

APPOLO STUDY CENTRE

MODERN INDIA

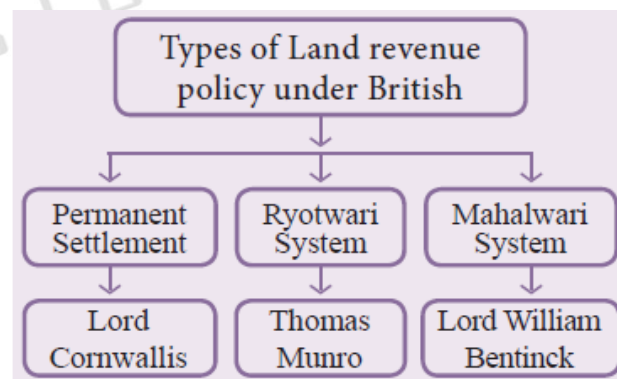
Effect Of British Rule On Socio Economic Factors

8 th std	Unit - 3	Rural Life and Society
11 th std	Unit - 17	Effects of British Rule- (17.5 -17.9)
12 th std	Unit - 1	Rise of Nationalism in India- (1.1-1.4)

8th std

Unit - 3. Rural Life and Society

The Land Revenue Policy under the British



Permanent Settlement

When Robert Clive obtained the Diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa in 1765, there used to be an annual settlement (of land revenue). Warren Hastings changed it from annual to quinquennial (five-yearly) and back to annual again. During the time of Cornwallis, a ten years' (decennial) settlement was introduced in 1793 and it was known Permanent Settlement. Permanent settlement were made in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Varanasi division

of U.P., and Northern Karnataka, which roughly covered 19 percent of the total area of British India. It was known by different names like Zamindari, Jagirdari, Malguzari and Biswedari.

Salient Features of the Permanent Settlement

- ✓ The Zamindars were recognised as the owners of land as long as they paid the revenue to the East India Company regularly.
- ✓ The Zamindars acted as the agent of the Government for the collection of revenue from the cultivators.
- ✓ The amount of revenue that the Zamindars had to pay to the Company was firmly fixed and would not be raised under any circumstances.
- ✓ They gave 10/11 of the revenue collected by them from the cultivator to the Government.
- ✓ The Zamindars would grant patta (written agreements) to the ryots. The ryots became tenants since they were considered the tillers of the soil.
- ✓ All judicial powers were taken away from the Zamindars.

Merits

- ✓ Under this system many of the waste lands and forests became cultivable lands.
- ✓ The Zamindars became the owner of the land.
- ✓ The Zamindars were made free from the responsibility of providing justice.
- ✓ The Zamindars remained faithful to the British Government.
- ✓ This system secured a fixed and stable income for the British Government.

Demerits

- ✓ The British Government had no direct contact with the cultivators.
- ✓ The rights of the cultivators were ignored and they were left at the mercy of the Zamindars.
- ✓ The peasants were almost treated as serfs.
- ✓ This system was made the Zamindars lethargic and luxurious.
- ✓ Many conflicts between the zamindars and the peasants arose in rural Bengal.

Ryotwari system

Ryotwari system was introduced by Thomas Munro and Captain Read in 1820. Major areas of introduction of Ryotwari system included Madras, Bombay, parts of Assam, and Coorg provinces of British India. By Ryotwari system the rights of ownership was handed over to the peasants. British government collected taxes directly from the peasants. Initially, one-half of the estimated produce was fixed as rent. This assessment was reduced to one-third of the produce by Thomas Munro. The revenue was based on the basis of the soil and the nature of the crop. Rents would be periodically revised, generally after 20 to 30 years. The position of the cultivators became more secure. In this system the settlement was made between the Government and the Ryots. Infact, the Government later claimed that the land revenue was rent and not a tax.

Salient Features of the Ryotwari system

- ✓ Revenue settlement was done directly with the ryots.
- ✓ Measurement of field and an estimate of produce were calculated.
- ✓ Government fixed the demand at 45 to 55 percent of the produce.

Effects of the Ryotwari Settlement

- ✓ In most areas the land revenue fixed was excessive; the ryots were hardly left with bare maintenance even in the best of seasons.
- ✓ Under this system the government exploited the farmers instead of zamindars.

Mahalwari system

Mahalwari system, a brain child of Holt Mackenzie was modified version of the Zamindari settlement introduced in the Ganga valley, the North-West Province, parts of the Central India and Punjab in 1822. Lord William Bentinck was to suggest radical changes in the Mahalwari system by the guidance of Robert Martins Bird in 1833. Assessment of revenue was to be made on the basis of the produce of a Mahal or village. All the proprietors of a Mahal were severally and jointly responsible for the payment of revenue. Initially the state share was fixed two-thirds of the gross produce. Bentinck, therefore, reduced to fifty percent. The village as a whole, through its headman or Lambardar, was required to pay the revenue. This system was first adopted in Agra and Awadh, and later

extended to other parts of the United Provinces. The burden of all this heavy taxation finally fell on the cultivators.

Salient Features of the Mahalwari Settlement

- ✓ The Lambardar acted as intermediaries between the Government and the villagers.
- ✓ It was a village-wise assessment. One person could hold a number of villages.
- ✓ The village community was the owner of the village common land.
- ✓ The village land belonged to the village community.

Effects of the Mahalwari Settlement

- ✓ The Lambardar enjoyed privileges which was misused for their self-interest.
- ✓ This system brought no benefit to the cultivators.
- ✓ It was a modified version of the Zamindari system and benefited the upper class in villages.

Impact of the British land revenue system on the cultivators

- ✓ A common feature of all the settlements was the assessment and the maximize income from land. It resulted in increasing land sales and dispossession.
- ✓ The peasants were overburdened with taxation. Due to the tax burden and famines, in general, the people suffered in poverty and burdened with debts. They had to seek the moneylenders who became rich and acquired lands from the peasants.
- ✓ The Zamindars, money-lenders and lawyers exploited the poor peasants.
- ✓ The stability and continuity of the Indian villages was shaken.
- ✓ Cottage industries disappeared on account of the import of British goods and the peasants had nothing to supplement their income.
- ✓ The old body of custom was replaced by new apparatus of law, courts, fees, lawyers and formal procedures.
- ✓ The British policy proved advantageous only to the government of a privileged section of the society at the cost of the cultivators who were the rightful owners of their lands and claimants of the larger share of the produce.

Peasants Revolts

The British rule in India brought about many changes in the agrarian system in the country. The old agrarian system collapsed and under the new system, the ownership of land was conferred on the Zamindars. They tried to extract as much as they could from the cultivators of land. The life of the peasants was extremely miserable. The various peasant movements and uprisings during the 19th and 20th centuries were in the nature of a protest against of the existing conditions under which their exploitation knew no limits.

The Santhal Rebellion (1855-56)

The first revolt which can be regarded as peasants' revolt was the Santhal Rebellion in 1855-56. The land near the hills of Rajmahal in Bihar was cultivated by the Santhals. The landlords and money-lenders from the cities took advantage of their ignorance and began grabbing their lands. This created bitter resentment among them leading to their armed uprising in 1855. Consequently, under the belief of a divine order, around 10,000 Santals gathered under two Santhal brothers, Siddhu and Kanhu, to free their country of the foreign oppressors and set up a government of their own. The rebellion assumed a formidable shape within a month. The houses of the European planters, British officers, railway engineers, zamindars and money-lenders were attacked. The rebellion continued till February 1856, when the rebel leaders were captured and the movement was put down with a heavy hand. The government declared the Parganas inhabited by them as SanthalParganas so that their lands and identity could be safeguarded from external encroachments.

Indigo Revolt (1859-60)

The Bengal indigo cultivators strike was the most militant and widespread peasant uprisings. The European indigo planters compelled the tenant farmers to grow indigo at terms highly disadvantageous to the farmers. The tenant farmer was forced to sell it cheap to the planter and accepted advances from the planter that benefitted the latter. There were also cases of kidnapping, looting, flogging and burning. Led by DigambarBiswas and BishnuCharanBiswas, the ryots of Nadia district gave up indigo cultivation in September 1859. Factories were burnt down and the revolt spread. To take control of the situation, the Government set up an indigo commission in 1860 whose recommendations formed part of the Act VI of 1862. The indigo planters of Bengal, however, moved on to settle in

Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The newspaper, Hindu Patriot brought to light the misery of the cultivators several times. Dinabandhu Mitra wrote a drama, Nil-Darpan, in Bengali with a view to draw the attention of the people and the government towards the misery of the indigo-cultivators.

Pabna Revolt (1873-76)

Pabna Peasant Uprising was a resistance movement by the peasants against the oppression of the Zamindars. It originated in the Yusufshahipargana of Pabna in Bengal. It was led by Keshab Chandra Roy. The zamindars routinely collected money from the peasants by the illegal means of forced levy, abwabs, enhanced rent and so on. Peasants were often evicted from land on the pretext of non-payment of rent.

Large crowds of peasants gathered and marched through villages frightening the zamindars and appealing to other peasants to join with them. Funds were raised from the ryots to meet the costs. The struggle gradually spread throughout Pabna and then to the other districts of East Bengal. Everywhere agrarian leagues were organized. The main form of struggle was that of legal resistance. There was very little violence. It occurred only when the zamindars tried to compel the ryots to submit to their terms by force. There were only a few cases of looting of the houses of the zamindars. A few attacks on police stations took place and the peasants also resisted attempts to execute court decrees. Hardly zamindars or zamindar's agent were killed or seriously injured. In the course of the movement, the ryots developed a strong awareness of the law and their legal rights and the ability to combine and form associations for peaceful agitation.

Deccan Riots (1875)

In 1875, the peasant revolted in the district of Poona, that event has been called the 'Deccan Riots'. The peasants revolted primarily against the oppression of local moneylenders who were grabbing their lands systematically. The uprising started from a village in Poona district when the village people forced out a local moneylender from the village and captured his property. Gradually, the uprising spread over 33 villages and the peasants looted the property of Marwari Sahukars. The uprising turned into violent when the Sahukars took help of the police. It was suppressed only when the army was called to control it. However, it resulted in passing

of the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act' which removed some of the most serious grievances of the peasants.

Punjab Peasant Movement (1890-1900)

The peasants of the Punjab agitated to prevent the rapid alienation of their lands to the urban moneylenders for failure to pay debts. The Government of India did not want any revolt in that province which provided a large number of soldiers to the British army in India. In order to protect the peasants of the Punjab, the Punjab Land Alienation Act was passed in 1900 "as an experimental measure" to be extended to the rest of India if it worked successfully in the Punjab. The Act divided the population of the Punjab into three categories viz., the agricultural classes, the statutory agriculturist class and the rest of the population including the moneylenders. Restrictions were imposed on the sale and mortgage of the land from the first category to the other two categories.

Champan Satyagraha (1917-18)

The European planters of Champan in Bihar resorted to illegal and inhuman methods of indigo cultivation at a cost which was wholly unjust. Under the Tinkathia system in Champan, the peasants were bound by law to grow indigo on 3/20 part of their land and send the same to the British planters at prices fixed by them. They were liable to unlawful extortion and oppression by the planters. Mahatma Gandhi took up their cause. The Government appointed an enquiry commission of which Mahatma Gandhi was a member. The grievances of the peasants were enquired and ultimately the Champan Agrarian Act was passed in May 1918.

Kheda (Kaira) Satyagraha (1918)

In the Kheda District of Gujarat, due to constant famines, agriculture failed in 1918, but the officers insisted on collection of full land revenue. The local peasants, therefore, started a 'no-tax' movement in Kheda district in 1918. Gandhi accepted the leadership of this movement. Gandhiji organised the peasants to offer Satyagraha and opposed official insistence on full collection of oppressive land revenue despite the conditions of famine. He inspired the peasants to be fearless and face all consequences. The response to his call was unprecedented and the government had to bow to a settlement with the peasants. Sardar Vallabhai Patel emerged as an important leader of the Indian freedom struggle during this period.

Moplah Rebellion (1921)

The Muslim Moplah (or Moplah) peasants of Malabar (Kerala) was suppressed and exploited by the Hindu zamindars (Jenmis) and British government. This was the main cause of this revolt.

The Moplah peasants got momentum from the Malabar District Conference, held in April 1920. This conference supported the tenants' cause, and demanded legislations for regulating landlord-tenant relations. In August 1921, the Moplah tenants rebelled against the oppressive zamindars. In the initial phase of the rebellion, the Moplah peasants attacked the police stations, public offices, communications and houses of oppressive landlords and moneylenders. By December 1921, the government ruthlessly suppressed the Moplah rebellion. According to an official estimate, as a result of government intervention, 2337 Moplah rebels were killed, 1650 wounded and more than 45,000 captured as prisoners.

Bardoli Satyagraha (1929-30)

In 1928, the peasants of Bardoli (Gujarat) started their agitation under the leadership of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, in protest against the government's proposal to increase land revenue by 30 percent. The peasants refused to pay tax at the enhanced rate and started no-tax campaign from 12 February 1928. Many women also participated in this campaign. In 1930, the peasants of Bardoli rose to a man, refused to pay taxes, faced the auction sales and the eventual loss of almost all of their lands but refused to submit to the Government. However, all their lands were returned to them when the Congress came to power in 1937.

11th std
Unit - 17-Effects of British Rule

Reforms in Civil and Judicial Administration

Cornwallis organized company administration securing the services of William Jones, a judge and an Orientalist. He set up a machinery for the detection and punishment of crime, thereby ending the dual system of government established by Clive. The collection of revenue was separated from administration and justice. He deprived the collectors of their judicial function and confined them to revenue collection. Civil and criminal courts were thoroughly reorganized. At the top of the judicial system were the Sadar Diwani Adalat and the Sadar Nizamat Adalat. These two highest civil and criminal courts of appeal at Calcutta were presided over by the Governor General and his Council. Under them were four provincial courts of appeal at Calcutta, Deccan, Murshidabad and Patna. Each was to function under three European judges, aided by Indian advisers. Next came the District and City courts, each presided over by a European judge assisted by Indians. Every district and important city was provided with a court. At the bottom of the judicial system were courts under Indian judges, called munsifs. In civil cases, Muslim law was imposed and followed. In criminal cases, Hindu and Muslim laws were applied according to the religion of the litigants.

The biggest contribution of Cornwallis was the reform of the civil services. Cornwallis provided scope for employing capable and honest public servants. He put an end to the old tradition of the civil service wherein the Company's servants were given a small salary but were permitted to trade. Cornwallis appointed people solely on merit but considered that efficiency required the exclusion of Indians from the Company's service.

Every district was divided into thanas (police circles). Each thana was under adaroga, an Indian officer. Cornwallis' police system was further improved under Warren Hastings. The rigid separation of judicial and revenue powers was given up. The Collector began to function as Magistrate as well.

Cornwallis, who toned up the civil and criminal administration, however, did not pay adequate attention to the education of Company

servants. It was Wellesley who emphasized the need for educating and training them. Wellesley thought the civilians should have knowledge of the languages, laws, customs and manners and history of India, in addition to their liberal education in England. With this object, the College of Fort William was founded at Calcutta in 1800. A three year course of study was provided for the Company's civil servants. The college was staffed by European professors and eighty Indian pundits. This became the Oriental School for Bengal civilians. In 1806 the East India College was established in England. In Madras, the College of Fort St George was set up by F.W. Ellis in 1812 on the lines of College of Fort William. It was here that the theory that the South Indian languages belonged to a separate family of languages independent of Sanskrit was formulated.

Education and Development under Company Rule

Education

The establishment of a Madrasa by a learned maulvi with the support of Warren Hastings was the beginning of initiatives of British government to promote education. This Madrasa started with forty stipendiary students. What Warren Hastings had done for the Muslims, his successor was prepared to do for the Hindus. Cornwallis established a Sanskrit college (1791) in Benares. The successive governors in the next twenty years, however, did nothing to follow it up.

Company held the view that it was not desirable in its own interests to encourage education in India. In 1813, when the Company Charter was renewed, it contained a clause intended to force on the Company the initiative for a regular educational policy. Hastings encouraged the foundation of vernacular schools by missionaries. He was the patron of the Hindu College, established at Calcutta in 1817, supported by the Indian public for the teaching of English and of Western science. The cause of education was further promoted by missionaries like Alexander Duff. Thanks to Hastings' liberal outlook, press censorship instituted in 1799 was abolished. It was in such an atmosphere that the Bengali Weekly, the Samachar Darpan was started in 1818.

The Charter of 1833 emphasized the development of the country primarily in the interest of its inhabitants. William Bentinck, appointed the first Governor General of united India reformed the society by suppressing thuggee (robbery and murder committed by the thugs in accordance with

their ritual), abolishing sati and introducing English as the medium of instruction in schools and colleges. This he thought would facilitate Indianization of the services. Bentinck founded the Calcutta Medical College in March 1835. The students of this college were sent to London in 1844 to complete their studies. Ten years after the establishment of the Calcutta Medical College, the Grant Medical College in Bombay was founded in 1845. In 1847 the Thomason Engineering College at Roorkee (now IIT Roorkee) came into existence. In 1849 a school for girls was founded in Calcutta.

Macaulay came to India as a law member in 1835. He was appointed President of the Board of Education. He had a poor opinion of indigenous learning. Macaulay recommended and government accepted to make English the literary and official language of India.

Dalhousie showed keen interest in education. He approved of the system of vernacular education designed by James Thomason, Lieutenant Governor of the North-Western Provinces (1843- 53). The Educational Dispatch of Charles Wood (1854) outlined a comprehensive scheme of education—primary, secondary, collegiate. Departments of Public Instruction and a university for each of the three Presidencies were organized for the purpose. University of Madras was established under this plan (1857), along with universities in Bombay and Calcutta. Dalhousie modified the policy of Macaulay by encouraging educational institutions in vernaculars too. He also agreed to the principle of grants-in-aid to private effort, irrespective of caste or creed.

Macaulay found nothing good in Indian literature, philosophy and medicine. Macaulay, in his minute of 1835 wrote: 'I have no knowledge of either Sanskrit or Arabic. But I have read translations of the most celebrated Arabic and Sanskrit works. I have conversed both here and at home with men distinguished by their proficiency in the Eastern tongues. I have never found one among them who could deny that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia.

The question now before us is simply whether, when it is in our power to teach this language, we shall teach languages in which, by universal confession, there are no books on any subject which deserve to be compared to our own, whether, when we can teach European science, we shall teach systems which, by universal confession, wherever they differ from those of Europe differ for the worse, and whether, when we can

patronize sound philosophy and true history, we shall countenance, at the public expense, medical doctrines which would disgrace an English farrier, astronomy which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding school, history abounding with kings thirty feet high and reigns thirty thousand years long, and geography made of seas of treacle and seas of butter.

It is said that the Sanscrit and the Arabic are the languages in which the sacred books of a hundred millions of people are written, and that they are on that account entitled to peculiar encouragement. Assuredly it is the duty of the British Government in India to be not only tolerant but neutral on all religious questions. ... We abstain, and I trust shall always abstain, from giving any public encouragement to those who are engaged in the work of converting the natives to Christianity. And while we act thus, can we reasonably or decently bribe men, out of the revenues of the State, to waste their youth in learning how they are to purify themselves after touching an ass or what texts of the Vedas they are to repeat to expiate the crime of killing a goat?

We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern, -a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit vehicles for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population.

Efforts at Safety and Developmental Measures

Pindari War

Pindaris were freebooters composed of both Muslim and Hindu bands. The Subsidiary Alliance of the Company had led to the disbandment of thousands of soldiers and most of them joined them and swelled their numbers in central India. The British proclaimed Pindari War. But it turned out to be a war against Marathas and the outcome of this prolonged war (1811 to 1818) was that the whole of Central India came under British rule. William Bentinck The villagers burning themselves to avoid Pindaris

Suppression of Thuggee

The Thugs were robbers operating between Delhi and Agra from the fourteenth century. They were bound together by oaths and ritual and murdered unsuspecting travellers in the name of the goddess Kali. Bentinck placed William Sleeman in charge of the operation to eliminate the Thuggee menace. Between 1831 and 1837 more than three thousand Thugs were convicted. Five hundred approvers. By 1860 the problem of thuggee had ceased to exist.

Abolition of Sati

Bentinck showed great courage and humanity by his decision to abolish sati, the practice of burning widows alive with the corpses of their husbands. Previous governors-general were reluctant to prohibit the custom as interference in religion but Bentinck enacted a law (Sati Abolition Act, 1829) to put an end to this practice. Raja Rammohan Roy's campaigns and efforts played a decisive part in getting this inhuman practice abolished.

Railways, Postal & Telegraph Systems

The first serious proposal for constructing railways was made by the European business community. The Directors were doubtful whether railways could be successfully built in India. Governor General Dalhousie however persuaded them arguing that the railways would bring very considerable economic advantage. Yet before the Great Rebellion less than three hundred miles of track had been laid.

Though several proposals for the laying of telegraph communication between India and London were put forward, the telegraph service was inaugurated only in 1854. During the Great Rebellion of 1857 its importance was realised. In the aftermath of 1857, it became an urgent necessity. The time of communication between London and Calcutta came down from several days to twenty eight minutes. With the opening of Suez Canal in 1869, the journey between Europe and India was reduced by some 4000 miles. By 1870 the government of British India was in effective contact with Secretary of State, India Office, London. Subsequently, with the exception of Curzon, Governor Generals were reluctant to do anything without seeking the permission of Whitehall, the headquarters of the East India Company.

Irrigation

The British neglected irrigation. The irrigation channels and tanks built by Indian rulers fell into disuse and there was little effort on the part of the Company to undertake repairs or renovation works. In Madras, as we will see in the following section, a few irrigation works were carried out because of the personal enthusiasm of Arthur Cotton, an Engineering officer. Against much opposition, Cotton built a dam across the Kollidam (Coleroon) in 1836. In 1853, a dam across the Krishna River had also begun. In the north, before the takeover of India by the Crown, Jumna canal was completed in 1830 and by 1857 the Ganges canal had been extended to nearly 450 miles. In the Punjab area the Bari Doab canal had been excavated by 1856. But the canal water contributed to soil salinity and water logging causing great ecological distress.

Forests

Land revenue was the mainstay of the British Indian government's fiscal system. Therefore, in their effort to extend the areas of cultivable land, forests were destroyed. Zamins were created out of Jungle Mahal forests and auctioned off for regular cultivation. The original inhabitants of this region, the Santhals were evicted. Therefore it was the Santhals who were the first tribal group to resist the British rule in India. Slope cultivation was encouraged in the hilly and mountainous tracts. Land was provided to European enterprises at a throwaway price for slope cultivation. Further, in their enthusiasm to try plantation crops, zamindars and Indian rulers destroyed the forests. Coffee, for instance, did not grow in many places. Yet in the process of attempting coffee cultivation large tracts of virgin forests were destroyed. Timber came to be exploited with the massive construction of the railway system. In the 1870s, it was calculated that every year one million sleepers were needed to build railway tracks. Indian trees, particularly sal, deodar, and teak, were preferred for their strength over other Indian timbers. These three species were intensively exploited. Much sal was extracted from the forests of the Jungle Mahals of West Bengal and Bihar. Timber went to England too for the building of railways. The myth that India's forests were inexhaustible was exploded. It was in this background that the colonial state, in order to manage and control forest resources, started the Forest Department and passed the Indian Forest Act, 1865. This was a draconian act which restricted the use of forest resources by indigenous groups who resented it. In order to contain protest and

resistance the British enacted the dreaded Criminal Tribes Act, 1871. During the entire colonial period there were frequent insurrections by tribal people against the colonial state. The legacy of the colonial forest acts continues to haunt contemporary times as well.

Deindustrialization and Drain of Wealth

Europe had always imported more from the East than was exported here. There was little that the East required from the West in return for the spices, silks, calicos, jewels and the like it sent there. The industrial revolution in textile production that took place in England reversed this relationship for the first time. India was systematically de-industrialized. Rather than being the world's leading exporter of cloth and textiles, India became a market for Lancashire cottons. Cheap machine-made British goods led to the flooding of Indian markets. Indian cotton piece goods began to lose ground gradually given that machine-made goods were more durable and cost less.

The Company government, in the first three decades, followed a policy of allowing unrestricted flow of imports of British goods into India. Without any import duty English goods were much cheaper than domestic products. At the same time, Indian manufactures were shut out from the British market by high protective duties. This policy ruined the Indian weavers and traders.

Contrasting Muslim rule with British governance William Bentinck himself acknowledged the benevolent nature of the former. 'In many respects', Bentinck wrote, 'the Muhammedans surpassed our rule; they settled in the countries which they conquered; they intermarried with the natives; they admitted them to all privileges, the interests and sympathies of the conquerors and conquered became identical. Our policy on the contrary, has been the reverse of this- cold, selfish and unfeeling.'

Military and civil administrative costs in British India consumed an average of eighty per cent of the budget, leaving twenty per cent to be divided among the various departments concerned. Agriculture was left to its deteriorating condition. Irrigation was neglected. Arthur Cotton wanted the colonial state to give priority to irrigation rather than building railway network, but his suggestion was turned down by the imperial government in England. Outbreak of successive famines in the last quarter of the

nineteenth century ultimately prompted the government under British Crown to initiate some steps for the building of dams.

The Ryotwari system intended to create a large body of independent peasants, who would be protected from the “corrupt and faithless zamindar,” however, in reality achieved the contrary result of strengthening the position of the big landlords. The government showed little interest in protecting the interests of tenants in ryotwari areas. Since land was the main source of revenue, its rigorous collection became an imperative policy of the British. The Torture Commission, appointed by the Company government in Madras in its report presented in 1855 exposed the atrocities perpetrated by the Indian revenue and police officials in the process of collecting land tax from the cultivators. The Torture Act which justified forcible collections of land revenue was abolished only after 1858.

Famines and Indentured labour

Famine, though no stranger to India, increased in frequency and deadliness with the advent of British colonial rule. Between 1800 and 1825, there were only four famines. But in the last quarter of the century there were 22 famines. It is estimated that over five million died. By 1901, Romesh Chunder Dutt, a former ICS officer and a staunch nationalist, enumerated 10 mass famines since the 1860s, putting the total death toll at 15 million.

The laissez faire (non-intervention) principles to which the colonial state was committed since 1833 was applied to famines also. For years, western-educated Indians had argued that British rule was grossly impoverishing India. The Orissa famine, in which one third of the population died of starvation and disease, served as a patent proof of this thesis. It prompted nationalist Dadabhai Naoroji, to begin his lifelong investigations into Indian poverty.

An eye witness (an Englishman) of the terrible famine in the Guntur district of Madras Presidency in 1833 said: ‘It is dreadful to see what revolting food human beings may be driven to partake of. Dead dogs and horses are greedily devoured by these surviving wretches; and the other day, an unfortunate donkey having strayed from the fort, they fell upon him like a pack of wolves, tore him limb from limb and devoured him on the spot.’

Madras Famine of 1876-78: The failure of two successive monsoons caused a severe famine in the Madras Presidency during 1876-78. The viceroy Lytton adopted a hands-off approach similar to that followed in Orissa. 3.5 million People died in the presidency.

The introduction of plantation crops and slope cultivation in Ceylon, Mauritius, Fiji, Malaya, the Caribbean islands, Natal and South Africa required enormous labour. Initially slave labour was used for this purpose. But after the Company government abolished slavery in India (1843), the system of indentured was used. Under this system, labourers were hired on contract for a period of five years (indenture) and they could return to their homeland with passage paid at the end. Many impoverished peasants and weavers went hoping to earn some money. But in effect it was worse than slave labour. The colonial state allowed agents (kanganis) to trick or kidnap indigent landless labourers. 150 indenture labourers “the innocent victims of a new system of slavery” were first taken from Thanjavur in 1828 to the new British coffee plantations in Ceylon. All of them deserted. Therefore, recruitment coupled with criminal laws prohibiting desertion started in the 1830s. People courted this new form of slavery to escape starvation deaths.

In 1815, the Governor of Madras received a communication from the Governor of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) asking for coolies to work on the coffee plantations. The Madras Governor forwarded this letter to the collector of Thanjavur, who after enquiry reported back saying that the people were very much attached to the soil and hence unless some incentive was provided it was not easy to make them move out of their native soil. But the outbreak of two famines (1833 and 1843) forced the people, without any prompting from the government, to leave for Ceylon to work as coolies in coffee and tea plantations under indentured labour system. During 1843-1868, nearly 1.5 million people (1,444,407) had gone from Madras to Ceylon as indentured labourers.

Drain of Wealth

Dadabhai Naoroji in his Poverty and Un- British Rule in India explained how the English rulers were different from the earlier invaders. He said, in the case of former foreign invaders, they plundered and went back. They made, no doubt, great wounds, but India, with her industry, revived and healed the wounds. When the invaders became rulers of the country they settled down in it; whatever was the condition of their rule,

there was at least no material or moral drain in the county. But with the English the case was different. There are the great wounds of the first wars in the burden of the public debt and those wounds are kept perpetually open and widening by draining away the lifeblood in a continuous stream. The former rulers were like butchers hacking here and there, but the English with their scientific scalpel cut to the very heart, and yet, there is no wound to be seen, and soon the plaster of the high talk of civilization, progress and what not covers up the wound.

- Naoroji argued that a great deal of wealth was drained to England in the form of Home Charges. The following constituted the Home Charges:
 - Incentive to the shareholders of the Company
 - Savings and the salaries of European officials, European traders and Planters remitted to England.
 - Pensions to those who retired from civil and military services.
 - The salaries of the staff and the Secretary to Home Government, India Office at London
 - Expenses on wars fought in India and interests for the loans obtained from the banks for the conduct of wars and for the building of railroads.

India's loan to England was 130 million pounds in 1837. It increased to 220 million pounds, of this 18 percent was for conducting wars waged against Afghanistan and Burma. A government report of 1908 informed that on account of railways, India had incurred a debt of 177.5 million pounds. In order to give outlet to the saturated capital the British secured the capital from private enterprise in England. In the form of guaranteed interest of 5 percent, the Colonial state promised to repay the interest in sterling. There was a loss of 220 million pounds to India on this score.

Calling this as drain of wealth Dadabhai Naoroji lamented that had the money drained to England remained in the pockets of Indians, India would have economically progressed. Even Gazni Mahmud's pillage stopped after eighteen times but the British plunder seemed to be unending, he quipped. R.C. Dutt estimated that during the last decade of the reign of Queen Victoria (1891-1901), of the total income 647 pounds, 159 million pounds drained to England. This worked to 44 percent of the total income of the country.



12th Histroy

Unit - 1- Rise of Nationalism in India

Broadly, nationalism means loyalty and devotion to a nation. It is a consciousness or tendency to exalt and place one nation above all others, emphasising promotion of its culture and interests as opposed to those of other nations

Socio-economic Background

(a) Implications of the New Land Tenures

The British destroyed the traditional basis of Indian land system. In the pre-British days, the land revenue was realised by sharing the actual crop with the cultivators. The British fixed the land revenue in cash without any regard to various contingencies, such as failure of crops, fall in prices and droughts or floods. Moreover, the practice of sale in settlement of debt encouraged money lenders to advance money to landholders and resorting to every kind of trickery to rob them of their property.

There were also two other major implications of the new land settlements introduced by the East India Company. They institutionalised the commodification of land and commercialisation of agriculture in India. As mentioned earlier, there was no private property in land in pre-British era. Now, land became a commodity that could be transferred either by way of buying and selling or by way of the administration taking over land from holders, in lieu of default on payment of tax/rent. Land taken over in such cases was auctioned off to another bidder. This created a new class of absentee landlords who lived in the cities and extracted revenue from the lands without actually living on the lands. In the traditional agricultural set-up, the villagers produced largely for their consumption among themselves. After the new land settlements, agricultural produce was predominantly for the market.

The commodification of land and commercialisation of agriculture did not improve the lives and conditions of the peasants. Instead, this created discontent among the peasantry and made them restive. These peasants later on turned against the imperialists and their collaborators.

(b) Laissez Faire Policy and De-industrialization: Impact on Indian Artisans

The policy of the Company in the wake of Industrial Revolution in England resulted in the de-industrialization of India. This continued until the beginning of the World War I. The British Government pursued a policy of free trade or laissez faire. Raw materials like cotton, jute and silks from India were taken to Britain. The finished products made from those raw materials were then transported back to the Indian markets. Mass production with the help of technological advancement enabled them to flood the Indian market with their goods. It was available at a comparatively cheaper price than the Indian handloom cloth. Prior to the arrival of the British, India was known for its handloom products and handicrafts. It commanded a good world market. However, as a result of the colonial policy, gradually Indian handloom products and handicrafts lost their market, domestic as well as international. Import of English articles into India threw the weavers, the cotton dressers, the carpenters, the blacksmiths and the shoemakers out of employment. India became a procurement area for the raw material and the farmers were forced to produce industrial crops like indigo and other cash crops like cotton for use in British factories. Due to this shift, subsistence agriculture, which was the mainstay for several hundred years, suffered leading to food scarcity.

The Indigo revolt of 1859-60 was one of the responses from the Indian farmer to the oppressive policy of the British. Indian tenants were forced to grow indigo by their planters who were mostly Europeans. Used to dye the clothes indigo was in high demand in Europe. Peasants were forced to accept meagre amounts as advance and enter into unfair contracts. Once a peasant accepted the contract, he had no option but to grow indigo on his land. The price paid by the planter was far lower than the market price. Many a times, the peasants could not even pay their land revenue dues. Hoping that the authorities would address their concerns, the peasants wrote several petitions to authorities and organised peaceful protests. As their plea for reform went in vain, they revolted by refusing to accept any further advances and enter into new contracts. Peasants, through the Indigo revolt of 1859-60, were able to force the planters to withdraw from northern-Bengal.

(c) Famines and Emigration of Indians to Overseas British Colonies **Famines**

As India became increasingly de-industrialised and weavers and artisans engaged in handicrafts were thrown out of employment, there were recurrent famines due to the neglect of irrigation and oppressive taxation on land. Before the arrival of the British, Indian rulers had ameliorated the difficulties of the populace in times of famines by providing tax relief, regulating the grain prices and banning food exports from famine-hit areas. But the British extended their policy of non-intervention (*laissez faire*) even to famines. As a result, millions of people died of starvation during the Raj. It has been estimated that between 1770 and 1900, twenty five million Indians died in famines. William Digby, the editor of Madras Times, pointed out that during 1793-1900 alone an estimated five million people had died in all the wars around the world, whereas in just ten years (1891-1900), nineteen million had died in India in famines alone.

Sadly when people were dying of starvation millions of tonnes of wheat was exported to Britain. During the 1866 Orissa Famine, for instance, while a million and a half people starved to death, the British exported 200 million pounds of rice to Britain. The Orissa Famine prompted nationalist Dadabhai Naoroji to begin his lifelong investigations into Indian poverty. The failure of two successive monsoons caused a severe famine in the Madras Presidency during 1876-78. The viceroy Lytton adopted a hands-off approach similar to that followed in Orissa. An estimated 3.5 million people died in the Madras presidency.

Indentured Labour

The introduction of plantation crops such as coffee, tea and sugar in Empire colonies such as Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Mauritius, Fiji, Malaya, the Caribbean islands, and South Africa required enormous labour. In 1815, the Governor of Madras received a communication from the Governor of Ceylon asking for “coolies” to work on the coffee plantations. The Madras Governor forwarded this letter to the collector of Thanjavur, who reported that the people were very much attached to the soil and unless some incentive was provided it was not easy to make them move out of their native soil. But the outbreak of two famines (1833 and 1843) forced the people, without any prompting from the government, to leave for Ceylon to work as coolies in coffee and tea plantations under the indentured labour system. The abolition of slavery in British India in 1843 also facilitated the processes of emigration to Empire colonies. In 1837 the number of

immigrant Tamil labourers employed in Ceylon coffee estate was estimated at 10,000. The industry developed rapidly and so did the demand for Tamil labour. In 1846 its presence was estimated at 80,000 and in 1855 at 128,000 persons. In 1877, the famine year, there were nearly 380,000 Tamil labourers in Ceylon. Besides Ceylon, many Indians opted to emigrate as indentured labour to other British colonies such as Mauritius, Straits Settlements, Caribbean islands, Trinidad, Fiji and South Africa. In 1843 it was officially reported that 30,218 male and 4,307 females had entered Mauritius as indentured labourers. By the end of the century some 500,000 labourers had moved from India to Mauritius.

(a) Education in Pre-British India

Education in pre-colonial India was characterised by segmentation along religious and caste lines. Among the Hindus, Brahmins had the exclusive privilege to acquire higher religious and philosophical knowledge. They monopolised the education system and occupied positions in the society, primarily as priests and teachers. They studied in special seminaries such as Vidyalayas and Chatuspathis. The medium of instruction was Sanskrit, which was considered as the sacred language. Technical knowledge – especially in relation to architecture, metallurgy, etc. – was passed hereditarily. This came in the way of innovation. Another shortcoming of this system was that it barred women, lower castes and other under-privileged people from accessing education. The emphasis on rote learning was another impediment to innovation.

(b) Contribution of Colonial State: Macaulay System of Education

Indentured Labour: Under this penal contract system (indenture), labourers were hired for a period of five years and they could return to their homeland with passage paid at the end. Many impoverished peasants and weavers went hoping to earn some money. It turned out to be as worse than slave labour. The colonial state allowed agents (*kanganis*) to trick or kidnap indigent landless labourers. The labourers suffered terribly on the long sea voyages and many died on the way. The percentage of deaths of indentured labour during 1856-57, in a ship bound for Trinidad from Kolkata is as follows: 12.3% of all males, 18.5% of the females, 28% of the boys 36% of the girls and 55% of the infants perished.

The colonial government aided the spread of modern education in India for a different reason than educating and empowering the Indians. To administer a large colony like India, the British needed a large number of personnel to work for them. It was impossible for the British to import the educated lot, needed in such large numbers, from Britain. With this aim, the English Education Act was passed by the Council of India in 1835. T.B. Macaulay drafted this system of education introduced in India. Consequently, the colonial administration started schools, colleges and universities, imparting English and modern education, in India. Universities were established in Bombay, Madras and Calcutta in 1857. The colonial government expected this section of educated Indians to be loyal to the British and act as the pillars of the British Raj.

The British created an educated Indian middle class for their own ends but sneered at it as the Babu class. That very class, however, became the progressive intelligentsia of India and played a leading role in mobilising the people for the liberation of the country.

T. B. Macaulay was India's first law member of the Governor General in Council from 1834 to 1838. Before Macaulay arrived in India the General Committee of Public Instruction was formed in 1823 with the responsibility to guide the East India Company on the matter of education and the medium of instruction. The Committee was split into two groups. The Orientalist group advocated education in vernacular languages. The Anglicists advocated Western education in English.

Macaulay was on the side of Anglicists and wrote his famous 'Minute on Indian Education' in 1835. In this Minute, he argued for Western education in the English language. His intention behind supporting the Anglicists was that he wanted to create a class of persons from within India who would 'be Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinion, in morals and in intellect'.

(c) Role of Educated Middle Class

The economic and administrative transformation on the one side and the growth of Western education on the other gave the space for the growth of new social classes. From within these social classes, a modern Indian intelligentsia emerged. The "neo-social classes" created by the British Raj, which included the Indian trading and business communities, landlords,

money lenders, English-educated Indians employed in imperial subordinate services, lawyers and doctors, initially adopted a positive approach towards the colonial administration. However, soon they realised that their interests would be better served only in independent India. People of the said social classes began to play a prominent role in promoting patriotism amongst the people. The consciousness of these classes found articulation in a number of associations prior to the founding of the Indian National Congress at the national level.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Vivekananda, Aurobindo Ghose, Gopala Krishna Gokhale, Dadabhai Naoroji, Feroz Shah Mehta, Surendra Nath Banerjea and others who belonged to modern Indian intelligentsia led the social, religious and political movements in India. Educated Indians had exposure to ideas of nationalism, democracy, socialism, etc. articulated by John Locke, James Stuart Mill, Mazzini, Garibaldi, Rousseau, Thomas Paine, Marx and other western intellectuals. The right of a free press, the right of free speech and the right of association were the three inherent rights, which their European counterparts held dear to their heart, and the educated Indians too desired to cling to. Various forums came into existence, where people could meet and discuss the issues affecting their interests. This became possible now at the national level, due to the rapid expansion of transport network and establishment of postal, telegraph and wireless services all over India.

(d) Contribution of Missionaries

One of the earliest initiatives to impart modern education among Indians was taken up by the Christian missionaries. Inspired by the proselytizing spirit, they attacked polytheism and caste inequalities that were prevalent among the Hindus. One of the methods adopted by the missionaries, to preach Christianity, was through modern secular education. They provided opportunities to acquire education to the underprivileged and the marginalised sections, who were denied learning opportunities in the traditional education system. However only a very small fraction converted to Christianity. But the challenge posed by Christianity led to various social and religious reform movements.

Social and Religious Reforms

The English educated intelligentsia felt the need for reforming the society before involving the people in any political programmes. The reform

movements of nineteenth century are categorised as 1. Reformist movements such as the Brahma Samaj founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the Prarthana Samaj, founded by Dr Atmaram Pandurang and the Aligarh Movement, represented by Syed Ahmad Khan; 2. Revivalist movements such as the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission and the Deoband Movement. 3. There were social movements led by Jyotiba Phule in Pune, Narayana Guru and Ayyankali in Kerala and Ramalinga Adigal, Vaikunda Swamigal and later Iyothee Thassar in Tamilnadu. All these reformers and their contributions have been dealt with comprehensively in the XI Std. text book.

The reformers of nineteenth century responded to the challenge posed by Western Enlightenment knowledge based on reason. Indian national consciousness emerged as a result of the rethinking triggered by these reforms. The Brahma Samaj was founded by Ram Mohan Roy in 1828. Other socio-cultural organisations like the Prarthana Samaj (1867), the Arya Samaj (1875) were founded subsequently. Roy's initiative was followed up by reformers like Keshav Chandra Sen and Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar. Abolition of sati and child marriage and widow remarriage became the main concerns for these reformers. The Aligarh movement played a similar role among the Muslims. Slowly, organisations and associations of political nature came up in different parts of British India to vent the grievances of the people.

(a) Memories of 1857

Indian national movement dates its birth from the 1857 uprising. The outrages committed by the British army after putting down the revolt remained "un-avenged". Even the court-martial law and formalities were not observed. Officers who sat on the court martial swore that they would hang their prisoners, guilty or innocent and, if any dared to raise his voice against such indiscriminate vengeance, he was silenced by his angry colleagues. Persons condemned to death after the mockery of a trial were often tortured by soldiers before their execution, while the officers looked on approvingly. It is worth recalling what Elphinstone, Governor of Bombay Presidency, wrote to Sir John Lawrence, future Viceroy of India (1864) about the British siege of Delhi during June-September, 1857: '...A wholesale vengeance is being taken without distinction of friend or foe. As regards the looting, we have indeed surpassed Nadirshah.'

(b) Racial Discrimination

The English followed a policy of racial discrimination. The systematic exclusion of the Indians from higher official positions came to be looked upon as an anti-Indian policy measure and the resultant discontent of the Indian upper classes led the Indians to revolt against the British rule. When civil service examinations were introduced the age limit was fixed at twenty one. When Indians were making it, with a view to debarring the Indians from entering the civil services, the age limit was reduced to nineteen. Similarly, despite requests from Indian educated middle class to hold the civil service examinations simultaneously in India, the Imperial government refused to concede the request.

(c) Repressive as well as Exploitative Measures against Indians

Repressive regulations like Section 124A of the Indian Penal Code (1870), punishing attempts to excite disaffection towards the Government, and the Vernacular Press Act (1878), censoring the press, evoked protest. Abolition of custom duty on cotton manufactures imported from England and levy of excise duty on cotton fabrics manufactured in India created nationwide discontent. During the viceroyalty of Ripon the Indian judges were empowered through the Ilbert Bill to try Europeans. But in the face of resistance from the Europeans the bill was amended to suit the European interests.

(d) Role of Press

The introduction of printing press in India was an event of great significance. It helped people to spread, modern ideas of self-government, democracy, civil rights and industrialisation. The press became the critic of politics. It addressed the people on several issues affecting the country. Raja Rammohan Roy's Sambad Kaumudi (1821) in Bengali and Mirat-ul-Akbar (1822) in Persian played a progressive role in educating the people on issues of public importance. Later on a number of nationalist and vernacular news papers came to be launched to build public opinion and they did yeomen service in fostering nationalist consciousness. Among them Amrit Bazaar Patrika, The Bombay Chronicle, The Tribune, The Indian Mirror, The Hindu and Swadesamitran were prominent.

(e) Invoking India's glorious Past

Orientalists like William Jones, Charles Wilkins and Max Muller explored and translated religious, historical and literary texts from Sanskrit, Persian and Arabic into English and made them available to all. Influenced by the richness of Indian traditions and scholarship, many of the early nationalists made a fervent plea to revive the pristine glory of India. Aurobindo Ghose would write, 'The mission of Nationalism, in our view, is to recover Indian thought, Indian character, Indian perceptions, Indian energy, Indian greatness and to solve the problems that perplex the world in an Indian spirit and from the Indian standpoint.'

