

# APPOLO STUDY CENTRE

## Test -II (Material)

### Unit VII- INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT 10<sup>TH</sup> Civics - vol I (National Renaissance) Unit 2 - The world between Two World Wars

#### (b) Decolonisation in India

##### Dyarchy in Provinces

- The decolonization process started in India from the beginning of the twentieth century with the launch of the Swadeshi Movement in 1905. The outbreak of the First World War brought about rapid political as well as economic changes. In 1919, the Government of India Act introduced Dyarchy that provided for elected provincial assemblies as well as for Indian ministers to hold certain portfolios under Transferred Subjects. The Montague declaration read: 'Increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration and the gradual development of self-government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. This measure of the British government was "to buy the political peace needed to expand the tax base." The Indian National Congress rejected Dyarchy and decided to boycott the legislature.

# 10<sup>th</sup> vol - II

## Unit - 7

### Anti-Colonial Movements and The Birth of Nationalism

#### Learning Objective

##### To acquaint ourselves with

- ❖ The nature of tribal and peasant revolts against the British
- ❖ Contributory factors for the outbreak of the Great Rebellion of 1857 and the subsequent changes in the British approach to governing India
- ❖ Factors leading to the formation of the Indian National Congress and the perspectives of the early nationalists
- ❖ Divide and rule policy of the British behind the Partition of Bengal (1905) and the launch of Swadeshi movement in Bengal
- ❖ Background for the launch of Home Rule Movement

#### Introduction

- On 23 June 1757 the Nawab of Bengal Siraj-ud-daulah was defeated by the East India Company at the Battle of Plassey. The battle was orchestrated by Robert Clive, commander-in-chief of the East India Company, who managed to get the clandestine support from Mir Jafar, the uncle of Siraj-ud-daulah and the chief of the Nawab's army. Clive was helped by the Jagat Seths (moneylenders from Bengal) who were aggrieved by Siraj-ud-daulah's policy. The Battle of Plassey was followed by the plunder of Bengal. Between 1757 and 1760, the company received ₹ 22.5 million from Mir Jafar, who became the new Nawab of Bengal. The same money was later invested to propel the industrial revolution in Britain, which rapidly mechanised the British textile industry. On the other hand, India was led to the path of de-industrialisation and forced to create a market for the products manufactured in Britain. The plunder of India by the East India Company continued for another 190 years.

- After Plassey, the British adopted a policy of territorial expansion. Soon the remaining parts of the Indian subcontinent came under their control. British brought systemic changes in land revenue administration, army, police, judicial system and other institutions of governance.
- The early Indian response to colonial exploitation and the colonial political and economic domination consisted of two elements. The response in the late 18th and early 19th century was restorative in nature.
- Tribal uprisings and peasant rebellions made an attempt to restore the old order. The second response appeared in the second half of the 19th century in the form of Indian nationalism that imagined India as a nation emphasising on a consciousness of unity and national aspiration.
- In this lesson the story of resistance and a varied range of response against the British rule in the Indian subcontinent from the early and mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century are outlined. In the process the nature of British rule, its policies and administrative apparatus, which adversely affected almost all the sections of the society are analysed.

### **Peasant and Tribal Resistance**

- While the urban elite of India was busy responding to the western ideas and rationality by engaging in various socio-religious reform movements, a far more aggressive response to the British rule emerged in rural India. The traditional elite and peasantry along with the tribals revolted. They were not necessarily seeking the removal of British but rather the restoration of the pre-colonial order.
- The concept of private property rights in land, rigorous collection of land revenue, encroachment of tribal land by the nontribal people, the interference of Christian missionaries in the socio-religious life of the local people were a few of the many issues which added to the sense of resentment against the British. The tribal people, in

particular, started looking at them as invaders and encroachers. The fundamental aspect of various tribal and peasant revolts was that all of them tried to eliminate the most immediate and visible cause of their misery. There were nearly a hundred peasant uprisings during British rule. They can be classified into the following categories:

- Restorative rebellions – Agitation of this type relates to attempts to restore old order and old social relations.
- a. Religious Movements – Such agitations were led by religious leaders who fought for the liberation of the local populace by restructuring society on certain religious principles.
- b. Social Banditry – The leaders of such movements were considered criminal by the British and the traditional elite but were looked upon by their people as heroes or champions of their cause.
- c. Mass Insurrection – Usually leaderless and spontaneous uprising.

### **Changes in the Revenue System**

- The East India Company restructured the Mughal revenue system across India in such a manner that it increased the financial burden on the peasants. There was no widespread system of private ownership of the land in pre- British India. Similarly, zamindars and others who were to collect revenue and remit it to the govt were never given the possession right on land. So the changes introduced by the British in land tenures, as we studied in Std. IX significantly altered the agrarian relations.

### **Subletting of Land**

- The practice of letting out and subletting of land complicated the agrarian relations. The zamindar often sublet land to many subordinate lords who in return collected a fixed amount of revenue from the peasant. This increased the tax burden on the peasants.

### **(a) Peasant Uprising**

- Peasant revolts began to erupt in the early 19th century and continued till the very end of British rule in India. Many of these revolts were led by religious leaders, who treated the British rule as an invasion into the socioreligious life of the people of India.

### **Farazi Movement**

- Farazi movement launched by Haji Shariatullah in 1818, in the parts of eastern Bengal, advocated the participants to abstain from un-Islamic activities. This brought him into direct conflict with the Zamindars and subsequently with British, who favoured the Zamindars to suppress the peasant uprising. After the death of Shariatullah in 1839, the rebellion was led by his son Dudu Mian who called upon the peasants not to pay tax. It gained popularity on a simple doctrine that land and all wealth should be equally enjoyed by the common folk. Dudu Mian laid emphasis on the egalitarian nature of religion and declared that “Land belongs to God”, and collecting rent or levying taxes on it was therefore against divine law.

Large numbers of peasants were mobilised through a network of village organisations. There were violent clashes throughout 1840s and 1850s with the zamindars and planters. After the death of Dudu Mian in 1862, the was revived in the 1870s by Noah Mian.

### **Wahhabi Rebellion in Barasat**

- The Wahhabi rebellion was an antiimperial and antilandlord movement. It originated in and around 1827, in the Barasat region of Bengal. It was led by an Islamic preacher who was deeply influenced by the Wahhabi teachings. He became an influential figure among the predominately Muslim peasantry oppressed under the coercive zamindari system. However, the fact that the majority of zamindars were Hindus, gave this movement an anti-Hindu complexion.
- On 6 November 1831 the first major attack was launched in the town of Purnea. Titu Mir immediately declared freedom from British rule. Soon there was retaliation from the British and a large number of

troops were sent to Narkelberia. Titu Mir along with his 50 soldiers were killed in the struggle.

- In the end, the peasant rebellion clearly showed an awareness of the power structure in rural society and a strong will to restructure authority. The rebels were quite familiar with the political source of oppression, demonstrated in their actions against the Zamindar houses, their grain stocks, the moneylenders, and the merchants. At times the British state machinery, which came forward to protect these local agents of oppression, was also attacked. These characteristics were reflected in the peasant movements of the 20th century too.

### **(b) Tribal Uprising**

- Under colonial rule, for the first time in Indian history, government claimed a direct proprietary right over forests. The British rule and its encouragement of commercialisation of forest led to the disintegration of the traditional tribal system. It encouraged the incursion of tribal areas by the non-tribal people such as moneylenders, traders, land-grabbers, and contractors. This led to the widespread loss of adivasi land and their displacement from their traditional habitats.
- Tribal resistance was therefore, a response against those who either introduced changes in the peaceful tribal life or took undue advantage of the innocence of the tribal people.

### **'Tribes' who are they?**

- The modern usage of word tribe in India restricts the definition to distinguish them (tribes) from the rest of the Indian society, a stratified system based on caste. Often the term is misused to refer to isolated groups. Tribes in India were and are very much part of the Indian society. They in fact have acted for long as part of Indian peasantry subsisting through shifting cultivation.

### **(i) Kol Revolt**

- One major tribal revolt, the Kol uprising of 1831-32, took place in Chota Nagpur and Singbhum region of Jharkhand and Orisa, under the leadership of Bindrai and Singhrai. The Raja of Chhota Nagpur had leased out to moneylenders the job of revenue collection. The usury and forcible eviction of tribals from their land led to the resentment of Kols. The initial protest and resistance kols was in the form of plunder, arson and attacks on the properties of outsiders. This was followed by the killing of moneylenders and merchants. The tribal leaders adopted varied methods to spread their message such as the beating of drums and the circulation of arrows accompanied by a warning to all outsiders to leave.
- Kols organised an insurrection in 1831-32, which was directed against government officers and moneylenders. The Kol rebels took control of the king's palace. They even succeeded in forming an independent government there. The British suppressed the rebellion with great violence.

### **(ii) Santhal Hool (Insurrection)**

- Santhals, scattered in various parts of eastern India, when forced to move out of their homeland during the process of creation of zamins under Permanent Settlement, cleared the forest area around the Rajmahal Hills. They were oppressed by the local police and the European officers engaged in the railway construction. Pushed out of their familiar habitat, the Santhals were forced to rely on the moneylenders for their subsistence. Soon they were trapped in a vicious circle of debt and extortion. Besides this, Santhals also felt neglected under the corrupt British administration and their inability to render justice to their legitimate grievances.

### **Outbreak**

- Around 1854 activities of social banditry led by a person named Bir Singh was reported from different places. These were directed against mahajans and traders. Following this Bir Singh was summoned to the zamindari court, where he was beaten up and humiliated. Bir Singh along with his friends retaliated by committing further dacoities on

the mahajans and merchants. The repressive measures only angered the Santhals.

- In 1855, two Santhal brothers Sidhu and Kanu proclaimed that they had received a divine message from the God, asking them to lead the rebellion. On June 30, 1855 they announced that God has ordered them “to slaughter all the mahajans and daroga, to banish the traders and zamindars and all rich Bengalis from their country.... And to fight all who resisted them, for the bullets of their enemies would be turned into water”. Two Darogas (chief police officers) were killed by the santhal crowd.
- By July 1855 the rebellion has taken the form of open insurrection against the mahajans, the zamindars and the British officials. They marched with bows, poisoned arrows, axes and swords taking over the Rajmahal and Bhagalpur by proclaiming that the Company rule was about to end. In response villages were raided and properties destroyed by the British. Nearly 15 to 25 thousand rebels were murdered before the insurrection was finally suppressed. These events compelled the British government to restructure their policies towards the tribal people. In 1855 an act was passed to regulate the territories occupied by the Santhals. The Act formed the territory into a separate division called Santhal Pargana division.

### **(c) Munda Rebellion**

- One of the prominent tribal rebellions of this period occurred in Ranchi, known as Ulugulan rebellion (Great Tumult).The Munda people were familiar with the cooperative or collective farming known as Khuntkatti (joint holding) land system. It was totally eroded by the introduction of private ownership of land and the intrusion of merchants and moneylenders. The Munda people were also forcefully recruited as indentured labourers to work on plantations. The corrupt police, lack of access to justice and the disillusionment with Christian missionaries aggravated the miseries of Munda people. In the 1890s tribal chiefs offered resistance against the alienation of tribal people from their land and imposition of bethbegari or forced labour.



- The movement received an impetus when Birsa Munda declared himself as the messenger of God. Birsa claimed that he had a prophecy and promised supernatural solutions to the problem of Munda people and the establishment of Birsaite Raj. The Munda leaders utilised the cult of Birsa Munda to recruit more people to their cause. A series of night meetings were held and a revolt was planned. On the Christmas day of 1889, they resorted to violence. Buildings were burnt down and arrows were shot at Christian missionaries and Munda Christian converts. Soon police stations and government officials were attacked. Similar attacks were carried out over the next few months. Finally the resistance was crushed and Birsa Munda was arrested in February 1900 who later died in jail. Birsa Munda became a folk hero who is to this day celebrated in many folk songs. The Munda rebellion prompted the British to formulate a policy on Tribal land. The Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (1908) restricted the entry of non-tribal people into the tribal land.

### **The Great Rebellion of 1857**

- In 1857, British rule witnessed the biggest challenge to its existence. Initially, it began as a mutiny of Bengal presidency sepoys but later expanded to the other parts of India involving a large number of civilians, especially peasants. The events of 1857-58 are significant for the following reasons:
  - ❖ This was the first major revolt of armed forces accompanied by civilian rebellion.
  - ❖ The revolt witnessed unprecedented violence, perpetrated by both sides.
  - ❖ The revolt ended the role of the East India Company and the governance of the Indian subcontinent was taken over by the British Crown.

## (a) Causes

### 1. Annexation Policy of British India

- In the 1840s and 1850s, more territories were annexed through two major policies:
- **The Doctrine of Paramountcy.** British claimed themselves as paramount, exercising supreme authority. New territories were annexed on the grounds that the native rulers were corrupt and inept.
- **The Doctrine of Lapse.** If a native ruler failed to produce a biological male heir to the throne, the territory was to 'lapse' into British India upon the death of the ruler. Satara, Sambalpur, parts of the Punjab, Jhansi and Nagpur were annexed by the British through the Doctrine of Lapse.

### 2. Insensitivity to Indian Cultural Sentiments

- There was always a suspicion among the people regarding British intentions. In 1806 the sepoys at Vellore mutinied against the new dress code, which prohibited Indians from wearing religious marks on their foreheads and having whiskers on their chin, while proposing to replace their turbans with a round hat. It was feared that the dress code was part of their effort to convert soldiers to Christianity.
- Similarly, in 1824, the sepoys at Barrackpur near Calcutta refused to go to Burma by sea, since crossing the sea meant the loss of their caste.
- The sepoys were also upset with discrimination in salary and promotion. Indian sepoys were paid much less than their European counterparts. They felt humiliated and racially abused by their seniors.

## **(b) The Revolt**

- The precursor to the revolt was the circulation of rumors about the cartridges of the new Enfield rifle. There was strong suspicion that the new cartridges had been greased with cow and pig fat. The cartridge had to be bitten off before loading (pork is forbidden to the Muslims and the cow is sacred to a large section of Hindus).
- On 29 March a sepoy named Mangal Pandey assaulted his European officer. His fellow soldiers refused to arrest him when ordered to do so. Mangal Pandey along with others were court-martialled and hanged. This only fuelled the anger and in the following days there were increasing incidents of disobedience. Burning and arson were reported from the army cantonments in Ambala, Lucknow, and Meerut.

## **Bahadur Shah Proclaimed as Emperor of Hindustan**

- On 11 May 1857 a band of sepoys from Meerut marched to the Red Fort in Delhi. The sepoys were followed by an equally exuberant crowd who gathered to ask the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah II to become their leader. After much hesitation he accepted the offer and was proclaimed as the Shahenshah-e- Hindustan (the Emperor of Hindustan). Soon the rebels captured the north-western province and Awadh. As the news of the fall of Delhi reached the Ganges valley, cantonment after cantonment mutinied till, by the beginning of June, British rule in North India, except in Punjab and Bengal, had disappeared.

## **Civil Rebellion**

- The mutiny was equally supported by an aggrieved rural society of north India. Sepoys working in the British army were in fact peasants in uniform. They were equally affected by the restructuring of the revenue administration. The sepoy revolt and the subsequent civil rebellion in various parts of India had a deep-rooted connection with rural mass. The first civil rebellion broke out in parts of the North-Western provinces and Oudh. These were the two regions from which the sepoys were predominately recruited. A large number of

Zamindars and Taluqdars were also attracted to the rebellions as they had lost their various privileges under the British government. The talukdar-peasant collective was a common effort to recover what they had lost. Similarly, artisans and handicrafts persons were equally affected by the dethroning of rulers of many Indian states, who were a major source of patronage. The dumping of British manufactures had ruined the Indian handicrafts and thrown thousands of weavers out of employment. Collective anger against the British took the form of a people's revolt.

### **Prominent Fighters against the British**

- The mutiny provided a platform to aggrieved kings, nawabs, queens, and zamindars to express the anti-British anger. Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the last Peshwa Baji Rao II, provided leadership in the Kanpur region. He had been denied pension by the Company. Similarly, Begum Hazrat Mahal in Lucknow and Khan Bahadur in Bareilly took the command of their respective territories, which were once ruled either by them or by their ancestors.

The siege of Kanpur was an important episode in the rebellion of 1857. The besieged Company forces and civilians in Kanpur were unprepared for an extended siege and surrendered to rebel forces under Nana Sahib, in return for a safe passage to Allahabad. The boats in which they were proceeding were burned and most of the men were killed, including British Commander of Kanpur Major General Hugh Wheeler.

- Another such significant leader was Rani Lakshmi Bai, who assumed the leadership in Jhansi. In her case Dalhousie, the Governor General of Bengal had refused her request to adopt a son as her successor after her husband died and the kingdom was annexed under the Doctrine of Lapse. Rani Lakshmi Bai battled the mighty British Army until she was defeated. Bahadur Shah Jafar, Kunwar Singh, Khan Bahadur, Rani Lakshmi Bai and many others were rebels against their will, compelled by the bravery of the sepoys who had defied the British authority.

### (c) Suppression of Rebellion

- By the beginning of June 1857, the Delhi, Meerut, Rohilkhand, Agra, Allahabad and Banaras divisions of the army had been restored to British control and placed under martial law. The British officers were given the power to judge and take the life of Indians without due process of law.
- William Howard Russell, the correspondent of the London Times, who was in India in 1858, met an officer who was a part of the column that under Colonel Neill's orders marched from Allahabad to Kanpur. The officer reported that 'in two days, 42 men were hanged on the roadside, and a batch of 12 men was executed because their faces were turned the wrong way when they were met on the march.' Even boys who had playfully flaunted rebel colours and beaten a tom-tom were not spared. Every Indian who appeared in sight was shot or hung on the trees that lined the road; villages were burnt....'

### (d) Causes of Failure

- There is hardly any evidence to prove that the rebellion of 1857 was organised and planned. It was spontaneous. However, soon after the siege of Delhi, there was an attempt to seek the support of the neighboring states. Besides a few Indian states, there was a general lack of enthusiasm among the Indian princeto participate in the rebellion. The Indian princes and zamindars either remained loyal or were fearful of British power. Many a time they acted as a fifth column. Those involved in the rebellion were left with either little or no sources of arms and ammunition. The emerging English-educated middle class too did not support the rebellion.
- One of the important reasons for the failure of the rebellion was the absence of a central authority. There was no common agenda that united the individuals and the aspirations of the Indian princes and the various other feudal elements fighting against the British.
- In the end, the rebellion was brutally suppressed by the British army. The rebel leaders were defeated due to the lack of weapons,

organisation, discipline, and betrayal by their aides. Delhi was captured by the British troops in late 1857. Bahadur Shah was captured and transported to Burma.

### **e) India Becomes a Crown Colony**

- The British were shocked by the events of 1857. The British Parliament adopted the Indian Government Act, in November 1858, and India was pronounced as one of the many crown colonies to be directly governed by the Parliament. The responsibility was given to a member of the cabinet, designated as the Secretary of State for India. The transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown also meant that there was a regular parliamentary review of Indian affairs.

### **Changes in the Administration**

- British rule and its policies underwent a major overhaul after 1857. British followed a cautious approach to the issue of social reform. Queen Victoria proclaimed to the Indian people that the British would not interfere in traditional institutions and religious matters. It was promised that Indians would be absorbed in government services. Two significant changes were made to the structure of the Indian army. The number of Indians was significantly reduced. Indians were restrained from holding important ranks and position. The British took control of the artillery and shifted their recruiting effort to regions and communities that remained loyal during 1857. For instance, the British turned away from Rajputs, Brahmins and North Indian Muslims and looked towards non-Hindu groups like the Gorkhas, Sikhs, and Pathans. British also exploited the caste, religious, linguistic and regional differences in the Indian society through what came to be known as “Divide and Rule” policy.

### **Peasant Revolts under Crown**

#### **(a) Indigo Revolt 1859-60**

- Before synthetic dyes were created, natural indigo dye was highly valued by cloth makers around the world. Many Europeans sought to make their fortunes by becoming indigo planters in India. They

employed peasants to grow the indigo, which was processed into dye at the planters factories. The dye was then exported to Europe. By the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, India supplied the vast majority of the indigo to Britain. The system was oppressive. The peasants were forced to grow the crop. The British planter gave the cultivator a cash advance to help pay for the rent of the land and other costs. This advance needed to be repaid with interest. The planters forced the peasant grow indigo, rather than food crops. At the end of the season, the planters paid the cultivators low prices for their indigo. Moreover, the small amount the peasant earned was not enough to pay back the cash advance with interest. So they fell into debt. However, the peasants again would be forced to enter into another contract to grow indigo. The peasants were never able to clear their debts. Debts were often passed from father to son.

- The Indigo Revolt began in 1859. The rebellion began as a strike, as the peasants of a village in Bengal's Nadia district refused to grow any more indigo. The movement quickly spread to the other indigo-growing districts of Bengal. The revolt then turned violent. The peasants, both Hindu and Muslim, participated in the revolt, and women—armed with pots and pans—fought alongside the men. Indian journalists in Calcutta wrote articles about the brutality of the planters. The 1860 play Nil Darpan (“Mirror of the Indigo”) by Dina Bandhu Mitra, did much to draw attention in India and Europe to the plight of the indigo growers.
- The indigo industry quickly declined in Bengal. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the demand for natural indigo dye began to decline worldwide, as man-made blue dyes came into use.

### **(b) Deccan Riots 1875**

- After the transfer of power to the Crown, deindustrialisation forced workers out of the land. Heavy taxation ruined agriculture. Famine deaths increased. The first recorded incident of rioting against the moneylenders in the Deccan was in May 1875, in Supa a village near Poona. Similar cases of riots were reported from close to 30 villages in Poona and Ahmadnagar. The rioting was directed mostly at the Gujarat moneylenders. Under British rule peasants were forced to

pay revenue directly to the government. Also, under a new law moneylenders were allowed to attach the mortgaged land of the defaulters and auction it off. This resulted in a transfer of lands from the cultivators to the non-cultivating classes. Trapped in the vicious cycle of debt and unable to pay the outstanding amount the peasant was forced to abandon cultivation.

According to Anthropologist Kathlene Gough British rule brought ... disruption and suffering among the peasantry which was more prolonged and widespread than had occurred in Mughal times. Ranajit Guha writes, 'agrarian disturbances in many forms and on scales ranging from local riots to war-like campaigns spread over many districts were endemic throughout the first three quarters of British rule until the very end of the nineteenth century.'

## **The Foundation of Indian National Congress (1870 - 1885)**

### **(a) Rise of Nationalism**

- The second half of the 19th century saw the emergence of national political consciousness among a new social class of English educated Indians. The Indian intelligentsia played a critical role in generating a national consciousness by exposing a large number of people to the idea of nation, nationalism and various democratic aspirations. They articulated modern notions of citizenship, the idea of the state, civil society, human rights, equality before the law, liberty, the distinction between public and private, sovereignty, democracy and so on. The flourishing of print media both in the vernacular and in English played a significant role in circulating such ideas.
- Even though they were numerically small they had a national character and capacity to establish contacts on an all India scale. They were working as lawyers, journalists, government employees, teachers or doctors. They took the initiative to float political outfits, such as Madras Native Association (1852) East India Association (1866), Madras Mahajana Sabha (1884), Poona Sarvajanik Sabha (1870), The Bombay Presidency Association (1885) and many others.
- The British directed their policies to trample on the aspirations of Indians, who were exposed to English education and Western ideas



and therefore had strong belief in modern values and institutions. However, the national consciousness in the late 19th century was also rooted in a glorification and celebration of Indian past, in which various religious and cultural symbols were used to kindle the patriotic zeal among the people.

### **(b) Economic Critique of Colonialism**

- One of the most significant contributions of early Indian nationalists was the formulation of an economic critique of colonialism. India was economically subjugated and transformed into a supplier of raw material to the British industries. Simultaneously it became a market to dump English manufactures and for the investment of British capital. So the colonial economy was a continuous transfer of resources from India to Britain without any favourable returns back to India. This is called "the drain of wealth".
- Dadabhai Naoroji, Justice Ranade, and Romesh Chandra Dutt, played a significant role in making this criticism about colonial economy. They clearly understood that the prosperity of the British lay in the economic and political subjugation of India. They concluded that colonialism was the main obstacle to the Indian's economic development.

### **(c) Objectives and Methods**

- The formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885 was intended to establish an all India organisation. It was the culmination of attempts by groups of educated Indians politically active in three presidencies: Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta. A.O. Hume lent his services to facilitate the formation of the Congress. Womash Chandra Banarjee was the first President (1885) Indian National Congress.
- The first session of the Indian National Congress was held on 28 December 1885. The early objectives were to develop and consolidate sentiments of national unity; but also professed loyalty to Britain. The techniques included appeals, petitions and delegations to Britain, all done within a constitutional framework. Some of the key demands were the following:

- creation of legislative councils at provincial and central level
  - increasing the number of elected members in the legislative council
  - separating judicial and executive functions
  - reducing military expenditure
  - reduction of Home Charges
  - extension of trial by jury
  - holding civil services exams in India as well as in England.
  - police reforms
  - reconsideration of forest laws
  - promotion of Indian industries and an end to unfair tariffs and excise duties.
- These show the vast gap between the interests of the upper sections of Indian society and the large mass of common people.

### **Question of Poverty**

- According to the early Congress leaders the economic exploitation of India was the primary reason for the abysmal and the growing poverty of India. Therefore, early Indian nationalists advocated industrialisation.

### **Militant Nationalism**

- The methods of moderate leaders failed to yield any substantive change in the British attitude towards the moderate demands of early Indian nationalists. They were criticised by a group of leaders known as “extremists”. Instead of prayers and petitions, these militants were more focused on self-help and the use of religious symbols to bridge the gap between the elite and the masses. The partition of Bengal gave a fillip to those who were advocating militant direct action programmes to fight the exploitative British policies.

### **Partition of Bengal**

- In 1899, Lord Curzon was appointed the Viceroy of India. Instead of engaging with the nationalist intelligentsia for handling the problem of famine and plague, Curzon resorted to repressive measures to undermine the idea of local self-government, autonomy of higher

educational institutions and gag the press. Partition of Bengal in 1905 was the most unpopular of all. The partition led to widespread protests all across India, starting a new phase of the Indian national movement.

- The idea of partition was devised to suppress the political activities against the British rule in Bengal by creating a Hindu-Muslim divide.

#### **(a) Hindu-Muslim Divide**

- It was openly stated that the objective of partition was to curtail Bengali influence and weaken the nationalist movement. By placing Bengal under two administrative units Curzon reduced the Bengali – speaking people to a linguistic minority in a divided Bengal. Curzon assured Muslims that in the new province of East Bengal Muslims would enjoy a unity, which they never enjoyed since the days of the Mughals.
- Instead of dividing the Bengali people along the religious line partition united them. The growth of regional language newspapers played a role in building a sense of proud Bengali identity.

#### **(b) Anti- Partition Movement**

- The leaders of both the groups – extremist and moderate – were critical of partition. Initially, the objective of the anti-partition campaign was limited to changing the public opinion in England. So they protested through prayers, press campaigns, petitions, and public meetings. However, despite widespread protest, partition of Bengal was announced on 19 July 1905.
- With the failure to annul the partition moderate leaders were forced to rethink their strategy and look for new techniques of protest. The boycott of British goods was one such method. However, the agenda of Swadeshi Movement was still restricted to secure an annulment of partition and the moderates were very much against utilising the campaign to start a full-fledged passive resistance. The militant nationalists, on the other hand, were in favour of extending the movement beyond Bengal and to initiate a full-scale mass struggle.

- The day Bengal was officially partitioned – 16 Oct 1905 – was declared as a day of mourning. Thousands of people took bath in the Ganga and marched on the streets of Calcutta singing Bande Mataram.

### **(c) Boycott and Swadeshi Movement in Bengal (1905–1911)**

- Boycott and swadeshi were always interlinked to each other and part of the wider plan to make India self-sufficient. Four major trends can be discerned during the Swadeshi Movement in Bengal.

**1. The Moderate Trend** – Faith in British rule and their sense of justice and democratic practice. The moderate leaders were not ready to wrest power from British in one single movement and therefore Boycott and Swadeshi Movement was of limited significance to them.

**2. Constructive Swadeshi** – Rejected the selfdefeating modest approach of moderates and focused on self-help through swadeshi industries, national schools, arbitration courts and constructive programmes in the villages. It remained non-political in nature.

**3. Militant Nationalism** – A section of Indian nationalists who had little patience for the non-political constructive programmes. They ridiculed the idea of self-help and were more focused on a relentless boycott of foreign goods.

**4. Revolutionary terrorism** – A far more radical response to the British rule in India was to fight British with violent methods. British officials who were anti-swadeshi or repressive towards the native population were targeted. It also marked the shift from the mass-based movement to individual action.

### **Constructive Swadeshi**

- The constructive programmes largely stressed upon self-help. It focused on building alternative institutions of self-governance that would operate free of British control. It also laid emphasis on the need of selfstrengtheningb of the people which would help in creating a worthy citizen for the political agitation. Swadeshi shops

sprang all over the place selling textiles, handlooms, soaps, earthen ware, match and leather goods.

### **Passive Resistance**

- From 1906 the Swadeshi Movement took a turn where the repeal of partition was no longer on the agenda. For many leaders, the movement was to be utilized for propagating the idea of the political independence or Swaraj across India. Under this new direction, the swadeshi programme included four points: boycott of foreign goods, boycott of government schools and colleges, courts, titles and government services, development of Swadeshi industries, national schools, recourse to armed struggle if British repression went beyond the limits of endurance.
- The method of passive resistance had no practical utility in a situation where there is a ruthless and mighty administration on the side and on the other the militarily weaker people. Resistance in such a situation can be provided through relentless non-cooperation and disobedience.

### **(d) Militant Nationalism**

- Lala Lajpat Rai of Punjab, Bala Gangadhar Tilak of Maharashtra and Bipin Chandra Pal of Bengal were three prominent leaders during the Swadeshi period and were referred to as Lal-Bal-Pal triumvirate. Punjab, Bengal, and Maharashtra emerged as the hotbed of militant nationalism during the Swadeshi Movement. In South India Tuticorin became the most important location of Swadeshi activity with the launch of a Swadeshi Steam Navigation company by V.O. Chidambaranar.

### **Swaraj or Political Independence**

- One of the common goals of the extremist leaders was to achieve Swaraj or Self Rule. However, the leaders differed on the meaning of Swaraj. For Tilak Swaraj was the attainment of complete autonomy and total freedom from foreign rule. Unlike the moderates who were critical of the reckless revolutionaries, militant nationalists were sympathetic towards the extremists. However, the political murders

and individual acts of terrorism were not approved by the militant leaders.

- The British brutally crushed the Swadeshi Movement by jailing prominent leaders for long spells of imprisonment. Revolutionaries were hanged to death. The press was crushed.

### **Home Rule Movement (1916–1918)**

- The Indian national movement was revived and also radicalised during the Home Rule Movement (1916-1918), led by Lokamanya Tilak and Annie Besant. World War I and Indian's participation in it was the background for the Home Rule League. When Britain declared war against Germany in 1914, the moderate and liberal leadership extended their support to the British cause. It was hoped that, in return, the British government would give self-government after the war. Indian troops were sent to several theatres of World War. But the British administration remained non-committal to such goals. What was seen as a British betrayal to the Indian cause of self-government led to a fresh call for a mass movement to pressurise the British government.

#### **(a) Towards Charting a Common Path**

- The 1916 Annual Session of Congress began with two significant developments. One, moderate leaders Pherozeshah Mehta and Gokhale, two main voices of opposition against the militant faction, had died in 1915. The rising popularity of Annie Besant was the other factor which compelled the moderates to put up a common front against the colonial government. In the Lucknow session of Indian National Congress (1916), it was decided to admit the militant faction into the party.
- Tilak set up the first Home Rule League in April 1916. In September 1916, after repeated demands of her impatient followers, Annie Besant decided to start the Home Rule League without the support of Congress. Both the leagues worked independently. The Home Rule Leagues were utilised to carry extensive propaganda through, press, speeches, public meetings, lectures, discussions and touring in favour of self-government. They succeeded in enrolling young people in

large numbers and extending the movement to the rural areas. The Home Rule Movement in India borrowed much of its principles from the Irish Home Rule Movement.

### **(b) Objectives of the Home Rule Movement**

- To attain self-government within then British Empire by using constitutional means.
- To obtain the status of dominion, a political position accorded later to Australia, Canada, South Africa, and New Zealand.
- To use non-violent constitutional methods to achieve their goals.

### **(c) Lucknow Pact (1916)**

- \The Home Rule Movement and the subsequent reunion of moderate and the militant nationalists opened the possibility of fresh talks with the Muslims. Under the Lucknow Pact (1916), the Congress and the Muslim League agreed that there should be self-government in India as soon as possible. In return, the Congress leadership accepted the concept of separate electorate for Muslims.

### **(d) British Response**

- The response of the government of British India to the Home Rule Movement was not consistent. Initially it stated that there should be reform to accommodate more Indians in local administrative bodies. As the demand for Swaraj was raised by Tilak and Annie Besant that gained popularity, the British used the same old ploy to isolate the leaders by repressing their activities.
- In 1919 the British government announced the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms which promised gradual progress of India towards self-government. This caused deep disappointment to Indian nationalists. In a further blow the government enacted what was called the Rowlatt Act which provided for arbitrary arrest and strict punishment.

I mean by self-government that the country shall have a government by councils, elected by the people, elected with the power of the purse and the government is responsible to the house.... India should demand self-government not based on loyalty to the British government or as a reward for her services in the war but as a right based on the principle of national self-determination.

– Annie Besant (in September 1915)

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## 10 th vol - II Unit - 8

### Nationalism: Gandhian Phase

#### Learning Objectives

##### To acquaint ourselves with

- Gandhian phase of India's struggle for independence
- Gandhi's policy of ahimsa and satyagraha tried and tested for mobilisation of the masses in India
- Non-violent struggles in Champaran and against the Rowlatt Act
- The Non-Cooperation Movement and its fallout
- Emergence of radicals and revolutionaries and their part in the freedom movement
- Launch of Civil Disobedience Movement
- Issue of separate electorate and the signing of Poona Pact
- First Congress Ministries in the provinces and circumstances leading to the launch of Quit India Movement
- Communalism leading to partition of sub-continent into India and Pakistan

#### Introduction

- Mahatma Gandhi arrived in India in 1915 from South Africa after fighting for the civil rights of the Indians there for about twenty years. He brought with him a new impulse to Indian politics. He introduced satyagraha, which he had perfected in South Africa, that could be practiced by men and women, young and old. As a person dedicated to the cause of the poorest of the poor, he instantly gained the goodwill of the masses. Before Gandhi, the constitutionalists appealed to the British sense of justice and fair play. The militants confronted the repression of the colonial state violently. Gandhi, in contrast, adopted nonviolent methods to mobilise the masses and mount pressure on the British. In this lesson we shall see how Gandhi transformed the Indian National Movement.

## Gandhi and Mass Nationalism

### (a) Evolution of Gandhi

- Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2 October 1869 into a well to do family in Porbandar, Gujarat. His father Kaba Gandhi was the Diwan of Porbandar and later became the Diwan of Rajkot. His mother Putlibai, a devout Vaishnavite, influenced the young Gandhi. After passing the matriculation examination, Gandhi sailed to England in 1888 to study law. After becoming a barrister in June 1891 Gandhi returned to India as a firm believer in British sense of justice and fair play. His experiences in London had not prepared him for the racial discrimination he would encounter in South Africa.
- On returning to India, Gandhi's attempt to practice in Bombay failed. It was during this time that a Gujarati firm in South Africa, sought the services of Gandhi for assistance in a law-suit. Gandhi accepted the offer and left for South Africa in April 1893. Gandhi faced racial discrimination for the first time in South Africa. On his journey from Durban to Pretoria, at the Pietermaritzburg railway station, he was physically thrown out of the first class compartment. Indians were treated only as coolies. But Gandhi was determined to fight.
- Gandhi called a meeting of the Indians in the Transvaal and exhorted them to form an association to seek redress of their grievances. He continued to hold such meetings, petitioned to the authorities about the injustices which were in violation of their own laws. Indians in the Transvaal had to pay a poll tax of £ 3, could not own land except in areas marked for them, and could not move outdoors after 9 p.m. without a permit. He launched a struggle against such unjust laws.
- Gandhi was introduced to the works of Tolstoy and John Ruskin. He was deeply influenced by Tolstoy's *The Kingdom of God is Within You*, Ruskin's *Unto this Last* and Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience*. Gandhi's ideas were formed due to a blend of Indian and Western thought. Despite being deeply influenced by Western thinkers he was highly critical of Western civilisation and industrialisation. Inspired by Ruskin Gandhi established the Phoenix Settlement (1905) and the Tolstoy Farm (1910). Equality, community living and dignity of

labour were inculcated in these settlements. They were training grounds for the satyagrahis.

### **Satyagraha as a Strategy in South Africa**

- Gandhi developed satyagraha (devotion to the truth, truth-force) as a strategy, in which campaigners went on peaceful marches and presented themselves for arrest in protest against unjust laws. He experimented with it for fighting the issues of immigration and racial discrimination. Meetings were held and registration offices of immigrants were picketed. Even when the police let loose violence no resistance was offered by the satyagrahis. Gandhi and other leaders were arrested. Indians, mostly indentured labourers turned hawkers continued the struggle despite police brutality. Finally, by the Smuts-Gandhi Agreement the poll tax on indentured labourers was abolished. Gandhi's stay in South Africa was a learning experience for him. It was there that Gandhi realised that people of different religions, regions, linguistic groups could be welded into one to fight against exploitation. After the outbreak of the First World War, Gandhi returned to India.

### **Gandhi's Early Satyagrahas in India**

- Gandhi regarded Gopal Krishna Gokhale, whom he had met on previous visits to India, as his political guru. On his advice, Gandhi travelled the length and breadth of the country before plunging into politics. This enabled him to understand the conditions of the people. It is on one of these journeys through Tamil Nadu that Gandhi decided to discard his following robes and wear a simple dhoti. Gandhi before returning to India visited England where he enlisted for the War to offer ambulance services. Considering himself a responsible citizen of the Empire he believed it was his duty to support England in its difficult times and even campaigned for the recruitment of Indians in the army. However, his views changed over the years.

#### **(a) Champaran Satyagraha**

- In Champaran in Bihar the tinkathia system was practiced. Under this exploitative system the peasants were forced by the European

planters to cultivate indigo on three-twentieths of their land holdings. Towards the end of nineteenth century German synthetic dyes had forced indigo out of the market. The European planters of Champaran, while realising the necessity of relieving the cultivators of the obligation of cultivating indigo, wanted to turn the situation to their advantage. They enhanced the rent and collected illegal dues as a price for the release of cultivators from the obligation. Resistance erupted. Rajkumar Shukla, an agriculturist from Champaran who suffered hardships of the system, prevailed on Gandhi to visit Champaran. On reaching Champaran, Gandhi was asked by the police to leave immediately. When he refused he was summoned for trial. The news spread like wild fire and thousands swarmed the place in support of Gandhi. Gandhi pleaded guilty of disobeying the order, and the case had to be finally withdrawn. According to Gandhi, "The country thus had its first objectlesson in Civil Disobedience". He was assisted by Brajkishore Prasad, a lawyer by profession, and Rajendra Prasad, who became the first President of independent India. The Lieutenant Governor eventually formed a committee with Gandhi as a member which recommended the abolition of the tinkathia system, thereby ending the oppression of the peasants by the Indigo Planters.

- The success of Champaran satyagraha, followed by his fruitful intervention in Ahmedabad mill strike (1918) and the Kheda Satyagraha (1918) helped Gandhi establish himself as a leader of mass struggle. Unlike earlier leaders, Gandhi demonstrated his ability to mobilise the common people across the country.

### **(b) Rowlatt Satyagraha and Jallianwala Bagh Massacre**

- In the aftermath of the First World War, people expected liberal political reforms from the British. The Government of India Act 1919, however, caused disappointment, as it did not transfer real power to the Indians. Besides, the government began to enforce the permanent extension of war time restrictions. The Rowlatt Act was enacted which provided for excessive police powers, arrest without warrant and detention without trial. Gandhi called it a 'Black Act' and in protest called for a nation-wide satyagraha on 6 April 1919. It was to be a non-violent struggle with fasting and prayer, and it was the earliest anticolonial struggle spread across the country. The anti-

Rowlatt protest was intense in Punjab, especially in Amritsar and Lahore.

- Gandhi was arrested and prevented from visiting Punjab. On 9 April two prominent local leaders Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal were arrested in Amritsar leading to protests in which a few Europeans were killed. Martial law was declared.

### **General Dyer's Brutality**

- On 13 April 1919 a public meeting was arranged at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar. As it happened to be Baisaki day (spring harvest festival of Sikhs) the villagers had assembled there in thousands. General Reginald Dyer, on hearing of the assemblage, surrounded the place with his troops and an armoured vehicle. The only entrance to the park that was surrounded. The brutality enraged Indians. Rabindranath Tagore returned his knighthood. Gandhi surrendered his Kaiser-i-Hind medal.

### **(c) Khilafat Movement**

- The First World War came to an end in 1918. The Caliph of Turkey, who was considered the head of Muslims of the world, was given a harsh treatment. A movement was started in his support called the Khilafat Movement. Led by the Ali brothers, Maulana Mohamed Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali, it aimed to restore the prestige and power of the Caliphate. Gandhi supported the movement and saw in it an opportunity to unite Hindus and Muslims. He presided over the All India Khilafat Conference held at Delhi in November 1919. Gandhi supported Shaukat Ali's proposal of three national slogans, Allaho Akbar, Bande Mataram and Hindu-Musslamanki Jai. The Khilafat Committee meeting in Allahabad on 9 June 1920 adopted Gandhi's non-violent non-cooperation programme. Non-Cooperation was to begin on 1 August 1920.

### **Non-Cooperation Movement and Its Fallout**

- The Indian National Congress approved the non-cooperation movement in a special session held in Calcutta on September 1920.

- It was subsequently passed in the Nagpur Session held on December 1920, Chaired by Salem C.Vijayaraghavachariar. The programme of non-cooperation included:
  - ❖ Surrender of all titles of honours and honorary offices.
  - ❖ Non-participation in government functions.
  - ❖ Suspension of practice by lawyers, and settlement of court disputes by private arbitration.
  - ❖ Boycott of government schools by children and parents.
  - ❖ Boycott of the legislature created under the 1919 Act.
  - ❖ Non-participation in government parties and other official functions.
  - ❖ Refusal to accept any civil or military post.
  - ❖ Boycott of foreign goods and spreading the doctrine of Swadeshi.

#### **(a) No-Tax Campaign and Chauri Chaura Incident**

- Programmes such as no-tax campaigns caught the imagination of the kisans (peasants). Gandhi announced a no-tax campaign in Bardoli in February 1922. These movements greatly enhanced Gandhi's reputation as a national leader, especially the peasants. Gandhi made a nation-wide tour. Wherever he visited there was a bonfire of foreign cloth. Thousands left government jobs, students gave up their studies in large numbers and the lawyers gave up thriving practices. Boycott of British goods and institutions were effective. The boycott of the Prince of Wales' visit to India was successful. During this boycott trade unions and workers participated actively. However, Gandhi suddenly withdrew the movement because of the Chauri Chaura incident.
- On 5 February 1922 a procession of the nationalists in Chauri Chaura, a village near Gorakhpur in present-day Uttar Pradesh provoked by the police turned violent. The police finding themselves outnumbered shut themselves inside the police station. The mob burnt the police station 22 policemen lost their lives. Gandhi immediately withdrew the movement. This was done much against the wishes of many congressmen including young leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose who thought the movement was gaining momentum. Gandhi was arrested and was released only in 1924. Gandhi believed that the movement failed not because of any defect

in the means employed, viz. non-violent non-cooperation but because of lack of sufficiently trained volunteers and leaders. Soon after the Khilafat Movement also came to an end as the office of the Caliph (Caliphate) was abolished in Turkey.

### **(b) Swarajists**

- Meanwhile Congress was divided into two groups viz. pro-changers and no-changers. Some of the Congressmen led by Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das wanted to contest the elections and enter the legislature. They argued that the national interest could be promoted by working in the Legislative Councils under Dyarchy and wrecking the colonial government within. They were called the pro-changers. Staunch followers of Gandhi like Vallabhbhai Patel, C. Rajaji and others, known as no-changers, wanted to continue non-cooperation with the government. Despite the opposition C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru formed the Swaraj Party on 1 January 1923, which was later approved by a special session of the Congress. Swaraj Party members were elected in large numbers to the Imperial Legislative Assembly and the various Provincial Legislative Councils. They effectively used the legislature as a platform for propagation of nationalist ideas. In Bengal, they refused to take charge of transferred subjects, as they did not want to cooperate with the government. They exposed the true nature of the colonial government. However, the Swaraj Party began to decline after the death of its leader C.R. Das in 1925. Some of the Swaraj Party members began to accept government offices. Swaraj Party withdrew from the legislatures in 1926.

Dyarchy, a system of dual government introduced under the Government of India Act 1919, divided the powers of the provincial government into Reserved and Transferred subjects. The Reserved Subjects comprising finance, defence, the police, justice, land revenue, and irrigation were in the hands of the British. The Transferred Subjects that included local self-government, education, public health, public works, agriculture, forests and fisheries were left under the control of Indian ministers. The system ended with the introduction of provincial autonomy in 1935.

### **(c) Constructive Programme of Gandhi**

- After the Chauri Chaura incident, Gandhi felt that the volunteers and the people had to be trained for a non-violent struggle. As a part of this effort he focused on promoting Khadi, Hindu-Muslim unity and the abolition of untouchability. He exhorted the Congressmen, "Go throughout your districts and spread the message of Khaddar, the message of Hindu-Muslim unity, the message of anti-untouchability and take up in hand the youth of the country and make them the real soldiers of Swaraj." He made it compulsory for all Congress members to wear khaddar. The All India Spinner's Association was formed. Gandhi believed that without attaining these objectives Swaraj could never be attained.
- Despite the cooperation of the Hindus and Muslims during the Khilafat Movement and the Non-Cooperation Movement, the unity was fragile. The 1920s saw a series of communal riots between the Hindus and the Muslims. Hindu Mahasabha was gaining in popularity under Madan Mohan Malaviya and the Muslim League under the Ali Brothers. Gandhi undertook a 21- day a fast in between 1924 to appeal to the hearts of the Hindus and Muslims involved in communal politics. Serious efforts by Gandhi and Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who at that time believed Swaraj was possible only with Hindu-Muslim unity, failed to stem the communal riots.

### **(d) Boycott of Simon Commission**

- On 8 November 1927, the British Government announced the appointment of the Indian Statutory Commission. Composed of seven members headed by Sir John Simon it came to be widely known as the Simon Commission. It was an all-white commission with no Indian member. Indians were angered that they had been denied the right to decide their own constitution. All sections of India including the Congress and the Muslim League decided to boycott the commission. Wherever the Commission went there were protests, and black flag marches with the slogan 'Go Back Simon'. The protesters were brutally assaulted by the police. In one such assault in Lahore, Lal Lajpat Rai was seriously injured and died a few days later.



### (e) Nehru Report

- The Simon boycott united the different political parties in India. An all party conference was held in 1928 with the objective to frame a constitution for India as an alternative to the Simon Commission proposals. A committee under the leadership of Motilal Nehru was formed to outline the principles on the basis of which the constitution was to be drafted. The committee's report, known as the Nehru Report, recommended,
  - ❖ Dominion status for India.
  - ❖ Elections of the Central Legislature and the Provincial Legislatures on the basis of joint and mixed electorates.
  - ❖ Reservation of seats for Muslims in the Central Legislature and in provinces where they are in a minority and for the Hindus in North-West Frontier Province where they were in a minority.
  - ❖ Provision of fundamental rights, and universal adult franchise.
- Jinnah proposed an amendment to the reservation of seats in the Central Legislature. He demanded that one-third of the seats be reserved for Muslims. Tej Bahadur Sapru supported him and pleaded that it would make no big difference. However, it was defeated in the All Party Conference. Later he proposed a resolution which came to be known as Jinnah's Fourteen Points. However, it was also rejected. Jinnah who was hailed as Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity thereafter changed his stand and began to espouse the cause of a separate nation for Muslims.

### **The Struggle for Poorna Swaraj and Launch of Civil Disobedience Movement**

- Meanwhile some congressmen were not satisfied with dominion status and wanted to demand complete independence. In the Congress session held in Lahore in December 1929 with Jawaharlal Nehru as the President, Poorna Swaraj was declared as the goal. It

was also decided to boycott the Round Table Conference and launch a Civil Disobedience Movement. 26 January 1930 was declared as Independence Day and a pledge was taken all over the country to attain Poorna Swaraj non-violently through civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes. The Indian National Congress authorised Gandhi to launch the movement.

### (a) Salt Satyagraha Movement

A charter of demands presented to the Viceroy Lord Irwin with an ultimatum to comply by 31 January 1930 included:

- ❖ Reduction of expenditure on army and civil services by 50%
  - ❖ Introduction of total prohibition
  - ❖ Release of all political prisoners
  - ❖ Reduction of land revenue by 50%
  - ❖ Abolition of salt tax.
- When the Viceroy did not respond to the charter of demands, Gandhi launched the Civil Disobedience Movement. The inclusion of abolition of salt tax was a brilliant tactical decision. Salt was an issue which affected every section of the society. It transformed Civil Disobedience Movement into a mass movement drawing all sections of the population including women to the streets. At the break of dawn on 12 March 1930 Gandhi set out from Sabarmati Ashram with 78 of its inmates. The procession became larger and larger when hundreds joined them along the march. At the age of 61 Gandhi covered a distance of 241 miles in 24 days to reach Dandi at sunset on 5 April 1930. The next morning, he took a lump of salt breaking the salt law.

### Salt Satyagraha in Provinces

- In Tamil Nadu, C. Rajaji led a similar salt march from Tiruchirappalli to Vedaranyam. Salt marches took place in Kerala, Andhra and Bengal. In the North West Frontier Province Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan led the movement. He organized the Khudai Khidmatgar, also known as the Red Shirts. Government crushed the movement with brutal force, causing in many casualties. The soldiers of the Garhwali regiment refused to fire on unarmed satyagrahis.

- Gandhi was arrested at midnight and sent to Yeravada Jail. Jawaharlal Nehru, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and other leaders were swiftly arrested. Soon other forms of protests such as boycott of foreign cloth, picketing of liquor shops, non-payment of taxes, breaking of forest laws etc. were adopted. Women, peasants, tribals, students, even children and all sections participated in the nation-wide struggle. It was the biggest mass movement India had ever witnessed. More than 90,000 people were arrested.

- The British enacted the first forest act in 1865. This act restricted the access of the forest dwellers to the forest areas to collect firewood, cattle fodder and other minor forest produce such as honey, seeds, nuts, medicinal herbs. The Indian Forest Act of 1878 claimed that original ownership of forests was with the state. Waste lands and fallow lands were included as forest. Shifting cultivation practiced by the tribal people, was prohibited. Alienation of forests from local control was stiffly resisted by the aggrieved adivasis (tribals) and the nationalists.
- The most striking evidence of continuing struggles of the tribal groups was the one waged by Alluri Sitarama Raju in Rampa. Raju made Adivasi areas in the Eastern Ghats (the forest area along the Visakapatnam and Godavari district) his home. The Adivasis who were organized by Alluri Sitarama Raju lived in abject poverty. They were also harassed by police, forest and revenue officials in 'Manyam' (forest area). Raju's efforts at fighting corrupt officials to protect the interests of Rampa tribals prompted the British to target his life. A special Malabar Police team was sent to quell the uprisings (1922- 24) of Rampa Adivasis. Alluri Sitarama Raju attained martyrdom for the cause of forest dwellers.

### **(b) Round Table Conferences**

- In the midst of the movement the First Round Table Conference was held at London in November 1930. Ramsay Macdonald, the British Prime Minister, proposed a federal government with provincial autonomy. There was a deadlock over the question of separate electorates for the minorities. The Congress did not attend it as its

leaders were in jail. The Conference closed without any decision on the question. It was clear that without Congress participation the discussions were of no value. Gandhi was released unconditionally.

### **(c) Gandhi-Irwin Pact**

- Lord Irwin held talks with Gandhi which resulted in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact on 5 March 1931. The British agreed to the demand of immediate release of all political prisoners not involved in violence, return of confiscated land and lenient treatment of government employees who had resigned. It also permitted the people of coastal villages to make salt for consumption and non-violent picketing. The Congress agreed to suspend the Civil Disobedience Movement and attend the conference. Gandhi attended the Second Round Table Conference which began on 7 September 1931. Gandhi refused to accept separate electorates for minorities. As a result, the second conference ended without any result.

### **(d) Renewal of Civil Disobedience Movement.**

- On returning to India, Gandhi revived the Civil Disobedience Movement. This time the government was prepared to meet the resistance. Martial law was enforced and Gandhi was arrested on 4 January 1932. Soon all the Congress leaders were arrested too. Protests and picketing by the people were suppressed with force. Nearly 80,000 people were arrested within four months. The nationalist press was completely gagged. Despite Government's repressive measures it is worth mentioning here in that the movement continued till April 1934.
- In the meantime, the Third Round Table Conference was held from 17 November to 24 December 1932. The Congress did not participate in the conference as it had revived the Civil Disobedience Movement.

### **(e) Communal Award and Poona Pact**

- On 16 August 1932, Ramsay MacDonald, announced the Communal Award. It provided separate electorates to the minorities, viz. Muslims, Sikhs, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and women and the "depressed classes". Gandhi strongly opposed the inclusion of

depressed classes in the list of minorities. Gandhi argued that it would not only divide the Hindus but also make the campaign against untouchability meaningless, as they would be considered distinct from the Hindus. However, he supported reservation of seats. B.R. Ambedkar, the leader of the depressed classes, strongly argued for the separate electorate, as it, according to him, would give them political representation and power. On 20 September 1932, Gandhi went on a fast unto death against the separate electorates for the depressed classes. Madan Mohan Malaviya, Rajendra Prasad and others held talks with Ambedkar and M.C. Rajah the leaders of the depressed classes. After intense negotiations an agreement was arrived between Gandhi and Ambedkar. Known as the Poona Pact, its main terms were:

- „The principle of separate electorates was abandoned. Instead, the principle of joint electorate was accepted with reservation of seats for the depressed classes.
- „„Reserved seats for the depressed classes were increased from 71 to 148. In the Central Legislature 18 percent of the seats were reserved.

#### **(f) Campaign Against Untouchability**

- Gandhi devoted the next few years towards abolition of untouchability. His engagement with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar made a big impact on his ideas about the caste system. He shifted his base to the Satyagraha Ashram at Wardha. He undertook an all- India tour called the Harijan Tour. He started the Harijan Sevak Sangh to work for the removal of discriminations. He worked to promote education, cleanliness and hygiene and giving up of liquor among the depressed class. He also undertook two fasts in 1933 for this cause. An important part of the campaign was the Temple Entry Movement. 8 January 1933 was observed as ‘Temple Entry Day’. His campaign earned the ire of the orthodox Hindus and an attempt was made on his life by obscurantists upper caste Hindus. But this did not deter his mission. The work among the depressed classes and the tribals took the message of nationalism to the grassroots.

## **Beginnings of Socialist Movements**

- Inspired by the Russian Revolution of 1917 the Communist Party of India (CPI) was founded at Tashkent, Uzbekistan in October 1920. M.N. Roy, Abani Mukherjee, and M.P.T. Acharya were some of its founding members. The British government in India made vigorous efforts to suppress the communist movement by foisting a series of cases in the 1920s. In a further attempt to eliminate the threat of communism M.N. Roy, S.A. Dange, Muzaffar Ahmed, M. Singaravelar among others were arrested and tried in the Kanpur Conspiracy Case of 1924. The charge on them was “to deprive the King Emperor of his sovereignty of British India, by complete separation of India from imperialistic Britain.”

### **(a) Foundation of Communist Party**

- The communists used it as a platform to propagate their views and to expose the ‘true colour of British rule in India’. In an attempt to form a party an All India Communist Conference was held at Kanpur in 1925. Singaravelar gave the Presidential Address. It led to the founding of the Communist Party of India in Indian soil. The Communists organised workers’ and peasants’ organisations in different parts of India. A number of strikes were organised in the 1920s. Their efforts eventually led to the establishment of the All India Workers’ and Peasants’ Party in 1928. The progress in this direction was halted with the Meerut Conspiracy Case in 1929. Muzaffar Ahamed, S.A. Dange, S.V. Ghate, G. Adhikari, P.C. Joshi, S.S. Mirajkar, Shaukat Usmani, Philip Stratt and twenty-three others were arrested for organising a railway strike. They were charged with conspiring to overthrow the British government of India.

### **(b) Revolutionary Activities**

- The youths who were disillusioned with the sudden withdrawal of the Non Cooperation Movement by Gandhi took to violence. In 1924 Hindustan Republican Army (HRA) was formed in Kanpur to overthrow the colonial rule by an armed rebellion. In 1925 Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan and others held up a train carrying government money and looted in Kakori, a village near Lucknow.

They were arrested and tried in the Kakori Conspiracy Case. Four of them were sentenced to death while the others were sentenced to imprisonment.

- Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and their comrades reorganized the HRA in Punjab. Influenced by socialist ideas they renamed it as Hindustan Socialist Republican Association in 1928. Sanders, a British police officer, responsible for the lathi charge that led to Lala Lajpat Rai's death was assassinated. Bhagat Singh along with B.K. Dutt threw a smoke bomb inside the Central Legislative Assembly in 1929. It was not intended to hurt anyone. They threw pamphlets and shouted 'Inquilab Zindabad' and 'Long Live the Proletariat'. He along with Rajguru was arrested and sentenced to death. Bhagat Singh's daring and courage fired the imagination of the youth across India, and he became popular across India. During the Gandhi-Irwin negotiations there was wide-spread demand to include the case of Bhagat Singh and Rajguru. The Viceroy was not willing to commute the death sentence.
- In April 1930, the Chittagong Armoury Raid was carried out by Surya Sen and his associates. They captured the armories in Chittagong and proclaimed a provisional revolutionary government. They survived for three years raiding government institutions. In 1933 Surya Sen was caught and hanged after a year.

### **(c) Left Movement in the 1930s**

- By the 1930s the Communist Party of India had gained strength in view of the economic crisis caused by world-wide Great Depression. Britain transmitted the effects of Depression to its colonies. The effects of Depression were reflected in decline in trade returns and fall in agricultural prices. The governmental measures included forcible collection of land revenue which in real terms had increased two-fold due to a 50% fall in agricultural prices, the withdrawal of money in circulation, retrenchment of staff and expenditure on developmental works.
- In this context, the Communist Party, fighting for the cause of peasants and industrial workers hit by loss of income and wage

reduction, and problems of unemployment gained influence and was therefore banned in 1934. The Congress, as a movement with a wide spectrum of political leanings, ranging from the extreme Left to the extreme Right, welded together by the goal of Swaraj, emerged as a powerful organisation. There was a constant struggle between the right and left in the Congress during the 1930s. In 1934 the Congress Socialist Party was formed by Jayaprakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Dev and Minoo Masani. They believed that nationalism was the path to socialism and that they would work within the Congress..

- They worked to make Congress pro-peasant and pro-worker

‘Real Swaraj will come not by acquisition of authority by a few, but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority, when abused.’ - M. K. Gandhi

### **First Congress Ministries under Government of India Act, 1935**

- The Government of India Act 1935 was one of the important positive outcomes of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The key features of the Act were provincial autonomy and dyarchy at the centre. The Act provided for an all India Federation with 11 provinces, 6 Chief commissioner’s provinces and all those Princely states which wished to join the federation. The Act also provided autonomy to the provinces. All the subjects were transferred to the control of Indian ministers. Dyarchy that was in operation in provinces was now extended to the central government. The franchise, based on property, was extended though only about ten percent of the population enjoyed the right to vote. By this Act Burma was separated from India.

#### **(a) Congress Ministries and their Work**

- The Government of India Act 1935 was implemented with the announcement of elections in 1937. The Congress immensely benefitted because of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The Congress called off its programme of boycott of legislature and contested elections. It emerged victorious in seven out of the eleven



provinces. It formed ministries in 8 provinces – Madras, Bombay, Central Provinces, Orissa, Bihar, United Provinces, North West Frontier Province. In Assam it formed a coalition government with Assam Valley Muslim Party led by Sir Muhammad Sadullah. The Congress Ministries functioned as a popular government and responded to the needs of the people. The salaries of ministers were reduced from Rs. 2000 to Rs. 500 per month. Earlier action taken against nationalists were rescinded. They repealed the Acts which vested emergency powers in the government, lifted the ban imposed on political organisations except the Communist Party, and removed the restrictions on the nationalist press. Police powers were curbed and reporting by the CID on political speeches discontinued. Legislative measures were adopted for reducing indebtedness of the peasantry and improving the working conditions of the industrial labour. Temple entry legislation was passed. Special attention was paid to education and public health.

### **(b) Resignation of Congress Ministries**

- In 1939 the Second World War broke out. The colonial government of India entered the War on behalf of the Allies without consulting the Congress ministries. The Congress ministries resigned in protest. Jinnah who had returned from London with the determination of demanding separate state for Muslims, revived the Muslim League in 1934. He was one of the staunchest critics of the Congress Ministries. He declared the day when the Congress Ministries resigned as the 'Day of Deliverance'. By 1940 he was demanding a separate state for the Muslims arguing that in an independent India the Muslims would lose all political power to the Hindus.

### **(c) National Movement during the Second World War, 1939-45**

- In 1939 Subhas Chandra Bose became the President of the Congress by defeating Pattabhi Sitaramayya, the candidate of Gandhi. When Gandhi refused to cooperate, Subhas Chandra Bose resigned his post and started the Forward Bloc. The Communists initially opposed the War, calling it an imperialist war. However, with the Nazi attack on the Soviet Union, they called it the 'People's War' and offered cooperation to the British. As a result, in 1942, the ban on the Communist Party of India was lifted.

## **Hindu Communalism, Muslim Communalism and Indian Nationalism**

- The Muslim League dubbed the Congress as a Hindu organisation and claimed that it alone was the representative of the Muslims of India. Similarly, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) took a pronounced anti-Muslim stance. Both Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League claimed that the interests of the Hindus and Muslims were different and hostile to each other. The British policy of divide and rule, through measures such as Partition of Bengal, Communal Award, had encouraged the vested interests out to exploit the religious differences. In 1933, Rahmat Ali a student of Cambridge University conceived the idea of Pakistan, comprising the provinces of Punjab, Kashmir, North West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan. Muhammad Iqbal, who was advocating Hindu-Muslim unity later changed his stance and began to campaign for the formation of a separate state for Muslims. Indian Nationalism represented by Gandhi, Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and others opposed the idea of partitioning the country.

### **Developments leading to Quit India Movement**

#### **(a) Individual Satyagraha**

- In August 1940 Viceroy Linlithgow made an offer in return for Congress' support for the war effort. However, the offer of dominion status in an unspecified future was not acceptable to the Congress. However, it did not want to hamper the British during its struggle against the fascist forces of Germany and Italy. Hence Gandhi declared limited satyagraha which would be offered by a few individuals. The objective was to convey to the world that though India was opposed to Nazism it did not enter the War voluntarily. Vinobha Bhave was the first to offer satyagraha on 17 October 1940. The satyagraha continued till the end of the year. During this period more than 25,000 people were arrested.

### **(b) Cripps Mission**

- On 22 March 1942, the British government sent a mission under Cabinet Minister Sir Stafford Cripps as the Japanese knocked on the doors of India. The negotiations between the Cripps Mission and the Congress failed as Britain was not willing to transfer effective power immediately. The Cripps Mission offered:
  1. Grant of Dominion Status after the War
  2. Indian Princes could sign a separate agreement with the British implying the acceptance for the demand of Pakistan.
  3. British control of defence during the War.
- Both the Congress and the Muslim League rejected the proposal. Gandhi called the proposals as a post-dated cheque on a crashing bank.

### **(c) "Do or Die" Call by Gandhi**

- The outcome of the Cripps Mission caused considerable disappointment. Popular discontent was intensified by war time shortages and steep rise in prices. The All India Congress Committee that met at Bombay on 8 August 1942 passed the famous Quit India Resolution demanding an immediate end to British rule in India. Gandhi gave a call to do or die. Gandhi said, 'We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery.' A non-violent mass struggle under Gandhi was to be launched. But early next morning on 9 August 1942 Gandhi and the entire Congress leadership was arrested.

### **(d) Role of Socialists**

- With Gandhi and other prominent leaders of the Congress in jail, the Socialists provided the leadership for the movement. Jayaprakash Narayan and Ramanand Misra escaped from prison and organised an underground movement. Women activists like Aruna Asaf Ali played a heroic role. Usha Mehta established Congress Radio underground which successfully functioned till November 1942. British used all its

might to suppress the revolt. Thousands were killed with machine guns and in some cases airplanes were used to throw bombs. Collective fines were imposed and collected with utmost rigour. Gandhi commenced a twenty-one day fast in February 1943 which nearly threatened his life. Finally, the British government relented. Gandhi was released from jail in 1944.

### **(e) People's Response**

- As news spread to different parts of India, a spontaneous protest broke out everywhere. The people protested in whatever form that they could, such as hartals, strikes, picketing. The government suppressed it with brute force. People attacked government buildings, railway stations, telephone and telegraph lines and all that stood as symbols of British authority. This was particularly widespread in Madras. Parallel governments were established in Satara, Orissa, Bihar, United Provinces and Bengal.
- Though the movement was suppressed, it demonstrated the depth of nationalism and the readiness of the people to sacrifice for it. Nearly 7000 people were killed and more than 60,000 jailed. Significantly it also demonstrated the weakening of the colonial hegemony over the state apparatus. Many officials including policemen helped the nationalists. Railway engine drivers and pilots transported bombs and other materials for the protestors.

### **(f) Subhas Chandra Bose and INA**

- Subhas Chandra Bose's INA Subhas Chandra Bose who had left the Congress was now under house arrest. He wanted to strike British hard by joining its enemies. In March 1941, he made a dramatic escape from his house in disguise and reached Afghanistan. Initially he wanted to get the support of Soviet Union. After the Soviet Union joined the Allied Powers which included Great Britain, he went to Germany. In February 1943, he made his way to Japan on a submarine and took control of the Indian National Army. The Indian National Army Captain Lakshmi Sahgal headed it (Azad Hindu Fauj) had earlier been organized by Gen. Mohan Singh with Indian prisoners of war with the support of Japanese in Malaya and Burma.

Bose reorganised it into three brigades: Gandhi Brigade, Nehru Brigade and a women's brigade named after Rani of Jhansi. Subhas Chandra Bose formed the Provisional Government of Free India in Singapore. He gave the slogan 'Dilli Chalo'. INA was deployed as part of the Japanese forces. However, the defeat of Japan stopped the advance of INA. The airplane carrying Subhas Chandra Bose crashed bringing to an end his crusade for freedom.

- The British government arrested the INA officers and put them on trial in the Red Fort. The trial became a platform for nationalist propaganda. The Congress set up a defence committee comprising Nehru, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Bhulabhai Desai and Asaf Ali. Though the INA officers were convicted they were released due to public pressure. The INA exploits and the subsequent trials inspired the Indians.

## **Towards Freedom**

### **(a) Royal Indian Navy Revolt**

- The Royal Indian Navy ratings revolted at Bombay in February 1946. It soon spread to other stations involving more than 20,000 ratings. Similar strikes occurred in the Indian Air Force and the Indian Signal Corps at Jabalpur. Thus the British hegemonic control ceased even in the armed forces. Despite the victory in the War, it left the British completely weakened. British surrender in South-East Asia to the Japanese was a big blow to imperial prestige. All the political leaders were released and the ban on Congress was lifted.

### **(b) Negotiating Independence: Simla Conference**

- The Wavell Plan was announced on 14 June 1945. It provided for an interim government, with an equal number of Hindus and Muslims in the Viceroy's Executive Council. All portfolios, except war portfolio, was to be held by Indian ministers. However, in the Shimla Conference, the Congress and the Muslim League could not come to an agreement. Jinnah demanded that all the Muslim members should be from the Muslim League and they should have a veto on all important matters. In the provincial elections held in early 1946 the Congress won most of the general seats and the Muslim

League won most of the seats reserved for the Muslims thus bolstering its claim.

### **(c) Cabinet Mission**

- In Britain, the Labour Party had won a landslide victory and Clement Atlee became the Prime Minister. He declared that he wanted to transfer power at the earliest. He sent a Cabinet Mission comprising Pethick Lawrence, Sir Strafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander. Rejecting the demand for Pakistan, it provided for a Federal government with control over defence, communications and foreign affairs. The provinces were divided into three groups viz. Non-Muslim Majority Provinces, Muslim Majority Provinces in the Northwest and the Muslim Majority Provinces in the Northeast. A Constituent Assembly was to be elected and an interim government set up with representation for all the communities. The Congress and the Muslim League accepted the plan. However, both interpreted it differently. The Congress wanted the division of the provinces to be temporary while the Muslim League wanted it to be a permanent arrangement.

### **(d) Direct Action Day Call by Muslim League**

- Difference arose between Congress and Muslim League when the former nominated a Muslim member. The League argued it was to be the sole representative of the Muslims and withdrew its approval. Jinnah declared 16 August 1946 as the 'Direct Action Day'. Hartals and demonstrations took place which soon turned into Hindu-Muslim conflict. It spread to other districts of Bengal. The district of Noakhali was the worst affected. Gandhi left for the worst affected regions and toured them on barefoot bringing the communal violence under control and spreading the message of peace and nonviolence.

### **(e) Mountbatten Plan**

- The interim government headed by Jawaharlal Nehru was formed in September 1946. After some hesitation the Muslim League joined it in October 1946. Its representative Liaqat Ali Khan was made the Finance Member. In February 1947, Clement Atlee declared that power would be transferred by June 1948. Lord Mountbatten was

sent as Viceroy to India with the specific task of transfer of power. On 3 June 1947 the Mountbatten Plan was announced. It proposed:

- Power would be transferred on the basis of dominion status to India and Pakistan.
- Princely states would have to join either India or Pakistan.
- Boundary commission was to be set up under Radcliffe Brown and the award would be announced after the transfer of power.
- Punjab and Bengal Legislative Assemblies would vote on whether they should be partitioned.

#### **(f) Independence and Partition**

- The Mountbatten Plan was given effect by the enactment of the Indian Independence Act on 18 July 1947 by the British Parliament.
- The Act abolished the sovereignty of the British Parliament over India. India was partitioned into two dominions - India and Pakistan. On 15 August 1947 India won independence.

# India after Independence

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### Non-Aligned Movement

- The Non-Alignment Movement (NAM) emerged in the wake of decolonization that followed World War II. At the Bandung (a city in Indonesia) conference (1955), the newly independent countries of Asia and Africa gave a call for abstaining from allying with any of the two Super Powers. It also pledged to fight all forms of colonialism and imperialism.
- The NAM held its first conference at Belgrade in 1961 under the leadership of Tito (Yugoslavia), Nasser (Egypt), Nehru (India), Nkrumah (Ghana) and Sukarno (Indonesia). The basic principles of non-alignment, as listed in the statement issued at the Belgrade (a Serbian city, then part of Yugoslavia) Conference, were: peaceful co-existence, commitment to peace and security, no military alliance with any super power, no permission for any super power to build its military base in its territories. With the collapse of Soviet Union, the idea of non-alignment lost relevance.

### The Cuban Revolution

- The United States had its satellite states in Central America (Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Panama and Guatemala), the Caribbean (Cuba, the Dominion Republic and Haiti) and east Asia (the Philippines, South Korea, South Vietnam and Thailand). These states were governed by ruling groups made up of military personnel, landed gentry and occasionally of local capitalists. This made them dependent on US aid. At times the US intervened for a change of government to suit its economic and strategic interests. Its Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) was used for this purpose. For example, in 1954, the CIA organized the overthrow of a reformist government in Guatemala. Five years later the US tried to prop up the corrupt and dictatorial Cuban regime of Batista against the seizure of government by Fidel Castro and his colleague Che Guevara.



After Castro took power, the US-owned oil refineries on the island refused to process Russian oil. Castro nationalized them. The US retaliated by ending the arrangement by which it bought the bulk of Cuba's sugar. Castro nationalized the US-owned sugar companies, and ended the US monopolies in electricity and telephones. All these gravely threatened American economic interests.

### **Cuban Missile Crisis**

- In April 1961, while landing an army of Cuban exiles on the island of Bay of Pigs, the US bombed Cuban airfields with the objective of overthrowing Castro's regime. US warships surrounded Cuba. The Kennedy government had received intelligence that the USSR was secretly installing nuclear missiles in Cuba. Finally, the Soviet President Khrushchev agreed to withdraw the missiles and thus the Missile Crisis was defused. Eventually the two sides reached an agreement. The Soviet Union removed the missiles from Cuba on an understanding that the US would never invade Cuba again. In secret the US also had to agree to remove their nuclear missiles from Turkey and Italy.

### **Arab-Israeli War**

- The Treaty of Versailles (1919) had provided for mandates in Turkish Arab Empire. France was given the mandate for Syria and Lebanon, and Britain for Iraq, Palestine and Jordan. This arrangement upset the Arabs since they had expected independence at the end of World War I. Britain's promise to Zionist leaders that it would allocate one of the Arab lands, Palestine, to Jewish settlers from Europe further embittered the Arabs. There was growing Arab antagonism towards Zionist settlers, as they bought land from rich Arabs and evicted the local peasant families who had been cultivating it for centuries.
- At the end of October 1945, the Jewish underground organizations like Irgun Zvai Leumi (Zionist Para-military Organization) and the Stern Gang (Zionist Terrorist Organization)

### **Zionist Movement**

In Palestine, the ancient home of Jews, only a few thousand Jews were living in 1900. Some 15 million were scattered around Europe and North America. (This is referred to as the Diaspora.) These Jews had been subjected to systematic persecution for centuries. But in the late nineteenth century the persecution in Russia (where two-thirds of the world's Jews lived), France and Germany was intense. Some Jews emigrated to Palestine, while many more went to the United States and Britain. In 1896 Thodore Herzl, a Viennese journalist, published a pamphlet called *The Jewish State* in which he called for the creation of a Jewish national home. Next year (1897) the World Zionist Organisation was founded.

**A r a b N a t i o n a l i s m** Since the dawn of the twentieth century Arab nationalism was growing in Syria and Iraq. Subsequently nationalism became intense in Egypt. In March 1945 The Arab League was formed in Cairo. Its founder members were Egypt, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Yemen.

- began to launch terror attacks on a large scale. Railways, bridges, airfields and government offices were blown up. The British government, presented the dispute to the UN for a decision. Succumbing to the pressure of great powers, the UN resolved to partition the British mandate of Palestine into a Jewish state and an Arab state (29 November 1947). Clashes broke out almost immediately between Jews and Arabs in Palestine.
- The Israelis, won control of the main road to Jerusalem and successfully repulsed repeated Arab attacks. By early 1949 the Israelis managed to occupy all of the Negev (a desert and semi-desert region of southern Israel) up to the former Egypt-Palestine frontier, except for the Gaza Strip (a self-governing Palestinian territory). As a result of separate armistice agreements between Israel and each of the Arab states, a temporary frontier was fixed between Israel and its neighbours. In Israel, the war is remembered as its War of Independence. In the Arab world, it is treated as the Nakbah ("Catastrophe") as a large number of Arabs became refugees. Israel

was admitted into the UN immediately much against the wishes of Arabs. Israel was established as a powerful state to assist Western interests - particularly the US - in return for arms and financial aid.

### **Suez Canal Crisis (1956)**

- In Egypt, in a coup in 1952, Colonel Nasser became its President. In 1956 he nationalized the Suez Canal, which undermined British interests. With the failure of diplomacy, Britain and France decided to use force. Israel saw this as an opportunity to open the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping and put a stop to Egyptian border raids. On 29 October Israeli forces invaded Egypt. Britain used this opportunity to demand that its troops be allowed to occupy the canal zone to protect the canal. Egypt refused and on 31 October Britain and France bombed Egyptian airfields and other installations as well as the Suez Canal area. However, under pressure of world opinion, Britain and France ended hostilities on 6 November. India represented by Nehru played a crucial role in resolving the Crisis.

### **Arab-Israeli War 1967**

- Ever since the formation of the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), Israel came to be attacked frequently by Palestinian guerrilla groups based in Syria, Lebanon and Jordan. Israeli resorted to violent reprisals. In November 1966 an Israeli strike on the village of Al-Samū in the Jordanian West Bank, left 18 dead and 54 wounded. Israel's air battle with Syria in April 1967 ended in the shooting down six Syrian MiG fighter jets. he crisis.

**Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)**- It is an umbrella political organization representing the world's Palestinians - all Arabs and their descendants who lived in mandated Palestine before the creation of the State of Israel in 1948. It was formed in 1964 to federate various Palestinian groups that previously had operated as clandestine resistance movements. It came into prominence after the Arab-Israeli War of June 1967. The PLO was engaged in a protracted guerrilla war against Israel during the 1960s, '70s, and '80s before entering into peace negotiations in the 1990s. Yasser Arafat was its most prominent leader.

- In his bid to demonstrate Egypt's support for Syria Nasser mobilized Egyptian forces in the Sinai, seeking the removal of UN emergency forces stationed there on May 18. On May 22 he closed the Gulf of Aqaba to Israeli shipping. King Hussein of Jordan signed a mutual defence pact with Egypt. Accordingly, it was decided to place Jordanian forces under Egyptian command. Soon, Iraq too joined the alliance.

### **Israel's Offensive**

- Following the mobilization of Arab states by Nasser, on June 5, Israel staged a sudden pre-emptive air strike that destroyed more than 90 percent of Egypt's air force on the tarmac. A similar air assault incapacitated the Syrian air force. Within three days the Israelis had achieved an overwhelming victory on the ground, capturing the Gaza Strip and all of the Sinai Peninsula up to the east bank of the Suez Canal. An eastern front was also opened on June 5 when Jordanian forces began shelling West Jerusalem. On June 7 Israeli forces drove Jordanian forces out of East Jerusalem and most of the West Bank.

### **UN Intervention**

- The UN Security Council called for a ceasefire. While Egypt, Jordan and Israel responded to the call favourably Syria continued to shell villages in northern Israel. On June 9 Israel launched an assault on the fortified Golan Heights and capturing it. Syria accepted the ceasefire on June 10.

### **Yasser Arafat (1924–2004)**

In 1969, Yasser Arafat became chairman of the PLO's executive committee a position he held until his death in 2004. Yasser Arafat was appointed commander-in-chief of the all Palestinian Arab guerilla forces in September 1970. At this time the PLO was driven out of Jordan after Palestine factions attempted to overthrow the government of King Hussein. Arafat and the PLO eventually found their way to Beirut which remained the center of PLO operations against Israel until 1982. Wearing a Harley disguised pistol and carrying an olive branch and dressed in a military uniform, his appearance raised world awareness of the Palestinian cause. Arafat was elected by the central council of the PLO as

the first president of the state of Palestine on April 2, 1989.

- The Arab losses in the war were heavy. The defeat demoralized both the Arab public and the political elite. The Six-Day War also marked the start of a new phase in the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians. The conflict created hundreds of thousands of refugees and brought more than one million Palestinians in the occupied territories under Israeli rule.

### **Arab-Israeli War 1973**

- Egypt and Syria under Presidents Anwar Sadat and Hafez al- Assad respectively concluded a secret agreement in January 1973 to bring their armies under one command. Assad was keen on retrieving Golan Heights. Aware that his country's weapons were outdated, Sadat offered the Israelis a peace deal, if they withdrew from Sinai. Israel rejected the offer. Egypt and Syria launched a sudden and surprise attack on the Yom Kippur religious holiday (6 October 1973). Though Israel suffered heavy casualties it finally pushed back the Arab forces. But this time, due to UN intervention, Israel was forced to return to its 1967 position. Arabs gained nothing out of this war too. By way of mediation the US succeeded in asserting its hegemony over the region and its oil. Its strategy of encouraging hostility between states and peoples resulted in a succession of wars - civil war in Lebanon, and the war between Iraq and Iran in the 1980s, Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982 and the US-led war against Iraq in 1991.

### **Vietnam War**

- By the end of Second World War Viet Minh controlled the northern half of Vietnam. Viet Minh formed a government led by Ho Chi Minh in Hanoi. This Viet Minh government quickly occupied the southern half of Vietnam. However, the Allied Powers decided at Potsdam that the British in the south and the Chinese in the north should defend Indo-China from the Japanese. But Ho Chi Minh had established his control very firmly and so, early in 1946, the British and Chinese troops had to withdraw, leaving the French and Viet Minh to confront each other. In March the two governments (French and Viet

Minh) reached an agreement by which North Vietnam was to be a free state, within an Indo-Chinese Federation. But the new French constitution included all overseas colonies in a French Union.

- In 1949 the French attempted to secure the support of the population by declaring Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia independent within the French Union, retaining only foreign affairs and defence under French control. However, the problem of Indo-China soon became involved in the Cold War. China, Russia and the East European countries recognized the Viet Minh government, while the Western powers recognized the new Vietnam government of Bao Dai.
- While the French were receiving considerable financial aid from America, the Viet Minh were helped by the new Chinese communist government. The French troops were eventually defeated. The Geneva Conference (1954) that met on Korea and Indo China decided that Vietnam was to be an independent state but temporarily divided; the Viet Minh to control the north and Bao Dai to head the government the south. Cambodia and Laos were to be independent. With a population of 16 million North Vietnam became a Communist state with Ho Chi Minh as President. South Vietnam, approximately of the same size and population, was ruled by Ngo Dinh Diem. Diem refused to hold the elections to decide on a united Vietnam. The US initially supported the Diem regime as it hoped of establishing a strong non-communist government in South Vietnam as a bulwark against the spread of communism in Asia. However, by 1962, it was clear that Diem was incapable of controlling the situation. This led to the posting of more US armed forces in the area.
- The government's survival in South Vietnam depended on increasing amounts of US support. In 1965 marines landed at Danang naval base, and there were 33,500 US troops in the country within a month. The number increased and there were 210,000 by the end of year. The US bombed both North and South in the hope that it could force the liberation forces to abandon the struggle. The fighters of North Vietnam, trained in guerilla warfare, had grown out of spontaneous struggles against a repressive regime. They sustained their resistance without bowing to the US. The American troops also used bacteriological weapons.

- Incendiary bombs such as napalm and Agent Orange (to defoliate the forest cover) were used. Vast areas of Vietnam were devastated and hundreds of thousands of people killed. The American forces too suffered heavy casualties.

### **American Bombing of North Vietnam**

- Escalation of the total military outlay caused the US big business to protest. The youths rebelled against the conscription and the horrors of war. Thousands of Americans refused to be drafted in the US army and many American soldiers deserted. Anti-Vietnam War protests rocked universities and colleges across the US and in Europe, and became part of the 1960s counterculture. No other single issue united millions of people all over the world as the war of Vietnam. However, the US government continued the war even though it was clear that it could not be won.

### **Anti-Vietnam War Demonstrations**

- Early in 1975, the war took a decisive turn. The armies of North Vietnam and of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam swept across the country routing the American supported troops of South Vietnam. By 30 April 1975, all the American troops had withdrawn and the capital of South Vietnam, Saigon, was liberated. North and South Vietnam were formally united as one country in 1976. The city of Saigon was renamed as Ho Chi-Minh City after the great leader of the Vietnamese people.
- The emergence of Vietnam as a united and independent nation was an historic event. A small country had succeeded in winning independence and unification in the face of the armed opposition of the greatest power in the world. The help given to Vietnam by the socialist countries, the political support extended by a large number of Asian and African countries, and the solidarity expressed by the peoples in all parts of the world, helped in achieving this.

## **Towards European Union**

### **(a) Council of Europe**

- One of the momentous decisions taken in the post-War II era was to integrate the states of Western Europe. In doing so the Europeans wanted (1) to prevent further European wars by ending the rivalry between France and Germany. (2) to create a united Europe to resist any threat from Soviet Russia. (3) to form a third force in the world to counter-balance the strength of the US and USSR. (4) to make full use of the economic and military resources of Europe by organizing them on a continental scale. In May 1949 ten countries met in London and signed to form a Council of Europe. The Council of Europe with headquarters at Strasbourg was established with a committee of foreign ministers of member countries and a Consultative Assembly, drawn from the parliaments of foreign countries.

### **(b) European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC)**

- Since the Council of Europe had no real power, a proposal to set up two European organizations was made. Accordingly, the European Defence Community (EDC) and the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) were established. Six countries (France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, Holland and Luxemburg belonging to ECSC signed the treaty of Rome which established the European Economic Community (EEC) or the European Common Market, with headquarters at Brussels. Britain did not join the EEC. Instead it floated a European Free Trade Association with Portugal, Denmark, Austria, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland as member states.

### **(c) European Economic Community (EEC)**

- The EEC eliminated barriers to the movement of goods, services, capital, and labour. It also prohibited public policies or private agreements that restricted market competition. A common agricultural policy (CAP) and a common external trade policy were evolved. European Common market was a remarkable success. Throughout the 1970s and '80s the EEC kept expanding. In 1973 the



United Kingdom, Denmark, and Ireland were admitted, followed by Greece in 1981 and Portugal and Spain in 1986.

#### **(d) Single European Act (SEA)**

- The Single European Act came into force on July 1, 1987. It significantly expanded the EEC's scope giving the meetings of the EPC a legal basis. It also called for more intensive coordination of foreign policy among member countries. According to the SEA, each member was given multiple votes, depending on the country's population. Approval of legislation required roughly two-thirds of the votes of all members. The new procedure also increased the role of the European Parliament.

#### **(e) European Union (EU)**

- The Maastricht (Netherlands) Treaty signed on February 7, 1992, created the European Union. The monetary policy and a common currency (euro) to replace national currencies managed by common monetary institutions were subsequently planned and implemented. Today the European Union has 28 member states, and functions from its headquarters at Brussels, Belgium. In 2017, Britain voted to exit the EU.