one whose foundations included the Montagu–Chelmsford reforms. The royal amnesty, issued by King George V, called for the immediate release of political prisoners who had been detained or convicted and remained in British jails under the Seditious Meetings Act, the Indian Press Act, the Defence of India Act, Regulation III of 1818, and those convicted of sections 121A, 124A, and 153 A of the Indian Penal Code, and “other similar enactments or ordinances.” In spite of the findings of the Beachcroft–Chandavarkar report which had shown that these men had been rightly detained, the amnesty authorized the release of all prisoners who had been detained during 1919 under the nationalist agitations against the government that year and remitted the sentences of those in jails for political crimes committed before and during the war.

The language of the proclamation was remarkable in its scope: it provided a historical narrative of the progress of liberal and representative institutions in the governance of British India and offered a vision of a political amnesty that promised to render the most militant opponents of the colonial government into participants of the broader constitutional reforms that the colonial government had introduced that year. It also promised the king’s loyalty to the Chamber of Princes, who represented the 500 areas that were not under direct British rule, thus recognizing and guaranteeing the sovereign power of the royal states within India, who were not included in the Montagu–Chelmsford reforms. The King’s proclamation began with a brief history of legislative acts promulgated in the British Parliament that directly

dealt with Indian affairs: acts promulgated in 1773, 1784, 1833, 1858, 1861, and 1909 provided a series of legislation that were “for the better government of India and the greater happiness of its people.” The particular legislation from 1861 and 1909 were noted because they “sowed the seed for representative institutions,” something that the 1919 act would bring to fruition. Based on India and Britain’s longstanding relationship of “affection and devotion,” the King noted that “the Parliament and the people of this realm and My officers in India have been equally zealous for the moral and material advancement of India.” With this grand and ambitious beginning, the King noted his approval of Indians’ growing demands for representative institutions, and agreed that the “progress of a country cannot be consummated – the right of its people to direct its affairs and safeguards its interests.” He briefly acknowledged that Indians had long been clamoring for political reforms, applauding those who had pursued these reforms through “constitutional channels,” rather than through “acts of violence committed under the guise of patriotism.” In spite of Indians’ demands for a change in the style of governance, the King’s proclamation noted the British origins of good government, “In truth the desire after political responsibility has its source at the very root of the British connection with India.”

The king’s brief history lesson sketched a British history of India that was filled with liberal progress toward democratic institutions. The king warned that in the future, “the path will not be easy,” and offered advice to those who were elected to “face responsibility,” and “sacrifice much for the common interest of the State,” in order to “maintain the standards of a just and generous government.” After a brief instructional passage to Indians about how self-representative institutions relied on “honest work,” “mutual respect,” and “perseverance and forbearance,” paragraph 6 explained why it was important for the crown to offer an amnesty to those who had been convicted of political crimes. It is worth quoting this passage at length to animate the liberal aspirations that guided this proclamation:

It is my earnest desire at this time that, so far as possible, all traces of bitterness between My people and those who have been responsible for My government should be obliterated. Let those who, in their eagerness for political progress, have broken the law in the past respect it in the future. Let it become possible for those who are charged with the maintenance of peaceful and orderly government to forget the extravagances which they have had to curb. A new era is opening. Let it begin with a common determination among My people and My officers to work together for a common purpose. I therefore direct my Viceroy to exercise, in My name and on My behalf, My Royal clemency in the case of political offenders, save those who have directly taken part in the murder of Our subjects, to the widest extent which in his judgment is compatible with the public safety, and to extend it to persons suffering restraint or held to security for offences against the state under any special or emergent measures for the maintenance of order, or under any exceptional powers employed for that purpose by the executive government. I trust that this leniency will be justified by the future conduct of those whom it benefits, and that their conduct will render it unnecessary to enforce the law against them hereafter.

The amnesty was issued over the objections of the Viceroy of India, Lord Chelmsford, who was repeatedly advised by local authorities from Punjab to Madras that the release of those convicted under various political crimes would pose a serious threat to the security of the state and would create more unrest rather than defuse it. As the viceroy measured the various positions, he noted, "The risk of release on the one hand is the danger the gradual reformation for revolutionary organization. The risk on the other hand of continued detention is the creation of bitterness and wide-spread agitation, which might be fatal to authority of Government." Officials in Punjab, in particular, made clear that the inquiry into the April 1919 disturbances and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre should be concluded before any political prisoners were released.

Montagu, the secretary of state, was not to be dissuaded and issued a strongly worded rebuke that was directed at local authorities who were attempting to dilute the general amnesty with “exceptions”: “I feel very strongly that this amnesty is only worth granting if we give it in a spirit of most liberal confidence. And I feel that we ought to give it in that spirit and make a supreme effort to convince India by our sincere desire to bury the past.” As he reiterated the liberal aspirations of the amnesty, Montagu made the case that a general amnesty would promote the success of the Government of India’s reforms.² It would fulfill the conditions of bringing Indians into government, something that British government had committed itself to in constructing the reforms; indeed, political prisoners such as Annie Besant had been released from internment under the Defence of India Act as early as 1917 in order to show the good faith of the government in negotiating with dissidents. His statements, both in public and in private, illuminated his belief in a liberal approach that would remake “gentlemanly terrorists” into gentleman who might take part in a new structure of governance for India; he argued that the “King’s policy of a clean slate,” would enable such a political reformation. In any case, the terms of the amnesty gave local authorities sufficient grounds for restraining the small number of figures they felt were a serious threat.

Against their considered judgment, officials from the province of Bengal released nearly 60 men who had been members of revolutionary terrorist groups in 1920 and 1921; all were high-caste, educated, and had been either convicted or detained for their involvement in secret, underground networks, but most had not themselves pulled any triggers, set off any bombs, or assassinated any officials. Bengal’s officials argued they were upholding the spirit of the general amnesty, as Montagu had directed, but they registered their “gravest misgivings,” and “want to have it placed on record that they have done so [released these detainees] under force.” Montagu continued to insist that these were exactly the men whose trust could be earned by an amnesty and brushed off these anxieties.

Even if the numbers of crimes, casualties, and detainees in Bengal were roughly equivalent with those from other regions, particularly Punjab, which had been the site of protests in the aftermath of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, Bengal's officials felt they faced a particularly acute crisis from the amnesty: if they kept some political dissidents in jail, it might unleash protests and "wide-spread agitation," but releasing them was sure to result in a renewed campaign of terrorism. As one of Bengal's top officials predicted, "... the result will be a revival of agitations against the policy of extra-judicial restraint and a widespread and virulent attack upon Government, who will be represented as whittling down the Royal boon."

In spite of their grave misgivings about the royal amnesty and releasing those who had a record of violent insurgence against the government, between 1920 and 1921, the Bengal government under the governor, the Earl of Ronaldshay, released nearly all prisoners and detainees who had been in British jails and prisons for political crimes under various statutes. Called alternately "state prisoners," if they were detained under Regulation III of 1818, or "detenus," if they were held under the Defence of India Act, the amnesty marked the end of their detention. The amnesty reduced the sentences of political convicts whose sentences were near completion, which meant that those who had been convicted of political crimes against the state, such as publishing or distributing seditious texts, involved in conspiracies against the government or its officials, or organizing meetings for anti-government activities were released as well.

In anticipation of a new chapter in politics in India, in 1921, the Government of India also decided to close the Cellular Jail at the Andaman Islands, which had been built and used to incarcerate India's worst political offenders. Among the prisoners who had been jailed there included those convicted of some of the most widespread criminal conspiracies of the 1900s and 1910s.

Conclusion

These small and large historical events that occurred in the immediate aftermath of the First World War – the Montagu–Chelmsford reforms, the Rowlatt Act, the Jails Commission’s reforms, and the royal amnesty – are constitutive of one another, intricately linked by the exigencies of political reform that was carefully managed by colonial officials and focused on those who had undertaken acts of political violence. The revolutionary terrorist movement put a great deal of pressure on the colonial state as it attempted to reform the structure of governing India. In the process of introducing constitutional reforms, the colonial government was compelled to defuse radical and militant activity that had been thriving for over a decade, particularly among a group who had been identified as gentlemanly terrorists, or in Montagu’s words, “honourable but dangerous enemies of the Government.” The tensions between the goals of British officials in London, such as Montagu, Chelmsford in Delhi, and provincial officers in Bengal animated a bureaucratic, administrative, and legal set of problems that was central to governing a colonial territory that was putatively governed by rule of law and simultaneously confronted by the threat of campaigns of political violence. In the discussions that spanned the years of 1919 to 1921, where this chapter ends, liberal ideals of rule of law and prisoner reform laid the foundations of Britain and India’s interwar relationship. The realities faced by local officials, who were often resistant to adopting legislation or policies that would embolden revolutionary terrorists, were repeatedly challenged by reform-minded officials at higher levels who felt Indian radicals, militants, and revolutionaries could eventually be persuaded to convert to the goals of civic and liberal government.

Disagreements between colonial officials at different levels show how conflicts about how to suppress violent acts of political dissidence were debated on the grounds of laws and legislation that were ratified by emergent representative institutions. Embedded within this moment – maintaining repressive laws that had the logic of rule law behind them while promoting political reforms – was a crisis of sovereignty and political legitimacy in the

aftermath of the war. Throughout the conversations and discussions behind the plight of the detainees, the government stood behind the legality of the Rowlatt Act and the wisdom of granting amnesty to political prisoners (allowing for the possibility that they might be detained again). Throughout, Indian nationalists voiced in their objections to the Rowlatt bills and provincial colonial officials stated strong opposition to the royal amnesty. By framing the Rowlatt Act as they did, the colonial government voiced a clear commitment to making the detention of suspected revolutionaries and terrorists appear legal because it was produced through constitutional channels and in consultation with officials and legislators. The appearance of bureaucratic transparency – sustained by the convening of commissions, investigations, and reports – enabled the colonial government to explain how it was promoting constitutional reform all while enacting emergency legislation.

Reports such as those by the Rowlatt commission, the Beachcroft–Chandavarkar inquiry, the Hunter commission on the Punjab disturbances, and the Indian Jails Commission repeatedly investigated the enforcement of laws having to do with Indian affairs and showed how committed the government was to thorough inquiry with legality in mind. As Montagu noted in a debate in the House of Commons, the Rowlatt Act and other similar legislation had passed through many channels of discussion, even though the government could have issued an executive ordinance in its place. Indeed, in response to opposition by elected Indians, the Government abandoned the idea of making the Rowlatt legislation permanent; instead, it was adopted for a three-year period and only in districts where there was a defined threat of revolutionary activity. In the end, because of mass protests, the Rowlatt Act was never enforced.

Yet, Montagu defended the legislation: although a suspect could be detained indefinitely, the government had to convene a three-member committee to ensure that there was a just cause for detention. This committee could be understood in a benign and liberal spirit: “It is more like a body of

schoolmasters investigating trouble in a school, a committee of a club using its friendly services for the purposes of inquiry; some body to explore all matters, some body to see that injustice is not done, some body to be sure that all the facts are investigated.” The detention of suspects was authorized through legal measures that subjected political dissidents to more state intervention, subverting the accusation that these measures were arbitrary or authoritarian. To their critics, Montagu and other British officials noted that the government already had the mechanism to detain those suspected of sedition – Regulation III of 1818 – but that the Rowlatt provisions gave more legal rights to the detainee by creating oversight for the government’s actions. In order for India to develop as a nation, which was a stated goal behind the constitutional reforms, the government needed to protect the political arena from those who might disrupt the progress of the Montagu–Chelmsford plan. As Montagu wrote, “We intend to maintain order in India, and we intend to safeguard it because we believe that that is the only atmosphere in which nationality can grow uninterruptedly, surely, and swiftly.”

The aspirations toward “safeguarding” order so that nationalism could thrive would prove not to be well founded. Within a year of Montagu’s statement, Gandhi, who had been elected the President of the Indian National Congress, abandoned any optimism about the possibilities of the royal amnesty and turned against the constitutional reforms of 1919. He called for *purna swaraj*, or complete independence from the British within the year, and announced plans for a non-cooperation campaign that called on all Indians to withdraw their labor from work, school, and administration – anything that sustained the British government and economy in India. By July 1920, he expressed his dismay about the events of 1919, gesturing in particular to the bad faith that was represented by the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. For Gandhi, who had trained as a barrister and passed the bar at the Inner Temple in London, violence by the military backed by a new round of repressive laws showed that the British were not fully committed to the project of Indian governance in India. He wrote that he had

“honestly believed that a new era was about to begin, and that the old spirit of fear, distrust, and consequent terrorism was about to give place to the new spirit of respect, trust, and goodwill. But to my amazement and dismay, I have discovered that the present representatives of the Empire have become dishonest and unscrupulous.”

Under Gandhi’s leadership, the Indian National Congress was reorganized, adopting a creed of nonviolence. Many former revolutionary terrorists – including those who had been amnestied in 1919 – joined Gandhi’s movement in Bengal, even though they had been active as revolutionary terrorists before the war. The begins with those released from Cellular Jail on Andaman Island, those who had been considered the most dangerous threat to political order, which included Barindra Kumar Ghosh, Upendra Nath Banerji, and Trailokya Nath Chakrabarty. While the revolutionary terrorist movement appeared to be moribund, largely because many of its participants in the 1910s appeared to join Gandhi’s nonviolent movement, these political prisoners generated a history of the terrorist movement in Bengal from the perspective of its participants. From the early 1920s onward, they produced memoirs that included an account of their early lives, how they embraced revolutionary nationalism, and how a revolutionary future might emerge if Indians came together to challenge the British.

The autobiographies, memoirs, and histories written by those who participated in the revolutionary terrorist movement articulated a different kind of historical progression than the one offered by the British that was animated by a history of India’s past as a nation that had resisted many kinds of tyranny. Among those released from jails in Bengal, Bhupendra Kumar Dutta published a series of historical vignettes, explaining Bengal’s turn toward radicalism as part of a revolutionary process that would undermine the kind of incremental change that the British imagined. As a burst of autobiographies, memoirs, and historical accounts of the experiences of revolutionary terrorists were published and distributed widely in the early

1920s, former revolutionary terrorists returned to clandestine activity, causing a “recrudescence of terrorism,” as British officials called it.

After Gandhi’s protests, the Rowlatt legislation was not enforced at a national level, but many of the extra-legal measures were later enacted and enforced on a provincial level, particularly in Bengal where the revolutionary movement continued to be characterized as a live threat by the government. Enabled by the provisions of a diarchic government, the Government of Bengal enacted nearly all of the provisions that the Rowlatt Act had proposed. In subsequent chapters, I turn to “temporary” legislation that followed the events of this chapter and I examine the logic of a series of provincial acts that began with the Bengal Criminal Law Amendment Acts and Ordinances in the 1920s, and became more or less permanent provisions enabling the government to detain without charge until the next Government of India Act, which was passed in 1935.

Government of India Act 1919

Montagu, the Secretary of State, arrived in India in Nov 1917 for consideration of reforms with Viceroy Lord Chemsford, eminent British civil servants and Indian politicians of all shades of opinion. A committee was formed – William Duke, Earl of Donoughmore, Bhupendra Nath Basu and Charles Robert which together with Viceroy- to help Montagu to prepare the draft of the reform scheme which was published in July 1918 and is called Montagu-Chelmsford Report. On the basis of this report, the Government of India Act 1919 was passed. The Act consisted of 47 sections and 5 schedules and was written in a legal style.

Features of the Government of India Act 1919

- Also known as Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.
- Named after Edwin Montagu (Secretary of State for India) and Lord Chelmsford (Viceroy).
- Montagu Declaration: On August 20, 1917, for the first time, the British Government declared that its objective was the gradual introduction of a Responsible Government in India.

- Classification of Administrative Subjects: It provided for the classification of all the subjects of administration into two categories, namely, the central subjects and the provincial subjects.
- Devolution Rules: This classification was done by the “Devolution Rules”, which facilitated the delegation of authority from the centre to the provinces.
- Introduction of Dyarchy: The Element of Dyarchy or dual scheme of governance was introduced in Provincial Subjects, and it was divided into two parts.
- Reserved Subjects: these were to be administered by the Governor General and his Executive Council so not responsible to the Legislative Council.
- Transferred Subjects: which were to be administered by the Governor General with the help of his council.
- They were responsible to the legislative council.
- Introduction of Bicameral Legislature: For the first time, the Indian Legislative Council was replaced by the Bicameral legislature consisting of an Upper House (Council of State) and a Lower House (Legislative Assembly).
- The majority of members were chosen by Direct Elections.
- Increased Indians in Viceroy Executive Council: Three of the six members of the Viceroy Executive Council (excluding the Commander in Chief) were Indians.
- Extension of Separate Electorate: There was an extension of the Separate electorate for Sikhs, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians, and Europeans.
- Limited Franchise: The franchise was given to a limited number of people based on property, Tax, education etc.
- Separation of Provincial Budgets and Authority: The Provincial Budget was separated from the Central Budget, and Provinces were allowed to enact their own Budget.

- High Commissioner for India: It created a new office of the High Commissioner for India in London and transferred to him some of the functions performed by the Secretary of State for India.
- A Central Public Service Commission was set up in 1926 to recruit civil servants.
- Chamber of Princes: It proposed the establishment of a Chamber of Princes (also known as Narendra Mandal).
- The chamber was inaugurated in 1921. It consisted of 120 members i.e., Princes of 108 states and 12 representatives of other states.
- It was headed by the Viceroy (Governor General). It facilitated the consultation and discussion on matters of common interest.
- Provision of Statutory Commission: Provided for the appointment of a statutory commission to inquire into and report on its working after ten years of its coming into force.

Major provisions

- ❖ Indian Legislative Council at the Centre was replaced by a bicameral system consisting of a Council of State (Upper House) and a Legislative Assembly (Lower House).
- ❖ Communal representation was extended further with separate electorates for Sikhs, Christians and Anglo-Indians, besides Muslims.
- ❖ Provinces were given power to decide on women's representation in provincial assemblies.
- ❖ It introduced dyarchy in the provinces, which indeed was a substantial step towards transfer of power to the Indian people.
- ❖ However, provincial legislature was to consist of one house only (legislative council).
- ❖ It separated the provincial and central budgets, with provincial legislatures being authorised to make their budgets.
- ❖ A High Commissioner for India was appointed, who was to hold his office in London for six years and whose duty was to look after Indian

trade in Europe. Some of the functions hitherto performed by the Secretary of State for India were transferred to the high commissioner.

Analysis

- ❖ Though a step was taken towards increasing association of Indians by raising their strength to 3 in Viceroy's council, the departments assigned to them were comparatively unimportant.
- ❖ Nor were these members made responsible to the legislative.
- ❖ Division of subjects into two lists was not. Clear-cut or based on proper consideration.
- ❖ Chief executive Authority remained with Governor-general.
- ❖ Communal politics of British was strengthened.

Self Assessment Questions

S.N.	Questions (5 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Write a short note on the birth of the Indian National Congress.	CO2	PO1	K1
2	Explain the composition of the early Indian National Congress.	CO2	PO2	K2
3	Describe the methods of work and demands of the early Congress leaders.	CO3	PO2	K2
4	Write a note on the attitude of the British towards the early national movement.	CO4	PO2	K2
5	Explain the rise of extremism in the Indian National Movement.	CO5	PO3	K2
6	Write a short note on the Partition of Bengal and the Swadeshi Movement.	CO2	PO3	K2
7	Describe the foundation of the All India Muslim League.	CO5	PO3	K3
S.N.	Questions (8 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Explain the origin and growth of the Indian National Congress.	CO2	PO2	K3
2	Discuss the composition, methods and policies of the early Congress leaders.	CO3	PO3	K4
3	Analyse the attitudes of the British towards the early national movement.	CO4	PO3	K4
4	Evaluate the early phase of the Indian National Movement.	CO5	PO4	K4
5	Examine the causes for the rise of extremism in Indian politics.	CO4	PO3	K4
6	Discuss the causes and impact of the Partition of Bengal and the Swadeshi Movement.	CO5	PO4	K4
7	Analyse the circumstances leading to the foundation of the All India Muslim League.	CO5	PO3	K4
8	Examine the role of revolutionary movements in the freedom struggle.	CO3	PO4	K4
9	Discuss the reactions to the Morley-Minto Reforms.	CO5	PO4	K3
10	Explain the features and significance of the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms and the Government of India Act 1919.	CO4	PO4	K3

UNIT - IV

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the early political activities of Gandhi in India.
2. To study the causes and impact of the Rowlatt Satyagraha.
3. To examine the significance of the Non-Cooperation Movement.
4. To analyse the role of Swarajists in the national movement.
5. To study the events related to the Simon Commission and Round Table Conferences.
6. To understand the causes and impact of the Civil Disobedience Movement.
7. To analyse the provisions of the Government of India Act 1935 and provincial ministries.
8. To study the growth of socialist ideas, communalism and Congress involvement in world affairs.

Course Outcomes

1. Students understand the early political activities of Gandhi.
2. Students explain the causes and impact of the Rowlatt Satyagraha and Non-Cooperation Movement.
3. Students analyse the role of Swarajists in the national movement.
4. Students describe the significance of the Simon Commission and Round Table Conferences.
5. Students examine the Civil Disobedience Movement and British repression.
6. Students understand the features of the Government of India Act 1935 and provincial ministries.
7. Students analyse the growth of socialist ideas and Congress involvement in world affairs.
8. Students evaluate the rise of communalism in India.

Mahatma Gandhi played a key role in transforming the content, ideology and range of Indian politics during the National Movement. With his entry into politics there opened a new phase of struggle. With the shift to mass mobilization, he remained the dominant personality during the National Movement and played a crucial role in directing the struggle against British imperialism. In the initial stage of his entry into Indian politics, Gandhi tried to understand Indian economic, social and political reality and applied new forms of struggle. During his stay in South Africa Gandhi fought against racial discrimination which denied to the Indian community human rights necessary for leading a civilized life. So he was experienced in the techniques of political mobilization. After his return from South Africa, Gandhi emerged the most prominent leader of Indian national movement and using his new

techniques of mass mobilization he was able to secure participation of poorer peasants, youth and women. This was visible in the series of movements like Non-Cooperation, Civil Disobedience and Quit India movement. So, understanding Gandhi's ideas and techniques is essential to understand his influence on the National Movement.

Knowing the Country

Gandhi reached India on January 9, 1915 and was given a warm welcome for his partial victory in South Africa. In India, the moderate leader Gokhale was his political Guru. He wanted Gandhi to join the Servants of India Society. But Gandhi could not become its member because some members of the society strongly opposed his entry. Gokhale had extracted a promise from Gandhi that he would not express any opinion or political matters for a year. Gandhi spent 1915, and most of 1916 touring India and visiting places as far as Sindh and Rangoon, Banaras and Madras. He also visited Rabindranath Tagore's Shantiniketan, and then the kumbh fair at Hardwar. All this helped Gandhi in the better understanding of his countrymen and the conditions in India. In 1915 Gandhi had set up an Ashram at Ahmedabad on the bank of the Sabarmati. Here Gandhi lived with his close associates who were being trained in the rigorous of moral life essential for a satyagrahi.

At this time Gandhi took very little interest in political matters, and at his meetings he mostly spoke on his experiences in South Africa and the ideas he had formulated there. When Annie Besant approached Gandhi to join her in founding a Home Rule League he refused on the ground that he did not wish to embarrass the British government during the war. In 1915, he attended the Congress session, but avoided speaking on important issues like self government. Gandhi welcomed the unity move of bringing back Tilak and others who were earlier excluded from the Congress. But at the same time Gandhi made it clear that he did not belong to any group. He attended the reunited session of the Congress but refused to speak on issues which would have meant aligning himself with a particular group. He spoke strongly on the

indentured labourers recruitment and a resolution was passed for the abolition of this practice.

The Gandhian Ideological Tools and Methods of Mass Mobilization

In this part we will study the main aspects of Gandhian ideology. Before we discuss Gandhi's ideology it is necessary to mention that there were various influences which worked on Gandhi and helped him in evolving his philosophy. His autobiography makes it clear that the outlook of his parents and the socio-religious milieu of his native place left a profound influence on him. In particular, the values of Vaishnavism and the tradition of Jainism shaped his early thoughts. Moreover, some Hindu texts like the Bhagavata Gita also influenced him. The Gospels (especially the Sermon on the Mount) and the writings of Tolstoy, Thoreau and Ruskin also greatly influenced his thinking. However, Gandhi was primarily a man of action and his own experiences in life helped him more than his readings in evolving and shaping his ideology.

Satyagraha

The chief aspect of Gandhi's ideology was Satyagraha i.e. 'truth-force'. As mentioned earlier, it was evolved by Gandhi in South Africa but after it had been fully developed it became a dominant element in India's struggle for freedom from 1919 onwards. For Gandhi, the Satyagraha was to be used so that by self suffering and not by violence the enemy could be converted to one's own view. Gandhi made a distinction between the Satyagraha and passive resistance, when he wrote:

"The latter (passive resistance) has been conceived as a weapon of the weak and does not exclude the use of physical force or violence for the purpose of gaining one's end; whereas the former (Satyagraha) has been conceived as a weapon of the strongest, and excludes the use of violence in any shape." In fact, for Gandhi, Satyagraha was not merely a political tactic but part of a total philosophy of life and ideology of action. Gandhi believed that the search for truth was the goal of human life. Since no one could know

the ultimate Truth one should never attack another's integrity or prevent another's search for truth.

Non-Violence

Non-Violence formed the basis of Satyagraha. Gandhi emphasized that non-violent Satyagraha could be practised by common people for achieving political ends. But some time Gandhi took a position which fell short of complete non-violence. His repeated insistence that even violence is preferable to a cowardly surrender to injustice sometimes created a delicate problem of interpretation. In practice, Satyagraha could assume various forms – fasting, non-violent picketing, different types of non-cooperation and ultimately in politics, civil disobedience in willing anticipation of the legal penalty. Gandhi firmly believed that all these forms of Satyagraha were pure means to achieve pure ends.

Use of Religious

Idioms another important aspect of Gandhi's ideology was his attitude towards religion. Religion for Gandhi was not a doctrinal formulation of any religious system but a basic truth underlying all formal religions. Gandhi described religion as the struggle for Truth. His conviction was that religion could not be relegated to the realm of private opinion but must influence and permeate all activities of men. He was convinced that religion provided the fundamental basis for political action in India. Gandhi also used the religious idiom through concepts like 'Ram Rajya' to mobilize people in the National Movement.

Idea of Hind Swaraj

The other important feature of Gandhian thought was the body of ideas which he illustrated in his book Hind Swaraj (1909). In this work, Gandhi pointed out that the real enemy was not the British political domination but the modern western civilization which was luring India into its stranglehold. He believed that the Indians educated in western style, particularly lawyers, doctors, teachers and industrialists, were undermining Indian's ancient heritage by insidiously spreading modern ways. He criticized railways as they

had spread plague and produced famines by encouraging the export of food grains. Here he saw Swaraj or self rule as a state of life which could only exist where Indians followed their traditional civilization uncorrupted by modern civilization. Gandhi wrote:

“Indian’s salvation consists in unlearning what she has learnt during the past 50 years or so. The Railways, telegraphs, hospitals, lawyers, doctors and such like have to go and the so-called upper classes have to learn to live consciously and religiously and deliberately the simple life of peasant.” Later on, Gandhi tried to give concrete shape to his social and economic ideas by taking up the programme of Khadi, village reconstruction and Harijan welfare (which included the removal of untouchability). It is true that these efforts of Gandhi could not completely solve the problem of the rural people, but it cannot be denied that this programme of Gandhi succeeded in improving their conditions to a certain extent and making the whole country conscious of the new need for its social and economic reconstruction.

Swadeshi

Gandhi advocated swadeshi which meant the use of things belonging to one’s own country, particularly stressing the replacement of foreign machine made goods with Indian handmade cloth. This was his solution to the poverty of peasants who could spin at home to supplement their income and his cure for the drain of money to England in payment for imported cloth.

Gandhi’s Plunge into Indian Politics

Gandhi’s entry into Indian politics occurred in the 1917-1918, when he became involved in three local issues concerning with Champaran indigo farmers, the Ahmedabad textile workers and the Kheda peasants. In these disputes Gandhi deployed his technique of Satyagraha and his victories in all these cases ultimately paved the way for his emergence as an all India leader. Here we will focus only on Champaran case to understand Gandhi’s methods and techniques of mass mobilization.

Champaran’s Experiment in Mass Mobilization Champaran in the Tirhut division of North Bihar had been seething with agrarian discontent for

some time. European planters had established indigo farms and factories in Champaran at the beginning of the 19th century. By 1916-17, a large part of Champaran was held by three proprietors, the Bettiah, Ram Nagar and Madhuban estates. Bettiah was the largest estate consisting of over one and half thousand villages. Most of these villages were not managed by landlords but were leased to thikadars or temporary tenure holders, of whom the most influential group was European indigo planters. The basic issue of the trouble was the system of indirect cultivation whereby peasants leased land from planters, binding themselves to grow indigo each year on specified land in return for an advance at the beginning of the cultivation season.

Indigo was cultivated under the system called Tinkathia by which a tenant had to cultivate indigo at three-twentieths of his holdings, which generally constituted the best portion of the land. Although some small modifications were made in the Tinkathia system in 1908, it did not bring any material change in the degrading conditions of the tenants. Planters always forced them to sell their crop for a fixed and usually uneconomic price. At this time the demand of Indian indigo in the world market was declining due to the increasing production of synthetic indigo in Germany. Most planters at Champaran realised that indigo cultivation was no longer a paying proposition. The planters tried to save their own position by forcing the tenants to bear the burden of their losses. They offered to release the tenants from growing indigo (which was a basic condition in their agreement with planters) if the latter paid compensation or damages. Apart from this, the planters heavily inflated the rents and imposed many illegal levies on the tenants.

Gandhi took no interest in the case of indigo cultivators of Champaran when this question was discussed at the Lucknow session of the Congress in 1916 on the ground that he knew nothing about the matter. But Raj Kumar Shukla a peasant from Champaran, persuaded Gandhi to visit Champaran. Gandhi arrived in Bihar and started making investigations in person. When he reached Motihari, the headquarters of the district of Champaran, he was

served with an order to quit Champaran as he was regarded a danger to the public peace. Gandhi decided to disobey the order. He was immediately arrested and tried in the district court. But the Bihar government ordered the Commissioner and District Magistrate to abandon proceedings and grant to Gandhi the facilities for investigation. Gandhi was warned not to stir up trouble, but he was free to continue his investigations into the cultivators' grievances.

The Government appointed Champaran Agrarian Committee with Gandhi as one of its members. The committee unanimously recommended the abolition of Tinkathia system and many illegal exactions under which the tenants groaned. The enhanced rents were reduced, and as for the illegal recoveries, the committee recommended 25% refund. The major recommendations of the Committee were included in the Champaran Agrarian Act of 1917. In this agitation, the chief supporters of Gandhi came from the educated middle class. For instance, Rajendra Prasad, Gorakh Prasad, Kirpalani and some other educated persons from the cities worked as his close associates. Local Mahajans traders and village Mukhtars (attorneys) also helped him. But it was the peasantry which gave him the real massive support. Gandhi approached them in a most simple and unassuming manner. In the countryside, he often walked on foot or travelled in a bullock cart. He came where ordinary people lived and talked about their fight in the language they understood.

Kheda

Gandhi's second intervention was for the peasants of Kheda in Gujarat where his method of Satyagraha came under a severe test. Most of Kheda was a fertile tract and the crop of food grains, tobacco and cotton produced here had a convenient and sizeable market in Ahmedabad. There were many rich peasant proprietors called Patidars or from the Kunbi caste. Besides, a large number of small peasants and landless labourers also lived in this region.

In 1917 excessive rain considerably damaged the Kharif crop in Kheda. This coincided with an increase in the price of kerosene, iron, cloth

and salt because of which the cost of living for the peasantry went up. In view of the poor harvest, the peasants demanded the remission of land revenue. The 'revenue code' provided for a total remission if the crops were less than twenty five per cent of the normal production. Two Bombay barristers, V.J. Patel and G.K. Parakh made the enquiries and reached the conclusion that a major portion of the crop was damaged. But the government did not agree with their findings. After enquiry into the state of the crop in Kheda the Collector decided that there was no justification for the remission of land revenue. The official contention was that the agitation was not a spontaneous expression of the peasant discontent but was started by 'outsiders' or members of the Home Rule League and Gujarat Sabha of which Gandhi was the president at that time. The truth was that initiative for the agitation against payment of revenue came neither from Gandhi nor from the other Ahmedabad politicians; it was raised by local village leaders like Mohanlal Pandya of Kapadvanj taluka in Kheda.

Gandhi maintained that the officials had over-valued the crops and the cultivators were entitled to a suspension of revenue as a legal right and not as a concession by grace. After a lot of hesitation he decided to launch a Satyagraha movement on 22 March 1918. He inaugurated the Satyagraha at a meeting in Nadiad, and urged the peasants not to pay their land revenue. He toured villages and gave moral support to the peasants in refusing to pay revenue, and to expel their fear of the government authority.

Gandhi was also assisted in this struggle by Indulal Yajnik, Vallabhbhai Patel and Anasuya Sarabhai. The Satyagraha reached at its peak by 21 April when 2,337 peasants pledged not to pay revenue. Most of the Patidars took part in this Satyagraha. Some poorer peasants were coerced by the government into paying the revenue. Moreover, a good Rabi crop had weakened the case for remission. Gandhi began to realise that peasantry was on the verge of exhaustion. He decided to call off the agitation when the government issued instructions that land revenue should be recovered from only those who had the capacity to pay and no pressure should be exerted on

the genuinely poor peasants. This agitation did not have a uniform effect on the area. Only 70 villages out of 559 in Kheda were actually involved in it and it was called off after a token concession. But this agitation certainly helped Gandhi in broadening his social base in the rural Gujarat.

Ahmedabad

Gandhi organized the third campaign in Ahmedabad where he intervened in a dispute between the mill owners and workers. Ahmedabad was becoming the leading industrial town in Gujarat. But the millowners often faced scarcity of labour and they had to pay high wages to attract enough millhands. In 1917 plague outbreak made labour shortage more acute because it drove many workers away from Ahmedabad to the countryside. To dissuade the workers from leaving the town, the millowners decided to pay 'Plague Bonus' which was sometimes as high as 75% of the normal wages of the workers. After the epidemic was over, the millowners decided to discontinue the Plague Bonus. But the workers opposed the employers move and argued that it was helping them to offset the war time rise in the cost of living. The millowners were prepared to give 20% increase but the workers were demanding a 50% raise in the wages in view of the price hike.

Gandhi was kept informed about the working conditions in Ahmedabad mills by one of the secretaries of the Gujarat Sabha. Gandhi knew Ambalal Sarabhai, a millowner, as the latter had financially helped Gandhi's Ashram. Moreover, Ambalal's sister Anasuya Sarabhai had reverence for Gandhi. Gandhi discussed the workers problems with Ambalal Sarabhai and decided to intervene in the dispute. Both workers and millowners agreed to refer the issue to a board of arbitration consisting of three representatives of the employers and three of the workers with the British Collector as Chairman. Gandhi was included in the board as representing the workers. But, suddenly the millowners decided to withdraw from the board on the ground that Gandhi had no real authority or mandate from the workers, and that there was no guarantee that workers would accept the arbitration award. They declared the lockout of the Mills from 22 February 1918.

In such a situation, Gandhi decided to study the whole situation in detail. He went through a mass of data concerning the financial state of the mills and compared their wage rates with those of Bombay-Finally he came to the conclusion that the workers should demand 35% instead of 50% increase in their wages. Gandhi began the Satyagraha movement against the millowners. The workers were asked to take a pledge stating that they would not resume work without 35% increase and that they would remain law abiding during the lockout. Gandhi, assisted by Anasuya Sarabhai organized daily mass meetings of workers, in which he delivered lectures and issued a series of leaflets on the situation.

The millowners ended the lockout on 12 March and announced that they would take back the workers who were willing to accept 20% increase. On the other hand, Gandhi announced on 15 March that he would undertake a fast until a settlement was reached. Gandhi's object was to rally the workers who were thinking of joining the mills despite their pledge. The fast created tremendous excitement in Ahmedabad and the millowners were compelled to negotiate. A settlement was reached on 18 March. According to this agreement, the workers on their first day would receive 35% raise, in keeping with their pledge. On the second day, they would get 20% increase, offered by the millowners. From the third day until the date of an award by an arbitrator, they would split the difference and receive 27½ % increase. Finally the arbitrator's award went in favour of the workers and 35% raise was given to them.

Rowlatt Act Satyagraha

The British government drafted two bills to deal effectively with the revolutionary activities and presented them to the Imperial Legislative Council on 6 February 1919. The government maintained that the bills were 'temporary measures' which aimed at preventing 'seditious crimes'.

The new bills attempted to make war-time restrictions permanent. They provided trial of offences by a special court consisting of three high court judges. There was no provision of appeal against the decision of this

court which could meet in camera and take into consideration evidence not admissible under the Indian Evidence Act. The bill also proposed to give authority to the government to search a place and arrest a person without a warrant. Detention without a trial for maximum period of two years was also provided in the bills. The bills were regarded by nationalist leaders as an effort to conciliate a section of official and non-official white opinion which had resented Montagu's Reform proposals.

There was widespread condemnation of the bills in the whole country. Gandhi also launched his campaign against the bills. He formed a Satyagraha Sabha on 24th February 1919 in Bombay to protest against the Rowlatt Bills. Its members signed a pledge proclaiming their determination to disobey these laws. A country-wide agitation was planned for April 6, 1919. The success of hartal varied considerably between regions and between towns and the countryside. In Delhi a hartal was observed on 30th March and ten people were killed in police firing. In almost all major towns of the country, the hartal was observed on the 6th April and the people responded enthusiastically. Gandhi left Bombay on the 8th April to promote the Satyagraha agitation in Delhi and Punjab. But, as his entry in Punjab was considered dangerous by the government, Gandhi was removed from the train in which he was travelling at Palwal near Delhi and was taken back to Bombay. The news of Gandhi's arrest precipitated the crisis. The situation became tense in Bombay and violence broke out in Ahmedabad and Virangam. In Ahmedabad the government enforced martial law. The Punjab region as a whole and Amritsar, in particular, witnessed the worst scenes of violence. In Amritsar, the news of Gandhi's arrest coincided with the arrest of two local leaders Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal on 10th April. This led to mob violence and government buildings were set on fire, five Englishmen were murdered, and a woman assaulted. The civil authority lost its control of the city. On 13th April, General Dyer ordered his troops to fire on a peaceful unarmed crowd assembled at Jallianwala Bagh. Most of the people were not aware of the ban on meetings, and they were shot without the slightest warning by General

Dyer who later on said that it was no longer a question of merely dispersing the crowd, but one of 'producing a moral effect'. According to official figures, 379 persons were killed but the unofficial accounts gave much higher figures.

The whole agitation against the Rowlatt Act shows that it was not properly organized. The Satyagraha Sabha concentrated mainly on publishing propaganda literature and collecting signatures on the Satyagraha pledge. The Congress as an organization was hardly in the picture at all. In most of the areas people participated because of their own social and economic grievances against the British rule. Gandhi's Rowlatt Act Satyagraha provided a rallying point to the people belonging to different sections and communities. The most significant result of this agitation was the emergence of Gandhi as an all India leader.

Non-Cooperation Movement

During 1920-21 the Indian National Movement entered into a new phase, i.e. a phase of mass politics and mass mobilization. The British rule was opposed through two mass movements, Khilafat and Non-Cooperation. Though emerging out of separate issues both these movements adopted a common programme of action. The technique of non-violent struggle was adopted at a national level. The background to the movements was provided by the impact of the First World War, the Rowlatt Act, the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre and the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

The Issue of Khilafat

During the First World War Turkey allied with Germany and Austria against the British. The Indian Muslims regarded the Sultan of Turkey as their spiritual leader, Khalifa. So, their sympathies were naturally with Turkey. After the war, the British removed the Khalifa from power in Turkey. Hence, the Muslims started the Khilafat movement in India for the restoration of the Khalifa's position. Their main demands were:

- Khalifa's control should be retained over the Muslim sacred places, and

- In territorial adjustments after the war the Khalifa should be left with sufficient territories.

In early 1919, a Khilafat Committee was formed in Bombay. The initiative was taken by Muslim merchants and their actions were confined to meetings, petitions and deputation in favour of the Khalifa. However, there soon emerged a militant trend within the movement. The leaders of this trend were not satisfied with a moderate approach. Instead they preached for the launching of a countrywide movement. They advocated, for the first time, at the All India Khilafat Conference in Delhi (22-23 November 1919) noncooperation with the British Government in India. It was in this conference that Hasrat Mohani made a call for the boycott of British goods. The Central Khilafat Committee met at Allahabad from 1st to 3rd June 1920. The meeting was attended by a number of Congress and Khilafat leaders. In this meeting a programme of non-cooperation towards the Government was declared. This was to include:

- Boycott of titles conferred by the Government,
- Boycott of civil services, army and police, i.e. all government jobs, and
- Non-payment of taxes to the Government.

August 1st, 1920 was fixed as the date to start the movement. Gandhi insisted that unless the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs were undone, there was to be non-cooperation with the Government. However, for the success of this movement, Congress support was essential. Main points of NonCooperation movement were:

- the nationalization of education,
- the promotion of indigenous goods,
- the popularisation of Charkha and Khadi,
- the enrolment of a volunteer corps,
- boycott of law courts, educational institutions, official functions, and British goods,
- the surrender of honours and titles conferred by the British.

Main Phases of the Non-Cooperation

The campaign for non-cooperation and boycott started with great enthusiasm from early 1921. In the first phase from January to March 1921, the main emphasis was on the boycott of schools, colleges,, law courts and the use of Charkha. There was widespread student unrest and top lawyers like C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru gave up their legal practice. This phase was followed by the second phase starting from April 1921. In this phase the basic objectives were the collection of Rs. one crore for the Tilak Swaraj Fund by August 1921, enrolling one crore Congress members and installing 20 lakh Charkhas by 30 June. In the third phase, starting from July, the stress was on boycott of foreign cloth, boycott of the forthcoming visit of the Prince of Wales in November, 1921, popularisation of Charkha and Khadi, and Jail Bharo by Congress volunteers. In the last phase, from November 1921, a shift towards radicalism was visible. The Congress volunteers rallied the people and the country was on the verge of a revolt. Gandhi decided to launch a no revenue campaign at Bardoli, and also a mass civil disobedience movement for freedom of speech, press and association.

Popular Response to the Movement and End of Movement

The economic boycott received support from the Indian business group, because the textile industry had benefited from the nationalist emphasis on the use of Swadeshi. The response from the students and women was very effective. Thousands of students left government schools and colleges; and joined national schools and colleges. The newly started national institutions like the Kashi Vidyapeeth, the Gujarat Vidyapeeth and the Jamia Millia Islamia and others accommodated many students although several others were disappointed. Students became active volunteers of the movement. Women also came forward. They gave up Purdah and offered their jewellery for the Tilak Fund. They joined the movement in large numbers and took active part in picketing before the shops selling foreign cloth and liquor. The most important landmark of this movement was the massive participation of the peasants and workers in it. In rural areas and some other places, the peasants

turned against the landlords and the traders. This gave a new dimension to the movement of 1921-22.

Congress volunteers were fired at by the police at Chauri Chaura in Gorakhpur district in U.P. In retaliation the infuriated mob killed 21 policemen. This violent incident shocked Gandhi and he suspended the Non-Cooperation Movement. He also postponed the proposed civil disobedience at Bardoli. Many Congressmen were shocked and surprised by Gandhi's decision. On 12 February 1922 the Congress Working Committee meeting at Bardoli condemned the inhuman conduct of the mob at Chauri Chaura. It endorsed the suspension of the mass civil-disobedience movement. The same day Gandhi started his five day fast as a penance. Thus, the first non-cooperation virtually came to an end. Gandhi was arrested on 10 March 1922 and was sentenced to six years' imprisonment.

Swaraj Party: Formation

At this stage a new lead was given by C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru. When the Civil Disobedience Enquiry Committee. Reported that the country was not yet ready to embark upon a programme of mass civil disobedience, and the constructive programme found only a limited response, these leaders proposed that instead of boycotting the legislatures, Noncooperation should be carried into them. They put forward the idea of Council-Entry to wreck the reforms from within. This proposal attracted several congressmen but it was stoutly opposed by orthodox Gandhians led by Rajagopalachari, Rajendra and Vallabhbhai Patel. There was a split in the Congress. The Non-Changers or orthodox Gandhians decried the programme of council-entry and desired the congress to follow Gandhi's constructive programme. The Pro-Changers or Swarajists wanted the constructive programme to be coupled with a political programme of council-entry. The matter came to a head in December 1922 at the Gaya Session of the Congress where Rajagopalachari led opposition to Council Entry forcing C.R. Das to tender resignation from the presidentship of the Congress. On being outvoted C.R. Das announced the formation of the

Swaraj Party on 31 December, 1922 with himself as President and Motilal as Secretary.

The victory of the No-Changers at the Gaya Congress was short-lived. The Hindu-Muslim riots of 1923 darkened the political atmosphere. It was also clear that the civil disobedience could not be resumed as a national programme. The special Congress session, held at Delhi in September 1923 under the presidentship of Maulana Azad, allowed congressmen to contest the forthcoming elections. Annual session at Cocanada blessed the council-entry by maintaining that Non-Cooperation could be practised inside the councils also. The Congress called upon all its members to double their efforts to carry out the constructive programme of Gandhi. Thus the split in the Congress was avoided.

Gandhi and Swarajists

The elections were fought and the Swarajists swept the polls in some provinces. Their position and strength within the Congress increased. Gandhi was released from the jail in February, 1924. His release revived the old conflict and a split in the Congress seemed imminent. In June Gandhi made a declaration in favour of the original 'boycott' programme. He went to the length of saying that those who did not accept his policy should function as a separate organisation. His resolutions at the A.I.C.C. meeting at Ahmedabad in June 1924 were virtually aimed at eliminating the Swarajists from the Congress. One of the resolutions called upon every office-holder of the Congress to spin two thousand yards of yarn every month and authorised the PCCs to take proper action against the defaulters. Those who did not accept the boycott of the councils were to resign from the AICC. The electorates were warned against those who flouted the Congress policy. The Swarajists were disturbed as their success with the electorates was to a great extent due to the prestige and resources of the Congress. They offered stiff resistance to these resolutions. In the face of opposition from Das-Nehru Gandhi diluted his resolution which was eventually carried with the omission, by way of compromise, of the penalty of loss of office originally

attached to it. It was a serious blow to Gandhi's power and prestige. He publicly confessed that he was 'defeated and humbled'. Gandhi now lent his support to swarajists and made them the accredited agents of the Congress to deal with the Government.

The Belgaum Congress, presided over by Gandhi, laid the foundation of mutual trust between No-Changers and the Swarajists. He brought about an agreement incorporating the suspension of non-cooperation except in so far as it related to the refusal to use or wear cloth made out of India. It laid down that different kinds of Congress work might be done by different sections. The constructive programme with its emphasis on the spinning wheel, Hindu-Muslim unity, prohibition and the removal of Untouchability was prescribed ! to congressmen as the chief means for the attainment of Swaraj.

Objectives and Aims

The objectives and aims of the Swaraj Party were indicated in its programme first published in February, 1923. The immediate objective was 'speedy attainment of full Dominion Status', including 'the right to frame a constitution adopting such machinery and system as are most suited to the conditions of the country and genius of the peoples'. Its manifesto of 14 October 1923 as well as the nature of its demands in the councils revealed that it wanted full provincial autonomy implying control over bureaucracy as a necessary preliminary to the right to frame constitution. The other objective of the party was to secure the recognition of the principle that the bureaucracy derived its power from the people. The manifesto made it clear that the demand which its members would make on entering legislatures was to press the Government to concede "the right of the people of India to control the existing machinery and system of government", and to resort to a policy of "uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction" if the Government refused to entertain such a demand.

The constitution of the Swaraj Party, framed in 1923, underwent many changes until its relationship with the Congress was finally determined at the Belgaum Congress in December, 1924. The constitution of 1924 laid down

the party's objective as the attainment of Swaraj by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means. The exact nature of Swaraj was left undefined in the constitution.

Methods

What gave a peculiar distinction to the politics of the Swarajists was their avowed intention of wrecking the reforms from within, Michael O'Dwyer, formerly Lt. Governor of Punjab had written that to deal with 'sabotage' was much more difficult than an open rebellion. The Swarajists' methods of obstruction to all government sponsored laws were calculated to destroy the prestige of the councils which had throttled the national self-assertion and respect. Motilal observed in March, 1926 while staging a walk-out of his party, 'we feel that we have no further use for these sham institutions and the least we can do to vindicate the honour and self-respect of the nation is to get out of them. We will try to devise those sanctions which alone can compel any government to grant the demand of a nation'. The Swarajists carried non-cooperation 'into the very aisles and chancel of the Bureaucratic church'. They created deadlock in the legislatures, blew up the Dyarchy in the provinces by their method of obstruction. By obstruction-they meant resistance to the obstruction placed in the way of Swaraj by the alien government. In a speech in the Bengal Legislative council in 1925. C.R. Das observed:

"We want to destroy and get rid of a system which does no good and can do no good. We want to destroy it, because we want to construct a system which can be worked with success and will enable us to do good to the masses."

Swarajists at the Polls

There were altogether three elections held under the provisions of the Act of 1919 in 1920, 1923 and 1926. Owing to the Non-Cooperation movement, the Congress had boycotted the elections in 1920 leaving the field for the liberals and others. By the time elections were held in 1923 the Non-Cooperation movement had spent its force and the split in the Congress over

Council entry had become pronounced. The Das-Nehru group under the banner of the Swaraj Party fought elections on the charter of Council entry.

At the elections, the Liberals alone constituted a formidable opposition to the Swarajists. The independents were also in the fray and were men of local importance but without any definite political status. The Liberals were at a disadvantage as they were in the councils in Swaraj and Constructive Work the previous term. They were overruled by the Government even on trivial routine matters. The stigma of association with an alien Government was attached to them. On the contrary the Swarajists had a halo of martyrdom due to their imprisonment during the Noncooperation movement. The Liberals had no tangible achievement to advertise to the electorates while the Swarajists appeared as 'Gandhi's men' committed to the attainment of Swaraj. They were now going to enter the Councils as the battle for Swaraj outside had ended without success. Their policy of open antagonism to the prevailing system of Government made a wide appeal to the electorates.

The Swarajists' success in the elections of 1923 was impressive but by no means brilliant except in the central Provinces. Table 1 would show their position in the legislative bodies:

The Swarajists emerged as the single largest party in the Central Assembly, Bombay and Bengal Councils while their number in the U.P. Council was not insignificant. The Swarajists were successful against the liberals but they could do little against the Independents who counted for success on the basis of their local influence. The victory of the Swarajists at the polls strengthened their position in the congress as against the NoChangers. They, in effect, came to be recognised as the parliamentary wing of the congress.

Simon Commission

The appointment of the Simon Commission in November 1927, two years before it was due, was an indirect admission by the government of the failure of its reforms. The reason put forward, however, was that unrest was mounting in India. But a private letter of Lord Birkenhead to the Viceroy,

Lord Reading, stated that the Conservatives in power apprehended a Labour victory in next general elections in England and did not like to leave the announcement of the Commission to the successors. Furthermore, it was believed that such a move could be used as a bait to ensnare and thereby break the Swaraj Party. The Commission was to look 'into the working of the system of government, the growth of education and the development of representative institutions in British India and matters connected therewith' and to consider 'to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible government, or to extend, modify or restrict the degree of responsible government existing therein, including the question whether the establishment of Second Chambers of the local legislatures is or is not desirable'. The Commission was composed of seven members of the British Parliament, mostly white, which disappointed the Indian public and led to its total boycott by the Congress. The untenable excuse offered by the British was that, as their Parliament appointed the Commission, its members necessarily had to be from that body. The Commission faced black-flags demonstrations wherever it went in India and had to hear the slogan 'Simon Go Back'. Its offer to form a joint committee with the Central Assembly was also rejected unceremoniously.

The Simon Commission had stated that in order to cope with the diversity of the country the ultimate character of the Indian government had to be federal. It declared that the establishment of responsible government at the centre was to wait indefinitely, which obviously meant that it was to be established somewhere in the distant future. Its observations regarding Dominion status were not very clear. It recommended that a Greater India consisting of British India and the Princely States as a federal association was to be established in the future but the clause of British Paramountcy (with Viceroy as the agent of Paramount power) was to remain. This was met with great opposition from many political parties, spearheaded by the Congress.

All-Parties Conference and Nehru Report

At the 1927 Madras Congress Session, a resolution boycotting the Simon Commission was passed. The Working Committee was authorized to prepare a constitution for India in consultation with other organisations. Congress representatives as well as representatives of other organisations such as Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha, etc. met at a conference in February, 1928. This came to be known as the All Parties Conference. This Conference was presided over by Dr. M.A. Ansari. It was agreed that in framing the Constitution of India, the principle of full Dominion responsible self-government should be kept in mind. After two subsequent meetings of All-Parties, in Bombay and in Lucknow, the Constitution was ratified. It asked for full Dominion Status and had provisions for having responsible governments at Center as well as in the Provinces.

Responsibility of the Cabinets was to be joint or collective, a full-fledged federation for India was considered only as a possibility and defense budgets were subject to approval of the Central Legislature and included provisions for incorporating fundamental rights (nineteen fundamental rights were suggested for inclusion in the proposed statute), though moderately worded. A Supreme Court was to be established, to serve as the final court of appeal and all appeals to the Privy Council were to be stopped.

It also secured the rights of the Native Rulers on the condition that they must allow for establishment of responsible governments in the States. The Nehru report also recommended joint electorates with seats reserved for the minorities on population basis except in Bengal and Punjab. 'Full protection was afforded to the religious and cultural interests of the Muslims, and even new provinces on linguistic basis were to be created with a view to the planning of Muslim-majority provinces.

Therefore, in May 1928, a Committee was appointed with Motilal Nehru as president. The Nehru Committee appointed by the nationalists was a response to the appointment of Simon Commission and the challenge given by Lord Birkenhead thrown to Indians asking them to frame a Constitution on

which the Indian opinion was united. At the Calcutta Congress session it was stated that the Report had contributed to a great extent in solving India's political and communal problems.

The committee's report was an outline draft of a constitution which was based on the principle of fully responsible government on the model of the Constitution of self-governing dominions. The establishment of full responsible government was not to be considered as a remote but as an immediate step. Apparently it was different from the principle of gradual advancement as envisaged by the Act of 1919. This draft is commonly known as the Nehru Committee report. It made the following recommendations:

- i) India should have the same constitutional status in the British Empire as other dominions with parliament having powers to make laws and should be known as the Commonwealth of India.
- ii) The Constitution should define citizenship and declare fundamental rights.
- iii) The legislative powers should vest with the King and bicameral parliament, and executive powers with the king exercisable by the Governor-General and the same provisions should be made for the establishment of responsible governments in provinces in respect of governors and executive councils.
- iv) Hierarchy of courts with a Supreme Court as its apex appeal court is established.

Main Features of Nehru Report

The report suggested that the Indian Parliament should consist of (a) the Senate elected for seven years, consisting of 200 members elected by the Provincial Councils; and (b) the House of Representatives with 500 members elected for five years through adult franchise. The Governor General (to be appointed by the British Government but paid out of Indian revenues) was to act on the advice of the Executive Council which was to be collectively responsible to the Parliament. The Provincial Councils were to be elected, on the basis of adult franchise, for five years and the Governor (to be appointed

by the British Government) was to act on the advice of the Provincial Executive Council’.

The Nehru Report contained virtually no federal features. Despite the fact that federal principle was introduced in the composition of the senate, the provinces were not equally represented in it and thus the federal principle was not really put into practice. De-centralisation was carried to the same extent as in the Act of 1919. Residuary powers were vested in the centre. The position of Princely States in relation to Centre was not made clear. The Committee considered the establishment of a federal constitution but it did not take concrete steps to materialize it.

The importance of the Report lay in the fact that it was the first expression of the organised opinion of the majority of the Indian leadership on the communal problem. According to Coupland, ‘it embodied the frankest attempt yet made by the Indians to face squarely the difficulties of communalism’. The Report stated that the only method of giving a feeling of security to the minority was to provide for safeguards and guarantees. The Committee in this respect made three distinct proposals:

- i) The proposed Constitution should provide for liberty of conscience and religion.
- ii) On the principle of self-determination the Muslim majority provinces should be given distinct politico-cultural identity i.e., Sind was to be separated from Bombay presidency and N.W.F.P. was to be given full provincial status.
- iii) The principle of separate electorates should be rejected and all elections should be conducted on the basis of joint electorates subject to reservations of seats for Muslims at centre and in provinces where they were in a minority and for non-Muslims in N.W.F.P.

However a little later, the Committee made two additional recommendations relating to the communal problem. Communal representation was to be reconsidered after ten years and Baluchistan was to be given full provincial status.

Muslim Reaction to Nehru Report

At the All Parties Convention held in Calcutta in December 1928, M.A. Jinnah demanded one third representation for the Muslims in the Central Legislature. As this was not accepted, he joined the groups led by Agha Khan and Muhammed Shafi. An All India Muslim Conference was held in Delhi on 1 January, 1929 and it passed a resolution emphasising two principles:

- i) The first principle was that since India was a vast country, with a lot of diversity it required a federal system of government in which the states would have complete autonomy and residuary powers.
- ii) The second principle was that the system of separate electorates should continue as long as the rights and interests of Muslims were not safeguarded in the constitution.

In March 1929 Jinnah put forward before the Muslim League a detailed account of Muslim demands known as the 'Fourteen Points'. These demands suggested a total rejection of Nehru Report because of two reasons. Firstly a unitary Constitution was not acceptable because it would not ensure Muslim domination in any part of India. A federal Constitution consisting of a Centre with limited powers and autonomous Provinces with residuary powers would enable the Muslims to dominate in five provinces, namely NWFP, Baluchistan, Sind, Bengal and Punjab; and, secondly the solution to the communal problem as suggested by Nehru Committee was not acceptable to Muslims. Jinnah was categorical about the inclusion of separate electorates.

Nehru Report and the Native States

A complex problem which confronted the Nehru Committee was regarding the status of princely states. In 1927 the people of Princely states formed the State Peoples Conference with a view to introducing self-governing institutions. This move threatened the interests of princes who sought the help of British in this matter. The result was the appointment of a Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Harcourt Butler which laid stress on preservation of princely states through British Paramountcy. The Nehru Committee criticized the appointment of Butler Committee and stated that the

rights and obligations of Paramountcy should be transferred to the government of Commonwealth of India and conflicts between Commonwealth of India and Indian states were to be referred to the Supreme Court.

Internal Opposition to Nehru Report

Within the Congress the younger section led by Jawaharlal Nehru and S.C. Bose criticized the Nehru Report because of its acceptance of dominion Status. They had already stated their inclination towards greater freedom and talking about dominion status was viewed as a limiting Constitutional exercise. This reaction by the younger section within the Congress forced leadership at the Calcutta Congress to pass a resolution that if the British government did not accept the Nehru Report on or before 31 December, 1929, or spurned it before that date, the Congress would start another mass movement. Since Lord Irwin showed no signs of taking concrete steps in the direction of establishing full Dominion SelfGovernment, as he had announced in his declaration of 31 October 1929, the Congress declared on 31 December, 1929, that the Nehru Report had ceased to be valid.

Nehru Report's Acceptance

The All-Parties Conference subsequently accepted the report but did not include the three amendments Jinnah had suggested in the meeting. The Congress forwarded the report to the British and set a deadline of one year for its acceptance, failing which they would organise a non-violent campaign in 1930. Three months later the Muslim league rejected the report and came up with Jinnah's famous 'Fourteen Point', their minimum acceptable conditions for a political settlement. Meanwhile, Ramsay MacDonald of the Labour Party had become the Prime Minister of England under whose advice the Viceroy stated that 'it is implicit in the Declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress as therein contemplated is the attainment of Dominion Statue. So there should be a Conference of the Indians and the British to consider the final proposals of the Simon Commission (in limbo at that time) before they were submitted to the Parliament in England.'

Round Table Conferences

Not only did the proposed Round Table Conference have a limited purpose and scope, but the 'Dominion status' referred to as the subject matter was also capable of being interpreted differently. The Congress decided to boycott the Round Table Conference by declaring that the national aim was to attain complete independence and therefore it launched the Civil Disobedience Movement in March 1930.

Gandhi set out on his momentous march to Dandi to prepare salt from the sea accompanied by thousands of followers. There were numerous arrests, lathicharges by the police (even on women and children), threats to newspapers and journals for publishing the details of such onslaughts on unarmed people, and enactment of a number of ordinances. The gap between the nationalists and the government appeared to be unbridgeable. Amidst such political turmoil the Round Table Conference was convened in London between November 16, 1930 and January 19, 1931.

As many Congress leaders were in jail, 'safe' representatives of other parties, communities and services were nominated by the government as the spokespeople of India. The three basic principles adopted in the conference were: (i) the form of the new government would be an all-India federation; (ii) the federal government, subject to certain conditions, would be answerable to the federal legislature; and (iii) the provinces would be autonomous. The Conference ended with the declaration of Ramsay MacDonald, '... responsibility for the Government of India should be placed upon legislature, Central and Provincial, with such provisions as may be considered necessary ... and also with guarantees... required by minorities'.

To secure the participation of the Congress in the next Conference, the Gandhi-Irwin pact was signed in March 1931 leading to the release of all political prisoners. The Congress in turn terminated the Civil Disobedience Movement. As the sole representative of the Congress to the second Conference (September 1 to December 1, 1931), Gandhi gave wide space to Jinnah to solve the vexed communal problem. In the meantime, M.A. Jinnah,

having received secret support from the Secretary of State for India, Sir Samuel Hoare, became too inflexible in his demands, leaving Gandhi with no other option but to return to India without any results. Gandhi was arrested on reaching India. Citing the absence of an agreed settlement as a pretext, the British proceeded to adjudicate on the respective quantum of representation of different communities which led to the infamous 'Communal Award' of 1932.

Gandhi could possibly sense the British game plan of divisive politics. He went on a fast to stop this political fracture between 'Caste Hindus' and the 'Scheduled Castes'. The Poona Pact was signed somewhat modifying the 'Communal Award'. The Third Round Table Conference in London (November 17 to December 24, 1932) was attended by 46 delegates, very carefully invited by the Conservative government in Britain. In the Conference the reports of the Sub-Committees appointed during the Second Round Table Conference were heard and formed the basis of discussions. Some more details about the new constitution were settled. The Indian delegates tried to push through some progressive provisions, which were instantly put into the cold storage. Similarly the question of including a Bill of Rights for the citizens was shelved on flimsy excuses.

In March, 1933 the British Government came out with the White Paper containing the proposals, indicating the line on which the new constitution of India was to take shape. As expected the White Paper introduced some reactionary provisions like recommending the extension of the scope of separate electorates, a provision whereby the representative of the States were to be nominated by the Princes and the power to abolish the second Chambers in the Provinces was given to the Central Legislature. Later on this power was given to the British Parliament. Restrictions on the powers of the Federal Court were increased so as not to make it the final Court of Appeal. This process culminated in the Secretary of State for India placing a Bill in the British Parliament in February 1935, which, on being passed and receiving Royal assent, became the Government of India Act 1935.

Civil Disobedience Movement

The Civil Disobedience Movement was launched when Gandhiji, along with a group of chosen volunteers, began the Dandi March to break the Salt Law. Following him, people all over the country broke salt laws and courted arrests. Besides breaking of the salt laws, no-tax and no-revenue campaigns were also launched in certain areas. There was also defiance of the forest laws which prohibited the use of forests by the locals. Noticing the gravity of the situation, the British government called a Round Table Conference and invited the Congress for talk. Gandhiji represented the Congress and the movement was temporarily withdrawn to facilitate the talk. However, the talk proved to be a failure due the divisive policies of the colonial rulers. This led to the resumption of the movement which, however, failed to acquire its earlier intensity.

Gandhi's Efforts to Gain Concessions

Before launching the movement Gandhi tried for compromise with the Government. He placed eleven points relating to administrative reform and stated that if Lord Irwin accepted them there would be no need for agitation. The important demands were:

1. The Rupee-Sterling ratio should reduced to Is 4d,
2. Land revenue should be reduced by half and made a subject of legislative control,
3. Salt tax should be abolished and also the government monopoly over manufacturing of salt,
4. Salaries of the highest grade services should be reduced by half,
5. Military expenditure should be reduced by 50% be begin with,
6. Protection for Indian textile and coastal shipping,
7. All political prisoners should be discharged. To many observers this charter of demands seemed a climb-down from Purna Swaraj. The Government response to Gandhi's proposal was negative.

Beginning of the Movement

Gandhi took the decision to start the movement. On 12 March 1930 Gandhi started the Historic March from his Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi beach accompanied by his 78 selected followers. There Gandhi and his followers broke the law by manufacturing salt from the sea. The Programme of the movement was as follows:

- a) Salt law should be violated everywhere.
- b) Students should leave colleges and government servants should resign from service.
- c) Foreign clothes should be burnt.
- d) No taxes should be paid to the government.
- e) Women should stage a Dharna at liquor shops, etc

The choice of salt as the central issue appeared puzzling initially. Events quickly revealed the enormous potentialities of this choice. “You planned a fine strategy round the issue of salt”. Irwin later admitted to Gandhi. Salt was a concrete and a universal grievance of the rural poor, which was almost unique in having no socially divisive implications. With regard to food habits salt was a daily necessity of the people. It also carried with it the implications of trust, hospitality, mutual obligations. In this sense it had a far-reaching emotional content. Moreover the breaking of the salt law meant a rejection of the Government’s claims on the allegiance of the people. In coastal areas where over the previous century indigenous salt production had been ruined by British imports, illegal manufacture of salt could provide the people a small income which was not unimportant. The manufacture of salt also became a part of Gandhian methods of constructive work like Khadi production. Rural Gandhian bases everywhere provided the initial volunteers for the salt satyagraha. Above all, the Dandi March and the subsequent countrywide violation of the salt law provided a tremendously impressive demonstration of the power of non-violent mass struggle. What came to be undermined were the entire moral authority of the government and its paternalistic self-image of being the saviour of the poor.

Movement Spreads

Social boycott of police and lower-level administrative officials led to many resignations. That the British realized the gravity of the threat was revealed by the sheer brutality of repression. But the spectacle of unarmed, unresisting satyagrahis standing up to abominable torture aroused local sympathy and respect as nothing else could have done. The movement, unlike NonCooperation, implied violations of law, arrests, and government repression right from the beginning. The number of jail goers was 92,214 which was more than three times the 1921-22 figures. Support from Ahmedabad mill owners, Bombay merchants and petty traders (industrialists in the city being less enthusiastic), and Calcutta Marwaris headed by GD Birla can be cited as example of the solidarity of the Capitalists with the national movement at this stage. For example, the merchants in many towns took a collective pledge to give up import of foreign goods for some months. Combined with picketing and the overall impact of the Depression, there was a spectacular collapse of British cloth imports, from 1248 million yards in 1929-30 to only 523 million yards in 1930-31.

A novel and remarkable feature of the Civil Disobedience Movement was the widespread participation of women. The handful of postgraduate women students in 1930s still went to class escorted by their teachers, and yet there were women from far more socially conservative professional, business or peasant families, picketing shops, facing lathis, and going to jail. However, this sudden active role of women in politics did not produce any significant change in the conditions of women in or outside the family. The deeply religious ambience of Gandhi's saintly image was perhaps even more crucial: joining the Congress movement was a new religious mission.

Gandhi-Irwin Pact, Round Table Conference and Second Phase

The Gandhi-Irwin Pact had ambiguous consequences. Many others besides Nehru felt dismayed by the unexpected halt, long before attaining the proclaimed goal of Purna Swaraj, and peasants who had sacrificed land and goods at the Congress behest must have felt particularly let down. There was

even a black flag demonstration against Gandhi when the Karachi Congress opened a few days after the execution of Bhagat Singh. The session, however, ratified the new policy, with Nehru, having spent some sleepless nights, moving the key resolution accepting the Delhi agreement.

Gandhi's entry into the Second Round Table Conference also proved a virtual fiasco. The first Conference, in January 1931, with Civil Disobedience still at large and the Congress boycotting it had been marked by Ramsay Macdonald's novel offer of responsible government at the centre. But its two characteristics were a Federal assembly on which princes who joined would nominate their own members, and a series of "reservations and safeguards" to maintain British control over defence, external affairs, finance, and economy. Having accepted this as the framework for discussion, Gandhi as sole Congress representative at the second RTC found himself involved in endless squabbles with Muslim leaders, the Scheduled Caste representative Bhimrao Ambedkar, who had started demanding separate electorates for untouchables, and the princes. The British watched this gleefully. The Congress had clearly been outmanoeuvred.

When the movement was restarted, 120000 people were jailed in the first three months – an indication, however, not so much of a more extensive movement than in 1930, but of more intense and systematic repression, for the figures soon began to decline fairly fast. As the mass movement gradually declined in face of ruthless repression, political 'realism' combined with economic calculations of certain sections of Indians pushed Indian big business towards collaboration.

Gandhi in jail not unnaturally began to think in terms of an honourable retreat. He suspended Civil Disobedience temporarily in May 1933, and formally withdrew it in April 1934. The Mahatma decided to make Harijan work the central plank of his new rural constructive programme. This was his answer to the British policy of Divide and Rule which found expression in the official Communal Award declared early in 1932 by Ramsay Macdonald. The Award provided for separate Hindu, Untouchables and Muslim electorates for

the new Federal legislatures, treating Hindus and Dalits as two separate political entities. Gandhi opposed this Award. He demanded reservation of more seats for Harijans within the Hindu electorate. Ambedkar, the Dalit leader, accepted Gandhi's stand.

Government of India Act, 1935

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

- i) **Supremacy of the British Parliament:** The Government of India Act, 1935 was passed without a Preamble. This allowed the Preamble of 1919 Act to continue unhindered. This meant that realisation of responsible government by successive stages was the goal, with British Parliament being the sole judge of the nature and time of each advance. All rights of amending, altering or repealing the Constitution of India remained vested with the British Parliament.
- ii) **Provincial Autonomy:** The whole of the Provincial Executive was now made responsible to or removable by the legislative Assembly of the Province. The difference between the reserved subjects and the transferred subjects was dropped. All Provincial subjects were placed under the charge of the popular ministries but the Governors still retained their imposing set of powers. This made the application of provincial autonomy incomplete.
- iii) **Dyarchy at the Centre:** It was to comprise all British Indian Provinces, all chief commissioner's Provinces and Indian states. The federation's formation was conditional on the fulfillment of two conditions: (a) states with allotment of 521 seats in the proposed Council of States should agree to join the federation; (b) 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 up to 1946 as per the provisions of Government of India Act, 1919.

At the Federal Level:

- a) **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, defense, tribal areas and ecclesiastical affairs-were to be exclusively administered by the Governor-general on the advice of executive councilors. Executive councilors were not to be responsible to the central 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 judgment in the discharge of his special responsibilities for the security and tranquility of India;
- b) **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 members 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 state 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 list 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. 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. Eighty per cent of the budget was non-votable.

At the Provincial Level: Provincial autonomy replaced dyarchy. Provinces were granted autonomy and separate legal identity. They were freed from ‘the

superintendence, direction' of the secretary of state and Governor-General. Provinces hence forth derived their legal authority directly from the British Crown. They were given independent financial powers and resources. Provincial governments could borrow money on their own security.

- a) **Executive:** Governor was to be the Crown nominee and representative to exercise authority on the king's behalf in a province. He was to have special powers regarding minorities, rights of civil servants, law and order, British business interests, partially excluded areas, princely states etc. They also had the power to take over and indefinitely run administration.
- b) **Legislature:** Separate electorates based on communal award were to be made operational. All members were to be directly elected. Franchise was extended and women got the right on the same basic as men. Ministers were to administer all provincial subjects in a council of ministers headed by a Premier. The Provincial ministers were made answerable to and removable by the adverse vote of the legislature. The Provincial legislature could legislate on subjects in provincial and concurrent lists.

Forty percent 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 responsibility of the Governor General worked as brakes in proper functioning of the act. In the Provinces the governor still had extensive powers. This Act enfranchised 14 per cent of British India population. However the extension of the system of communal electorates and representations 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.

The Act of 1935 was based on two basic principles, namely, federation and parliamentary system. Although the federation principle was introduced

with a built-in unitary bias yet the provinces were invested with a coordinate and not a subordinate authority. No doubt, the federal character was seriously distorted by the provisions of safeguards and special responsibility which gave extraordinary powers to the executive head at the centre and the provinces. An important point to be noted is that fully responsible government was not introduced at the centre. The provincial autonomy envisaged under the Act was also placed under serious limitations. The Dominion Status for India was still a distant dream. The incorporation of safeguards was a clever constitutional device to delay the introduction of a fully responsible government. Although these provisions were made for the transition period, the extent of the period of transition was not defined. The Indian National Congress rejected the provision of safeguards and repudiated the idea of transition. It suspected that there were sinister motives behind them and they were found to have an adverse effect on the national movement.

The Long-term British Strategy

Political 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. It was hoped that these reforms would revive political standing of constitutionalist, liberals and moderates who had lost public support during the Civil Disobedience Movement. The Colonial State repression earlier and reforms now would convince a large section of Congressmen of the ineffectiveness of an extra-legal struggle. The British political establishment felt that once Congressmen had tasted power, they would be reluctant to go back to politics of sacrifice.

The Colonial State had planned that these reforms could be used to create Constitutional Developments dissensions within the Congress. The right-wing political groups were 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 centers of political power. Congress would thus be provincialised and its central leadership would get weakened.

Nationalists' Response

The Act was criticized and rejected by the Congress on the ground that in formulating it the people of India were never consulted, and as such it did not represent their will. Congress charged the government of formulating the Act in such a way as to stall the introduction of responsible government and perpetuate their rule and exploit the Indian masses. In spite of its recognition of the aspirations of the Indians to have a responsible government, the Act of 1935 did not fulfill those aspirations. It did not concede the right to vote to all the adults. The property qualifications, the system of separate electorates, the provisions of safeguard were violative of democratic rights of the people. The Act was, therefore, denounced as undemocratic in spirit, offensive to people's sovereignty and institutionally unworkable. The Liberals criticized the Act but were willing to work the reforms as a step towards responsible government. The Muslim League also criticized the Act but was ready to give it a trial. On the whole the Congress condemned the Act but hesitated that they might be prepared to work the provincial part under protest. Thus, the Congress participated in the elections in 1937 and formed provincial ministries. However, the Congress demanded convening of a constituent assembly elected on the basis of adult franchise to frame a constitution for independent India.

Growth of Socialist Ideas

You may have heard the words socialist and socialism used many times, and also the words capitalist and capitalism. You may also have heard that United States is a capitalist country and the Soviet Union a socialist country. You may not be very clear as to what are the distinguishing features that make a society capitalist or socialist. This is not surprising.

Because these historical concepts are sometimes used very carelessly and without clear reference to their scientific meaning. Therefore, you must know first what exactly is meant by these terms.

I Today almost one third of the world's people live in a socialist society. Many millions are fighting in their countries for the establishment of socialism in their countries. What are they fighting for, do you know? Why are they ready to give their lives for transforming their societies into socialist societies? Why have so many millions already given their lives in history for a socialist cause? You will only understand this if you know what socialism means and what kind of a society is a socialist society. When did mankind first think about a socialist society? Where did people first think about it? And why did they think about it at a particular stage in history? Man has always thought about building a better world, but how and when did he start thinking about socialism? You may want to know something about the ideas of those who wanted to build throughout the world a society free from oppression, a society which is equal, and in which the resources of the world are equally shared. The ideas of such people are known as socialist ideas, and the kind of society they wanted to build is known as a socialist society. Their movements which were aimed at building a socialist society are known as socialist movements.

The most important socialist thinker was Karl Marx. But he went further than most socialist and Mahatma Gandhi thinkers of his time, and drew a blue print of a communist society. He based his ideas of how to change the world, on a scientific analysis of society through history. He saw the final stage of man's history as a stage in which the society would be communist. He also showed how it could be brought about. Therefore, to distinguish his ideas from that of other socialists his followers began to call themselves communists, and his ideas began to be known as Marxism. We will also study in this lesson what was the contribution of Marxism to socialist thought. The first country in which Socialism, or the kind of society the communists were fighting for, was built in Soviet Russia after the Revolution of 1917.

Definition of Socialism

We start by asking the question. What is Socialism?

Socialism is a social system which comes into being as a result of the socialist-proletarian revolution. It is a form of society which resulted from the overthrow of the capitalist system. No society can be socialist before having gone through the stage of capitalism. It is capitalism which creates the conditions for the growth of socialist movements and ideology, and eventually for the building of a socialist society. We will talk more about it later when we discuss the ideas of Marx.

Socialist society destroys private ownership of means of production and in its place creates public ownership of means of production. This means that all resources out of which wealth can be created - land, factories, mines, banks - no longer remain the property of one person or group of persons. They become the property of the whole people. This also means that nobody can enrich himself from these resources just by owning them, and making others work on them. The workers who work them are the owners of these resources, and they derive from them the wealth created by their own labour, because, they now themselves own these resources.

All societies prior to socialist societies are class societies, based on antagonism of class interests, between those who own resources and those, who work on those resources to produce wealth. Socialist society destroys this antagonism, because, now the people who work are also the people who own the resources. Therefore, in a socialist society there is no exploitation of one class by another, and, it is a society based on the equality of all men. This equality is not only political and legal, as in capitalist societies, but also social and economic, because private property, which is the root of all inequality, is abolished in a socialist society. Socialist society is, therefore, a society characterised by social justice.

This does not mean, however, that people cannot own anything individually. In a socialist society people do have the opportunity to own their personal belongings - house hold things, vehicle, house, bank account from their savings etc.

Only, they cannot own those things, means of production - which they can use to deprive other human beings of the fruits of their labour. In fact, as wealth increases in a socialist society as a result of increased production, everyone owns more and more personal belongings, not just a few people.

The increase in production in a socialist society comes about through planned production. You must have heard of the Five Year Plans. In socialist societies this is a centralised plan which takes into account all the needs of a society, deciding what needs priority in terms of everyone's interests.

Socialist society also establishes a state of the working people, in the interests of the working people. It ensures that everyone works according to his ability and everyone gets according to his work. Socialist democracy ensures certain social rights to all people - the right to employment, rest and leisure, health protection, security in old age, housing, free and equal education, apart from the right to participate in administering the state and public affairs.

A socialist society promises complete separation of religion and politics. This does not mean that people cannot hold private beliefs. It means only that they cannot make religion into a - public affair, or use it politically, or propagate it in schools etc. We all know about the communal riots in our country. and how religious feelings are exploited by communal groups, and should, therefore, see how important it is to separate religion as a private belief from politics, and also to build a scientific temper.

A socialist society also grants complete equality to women. It creates the material bases for this equality also through shorter hours of work for women with small children, creches at places of work- so that women can feed their children during the day, canteens and public kitchens at places of work etc. Advanced capitalist countries also have these benefits, but they have to be heavily paid for individually. They are commercial enterprises for profit, and only the rich can afford them. A socialist state guarantees these benefits to all women. With minimum cost. It gives allowances for children, who are

considered a responsibility of society as a whole, though it is the family which cares for them and looks after them.

A socialist state also supports all national liberation movements, and movements of the working people against oppression. Here we would also like to point out what is meant by socialist thought.

Socialist thought is that body of ideas which analyses society scientifically, and which wants not only to understand the world, but also to change it for the better. It looks at mankind's historical experience not from the point of view of the interests of kings and rulers and those privileged, but from the point of view of the down trodden. It emphasises the role of the working people in building human civilization and in transforming society through its various stages. It aims at drawing the blue-print of a society which is equal, human, and just, and seeks to organise the working people for creating such a society. For this purpose, it makes a critique of the capitalist society, and shows how it is an unequal and unjust society. A Socialist thought also calls for an end to the capitalist system for this reason, and helps in the creation of working people's organisation and struggles.

Origins of Socialist Thought

How did socialist thought come up? Historically, socialist thought arose as a reaction to the reality of capitalism. Since capitalism first developed in Western Europe, its opposition in the form of socialist theory also first developed in Europe. The first revolution based on ! socialist ideals and socialist transformation of society was the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Before discussing the rise of socialist movements in Europe, it is first necessary to describe ! I the historical context in which they arose. The context which gave birth to socialist ideas, was capitalism, with all its consequences for the vast majority of the people. Capitalism was I the form of society which grew in its developed form in Western Europe during the 19th Ist century. Capitalism is a society in which the means of production dr sources of wealth i.e. 1 land, factories, mines, raw-materials are owned by a few individuals known as capitalists.

But, in order to produce goods one other thing is also required, and that is labour. For, if nobody is there to work with the raw materials in the factories, mines or land, how will things be produced? For production, labour is one of the most essential needs. Therefore, for this purpose, the factory owners employ workers who do not have any other source of income except the hands with which they work.

So you can see, in a capitalist system there is one class of people who own things from which income can be derived, and another class of people who work on these things. Those who own the sources of income do not work. But still they are the ones who are rich by exploiting the labour of others. Those who work are poor because they cannot take and sell in the market what they have produced.

But now you will ask me why is that wrong. After all the capitalist pays wages to the worker for the work he does for him. And if one gets the profit from the market, the other gets the wages.

But do you know, the workers are not paid the full amount for what they produce. The factory owner pays to the worker for the number of hours the worker works in his factory. But the goods the workers collectively produce in the factory have more value and are sold at a higher price in the market, and this amount the factory owner keeps, for himself. This is the factory owner's profit with which he becomes rich, while the worker who is the real producer remains poor.

This relationship of inequality is of tremendous importance in a capitalist society, and it is this that makes the capitalist society an unjust society. One class lives by owning, the other class lives by working. One lives without working, the other cannot live unless it works.

Can you then see how a capitalist society is a society of inequality, social injustice and oppression of the large majority of the people? And how this inequality is a result of private property and profits? It was against this growing capitalist factory system that socialist thought arose.

Man can think about a problem only when a problem exists. The problem of a capitalist society could be thought about by man only when the consequences of capitalism were felt and seen. Therefore, socialist thought arose only with the development of capitalism, when it became necessary to think about how to improve the conditions of life of the working people in factories.

But did the socialist thinkers emerge suddenly in an intellectual vacuum? Did no one before them think about the oppressed?

No, this is not so

But man can conceive (think) of as attainable, only that, which is not very far removed from the possibilities of his time and age. For example, going to the moon could only be a dream in the 16th century when science and technology were not so developed. To man it seemed a dream then. In the 20th century, when science and technology had developed so much more, man began to see that going to the moon was a possibility. It could happen if he tried and worked for it. And it has happened! Do you think it could have happened in the 16th century? Similarly, mankind could think of providing all the necessities of life to everyone, of having a good life for everyone, only when the possibilities of such a life existed. Only under capitalism and growth of factories when production increased so much did it become realistic to think of providing for everyone's needs - material and other needs such as leisure, health and education for all. Therefore, ideas for betterment of mankind existed almost as long as man himself has existed, but the ideas of socialism could emerge only in the 19th century with the growth of factory industry:

Early thinkers had debated about social justice and equality. But for them justice and equality were seen in relation to the ruling, rich and educated sections of their society. For example, Plato of whom you may have heard of, did not question the slavery of his times. The chivalrous and brave knights of the medieval legends were not sensitive to their peasants who were serfs. It was the Enlightenment thinkers of the 18th century who extended the idea of

freedom to all. But their idea of freedom was limited. The socialists developed these ideas of freedom and extended them to a broader vision of freedom. In fact we cannot think of socialist ideas without thinking of the intellectual heritage of the Enlightenment thinkers of the 18th century. Just as socialism could not be possible without factory industry, which creates the conditions for socialism, socialist ideas could not be possible without the contribution of the Enlightenment thinkers. Everything in history develops through continuity and conflict, which sharpens the struggle to a higher stage. Socialist thought was thus not only a product of capitalism, but also a product of the intellectual heritage of the 18th century Enlightenment.

Early History of Socialist Thought

It is not known who first used the words 'Socialism' and 'Socialist'. Around 1800, in both England and France there began to appear books, pamphlets and speeches against capitalism. It is generally believed that the word 'Socialism' was first seen in print in 1832, in a French periodical called *Le Globe*.

The real pioneer Socialists were Charles Fourier and St. Simon in France, and Robert Owen in England, and around each of them there developed big movements. Their books came to be widely read throughout Europe, and in the United States. Together they made a great contribution to the advance of social, political and economic thought of their age.

They made a scathing criticism of capitalist society. They showed in their writings how it was an unjust and an unequal society, and also, how, its main consequence was a denial of good life for the vast majority of people - even though, as they pointed out, capitalism had created tremendous possibilities for increased production.

But it is important to remember that they were not satisfied with only criticising the capitalist society. Each of them also worked out, in the minutest detail, his own vision of an ideal society-i.e. society as it should be. In this they went far ahead of the Enlightenment thinkers of the 18th Century.

The Enlightenment thinkers had said that everything must be analysed and judged on the basis of reason and rationality, and that a reasonable government was one which worked according to a rational law, and granted to its citizens political and civil liberty. They emphasised the fundamental rights of the individual, such as freedom of expression, religious toleration, equality before law etc. because these things were reasonable and everybody should therefore, have a right to them. They also talked about popular sovereignty or the right of participation of people in their own governance. You may have heard of Montesquieu who talked of 'separation of powers' and said all power should not be concentrated in one authority. You may also have heard of Rousseau and his General Will.

Secondly, they wanted the end of capitalism. They wanted its end not only because it was exploitative, but also because they recognised that it was not a permanent stage in history. They thought it was bound to end because it was unjust, and because of the problems and contradictions inherent in it. They saw history from the perspective of the interests of those who were oppressed and: therefore, uncompromisingly opposed capitalism. They were also opposed to private property as a source of profit. Therefore they wanted a common or social ownership of means of production. That is why they were called Socialists.

But they did not know how to bring into being this new kind of society. This is because they belonged to a period when capitalism had developed enough for them to see the misery it caused to the working people. But, as yet, the working class, whose interests are most directly and uncompromisingly opposed to that of the capitalists, had not developed sufficient class-consciousness and organisation for independent political action. Also, the workings of the capitalist system were not yet clear, and it was not yet known that capitalism as a system had inherent in it inevitable crises. Their theories, therefore, reflected the undeveloped or early stages of capitalism. They did not understand what the historic role of the working class would be. They did not recognise that class struggle between the workers and

capitalists was a necessary feature of capitalism, or that the interests of the two were irreconcilable. In fact, they did not really understand the working of the capitalist system. They did not take into account the fact that the profit of the owners depended precisely on the exploitation of the workers - and that is why the interests of the workers and the capitalists could not be reconciled.

But they thought otherwise. The solution for them, therefore, lay in a change of heart and development of a new morality. This new morality could be achieved through a new and correct education, through propaganda and through experiments which would serve as examples for others. They did not understand that economic changes form the basis for changes in political institutions and social life. That is why they were known as Utopian Socialists.

Capacity within Congress's Foreign Affairs Committees

The overarching goal of congressional oversight is to provide Congress with the necessary information for it to more effectively legislate and surveil federal agency implementation of its passed policies. More specifically, Congress has a multitude of soft and hard oversight tools—including hearings, document requests and subpoenas—that allow the legislative branch to investigate and monitor governmental actions in hopes of maximizing legislative efficiency, minimizing waste and ensuring compliance by the executive branch.

As with most of the substantive legislative work done in Congress, nearly all oversight is conducted at the committee level, the delineated jurisdictions of which create member and staff-level focus, specialization and issue-area expertise. Rule X, clause 2 of the Rules of the House of Representatives lays out the broad oversight prerogatives of the chamber in writing: “The various standing committees shall have general oversight responsibilities” as to “the application, administration, execution, and effectiveness of laws and programs addressing subjects within its jurisdiction”¹⁴ and “the organization and operation of Federal agencies and

entities” under their jurisdiction.¹⁵ A similar structure is used within the Senate.

But despite their extensive oversight prerogatives, congressional committees have long been starved for the personnel resources that are required to carry out the day-to-day tasks of legislative inquiry. The lack of adequate staff resources, especially those with tailored investigative specialties, has left committees doing the bare minimum when it comes to overseeing the executive departments and programs within their purview. Effective oversight requires true issue-area expertise. Technical knowledge allows committees and their staff to more effectively monitor agencies, triage the endless possibilities of congressional inquiries and develop the essential agency relationships that foster the sharing of information between the two branches.

However, without the capacity and required expertise within committees, federal agencies operate more independently of their congressional overseers because they know committees struggle to maintain a watchful eye. In the words of oversight scholar Morton Rosenberg, “Experience has shown that in order to engage in successful oversight, committees must establish their credibility with the executive departments and agencies they oversee early, often, consistently, and in a matter that evokes respect, if not fear.”¹⁶ The absence of staff capacity within congressional committees does not allow for these early, often, and consistent agency contacts, which has made regular and successful congressional oversight an exceedingly rare occurrence.

Stagnant Committee Capacity

To provide context about Congress’s capacity to perform oversight on matters of foreign affairs, the remainder of this report focuses on the staff capacity of the congressional committees whose jurisdictions include foreign affairs or federal agencies that deal with military matters. These committees include:

House Armed Services Committee

House Foreign Affairs Committee

House Homeland Security Committee

House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence

Senate Armed Services Committee

Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee

Senate Intelligence Committee

To get a baseline sense of committee capacity, the best place to begin is the amount of money Congress allocates to its respective committees. While a crude measure, these topline totals provide an indication of Congress's priorities in that increased funds allocated to an individual committee signals that committee's work is of particular importance to the majority and chamber. More specifically, because the vast majority of committee funds are used for staffer salaries and committee aides are tasked with executing the day-to-day work of the committee, funding levels also provide a quick sense of how staff levels vary over time, and with them, the committee's ability to conduct its work, including oversight. This is particularly important given the constant increase in the size of the federal budget and government, as decreasing or even stagnant committee allocations signal that Congress is not keeping pace with the growth within the executive branch. And, as a result, it becomes less able to execute its oversight responsibilities with its own internal resources.

Congress and World Affairs

Neither the President of the United States nor any of his principal officials charged with foreign policy responsibilities doubts the involvement or power of Congress in foreign affairs. Visible evidence of that power can be found throughout the statute books in laws authorizing and funding foreign diplomatic and military activities, regulating foreign commerce, providing economic and military assistance to foreign nations, and ratifying treaty obligations. Members of Congress devote considerable time and attention to these formal assertions of the Congressional role and far greater amount of

time and energy is spent by them, and by the Executive Branch, in informal consultation. Top officials of State and Defense spend substantial amounts of their time, at least as much as their colleagues in other departments, on Congressional relations and securing legislation on foreign aid occupies most of the time of the AID Administrator. There is genuine respect for the power of Congress - though not always for the views of its members. Congress does not see the problem in the same light. There is considerable concern currently being expressed over the loss of Congressional influence. In a recent report the Senate Foreign Relations Committee said:

Our country has come far toward the concentration in its national executive of unchecked power over foreign relations, particularly over the disposition and use of the armed forces. So far has this process advanced that, in the committee's view, it is no longer accurate to characterize our government, in matters of foreign relations, as one of separated powers checked and balanced against each other. The Executive has acquired virtual supremacy over the making as well as the conduct of the foreign relations of the United States.

The principal cause of the constitutional imbalance has been the circumstance of American involvement and responsibility in a violent and unstable world. Since its entry into World War II the United States has been deeply, and to a great extent involuntarily, involved in a series of crises which have revolutionized and are continuing to revolutionize the world of the 20th century. There is no end in sight to these global commotions; there is no end in sight to deep American involvement in them.

This particular statement was, of course, touched off by dissatisfaction with Vietnam in particular and uneasiness about the extent of our foreign involvement generally. It was, therefore, a part of the crisis of confidence that affects the conduct of foreign affairs today. There is no consensus within the Congress or within the committee as to what changes should be made in our policy or even in its method of determination. Institutional loyalty is reflected

in agreement by congressmen that Congress should play a greater role, but there is little real agreement on what that role should be.

The President needs the support of Congress for his foreign policy. He needs it because Congress, through its elected members, is probably his most important means of getting public support within the United States. He needs Congressional support because the United States cannot speak or act effectively with foreign countries if domestic division casts doubt upon what it says or does. He needs it because Congress can, and sometimes does, cripple and frustrate a particular foreign policy through legislative restrictions or refusal to appropriate funds.

This common wisdom is reflected by Presidential commitments to a "bi-partisan foreign policy" and by saying that "politics stops at the water's edge". It is reflected also by Congressional reluctance, at least in times of crisis, to criticize Presidential action. The President can and does play on feelings of patriotism and the need for unity. But unless the unity is genuinely there or the Presidential action quickly and demonstrably a success, he may pay a heavy political price for acting on his own. Vietnam and the dispatch of marines to the Dominican Republic in 1965 - in different degrees - serve to illustrate the point.

In general we have had an extremely successful bi-partisan foreign policy for the past quarter of a century and it has enjoyed, perhaps for that reason, a large measure of both Congressional and public support. Today the agony of Vietnam has led the public and the Congress to question the relevance of that policy to the contemporary world and to raise questions which once seemed to have easy answers and which today are far more difficult to explain. In part these questions have been raised as procedural and constitutional issues - by inquiry into the proper role of Congress.

One could argue that the role of Congress in its relationship with the Executive is not very important if there is general agreement on the policy which is being followed. Essentially procedural points can seldom be made effectively if they do not have a substantive objective. If students, for

example, are wholly happy with the decisions of university administrators they are unlikely to spend time and energy trying to affect the decision-making process. And I believe the same is true with respect to foreign policy

But a decision-making process should be examined for its capacity in times of crisis and difficulty as well as in times of relative agreement. And so I think this is a good time to examine and seek to understand the role of Congress in foreign policy. The Constitution says relatively little about how foreign policy decisions should be made and foreign relations conducted. Even in the far calmer climate of this nation's infancy when - ironically - our foreign policy was "to steer clear of permanent alliances, with any portion of the foreign world" - the Founding Fathers appreciated the complexity of foreign affairs. They recognized that the voice of the United States in foreign matters was, of necessity, the voice of the Executive. Consistent with that basic necessity, they provided for the participation of Congress in a number of ways, direct and indirect. They did not seek a simple formula nor try to engrave the lines of authority comprehensively or clearly. Throughout our history the focus has always been upon the Presidency, and it is difficult to imagine how it could be otherwise. Jefferson put it succinctly: "The transaction of business with foreign nations is Executive altogether."

I think it is fair to say, as virtually every commentator has in fact said throughout our history, that under our Constitutional system the source of an effective foreign policy is Presidential power. His is the sole authority to communicate formally with foreign nations; to negotiate treaties; to command the armed forces of the United States. His is a responsibility born of the need for speed and decisiveness in an emergency. His is the responsibility for controlling and directing all the external aspects of the Nation's power. To him flow all of the vast intelligence and information connected with national security. The President, of necessity, has a pre-eminent responsibility in this field.

This was always the case. John Jay observed in *THE FEDERALIST* that the Presidency possesses great inherent strengths in the direction of

foreign affairs: the unity of the office, its capacity for secrecy and speed, and its superior sources of information. But, as Professor Corwin has said: Despite all this, actual practice under the Constitution has shown that while the President is usually in a position to propose, the Senate and Congress are often in a technical position at least to dispose. The verdict of history, in short, is that the power to determine the substantive content of American foreign policy is a divided power, with the lion's share falling usually to the President, though by no means always.

The Constitution left to the judgment and wisdom of the Executive and the Congress the task of working out the details of their relationships. Disagreements susceptible of decision by the Supreme Court have been rare. As a result, controversies over the line of demarcation in foreign affairs have been settled, in the end, by the instinct of the nation and its leaders for political responsibility.

In leaving the job of working out the details of this relationship to the judgment and wisdom of the Executive and Congress, the framers of the Constitution acted wisely. Certainly they did not eliminate dispute as to power or role; we have had that from the outset of our history. Nor did they eliminate the possibility that the Executive, acting unwisely, could plunge this country into disastrous wars, although that was a concern. Nor did they insure that the Congress could not frustrate the wisest and most productive foreign policy imaginable.

Would and did insure that neither the President nor the Congress could long do without the other in the conduct of foreign affairs. They did recognize the need for Presidential initiative to an extent that they did not contemplate it in domestic matters. In the context of the times such initiative was not a particularly important one. If Presidential initiative is far more important today, as it undoubtedly is, it has also evolved in the domestic arena in ways not contemplated in our early history

Tate's involvement in world affairs, but also a growth of Executive initiative and leadership in all fields. Clearly these developments have made

more difficult an application of the flexible Constitutional formula. But we would do well to remember that it has never been an easy formula to apply, even early in our history.

Members of Congress have frequently criticized acts of the Executive as exceeding his power when acting without the support of a Congressional vote. Early examples are President John Adams' use of troops in the Mediterranean, President Jefferson's Louisiana Purchase agreement, and President Monroe's announcement of his famous Doctrine. In 1846 President Polk sent American forces into the disputed territory between Corpus Christi and the Rio Grande River, an action which began the Mexican War. Presidents Roosevelt, Taft and Wilson frequently used American armed forces without authorization by Congress in protection of U.S. lives and property in Latin America and the Caribbean. While Congress was not consulted in any formal way in advance, during that period of our history the acts were generally popular, and in many instances both houses of Congress gave retroactive approval to Presidential action.

It can be maintained, as the Senate Foreign Relations Committee currently does, that Franklin Roosevelt expanded Executive power in foreign affairs to an unprecedented degree. Acting on Presidential authority alone, he exchanged overage American destroyers for British bases in the Western Hemisphere, committed American forces to the defense of Greenland and Iceland, and authorized American naval vessels to escort convoys to Iceland provided at least one ship in each convoy flew the American or Icelandic flag. All of these actions were justified as an emergency use of Presidential power. But there can be little question that, despite President Roosevelt's belief in the wisdom and necessity of these acts, he took them on Executive authority alone because he did not believe that the ensuing Congressional debate, should he have put the matters to Congress, would have been consistent with our national interest. The political problem, of course, disappeared with the Japanese attack upon Pearl Harbor, though the Constitutional problem and precedent remained.

Throughout our history, as currently, Congressional concern has most often been focused on two exercises of Presidential authority which are particularly troublesome from both a political and Constitutional view. The first of these is the Presidential power to use the Armed Forces of the United States. The second is the power of the Executive to engage the United States in various kinds of "commitments" to foreign governments. Congress sees the first as related to its Constitutional power "to declare war" and the second as related primarily to the treaty power, but also to more general authority delegated to the Executive by statute. There is a wealth of conflicting historical precedent and Constitutional argument on both issues

I doubt it is fruitful to rehearse legal arguments with respect to the Constitutional provisions in any detail. Clearly they do reflect the view that both the President and the Congress have a voice - the power over foreign policy is divided. But we cannot find the answers to an effective foreign policy in a recitation of specific Constitutional provisions "all of which," as Professor Corwin noted, "amounts to saying that the Constitution, considered only for its affirmative grants of power which are capable of affecting the issue, is an invitation to struggle for the privilege of directing American foreign policy.

If it is true, as I have said, that neither can succeed in this struggle and that what is essential is cooperation between the President and the Congress, the problem is less a Constitutional issue than a political one. How, within the quite broad confines of the Constitution, can the political system be made to produce a workable foreign policy? And to what extent is this possible if there is a genuine division of view in the country as there seems to be today?

The accepted fact that it is the President who must speak for the country and the modern tradition of bi-partisanship in foreign policy only complicate the matter. On domestic problems the Executive can operate successfully on quite narrow Congressional margins if need be, and employ partisan politics to the extent that it proves helpful to secure legislative authority. But often in foreign affairs he feels correctly that the effectiveness

of the policy he espouses depends on his ability to convince other nations that it will not significantly or abruptly change with a new Congress or even with a new President. We have been operating in the post-World War II world on the assumption that longterm relationships, whether military alliances or economic programs, are important. And so, understandably, have many other nations whose leaders have made significant political commitments in their countries and to their peoples on the assumption that the United States will, for example, maintain certain trade policies or levels of capital flow. Our ability to influence others often depends on their assessment of the constancy of our policy. This is a function of our size, our wealth, and our power in today's world. What we do, or what we fail to do, influences other nations whether we want to influence their decisions or not. As Prime Minister Trudeau of Canada recently remarked, "Being a nextdoor neighbor to the United States is like being in bed with an elephant." Let us examine the power to use the armed forces of the United States. To resort to armed force, for any purpose, is clearly a major, and conceivably the ultimate decision, in terms of the exercise of governmental authority. More than any other act it requires, or ought to require, the maximum in terms of consensus. It should be supported by the Congress of the United States and whatever is necessary to insure the broadest kind of public support should be done. Clearly it was this sort of consideration which led the authors of the Constitution to temper the President's power as Commander-in-Chief with the power of Congress to declare war and to raise armies. The President was not empowered to plunge the United States into war without Congressional sanction.

It has long been recognized that even this seemingly clear principle has difficulties in application. At the time the Constitution was written the declaration of war itself was an important international act. War itself was regarded as an appropriate means of effecting national objectives. The declaration of war, as a political act, had important international significance. It affected, for example, the rights of neutrals vis-h-vis belligerents. Today all that has changed. War is no longer an accepted or acceptable act; the use of

armed forces is, by international fiat, outlawed save in self-defense. The declaration of war, as such, no longer has international significance.

This interaction between accepted international doctrine, expressed in the U. N. Charter and sanctioned by the Congress of the United States, and the language of the Constitution, is troublesome. Viewed from the point-of-view of the separation of powers and the need for Congressional participation, the policies expressed by giving Congress the power to declare war remain valid. But viewed externally, as a national act, the declaration of war is itself no longer appropriate.

A further difficulty arises because even in terms of our own Constitutional doctrine, the Congressional power has always been subject to the exception that the President may employ the Armed Forces in self-defense against attack without the need for Congressional action. At least verbally this appears to have a relationship to Article 51 of the U. N. Charter which permits the use of Armed Forces in self-defense. And in an era in which U. S. forces are stationed in dozens of countries around the world - and which any use of force by anyone involves the possibility of large scale warfare - there is the danger that the power of Congress could be quickly emasculated.

The nature of both the world political system and the U. S. role in it, coupled with modern technology of warfare, has greatly complicated the problem of giving Congress a real voice in this most important of political acts, the engagement of U. S. forces. Any time the safety of U. S. troops stationed anywhere in the world is threatened there is a strong likelihood of a need for a quick response. Once engaged, it is often difficult, politically and militarily, to disengage.

Put differently, I doubt the President is likely to use force in a major way without the certainty of Congressional sanction, at least after the fact - when the prestige and emotions of the United States are already engaged and when the Congress, accordingly, is left little option. But in such an event the decision of Congress is not the same decision that the President made. He may have had choices as to the nature and magnitude of the response. The

Congress may not, for it must make its decision in the context of a response already made. The facts have changed. Whatever one thinks of the Presidential decision involved, it is clear that the decision to use U. S. forces in Vietnam or the Dominican Republic was of a different type than the decision to withdraw them. In short, the President has a great capacity to put the Congress on the spot in circumstances in which it has little real choice but to back him. The Congress knows this, does not like it, and is floundering around in search of better solutions.

The Rise and Growth of Communalism

Before we discuss the growth of communalism in modern India, it is perhaps useful to define the term and point to certain basic fallacies regarding it. Communalism is basically an ideology with which we have lived so long that it appears to be a simple, easily understood notion. But this is, perhaps, not so.

Communalism or communal ideology consists of three basic elements or stages, one following the other. First, it is the belief that people who follow the same religion have common secular interests, that is, common political, economic, social and cultural interests. This is the first bedrock of communal ideology. From this arises the notion of socio-political communities based on religion. It is these religion-based communities, and not classes, nationalities, linguistic-cultural groups, nations or such politicoterritorial units as provinces or states that are seen as the fundamental units of Indian society. The Indian people, it is believed, can act socially and politically and protect their collective or corporate or non-individual interests only as members of these religion-based communities. These different communities are alleged to have their own leaders. Those who talk of being national, regional, or class leaders are merely masquerading; beneath the mask they are only leaders of their own communities. The best they can do is to unite as communal leaders and then serve the wider category of the nation or country.

The second element of communal ideology rests on the notion that in multi-religious society like India, the secular interests, that is the social,

cultural, economic and political interests, of the followers of one religion are dissimilar and divergent from the interests of the followers of another. The third stage of communalism is reached when the interests of the followers of different religions or of different 'communities' are seen to be mutually incompatible, antagonistic and hostile. Thus, the communalist asserts this stage that Hindus and Muslims cannot have common secular interests, that their secular interests are bound to be opposed to each other.

Communalism is, therefore, basically and above all an ideology on which communal politics is based. Communal violence is a conjunctural consequence of communal ideology. Similarly, Hindu, Muslim, Sikh or Christian communalisms are not very different from each other; they belong to a single species; they are varieties of the same communal ideology.

Communal ideology in a person, party or movement starts with the first stage. Many nationalists fell prey to it or thought within its digits even while rejecting the two other elements of communalism, that is, the notion of the mutual divergence or hostility of the interests of different religion-based communities. These were the persons who saw themselves as Nationalist Hindus, Nationalist Muslims, Nationalist Sikhs, etc., and not as simple nationalists.

The second stage of communalism may be described as liberal communalism or, in the words of some, moderate communalism. The liberal communalist was basically a believer in and practitioner of communal politics; but he still upheld certain liberal, democratic, humanist and nationalist values. Even while holding that India consisted of distinct religion-based communities, with their own separate and special interests which sometimes came into conflict with each other, he continued to believe and profess publicly that these different communal interests could be gradually accommodated and brought into harmony within the overall, developing national interests, and India built as a nation. Most of the communalists before 1937 — the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim League, the All Brothers after

1925, M.A. Jinnah, Madan Mohan Malaviya, Lajpat Rai, and N.C. Kelkar after 1922 — functioned within a liberal communal framework.

Extreme communalism, or communalism functioning broadly within a fascist syndrome, formed the third or last stage of communalism. Extreme communalism was based on fear and hatred, and had a tendency to use violence of language, deed or behaviour, the language of war and enmity against political opponents. It was at this stage that the communalists declared that Muslims, ‘Muslim culture’ and Islam and Hindus, ‘Hindu culture, and Hinduism were in danger of being suppressed and exterminated. It was also at this stage that both the Muslim and Hindu communalists put forward the theory that Muslims and Hindus constituted separate nations whose mutual antagonism was permanent and irresolvable. The Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha after 1937 and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) increasingly veered towards extreme or fascistic communalism.

Though the three stages of communalism were different from one another, they also interacted and provided a certain continuum. Its first element or stage fed liberal and extreme communalism and made it difficult to carry on a struggle against them. Similarly, the liberal communalist found it difficult to prevent the ideological transition to extreme communalism.

We may take note of several other connected aspects. While a communalist talked of, or believed in, defending his ‘community’s’ interests, in real life no such interests existed outside the field of religion. The economic and political interests of Hindus, Muslims, and others were the same. In that sense they did not even constitute separate communities. As Hindus or Muslims they did not have a separate political-economic life or interests on an all-India or even regional basis. They were divided from fellow Hindus or Muslims by region, language, culture, class, caste, social status, social practices, food and dress habits, etc., and united on these aspects with follower of other religions. An upper class Muslim had far more in common, even culturally, with an upper class Hindu than with a lower class Muslim. Similarly, a Punjabi Hindu stood closer culturally to a Punjabi Muslim than to a Bengali

Hindu; and, of course, the same was true of a Bengali Muslim in relation to a Bengali Hindu and a Punjabi Muslim. The unreal communal division, thus, obscured the real division of the Indian people into linguistic-cultural regions and social classes as well as their real, emerging and growing unity into a nation.

If communal interests did not exist, then communalism was not a partial or one-sided or sectional view of the social reality; it was its wrong & unscientific view. It has been suggested, on occasions, that a communalist being narrow-minded, looks after his own community's interests. But if no such interests existed, then he could not be serving his 'community's' or co-religionists interests either. He could not be the 'representative' of his community. In the name of serving his community's interests, he served knowingly or unknowingly some other interests. He, therefore, either deceived others or unconsciously deceived himself. Thus, communal assumptions, communal logic and communal answers were wrong. What the communalist projected as problems were not the real problems, and what the communalist said was the answer was not the real answer.

Sometimes, communalism is seen as something that has survived from the past, as something that the medieval period has bequeathed to the present or at least as having roots in the medieval period. But while communalism uses, and is based on, many elements of ancient and medieval ideologies, basically it is a modern technology and political trend that expresses the social urges and serves the political needs of modern social groups, classes and forces. Its social roots as also its social, political and economic objectives lie very much in the modern period of Indian history. It was brought into existence and sustained by contemporary socio-economic structure.

Communalism emerged as a consequence of the emergence of modern politics which marked a sharp break with the politics of the ancient or medieval or pre-1857 periods. Communalism, as also other modern views such as nationalism and socialism, could emerge as politics and as ideology only after politics based on the people, politics of popular participation and

mobilization, politics based on the creation and mobilization of public opinion had come into existence. In pre-modern politics, people were either ignored in upper-class based politics or were compelled to rebel outside the political system and, in case of success, their leaders incorporated into the old ruling classes. This was recognized by many perceptive Indians. Jawaharlal Nehru, for example, noted in 1936: 'One must never forget that communalism in India is a latter-day phenomenon which has grown up before our eyes.' Nor was there anything unique about communalism in the Indian context. It was not an inevitable or inherent product of India's peculiar historical and social development. It was the result of conditions which have in other societies produced similar phenomena and ideologies such as Fascism, anti-Semitism, racism, Catholic-Protestant conflict in Northern Ireland, or Christian-Muslim conflict in Lebanon.

The communal consciousness arose as a result of the transformation of Indian society under the impact of colonialism and the need to struggle against it. The growing economic, political and administrative unification of regions and the country, the process of making India into a nation, the developing contradiction between colonialism and the Indian people and the formation of modern social classes and strata called for new ways of seeing one's common interests. They made it necessary to have wider links and loyalties among the people and to form new identities. This also followed from the birth of new politics during the last half of the 19th century. The new politics was based on the politicization and mobilization of an ever increasing number of the Indian people.

The process of grasping the new, emerging political reality and social relations and the adoption of new uniting principles, new social and political identities with the aid of new ideas and concepts was bound to be a difficult and gradual process. The process required the spread of modern ideas of nationalism, cultural-linguistic development and class struggle. But wherever their growth was slow and partial, people inevitably used the old, familiar pre-modern categories of self-identity such as caste, locality, region, race,

religion, sect and occupation to grasp the new reality, to make wider connections and to evolve new identities and ideologies. Similar developments have occurred all over the world in similar circumstances. But often such old, inadequate and false ideas and identities gradually give way to the new, historically necessary ideas and identities of nation, nationality and class. This also occurred on a large scale in India, but not uniformly among all the Indian people, in particular, religious consciousness was transformed into communal consciousness in some parts of the country and among some sections of the people. This is because there were some factors in the Indian situation which favoured its growth; it served the needs of certain sections of society and certain social and political forces. The question is why did communalism succeed in growing during the 20th century? What aspects of the Indian situation favoured this process? Which social classes and political forces did it serve? Why did it become such a pervasive part of Indian reality? Though it is an inherent or inevitable part of the situation, it was not a mere conspiracy of power-hungry politicians and crafty administrators either. It had socioeconomic and political roots. There was a social situation which was funneling it and without which it could not have survived for long.

Above all, communalism was one of the by-products of the colonial character of Indian economy, of colonial underdevelopment, of the incapacity of colonialism to develop the Indian economy. The resulting economic stagnation and its impact on the lives of the Indian people, especially the middle classes, produced conditions which were conducive to division and antagonism within Indian society as also to its radical transformation.

Throughout the 20th century, in the absence of modern industrial development and the development of education, health and other social and cultural services, unemployment was an acute problem in India, especially for the educated middle and lower middle classes who could not fall back on land and whose socio-economic conditions suffered constant deterioration. These economic opportunities declined further during the Great Depression after 1928 when large scale unemployment prevailed.

In this social situation, the nationalist and other popular movements worked for the long-term solution to the people's problems by fighting for the overthrow of colonialism and radical social transformation. In fact, the middle classes formed the backbone both of the militant national movement from 1905 to 1947 and the left-wing parties and groups since the 1920s. Unfortunately there were some who lacked a wider social vision and political understanding and looked to their narrow immediate interests and short-term solutions to their personal or sectional problems such as communal, caste, or provincial reservation in jobs or in municipal committees, legislatures, and so on.

Because of economic stagnation, there was intense competition among individuals for government jobs, in professions like law and medicine, and in business for customers and markets. In an attempt to get a larger share of existing economic opportunities, middle class individuals freely used all the means at their disposal — educational qualifications, personal merit as also nepotism, bribery, and so on. At the same time, to give their struggle a wider base, they also used other group identities such as caste, province and religion to enhance their capacity to compete. Thus, some individuals from the middle classes could, and did, benefit, in the short run, from communalism, especially in the field of government employment. This gave a certain aura of validity to communal politics. The communalist could impose his interpretation of reality on middle class' individuals because it did have a basis, however partial, perverted and short-term, in the social existence and social experience of the middle classes.

Gradually, the spread of education to well-off peasants and small landlords extended the boundaries of the job-seeking middle class to the rural areas. The newly educated rural youth could not be sustained by land whether as land lords or peasants, especially as agriculture was totally stagnant because of the colonial impact. They flocked on the towns and cities for opening in government jobs and professions and tried to save themselves by fighting for jobs through the system of communal reservations and

nominations. This development gradually widened the social base of communalism to cover the rural upper strata of peasants and landlords.

Thus, the crisis of the colonial economy constantly generated two opposing sets of ideologies and political tendencies among the middle classes. When anti-imperialist revolution and social change appeared on the agenda, the middle classes enthusiastically joined the national and other popular movements. They then readily advocated the cause and demands of the entire society from the capitalists to the peasants and workers. Individual ambitions were then sunk in the wider social vision. But, when prospects of revolutionary change receded, when the anti-imperialist struggle entered a more passive phase, many belonging to the middle classes shifted to short-term solutions of their personal problems, to politics based on communalism and other similar ideologies. Thus with the same social causation, large sections of the middle classes in several parts of the country constantly oscillated between antiimperialism and communalism or communal-type politics. But, there was a crucial different in the two cases. In the first case, their own social interests merged with interests of general social development and their politics formed a part of the broader antiimperialist struggle. In the second case, they functioned as a narrow and selfish interest group, accepted the sociopolitical status and objectively served colonialism.

To sum up this aspect: communalism was deeply rooted in and was an expression of the interests and aspirations of the middle classes in a social situation in which opportunities for them were grossly inadequate. The communal question was, therefore a middle class question par excellence. The main appeal of communalism and its main social base also lay among the middle classes. It is, however, important to remember that a large number of middle class individuals remained, on the whole, free of communalism even in the 1930s and 1940s. This was, in particular, true of most of the intellectuals, whether Hindu, Muslim or Sikh. In fact, the typical Indian intellectual of the 1930s tended to be both secular and broadly left-wing.

There was another aspect of the colonial economy that favoured communal politics. In the absence of openings in industry, commerce, education and other social services, and the cultural and entertainment fields, the Government service was the main avenue of employment for the middle classes. Much of the employment for teachers, doctors and engineers was also under government control. As late as 1951, while 1.2 million persons were covered by the Factory Acts, 3.3 millions got employment in government service. And communal politics could be used to put pressure on the Government to reserve and allocate its jobs as also seats in professional colleges on communal and caste lines. Consequently, communal politics till 1937 was organized around government jobs, educational concessions, and the like as also political positions — seats in legislative councils, municipal bodies, etc. — which enabled control over these and other economic opportunities. It may also be noted that though the communalists spoke in the name of their ‘communities,’ the reservations, guarantees and other ‘rights’ they demanded were virtually confined to these two aspects. They did not take up any issues which were of interest to the masses.

At another plane, communalism often distorted or misinterpreted social tension and class conflict between the exploiters and the exploited belonging to different religions as communal conflict. While the discontent and clash of interests was real and was due to non-religious or non-communal factors, because of backward political consciousness it found a distorted expression in communal conflict. As C.G. Shah has put it: ‘Under the pressure of communal propaganda, the masses are unable to locate the real causes of their exploitation, oppression, and suffering and imagine a fictitious communal source of their origin.’

What made such communal (and later casteist) distortion possible specific feature of Indian social development — in several parts of the country the religious distinction coincided with social, and class distinctions. Here most often the exploiting sections — landlords, merchants and moneylenders, were upper caste Hindus while the poor and exploited were Muslims or lower

caste Hindus. Consequently, propaganda by the Muslim communalists that Hindus were exploiting Muslims or by the Hindu communalists that Muslims were threatening Hindu property or economic interests could succeed even while wholly incorrect. Thus, for example, the struggle between tenant and landlord in East Bengal and Malabar and the peasant-debtor and the merchant-moneylender in Punjab could be portrayed by the communalists as a struggle between Muslims and Hindus. Similarly, the landlord-moneylender oppression was represented as the oppression of Muslims by Hindus, and the attack by the rural poor on the rural rich as an attack by Muslims on Hindus. For example, one aspect of the growth of communalism in Punjab was the effort of the big Muslim landlords to protect their economic and social position by using communalism to turn the anger of their Muslim tenants against Hindu traders and moneylenders, and the use of communalism by the latter to protect their threatened class interests by raising the cry of Hindu interests in danger. In reality, the struggle of the peasants for their emancipation was inevitable. The question was what type of ideological-political content it would acquire. Both the communalists and the colonial administrators stressed the communal as against the class aspects of agrarian exploitation and oppression. Thus, they held that the Muslim peasants and debtors were being exploited not as peasants and debtors but because they were Muslims.

In many cases, a communal form is given to the social conflict not by the participants but by the observer, the official, the journalist, the politician, and, finally, the historian, all of whom provide a post-facto communal explanation for the conflict because of their own conscious or unconscious outlook. It is also important to note that agrarian conflicts did not assume a communal colour until the 20th century and the rise of communalism and that too not in most cases, in the Pabna agrarian riots of 1873, both Hindu and Muslim tenants fought zamindars together. Similarly, as brought out in earlier chapters, most of the agrarian struggles in 1919 stayed clear of communal channels. The peasants' and workers'—the radical intelligentsia succeeded in

creating powerful secular and irreligious movements and organizations which became important constituents of the anti-imperialist struggle.

It is important to note in this context that Hindu zamindars in Bengal had acquired control over land not because they were Hindus but as a result of the historical process of the spread of Islamic religion in Bengal among the lower castes and classes. Hindu zamindars and businessmen acquired economic dominance over landed capital in Bengal at the beginning of the 18th century during the rule of Murshid Quli Khan, religiously the most devout of Aurangzeb's officials and followers. Under his rule, more than seventy-five per cent of the zamindars and most of the taluqdars were Hindus. The Permanent Settlement of 1793 further strengthened the trend by eliminating on a large scale both the old Hindu and Muslim zamindar families and replacing them with new men of commerce who were Hindus. Similarly, the predominance of Hindus among bankers, traders and moneylenders in northern India dated to the medieval period. The dominance these strata acquired over rural society under British rule was the result not of their being Hindu but of the important economic role they acquired in the colonial system of exploitation. In other words, colonial history guaranteed the growth and economic domination of merchant-moneylenders; medieval history had guaranteed that they would be mostly Hindus.

Communalism represented, at another level, a struggle between two upper classes or strata for power, privileges and economic gains. Belonging to different religions (or castes) these classes or strata used communalism to mobilize the popular support of their co-religionists in their mutual struggles. This was, for example, the case in Western Punjab where the Muslim landlords opposed the Hindu moneylenders and in East Bengal where the Muslim jotedars (small landlords) opposed the Hindu zamindars.

Above all, communalism developed as a weapon of economically and politically reactionary social classes and political forces — and semi-feudal landlords and ex-bureaucrats (whom Dr. K.M. Ashraf has called the jagirdari classes) merchants and moneylenders and the colonial state. Communal

leaders and parties were, in general, allied with these classes and forces. The social, economic and political vested interests deliberately encouraged or unconsciously adopted communalism because of its capacity to distort and divert popular struggles, to prevent the masses from understanding the socio-economic and political forces responsible for their social condition, to prevent unity on national and class lines, and to turn them away from their real national and socio-economic interests and issues and mass movements around them. Communalism also enabled the upper classes and the colonial rulers to unite with sections of the middle classes and to utilize the latter's politics to serve their own ends.

British rule and its policy of Divide and Rule bore special responsibility for the growth of communalism in modern India, though it is also true that it could succeed only because of internal social and political conditions. The fact was that the state, with its immense power, could promote either national integration or all kinds of divisive forces. The colonial state chose the latter course. It used communalism to counter and weaken the growing national movement and the welding of the Indian people into a nation, communalism was presented by the colonial rulers as the problem of the defence of minorities. Hindu-Muslim disunity — and the need to protect minorities from domination and suppression by the majority — was increasingly offered as the main justification for the maintenance of British rule, especially as theories of civilizing mission, white man's burden, welfare of the ruled, etc., got increasingly discredited.

Communalism was, of course, not the only constituent of the policy of Divide and Rule. Every existing division of Indian society was encouraged to prevent the emerging unity of the Indian people. An effort was made to set region against region, province against province, caste against caste, language against language, reformers against the orthodox, the moderate against the militant, leftist against rightist, and even class against class. It was, of course, the communal division which survived to the end and proved the most serviceable. In fact, near the end, it was to become the main prop of

colonialism, and colonial authorities were to stake their all on it. On the other hand, communalism could not have developed to such an extent as to divide the country, if it did not have the powerful support of the colonial state. In this sense, communalism may be described as the channel through which the politics of the middle classes were placed at the service of colonialism and the jagirdari classes. In fact, communalism was the route through which colonialism was able to extend its narrow social base to sections of workers, peasants, the middle classes and the bourgeoisie whose interests were otherwise in contradiction with colonialism.

What were the different ways and policies, or acts of omission and commission, through which the British encouraged and nurtured communalism? First, by consistently treating Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs as separate communities and sociopolitical entities which had little in common. India, it was said, was neither a nation or a nation-in-the-making, nor did it consist of nationalities or local societies, but consisted of structured, mutually exclusive and antagonistic religion-based communities. Second, official favour and patronage were extended to the communalists. Third, the communal Press and persons and agitations were shown extraordinary tolerance. Fourth, communal demands were readily accepted, thus politically strengthening communal organizations and their hold over the people. For example, while the Congress could get none of its demands accepted from 1885-1905, the Muslim communal demands were accepted in 1906 as soon as they were presented to the Viceroy. Similarly, in 1932, the Communal Award accepted all the major communal demands of the time. During World War II, the Muslim communalists were given a complete veto on any political advance. Fifth, the British readily accepted communal organizations and leaders as the real spokesperson for their 'communities,' while the nationalist leaders were treated as representing a microscopic minority — the elite. Sixth, separate electorates served as an important instrument for the development of communal politics. Lastly, the colonial government encouraged communalism through a policy of nonaction against it. Certain positive measures which the

state alone could undertake were needed to check the growth of communalism. The failure to undertake them served as an indirect encouragement to communalism. The Government refused to take action against the propagation of 'virulent communal ideas and communal hatred through the Press, pamphlets, leaflets, literature, public platform and rumours. This was in sharp contrast with the frequent suppression of the nationalist Press, literature, civil servants, propaganda, and so on. On the contrary, the Government freely rewarded communal leaders, intellectuals and government servants with titles, positions of profit, high salaries, and so on. The British administrators also followed a policy of relative inactivity and irresponsibility in dealing with communal riots. When they occurred, they were not crushed energetically. The administration also seldom made proper preparations or took preventive measures to meet situations of communal tension, as they did in case of nationalist and other popular protest movements.

To sum up: So long as the colonial state supported communalism, a solution to the communal problem was not easily possible while the colonial state remained; though, of course, the overthrow of the colonial state was only the necessary but not a sufficient condition for a successful struggle against communalism.

A strong contributory factor in the growth of communalism was the pronounced Hindu tinge in much of nationalist thought and propaganda in the beginning of the 20th century.

Many of the Extremists introduced a strong Hindu religious element in nationalist thought and propaganda. They tended to emphasize ancient Indian culture to the exclusion of medieval Indian culture. They tried to provide a Hindu ideological underpinning to Indian nationalism or at least a Hindu idiom to its day-to-day political agitation. Thus, Tilak used the Ganesh Puja and the Shivaji Festival to propagate nationalism; and the anti-partition of Bengal agitation was initiated with dips in the Ganges. What was much worse, Bankim Chandra Chatterjea and many other writers in Bengali, Hindi, Urdu and other languages often referred to Muslims as foreigners in their novels,

plays, poems, and stories, and tended to identify nationalism with Hindus. This type of literature, in which Muslim rulers and officials were often portrayed as tyrants, tended to produce resentment among literate Muslims and alienate them from the emerging national movement. Moreover, a vague Hindu aura pervaded much of the nationalist agitation because of the use of Hindu symbols, idioms, and myths.

Of course, the nationalist movement remained, on the whole, basically secular in its approach and ideology, and young nationalist Muslims like M.A. Jinnah and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad had little difficulty in accepting it as such and in joining it. This secularism became sturdier when leaders like Gandhi, C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Azad, Dr. M.A. Ansari, Subhas Bose, Sardar Patel and Rajendra Prasad came to the helm. The Hindu tinge was not so much a cause of communalism as a cause of the nationalist failure to check the growth. It made it slightly more difficult to win over Muslims to the national movement. It enabled the Government and Muslim communalists to use it to keep large sections of Muslims away from the nationalist movement and to instil among them the feeling that the success of the movement would mean 'Hindu supremacy' in the country.

This Hindu tinge also created ideological openings for Hindu communalism and made it difficult for the nationalist movement to eliminate Hindu communal political and ideological elements within its own ranks. It also helped the spread of a Muslim tinge among Muslim nationalists.

A communal and distorted unscientific view of Indian history, especially of its ancient and medieval periods, was a major instrument for the spread of communal consciousness as also a basic constituent of communal ideology. The teaching of Indian history in schools and colleges from a basically communal point of view made a major contribution to the rise and growth of communalism. For generations, almost from the beginning of the modern school system, communal interpretations of history of varying degrees of virulence were propagated, first by imperialist writers and then by others. So deep and widespread was the penetration of the communal view of history

that even sturdy nationalists accepted, however unconsciously, some of its basic digits. All this was seen by many contemporary observers. Gandhiji, for example, wrote: 'Communal harmony could not be permanently established in our country so long as highly distorted versions of history were being taught in her schools and colleges, through the history textbooks.' Over and above the textbooks, the communal view of history was spread widely through poetry, drama, historical novels and short stories, newspapers and popular magazines, pamphlets, and above all, orally through the public platform, classroom teaching, socialization through the family, and private discussion and conversation.

A beginning was made in the early 19th century by the British historian, James Mill, who described the ancient period of Indian history as the Hindu period and the medieval period as the Muslim period. (Though he failed to characterize the modern period as the Christian period!). Other British and Indian historians followed him in this respect. Furthermore, though the Muslim masses were as poor, exploited and oppressed as the Hindu masses, and there were Hindu zamindars, nobles and rulers along with Muslim ones, these writers declared that all Muslims were rulers in medieval India and all Hindus were the ruled. Thus, the basic character of a polity in India was identified with the religion of the ruler. Later the culture and society of various periods were also declared to be either Hindu or Muslim in character.

The Hindu communalist readily adopted the imperialist view that medieval rulers in India were anti-Hindu, tyrannized Hindus and converted them forcibly. All communalist, as also imperialist, historians saw medieval history as one long story of Hindu-Muslim conflict and believed that throughout the medieval period there existed distinct and separate Hindu and Muslim cultures. The Hindu communalists described the rule of medieval Muslim rulers as foreign rule because of their religion. The talk of 'a thousand years of slavery' and 'foreign rule' was common rhetoric, sometimes even used by nationalists. Above all, the Hindu communal view of history relied on

the myth that Indian society and culture had reached great, ideal heights in the ancient period from which they fell into permanent and continuous decay during the medieval period because of 'Muslim' rule and domination. The basic contribution of the medieval period to the development of the Indian economy and technology, religion and philosophy, arts and literature, and culture and society was denied.

In turn the Muslim communalists harked back to the 'Golden Age of Islamic achievement' in West Asia and appealed to its heroes, myths and cultural traditions. They propagated the notion that all Muslims were the rulers in medieval India or at least the beneficiaries of the so-called Muslim rule. They tended to defend and glorify all Muslim rulers, including religious bigots like Aurangzeb. They also evolved their own version of the 'fall' theory. While Hindus were allegedly in the ascendant during the 19th century, Muslims, it was said, 'fell' or declined as a 'community' throughout the 19th century after 'they' lost political power.

A major factor in the growth of communalism according to some authors was the religious pluralism or the existence of several religions in India. This is not so. It is not true that communalism must arise inevitably in a multi-religious society. Religion was not an underlying or basic cause of communalism, whose removal was basic to tackling or solving the communal problem. Here we must distinguish between religion as a belief system, which people follow as part of their personal belief, and the ideology of a religion-based socio-political identity, that is, communalism. In other words, religion is not the 'cause' of communalism, even though communal cleavage is based by the communalist on differences in religion — this difference is then used to mask or disguise the social needs, aspirations, conflicts, arising in non-religious fields. Religion comes into communalism to the extent that it serves politics arising in spheres other than religion. K.M. Ashraf put this aspect in an appropriate phrase when he described communalism as 'Mazhab ki siyasi dukadari' (political trade in religion). Communalism was not inspired by

religion, nor was religion the object of communal politics — it was only its vehicle.

Religion was, however, used as a mobilizing factor by the communalists. Communalism could become a popular movement after 1939, and in particular during 1945-47, only when it adopted the inflammable cry of religion in danger. Moreover, differing religious practices were the immediate cause of situations of communal tension and riots. We may also note that while religion was not responsible for communalism, religiosity was a major contributory factor. (Religiosity may be defined as intense emotional commitment to matters of religion and the tendency to let religion and religious emotions intrude into nonreligious or non-spiritual areas of life and beyond the individual's private and moral world.) Religiosity was not communalism but it opened a person to the appeal of communalism in the name of religion. Secularization did not, therefore, mean removing religion but it did mean reducing religiosity or increasingly narrowing down the sphere of religion to the private life of the individual.

Self Assessment Questions

S.N.	Questions (5 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Write a short note on the early political activities of Gandhi in India.	CO1	PO1	K1
2	Explain the causes of the Rowlatt Satyagraha.	CO2	PO2	K2
3	Describe the Non-Cooperation Movement.	CO2	PO2	K3
4	Write a note on the role of the Swarajists in Indian politics.	CO3	PO3	K2
5	Explain the significance of the Simon Commission.	CO4	PO2	K2
6	Write a short note on the Round Table Conferences.	CO4	PO2	K1
7	Describe the Civil Disobedience Movement and British repression.	CO5	PO3	K2
S.N.	Questions (8 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Explain the early political activities of Gandhi in the Indian National Movement.	CO1	PO2	K3
2	Discuss the causes and impact of the Rowlatt Satyagraha.	CO2	PO3	K4
3	Analyse the objectives and significance of the Non-Cooperation Movement.	CO2	PO3	K4
4	Examine the role of the Swarajists in the national movement.	CO3	PO3	K4
5	Discuss the circumstances and reactions to the Simon Commission.	CO4	PO3	K4
6	Explain the significance of the Round Table Conferences.	CO4	PO3	K4=3
7	Analyse the causes and impact of the Civil Disobedience Movement.	CO5	PO3	K4
8	Examine the features of the Government of India Act 1935 and provincial ministries.	CO4	PO4	K3
9	Discuss the growth of socialist ideas and Congress involvement in world affairs.	CO5	PO4	K4
10	Analyse the causes for the growth of communalism in India.	CO5	PO4	K4

Unit - V

Learning Objectives

1. To understand the political developments after the resignation of Congress ministries.
2. To study the significance of the Individual Satyagraha.
3. To examine the aims and failure of the Cripps' Mission.
4. To analyse the causes and impact of the Quit India Movement.
5. To study the role of the Indian National Army in the freedom struggle.
6. To understand the political developments during 1945–47.
7. To examine the proposals of the Simla Conference and Cabinet Mission.
8. To analyse the circumstances leading to the transfer of power and partition of India.

Course Outcomes

1. Students understand the political situation after the resignation of Congress ministries.
2. Students explain the significance of the Individual Satyagraha.
3. Students analyse the aims and failure of the Cripps' Mission.
4. Students describe the causes and impact of the Quit India Movement.
5. Students understand the role of the Indian National Army.
6. Students examine the developments during the last phase of the freedom struggle.
7. Students analyse the proposals of the Simla Conference and Cabinet Mission Plan.
8. Students evaluate the transfer of power and the partition of India.

Independence and Partition

In the context of India, 1947 was the year under which the two biggest incidents in human history took place. First - On August 15, 1947, the slavery of the British became independent, India and the other two nations were born. India came into existence as a Hindu nation on the one hand, Pakistan on the other side emerged as an Islamic nation, but the partition of India proved to be a painful event for both the nations and an augmenting human existence.

During the partition of India there was a large scale migration of people from both the nations, that is, Hindus and Sikhs migrated from Pakistan to India and Muslim people migrated from India to Pakistan. Due to religious fanaticism, the seeds of hatred and hostility arose among the fleeing people and robbery, stealing, kidnapping and thirsting of human, human blood, was a massacre which is difficult to express in words. It is estimated that about 2 lakh people were killed during partition of India. Midnight furies:

- The author of the *Deadly Legacy of India's Partition* (Nisid Hajari) writes that "India and Pakistan were not two countries before partition of India, but when India was partitioned, the leaders of both countries wanted that both Nations will cooperate with each other as are the US and Canada, but after partition the sub-continent

was rapidly transformed into riots and bloodshed. 1 Not only this, people's houses and houses were burnt, along with women and children was treated inhumanely. Even as women were raped and the body parts of children were cut off. This is the reason, it is known as the most tragic event of human history

This research paper includes the study of the causes of partition of India and its effects on people and nations. Who was responsible for the partition of India? What was the contribution of the Indian nationalists and Congress in this, what role did Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru play in the partition of India, what was the role of Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League and how the two countries were affected due to the partition of India, etc. Components are looked at.

Reasons for Partition of India

Arrival of the British in India in 1600 BC. With the aim of doing business in India, the British rule started its business by establishing an East India Company. Initially the focus of the company was to increase the volume of its business to earn more and more money, nothing to do with the internal affairs, battles and political situation in India.² The British East India Company began to interfere in the monarchy and political affairs of the country, because of the position of kings and emperors who ruled under small princely states in different parts of India Had become well aware of It was known to them that it could be ruled easily by splitting between the various kings of this place and they were also successful in this task.

The British rule, under its divide and conquer policy, first recorded a decisive victory over Sirajud-Daula, the Nawab of Bengal under the Battle of Plassey in 1757.³ This battle was fought by the Nawab's 5000 soldiers and the

British East India Company. There were between 3000 soldiers. In which the British rule won with a strong fight. Through this victory, the British government tried to give a new shape to its expansion plans across India by receiving 5 million dollars from the treasury received from Bengal.

By the 18th century the English had come to know very well how the rulers of India could be ruled through the policy of divisions. In this decade the company is known as a strong leadership from the removal of the local rulers to establishing control over the people of India (Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs). Historical documents suggest that the company has since 1757 In the period of 1857, the position of Company Raj was strengthened by removing the kings and emperors from their rule, took over the local people, subjugated the powers of governance and ruled India for nearly 200 years through a strong army and judiciary. Were able to do. Day by day the growing power of the company and its officers created a kind of dissatisfaction among the local people. The reason for this is that the upper caste Hindus were recruited in the British army, due to which the lower castes, in a fit of anger, revolted against the English in the Sepoy Bidroh of 1857.5 In this rebellion of the British rule Nearly 8 lakh soldiers were killed and the local people did not achieve any kind of success, but even after this rebellion, the Company rule grew and gradually the company split its divide through the policy of rule all over India. He established his control over small princely states. The British rule implemented this policy not only to usurp the local rule but also to make the Hindus against the Muslims from the communal point of view, because the British India India company did not want the communal unity of both Hindu and Muslim country And work for integrity. Meanwhile, in the year 1919, about 1500 women, children and men were killed by the British soldiers at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar, due to which the Swadeshi movement gained further momentum and there were voices of protest against the British rule all over the country. Launched by Mahatma Gandhi in 1942, the Quit India Movement was the result of this protest, under which many nationalist rebels including Gandhi were arrested by the British rule. With this arrest, many

other nationalist leaders, including Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, understood very well that the British rule was cooperating with one side of the country (Muslims), because since 1940, the British had deliberately created Muslim League And encouraged the demand of Pakistan. In such a situation Mahatma Gandhi had argued that if we want to achieve independence from the Britishers, then it is very important to have communal harmony i.e. Hindu-Muslim unity, but this could not be possible, because the Muslim fundamentalists rejected it and the nation of Pakistan They continued the demand.

It is said about the partition of India-Pakistan that it was a result of factors like Muslim League, British rule, Jinnah's fundamentalist communal policy and Indian National Congress. By the 19th century in India, such a situation had arisen in the whole country that colonial rule was being opposed everywhere, Indians started demanding their rights from the British rule, as a result of the situation of the imperial and riots in the country, that is why In 1885, a political party was formed. Which was named the Indian National Congress, which exists in India today as the Congress.⁶ It was alleged by the powerful leaders of the Congress Party (Mahatma Gandhi, Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru, Lala Lajpat Rai) and the Nationalists that India The partition was due to the demand of the British rule and the Muslim League, but historians and historical documents show that the Congress Party had failed to unite all sections of Indian society for the independence of the nation, especially the party It was unable to reach any one community, that is, the Muslim people, as a result of which the Muslim people presented their demand for a separate nation as a strength. Vipin Chandra presented a different argument about the Congress party. Under which he told that - "There was a Hindu quarrel in the Congress party, that means that liberal Hindus like Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai had failed to include Muslims with communal thinking in the Congress party, although this possibility was also expressed. It was that the Muslim League carried the communal spirit forward on a very large scale, but the Congress Party failed to address this communal problem.

Others argued about the Congress Party that it did not adopt an inclusive approach towards Muslim communities, as the party intended to rule the monarchy by Hindus. He did not want to keep the Muslim people with him under any circumstances. This is the reason why the people of Muslim communities demanded a separate nation to establish their own identity.

In the context of partition of India, some other historians claim that Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the Muslim League were responsible for this. In the 1920s, Gandhiji asked the Hindu-Muslim people to join together on a large scale. During this time, Jinnah realized that the Congress party was neglecting the Muslim communities to further their Hindutva sect, that is, they were giving very less importance to them. The result of this incident was that in Muhammad Ali Jinnah the strong possibility of a separate communal nation was visible, because Jinnah understood that the Congress Party was giving him very little importance, whereas Mahatma Gandhi for India's independence, Jawaharlal Nehru and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, all three had tried together, but the Congress Party ignored his contribution. In this regard, historians said that at that time the Congress Party was struggling with its internal struggle and power struggle, a kind of internal struggle for power had started in Hindu and nationalist people. For this reason, Muhammad Ali

As the next step for the partition of India, in March 1947 Lord Mountbatten, the British Viceroy, reached Delhi to end the British rule in India.⁸, under which it was announced that India would be partitioned in August. The primary reason for taking this forward was to discuss the boundary line of the respective countries with the politicians of both countries. A Border Commission was then prepared under the leadership of a British lawyer Cyril Radcliffe and Pakistan gained independence on the midnight of August 14, 1947 and India on August 15, 1947.

Effects of Partition of India

The partition of India proved to be a frightening and gruesome event for both the nations, because thousands of millions of people had migrated from one country to another during this period, that is, Muslim people from

India to Pakistan and Hindu and Sikh people. It is difficult to describe the incidents that happened with Hindu, Sikh and Muslim people during migration from Pakistan to India, incidents like robbery, theft, kidnapping, rape and murder took place. Due to the killing, the land of both the countries had turned red, the rail, known as Samjhauta Express, was running in each other's country full of dead bodies. Nisid Hajari, author of *Midnight Furies: The Deadly Legacy of India's Partition*, said that: - The railway between India and Pakistan was filled with the bodies of refugees. In his book, he called this train "blood train" and said that many times this train used to cross the border in silence and blood was seen leaking from the door and bottom of the train.¹ It was that people were thirsty for each other's blood, even as two deep friends were thirsty for blood, many people's houses and houses were burnt. The children were killed in front of their brothers and sisters and there were incidents of rape of women. In connection with these events, Pakistani historian "Ayesha Jalal called a central historical event in South Asia of the 20th century, she writes that - a moment which has neither beginning nor end, division continues, South People and nations in East Asia have envisaged their present, past and future.¹⁰ What is meant by saying that what is the benefit of freedom of a nation where neither the past nor the present and future of the people are safe? Achieving freedom from the bloodshed of such innocent and unarmed people is a shameful event to human existence and hardly any other event will happen in the future of human history. Apart from these, there are other historians who have written on the partition of India, who have mentioned these ghastly events of Partition in their respective books.

The migration of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh people between India and Pakistan during Partition of India in 1947 was recorded at about 14 million. Leave the country in which they reside because the riots and killings had frightened them and they had no other option, but this does not mean that people from all the Muslim communities were willing to flee, some Muslims refused to consider India as their birthplace. In 1951, most of the Muslims opposed the exodus and created about 10% of the Indian population.

Writers writing on the partition of India, namely Aseem Khwaja, Prashat Bhardwaj and Atif Mia, etc., considered that according to the 1951 census, 14.49 million population was seen in India, which was 3% of the total population. About 14 to 16 million Hindus and Sikhs who were migrating to India were missing from the point of view of displacement or missing people.⁸ It is estimated that around 2 lakh people died during partition of India. Had given. Aseem Khwaja.

Prashat Bhardwaj and Atif Mia in their article made it clear that - "Of the people migrating from one country to another, 5.4 million from Pakistan, 2.9 million from Bangladesh, ie a total of 8.3 million missing people claimed.¹² "Although, historical documents show that many attempts were made to find the missing people during Partition of India." Many authors find facts or evidence of attempts to search through articles, books and the Indian film industry, but there was no breakthrough in locating people. "About 1.26 million Muslims who left India and went to Pakistan had not reached Pakistan and 0.84 million Hindus and Sikhs had not reached India."

India and Pakistan were originally divided on religious grounds. Based on this, according to the Census of 1941 under the status of migration - the number of Muslim communities living in India was about 23%. Out of which about two third Muslims migrated to East and West Pakistan during Partition.

The partition of India also had a considerable impact in terms of economic resources. Before the partition, British was the main source of income of India, but as both India and Pakistan came into existence, the sources of income from agriculture were also divided. Under this, areas of jute, raw cotton and some amount of wheat went to Pakistan while the products related to fuel (coal, wood, kerosene, fossil oil) remained in India. With this view, India was deprived of jute and cotton and Pakistan was fueled.

From the point of view of structural structure, India was prosperous in terms of electricity, rail transport, ports etc. while Pakistan was far behind India in all three areas. The rail transport system in this country was weak, as well as it had to face electricity problem for a long time. At the time of

Partition, the total installed power capacity in Pakistan was 75000 kilobytes, of which 15600 kilobytes went to East Pakistan (Bangladesh). The problem of power shortage in Pakistan existed till 1954. financial institutions (banks, insurance companies) which are considered to be very important for investment in the industrial development of any country, after partition, Pakistan was found to be very scarce. This was because before partition, there were a total of 487 banks and financial institutions in the country, which had reduced to just 69 after partition.

Literacy rates also had a great impact on migrants during the Partition of India. In Indian and Pakistani societies, people who were seen as emigrating were seen with a sense of hatred and hatred, in Pakistan, such people were referred to by a different name Muhajir. Due to which the expatriates were unable to pay attention to the education of their children, therefore the rate of increase in literacy in Indian society was recorded only 1, whereas in Pakistan this growth was seen with only 0.82.

If we look at the impact of the partition of India on the basis of gender, it is found that women and children were much more injured than men. According to the government of India and Pakistan, 33000 women and 50000 Muslim women were kidnapped respectively, so about 20000 Muslim and 9000 Hindu and Sikh women were freed from kidnapping by the efforts of both governments.¹⁶ But this effort of both governments Fail was proved, because most of them refused to go to their families - "while some family men deliberately killed their children and women because they were hindering their movement."

Another effect of partition of India was the emergence of new political parties. The partition of India was primarily to create two countries on religious grounds, but when the partition took place, due to riots, robbing and murders, the migrants formed new political parties to protect themselves and maintain their existence. Had started It saw the emergence of several new regional political parties in the areas of North-West India by the Sikh community in the first state of Pajab. Those who believed Hinduism or

accepted Hindu ideology. Under him the R.S.S. And regional organizations like Hindu Mahasabha gave birth to a political party like BJP (Bharatiya Janata Party). The BJP party in existence today has a large number of people who came to India in 1947 from Sindh province of Pakistan, Since these people had migrated from Sindh-Prate, they were called Sindhis in India. Currently he is known as Sindhi Sampradaya (religion) in India.

At the very outset of the World War II in September 1939, it became evident that India would be in the forefront of the liberation struggle by the subject countries. In fact, support to Britain in its war efforts rested on the assurance by the former that India would be freed from British subjection after the war. Imperial strategy as it was shaped in Britain was still stiff and rigid. Winston Churchill who succeeded Neville Chamberlain as the Prime Minister of Britain on 10 May 1940, declared that the aim of the war was, “victory, victory at all costs... for without victory, there is no survival... no survival for the British Empire...”. (Madhushree Mukerjee, 2010, p.3.) More than ever before, the mainstream political parties of India had to make their moves on the basis of both national politics and international developments. It is in this context that the Quit India Movement of 1942 heralded one of the most tumultuous phases in the history of the Indian national movement. The developments leading up to it were also momentous because of their long term ramification. In the course of this Unit, we will establish the pulls and pressures working on mainstream Indian politics and their regional manifestations prior to the beginning of the Quit India Movement of 1942. We will also see the extent to which the imperial state steered the course of these developments and how different groups in the political mainstream perceived and interpreted them.

Political Situation in India 1930-39 – A Background

The nationalist offensive in the form of the Civil Disobedience Movement in the summer of 1930 [see Box-1 for a summary of these activities] had compelled the government to enter into negotiations in the first session of the Round Table Conference held in London from November 1930

to January 1931. The Congress had kept aloof from it. However, when the government yielded some ground to the Indian businessmen by imposing a surcharge of 5% on cotton piece goods imports, and thus came to grant some protection to the Indian mercantile interests, the former put pressure on Gandhi to negotiate with the government. In the Gandhi-Irwin Pact of March 1931, Mahatma Gandhi came to accept Viceroy Irwin's proposals and temporarily withdrew the movement. As per the conditions of the Pact, thousands of prisoners jailed during the Civil Disobedience were to be released. While the bargaining power of the Congress was clearly evident in this move, there was widespread disquiet at the withdrawal of the movement. A sense of betrayal, particularly among the youth, because young revolutionaries like Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were executed on 23 March 1931 without Gandhi seeking any reprieve for them, was also palpable.

This was the time when the radical nationalists and Nehru contemplated building alternatives to the Gandhian anti-imperialist programme and strategy. The Left groups had begun to intervene in strikes from 1929 and were also functioning through the Workers and Peasant Parties (WPPs). The Trade Disputes Act of 1929 made strike a punishable offence. After a period of relative isolation when the Communists worked through the WPPs, the group grew in strength because the Left gained from the new Communist International strategy of organising a broad anti-imperialist movement of the working-class, peasantry and the middleclass through the consolidation of the Left and other likeminded groups both within and outside the Congress. However, there was a lull in mainstream Indian politics following the withdrawal of the Civil Disobedience Movement at the time of the Round Table Conference (September – December 1931). In contrast to this, there was an increase in revolutionary nationalism in the years preceding the passing of the 1935 Act. In Bengal, rise in individual acts of violence against officials saw an increase in participation of women in such activities. The assassination of B. Stevens, the District Magistrate of Tippera on 14 December 1932 by two school girls, Shanti Ghosh and Suniti Chaudhury,

exemplifies this. Prelude to Quit India As such activities spread to towns and cities like Chittagong (east Bengal, now in Bangladesh), the Government adopted repressive measures to contain them. There were other developments as well, for instance the increasing mobilisation of Hindus and Muslims along communal lines. The Congress Report on the 1931 (Kanpur) Riot showed how a sense of unease had affected relations between the two communities and had affected the public space commonly shared by these communities. It was precisely in the years after 1931 that Mahatma Gandhi's differences with Bhim Rao Ambedkar on the issue of the grant of the Communal Award grew acute. In 1933-34 Gandhi undertook fasts, campaigned against untouchability and formed the Harijan Sevak Sangh. That the imperial government was breaking the back of the national movement was evident when it supported the anti-reform groups and defeated the Temple Entry Bill in the Legislative Assembly in August 1934. It is in the background of these developments that we need to briefly discuss the 1935 Provincial Autonomy Act of 1935.

From 1920 Congress had rejected devolution by stages and demanded immediate Swaraj and in 1929 Poorna Swaraj or complete independence and sovereignty. The Nehru Report of 1928 had envisaged a unitary constitution rather than a federal one. However, this vision was not shared by two groups whom the imperial authorities claimed they were obliged to protect – the princes and the Muslim minority of British India. The British statesmen had never encouraged the princely states to bring their states into constitutional harmony with the provinces. Thus these states had constantly sought an assurance that the imperial authority would never transfer its paramount power to a responsible Indianised central authority. If the princes sought exclusion, as far as British India is considered by the late 1920s Muslim leaders subscribed to a strong-province-but-weak-federation strategy. By the time of the decennial revision of the constitution of the 1919 Act, the princes had emerged as opponents of a fully responsible self-governing Dominion, and the Muslim League as the opponent of a unitary self-governing British India. At the same time, on the basis of claims of upholding constitutional and

social heterogeneity, Britain was also unprepared to recognise Congress as the representative of India at large, nor to accept the possibility of India providing for its own defence, nor to jettison its own financial and commercial interests. With the Congress stiffening its position, Raj looked to the minorities and the princes to help with the work of constitutional devolution (D.A. Low, 2004, p. 381). The Government of India Act 1935, also known as the Provincial Autonomy Act, was the result of such endeavours. In brief, the 1935 Act provided for central responsibility within a strong federation. However, defence and political relations were 'reserved' subjects and therefore under imperial control. Subjects such as finance, the civil services, commerce, the minorities and the safety, stability and interest of British India were subject to imperial safeguards. While the imperial authorities hailed the 1935 Act, and the ministries were formed after the 1937 elections as a significant step towards the goal of responsible government, it actually contributed to disunity.

The Congress and the Muslim League continued to denounce certain eventualities embodied in the 1935 Act. The idea of federation, central to the Act, was one such eventuality. Federation would have come into operation only if the Indian princely states agreed to join the Indian federation. This had given these states an opportunity to haggle with the centre over the terms of entry. Even under the existing clauses of the 1935 Act these states were to continue to enjoy substantial representation in the Lower House (Federal Assembly) and the Upper House. The princes enjoyed the prerogative of appointing their representatives to the legislature. This would have deprived the 81 million States people living under their absolute domain of any representation. Thus feudal despotism was to continue without any compulsion on the princely states to introduce any reforms to curtail their unbridled power over their subjects. There was no provision in the 1935 Act for voting in the Native States. Till 1935, the Congress had been by and large non-interventionist in the affairs of these states. Encouraged by the Praja Mandal groups, which were spearheading the state-subjects movement in

states like Baroda, the Congress now sought a more responsible government in the princely states. In the Provinces, property requirements limited the total vote to 150,000 people. Only 150,000 were to vote out of a total population of 365 millions! The seats in the Legislature were divided along communal lines. The Congress was particularly disturbed by the fact that there were special seats for communal minorities in addition to general seats. Muslims, Sikhs, Scheduled Castes, Christians, etc., were to have separate elections. Each territorial constituency was split up into communal groupings when voting took place. Thus for the Congress the 1935 Act harmonised well with the British 'divide and rule' traditions. Mahatma Gandhi's Civil-Disobedience Movement which was directed primarily against separate electorates had been overlooked by the framers of the Government of India Act, 1935. Federal finances would have also tightened the noose around provincial necks. Over 80% of the Federal budget was non-votable and outside Legislative control. 90% of Federal revenue was to be drained from the British provinces; only 10% from the princely states. The revenue flow provided for would have been directed toward the central government and would have left the provinces responsible for the upkeep of the various public services. Thus there was deep resentment in some sections of the Indian political circles about the inefficacy of the 1935 Act in politically and economically empowering Indians. In their opinion the Act would have allowed the growth of Indian economy to remain stunted and undeveloped. The illiteracy, disease and poverty of the people would have also continued to be as rampant as they had been.

The participation of the Congress and the Muslim League in the 1937 elections and the formation of Provincial Ministries after the elections, however, highlighted both, the political ambitions of these parties and the introduction of a new element in the protracted debate that had begun as early as the formation of the INC itself regarding the relevance of the 'constitutional way' on the road to self government (D.A. Low, 1997). The contest for popular loyalties between the British and the Congress was no longer principally revolved around popular peasant grievances. It was determined in

the course of an election campaign and electoral results. The parliamentary road after the success of the 1936-7 elections proved to be very attractive. Even Jawaharlal Nehru in the opinion some scholars was now a partial convert. However, the more radical sections both within and outside the political parties were aspiring for a more popular course of action.

British Imperial Strategy in India

World War II began on 3 September 1939. In September 1939 itself, the Viceroy Linlithgow announced that following the beginning of the Second World War (between UK, France, and the USA, i.e., the Allies and Germany which headed the Axis powers) India, which was still an integral part of the British Empire, was also at war with Germany. Many argued that Linlithgow's declaration of war on India's behalf without consulting the Indian leadership was an autocratic act. Doubts were expressed about whether Britain would keep faith in the political promises made before the outbreak of the war. The main concern of the new Secretary of State for India, Leopold Amery, and the Viceroy of India since 1936, Lord Linlithgow, was how to maximise India's contribution to the war. The question, however, did not elicit a satisfactory response. The political impasse with the Indian nationalists and the war-time expectations of the political parties in India, particularly opportunities for determining the nature of Indian politics in the post-war years, were instrumental in shaping the British imperial policies in India as also the stance of the political parties in India.

As far as Britain is concerned, the advantages of the empire had a definite role to play in policy decisions taken in London. As long as India was a major area of trade and investment, a large contributor to the costs of imperial defence and employed a fairly large number of British civil and military officers, there was an advantage in gradual devolution of power. This was the situation till the 1930s. But since then the relative advantage of the India trade had declined sharply. In 1917, i.e. the year preceding World War I, India imported £ 83.5 million worth of British goods, in 1938 i.e. the year preceding the beginning of World War II, £35 million. Correspondingly,

Indian export to Britain was £ 39 million and £41.25 million respectively. By 1939, according to one estimate, India had a favourable balance of trade with Britain. The Lancashire lobby of industrialists had virtually lost its cotton trade with Britain. With considerable 'Indianisation' the civil services were no longer attractive to Britain's youth. The Indian Army remained vital for imperial defence.

World War II drew upon the human and material resources of the colonies on an unprecedented scale. Of all the colonies, India perhaps was the most indispensable. India was essential to Britain's planning of the war. The Indian Army was central to the strategy being followed in the Middle East. In 1939, the British Indian Army consisted of one hundred eighty nine thousand soldiers. By 1945, India had contributed two and a half million men to the British Indian Army; 28,538 to the Royal Indian Air Force; thirty thousand to the Royal Indian Navy; and ten thousand women to the Women's Auxiliary Corps. Recruitment to the armed forces was high because of unemployment. In the course of the war, India emerged as a major production centre for food grains and materials like jute, which was used largely in packing for commercial and military purposes and other military supplies. Once Japan entered the war in 1941, eastern India became a strategic base of operations for the Allied Powers in Southeast Asia. With it began yet another period of hesitant promises by the imperial government to the colonial subjects regarding their political future.

In 1939, the colonial Indian state had to tread extremely carefully to avoid charges of neglect and abandonment of the colonies. Strategic and economic expediency demanded that it heeded some of the concerns of the colonies. The British Indian Government was mainly concerned about the position undertaken by the Congress and the Muslim League. At the very outset of the war in 1939, it became evident that India would be in the forefront of the liberation struggle by the subject countries. In fact, support to Britain in its war efforts hinged on the assurance by the former that India would be freed from British subjection after the war. At the beginning, there

was an intense debate across the political spectrum on how crucial it was to support the war. The debate rested on the position of each political party on domestic and international politics.

The support of these and other political parties in India was vital to the imperial state because the war required the state to make unusual demands on society and to extract greater resources than usual. Since the demands were not justified, a fact that the imperial state was hardly in a position to acknowledge, it wanted to guard against any articulation of Indian nationalist aspirations during the war. It is important to note that at this early stage no political party, except the Forward Bloc – founded by Subhas Chandra Bose and his brother Shishir Bose in 1939 – had voiced its active opposition to the war [see Box-2]. Mahatma Gandhi had openly expressed his anxiety at the thought of German bombs falling on London. The relatively uncritical stance of other prominent nationalists during the early stages of the war was to some extent due to the principle of democratic benevolent liberalism in which most of the Congress leaders had been educated. It also had much to do with the intense dislike of Nazi racism (evident in Jawaharlal Nehru's writings). Britain could have capitalised on that qualified support by winning the goodwill of the Congress leaders. However, she failed to do so and devoted all her attention on winning the war. The Indian leadership was reduced to the position of onlookers at an event in which they could play no part.

There was a political deadlock at this stage. The talks between the Congress and the Muslim League, held between 16 and 18 October 1939, had failed to make headway. Apart from differences of opinion on the functioning of ministries in different provinces, the basic difference between the two was based on Jinnah's non-acceptance of any conflict with the British Government during the war and Nehru's anti-imperialist stance. As early as July 1939, at the time of impending war in the West, the Congress made its stand clear that it will not support Britain in any 'imperialist' war. When the war began, Gandhi was the only one in the Congress Working Committee who suggested extending unconditional support to the British on a non-violent basis.

However, the Congress resolved on 14 September 1939, that the issue of war and peace “must be decided by the Indian people, and no outside authority can impose this decision upon them, nor can Prelude to Quit India the Indian people permit their resources to be exploited for imperialist ends”. In the same resolution the British government was invited “to declare in unequivocal terms, what their war aims are in regard to democracy and imperialism and the new world order that is envisaged; and in particular, how these aims are going to apply to India and ... be given effect to in the present”. The Congress also sought the right of Indians to frame their own constitution through a Constituent Assembly and to participate in the war effort through representations in the Viceroy’s Executive Council. A resolution of this nature amounted to demand for immediate political and constitutional concession, something that the British were not willing to concede.

The British government reiterated its offer of Dominion Status after the war on 18 October 1939 but failed to declare its political objectives or war aims. The Viceroy Linlithgow only stated that the British were willing to consult representatives of different communities, parties and interests in India and the Indian princes on the issue of constitutional reforms for India after the war. He also assured the representatives of minorities that full weightage would be given to their views and interests during modification of the British imperial position on the matter. A statement to this effect, did not satisfy the Congress, but bolstered up the Muslim League. Thus the Muslim League Working Committee announced that it empowered M.A. Jinnah, as President of the League, to assure Britain of Muslim support and cooperation during the war. Some scholars are therefore of the view that the outbreak of the war saved the League and made it a representative Muslim body. The contention is that the British deliberately boosted Jinnah’s prestige at the all-India level for their war-purpose though at the provincial level they subordinated this objective. This was done to operate the war machine with efficiency (Anita Inder Singh, 1987). Linlithgow also admitted that the government was aware of the ‘nuisance value’ of the Congress but was still keen to seek its support.

In the meantime, the Muslim League in its resolution passed on 18 October 1939, offered its support for the war effort if the Viceroy would accept the League as the only representative body of the Muslims of India. Its contention that India did not constitute a national state because it was composed of various nationalities echoed the British imperialist views since the late nineteenth century. A few days later the Congress Working Committee rejected the offer of Dominion Status after the War for being a continuation of the old imperialist policy and called for the resignation of the Congress provincial ministries.

Resignation of Ministries

In December 1939, the Congress withdrew the Ministries from the seven provinces where it had a majority. This was not an easy decision to take, particularly because in the two and a half years of their existence these ministries had exercised to the full the powers that the 1935 Act had granted them. Some of the important measures undertaken by them included educational and agrarian reforms, for instance in Bihar and UP. The question of release of political prisoners like those jailed in the Kakori Conspiracy Case of 1925 was undertaken and hundreds of prisoners were released. The issue had raised considerable flutter in the imperial circles. Because there did exist a working relationship between the British Governor and his Congress Chief Minister, there was a sense of unease among nationalist leaders like Nehru that the Congress ministries were 'tending to become counter-revolutionary'.

In December 1939 when the Congress ministries handed over their resignation such apprehensions were set aside. This was a major step in the direction of withdrawal of support to the government. But for the next two years the local congressmen continued to contest local board elections. Some scholars like Judith Brown have perceived this as support to the political system by participation in it at the individual level. (Judith Brown, 1984, p.317) These Congress-controlled provinces were now administered by the Governor, who used the special powers allotted under Section 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935. The non-Congress ministries continued to

cooperate with the government. The All India Congress Committee (AICC) adopted an anti-war position. The Congress now asked its members to join the war committees only in their individual capacity. The Forward Bloc, formed when Subhas Chandra Bose and his brother Sarat Chandra Bose moved out of the Congress due to acute differences between the former and Mahatma Gandhi at the Tripuri Congress in 1939, was opposed to the war. It continued to be anti-British and anti-imperialist throughout the war. The Communist Party was keen to revive the sagging spirits of the national movement through anti-imperialist struggles during the war. This was the position adopted by the party till the USSR joined the war on the side of the Allied Powers in the summer of 1941.

Earlier the All India Muslim League (AIML) had wanted a complete agreement between Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the main political leader of the party and Viceroy Linlithgow on the issue of dividends before offering unconditional support to Britain. Now the strategy of the Muslim League was to turn the situation to its favour by publicly rejoicing at the development. Jinnah announced that to celebrate the resignation by the Congress Ministries, 22 December 1939 should be declared as the 'Day of Deliverance' and thanks-giving. In this announcement of 2 December, he appealed to the imperial officials "to enquire into the legitimate grievances of the Musalmans and the wrongs done to them by the outgoing Congress Ministry". (C.H. Philips et al 1962, p. 353) The appeal and the fact that the Governors had made such announcements while taking over the government of various provinces under Section 93 of the 1935 Act indicate that the resignation of Congress ministries was used as an opportunity both by the Muslim League and the administration to whip up the issue of maltreatment of minorities in Congress-led provinces.

After the resignation of Congress ministries, the party demanded a new constitution and independence at the Ramgarh session of the party in March 1940. It was on an offensive now. It made it clear in no uncertain terms that, "The recent pronouncements made on behalf of the British Government

in regard to India demonstrate that Great Britain is carrying on the war fundamentally for imperialist ends and for the preservation and strengthening of her Empire, which is based on the exploitation of the people of India as well as of other Asiatic and African countries. Under these circumstances, it is clear that the Congress cannot in any way, directly or indirectly, be party to the war, which means continuance and perpetuation of this exploitation” (CH Philips et. al, 1962; pp.338-339). This was by far one of the most powerful statements issued out by the Congress. At the same session the Congress also announced a new campaign of non-cooperation and civil disobedience.

India’s role in imperial defence changed significantly following the ‘blitzkrieg’ in Europe in May and June 1940. She was now all the more crucial on account of her resources, her manpower and the economic potential east of Suez. War production now stepped up with inclusion of six more divisions into the British India Army. There was development of aircraft production for the first time in India. On 7 June 1940, Linlithgow launched his plan of pooling the resources and production of the countries of the British Empire in the Indian Ocean with India as its ‘natural’ centre (Johannes H. Voigt, 2004; p. 356). However, material support from India was not enough. It was equally necessary to keep India politically quiet. By the end of May 1940 Linlithgow asked for the enactment of a Revolutionary Movements Ordinance to give the Government of India emergency powers to deal with any act of political resistance. Thus the imperial strategy at this stage was to be prepared both to crush the Congress by preempting any civil disobedience campaign as also to allow administrative concessions in order to avoid political conflict in India. Thus, in August 1940, the Viceroy came up with the ‘August offer’. The offer provided encouragement to Muslim separatism. Secondly, it promised that at an ‘appropriate time after the war’ the British Government would introduce a representative constituent body in India to frame the country’s new constitution in accord with dominion precedent. It was observed that this would open the way for the attainment by India ‘of that free and equal partnership in the British Commonwealth which remains the

proclaimed and accepted goal of the Imperial Crown and of the British Parliament’.

Thus in August 1940, Linlithgow repeated the offer earlier made to the Indian leaders in October 1939 of a consultative role in the war effort with the promise of dominion status after victory in the war and that a post-war assembly should frame a new constitution. The suggestion was rejected by both the Congress and the League which was now beginning to demand a separate state of Pakistan. In the meantime, Subhas Chandra Bose, who openly questioned the credibility of the empire through his strident anti-war position, proved a greater threat to the British. In fact, after his house arrest and escape to Berlin and his activities thereafter through the formation of the Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army), he inspired a following among thousands of fellow-citizens.

Individual Satyagraha

The Individual Satyagraha or passive resistance campaign was launched when the Government refused to heed the Congress resolution of lending support to Britain in its war efforts if she would grant the formation of a provisional national government. Mahatma Gandhi on his part was in principle opposed to Indian participation in the war. It may be therefore suggested that there were two strands of opinion in the Congress at this time – those who were prepared to support the war effort but were not ready to compromise on the issue of full independence and ‘national government’ and Gandhi himself who was perhaps willing to accept a compromise solution on the issue of a national government before the end of the war but was staunchly against India’s participation in the war. The suggestion of a civil disobedience campaign brought both the strands of opinion together.

The campaign began in October 1940 and continued till December 1942. It was started mainly to protest peacefully against the war. That the move was not stridently aggressive was evident at the very beginning. Gandhi formulated a protest not against India’s war effort as such but against the prohibition to protest against it. The struggle was mainly based on the

principle of freedom of speech, not on the principle of non-violence in the circumstances of the war. It was to be a controlled 'individual satyagraha' because non-Congress members could not offer it. Replying to a query to this effect, Mahatma Gandhi had replied in March 1941 that Satyagraha could be offered by only those who had become "four anna" (anna is denomination denoting 1/16 of a rupee) members of the Congress and fulfilled other conditions. Thus the movement remained confined to the Congress. Mahatma described the campaign in glowing terms as the most glorious and disciplined campaigns ever launched by the Congress. Some scholars have described it in terms of perhaps the weakest and the least effective of the Gandhian campaigns. In more recent times however, scholars have drawn attention to the regional variations in this short-lived campaign. In the United Provinces, the Congress Committees were asked to convert themselves into Satyagraha Committees. Those who were not in agreement with the programme proposed by Gandhi were asked to resign from the organisation. Sucheta Kripalani was one of the first Congress members to be arrested from the region.

Regional studies have shown that the Individual Satyagraha campaign was fairly successful in the United Provinces. In western India prominent leaders like Vinoba Bhave were arrested in October 1940 and went to jail. By June 1941 about 20,000 Congressmen had been arrested in different parts of the country. However, it failed to impress the popular masses everywhere. Besides the restrictions placed on the campaign by Gandhi himself, the agitational potential present in the late 1930s in places like Bihar and United Provinces, had also either been suppressed or assuaged by the provincial Congress governments through some modest land reforms before their resignation. By October 1941, the campaign lost its initial impetus and only about 5,600 Satyagrahis had remained in jail. Thus, by and large the campaign was limited to symbolic acts of defiance. Individual Satyagraha did not completely jeopardise war effort. Nor did it bring the two sides – the imperial government and the Congress on to the negotiating.

However, recent studies have shown that despite the limited impact of the Individual Satyagraha campaign, several relatively unknown and marginal individuals joined the campaign to also protest against local excesses. For instance, in 1940-41 tribal leaders like Laxman Naiko in the Malkangiri district in Orissa, along with seven local villagers launched individual satyagraha. It was through these satyagrahas that a movement was built against the immediate grievances of illegal exactions, forced and unpaid labour etc. Ultimately, the movement failed to jeopardise the war efforts of the state. As the Congress emphasised on discipline and discouraged militancy, the officials, who had expected acts of daring and aggression, dismissed the campaigns as 'stillborn'. In places like Burdwan in Bengal, the District Magistrate noted that even the Satyagrahis were becoming impatient with the restrictions on their activities and there was every possibility of their attempting a more active programme. In any case, it was difficult to retain sustained levels of patience and endurance once food scarcity, price-rise and state repression began raising their ugly heads and fundamental issues remained un-addressed. Political groups like the Forward Bloc, the Congress Socialist Party, the Revolutionary Socialist Party and the Communist Party became more belligerent in their anti-war rhetoric and were more vociferous in their criticism of the war effort. Right-wing organisations flexed their muscles too. The Hindu Mahasabha and the semi-militarised Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) spread its net in different parts of the country.

Cripps Mission

The political mood in India was certainly becoming belligerent in the backdrop of the individual acts of defiance against the war-effort as witnessed in the individual satyagraha campaigns and the increase in the lack of faith in the British Indian Army's capability of defending the east against the aggressive onward march of Japan. There was an attempt made by Sir Tejbahadur Sapru, a leading lawyer from Allahabad, to bring the Congress and the League together to resolve the existing impasse. When the attempt failed he presided over a conference called the Bombay Conference to arrive

at a settlement with the government and to put across the Indian perspective. This conference was organised on 13-14 March 1941 in Bombay. It was largely attended by prominent non-Congress members many of whom had attended the Round Table Conference in London in 1931. The conference proposed that Britain should make a declaration promising India Dominion Status after the war. Secondly, in the interval, all central government portfolios should be transferred to the hands of non-official Indians. These proposals, thus, differed from the Congress proposals in that they did not demand immediate independence and they also proposed that the central executive in India should remain responsible to the Crown at least for the duration of the war. The proposals aroused considerable expectations. However, the talks with the government ultimately failed. The government refused to concede to any of the proposals. Amery, the Secretary of State scuttled the issue on Dominion Status after the war by playing the communal card. He observed that Jinnah had denounced the proposals as a trap by 'Congress wirepullers'.

In the meantime, government's policy of appeasing the minorities in Indian politics continued. It had almost acceded to the demand of the Muslim League for secession from the Indian state if the Congress was to acquire control at the Centre. At the same time, however, Britain could not risk inaction. The British War Cabinet announced certain measures for the conferment of Dominion Status on India. In the meeting of the War Cabinet it was declared that 'The object is the creation of a new Indian Union which shall constitute a Dominion, associated with the United Kingdom and the other Dominions by a common allegiance to the Crown, but equal to them in every respect, in no way subordinate in any aspect of its domestic or external affairs' (Nicholas Mansergh, p. 342). The Cripps Mission was thus formulated under the stewardship of Sir Stafford Cripps, the Lord Privy Seal in the Home Government, on 30 March 1942, as a preventive measure to thwart all attempts at withdrawal of support to Britain.

The Cripps Mission was fraught with ambiguities in terms of its purpose. Stafford Cripps, a Socialist in British politics, was ready to concede considerable ground to the demands of the Indian nationalists. For instance, in the press conference at Delhi on 28 March 1942, he went as far as to say that the Indian state had the right to secede from the Commonwealth at a future date. In his discussions with leaders like Rajagopalachari and Nehru, knowing that the basic objection of the Congress was to the emphasis attached to the 'Dominion Status' for India in all negotiations to discuss the post-war political status of India rather than 'poorna Swaraj' or complete independence as was the demand of the nationalists, he underplayed the use of the term. He explained that it had been used chiefly to silence possible objections in the House of Commons or from the dominions themselves. Cripps made it clear that it was a question of terminology not substance. However, Churchill was not so charitable or conceding. He continued to hold the view that the main problem preventing the future course of political affairs in India was not British imperialism but the aspirations of the Muslims, the Princes and the 'Hindu Untouchables'. The imperial strategy of denying India national independence by citing the presence of 'different sects or nations in India' was again at work here. Due to rigidity of this kind, Stafford Cripps could not manoeuvre much. Moreover there was nothing very reassuring about Britain's fate in the war. Singapore surrendered on 15 February and Rangoon fell to the Japanese on 8 March 1942 – a day prior to the announcement of Cripps Mission (9 March 1942). The bleakness of the possibility of Allied victory in World War II, prompted Gandhi to remark that the Cripps Mission was like a post-dated cheque upon a falling bank. The imagery drawn indicated that Britain had little to offer in the immediate situation.

The collapse of the Cripps negotiations did not disturb the equanimity of political circles in Britain. The rush to clinch the demand for a 'national government' in India following Japanese victories in Southeast Asia failed to come through. Many like Cripps and Clement Attlee, the leader of the British Labour Party and the Deputy Prime Minister in Winston Churchill Wartime

Coalition Government, blamed Mahatma Gandhi's opposition to the Cripps Mission for the failure of negotiations. This was an unfair assessment of the situation. The War Cabinet in Britain and Linlithgow and the Commander-in-Chief of the British Indian Army, Wavell, had in fact earlier expressed alarm at Cripps conceding too many concessions to the Congress (Sumit Sarkar, 1983; pp. 387-88) and thus been responsible for the ultimate failure of the Mission. Five months after the announcement of the Cripps Mission, on 8 August 1942, the Bombay session of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) passed the 'Quit India' resolution and thus triggered off a movement that surpassed almost all the earlier 'Gandhian' movements in terms of widespread and popular participation.

Quit India Movement

The Quit India Movement has rightly been described as the most massive antiimperialist struggle on the eve of Partition and Independence. 1942, the year that the movement was launched and the next five years witnessed unparalleled and tumultuous events in the political history of India. Sharp increase in popular nationalism, large-scale deprivation and death due to widespread famine conditions particularly the Bengal Famine of 1943, heightened Japanese aggression in Burma and Malaya, hopes of a military deliverance through the onward march of the 'Azad Hind Fauj' of Subhas Chandra Bose, and widening of the communal divide leading to the vivisection of the political fabric of the country were some of these developments. In this Unit, you will learn about various aspects of the Quit India Movement launched by Gandhi and the Congress to achieve freedom for India.

Nature of the Movement

This movement was projected initially as the mass civil disobedience movement of 1942. The emphasis on the 'mass' aspect distinguished it from the controlled and limited individual satyagrahas or civil disobedience of 1941. In nationalist historiography it has been described as the 'third great wave' of struggle against the British. The movement differed radically from

other movements launched by Mahatma Gandhi. The Non-Cooperation Movement of 1920-22 and the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-34 were conceived as campaigns of peaceful resistance to British rule in India. Their social base had expanded gradually to accommodate wider popular participation. However, the 1942 movement from the very beginning was a massive uprising to compel the British to withdraw entirely from India. The emphasis in the struggle was not on traditional Satyagraha but on 'fight to the finish'. It therefore represented a challenge to the state machinery. Moreover, Gandhi was now also prepared for riots and violence. His preparedness was based on his reading of the mood of the public. Gandhi had tested the mood in the limited yet symbolic campaign of Individual Satyagraha in 1941 when about 23,000 satyagrahis had gone to jail. He now conceded that the masses could take up arms in self-defence. Armed resistance against a stronger and well-equipped aggressor was to be considered a non-violent act as he observed in his articles in the Harijan in March 1942. Accepting the role of individual freedom and civil liberties in the face of state's organised violence, he affirmed that "every individual was to consider himself free and act for himself".

The 1942 movement was less ambiguous in its declared objectives. It was launched to ensure the complete withdrawal of British power from India. The projected struggle had four main features: 1) It was accommodative of violence directed against the state; 2) It aimed at destroying British rule in India. Unlike earlier movements when Gandhi had asked trained satyagrahis to join the movements, anybody who believed in the complete independence of the country could join it now; 3) Students were urged to play a prominent part and to lead the movement should senior Congress leaders be arrested; and 4) The movement was to be marked by total defiance of government authority.

The difference from the earlier movements has been well-established in the rich scholarship on the movement. In the official and the non-official historiography, most of the debate centres around 'spontaneity' vs.

‘organisation’ argument or the degree of violence and non-violence in the ‘Congress rebellion’. The government was keen to denounce Gandhi on charges of planning subversion and prepared a ground for the implementation of the Revolutionary Movement Ordinance. Intelligence reports warned of a series of acts planned by the Congress and the CSP to disrupt the smooth functioning of the war machinery. In fact, official sources had reported that the CSP workers had worked out modalities in a meeting in Allahabad in July 1941 for a radical course of action in Feb 1942. The plan of action came to be known as the Deoli Plan of Jai Prakash Narayan because the latter had reasoned from his Deoli Jail cell that nationalist unity could be revived if Gandhi were to plan a radical course of action rather than a Satyagraha. These papers were seized and used as evidence of the revolutionary plot planned by the CSP.

As these allegations grew a secret report of 24 July 1942 warned that 15 September 1942 was being planned by the Congress as the date when the ‘ultimatum’ to the imperial authorities to withdraw from the country was to expire, heralding the beginning of a campaign. The report disclosed, ‘...it is reliably understood that Congress contemplates in the coming movement that the maximum effort will be made by open and subversive groups alike to paralyse the existing form of Government. There are to be no restrictions on the actions of those who choose in their own way to assist the Congress to achieve their end... Congress is prepared to encourage all groups to assist them in whatever way they choose and with whatever weapon they choose’. Based on such accounts the imperialist historiography charged the Congress with conspiracy. The nationalist historians on the other hand interpreted these accounts to highlight a degree of central direction and organisation in the rebellion and to depict the ascendancy of the Congress. Once the movement was formally launched on 8 August 1942 and the main leaders arrested, the focus shifted to its elemental and radical aspects. In official discourse the movement came to be conceived as the most ‘un-Gandhian’ of all nationalist struggles. The same aspect has been discussed by scholars such as Francis

Hutchins in terms of the 'spontaneity' of the 'unfinished revolution'. It has also been described in terms of the 'greatest outburst ever' in the history of the national movement in India and yet, a 'patchy occurrence'.

Scholars have also focussed attention on the 1942 movement in order to either question or to establish the Congress ascendancy or leadership in different parts of the country. The nationalist writers have demonstrated that the nation stood united behind its leaders in 1942. And, since Gandhi had sanctioned violence in this movement most of what happened was as he had wished. In more recent times, scholars have explored the movement as it developed at the grass-roots. Paul Greenough in his work on the underground literature of the movement in Medinipur, Bengal, had observed that it was the move away from the issues, themes and symbols which Gandhi had articulated that provided Quit India Movement with a distinctive character and lent internal tension to it. However, Gyanendra Pandey has argued that popular anger and action cannot merely be interpreted as deviation from Gandhian norms. Rather, activities in the wake of the movement may be interpreted in terms of the appropriation of the name and symbols of Gandhian nationalism for a politics that was essentially their own (Gyanendra Pandey, p. 125). In recent times numerous other accounts have also added to our understanding of the nature of the movement as it spread in different parts of the country.

War and Rumours

The intensity of the movement was primarily due to conditions related to World War II (1939-45). A variety of factors such as the immediacy of the war in different parts of the subcontinent, the rapid increase in inflationary conditions, Government's preparedness to put down any resistance that might interfere with War supplies and the sharp difference of opinion among nationalist leaders and parties about the stand to be adopted in the face of the national and international crisis, affected the participation of people in the movement of 1942.

World War II and the possibility of its impact on developments in India had caught the attention of the political leadership in India and in England. Military and strategic considerations were cited to withhold political concessions to Indians. As the war progressed and as the forces of nationalism challenged the colonial systems in Asia, the Raj hardened its position further. It was relatively easy to influence opinions in Britain at this time. Evidently, India was the backbone of British defence east of Suez. Now the focus was on defending the Empire. Thus the political opinions that favoured granting Dominion status to India were overruled and the rigid and uncompromising position of Winston Churchill carried the day.

In 1939-40, the imperial state trumpeted the need for stepping up the war effort. At the same time, the military defeats faced by the Allied powers in the hands of the Japanese army indicated that countries like Burma and India would be left in the lurch on the face of successful attack from Japan. This feeling grew stronger as the Japanese forces occupied Burma and raided Akyab, the region bordering Chittagong in east Bengal, twenty-five times! Refugees poured in narrating woes of war, destruction and abandonment. The retreat of the British Indian Army from Burma was tame indeed. The British Navy did not seem strong enough to counter the Japanese in the Indian Ocean. Japanese air and naval superiority over the Bay of Bengal during 1942 made the East Coast ports of Calcutta, Chittagong, Madras and Vizag largely unusable. Thus, India faced an imminent threat on her eastern land frontier and on the almost undefended eastern seaboard at a time when the Germans were advancing in the West. That the triumph of the Japanese in South and Southeast Asia had unnerved the British military establishment is evident in the plan for the defence of north-east India, drawn up on 12 February 1942. In this the Gen. Staff had worked out a 'demolition policy' to deny the Japanese forces access to essentials. The policy involved destruction of power stations, oil installations and wireless, cable and telegraph stations. The military authorities also planned to destroy the ports of Calcutta and Chittagong and carry out the sinking of river craft and removal of railway stock as part of the

demolition policy. The Denial Policy in Bengal, that involved removal of rice and other essential items and boats and bicycles from the inland areas in order to prevent Japanese intrusion, was the consequence such fears.

The ill thought-out Air-raid Precautionary Schemes undertaken in areas that faced a direct military threat, the inflationary spiral and the growing shortage of food resources, exposed the hollowness of the claim of the British military preparedness. The economic situation in the interiors of the country, particularly eastern India had affected millions of people. Although scholars have pointed out that there need not always be a cause and effect relationship between economic crisis and political upheavals, yet the deteriorating economic conditions, for instance in Bengal, did affect the growing uneasiness among the people, particularly in the rural areas. It was evident that the authorities were doing very little to address their economic grievances. This was true of the jute growing areas of east Bengal. From 1940 onwards war-related developments had a scissors effect on the price of jute which crashed and the grain prices which increased.

The district officials neglected the signs of distress and permitted the export of rice from these areas. In addition, the rice and the boat denial policy resulted in the removal of nearly forty thousand tons of rice from the interiors of rural Bengal and affected the movement of large sections of population in the rice growing areas of Bengal and further reduced the supply of foodstuffs. This gave rise to an atmosphere of great insecurity and prompted speculation and large-scale hoarding of essential goods. Items such as matches, salt, kerosene, mustard oil, sugar and finally, rice disappeared from the village markets. There was a synchronisation of rising prices and shortages with the coming of a large number of Allied troops. Thus the fears that the food reserves of the country were being depleted to feed the army were not unfounded. At the same time in mid-1942 the British had little confidence in their capacity to defend Bengal and Assam in the event of a Japanese invasion. The educated sections feared the implementation of some kind of a 'scorched earth' policy in Eastern India. Grievances springing from an acute

economic crisis and the lack of any political or administrative mediation to conciliate the affected population while enforcing military imperatives such as the denial policy provided a renewed lease of life to anti-state activities.

As in the earlier phases of the national movement, rumours played a significant role in formulation of opinion regarding the onward march of the war, the British imperial policy and the fate of the British in the war. These rumours acted as a form of resistance as well as expressing a form of subaltern knowledge and understanding of the political struggle in which people found themselves. A few examples will establish the point. As the war progressed, there were rumours in the tribal areas of Central Provinces in May 1941 that the blood of the Gonds was being used to restore the limbs of the injured British soldiers (Crispin Bates, 2007, p. 158)! In Jabalpur in the same province, a rumour circulated that owing to food shortages the government was about to order a general evacuation of the city. David Hardiman's work on Gujarat has highlighted the chaos in different parts of the region following the increase in Japanese aggression in East Asia. In Dec 1941 there was a rush on banks as also a renewed hoarding of precious metals on the spread of rumours. In early 1942 many Gujarati families of Bombay fearing bombing and subsequent chaos left the city for their ancestral homes in Gujarat. These evacuees further disseminated the stories and rumours current in Bombay. Merchants and businessmen of Gujarat were apprehensive about a scorched earth policy and its devastating impact as witnessed in Rangoon when the city was evacuated. Their fears were reinforced by reports of how the British had favoured whites over coloured people during evacuation. Thus people were warned not to depend on the British in such times of crisis. By May it was feared that the Japanese fleet would soon attack the west coast of India. This encouraged widespread hoarding of food and a sharp rise in food prices throughout Gujarat and Saurashtra. One month before the beginning of the Quit India Movement, in July 1942, the authorities in Gujarat reported a feeling of great insecurity in the villages and a big demand for weapons for self-protection.

Rumours played an important role in the dissemination of information of a certain kind in militarily vulnerable regions such as Bengal, particularly with the increase in Japanese aggression in December 1941. Rumours were afloat regarding the impending British defeat. Peasants were advised to withhold food from the forces, seamen to decline work except in coastal waters and dock workers were asked not to handle war material. The fortunes of seamen, port and dock workers were directly linked to the ups and downs of the war. Their pliability was strategically significant for the war. The state hoped for their passivity as their militancy would have spurred anti-state activities.

Preparations for Struggle

The political mainstream had responded to the war-related developments in Asia and Europe differently. While the Congress Working Committee banned participation in the war effort, it shared and supported Britain's anti-Fascist position in international politics. Thus, Britain and the Congress were on the same side as far as their anti-Fascist stance is concerned. But there were acute differences of opinion within the Congress on international developments. Subhas Chandra Bose, re-elected to the post of the President of the Congress in 1938 proposed that Britain should be confronted with the ultimatum that she should free India or face direct action and disorder. Gandhi was opposed to this. With his intervention, Bose was forced out of office in May 1939. The differences between the two leaders explain, to some extent, Gandhi's attitude towards the British in the early stages of World War II. His views were also at variance with those of Jawaharlal Nehru who favoured an immediate declaration of independence as a precondition for the Congress lending support to the war. Ultimately, the Congress Working Committee Resolution of September 1939, declared that Britain should state clearly her war aims and recognise that freedom was her goal not only in relation to the occupied and un-free European nations but in relation to India too. It must be mentioned that in the early stages of the war there were hardly any political concessions made to enlist Indian cooperation.

The international political situation altered considerably from the summer of 1940. The Axis powers grew aggressive in Britain and Europe. As India's role in imperial defence grew in importance on account of her resources, manpower and economic potential in the region east of Suez, Britain equipped herself with both, a Revolutionary Movement's Ordinance to crush civil resistance and a plan to pacify the Congress with the promise of grant of political concessions. However, the offer known as Viceroy Linlithgow's 'August offer' of 1940 fell short of expectations. In the meantime, Gandhi who had insisted on non-violence in the international arena, launched an 'individual satyagraha' in 1940 against British Indian Government's war-efforts and against the prohibition to protest against it.

From the winter of 1941 and following the failure of the Cripps' Mission in March 1942, there were growing differences within the Congress largely due to war-related circumstances. After the collapse of Cripps' negotiations, the British Cabinet, including its Labour members, did nothing to demand a 'national government' in India during the course of the war. Administrative highhandedness in India, as witnessed in the continuance of Governor's authoritarian rule in the provinces, was accepted almost unquestioningly. Moreover, the British Cabinet gave Linlithgow and the government of India full support in their repression of the Quit India Movement. Their authoritarian attitude towards the Congress can be explained through their anger that Congress had sought to destroy British position in India at the time when it faced a major crisis in the war with Japan.

Political Situation in India in 1942 There were many contradictory stances and many conflicting tones in the statements and messages put out by many Congress leaders at different times and in different parts of the country a little before the beginning of the Quit India Movement. Gandhi's own language was distinctly more militant in the wake of 'the Cripps fiasco'. In May 1942 he wrote: "I waited and waited until the country should develop the non-violent strength necessary to throw off the foreign yoke. But my attitude has undergone a change. I feel that I cannot afford to wait... That is why I

have decided that even at certain risks, which are evidently involved, I must ask the people to resist the slavery”.

By early August 1942, considerable preparations had been made to launch the movement. As soon as Gandhi's plan was known Viceroy Linlithgow geared himself up to nip it in the bud. London suggested opening of negotiations with Gandhi when Stafford Cripps had left. However, Gandhi was not open for negotiations at this stage. Popular unrest, the deterioration in the war situation and the refusal of the British to allow any involvement of the Congress in government during wartime compelled Gandhi to decide upon a more militant line. Various pronouncements were made to this effect from the summer of 1942. The first draft of such a course of action was rejected in a meeting of the AICC on 27 April. In May, Gandhi gave a speech asking Britain to “leave India to God. If that is too much, then leave her to anarchy”. On 14 July, AICC adopted a resolution proposing a programme of civil disobedience if the British did not concede to their demands. Within a month of this ultimatum the All India Congress Committee session commenced on 7 August 1942 in a grand pandal of 35,000 sq. feet at Gowalia Tank Maidan in Bombay. Apprehensions due to the uncertainties of the war compelled Gandhi to begin his speech, delivered in Hindi, by saying that he did not believe that the British would be defeated, but if they were defeated they would follow a scorched earth policy as they did in Burma and Malaya. In that event Japan would have attacked India. Hence the urgency of the British quitting India”. On 8 August 1942 the Quit India Resolution, modified by Nehru, was finally adopted. This is what Gandhi had to say towards the end of his speech:

‘Here is a mantra, short one, that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The mantra is: ‘Do or Die’. We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery. Every true Congressman or (Congress) woman will join the struggle with an inflexible determination not to remain alive to see the country in bondage and slavery. Let that be your pledge ... Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness, that you will no

longer rest till freedom is achieved and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it. He who loses his life will gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the coward or the faint-hearted’.

The Government of India was determined to neutralise the Congress leadership. Its determination was sharpened by the danger from the Japanese in Asia. It was militarily prepared to crush any civil disobedience movement. Thus, within hours of the launch of the ‘Quit India’ movement on 8 August 1942 at the All India Congress Committee session in Bombay by Mahatma Gandhi, the entire CWC leadership was arrested and taken to different prisons. The next day, Gandhi, Nehru and many other leaders of the Indian National Congress were arrested by the British Indian Government. This heralded the spread of the movement in different parts of the country.

In the early hours of 9 August Gandhi was arrested along with other leaders and was rendered temporarily incommunicado. On 9 August Congressmen still at large were Maulana Azad, Sadiq Ali, Dhayabhai Patel, Pyarelal Nair, Ram Mahohar Lohia, Achyut Patwardhan and Sucheta Kripalani. These individuals in Bombay then drew up a programme of action – the Twelve-point programme. The original programme is said to have been prepared by the Congress leaders under Gandhi’s instructions or with his consent before 9 August. It began with a call for day-long hartal and incorporated all the methods of non-violent noncooperation and civil disobedience which had been employed under Gandhi’s leadership since 1920. The final stage of the movement included actions such as the breaking of salt laws on a large scale, picketing of foreign cloth and liquor shops, promoting industrial strikes, holding up of railways and telegraph, calling to soldiers of the British Indian Army to come out and join the people, nonpayment of taxes and the setting up of parallel Government. This was copied and circulated among people between 9 and 11 August soon after the arrest of the Congress leaders. As is evident from the kind of activities mentioned, the Twelve Point Programme was very broad in nature. It

addressed the concerns of diverse sections of people. As a result several versions of this programme prepared by the CSP and lesser known outfits like the Khadi group appeared to have gained wide currency. The course of action laid stress upon militant activities. This explains the uniformity in the course of the uprising in different parts of the country despite the absence from the scene of the important Congress leaders.

A comprehensive British Intelligence report on the Quit India Movement prepared by T. Wickenden had indicated that the Congress leaders had decided to work out the details of the programme after the AICC meeting in Bombay which ended on 8 August 1942. However, the arrest of the majority of the Congress leaders between 9 and 11 August deprived the Congress of the opportunity to conduct the movement. Consequently, the initiative passed into the hands of the lowerrank of political workers, students and the common people. These groups undertook a confrontationist attitude and advocated direct and drastic mass actions. A central directorate for continuing the movement was set up after 9 August, but it took considerable time for it to establish links with the autonomous developments in different parts of the country.

Officials like Sir Reginald Maxwell (Home Member, Government of India) and Sir Richard Tottenham (Additional Secretary, Home Department) played an active role in establishing that the Congress and its leaders had organised the Quit India Movement in order to jeopardise the war efforts of the imperial government. The authorities issued a secret circular dated 17 July 1942, signed by Sir Frederick Puckle, secretary to the Government of India, which read as – “...The threat of Civil Disobedience is a direct invitation to the Japanese ... If Congress cannot get their own way... (they) will throw India to the Japanese and Germans... The object is to mobilise public opinion against the Congress. ..The National War Front should be used to the fullest to oppose proposals which can only be detrimental to the war effort. Speeches, letters to the local Press, leaflets, cartoons, posters, and whispering campaigns are possible media for local publicity”. Imperial officials were therefore

determined to demonstrate that any defiance of British policy in India during the war amounted to hostility towards the Allied Powers, mainly Britain. Since the USA was critical of Britain's imperial interests in India and elsewhere it was useful to argue that the Congress was encouraging fascist forces and therefore it was justified to deal with the national movement with an iron hand. The panic-stricken government even contemplated deporting Gandhi to Aden or Nyasaland and the other main Congress leaders to Uganda or elsewhere in East Africa!.

The controversial Revolutionary Movements' Ordinance, which was intended to wipe out the Quit India Movement, was signed by the Viceroy on 12 August 1942. It was withheld from being issued in the Gazette of India because most of the provinces argued they could make do with powers under the Defence of India Rules (DIR). Martial Law was not declared because civilian officials were already equipped with plenipotentiary powers to suppress the uprising. During the war, DIR permitted the Government to take any arbitrary action against persons and property in the name of war effort. Thus officials could now undertake punitive actions not covered by law. Indian Penal Code was to be used as a shield against any demand for enquiry into police excesses.

The government also brought into force the Special Criminal Courts Ordinance II of 1942 which was originally intended to apply to cases arising directly from 'enemy' (Axis) attack. The Ordinance was made applicable to cases arising from the disturbances from 26 October 1942. This empowered the government to short-circuit the process of criminal justice. Under this ordinance special criminal courts could be set up which would have summary jurisdiction over the suspected offenders. They could be imprisoned for a maximum duration of two years and there was very limited scope for appeal to the higher courts. The judiciary however continued to be reluctant to ratify actions by the Government. Even the London Tribune condemned atrocities by the British in Bombay – "Our armoured cars are going into action against Congress supporters in Bombay. Our political warfare has reached new

inspiring heights. We proclaim a Whipping Act for the people of India. Every step taken by the Government of India since the dawn of the 9th August has been a stab in the back of the men and women who work and fight and die in the cause of freedom... The suicidal policy of the Government of India must be reversed” (London Tribune, 14 August 1942, As government repression increased, so did the saga of nationalist upsurge in various parts of the country, most significantly certain pockets in Gujarat, Satara in Maharashtra, Ballia in United Provinces, Medinipur in Bengal, and many areas in Bihar. Press censorship encouraged underground literature like the Bombay Congress Bulletin that was printed on 10 August in English, Gujarati, Marathi, Hindi and Urdu; Vande Mataram in Gujarati; Ittehad in Urdu in Bombay; Biplabi in Bengali in Medinipur.

Regional Aspects of the Movement

The Quit India Movement had two phases: an initial mass movement phase from August until September, followed by a longer quasi-guerrilla insurgency phase. In the cities, strike action continued from 9-14 August in Bombay and in Calcutta from 10-17 August. There were strikes in Kanpur, Lucknow and Nagpur and violent clashes with striking millworkers in Delhi. In Patna, the police almost completely lost control over the city for two days after clashes in front of the Secretariat on 11 August. Thereafter those activists who had not been arrested, including militant groups of students spread out from the cities to join the insurrection in rural areas. Mass participation was inspired by inflammatory underground publications, such as the Bombay Provincial Bulletin, Free India, War of India Bulletin, Do or Die News-sheet, Free State of India Gazette and the Congress Gazette which flourished after the official Congress leadership had been imprisoned and their offices, assets and printing presses seized.

In most places the movement declined within two to four weeks from 9 August 1942. This was due to both government repression through the army and the police and because the leaders responsible for guiding the movement failed to consolidate the spirit of rebellion among the people. But the quick

spread and the intensity of the movement took the British Indian government by surprise. The intelligence machinery of the government had failed to warn the authorities about the likely extent of the movement. Thus during the first two weeks of the uprising the authority of the government practically collapsed over vast tracts in the United Provinces, Bihar, Bengal, Orissa, Central Provinces, Maharashtra and in some parts of the Madras Presidency

In Western India the movement was slow to grow in August 1942. But as it gained momentum it continued into 1943 and in some cases even longer. In districts such as East Khandesh, Satara, Broach and Surat large number of peasants took part in guerrilla-style attacks on government property, lines of communication, and people known to be sympathetic to British rule. The agitation was remarkable also due to the strength and duration of protest in towns such as Pune, Ahmadnagar and Ahmedabad. One commentator named Ahmedabad as 'the Stalingrad of India'! Western India also took a lead in bomb and sabotage activities. Of the 664 bomb explosions recorded in India from August 1942 to January 1944, nearly 76 per cent occurred in Bombay Presidency.

The strong bases of the Congress were Ahmedabad, Baroda and Surat cities, the districts of Kheda and Surat and the Jambusar taluka of Broach district. One important group from the viewpoint of the movement was the Gujarat Vyayam Prachark Mandal (Gujarat Society For the Propagation of Physical Training). Its leader, Chhotubhai Purani was associated with extremist nationalist organisations. He had later become an active member of the Gandhian Congress but had never fully accepted the principle of non-violence. He founded a network of gymnasiums throughout Gujarat in which boys and young men were taught that they should train both their bodies and minds to fight the British. The boys were mostly Brahmans, Baniyas, Patidars from urban middle-class and prosperous rural families. Gandhi approved of these activities in part because Purani had refused to allow right-wing Hindu and anti-Muslim sentiments to be voiced in his gymnasiums. By 1942 there were as a result a large number of young men in Gujarat who were

mentally and physically prepared to support a violent struggle against the British. It was in this explosive atmosphere that the Congress leaders launched the Quit India Movement in which the likes of Vallabhbhai supported the agitationist mood of the people whereas Morarji Desai took a more cautious approach since he believed that Gandhi's work for non-violence would be undone if popular violence was condoned and encouraged.

There were similar stories in almost all the major cities across the country. As soon as the news of the arrest of Gandhi broke, the millworkers downed their tools, the merchants closed their shops, students left their schools and colleges, and large crowds flocked the streets. In Ahmedabad, the crowds targeted policemen and anyone wearing the symbol of colonial culture like the solar topi. On 10 August about 2,000 students took out a procession. When the police tried to break it up with lathi-charges, the students counter-attacked, throwing bricks. Demonstrations and clashes with the police continued at a high pitch for another two weeks.

In Kheda, a total of ten agitators were killed by the police between 11 and 19 August. In addition to the open clashes, there was widespread cutting of telegraph wire and other minor acts of sabotage on public property. According to Sir Roger Lumley (Governor of Bombay from 1937-43), Kheda was the most disturbed district in the Bombay Presidency during August. In Baroda State, by 17 August the moderate Praja Mandal leaders were forced by popular pressure to declare their support for the Quit India Movement. On 18 August when the organisation was banned and the leaders were arrested there were turbulent demonstrations. The underground movement remained strong. Most effective were the big mass protests. Notably absent from these protests were the Muslims, who made up twenty per cent of the population of Ahmedabad and fifteen per cent of the population of Baroda. There had been a definite change in the political loyalties of substantial sections of Muslims since the founding of the branches of Muslim League here since 1937.

Relationship between the working classes and middle class nationalist remained cordial. In 1942 there were 75 textile mills in Ahmedabad with

116,000 workers. Work in the mills was divided on communal lines – majority of the spinners were harijans, weavers were mostly patidar immigrants from north Gujarat and Muslims. Most powerful of labour unions were with Majur Mahajan Sangh which was closely connected with the Congress for over two decades. In 1942, it organised protests and strikes for the political cause and not for higher wages. Workers were persuaded to return to their home towns in times of inflation. The mill-owners were frightened that if the Japanese advanced into India, the British might destroy their textile mills as they retreated. As there was not much to gain from cooperation with the British war effort they had sympathy with the Congress suggestion that the Indian people should negotiate with the Japanese. They realised that if the Congress would form government after war it was in their interest not to alienate the party at this critical juncture. They also feared sabotage if they kept the mills open. But they did not support the Quit India Movement openly.

Protest in rural areas was the strongest in Kheda district. The most noticeable difference between rural agitation in 1942 and earlier Congress agitation in Gujarat was that this time revenue refusal was on the nationalist agenda from the beginning. Revenue collection was resumed in December 1942 only when the movement had begun to slacken. Collective fines were levied on villages which had provided violent support to the struggle. In 1932-34, the land of all the peasants who had participated in the civil-disobedience campaign was confiscated and returned only in 1938. They did not want a repeat of the ordeal. The draconian measures adopted by the authorities with show of troop strength also had a dampening impact in the rural areas. Moreover, the rich peasants had made profits due to war-time inflation and were therefore not too eager to lend support to the movement. The lower caste peasants - the Baraiyas, Patanvadiys and Thakardas – by and large remained aloof from the movement. Their belief that the Congress was primarily a Patidar party was confirmed when in 1938 the Congress government in Bombay forced them to return the land that had earlier been confiscated due to

revenue refusal during the civil disobedience movement and which they had bought at low prices.

The movement in Gujarat was not socially very radical. A very successful parallel government was nevertheless established in Ahmedabad. It duplicated the existing administrative machinery with underground leaders in charge of each municipal ward. This was the 'Azad Government'. It organised protests, levied taxes, issued information in 'patrikas', collected intelligence through a network of spies and punished certain notorious policemen. The leadership was in the hands of young Congress socialists. The parallel government drew its legitimacy from the broad mass of the Hindu middle classes of the city. No attempt was made to establish such bodies in the rural areas. Thus when rural underground activists were hounded down by the police in early 1943, the peasantry had no alternative programme to turn to. According to David Hardiman, only in the adivasi areas of south Gujarat were there indications of a more radical movement, for there the struggle was directed chiefly against Baniya moneylenders and Parsi landlordscum-liquor dealers. Local high caste Gandhian leaders proved very sensitive to the implications of such activities, and did their best to discourage them. The Quit India Movement strengthened the hold of the Gandhian Congress over Gujarat. In 1944 Congress swept the polls in the Gujarat local elections of that year with huge majorities.

In Bihar and eastern UP as elsewhere, the cities were the first to experience action in the course of 1942 disturbances. There was, as Max Harcourt observes, intense rioting in the cities between 8-10 August. Then the focus shifted to the rural areas. Large crowds of armed villagers converged on the semi-isolated administrative centres in the localities and targeted the police posts and the local courts at the district and tehsil level. There were instances of looting of shops, godowns and residences as well. Bihar, like Bengal and Orissa, was under Permanent Settlement. Some like the Darbhanga, Bettiah or Darbhanga Rajahs were very big landlords. However, the majority were medium level landholders. Rich peasants dominated over

the rest of the village population. In eastern UP villages were under the domination of Bhumihar-Brahman or Rajput-Brahman peasants who had a leading role in the 1942 movement. With the growing problem of food shortages and the tales of horror recounted by the refugees returning from different parts of South East Asia, there was an increase in the activities organised by the Kisan Sabha which supported the Quit India campaign

The underground movement grew very strong in Bihar and proved to be a major law and order problem for the British during 1942-44. Despite severe repression several terrorist organisations and dacoit gangs were formed in different parts of Bihar by 1943. Many of these groups had links with the Congress Socialist Party. They allied with socialist groups called 'Azad Dastas' and carried out activities in the name of the Congress. Vinita Damodaran equates these dacoit groups with Eric Hobsbawm's 'social bandits' and observes that they roamed the countryside with the support of the village population and filled the political vacuum between 1942-44. Their activities increased as Gandhi undertook a 21-day fast in prison in February 1943. In places like Muzaffarpur, Monghyr, Saran and Patna prisoners escaped from the overflowing prisons. There was a spurt in the publication of underground literature.

There was an increase in dacoities committed mainly for food. In Bhagalpur district the monthly incidence for dacoit crime in June 1943 was 310 as against a previous monthly average of 50. The targets were commonly food stores but attempts were also made to loot post offices, post bags, government treasuries and ammunition depots. These acts were often accompanied by cries of 'Gandhiji ki jai'. In Darbhanga, attacks on the local zamindar's kutcheri (office) was organised by Suraj Narayan Singh, a leader of the Congress Socialist Party who had received training in armed activity in Nepal. He was in constant contact with CSP leaders in Bombay. In Bhagalpur, dacoit gangs led by Sitaram Singh found wide support in the hands of villagers who provided food and money. Jayaprakash Narayan, one of the founder members of CSP, escaped from the prison in Nepal in November in

1942, and with the assistance of another socialist leader, Rammanohar Lohia, formed a parallel government on the Nepal border which lasted till 1944. In the neighbouring regions of Eastern UP, mainly the Ballia district, police stations were captured and a 'national government' was declared under the leadership of Chittu Pandey. In Azamgarh, the British could restore control only after massive use of troops and armed police (Crispin Bates 2010, p.162). In the Ghazipur dist of U.P. many recalled that the leadership was Gandhi's but the spirit was that of Bhagat Singh.

The Quit India Movement in Medinipur in Bengal and the famine of 1943 are the two most significant markers of the turbulence that gripped Bengal during 1940-44. Highhandedness by the state in the wake of World War II, administrative apathy and widespread hunger and destitution provided the context for heightened public anger and protests. District officials had earlier voiced their concern that a protest movement would gather momentum if the grievances were not promptly and effectively removed. The provincial coalition government of the Krishak Praja Party (KPP) and the Muslim League under the leadership of the premier Fazlul Huq implemented the Defence of India Rule and announced that, "There is no doubt that a mass movement capable of arousing the passions of hundreds and thousands of people during a period of war, may lead to serious consequences affecting the welfare of all sections of Indians. Such a movement cannot be allowed to spread anywhere in India to-day and not certainly in Bengal which falls within the danger zone".

Following Gandhi's arrest, the students of Calcutta like their counterparts in Bombay and Bihar vented their anger on services crucial to the war efforts. Interestingly, while the Calcutta Tramways, declared an essential service for the war period, was damaged, buses were ignored! Telegraph wires, railway lines and post offices were damaged. Masks covering the street lights as a precaution against air-raids were removed. Total collapse was prevented in the cities as the administration exploited the differences between the 'pro-war' (largely the Communists and members of the Radical

Democratic Party) and 'anti-war' groups. The Priority Classes Scheme which provided for the industrial workingclass of the cities also contributed to the relative lack of continued participation in the movement by industrial labour.

In east Bengal, the movement was restricted to towns and cities. Nationalist propaganda was intense here. Warnings against train journey is provided in leaflets like 'Rail Bhraman Bipadjanak' (Train Journey's are dangerous') affected the normal functioning of such indispensable means of communication. Other leaflets like 'Why Are We Neutral in the War?' explained the position of the Congress in the war. The underground press remained very active in the Dacca Division even when the movement did not. In Mymensingh leaflets propagated that the Indian soldiers headed by Rashbehari Bose had occupied Imphal and that Subhas Bose was in Burma awaiting the moment to invade Bengal with an army of 10,000. The information was provided in anticipation because it was only in 1944 that this happened and the Indian National Army (INA) succeeded on the Manipur front. Leaflets of this kind perhaps appeared when the regular Bengali newspapers ceased to be published. A War of Independence Bulletin published by the Assam office of Japanese-German-Indian Association advised people to withdraw from Calcutta as Bengal and Assam were to witness the first drive of the Azad Hind Fauj.

The Congress had a strong presence in Medinipur in west Bengal since the days of the Non-Cooperation Movement. It had faced additional problems in the wake of the war due to the Denial Policy and rice exports to the industrial metropolises. War-related tensions and the political receptiveness of the area had a role to play in the flaring up of an 'open rebellion' here. Hiteshranjan Sanyal's study shows how a number of established Congress leaders had initially held aloof from the Quit India Movement. Thus the initiative passed to militant young students many of whom were without distinct party affiliations but had turned towards the Forward Bloc in the late 1930s. Amidst the rising tensions in 1942, the most significant development in Medinipur was the formation of a parallel government with the formidable

name 'Mahabharata Yuktarashtra: Tamralipta Jatiya Sarkar'. The government remained functional till 1944. The repression that followed took the life of Matangini Hazra, an eighty-year old political worker who was killed in a lathi-charge on September 29, 1942. Biplabi, the underground newsletter of the Jatiya Sarkar reported on atrocities on women by the military and the police mainly to stifle protest. Women were asked to take-up arms in self-defence since Mahatma Gandhi had advised the same. However, government repression remained unabated even when the region experienced nature's fury in the form of a cyclonic storm in October 1942 and as the famine progressed in 1943.

In Satara, in western Maharashtra, the Satyashodhak Samaj founded by the reformer Jyotiba Phule in the late nineteenth century provided the base and the main striking force to the Quit India movement. Here the peasantry had joined the nationalist movement in the 1930s with hardly any link with the Congress or the Left. Still Gandhi, in the opinion of Gail Omvedt, was an important symbol for all. Thus the main slogan of the 1942 movement – 'do or die' – produced the 'Prati sarkar' which she describes as the most powerful and long-lasting of the parallel governments established during the Quit India Movement.

The activities of the 'Prati Sarkar' included people's courts or nyayadan mandals as well as various types of armed activities and constructive programmes. Its last armed encounter with the police which resulted in two deaths took place after the naval mutiny in 1946. In caste terms Satara was dominated by Kunbis. Other sections of the population included the Dhangara artisan castes and the Mahars, Mangs and Ramoshis classed as a criminal tribe by the British. All these groups represented the 'bahujan samaj' or the majority and included a wide range of people across castes and classes. The first wave of activities in 1942 in Satara included sabotage, jailbreak and armed encounters with the police. People came with spears, axes and other home-made weapons and believed that they could put

an end to colonial power. The govt imposed heavy fines and arrested people. 2000 people were in jail in Satara by the end of 1942.

The activists of the Prati Sarkar that was formed in early 1943, carried out both constructive as well as military and administrative tasks. They were organised into groups that were in touch with socialist groups of Bombay and established structures that included volunteer squads organised as Rashtra Seva Dal, Tufan Dal etc. The underground activists consisted of the young and educated sections of diverse castes of the 'bahujan Samaj'. Brahmans and merchants, Maratha middle-caste peasants and workers were very well-represented here. Dalits and women were under-represented. Between June 1943 and early 1944 as the movement spread here, attempts were made to build a viable and credible power structure by suppressing criminal activities including dacoity. In the middle of 1944 Gandhi gave a call to surrender since after his release from jail in May 1944, he was disturbed by the more violent underground activities. On 1 August he gave an open call for all those still underground to cease struggle and surrender. All over the country the nationalists, ranging from the disappointed socialist leadership to the loyal Congressmen, followed Gandhi's advice except in Satara.

Indian National Army

During the 1940s, the Indian National Army or Azad Hind Fauj, along with the Quit India Movement, emerged as one of the most important symbols of India's will to fight for independence in the best possible manner, even through violent efforts. There were mainly three attempts to form Indian national armies during the early 1940s in Europe and Southeast Asia. All these attempts were directly or indirectly associated with Subhas Chandra Bose (popularly known as Netaji) who had moved abroad escaping from the British captivity in India. In this Unit, we will discuss about these efforts by Bose and other Indians from outside India to liberate the country from colonial rule. The legend of Netaji cuts across political, religious, linguistic, and regional divides. He became a truly national figure and the INA became a symbol of national unity and of revolt against imperialism.

Subhas Chandra Bose: Revolt against British Imperialism

Bose was a staunch anti-imperialist, but he also recognized that it was the aggressive and expansionist nationalism that was in the centre of imperialism. He was a nationalist in its creative, egalitarian, and fraternal sense. But he did not favour nationalist chauvinism and its grossly discriminatory character. He felt repelled by the racism of Nazi Germany and aggression of Japan. At the same time, he adopted a pragmatic policy of taking the help of these powers to liberate his own country. His strong desire for the freedom of India led him to ignore the grossest human rights violations these countries engaged in at precisely the time he was soliciting and getting their help for his endeavour.

Bose was politically aligned with the socialists in the Congress and had many differences with Mahatma Gandhi. Firstly, while Gandhi resolutely believed in non-violence, Bose was not averse to using violence as a means to free his country. Secondly, Bose thought that industrialism and modernization would bring about regeneration of India, while Gandhi firmly thought that autonomous development of India's villages would be the salvation of the country. Thirdly, while Bose was politically radical and socialist who did not turn away from the possibility of class conflict to ameliorate the conditions of India's poor, Gandhi believed that class struggle, because of its violent character, was unacceptable and he put his faith in the probable trusteeship of the rich to alleviate the dire conditions of the poor and oppressed. Bose was elected as the Congress President in 1938 with support from Gandhi and others. But when Bose decided to contest the election again for this post in 1939, Gandhi and his associates opposed this. Bose won against Gandhi's candidate, Pattabhi Sitaramayya. But later, owing to opposition from Gandhi and others, he resigned his post and parted ways with the Congress.

When the Second World War started, most of the Indians were not in support of the Allies because of their experiences with British colonialism. In fact, Indian leaders and people were much disturbed about not being taken into confidence before Britain declared India to be a combatant. There was

also no concrete promise of any future plan for self-government. The Congress ministries resigned in protest. Even a mild-mannered Gandhi made it clear that he saw 'no difference between the Fascist or Nazi powers and the Allies. All are exploiters, all resort to ruthlessness to the extent required to compass their end'.

Bose was firmly opposed to the colonial rule and refused to accept the idea that the British should be supported against the Nazis in the War. Fearing his vocal and active opposition, the British colonial authorities arrested him in July 1940. In November 1940, he began a fast in the prison, after which he was released from the jail and put under house arrest in December 1940. From there he escaped to Afghanistan through the North-west Frontier Provinces, and then, with the help of the Soviet, German and Italian authorities, he travelled to Soviet Union, finally reaching Germany in 1941.

The Second World War was seriously progressing with Hitler overrunning most of Europe outside Soviet influence. There was a pact between Hitler and Stalin which had led to their dividing the areas of influence in Eastern Europe. Bose initial confabulations with the German authorities on the possibility of releasing the Indian soldiers who had fallen into German hands after British defeat in North Africa were not successful. Hitler and his cohorts still nurtured hopes for neutralizing England and, therefore, they did not want to take a tough stand against the British and their empire in India. They also refused to declare themselves unequivocally in favour of India's independence. When Bose drafted a declaration for Indian independence in May 1941, both the German and Italian governments kept delaying it under various pretexts.

When Germany invaded Soviet Union in June 1941, Bose's strategy suffered a serious setback. However, as the Germans and Italians still vouched to support him in his endeavour, he continued to hold hope. There was some progress also as some Indian soldiers were now trained by the German officers to make compact units to fight against the British. It was not easy to persuade the common Indian soldiers to participate in such training as they

had taken an oath earlier and they also feared for their families back home. But, despite all handicaps in Germany, Bose managed to raise four battalions, consisting of about 4,000 Indian soldiers, ready to fight against the British by December 1942.

It was with this first national army that he adopted Indian tricolour as the national flag, Tagore's song 'Jan Gan Man Adhinayak' as national anthem, and the 'Jai Hind' as national greeting which would be common to all the Indians irrespective of caste and creed. These were enduring legacies from Netaji towards the unity of the country.

Despite some progress, however, the German response remained lukewarm and there were not enough recruits in Europe to raise an effective fighting force. The entry of Japan in the War in September 1940, and more aggressively in December 1941, however, changed the entire dynamic in Asia. The speedy advance of Japanese forces and defeat of the British and other European imperialist powers in Southeast Asia opened up a new vista for Bose and his strategy geared towards the liberation of India. The fall of Singapore in February 1942 enthused him enormously and he came out, for the first time, to speak on Azad Hind Radio declaring that 'The fall of Singapore means the collapse of the British Empire, the end of the iniquitous regime which it has symbolized and the dawn of a new era in Indian history' [cited in Bose, p. 213]. This radio had been in existence since October 1941 and it became the most important mouthpiece of Indian freedom movement abroad during this period.

A substantial number of Indian soldiers fighting for the British had fallen into the hands of the Japanese. It was around them, as well as the resident Indian population in Southeast Asia and other countries, that Bose's strategy revolved.

From this point, he regularly addressed his country people on the radio stirring them to take action against the British. In the Japanese victories, he found the possibilities of a mortal weakening of British imperialism which could then be pushed over the brink. He also was now very hopeful about the

possibility of raising a big force of Indians to fight against the British for the liberation of India. He was in contact with the Japanese ambassador in Germany making plans to realize his goals. The Japanese were also more receptive and forthcoming about Bose's ideas. Bose wanted to move immediately in order to take advantage of British imperialism being at its lowest point during the War.

In May 1942, Hitler agreed to provide logistical support for Bose's shifting to Japan. But Hitler evaded the idea of a declaration of Indian independence. Bose was not satisfied with his meeting with Hitler but at least he secured the promise of German help in his transfer to Japan. On ideological issues and on the domestic and international policies of the tripartite powers, Bose took a very pragmatic stand. He did not even speak publicly about the extreme racist policies of Hitler. He held that 'In this fateful hour in India's history, it would be a grievous mistake to be carried away by ideological considerations alone. The internal politics of Germany or Italy or Japan do not concern us—they are the concern of the people of those countries'.

Meanwhile, the political scene in India was also changing. Gandhi, apprehensive of the Japanese attacks on India, wanted that the British should immediately relinquish the power so that Indians could negotiate with the Japanese. Gandhi believed that the Japanese had nothing against India but they were hostile to the British. If the British continued to hold reins in India, the Japanese would attack and invade India. So, he wanted the British to immediately leave India and let the Indians manage their own affairs. On 8 August 1942, Gandhi gave the slogan of 'do or die' for the Indians and asked the British to immediately 'quit India' which resulted in country-wide eruptions. This major shift in Gandhi's position coincided with the immediacy and urgency of Bose's thinking about the right time to strike.

However, it was only by mid-January 1943 that the plans for his submarine journey to Japan could be arranged. In February 1943, he left the German shore to launch his fight in Asia. By then, however, the German advance was halted both in Africa against the British and in the Soviet Union.

Soon, there would be a turn-around, but Bose moved towards his goal undaunted. He still posed a threat to the British, even under the changed situation, when the Quit India Movement was crushed and the Allied forces had halted the advance of Germany.

Foundation of the First Ina

The rapid advance of the Japanese forces in Southeast Asia uprooting the European colonial powers, such as the British, Dutch and French, led to a completely changed situation when the Indians in these countries as well as the captured Indian soldiers who had fought in the British army began to be mobilized and organized to fight for Indian freedom.

The total Indian population in this region was about 20 lakhs with significant concentration in Burma, Malaya, Thailand, Indonesia, Hongkong and IndoChina. In 1941, the Japanese strategists devised plans to tap the nationalists in Southeast Asia, including the Indians, to cooperate with them. Major Fujiwara was appointed to work as liaison person to establish links with the Indians. Fujiwara contacted Giani Pritam Singh of Indian Independence League (IIL) which started cooperation between both sides. It was agreed that some members of IIL would accompany the conquering Japanese forces into Malaya as part of propaganda units where both would work for establishment of an Indian national army which would assist the Japanese forces for achieving freedom of India.

They contacted Captain Mohan Singh, one of the most senior Indian officers, to organize an army of Indian soldiers who were now in Japan's captivity. Pritam Singh also held meetings with other Indian soldiers and asked them to fight for India's independence. Many rounds of discussion were held and finally Mohan Singh was convinced, particularly when the administration of Indian prisoners of war was left to him.

The British officers had abandoned the Indian soldiers to fend for themselves. This was considered as betrayal by the Indian soldiers and officers. The promise of being under control of Indian officers, rather than the Japanese, was probably the best offer they could get under the circumstances.

The army was to be based on Indian soldiers only, to be led by Indian officers, and only for the purpose of India's independence.

More Indian soldiers were entrusted to Mohan Singh's responsibility in early 1942 when Malaya and Singapore fell into Japanese hands. Besides looking after the Indian prisoners, Mohan Singh, along with IIL, also got in touch with Indian civilians in Thailand, Malaya, and Singapore. The brisk withdrawal of the British from these countries generated a deep sense of being betrayed among Indians as well as others in these countries. There were also complaints of racial discrimination when the European evacuees claimed all the privileges for escaping from Japanese attack by taking best ships and other provisions and means of transport. Moreover, the Indians in Malaya and other countries were quite deeply imbued with nationalist ideas. This made the job of Pritam Singh and Mohan Singh easy as the Indian civilians as well as the soldiers enlisted with certain enthusiasm and branches of IIL opened in most localities inhabited by Indians.

Thus, the reasons for Indian willingness to join their forces with the Japanese were three-fold: i) there was a deep nationalist sentiment, at least among the intelligentsia; ii) there was a feeling that the British had dishonourably abandoned them and had exercised racial discrimination while fleeing; and iii) there was an element of fear also as they witnessed the cruel Japanese treatment of the soldiers and civilians in the area, particularly the Chinese who were massacred in hundreds by the Japanese.

When the Indian civilians and soldiers in this region realized that the IIL not only provided them protection from the Japanese but also promised to include them in the fight for Indian freedom, they were quite willing to join. A meeting with the veteran revolutionary, Rash Behari Bose, was arranged in Japan. Pritam Singh and Satyanand Puri, who were flying from Bangkok, died when their plane crashed. But five other leaders reached Tokyo.

In the meeting, a draft constitution was prepared and it was decided that later the delegates from the newly conquered countries of Burma and Indonesia should also be invited. The delegates returned to their bases to

further mobilize and organize the Indians for the cause of Indian freedom. The Japanese were also in touch in Subhas Chandra Bose who was in Berlin and was making his radio broadcast from there exhorting the Indians to rise against the British. In June 1942, a large conference of Indian delegates from all over South-east Asia took place for which Netaji also sent a message.

The work started with all seriousness and progressed well. The failure of Cripps Mission and heightened political activities in India had given much hope of a rising which took place by the beginning of August in the form of 'Quit India' Movement. Enthusiasm among the Indians in this region was high and by the end of August 40,000 soldiers had joined the INA. The first INA division of 16,300 soldiers was ready by 10 September 1942 to go into action. Mohan Singh was ambitious and told the Japanese that he wanted to raise an army of 250,000 soldiers which would be recruited largely from the civilian population. He also wanted formal public recognition by the Japanese of the Indian National Army and facilities for training his troops in batches. But the Japanese response was not very encouraging towards these proposals.

The cold Japanese response towards their resolutions and Japanese interference in their activities upset the leaders of the IIL and INA. Many of them were also upset with Rash Behari Bose, the president of the IIL, for not being effective in pursuing the matter. The Japanese interference was general and was being resisted. The question of evacuee Indian properties in Burma became the most contentious element. The Japanese refused to give the control of these properties in Indian hands which the INA and IIL wanted in order to mobilise resources for training and equipping their soldiers. The Japanese reluctance to allow the expansion of Indian national army in Singapore and Malaya also upset Mohan Singh enormously. Moreover, he and other leaders realized that the Japanese were surreptitiously as well as openly not allowing the IIL and the INA to take control of all Indian prisoners of war. The Indians, therefore, began to suspect the Japanese intentions.

The situation became worse, and Mohan Singh plainly conveyed to the Japanese that if they tried to take the place of British in India the Indians

would fight them also. He also pointed out their oppressive and racist behaviour in Malaya. He refused to provide INA soldiers for Japanese military campaign in Burma, and then decided to disband the INA by the end of December. Rash Behari, on his part, wanted to save the situation. He proceeded to dismiss Mohan Singh and take control of the activities of Indians there. Mohan Singh was held and isolated by the Japanese along with some of his colleagues. The INA was now effectively non-functional and it was Subhas Chandra Bose who resuscitated it after his arrival in this region.

Netaji's Arrival in East Asia and the Formation of Azad Hind Fauj or the Second Ina

Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in Singapore on 2 July 1943 and assumed the command of the INA from Rash Behari. He altered the policy of recruitment by starting to recruit Indian civilians. About 30,000 people joined the ranks of INA in various capacities from the Indian civilians in the region. He also established Azad Hind League which was in charge of approaching Indian community in this region. By July 1944, the Azad Hind League had 72 branches with 200,000 members. Besides this, Bose also formed an all-women regiment named as 'Rani of Jhansi Regiment' in which about a thousand women joined as soldiers. Lakshmi Swaminathan, a Tamil woman, became the commander of this regiment.

In the first INA, there were multiple centres of authority. Mohan Singh was in charge of military training and operation, but he and the INA was under the IIL's Council of Action with regard to the policy matters, whose head was Rash Behari. All these were placed under the overarching control of the Japanese. On the other hand, the second INA remained committed only to Netaji.

Right since the first INA, the British policy of segregated recruitment and organization policy was given up. There was no longer any talk about the 'martial races' and all soldiers from different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds were put together into single units. Bose continued this policy

even further by recruiting even civilians along with trained and professional soldiers.

Now all efforts were made to subsume ethnic and regional loyalties under overarching national sentiments by forming mixed regiments and by imparting political training to the INA soldiers. This was done to wean them away from the colonial tradition of forming separate regiments and creation of imagined traditions of valour and martial pasts. The effort now was to Indianise and nationalize the fighting forces.

Even during the first INA, the mixed regiments were named after the nationalist leaders rather than after certain communities and regions. Thus, there were Gandhi, Azad, and Nehru brigades. Subhas Bose persisted with this tradition. He also viewed his struggle as well as that of INA as part of the wider nationalist struggle taking place in India.

Bose declared in Singapore on 21 October 1943 the formation of Azad Hind Government. He himself penned the declaration. It called upon the Indian people 'to rally round our banner and strike for India's freedom'. It further declared that the 'Provisional Government' would guarantee 'religious liberty, as well as equal rights and equal opportunities to its citizens. It declares its firm resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation equally and transcending all the differences cunningly fostered by an alien government in the past'

The radical change of loyalty by over 40,000 (out of a total of about 45,000) soldiers of the British Indian army in South-east Asia was of momentous importance. This happened in a short time and this evolved into a motivated force which fought against their former employers and trainers, almost similar to that of 1857 Revolt. The most important motivation, of course, was the feeling of nationalism. Another very important factor was Subhas Bose's wide popularity, his charismatic personality, his persuasive powers, his clear and deep commitment to the cause of Indian freedom, and his passionate attachment to the idea of Indian unity across the boundaries of religion, caste, region, and language.

His engagement for the next two years can be divided into two periods. In the first year of his stay in this region there was great enthusiasm among the Indians there about the possibility of breaching the British defences in India by the Indian National Army, with help for the Japanese, which would lead to nation-wide anti-colonial uprising. In the second period, after the Allied forces became dominant from the mid-1944 and the combined forces of Indian National Army and the Japanese military had to retreat from North-east India as well as from the countries of South-east Asia, Bose played a different role of a leader who would desperately try to keep the morale of his retreating forces high and to find other ways of attaining freedom. He, however, never left the hope of winning freedom for India.

By the late 1943, the response to his call to the people was overwhelming. Thousands of Indian soldiers and civilians volunteered to fight as well as help with money and materials. Netaji exhorted his audiences to prepare well and support in every way the struggle because ‘Indians outside India, particularly Indians in East Asia, are going to organize a fighting force which will be powerful enough to attack the British army of occupation in India. When we do so, a revolution will break out, not only among the civilian population at home, but also among the Indian Army, which is now standing under the British flag. When the British government is thus attacked from both sides— from inside India and from outside— it will collapse, and the Indian people will then regain their liberty’

Bose decided that Burma would be crucial to his strategy military manoeuvre. When the Japanese Field Marshal suggested that the INA should work only as field propaganda unit, Bose immediately rejected it and demanded that INA brigades should be used as advance fighting units. The Japanese agreed to initially put one division of INA consisting of about 10,000 soldiers into action. Mohammad Zaman Kiani assumed the command of this unit. This division was further divided into three regiments which had been named after Gandhi, Nehru, and Azad signifying oneness with the nationalist movement at home. Out of these the best soldiers were taken out to

form a guerrilla unit under Shah Nawaz Khan which would first go into action. The soldiers named this unit ‘Subhas Brigade’

For raising the morale of the soldiers, Bose visited them in their camps and also shared his meals with them. Soldiers of all castes and communities were persuaded to eat commonly which led to a common bond between them crossing religious and linguistic boundaries. This display of national unity was important, even though it was taking place on foreign soil, because increasingly sharp communal division was shearing the Indian body politic at home.

Last years of Freedom Struggle (1945 – 47)

Evidently after the war, it was no longer convenient for a metropolitan country – and far less profitable – to rule directly over a colony for the systematized reaping of all the economic advantages from it. However, the Second World War by no stretch of imagination marked the collapse of imperialism, rather it had heralded its survival, and opened up the possibility of rejuvenation on new lines – neo-colonialism.

That the Indian nationalists would not be willing to play into the hands of the puppeteers, and that a battle-weary and an internally wrecked Britain could not again be in a position to dominate the world market, did hardly discourage the British to dream on the wild neo-colonialist lines. Playing up the divergences of a pluralist people was expected by the British to be as useful in their tactical retreat from India as it certainly had been throughout in fostering the Raj’s advance.

Of all the distinctions among Indians that the imperial authorities tried to magnify, and make use of, those between the followers of two co-existing religious, Hinduism and Islam, or between the Hindu majority and the substantial Muslim minority, proved to be the most effective. On most of the important public matters, the Raj had succeeded in subtly setting one of these two communities against the other, by acknowledging the Muslim League as the only representative body of the Indian Muslims, by casting doubts on the nationalist character of a “Hinduised” Indian National Congress, and by using

the League as a Political force to counter-balance the Congress. The way the Raj utilized the League's demand for a Pakistan to thwart all constitutional negotiations with the Congress at the initial stage of the war, the manner in which it allowed the League practically through the back door (in the absence of the Congress from the legislative scene on account of the "Quit India" movement) to take over some of the provincial ministries, and the sardonic pleasure with which its officials noted the spreading of the League's sphere of influence among the Muslims with the aid of intrigues and dispersal of official patronages – all clearly point to the careful building of a backlash that could thwart the progress of the antiimperialist movement.

Congress and the Muslim League

On their part, the nationalist leaders could do precious little to counter the Pakistan Movement. Their self-righteous desire to do away with communalism merely through denunciation, disregard, and their criticism of the retrograde feudal leadership of the League however failed to check its growth because:

They made no serious attempts to contact the Muslim masses for wining them away from the League's hold

The idioms which they spoke in, like *Bande Matram*, *Ramrajya*, etc, were used by the League to propagate against them among the Muslims.

What seemed worst from the nationalist viewpoint -- and contrary to all their great expectations – was not that the League had been benefiting from the exercise of some political leverage under the Raj's shadow, but that its scheme of Pakistan – supposedly the panacea for all the evils of the Muslims – had gradually been attracting a considerable following among them.

- i) The educated Muslim middle class and the Muslim business interests started welcoming the severance of a part of the Indian SubContinent where they would not suffer from the unequal competition with the long-standing and overbearing Hindu business houses and professionals.

- ii) To this possibility of a Muslim hegemony over jobs and business in a region, was being added the anxiety of the Muslim peasants in Punjab and Bengal for freedom in a future Pakistan from the Hindu Bania and Zamindari exploitation.

The League's support-base among the Indian Muslims was broadening. This afforded its supremo, M.A. Jinnah, with an opportunity to assume – with unflinching British approval – an increasingly obstinate bargaining posture vis-à-vis the Congress. Jinnah's obstinacy was apparent as early as in July 1944 when he set Gandhi's belated initiative for a Congress-League rapprochement at naught, and refused to budge – even at the risk of weakening the over-all Indian claim for independence – from his obsessive demand for a wholesome Pakistan (comprising the Muslim-majority provinces of Sind, Punjab, Baluchistan, North West Frontier Provinces, Bengal and Assam in their entirety). The situation admirably suited the interests of the British, who could use it either to perpetuate their post-war imperial rule over India – at the best or to break-up at the worst – the Indian empire to their ulterior advantage. Howsoever distasteful to the common man and woman, and disconcerting for their hopes and aspirations, the communal tangle and the Pakistan issue were to dominate the Indian proceedings between 1945 and 1947.

The development during these crucial years ran on two perceptible lines:

- i) The level of high politics for bringing about a negotiated settlement among the Congress, the League and the Raj on India's political future.
- ii) The level of popular actions for demonstrating sporadically the urge the Indian masses felt for resistance against the British and their indigenous collaborators.

Although the two lines did hardly ever converge, they nevertheless attracted and distracted each other and constituted together the history of the three fateful years that culminated in the partition and independence of India.

Simla Conference

Once the tide of the war turned in their favour, the British started realizing by the end of 1944 generally that the Indian situation should not be allowed to remain where it stood after the Quit India Movement. They realized that it would be impossible to hold India by force for long. A dialogue, therefore, had to begin with the imprisoned Congress leaders, at least for preventing them in future from taking advantage of an explosive post-war situation of economic hardships and unemployment. According to Wavell, the energies of the Congress and its fellow-travellers were required to be directed from the path of agitation into “some more profitable channel, i.e. into dealing with the administrative problems of India and into trying to solve the constitutional problems”. Churchill and his men stubbornly resisted this line of thinking till the termination of the war came in full view (with the surrender of Germany in May 1945) and the war-time Coalition Government in Britain was scheduled to make room for a freshly elected one.

The Simla Conference

Eventually permitted by the home authorities to set the ball of negotiations rolling, the Viceroy, Wavell, ordered on 14 June 1945 the release of all the Congress Working Committee members, and invited them along with others, notably the League leaders, to join in a Conference in Simla (24 June - 14 July 1945) for setting up a new Executive Council at the Centre -- practically Indian in composition -- excepting the Commander in Chief and of course, the Viceroy, presiding over its deliberations. The Council would have equal representation from the so-called “Caste Hindus” and Muslims, and it should function within the existing constitutional arrangement without its being responsible to the legislature.

The British in fact were lukewarmly agreeable to discuss the making of a new constitution only at the actual end of the war. While attending the conference, the Congress naturally refused to be treated as a “Caste Hindu” body and, asserting its secular nationalist character, staked the right to select the representatives of any community, including Muslims (of whom Abul

Kalam Azad and Abudal Ghaffar Khan presented themselves in Simla in the capacities of the leaders and distinguished members respectively of the Congress delegation), as the Congress nominees to the council. The league, which insisted -- more obdurately than with reason -- on its having the sole agency to speak for every Indian Muslim, objected to the Congress stand, and claimed an absolute jurisdiction for choosing all the Muslim members of the Council. The Claim even embarrassed the Viceroy who felt that the loyal Unionist Muslims, or those in power in Punjab without compromising themselves with the League, deserved some representation.

Not satisfied with this, the League further demanded a communal veto by asking for a two-third majority in the proposed Council, instead of a simple one, on any decision opposed by the Muslim members (or its own nominees) and related to the Muslim interest. In his anxiety for encouraging the League's intransigent posture, and brushing aside the Congress offer to join the Council by keeping it open for the League to step in later, the Viceroy, Wavell, abruptly decided to abandon the British proposals and dissolve the Simla Conference. Judging by the subsequent development, his action implied not only an official recognition of the League's monopoly to speak for all Muslims, and thereby inflated its stature in the Muslim eyes, but he also seemed to have conceded to the League in Substance the power to Negate any future Negotiation that did not suit its own convenience. Hereafter, the satisfaction of the League became a pre-requisite to any major settlement.

The Labour in Power

Following a massive victory in the general elections, the British Labour Party came into power in Britain in July 1945 which thereby raised hopes for an early settlement of the Indian question. Known for their sympathies with the nationalist cause in India, the Labour leaders had already committed themselves to freeing India, if and when they were voted to power. They had also agreed to grant India freedom by transferring authority from the British to the Indian hands. So unequivocal appeared to be the position of the Labour Party on the issue of Indian independence, and so complete was its

electoral victory, that even the Viceroy of India shuddered at the possibility of the new British rulers handing over India “to their Congress friends as soon as possible”. What Wavell did not know initially, but came to understand soon with some satisfaction, was that the Labourite enthusiasm for making a promise, without being in office, could not be the same for keeping it when in office. If the Whigs and Tories in Britain, or for that matter the Tories and the Liberals there, did not drastically differ in the past in their attitudes towards the maintenance of the Indian Empire, despite the difference in ideology, why should the Labours not agree – in spite of their socialist affectation – with many of the Conservatives, bureaucrats and vested interests on the most advantageous ways of dismantling it? Apparently, the Labours were as willing as the conservatives and the British officials to:

- let the Communalists holding all others in India to ransom.
- silence popular outbursts in the country by the use of brute force,
- become obsessed with the defence of British overseas interests, and
- actually employ British-Indian troops in Indo-China and Java to prop up the French and the Dutch imperialists, respectively.

Consistent with the tenor of its overall approach, the first moves that the Attlee Government made in India were hardly path-breaking, or which a non-Labour Government could not make. It asked the Viceroy to announce on 21 August 1945, the holding of new elections for the Indian Legislatures in the approaching winter of 1945-46. The elections were not only overdue for the centre (last elected in 1934), as well as for the provinces (last elected in 1937), but also essential for reopening the constitutional game – the wrangles and squabbles in the name of negotiations. Viceroy was prompted further to renew on 19 September 1945 the promises of “early full self government” for India (refusing carefully to use the term “independence”), discussions with the elected legislators and the representatives of the Indian princes on the formation of a Constituent Assembly for undertaking fresh constitutional arrangements (by-passing conveniently the previous Labourite assurance to elect a Constituent Assembly on “universal suffrage”) and efforts to be made

once again for setting up the Viceroy's Executive Council with nominees from the main Indian parties

Elections and the Cabinet Mission

The elections were duly held in the winter of 1945-46. By the time the elections took place, the Muslim League – following the congenial aftermath of the Simla Conference, and dangling of the carrot of Pakistan -- was in a favourable situation to deal with its separate Muslim electorate. For the Muslim traders and middle classes, to the dream of MusalmanonkiHukumat and the Indian Muslim's special right of self-determination was added the fervent religious cry of "Islam in danger". Although the Congress was at the crest of its popularity, especially with the people's anticipations of the coming of independence, it was nevertheless not in a position in such religiously frenzied atmosphere to carry the bulk of the Muslim voters with it. The outcome of the elections, particularly the respective positions of the Congress and the League, clearly brought all these out.

The Congress won overwhelmingly in the General (non-Muslim) constituencies, securing 91.3 per cent votes, winning 57 out of 102 seats in the Central Legislative Assembly and obtaining majorities in all the provinces except Sind, Punjab and Bengal. The spectacular Congress victories, however, could not diminish the significance that the Government had already thrust upon the Muslim electorate. From the British point of view, and at the negotiation table to be presided by them, what mattered more in 1946 than the massive national mandate for the Congress was the League's ability to goad the Muslim voters to its side, by hook or by crook. Apparently in this the League attained remarkable successes by polling 86.6 per cent of the Muslim votes, winning all the 30 Muslim seats in the Central Legislative Assembly and grabbing 442 out of 509 Muslim seats in the provinces. But despite all its achievements, the League could not establish its Swaraj on those Muslim-majority provinces which it was demanding for Pakistan. It lost NWFP and Assam to the Congress and failed to dislodge the Unionists from Punjab. Even the League ministries that were set up in Bengal and Sind hinged precariously

on official and European support. The fact was that the League's claim for Muslim support had hardly ever been tested in undivided India. The elections were held not only on the basis of separate electorate, which had been devised to keep the Muslims away from the national mainstream, but also on the strength of severely restricted franchise – barely 10 per cent of the total population. Had the elections been contested on the adult franchise, it is difficult to say what would have actually happened, in view especially of the Congress successes in such elections in India in 1952 and the League's reverse in East Pakistan in 1954, as well as of its failure thereafter to control affairs in West Pakistan.

Once the main parties emerged from the limited elections in their strength, as anticipated more or less by the British, the Attlee Government lost no time in commencing negotiations with them. A high-powered mission of three British cabinet members (Pethick Lawrence, Secretary of State for India; Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade; and A.V. Alexander, First Lord of Admiralty) was sent to India to find out ways and means of a negotiated, peaceful transfer of power in India. As it had already been sensed in the British circles, time was running out of the British hands for all practical purposes, and India had reached the high point of ferment by March, 1946 with popular unrest finding intermittent expressions throughout the country. What was worse was the British fear that the disquietude of the people might take shape of another countrywide “mass movement or a revolution”, which it was in the power of the Congress to start, and which, the Viceroy felt, “we are not certain that we can control”. The Cabinet Mission, therefore, arrived in India to wrest the initiative. Aided by the Viceroy, it held discussion with the Indian leaders till June 1946 for setting the constitutional future of India, and for deciding upon an interim Indian Government.

Following a series of long-drawn deliberations with the Indian leaders of all kinds, which had often run into stalemates on account of Jinnah's brinkmanship over Pakistan and the Muslim right of self-determination, the Mission eventually came up with a complicated, but somewhat plausible plan

for wriggling out of the Indian impasse. Although the Viceroy and one of its members (Alexander) had been sympathetic towards Jinnah, the Mission was unable to accept the League's demand for a full-fledged Pakistan (comprising the whole of all the Muslim majority areas) on the ground that the right of communal self-determination, if conceded to Muslims, had also to be granted to the non-Muslims who formed majorities in West Bengal and Eastern Punjab, as well as in Assam proper. This would necessitate such a bifurcation of Bengal, Punjab and Assam which would go against all regional and linguistic ties, create insurmountable economic and administrative problems, and yet might not satisfy the League (for Jinnah at this stage was unequivocally opposed to the acceptance of a "truncated and moth-eaten Pakistan"). Having thus rejected both the concepts of a larger and a smaller Pakistan, the Mission offered the plan of a very loose union of all the Indian territories under a centre that would control merely the defences, the foreign affairs, and the communications, leaving all other subjects to the existing provincial legislatures. The provincial legislatures would then elect a Constituent Assembly, with each province being allotted a specified number of seats proportionate to its population and distributed strength-wise among its various communities. The members so elected "will divide up into three sections"-- Section A for the non-Muslim majority provinces (Bombay, the United Provinces, Bihar, the Central Provinces, Orissa and Madras), Section B for the Muslim-majority provinces in the north-west (Sind, NWFP and Punjab) and Section C for the same in the north-east (Bengal and Assam). All these sections would have the authority to draw up provincial constitutions and, if necessary, group constitutions, and setting up thereby provincial and sectional legislatures and executives. As the completion of all these longterm arrangements would take considerable time, the Mission proposed a short-term measure -- the formation immediately of an Interim Government at the Centre, enjoying the support of the major political parties, and with the Indians holding all the portfolios.

The Mission's plan was intended to be a compromise, by placating the Congress through the rejection of the Pakistan scheme and by mollifying the League through the creation of autonomous Muslim-majority areas in some proximity. At the outset, therefore, both the Congress and the League were inclined to accept the plan. But soon difficulty surfaced over the provisions for forming sections or groups of provinces. The League interpreted the groupings to be compulsory, for that might brighten up the possibility of a future full-fledged Pakistan by bulldozing the Congress-administered Muslim-majority provinces of NWFP (in section B) and Assam (in section C) into it (in their respective sections the Congress majorities from NWFP and Assam would be reduced to helpless minorities). It was precisely because of the opposition of NWFP and Assam to their being dragged into Sections B and C that the Congress wanted the grouping to be optional. The Congress was also critical of the absence of any provision for the elected members from the princely states in the proposed Constituent Assembly, though it appeared to be willing to swallow the limited and indirect nature of electing the Constituent Assembly which was blatantly contrary to its past demand for such an election on adult franchise. By the end of July 1946, the Congress and the League decided against trying out the Cabinet Mission plan any further, mainly on account of their difference over the grouping system, but partly because of the Mission's inability to clarify its intentions. In its anxiety for putting up a disarranged India under some nominal centre, and with the communally segregated autonomous units almost as a prelude to "Balkanization", the Mission failed to take note of all the important details. Still, the Cabinet Mission plan was the most that the British – in their haste to leave the ground to the neo-colonialists – could really offer. After July 1946, they had not even talked seriously of the necessity for maintaining the pretence of a weak Indian Union.

The Communal Carnage and Interim Government

The setback over the Cabinet Mission plan so exasperated the League that it wanted forthwith to force the situation through "Direct Action", or give

concrete expression to its postelection slogan, 'Ladke Lenge Pakistan' ("we shall have Pakistan by force"). The outcome was the communal carnage that began first on the Direct Action Day (16 August 1946) in Calcutta, and then in a chain of reactions spread over other areas of the country, notably in Bombay, eastern Bengal and Bihar, a certain part of the U.P., NWFP and Punjab. In Calcutta, the League rowdies, encouraged by the League Premier of Bengal, Suhrawardy, had a field day on 16 August by suddenly resorting to large scale violent attacks on the non-Muslims. Once the element of surprise was over, the Hindus and Sikh toughs also hit back. The army, stationed at the very heart of the city, took its own time to react, and when it did sluggishly move to restore order 4,000 had already been killed in three days, and 10,000 injured.

Riots erupted in Bombay in September 1946, but not so frenziedly as in Calcutta. Even then, more than 300 persons lost their lives in stray incidents there. In October 1946, communal riots broke out furiously in Noakhali and Tippera, leaving 400 dead and resulting in widespread violation of women, loot and arson. Noakhali was promptly avenged in Bihar towards the end of October with unsurpassed brutality, massacring more than 7,000. U.P. was not lagging far behind, and at Garhamukhteswar alone approximately 1,000 people were slaughtered. The Bihar and the U.P. butchery called for retaliatory actions in NWFP (Hazara district mainly) and led eventually to furious communal riots, encompassing the Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs of Punjab, especially in Lahore, Amritsar, Multan, Attock and Rawalpindi, and killing about 5,000 by the middle of 1947. These were, however, the mere beginnings, for the communal riots continued to blaze very high throughout 1947 and the earlier part of 1948, resulting in deaths and injuries to several lakhs of people, abduction and rape of countless women, immense destruction of personal properties and innumerable desecration of religious places. Millions had to become refugees, and whereas in some localities (like Punjab) a wholesale exchange of population took place, in others (like Bengal) people continued to leave their places in waves for a long time to come. In the sheer

extent of human suffering and dehumanization, and in the total upsetting of the country's social and economic fabric, the fratricidal violence in the Indian subcontinent between 1946 and 1948, and intermittently thereafter, perhaps had only a few parallels in the annals of civilization.

It was coinciding practically with the outbreak of the communal carnage that an Interim Government at the centre came into existence in September 1946. To begin with, the Viceroy's attempts at its formation met almost with the same difficulty they faced in the Simla Conference, namely Jinnah's insistence on parity between 5 Hindu nominees of the Congress and 5 Muslim nominees of the League in such a Government, apart from 1 Sikh and one Scheduled Caste in it. As anticipated, the Congress rejected such a proposal of "parity", claimed the right to include any number of Hindus, Muslims and others in its list of nominees and demanded the new Government to function like a cabinet, and not like a mere advisory body to the Viceroy. Wavell would have called off his endeavours on the ground that nothing was likely to be achieved if the main parties continued to differ, which he contentedly did in Simla in June 1945, had he not been thoroughly alarmed by the popular actions at the mass level immediately before and soon after the sojourn of the Cabinet Mission in India. It was the threat to law and order, either in shape of a mutiny of the forces in the recent past, or in the form of strike by the postal and railways employees in their imminence, that Wavell decided to go ahead with the plan of an Interim Government, constituted, even solely for the time being, by the Congress – the party which enjoyed the greatest influence over the public mind.

Elated apparently by the Viceregal gesture of giving them precedence over their League counterparts, and expecting the formation of the Interim Government to be to their advantage, as well as an advance towards the peaceful transfer of power, the Congress leaders opted on 2nd September for the marking of a cabinet under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru. As the situation unfolded later on, the Congress-dominated functioning of the Interim Government became on the whole an exercise in misadventure. Despite all its

concern, it was in effect helpless -- in the face of the communal holocaust -- to move the leisurely army, under a British commander in Chief, into the riot-afflicted areas. Being presided over by the Viceroy, the Interim Government was also not able sometimes to withstand his vetoing power. And its position worsened when Wavell persuaded the League leaders to join it on 26 October 1946, overlooking their persistence with the "Direct Action", and by agreeing to balance the Congress-nominated Scheduled Caste member. Thereafter the Interim Government, obstructed by its League members, and divided sharply into the Congress and the League camps, backed up by their warring followers within the bureaucracy, was reduced for all practical purposes to a figure head. If the Government of a country at the centre was thus torn asunder, and the major communities of its people were led desperately to cut each other's throat, could it still hope to remain untied, and yet be independent? The senior and venerable Congress leaders – those rendered a harassed, riot-wrecked and battle-weary lot by the beginning of 1947 -- were no longer hopeful. Rather, they were too keen to come out of the labyrinth at any cost, if necessary by buying freedom at the exorbitant price of partitioning the nation, and by putting their life-long nationalist dreams at an auction.

The alternative for them was:

- To refuse to serve in a sham Interim Government,
- To come down the streets to appeal to the saner sentiments,
- To try to expose the machinations behind the rioters,
- To make an effort to organize resistance against both the Muslim and the Hindu communalists, and
- To simultaneously go all out for launching the final anti-imperialist mass movement and to attempt at achieving popular unity on the battle lines.

The alternative, of course, was bound to be long-drawn, hazardous and, indeed, very difficult, but not impossible for those who could rely ultimately on the urges and upsurges of the people.

Transfer of Power and Partition

British Policies and Partition

The British's purpose of the policy of divide and rule, for deliberately favouring one community and then the other, is to prevent the coming together of Indians against the British. The acceptance of the Muslim League demand for separate electorates in 1909 was a major divisive move that vitiated the political culture of India until independence in 1947. Some argue that the Muslim League deputation to the Viceroy in 1906 itself was a command performance and the League was set up soon after by an elite group trying to promote its interest. The British extended it to the Sikhs as well. Gandhi and B.R. Ambedkar, through a compromise in 1932 thwarted a British attempt to drive a wedge between the Depressed classes and the upper caste Hindus by offering separate electorates to the former. The argument is no longer confined to the institutional mechanisms of representative government that were slowly being introduced by the British in India. Historians and anthropologists now argue that the British classification practices encouraged the representation as well as the self-representation of Indians according to caste and religion.

The Census listed various castes and communities in India, and also counted them. The colonial practice of census and surveys thus encouraged the idea of 'enumerated communities' and led to the concept of majority and minority in different parts of the country. Fuzzy identities were replaced by hard and singular identities often forcing groups with complex and multiple identities to choose one (Cohn, Appadurai, Kaviraj). The British Orientalist scholarship played a role in the development of ideas about the peculiarities of Indian society. The codification of the laws of the Hindus led to the freezing of the dynamic nature of traditional society and culture and valourised a primarily textual and elitist upper caste conception of Hindu law and practices. The codification of Muslim Law also led to the rigid interpretation of law and reduced the role of interpretation that had been important in Muslim jurisprudence. The writing of history also shaped ideas of community that soon became the commonsense of the time. The British perception of

Indian society in terms of religious and cultural differences led to the exaggeration of religious and cultural conflict.

As Gandhi had observed in *Hind Swaraj*, the Hindus and Muslims had learned to live with each other before the British established their rule in India. It was British rule that produced greater differences between the two communities. The historians focused only on the periods of conflict ignoring the much longer periods of harmony between communities. The colonial construction of the notion of communities grew more elaborate with time and the introduction of representative government and separate electorates gave the government ample opportunity to heighten this process of community formation. The logic of competition then took over and stronger notions of the boundaries of communities developed by the early twentieth century. The British were willing to go to any length to prolong their rule in India; they deliberately encouraged Jinnah's Muslim League after 1940 to weaken the national movement and thwart Congress participation in government during the war. They were willing to consider not only the partition of India but also the balkanisation of India. Their attitude towards the Indian problem was shaped by Britain's role in Asia after World War II and the emerging Cold War

Muslim League and Jinnah

In the nationalist accounts of the partition of India, Mohammad Ali Jinnah played a prominent role in the partition process. Other nationalist historians have argued that he was alienated by the transformation of the Congress after mass mobilisation began under Gandhi after 1920. This made Jinnah the moderate nationalist and constitutionalist less relevant in national politics although he remained opposed to the hardline communal politics. Gradually the ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity turned hostile and became an implacable foe of the Congress. He had opposed the Nehru report of 1928 that had advocated a unitary form of government and representation to minorities on the basis of numerical importance in different regions. There is a difference between Jinnah's Fourteen points and the demand for Pakistan;

Jinnah, as a liberal Muslim, was not averse to negotiations with the Congress. It was the poor performance of the Muslim League in the elections to the Provincial assemblies in 1937 that compelled him to rethink his strategy. Rejection of a coalition government with the League in Uttar Pradesh by the Congress after the former's poor showing in the elections led to a strong reaction from the League. Outright condemnation of the Congress Ministries was orchestrated by the League and the party decided to reject the notion that the Muslims could live as a minority under 'Hindu' Congress domination.

In 1940 the League declared the right of self determination of Muslim majorities in the North West and East of India. The demand for separate states within a common framework even if it meant statehood without a demand for a separate nation, as argued by Ayesha Jalal and the revisionists, fanned communal fears and animosities in the years after (Ayesha Jalal). If Jinnah did not want to divide the subcontinent, he chose an unwise policy. The communal polarisation that resulted from enthusiastic responses to the Pakistan idea undermined the cross communal alliances that were crucial to retain the Punjab and Bengal in the 'autonomous' Pakistan zones of an All India government. The virulent campaign for Pakistan got intertwined with various communal, linguistic and cultural anxieties and acquired a momentum of its own. Even if Jinnah did not want to create a separate nation state, his campaign for seven long years made it possible. The idea of using the power of the Muslim majority provinces to protect the interests of the Muslims in the Muslim minority provinces by creating a common government at the Centre was undermined by the unrestrained propaganda in the campaign for Pakistan. It is arguable that Muslim interests would have been far better served by emphasising the rights of provinces within a loose federation rather than the chimerical ideal of Pakistan. In any case Jinnah's strategy and Muslim League propaganda rather than his hidden objectives influenced Indian political developments and led to the partition of India.

Congress and Partition

The early nationalist accounts apportioned the blame for partition exclusively between the British and the Muslim League. The Congress tried to bring under its umbrella all sections of Indian society, but separate electorates, British policy of divide and rule, the intransigence of Jinnah and the communal and reactionary grip over the League led to the partition of the subcontinent. The Congress was unable to reach out to the Muslim masses and therefore reluctantly accepted the wishes of the majority of the Indian Muslims to carve a nation for themselves. This account has been challenged by two strands in Indian history. Bipan Chandra argues that there was a Hindu tinge in the Congress and that Hindu liberal communalists like Lala Lajpat Rai and Madan Mohan Malaviya were able to create doubts about the inclusive nationalist credentials of the Congress party. However, he believes that extreme communalism was promoted by the League and that Congress failed to handle the problem (Bipan Chandra). This was both because of pressure from Hindu communalists and insufficient mass mobilisation.

A second strand argues that the Congress was substantially to blame for the partition of the country. The Congress did not have a sufficiently inclusive approach towards Muslim communities in India. The culture and ideology of the Congress party was majoritarian—the belief that the view of the majority party must prevail. It wanted to dominate public life because it was the largest party. The other argument was that even Congress's inclusive nationalism entailed the denial of Muslim identity and that any signs of Muslimness were regarded as separatist or communal. Ayesha Jalal is unwilling to accept the binary opposition between Congress secular nationalism and Muslim communalism. In her *Self and Sovereignty*, however, the distinction between a political and religious notion of majoritarianism often gets blurred and the basis for characterising individuals and political demands or movements as acceptably communitarian or unacceptably communal is often unclear. The Congress was not a party that wanted to establish Hindu majority rule and a policy of safeguards for minorities,

emphasis on fundamental rights and federalism could have taken care of the dangers of religious majoritarianism.

The argument has also been made that the Congress, particularly Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel, were supporters of a strong state and therefore preferred to have a smaller and more centralised state than a united but confederal India with the Muslim League. This was why they rejected the Confederation that was recommended by the Cabinet Mission that came to India in 1946. It is argued that the partition of the subcontinent was imposed by the central leaders of the Congress who favoured a tighter grip over the provinces and a unitary conception of nationalism (A. Jalal). Patel wanted a strong state because of the need to create a unified nation and Nehru because he favoured a policy of state backed economic growth. Although the Congress leaders did favour the strong state this was not the view of the two leaders alone. A considerable number of Congressmen and nationalists favoured a strong government for various reasons.

It has been argued that many Indian Muslims did not accept the principles of liberal individualism and believed that their representatives should belong to the Muslim community and share their values and concerns. It was not enough to represent them and their secular interests (Farzana Shaikh). In the perception of many Congressmen and Hindu nationalists, a weak centre in India had been responsible for repeated invasions and British conquest and therefore the post independence state had to be strong enough to protect its citizens and provide for their well-being. The beliefs of the leaders of the Congress and the League were not those of a handful of leaders even if there is no way of knowing how many shared such views. If indeed Jinnah and the Muslim League did not want a separate state of Pakistan the leaders of the Congress could not have forced it upon eighty million Muslims against their will.

Gandhi and Partition

The partition of India was a severe blow to the leaders of the Indian National Congress who tried to avert it till the terms for preserving unity

seemed unacceptable to them. The strongest reaction to partition came from Gandhi who had worked for communal harmony for decades. He had brought a large number of Indian Muslims into the national movement by linking grievances about the treatment of the Khalifa and the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire with the nationalist outrage following the Jallianwala Bagh massacre at Amritsar in April 1919 and the imposition of martial law in Punjab. The Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movement brought forth Muslim participation on a scale which the Congress never managed to achieve after this. The withdrawal of the movement in early 1922 was followed by the outbreak of communal conflicts in many parts of north India stretching from Kohat to Calcutta between 1922 and 1926. The critics of Gandhi think that the use of a religious issue like Khilafat was dangerous since it encouraged extra-territorial loyalties and Pan-Islamic tendencies among Indian Muslims (B.R. Nanda). It has also been argued that Gandhi's collaboration with the Ali brothers led to Muslim mass mobilisation within India for achieving objectives within India (Gail Minault). Secular and Marxist historians consider the use of religion in politics a 'double-edged weapon' and therefore have regarded this strategy as fraught with dangerous consequences.

Gandhi believed in spiritualising politics and did not consider it essential to separate religion and politics as in the western conception of secularism. He believed in communal harmony and in Hindu-Muslim unity. His ideas and personality appealed to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who began as a radical Pan-Islamist and became a supporter of composite nationalism. Azad was a devout Muslim who believed in communal harmony and the need to preserve the unity of the country. His role and personality is frequently contrasted with that of the westernised Jinnah who was an unconventional Muslim fighting for the rights of Muslims and a separate state using appeals to religion (Aijaz Ahmad, T.N. Madan). The argument has been advanced that it was the emphasis on secularism and modernity that led to the failure to deal with the specific grievances of the Muslim community. It is difficult to accept this in so far as the problem was really about uneven development, economic

grievances and sharing of power rather than hard secularism or communitarian identities. In so far as communitarian identities are concerned the Gandhian emphasis on Hindustani in the Devanagari script had very little impact on the cultural politics of the Hindi speaking states. This was not a matter that could be understood primarily in terms of the secular-religious divide or the modernity and tradition distinction. The politics of language did play a role in the alienation of the Muslims of North India. Gandhi, Nehru and Bose despite their differences as well as moderate nationalists and progressive writers were all in favour of Hindustani but could not make much headway.

The ideas of Gandhi were misunderstood by many and the message of communal harmony and removal of untouchability were also regarded with suspicion by orthodox and even moderate Muslims. Some Muslims felt this was a subtle way of consolidating the Hindu vote bank and reducing the bargaining power of the Muslim community (William Gould). There was some recrimination after the Khilafat-Non-Cooperation movement was withdrawn and the Ali brothers were upset by Gandhi's withdrawal of the movement. The concept of Ramrajya was not a Hindu ideal as far as Gandhi was concerned though it might have sprung from within the Hindu tradition. Many orthodox Muslims regarded this as an unacceptable ideal and preferred to express themselves in an Islamic idiom. The existence of separate electorates and fears of Hindu consolidation ensured that the Muslims never supported the Congress in sufficient numbers during the period that led up to independence and partition. After the Gandhi-Ambedkar pact of 1932 the reserved seats for the depressed Classes led moderate nationalists and Hindu nationalists to enhance their influence among the depressed classes and thus to work for Hindu consolidation especially in Bengal (Joya Chatterjee). To those who did not dwell deeply on the matter, the Gandhian and Hindu nationalist concern with Harijan uplift would appear as part of the same agenda.

The essentialist understanding is that Pakistan was the product of a longstanding difference between Hindus and Muslims in the subcontinent. The historicists have rightly focused on the changes during the last decade of

colonial rule. Historians disagree on the precise reasons for the partition of the subcontinent but agree that it came about towards the end of colonial rule because of the failure of the Congress and the League to come to a settlement. The British policy of encouraging Muslim separatism and eagerness to withdraw from India after the Second World War made the partition more likely. There is a sense in which the economic and political consequences of World War II had an impact on political developments that could not be foreseen. Likewise the consequences of the demand for partition and the jostling for power in the localities speeded up the process of communal polarisation that influenced the decisions of the principal protagonists in the story of partition. In the final analysis the postwar crisis and the polarisation in society during the last few years of colonial rule contributed to the climate in which the decision was taken in 1946-47.

Social and Economic Background

The discussion of the partition of India cannot be reduced to the intentions or decisions of a few top leaders, no matter how significant their role might have been in the closing years of colonial rule. Moreover, the notion of inflexible forces in history leading to communal polarisation and partition are also untenable. The argument of the Indian communists that there are many nations in India and that the demand for Pakistan was a nationality demand is logically consistent but does not tell us how and why it emerged during the last decade of colonial rule. Yet there is a middle level formulation about the growing support for a separate state of Pakistan or partition of Punjab and Bengal during the last few years of colonial rule. The inchoate demand for Pakistan stirred poets and propagandists who influenced the popular mood and fuelled communal tensions and anxieties. Several scholars like Mushirul Hasan, who do not subscribe to the binary opposition between Indian nationalism and Muslim communalism and separatism, believe that the propaganda of the League had a deep impact on several sections of society (Mushirul Hasan). This helped to create not only support for a separate state in

the Muslim majority regions like Punjab and Bengal but also fuelled anxieties among the minorities in these regions.

The Sikhs had created their own reform movement and the Singh Sabha movement strengthened the communitarian identities of the Sikhs in the Punjab. The fear of being left defenceless, especially after the community had played a vital role in the agricultural colonisation and military service, created a vital unsettling factor. The growth of various volunteer organisations and communal polarisation undermined the cross-communal alliance created by the Unionist Party of the Punjab under Fazli Husain and Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan. The politics of the Punjab was heavily influenced by certain forms of communitarian identities – based on caste, language and religion but these were often competing and overlapping identities. Nevertheless the propaganda of the League upset this alliance and compelled those Muslims like Sikandar Hyat Khan, who believed in provincial autonomy, to accept the ideological preeminence of the League leadership. The support for Jinnah and the Muslim League may not bring back memories of the legendary Islamic hero Saladin, but the Pakistan idea had acquired considerable support in the North West of India (Akbar Ahmad and Ian Talbot). The attitude of the Muslim landlords of Punjab was of crucial importance in the creation of Pakistan.

Ayesha Jalal has argued that although Punjabis were “especially unwilling to make concessions to rival communities” the majority of Punjabis were opposed to the partition of their province on religious lines in March 1947 (Jalal, EPW, August 8, 1998). She argues that Hindus had indicated their unwillingness to accept Muslim domination at the provincial level twice before; this was reflected in their response to Lala Lajpat Rai’s proposals in 1924 and C. Rajagopalachari’s formula of 1944 calling for the separation of Hindu majority regions in Punjab and Bengal. Jalal argues that sub-regional and class factors influenced the behaviour of individuals more than communitarian identities, but the central leadership imposed the partition of the Punjab from above. It is arguable that rival communitarian and ‘nationalist’ or communal perspectives led to a paralysis of political will or

the unwillingness to come to a compromise that enabled the British government and the central leaderships of the League and the Congress to impose their will on the Punjab. This failure to come to an agreement was not the failure of a few leaders in the Punjab but of the clash of economic interests of social groups that underpinned communitarian identities and of widespread and extreme distrust of the other.

Communitarian differences were sustained by economic and legal-constitutional arrangements like the Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900 and the district-wise enumeration of agricultural castes whose lands could not be taken away by urban moneylenders. Marxist formulations about the economic basis of communalism or the communalisation of the class struggle may seem overstated or too general but communitarian identities have always been underpinned and qualified by economic and class differences. The opposition to Hindu merchant-moneylender domination brought together the Hindu, Sikh and Muslim agrarian interests in the Punjab in the Unionist party. The Congress led popular and peasant movements but its mass base was limited. The Congress in the Punjab was weaker than in the United Provinces because it was perceived as a representative of urban Hindu groups and its Hindu Mahasabha rivals often stole the support that the Congress sought in the crucial years before partition. The Muslim League was able to destroy the support for the Unionist party by winning the support of the landowners of western Punjab, forging an alliance with the pirs and sajjda nashins, a network that had been used by the British and the Unionist party earlier.

The partition of Bengal has been regarded as a tragedy that could have been averted but for the imposition from above. Sarat Bose argued for a united autonomous Socialist Republic of Bengal and the idea also appealed to Suhrawardy who felt that the loss of Calcutta would weaken the economy of East Pakistan (Sugato Bose, Christopher Bayly and Tim Harper, pp. 292-301). Gandhi himself offered to act as Suhrawardy's honorary private secretary in May 1947 if he worked to retain Bengal for the Bengalis by nonviolent means (CWMG, Vol-LXXXVII, p. 460). Joya Chatterjee has argued that the

bhadralok of Bengal had turned to a more Hindu nationalist position after the Communal Award of 1932 and weakened the social dominance of the upper castes in Bengal. In order to bolster their position, the bhadralok turned to the Depressed Castes to maintain their hold on the province. Sarat Chandra and the Hindu Mahasabha played an active role in creating a Hindu nationalist tendency. There was a strong movement by Hindus and a section of the Congress to call for the partition of Bengal in the late 1940s. This movement was popular in the eight Hindu majority districts of south-central Bengal (Joya Chatterjee, 1994). It was not the only trend in Bengal politics, but secular nationalism and socialist radicalism were not as robust as believed earlier.

Although there was the growth of a radical peasant movement in East Bengal, it had acquired a religious or communitarian perspective. Whether the peasants who supported the Krishak Praja party during the 1930s and 1940s were communal or not, they were no supporters of the Hindu landlords and the bhadralok (Tajul Hashmi). Some historians have argued that Muslim rent receivers were considered part of the peasant community but not Hindus in a similar economic position because of acceptance of insider exploitation (Partha Chatterjee). Anti-landlord and anti-moneylender legislation supported by the Krishak Praja party was viewed by Hindu bhadralok as anti-Hindu and communal. Radical initiatives were often seen in terms of their impact on specific communities. Advocates of Pakistan advised Muslim peasants during the Tebhaga movement: ‘why agitate for a larger share of the crop when under Pakistan you would have it all?’ For their part, the Hindu communalists reminded peasants of the plight of their co-religionists in Noakhali. The call for Direct Action by the League led to a bloodbath in Calcutta in 1946 and killings in East Bengal strengthened fears of Muslim majority rule in a united Bengal.

There is a persistent belief that a mass movement in 1946-47 could have dissolved the communal tensions and a last anti-imperialist struggle could have helped to bring about national unity. Officers and soldiers of the Indian National Army created by Subhas Chandra Bose inspired Indians from

all regions and communities, particularly in Punjab and Bengal. The postwar discontent was leading to peasant movements and protests in Bengal, Andhra and elsewhere. The grievances of the soldiers in the British Indian Army posted overseas and the mutiny of the naval ratings in 1946 led to hopes of a popular struggle against an emasculated British government in India. Although there were mass demonstrations in support of the INA officers and soldiers, the communal polarisation had also grown quite substantial. Some historians have noted the tendency of some peasant radicals to participate in communal movements. Others have observed that supporters of the INA, and some soldiers as well, were involved in communal violence during August 1946 in Calcutta.

The social discontent of the post-war period in combination with the communal polarisation did not bode well for an anti-imperialist struggle to combat the idea of Pakistan. Muslim mass contact had not worked well in the 1930s before the Muslim League had demonstrated its electoral strength. Any movement launched in a period of social tensions of the post-war years was bound to exceed the limits of non-violence prescribed by Gandhi. Therefore the option of a mass movement was not accepted by Gandhi. A movement launched by the left nationalists, with or without the support of the Congress, was unlikely to break the communal impasse produced by the fear of Hindu and Muslim majority rule. Members of the Muslim middle class and the capitalists had realised that a separate state was bound to give them a distinct advantage and they were unlikely to forego it. In Bengal not only did Muslim merchants like Ispahani favour Pakistan but the Marwaris of Calcutta also wanted to be free of Muslim domination (Claude Markovits). The left wing nationalists were too weak to influence the outcome of any mass movement and there were clear material and cultural rewards that members of the Muslim elite of Punjab and Bengal were unwilling to forego. The East Bengal assembly, however, voted against the partition of Bengal.

According to Joya Chatterjee, a section of the Hindu elite and the Congress were willing to go to any extent to escape the Muslim majority rule.

They wanted to remain in power in the newly carved Hindu majority state of Bengal. At the time of the drawing up of the boundary of West Bengal, the Congress wanted to create a state “with an unequivocal Hindu majority, containing as few Muslims as possible. In Punjab the problem of settling the demobilised soldiers would have posed a problem for peace as well as communal harmony if there was a confrontation between rival communities for dominance after the rout of the Unionist party. Therefore, the chances of a mass movement overcoming the problems posed by the demand for Pakistan were rather limited, but cannot be completely ruled out. The differences between him and the radicals and the left were too substantial for Gandhi to overlook when he suggested to the AICC that the Congress Working Committee leadership should be opposed and removed.

Self Assessment Questions

S.N.	Questions (5 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Write a short note on the early political activities of Gandhi.	CO1	PO1	K1
2	Explain the causes of the Rowlatt Satyagraha.	CO2	PO2	K3
3	Describe the objectives of the Non-Cooperation Movement.	CO2	PO1	K2
4	Write a note on the role of the Swarajists in Indian politics.	CO3	PO3	K2
5	Explain the significance of the Simon Commission.	CO4	PO2	K2
6	Write a short note on the Round Table Conferences.	CO4	PO2	K1
7	Describe the Civil Disobedience Movement and British repression.	CO5	PO3	K2
S.N.	Questions (8 Marks)	LOCF Mapping		
1	Explain the early political activities of Gandhi in the national movement.	CO1	PO2	K3
2	Discuss the causes and impact of the Rowlatt Satyagraha.	CO2	PO3	K4
3	Analyse the objectives and significance of the Non-Cooperation Movement.	CO2	PO3	K4
4	Examine the role of the Swarajists in the national movement.	CO3	PO3	K4
5	Discuss the circumstances and reactions to the Simon Commission.	CO4	PO3	K4
6	Explain the importance of the Round Table Conferences.	CO4	PO3	K43
7	Analyse the causes and impact of the Civil Disobedience Movement.	CO5	PO4	K4
8	Examine the features of the Government of India Act 1935 and the working of provincial ministries.	CO5	PO4	K3
9	Discuss the growth of socialist ideas and Congress involvement in world affairs.	CO4	PO4	K4
10	Analyse the causes for the growth of communalism in India.	CO5	PO4	K4

Recommended Readings

- Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar, *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 2006
- Chandra, Bipan, et. al., ed., *India's Struggle for Independence*, Penguin Random House India, New Delhi, 2016
- Grover, B.L. and Alka Mehta, ed., *A New Look at Modern Indian History: From 1707 to the Modern Times*, S. Chand & Co. Ltd., New Delhi, 2018
- Masselos, Jim, *Indian Nationalism: A History*, New Dawn Press, 2005
- Sarkar, Sumit, *Modern India, 1885-1947*, Laxmi Pub., New Delhi, 2008

References

1. Chand, Tara, *History of Freedom Movement in India, Vol. I - IV*, Pub. Div., New Delhi, 2017
2. Dutt, R.P., *India Today*, Read Books, 2008
3. Hasan, Mushirul, ed., *India's Partition - Process Strategy and Mobilization*, OUP, New Delhi, 1993
4. Mehrotra, S.R., *The emergence of the Indian National Congress*, Rupa & Co., 2007
5. Sitaramayya, Pattabhi B., *The History of Indian National Congress, 1885-1935*, Indian National Congress Working Committee, 1935
6. Sitaramayya, Pattabhi B., *The History of Indian National Congress, 1935-1947*, Padma Pub., 1947

Course Outcomes:

CO 1 –Evaluate the impact of British imperialism.

CO 2 –Examine the nature of early resistance against British rule in India.

CO 3 - Compare the relative merits of different methods of anti-British struggle

CO 4 –Evaluate the Gandhian non-cooperation movement and its influence on the masses.

CO 5 - Explain the process of partition

CO Mapping with Programme Outcomes

	PO 1	PO 2	PO 3	PO 4	PO 5	PO 6	PO 7	PO 8
CO 1	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3
CO 2	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3
CO 3	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3
CO 4	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	3
CO 5	3	3	2	2	3	3	2	3
Total	15	15	10	10	15	14	10	15
Average	3	3	2	2	3	2.8	2	3

S-Strong (3)**M-Medium (2)****L-Low (1)****CO Mapping with Programme Specific Outcomes**

	PSO 1	PSO 2	PSO 3	PSO 4	PSO 5
CO 1	3	3	2	3	2
CO 2	3	3	3	3	3
CO 3	3	3	3	3	3
CO 4	3	3	3	3	3
CO 5	3	3	2	3	2
Total	15	15	13	15	13
Average	3	3	2.6	3	2.6

S-Strong(3)**M-Medium (2)****L-Low (1)**