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UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

MASTER OF ARTS-HISTORY

SEMESTER -III

INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT AND

AFTER (1857-1964)

OPEN ELECTIVE 304

BLOCK-1

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

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FOREWORD

The Self Learning Material (SLM) is written with the aim of providing simple and organized study content to all the learners. The SLMs are prepared on the framework of being mutually cohesive, internally consistent and structured as per the university's syllabi. It is a humble attempt to give glimpses of the various approaches and dimensions to the topic of study and to kindle the learner's interest to the subject

We have tried to put together information from various sources into this book that has been written in an engaging style with interesting and relevant examples. It introduces you to the insights of subject concepts and theories and presents them in a way that is easy to understand and comprehend.

We always believe in continuous improvement and would periodically update the content in the very interest of the learners. It may be added that despite enormous efforts and coordination, there is every possibility for some omission or inadequacy in few areas or topics, which would definitely be rectified in future.

We hope you enjoy learning from this book and the experience truly enrich your learning and help you to advance in your career and future endeavours.

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BLOCK-1 INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT AND AFTER (1857-1964)

Introduction to Block

Unit 1 Approaches to Indian Nationalism: Conceptual Debates

discussing about the various concepts of nationalism related to freedom of India.

Unit 2 Emergence of organized nationalism till 1919, Birth of I.N.C,

Advent of Gandhi and new phase discusses about the rise of freedom from 1858 onwards till 1919 which also witnessed birth of Congress party and arrival of Gandhiji.

Unit 3)National Movement – nature, programme, social composition, limitations and challenge discussing about the rise of nationalism globally and its affects in India

Unit 4 Revolutionary and Left movements, Peasant movements,-

Kisan Sabha, Bardoli Satyagraha and others discussing about the various non Congress freedom movements

Unit 5 States Peoples Movements that started by ordinary Indian citizens for freedom

Unit 6 Working of Congress and non-Congress provincial ministers

discussing about the election of Congress party at various levels and running a Govt.

Unit 7 Birth of Muslim League – growth and activities and demand for

Pakistan discusses about the rise of Jinnah and birth of Pakistan

UNIT 1 - APPROACHES TO INDIAN NATIONALISM: CONCEPTUAL DEBATES

STRUCTURE

- 1.0 Objective
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Conceptual Debates
- 1.3 Let's Sum Up
- 1.4 Keywords
- 1.5 Questions For Review
- 1.6 Suggested Readings
- 1.7 Answers To Check Your Progress

1.0 OBEJCTIVE

To learn about the different approaches of national movement

To learn about the impact of the national movement

1.1 INTRODUCTION

There is different approach among the historians as to the rise and sporadic growth of nationalism in India. A group of Historian headed by Lajpat Rai, R.C. Manjumdar, R.G. Pradhan and Girija Mukherjee called nationalist Historians expounded the exploitative character of British Imperialism. The Marxist School emerged on the later seence and popularized by R. Pame Dutt and A.R. Desai. The conservative and colonial administration and the imperialist School of historians, popularly known as the Cambridge school mainly deny the existence of colonialism as an economic, political, social and cultural structure in India.

1.2 CONCEPTUAL DEBATES

Their major weakness, however, is that they tend to ignore or, at least, underplay the inner contradiction of Indian society both in terms of class and caste. They tend to ignore the fact while the nationalist movement people or the nation as a whole (that is, of all class vis-a-vis colonialism) it only did so from a particular class perspective and that consequently, there was a constant struggle between different social, ideological perspective for hegemony over the movement. They also usually take up the position adopted by the right wing of the nationalist movement and equate it with the movement as a whole. Their treatment of the strategic and ideological dimensions of the movement is also inadequate.

Marxist Approach

Marxist Historians

The Marxist school emerged on the since later. Its foundations, so far the study of the nationalist movement in concerned, were laid by R. Palme Dutt and A.R. Desai, but several other have developed it over the years. Unlike the imperialist school, the Marxist historians clearly see primary contradiction as well as the process of nation making and unlike the nationalist, they also take full note of the inner contradiction of Indian society. According to the soviet historian, the foundation of the Indian National Congress was inseparably connected with the rise of an indigenous Indian Capitalist industry.

Accordingly to the theory of economic determinism, changes in the structure of the economic produced new social relationship, transforming society from i status-based to a contract-based one, and set in motion a large scale social mobility which had never taken place in India before. The political struggle for freedom was a culmination of the social change which started in Bengal during the second half of the eighteenth century a product of the disruption of the old economic and social order proceeding from the growth of a market society.

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The penetration of British trade in the interior and the British land settlements which made land a saleable and alienable commodity, helped the growth of a market economy in India and as a result a new social class of traders, merchants, subordinate agent of the company and Private British Traders, middlemen and money-leaders sprang up.

The political development of modern India since the beginning of the nineteenth century can be considered as the history of the struggle of this class to find a new identity. Mishra, a non-Marxist historian, has also expressed the view that radical changes under British rule, emanating from progress of education and advancement of technology, led to the growth of a middle class whose component parts exhibited an element of uniformity in spite of being heterogeneous and even mutually conflicting at time. Mishra also specifies the economic process by which these social developments were brought about. Modern capitalism in India developed from the import of foreign capital and skill as part of the transformation of India as an appendage to the imperial economy, for producing raw materials to feed British industry. The export of agricultural products created a trade surplus which paid for the construction of railways and other public works, as well as for the import of capital goods and machinery which began to process locally the raw materials earlier developed for export.

K.M. Panikkar, another non-Marxist historian, also emphasized the central role of the new middle class in the national movement, but instead of specifying any decisive economic change behind their emergence, he pointed to shift in the centre of power and influence within Indian society as a result of the administrative and political impact of the British Raj. Panikkar uses the term class rather loosely. Sometimes using it almost as a synonym for caste. Marxist historians have used the concept in a more rigorous manner and have attributed the emergence of new classes in Indian society to specific economic progress. R.P. Dutt whose *Indian History* still remains the most authoritative Marxist work on modern India, wrote that the growth of modern industry in the second half of the nineteenth century led to the rise of the bourgeoisie, together with

a new educated middle class of lawyers, administrators, teachers and journalists. The writings of quite a few Marxian historians and sociologists echoed the same view before and after

Independence. But gradually there was a shift of emphasis from R.P. Dutta's bourgeoisie to intermediate groups variously designated as the educated middle class the Petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia. A.R. Desai's work on Indian nationalism took up in this respect the earlier threads woven into the brilliant analysis of M.N. Roy. With the growth of modern industries, wrote Professor Desai, new classes of modern bourgeoisie and a working class came into existence, along with the professional classes. The intelligentsia, drawn from the professional classes, developed before the industrial bourgeoisie and led the national movement in each phase. The more recent work of the soviet historians has followed the lines indicated by A.R. Desai. N.M. Goldberg, a leading soviet ideologist, has introduced a somewhat tentative distinction ! the class basis of the moderate and extremist movements within the Indian National Congress. In his view the native capitalist class, weak and tied to foreign economic interests, was irresolute on the demand which it expressed; but the petty bourgeois i.e., who lay behind the extremist movement, were more forthright. In a complementary study of urban Maharashtra in the late nineteenth century, V.I. Pavlov observes that India's national industrial bourgeoisie first developed in Bombay by accumulating capital in comprador activities associated with European merchant capital operating in the overseas cotton trade and the opium trade with China. Bipan Chandra, who exhibits this new reaction, assigns the most important role in the rise of Indian nationalism to the formulation of an ideology by the Indian intelligentsia, though he allows some weight to the growth of the Indian capitalist class. To him, the problem concerns the real nature of imperialism and how it contradicted the true interests of all classes of Indian people. In his view, the realization of this problem by the intelligentsia and their consequent propagation of an anti-imperialist ideology, which represented the common interests of all classes of India, gave rise to Indian nationalism.

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In any case, Bipan Chandra points out. It was not until after the First World War that they received any support from leading men of commerce and industry. Sumit Sarkar also expresses similar doubts about the simplistic version of the class-approach used by R.P Dutta and certain soviet historians. He point to the inconvenient facts of indifference and even hostility shown towards swodeshi by the bulk of the professional trading community in Bengal and the lukewarm attitude of the industrial bourgeoisie of Bombay and Gujarat. He also observes that the glib talk the urban betty-bourgeois character of the swodeshi movement obscures the link which so many of the participants had with land through some form of Zamindari or intermediate tenure.

Shortcomings

However, many of them and Palme Dutta in particular are not able to fully integrate their treatment of their primary anti-imperialist contradiction and the secondary inner contradictions, and tend to counter pose the anti-imperialist struggle to the class of social struggle. They also tend to see the movement as a structured bourgeois movement, it not the bourgeoisies movement and miss its open-ended and all-class character. They see the bourgeoisie as playing the dominate role in the movement-they tend to equate or conflate the national leadership with the bourgeoisie or capitalist class. They also interpret the class character of the movement in terms of its forms of struggle (i.e., in its non-violent character) and in the fact that it made strategic retreats and compromises. A few take an even narrow view. They suggest that access to financial resources determined the ability to influence the courseand direction of nationalist politics. Many of the Marxist writers also do not do an actual detailed historical investigation of the strategy, programme, ideology, extent and forms of mass mobilization and strategic and tactical maneuvers of the national movement.

Imperialist Approach

Main advocator:

The Imperialist School first emerged in the official pronouncements of the viceroy, Lord Dufferin, Curzon and Minto and the secretary of state, George Hamilton. It was first cogently put forward by V. Chitambar, the Rowlett (Sedition) committee report, Verney Lovett and the Franks-Chelmsford report. It was theorized for the first time, by Bruce T. McCully, an American scholar, in 1940. Its liberal version was adopted by Reginald Coupland and after 1947, by Percival Spear, while its conservative version was refurbished and developed at length by Anil Seal and J.A. Gallagher and their students and followers after 1968. Since the liberal version is no longer fashionable in academic circles, we will ignore it here due to shortage of space. The conservative colonial administrators and the imperialist school of historians, popularly known as the Cambridge School, deny the existence of colonialism as an economic, political, social and cultural structure in India. Colonialism is seen by them primarily as foreign rule. They either do not see or vehemently deny the economic, social, cultural and political development of India required the overthrow of colonialism. Thus, their analysis of the national movement is based on the denial of the basic contradiction between the interests of the Indian people and of British colonialism and causative role this contradiction played in the rise of national movement. Consequently, they implicitly or explicitly deny that the Indian National Movement represented the Indian side of this contradiction or that it was anti-imperialist, that is it opposed British imperialism in India. They see the Indian struggle against imperialism as a mock battle (mimic warfare), a Dassehra duel between two hollow statues, locked in motiveless and simulated combat. The denial of the central contradiction vitiates the entire approach of these scholars though their meticulous research does help others to use it within a different framework.

The imperialist writers deny that India was in the process of becoming a nation and believe that what is called Indian in fact consisted of religious, castes, communities and interests. Thus, the grouping of Indian politics around the concept of an Indian nation or an Indian people or social classes is not recognized by them. There

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were instead, they said, pre-existing Hindu-Muslim, Brahmin, Non-Brahmin, Aryan, Bhadrak (cultured people and other similar identities). They say that these prescriptive groups based on caste and religion are the real basis of political organization and as such, caste and religion based politics are primary and nationalism a mere cover. As Seal puts: what from a distance appear as their political strivings were often, on close examination, their efforts to conserve or improve the position of their own prescriptive groups. (This also makes Indian nationalism, says Seal, different from the nationalism of China, Japan, the Muslim countries and Africa). If the Indian National Movement did not express the interests of the Indian people vis-a-vis imperialism, then whose interests did it represent? Once again the main lines of the answer and argument were worked out by late 19th century and early 20th century officials and imperialist spokesmen.

The National Movement, assert the writers of the imperialist school, was not a peoples movement but a product of the needs and interests of the elite groups who used it to serve either their own narrow interest or the interests of their prescriptive groups. Thus, the elite groups and their needs and interests, provide the origin as well as the driving force of the idea, ideology and movement of nationalism. These groups were sometimes formed around religious or caste identities and sometimes through political connections built around patronage. But, in each case, these groups had a narrow, selfish interest in opposing British rule or each other. Nationalism, then, is seen primarily as a mere ideology which these elite groups used to legitimize their narrow ambitious and to mobilize public support. The national movement was merely an instrument used by the elite groups to mobilize the masses and to satisfy their own interests.

Gallagher, Seal and their students have added to this viewpoint. White Dufferin, Curzon, Chirol, Lovett, Mc Cully, and B.B. Mishra talked of the frustrated educated middle classes using nationalism to fight the benevolent Raj, Seal develops a parallel view, as found in Chirol and the Rowlatt Committee Report, that the national movement represented the struggle of one Indian elite group against another for British favours. As he puts it. It is misleading to view

these native mobilization as directed chiefly against foreign overlordship. Much attention has been paid to the apparent conflicts between imperialism and nationalism, it would be at least equally profitable to study their real partnership. The main British contribution to the rise and growth of the national movement, then was that British rule sharpened mutual jealousies and struggles among Indians and created new fields and institutions for their mutual rivalry. Seal, Gallagher and their students also extended the basis on which the elite groups were formed.

They followed and added to the view point of the British historian Lewis Namier and contended that these groups were formed on the basis of patron client relationships. They theorize that, as the British extended administrative, economic and political power to the localities and provinces, local potentates started organizing politics by acquiring clients and patrons whose interests they served, and who in turn served their interests. Indian politics began to be formed through the links of this patron client chain. Gradually, bigger leaders emerged who undertook to act as brokers to link together the politics of the local potentates, and eventually, because British rule encompassed the whole of India, all-India brokers emerged. To operate successfully, these all-India brokers need province level brokers at the lower levels, and needed to involve clients in the national movement. The second level leaders are also described as sub-contractors. Seal says the chief political brokers were Gandhi, Nehru and Patel. And according to these historians, the people themselves, whose fortunes were affected by all this power brokering came in only in 1918. After that, we are told their existential grievances such as war, inflation, disease, drought or depression which had nothing to do with colonialism were cleverly used to bamboozle them into participation in this factional struggle of the potentates

Shortcomings

Thus, this school of historians treats the Indian national movement as a cloak for the struggle for power between various sections of the Indian elite and between them and the foreign elite, thus effectively denying its insistence and legitimacy as a movement of the Indian people for the overthrow of imperialism and for the establishment of an

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independent nation state. Categories of nation, class, mobilization, ideology etc. which are generally used by historians to analyze national movement and revolutionary processes in Europe, Asia and Africa are usually missing from their treatment of the Indian national movement. This view not only denies the existence of colonial exploitation and under development and the central contradiction, but also any idealism on the part of those who sacrificed their lives for the anti-imperialist cause. As S. Gopal has put it Namier was caused of taking the mid out of politics: this school has gone further and taken not only the mind but decency, character, integrity and selfless commitment out of the Indian National Movement. Moreover, it denies any intelligent or active role to the mass of workers, peasants, lower middle class and women in the anti-imperialist struggle. They are treated as a child people or dumb creatures who had no perception of their needs and interests. One wonders why the colonial rulers did not succeed in mobilizing them behind their own politics.

A survey of the available literature of this type seems to indicate these fundamentally different lines of approach to the problem. There are also considerable difference of opinion within each line of approach which need attention. It is for the research dealing with segments of this history to now try and weave a complex web, of explanations bringing together economic force, institutional opportunities and government impulses in their proper sphere. The indirect pressure of class situation on the political situation in the long run, the local differences concealed by the regional uniformities of caste and community, the short term working of patrone-client linkages and their gradual dissolution, all need to be filled together into a more adequate framework of analysis. In this take, perhaps it may be useful to keep in mind a twofold distinction: the distinction between the real lever of power held by the ruling British economic and administrative interest and the uncertain pegs gained by those Indian aspirant trying to replace their interests and the distinction between the long-term and common goal of the Indian aspirants and their short-term

preoccupation and parochial interests. At one level, the Marxian method might seem appropriate, at another, the neo-traditional and the purely political approaches might throw light. The process of political change in India was after all very complex and would not easily fit into any ready-made or cut and dried explanations.

In evaluating the merits of these rival conceptions of nationalism, it is essential that primacy be given to the particular goals that inspired groups or movements to act in opposition to the colonial situation in Asia and Africa. It is generally acknowledged by all scholars that colonialism in these two continents gave rise to a variety of responses. Some were motivated by a desire to revive a lost dynasty or kingdom; some sought to preserve the purity of the ethnic group or religious doctrine from contamination by alien influences; some wanted remedies to specific economic and social ills; and some set their sights upon the establishment of the nation-state and achieving equality of status with other nations. Evidently all these responses are manifestations of anticolonialism: that is to say, they all claim to act in opposition to the existing colonial situation. However it is clear that these differing responses to colonialism otherwise shared little in common in the kind of goals that they pursued. Since nationalism is linked intimately with the objective of creating the nation-state or maintaining the one that already exists, it is difficult to know how anticolonial movements which did not espouse this goal can be grouped under the rubric of nationalism. To elaborate more upon this, while it is true to portray nationalism in colonial Asia and Africa as anticolonialism, yet it will be wrong to invert it and claim that anticolonialism in all guises is nationalism. This is to say that anticolonialism is conceptually a narrower concept than nationalism of which it forms a part, for instance, it is likely that many of anticolonial movements may not be national in spirit and contrarily might be only regional in spirit or a repertoire of regional forces as appears to be the case of 1857 sepoy rebellion.

Nationalism in India as elsewhere was a modern phenomenon, predicated in the belief that India was a nation and that freedom from colonial rule was a birthright of its people and that its conferment would allow the nation to occupy a status of equality with other members in the

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family of nations. Obviously, nationalism in India was not *sui generis*; it was part of a universal phenomenon that had swept the world in recent times under different circumstances. In the case of India, her status as a British colony meant that nationalism must necessarily assume an anticolonial garb. The dissolution of British imperialism was a necessary condition in the creation of an Indian nation-state. It is this commitment to the dual objectives of the dissolution of British colonialism and the establishment of the Indian nation-state in its place that separates nationalism (Indian national movements) from its older versions of other anticolonial movements in India, be they the primary resistance struggles mounted by the Indian rulers anxious to recover their lost kingdoms, the religiously inspired wars fought in the name of doctrinal purity, the agrarian outbursts of the peasantry nursing socio-economic grievances or even the Mutiny-Revolt of 1857 instigated primarily by military elements in order to protect their cultural identity. Emphasizing on the distinctive component of 'Third-World Nationalism', Partha Chatteljee has argued, against Gellner and Anderson, that their understanding of nationalism converges, despite important differences, on a kind of sociological determinism whereby third-world nationalisms are reduced to mere copies of the 'original', European ones -of 'modular' character, in Anderson's own phrase. If nations are to be imagined by the styles in which they are imagined, then, strictly speaking, this insistence on the 'modular' character of third-world nationalisms, leaves little by which they can be distinguished, according to Chatterjee. Anderson is, of course, the most sophisticated of the whole lot of theorists of nationalism, but he too, says Chatterjee, seems to share the opinion of others like John Plamenatz, Hans Kohn, Elie Kedourie, and Ernest Gellner in this regard. The burden of Chatterjee's argument is that by confining the discussion to the 'modular character of twentieth century nationalisms' Anderson fails to notice "the twists and turns, the suppressed possibilities, the contradictions still unresolved" in the histories of these nationalisms (Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World*, 1986,21). One point of definitional significance relating to Indian nationalism needs some elucidation, namely the validity or otherwise of the claim to nationhood by the Muslim minority in the subcontinent. The fact that Muslims were

widely dispersed all over the subcontinent, and were living amidst Hindus, Sikhs and other communities in close physical proximity, had raised doubts about whether a Muslim nation-state could be territorially demarcated which would be coextensive with the Hindu nation. Equally, as Muslim nationalism implied the territorial division of the subcontinent, threatening in the process to disrupt centralized colonial state, it was believed that such a division would shatter the very bonds of unity upon which the new nation-state would depend for its survival. Although these objections have some relevance, yet they in themselves do not invalidate the Muslim claim for nationhood as Muslim nationalism fulfilled all the qualifications - be it the issue of territory or that of collective 'will' to form a 'nation' required for a territorial nation-state. Besides the generally acknowledged fact that India's Muslims possessed a distinct identity based upon Islamic values, and this was evidenced in their studied refusal to identify with the Hindus in the Congress, what is also crucial is that the Muslim constituted the majority of the population in the northwest and the northeast and as such were in a position to claim these areas as their territory and homeland. It was the presence of these two factors that made Pakistan a reality in 1947. Hugh Tinker in his essay 'Nation-State in Asia' cites an interesting passage from E. M. Foster's 'A Passage to India' - "India a nation! What an apotheosis! Last comer to the drab nineteenth century sisterhood! Waddling in at this hour of the world to take her seat! She, whose only peer was the Holy Roman Empire, she shall rank with Guatemala and Belgium perhaps!" (See Hugh Tinker, 'The Nation-State in Asia' in "Nation-State" edited by L. Tivey, 1981, 104).

This passage by Forster sets another example of a stereotypical image of Asian countries like India maintained constantly during the colonial period by the Euro-centric and Orientalist European thinkers which specifically emphasizes here that India's future would only be confused and distorted by an anti-colonialist insistence and that it would eventually land up into a small nation-state on European model. Almost a century has passed since Indian nationalism has been studied, and despite the remarkable acceleration of research in recent years, there is still a conspicuous absence of agreement on basic issues relating to this

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important epiphenomenon in Indian history. In fact the approaches to the study of Indian nationalism are so diverse, and the explanations of its origins so varied, that a scholar might be forgiven if he finds himself lost in a maze of conflicting interpretations. This is not to imply that the complexity of Indian nationalism could not be reduced to the simpler logical conclusions. Early Discourses on Indian Nationalism: Among the early Romantic accounts to appear on Indian nationalism is Annie Besant's 'How India Wrought for Freedom?' Published in 1915, at a time when the Indian nationalist scene was in the throes of rapid change with the passing of the old leadership, the work was intended as much as a contribution to the understanding of Indian nationalism as a kind of political testament of a renowned Irish political activist who had graduated from early involvement in socialism and Fabianism in Britain to Theosophy and Hindu revivalism in India.

At the time that the book appeared, Besant, after two decades in the service of Hindu revival, was offering herself as a leader of the Indian nationalist movement, acting as a conciliator of the warring factions inside the Congress and busy in the formation of Home Rule Leagues. It is thus not surprising that Besant's study reveals to some extent how her preoccupations with Theosophy and Hindu revivalism influenced her perception of Indian nationalism. Besant insists that Indians had not only the capacity and knowledge to tackle their problems but also that Britain as the imperial power had turned traitor to her great ideals and principles. In writing the history of Indian nationalism, she hopes that the British nation would "understand the shame of autocratic rule in India, her broken pledges, her selfishness, her preference for her own to India's interests" and thus pave the way for the early grant of self-rule to the Indian people. While the history of the Congress forms the focus of study, Besant's account of its origins takes her into an investigation of the early history of India for she believes that the beginnings of national consciousness are deeply embedded in its ancient past, notably the civilization nurtured by the Aryans. The Aryan civilization is depicted as the true breeding ground of Indian nationality. On the one hand, there was the proud literary heritage which fostered legends, traditions, drama and songs which "live still more vitally in Indian hearts and

prayers and ceremonies today." Besant argues that it is "on this literature and on the past embodied in it that the foundation of Indian nationality is indestructibly laid." On the other hand, religion came to consolidate further this sense of unity and consciousness. To Besant, the people in mentioning their pilgrimages "knew them as their Motherland". It was further proof that "India was a unity" and possessed "national consciousness in her religion". Besant is thus led to conclude that Indian national consciousness was "not a plant of mushroom growth, but a giant of the forest, with millennia behind it." Denied implicitly here is that nationalism is a modern phenomenon of European origin. All that Besant is willing to concede is that the national unity imposed by the Aryan civilization was to an extent disrupted by the advent of Islam which introduced new material into Indian polity that was yet to be wholly assimilated.

"Indians, Persians (Parsis), and Musalmans are not yet wholly one nation, though becoming one with great rapidity." Although Besant denies any British part in sowing the seeds of nationalism in India, yet she believes that British policy could become an important factor in its development. Besant argues that in certain areas, notably education, British rule had done much to strengthen nationalist feeling in India and prepare the country for self-government. On balance, however, she finds the record of British imperialism in India a dismal one. Besant's version reflects what may be termed as the "romantic" school of Indian nationalism which the Theosophical Society and other Hindu bodies had done so much to popularize since the nineteenth century. This school of Indian historical writing started on the premise that India, as the inheritor of an ancient and glorious civilization, owed little to discoveries made by other civilizations, whether European or otherwise. It thus followed that nationalism was not in reality a European invention, as some writers had claimed, but a phenomenon that had long been embedded in Hindu culture. While Besant's version of Indian nationalism may be important to instill a sense of national pride to a people under colonial SUBjugation, it does however little to enhance our understanding of the dynamics of important historical processes like nationalism. In failing to see nationalism as a product of modern history, Besant has ruled out

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any prospect of coming to grips with the particular set of circumstances that gave rise to this phenomenon in India. Roy and the Perspective of Historical Materialism: A different perspective of Indian nationalism is gained from the writings of Manabendra Nath Roy, the founder of the Indian Communist movement and without doubt its leading theoretician during the 1920s. It must be admitted at once that Roy did not specifically address himself to the task of writing the history of Indian nationalism. Essentially he viewed Indian nationalism as a process within the country's broader historical evolution. Although Roy has written extensively on a variety of issues over a period of time, yet a reasonably clear insight into Roy's perspective of Indian nationalism can be gained through a scrutiny of his first study published in 1922 entitled *India in Transition*.

What is of some significance about this work is that it was written at a time when Roy was in the full flesh of conversion to communism and held fervently to the belief that this ideology was destined to achieve its global triumph. Roy states at the outset of his study that his analysis proceeds from "the point of view of Historical Materialism". Applying the techniques of Marxist analysis, Roy traces India's historical evolution from the beginning to modern times. However little space is devoted to developments in the pre-British periods, for Roy's main concern lies with the dual processes of how India was simultaneously struggling to free herself from foreign rule and at the same time seeking to destroy many of her old institutions which were obstructive to her social progress. In other words, Roy seeks to depict the revolt which would usher the people of India "into a more advanced stage of socio-economic development". It is this revolt that he terms as "the essence of the present transition". Roy denies vehemently the claims of the Romantic School that Indian nationalism originated in ancient times. To him, the historians of this school misguided the readers of history whose "subjective attitude prevents them from looking at the history of human progress as 'it is'".

To Roy, nationhood was "a comparatively recent phenomenon in the annals of human history". Nations were born at a certain stage of economic development when people in a given area were welded

together into a national entity. Specifically it is the development of a mode of production that brings into existence the bourgeoisie that provided the conditions for the rise of nationalism. This class, argues Roy, anxious to obtain power in order to control the means of production and distribution, originated the theory of nationhood in an attempt to rally the support of other classes. India did not inherit a bourgeoisie before the eighteenth century and as such the concept of nationhood was unknown at that time. India during the days of Hindu and Muslim rule was "a mere geographical expression". Hindu kingdoms that rose were theocratic and patricidal in nature, and what motivated them was "dynastic ambition, pure and simple". Under Muslim rule, although India was brought under one central rule, it was "not a nation -because the court of Delhi was not the centre of a national state".

India was ruled by a foreign aristocracy with the help of a mercenary army. However Roy does admit that the rise of Maratha power in the seventeenth century marked "the first stage of political nationalism in the history of India" but he claims that it soon degenerated into "medieval imperialism" propagating "a reactionary cult" based on Hindu antagonism towards the Muslim. It was only with the advent of British imperialism that the necessary objective conditions for the rise of Indian nationalism were truly laid. Roy argues that feudalism "as the basis of social economics received the first death blow" with British victories in the middle of the eighteenth century, and during the next century, it was progressively weakened, with "the last vestiges of feudal power shattered by the failure of the revolt of 1857". India thus passed under "the capitalist exploitation" of the British. Roy claims that this change from Indian feudalism to capitalism was made possible partly through the active support given to the British by the Indian middle class - intellectuals and traders -which had reared its head during the eighteenth century.

The middle class, being conscious that the decaying feudal order was inimical to its material interest, was willing to collaborate with a foreign bourgeoisie in order to establish a more advanced economic system. The British rulers in acknowledgement of this support gave the middle class opportunities to trade, invest in land, and to acquire modern education

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and professional skills. Especially significant was the introduction of modern secular education. Roy contends that the British permitted the new learning on the belief that its products would be their natural ally and oppose any "reactionary upheavals". However, the result turned out to be quite different, for modern education was to let loose "that dynamic social force which was destined to prove eventually mortal to the British". Not only did the Indian intellectual class show "signs of vigor in social and religious reformism", but more significant its members also became "the forerunners of Indian nationalism" who worked to bring about the dissolution of British imperialism.

Roy explains that what prompted the Indian intellectuals to espouse nationalism was their desire to foster their class interest. The intellectuals, together with the landowners and traders, formed the Indian bourgeoisie which had benefited from India's transition to a capitalist system. However, the continued growth of this class posed a threat to the ruling power. The British bourgeoisie recognized that the ambitions of its Indian counterpart to expand into industrial and administrative fields were "positively dangerous to the safety of the foreign domination", and as such ought to be checked, even if it meant the destruction of this class. The British rulers then sought allies amongst the feudal elements in society and also promulgated restrictive measures to contain the bourgeoisie. Acts of economic discrimination saw the bourgeoisie being "excluded from building railways, tramways, exploiting mines and others". Roy claims that the difficulties of the Indian bourgeoisie were compounded by the falling income from land, shortage of productive land for exploitation and the overcrowding of the liberal professions. It was a situation in which the "rich intelligentsia found its further economic development blocked on all sides. The British Government was seen to be the cause of all this, and there arose the necessity to fight against it. Economic necessity forced the intellectual bourgeoisie to begin a political struggle, which was initiated in the form of the Indian National Congress". Indian intellectuals found allies among the traders and the industrialists resentful of British obstructiveness. Roy argues that Indian capitalism "represented by the liberal professions and landholding class, and the Indian merchants and

traders" had launched nationalism to curtail British power which stood in the way of its further economic advancement.

The ideology of nationalism, claims Roy, was borrowed from the British bourgeoisie and it aimed at the creation of "a bourgeois national state". The Indian intelligentsia and capitalists who were in the vanguard of this movement proclaimed that "the sovereign power is not vested in an individual but in the entire community united into a nation". Roy asserts that these groups raised issues such as representative institutions, Indianization of the civil service, the development of home industry and the boycott of foreign goods. Although these demands were "clothed in the language of the democratic scriptures of 'national will', 'sovereign prerogative of the people,' etc", Roy believes that this was a clever piece of deception. "The grievances of the office-seeking intellectuals were put forth as those of the people. The ambitions of the native capitalist class were identified with the right of the people". In reality, the bourgeoisie was "shielding its exploitation under the cry against foreign imperialism". The same self-interest determined the attitude of this class towards social and religious conservatism. Although Roy admits that this programme was not without its revolutionary significance, yet the action of the bourgeoisie was founded on the secure belief that a state conducive to the growth of the bourgeoisie could not be built on feudal social relations and religious conservatism. Roy is thus led to conclude that victory for Indian nationalism would signify no more than "the victory of the progressive middle class" .

Integral to this analysis is the belief that the nationalism of the Congress would do little to alter the condition of the masses. Although India was essentially an agrarian society, with more than two-thirds of the people dependent on agriculture for their livelihood, Roy contends British rule had done little to advance the welfare of this class. Changes in system of leadership, introduction of cash crops for foreign market, import of cheap machine-produced goods into India, and the general play of free market forces had all combined to produce a pauperized peasantry and agricultural workers. Roy contends that the beneficiaries of these changes were the government, the Zamindars and the land speculators, none of whom ploughed back their profits to increase agricultural

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productivity. Clearly, there was conflict of interest between these profiteers and the masses of toiling peasantry, and Roy believes that it was this situation that was productive of a future revolution in India. To Roy, Gandhi represented "the acutest and most desperate manifestation of the forces of reaction" and as such bound to collapse under the weight of its own contradictions. The day was not far away when the masses would divorce themselves from the bourgeois leadership, organize to fight "on the grounds of class struggle", and eventually secure "ultimate economic and social liberation" of India.⁵ Roy's analysis of Indian nationalism reveals none of the conceptual fuzziness that so much besets the approaches of the romantic school. Roy perceives nationalism as a modern phenomenon born from conditions created by British rule, notably changes in the economy and education, which he argues created a middle class in Indian society that eventually became the leading exponents of the doctrine of nationalism.

Where Roy's analysis does cause disagreement is the extent to which he relies on Marx's materialist conception of history to explain the phenomenon of Indian nationalism. Claims by the leaders of the Congress to articulate "the national will" or assert "the prerogatives of the people" are depicted by Roy as deception on the part of the bourgeoisie to hide its real goals and delude the masses into supporting the so-called nationalist cause. While such a view has not only been regarded as an orthodoxy among Marxist historians but also drawn fire from other scholarly circles who see such a portrayal of Indian nationalism as simplistic, reducing a complex movement into the straight jacket of Marxist class struggle, and denying causal significance to non-economic factors.⁶ McCully and the Theory of the Educated Class: Unlike Besant and Roy, whose interest in Indian nationalism was stimulated through personal participation in it, B.T. McCully can claim no similar involvement. He came to the subject as a scholar working for a degree in an American university. In 1940 McCully's research findings were incorporated and published in a monograph called *English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism*. The author claims that nationalism was a global phenomenon which had touched all peoples and states. India was no exception and, although this was

recognized by all, yet scholars and publicists who had studied it had left many things still unexplained. In his work, Mccully seeks to discover from whence nationalism came to India, whether it constituted an opposition to the cultural and political penetration of Europe, and which groups in Indian society were its active disseminators. In other words, the writer addressed himself to the problem of causation of Indian nationalism.

Mccully conceives English education as the agency through which nationalism entered India. Government patronage, combined with missionary zeal and private enterprise, had helped to produce "the educated class" in India. Numbering over 55,000 at the time of the formation of the Congress in 1885, this minority "instructed in the literature, science and history of Europe" was essentially upper caste Hindu in composition, drawn from "the middle and lower income groups" residing in the presidency capitals and district towns, and sought employment in government and liberal professions. Mccully maintains that it was the resentments and aspirations of this educated class that led to the germination of the seed of nationalism in India. The resentments of the educated were partly economic in nature. Unemployment among this class had "become chronic" by the 1880s.

However, there were no outlets in politics or military service to speak of; agriculture "offered little temptation" while openings in manufacturing and commerce were "almost impossible for lack of skill, dearth of capital, and the inequality of terms on which it had to compete with European industry"; and the higher echelons of the civil service were for "all practical purposes" closed. These difficulties were aggravated by the baneful working of the new economic forces associated with British rule - money-economy, population growth, shortage of land, and rise in prices of agricultural products. It was in the face of such economic plight that the educated demanded that more jobs be made available in the government. When this demand was contemptuously rejected by the British bureaucracy, argues Mccully, it "furnished no little fuel for the nationalist agitation" (Mccully, 1940). The problems of the educated can also be traced to another quarter.

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Mccully argues that through English education, Indians came to exhibit "numerous traces of the exotic cultural influences to which their schooling had exposed them". There was a conscious imitation of European styles of dress and eating habits, the ready acceptance of alien ideas, and the consequent repudiation of long cherished beliefs and customs. The habitual use of English as the language of group communication also alienated the educated from the rest of the society. Mccully claims that the extent of disruption was so serious that the educated became "an anomaly in native society" which had "slipped its moorings and was drifting from the old anchorage". When a small section of the educated began attacking venerated traditions in the name of reform and progress, it precipitated a conflict inside Indian society. Social tension born from cultural alienation, coupled with economic distress, were the activating factors which led the educated to experiment with nationalism. Mccully asserts that in choosing nationalism as the ideology of its struggle, the educated reflected its close contact with European culture.

Nationalism in the true sense of the word was unknown in India before; nor did the different language groups that inhabited the subcontinent show any sense of national unity. What did exist before, maintains Mccully, was a form of Hindu patriotism which manifested itself in "parochial loyalties, a fond attachment to the natal spot, an interest in the local affairs of the village, a sentimental attachment to the ancestral religion and manners". In espousing nationalism, the educated broke with tradition, and began to improvise "with the aid of European example". European ideas such as freedom, liberty and common citizenship were imbibed by the educated through study of European history, by following press reports of happenings in the West, and through visits to Europe for business and study. Similarly, in the sphere of tactics and organization, the educated imitated "Young Italy", British political parties and the Irish nationalists. Mccully thus concludes that the emergence of Indian nationalism was "largely the outgrowth of British rule and English education".

Check your progress –

1. What is the period of British Raj ?

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2. What is Ahimsa?

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.....

1.3 LETS SUM UP

This can, therefore, be concluded that there was no sharp contestation, as Partha Chatterjee presumes, between the thematic of the 'colonialist discourse' and the thematic of the 'nationalist discourse'. The real site of intense contestation was between the problematic of the former and the latter. Sudipta Kaviraj accepts this distinction considerably when he maintains that colonial state created two different discourses amidst others: (a) intellectual discourse (which was often full of self-doubt and criticism) and (b) popular mythic discourse (which was unself-critical, arrogant and aggressive).⁶⁵ Further Kaviraj held that "By integrating society, introducing symmetric trends of social-hierarchy, enumerating society, familiarizing Indians with the theory of public power and democracy, placing before them the universality of reason and the great narratives of European nation-formation and introducing the skills of forming associations, this imperial discourse had also taught Indians how rationalism could be turned against the European colonizers themselves.

1.4 KEYWORDS

Ahimsa- An ancient Sanskrit term usually translated as, and possibly the model for, 'nonviolence'

Amristar - April 13, 1919; British troops fired on a large crowd of unarmed Indians in Amritsar in the Punjab region of India, killing several

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hundred people and wounding many hundreds more. Marks the turning point when Mohandas Gandhi's full commitment turned to the cause of Indian nationalism and independence from Britain

Barrister- A lawyer entitled to practice as an advocate, particularly in the higher courts.

Brahmo Samaj- A monotheistic reformist and renaissance movement of Hindu religion

British Raj-British rule in the Indian subcontinent between 1858 and 1947

1.5 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. When was the first nationalist movement started?
2. What is imperialism?

1.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

Sarkar, Sumit - "The Swadeshi Movement in Bengal, 1903-1908", New Delhi, 1973, 50.

Mccully, B.T. - "English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism", New York,1940.

Mannheim, Karl-"Ideology and Utopia", New York, 1936,

Seal, A. -"The Emergence of Indian Nationalism", Cambridge, 1968,

1.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Hint – 1.2
2. Hint – 1.2

UNIT 2 EMERGENCE OF ORGANIZED NATIONALISM TILL 1919

STRUCTURE

- 2.0 Objective
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Emergence Of Organized Nationalism
- 2.3 Let's Sum Up
- 2.4 Keywords
- 2.5 Questions For Review
- 2.6 Suggested Readings
- 2.7 Answers To Check Your Progress

2.0 OBJECTIVE

To learn about the emergence of nationalism in India

To learn about the birth of Congress party and advent of Gandhi

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi on the Indian political horizon posed enough reasons to excite as well as attract hundreds of Indians towards him and – more towards his ideology, which later came to be called the Gandhian Philosophy. It is indeed amazing that the personality of Gandhiji gripped the imagination of millions of his countrymen and in later stage an overwhelming number the world over.

It was to his unique credit that in a world marred by violence and man-made hatred, Mahatma Gandhi stands firm as a man of universal goodwill and a protagonist of peace. What is more striking is that Gandhiji emerged during his life time as a torchbearer of peace

2.2 EMERGENCE OF ORGANIZED NATIONALISM

The emergence of national movement of epic dimensions in India, and its culmination in the transfer of power from British into Indian hands, constitute one of the most important historic

Al processes of the twentieth century¹. Theories of Indian nationalism was the outcome of the action and interaction of numerous social, economic and political forces which evolved during the British period. Medieval Indian society was transformed into a modern national society. During this period of transformation the rise of Indian nationalism, and the nationalist movement in its various forms were the most fascinating developments. The change was brought about together with other causes, by the significant factors: the setting up of new economic institution, modern transport and means of communication, Western education, the establishment of the press and the instruction of various measures by the British government for the sake of political and administrative unification of India

.It is hazardous to assume that Indian nationalism was a logical historical outgrowth of 19th century political reform activities. As Indian political figures of the late 19th century realized, the earlier political activities in various parts of the country were concerned chiefly with local or provincial issues, they represented the interest of groups which had little sense of identification with the entire nation. At the beginning of 19th century India came into close contact with a Europe and England that was experiencing these varied forms of nationalism. It is commonly assumed that nationalism in India is a product of English education and the impact of the West. But few scholars are also of this view that Indian nationalism is not mere offspring of modern education but the outcome of the new social material conditions created in India and the new social forces which emerged within the Indian society, as a result of the British conquest. It was the outcome of the objective conflict of interests, the interests of Britain to keep India

politically and economically subjected to her and the interests of the Indian people for a free political, economic and cultural evolution by the British rule⁴. Indian nationalism crystallized as a national movement in the latter half of the 19th century. By that time, educated classes grew in the country and, with the rise of Indian Industries, the industrial bourgeoisie came into existence these classes were the organizers of the national movement, which inscribed on its banner. Such demands as Indianization of services, fiscal autonomy.

The movement arose out of the conflict of British and Indian interests in the economic and other spheres. This conflict of interest is the genetic cause of the Indian national movement. Nationalism in India arose to meet the challenge of foreign domination. The very existence of a foreign rule helped the growth of a national sentiment among the people. And then there was a clash between the British interest in India and the interest of the Indian people. The British came to India to promote their own interests and they ruled over her primarily with that object in view. With the passage of time, there was a realization in India and that realization brought bitterness against foreign rule and that was responsible for the growth of the nationalist movement to drive out the foreigners from the country.

All classes of people in India joined at one stage or the other the nationalist movement in the country. The intelligentsia in India, the peasants, the artisans and the workers all played their part in the struggle. While Indian nationalism emerged as a rival and competitor for power with British imperialism and finally succeeded in supplanting the latter in 1947, it will be wrong to depict these two phenomena as contradictory or antithetical to each other and bent on the destruction of the other. On the contrary, a study of the origins of Indian nationalism would reveal only too clearly that it emerged against the background of changes associated with British imperialism, notably as they impinged upon the political structure, economy and education of the country. It is these changes that set in motion a series of events culminating in the formation of the Indian National Congress. Viewed in this perspective, imperialism

and nationalism represent in effect two related historical processes, one following the other in a temporal, sequence, and between which there exists a causal connection.

Nationalism in India, and its Main Phases

Indian nationalism passed through various phases of development. As it advanced from one phase to another its social basis broadened, its objective became more clearly defined and bold, and its forms of expression more varied. As a result of the impact of forces of Indian and world development, increasing strata of the Indian people evolved a national consciousness and outlook and were drawn into the orbit of the nationalist movement. This national awakening found expression in varied spheres of national life, social, political and cultural.

First Phase:

The first phase of Indian nationalism in the early 19th century was dominated by those who had first come in contact with British education in Calcutta and Bombay. In its very first phase, Indian nationalism had a very narrow social basis. The intelligentsia who were the products of the modern education imparted in the new educational institutions, established by the British in India in the first decades of the 19th century, and who had studied Western culture and greatly assimilated its democratic and nationalist ideas, formed the first stratum of the Indian society to develop a national consciousness and aspirations. Raja Ram Mohan Roy and his group of enlightened Indians were pioneers of Indian nationalism. They were the exponents of the Indian nation which they propagated among the people. They initiated socio-reform and religio-reform movements which represented endeavours to remould the Indian society and religion in the spirit of the new principle of democracy, rationalism and nationalism.

In fact, these movements were the expression of the rising national democratic consciousness among a section of the Indian people. These founders and first fighters of Indian nationalism stood up for democratic rights, such as the freedom of the press, and out forth demands like the right of the nation to have a voice in the administration of the country

.Second Phase:

After 1870, when famines and agrarian unrest, trouble between landlords and tenants, between indebted peasants and money-lenders, the agitation for jobs in the civil service, the criticism of British revenue policy in India, the charges of exploitation and of wasteful expenditure on railways and frontier wars provided ample scope for nationalist criticism. The economic changes which had been brought about by several decades of stable British rule now showed their cumulative effect.

The pressure on the land had increased and landlords who had to treat their tenants leniently in earlier times when cultivators were scarce, could now enhance their rents as cultivators were competing for the land. Monetization and better communications encouraged the export of food grains and the depletion of stores would cause famines in bad years. The first phase extended till 1885 and culminated in the rise of the Indian National Congress in that year. The second phase roughly covered the period from 1885 to 1905. The liberal intelligentsia who were at the helm of the Congress were the leaders of the Indian nationalist movement during the second phase. Their ideology and methods determined the programme and forms of the movement which reflected the interests of the development of the new bourgeoisie society in India. The social basis of this movement was extended during this period to the educated middle class which, by the end of the 19th century had appreciably grown as a result of the expansion of modern education, and to go a section of the merchant class which had developed during this period as a result of the growth of Indian and international trade. Modern industries also grew steadily during this period as a result of which the class of industrialists emerged and began to gain strength. They started orienting towards the congress which adopted the programme of industrialization of the country and in 1905 organized actively the Swadeshi campaign. The Indian National Congress under the leadership of the Liberals, mainly voiced the demands of the educated classes and the trading bourgeoisie such as the Indianization of services, the association of the Indians with the administrative machinery of the state, the stoppage of

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economic drain and others formulated in the resolutions of the Indian National Congress. It also set forth such democratic demands as those of representative institutions and civil liberties. Its method of struggle dominated by liberal Congress was principally constitutional agitation, effective argument, and traditions of the British people. Since the British government did not satisfy the most vital demands of the Indian nationalist movement, disillusionment set in among a section of the nationalists regarding the ideology and methods of the Liberals, political group, with a new philosophy, political ideology and conception of the methods of struggle, crystallized within the Congress.

Increasing unemployment among the educated middle class youths due to the inability of the social and state apparatus to incorporate them and further, economic misery among the people due to devastating epidemic and famines at the close of the 19th century, created favorable conditions for the growth of the influence of the new group, the extremists. Various unpopular measures during the viceroyalty of Lord Curzon, such as the Indian Universities Act and the partition of Bengal further estranged the people from the government and made the politically conscious middle class rally round the extremists who possessed such capable and self-sacrificed leaders as Tilak¹¹, Aurobindo Ghose¹², B. C. Pal¹³ and Lajpat Rai¹⁴. By 1905, even some of the Liberals began to lose faith in the British government. However, they did not renounce their political philosophy and methodology of struggle.

Political discontent during the second phase, also expresses itself in the growth of the terrorist movement. A small section of nationalist youths organized themselves in terrorist bands and relied upon such.

Growth of Nationalism in the Twentieth Century India methods as assassination of individual officials and sometimes fomenting of mutinies in the army far achieving political freedom

Third Phase:

The third phase in the development of the nationalist movement extended from 1905 to 1918. During this phase, the Liberals were supplanted by the Extremists as the leaders of the nationalist movement. In spite of the strong government repression, the nationalist movement registered an advance. The political propaganda of the extremists instilled a feeling of national self-respect and self-confidence among the people who instead of looking the British for political freedom as counseled by the Liberals, began to rely on their own strength for achieving it. The movement, however, suffered from the defect that its leaders attempted to base it on a resurrected Hindu philosophy. This, to some extent, mystified the movement and weakened its secular character. It was also one of the reasons why it could not appeal to the Muslims.

During the third phase, the Indian National Movement became militant and challenging and acquired a wider social basis by the inclusion of sections of the lower-middle class. The agitation for Home Rule during wartime further strengthened the political consciousness of the people. It was during this phase that sections of upper class Muslims developed political consciousness and founded their all-India political organization in 1906, the Muslim League. Due to a number of reasons, the rising political consciousness of the Muslim upper and educated middle classes addressed more the issues pertaining to Muslims of the country.

Pre-Indian National Congress Movements

Even before the foundation of the Indian National Congress, there were certain movements against the British government. The Indian National Congress was founded in December 1885 and was the first organized expression of the Indian national movement on an all-India basis²². However, it has many predecessors which include the following:

Bengal Landholders Society.

It was on the advice of Theodore Dickens, an eminent British barrister and planter in India, that the principal Zamindars residing in and around Calcutta met on 10 November, 1837 to form an association called

the landholders society²³. British India Society. On 27 March 1839, a provisional committee was set up to establish an association in London named the British Indian Society. The society was formally inaugurated on 6th June, 1839 with Lord Brougham in the chairs. The speakers at the inaugural meeting criticized the administration of the English East India Company for its wicked wars, its ruinous system of taxation, its failure to develop the resources of the country, its neglect of public works its monopolies and its patronage. Emphasis was put on the poverty, misery and discontent prevailing in India

.British Indian Association.

The new association was entirely Indian in composition. It is true that it was dominated by the Calcutta zamindars but it claimed to represent the people of British India as a whole. The founders of the Association aimed at making it a central, national organization with branch all over the country. However, they did not succeed in their mission very soon, the Madras branch became independent and came to be known as the Madras Native Association. The same was true of Bombay and Poona. It also tried to encourage cooperation between the various parts of India on matters of common concern The Bombay Association. On 26 August, 1852, the principal Hindus, Parsees, Muslims, Portugese and Jews of Bombay met to consider the desirableness of an association with a view to ascertaining the wants of the people of this country and the measures calculated to advance their welfare and of representing the same to the authorities in India or in Engalnd. Dadabhai Naoroji, V. N. Mandalik and Nowrosjee Naoroji, V. N. Mandlik and Nowrosjee Surdoonjee were the leaders of the Bombay Association

.London Indian Society.

On 24 March, 1865, a meeting was held in London which was attended by —almost all the principal Indian gentlemen now in Londonl. At that meeting it was decided to form the London Indian Society —for the purpose of discussing all political, social and literary subjects relating to India and adopting such measures as may be

necessary to acquaint the public in England with the views and feeling of the people of India on all principal questions that may arise from time to time. Dadabhai Naoroji was elected its president and W. C. Banerjee its secretary. East India Association. The East India Association was founded in London on 1 October 1866 —for the independent and disinterested advocacy and promotion of the public interests and welfare of the inhabitants of India generally. Dadabhai Naoroji did all that he could to make the East India Association speak for India as a whole. He declared in 1867 that British rule has injected a —new political life into India. Its educated classes were becoming the natural leaders of the masses. A common language among them was forging bonds of nationality. To quote him: “The nation is now becoming gradually assimilated for political purposes”

.Madras Native Association.

The Madras Native Association was established in 1852. It submitted to the British parliament a petition in which it mentioned the various grievances of the people. Those arose —principally from the excessive taxation and the vexations which accompany its collection; and the insufficiency, delay and expense of the company’s courts of Law. What the petitioners asked for was —the construction of roads, bridges and works for the supply of irrigation..., a better provision for the education of the people... and a form of local government more conducive to the happiness of the subjects and the prosperity of the country. The petition condemned both the Zamindars and Raiyatwari systems which were —the instrument of injustice and oppression. The petition expressed dissatisfaction of the Hindus of Madras with their local government —for its propensities and with the government of India for its interference with the Hindu law of inheritance. The petition demanded an increased employment of Indians in the administration of the country.

It demanded greater independence for local governments and criticized —the systematic obstructiveness of Supreme government. The petition criticized the existing system of having a single council for the whole

of Indian and demanded that every local government be allowed to manage its own affairs

Poona Sarvajanik Sabha.

The Poona Sarjanik Sabha was started on 2 April 1870 through the efforts of G. V. Joshi and S. H. Chiplunkar. It was intended to be —a mediating body between the government and the people. Indian League. Sisir Kumar Ghosh founded Indian League in 1875. The Indian League was the first body in India which set up links with political groups outside Bengal. The Indian Association. The Indian Association was inaugurated on 26 July 1876. Surendranath Banerjee and Ananda Mohan Bose were the main force behind it. Its objects were declared to be —to represent the people and promote by every legitimate means, the political, intellectual and national advancement of the people.

Madras Mahajan Sabha.

The Madras Mahajan Sabha was inaugurated at a meeting held in Madras on 16 May 1884 under the presidentship of Rangiah Naidu, Viraraghavachari and Ananda Charlu became its secretaries. The object of the Sabha was declared to be —to endeavour to promote the interests of the people of this country

Bombay Presidency Association:

The Bombay Presidency Association was founded in January 1885 and the main figure in it was Bardroun Din Tyabji, Pherozeshah Mehta and K. T. Telang. Sir Jamsetjee Jeejeebhoy declared that —the desire of the promotion of this movement is to concentrate the existing force. In September 1885 Bombay Presidency Association, along with the Indian Association, the Madras Mahajan Sabha and Poona Sarvajanik Sabha made a joint appeal to the British electorate and sent three delegates to England. In December 1885, it played host to the first session of the Indian national Congress in Bombay. There is a common tendency among the writers of Indian National Movement to connect the revolution of 1858 and the Congress of 1885; —The fires lit in 1857, writes Professor M. Mujeeb,

—Smouldered here and there forever twenty years, created by the establishment of the Indian national Congressl.

The Indian National Congress, established in 1885 was the result of a large number of forces operating in the latter half of the nineteenth century such as English education, the press, quicker means of transport and communication, a strong and uniform system of administration, internal security and freedom from external danger. To these may be added a growing national consciousness in the country which in itself was fostered by a number of pioneers in the field of education, journalism and social system. The credit for giving expression to the nascent nationalism by founding Indian National Congress goes to Allan Octavian Hume, an English and a retired I.C.S. who spent thirty years of service of the people of India.

Hume laid the foundation of Indian National Congress on the advice of Lord Dufferin. The view of W. C. Bonnerjee was that if Hume was the father of the Congress, Lord Dufferin was the God-father. The view of Lala-Lajpat Rai was that the Congress was an English product—a product of Lord Dufferin's brain. As regards the real motives of Hume in the creation of the Indian National Congress, it is said that he believed that the interests of the British Empire in India would be better served by providing it with a safety-valve for the escape of dangerous agitation.

The Governor of Bombay, Lord Reay, followed a policy of—benevolent neutrality towards the Congress but he refused to accept the presidentship of the first session of the Congress at Bombay. The same was offered to W. C. Bonnerjee who had ridiculed all sorts of political agitation and was the model of a loyal India. The first session of the Congress was held in Bombay with seventy-two delegates in December 1885. The second session was attended by 434 delegates in December 1886 held at Calcutta and was presided by Dadabhai Naoroji. The third by 607 delegates in 1887 at Madras under the presidentship of Badruddin Tyabji (1844-1906)³⁹.

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The attitude of the great Muslim community towards the Congress in early days has become subject of great importance. Right from 1885, the year in which the Congress was established, the question of the Muslim participation in the national movement has been a subject of great debate in the British and the Indian press. There is a belief prevalent even amongst scholars that the Indian Muslims as a body kept themselves aloof from the Indian National Congress during the first three decades of its existence. It is further held that they do so at the advice of Sir Syed Ahmad whose influence was paramount during his lifetime and became much greater after his death. Prof. Hafeez Malik, the renowned contemporary scholar, in his research work published by the Public Affairs Press, Washington, points out: —Men like Rahmatullah M. Sayani, president of the Calcutta Session of the Congress in 1896, and the Honourable Mr. Badruddin Tyabji who were conspicuous in the early Congress and the solitary examples of Muslim collaboration with the All-Indian Congress, failed to persuade their co-religionists.

Sir Syed Ahmad from the first had stood out against any close amalgamation with the Congress. He held with all the strength of a life-long conviction that the Muslims in India must stand by themselves and work out their own salvation as a community with the help of the British rulers. He had grown old in mind as well as in body during the last years of his long life and this may have had something to do with his final decision. His personality was always commanding, and it became more so as he grew older, while the respect and reverence for him among Muslims were far greater in those last years than they had even been before. For these reasons his decision to oppose the Congress and his advice to hold aloof from it received after his death in 1898, almost a religious sanction.

Advent of Gandhi

The third and final phase of the Nationalist Movement [1917-1947] is known as the Gandhian era. During this period Mahatma Gandhi became the undisputed leader of the National Movement. His principles of non-

violence and Satyagraha were employed against the British Government. Gandhi made the nationalist movement a mass movement.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born at Porbandar in Gujarat on 2 October 1869. He studied law in England. He returned to India in 1891. In April 1893 he went to South Africa and involved himself in the struggle against apartheid (Racial discrimination against the Blacks) for twenty years. Finally, he came to India in 1915. Thereafter, he fully involved himself in the Indian National Movement.

Mahatma Gandhi began his experiments with Satyagraha against the oppressive European indigo planters at Champaran in Bihar in 1917. In the next year he launched another Satyagraha at Kheda in Gujarat in support of the peasants who were not able to pay the land tax due to failure of crops. During this struggle, Sardar Vallabhai Patel emerged as one of the trusted followers of Gandhi. In 1918, Gandhi undertook a fast unto death for the cause of Ahmedabad Mill Workers and finally the mill owners conceded the just demands of the workers.

On the whole, the local movements at Champaran, Kheda and Ahmedabad brought Mahatma Gandhi closer to the life of the people and their problems at the grass roots level. Consequently, he became the leader of the masses.

The year 1919 was an important and momentous moment in the history of India's struggle for freedom. It saw the entry of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi into the arena of Indian politics. With him came new technique and new orientation of spirit. Gandhiji's emergence as a leader was felicitated by the circumstances of the day. It was the revolutionary situation in India caused by the Montague Declaration, Home Rule Movement, spread of plague and influenza resulting in the death of millions of people, forcible recruitment of Indians in the army, Rowlatt Act, Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909, and the Khilafat agitation which necessitated a man, having the trust of his people in him. Gokhale and Tilak could have been the men of the moment but the former died in 1915 and the latter passed away in 1920, thus turning the people's attention towards Mahatma Gandhi.

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He was probably the only man to realise the importance of masses in an anti-imperialist struggle. But he recognised at the same time the divisive forces that were at work, which were counter-acting against the growing nationalist consciousness in the country. With this knowledge he developed an agenda that would involve not only the masses in the fight against British imperialism but also act as a organised force to hold together assorted social groups in their march to achieve Swaraj, that is, emancipation from alien rule as well as from social and economic handicaps. Once this became clear important communities, classes, ethnic groups, etc., rallied behind him accepting his leadership. He was the leader which the country needed when the government was arming itself with extraordinary powers to check the rising tide of nationalism. When his appeal was ignored, he came to the forefront and started the passive resistance movement as a challenge to the government. The people were called upon to disobey the new law by nonviolent resistance. Gandhiji's call to satyagraha met with a tremendous response. It led to mass demonstrations and strikes and riots in many parts of the country. Punjab was soon aflame and there were disorders in Delhi, Gujranwala and Amritsar. The Government hit back by firing and killing. Matters came to a crisis in the massacre of Jallianwala Bagh where people assembled in a prohibited meeting were ruthlessly fired on by the troops under General Dyer on 13th April 1919. Gandhiji's call to satyagraha was sealed and sanctioned by the blood that was shed at Jallianwala Bagh.

About this time there were stirrings among the Muslim populace also. Turkey joined Germany and fought against England and Allied forces. Turkey was defeated along with the Axis powers and compelled to submit to very harsh terms. The (Turkish) Ottoman empire was dismembered. Under the Treaty of Sèvres, territories such as Palestine, Syria, Lebanon, Iraq, Egypt were severed from the empire. The humiliation thus inflicted on the Turkish Sultan, who was the spiritual head (Kaliph/Caliph) of the Islamic world, shocked the religious sentiments of the Indian Muslims (and other Muslims globally). They resented the anti- Islamic attitude of England and started the Khilafat

movement (andolan) under the leadership of the Ali brothers (Maulana Shaukat Ali and Muhammad Ali).

Gandhiji also joined the movement and so for a time the Hindus and Muslims were united together in a common struggle for their political regeneration. Political happenings and widespread uproar on behalf of the Caliphate developed across the Islamic world, the most prominent activities took place in India. A celebrated Oxon journalist, Maulana Muhammad Ali Johar had spent four years in prison for advocating struggle with the British and support for the Caliphate. At the onset of the Turkish War of Independence, Muslim religious leaders feared for the caliphate, which the European powers were reluctant to protect. To some of the Muslims of India, the vision of recruitment by the British to fight against fellow Muslims in Turkey was nothing short of abhorrence.

The Khilafat movement was not a religious movement but rather a show of commonality with their fellow Muslims in Turkey. In 1920 a union was made between Khilafat leaders and the Indian National Congress, the principal political party and trailblazer of the nationalist movement. Mahatma Gandhi and the Khilafat leaders promised to work and fight together for the causes of Khilafat and Swaraj. Seeking to increase pressure on the British, the Caliphates became a major part of the Non-cooperation movement — a nationwide campaign of mass, peaceful civil disobedience. The support of the Caliphates helped Gandhi and the Congress ensured Hindu-Muslim unity during the struggle.

Khilafat leaders such as Dr. Ansari, Maulana Azad and Hakim Ajmal Khan became generally close to Gandhi. These leaders founded the Jamia Millia Islamia in 1920 to promote independent education and social transformation for Muslims. The Khilafat movement evoked debate and strong sentiments. The critics regarded it as a political agitation based on a pan-Islamist, fundamentalist platform and being largely indifferent to the cause of Indian independence. Critics of the Khilafat saw its blending with the Congress as a blending of expediency. Advocates of the Khilafat saw it as the catalyst that led to the noncooperation movement in India and a chief breakthrough in improving Hindu-Muslim relations. The combined Khilafat Non-

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Cooperation movement was the first all-India agitation against British rule. It saw an unparalleled degree of Hindu-Muslim collaboration and it recognized Gandhi and his technique of non-violent protest (satyagraha) at the centre of the Indian nationalist movement. Mass mobilization using religious signs was strangely effective, and the British Indian government was stunned. In late 1921, the government moved to suppress the movement. The leaders were arrested, tried, and imprisoned. Gandhi suspended the Non-Cooperation movement in early 1922. Turkish nationalists dealt the final blow to the Khilafat movement by abolishing the Ottoman sultanate in 1922, and the caliphate in 1924.

In his famous book *Hind Swaraj* (1909) Mahatma Gandhi declared that British rule was established in India with the cooperation of Indians, and had survived only because of this cooperation. With the emergence of Gandhiji as the leading personality in the nationalist movement in 1920, the nationalist movement underwent transformation. The Non-Cooperation Movement took place under his leadership and the Indian National Congress from September 1920 to February 1922, revolutionising a new Unit in the Indian Independence Movement. After a series of events including the Jallianwala Bagh carnage, the Mahatma realised that there was no scene of getting any reasonable dealing at the hands of British, so he planned a mass movement to awaken the people of India from the morass of despondency, educate them politically and throw a challenge to the British Government, thus launching the NonCooperation Movement and thereby marring the administrative set up of the country. This movement was a great success as it got massive encouragement to millions of Indians. This movement almost shook the British authorities.

A special session of the Congress met at Calcutta in 1920. It supported Gandhiji's plan for non-cooperation till Punjab and Khilafat wrongs were redressed. It adopted the programme of non-cooperation under the leadership of the Mahatma. The people were asked to boycott government educational institutions, law courts and legislatures, while using khadi. This decision was endorsed by the Congress session at Nagpur in 1920. It was resolved at the session to form a Congress Working Committee to enable the Congress to function as a continuous

political organisation. The provincial Congress Committees were organised on linguistic basis. Besides, membership was thrown open to all men and women on payment of four annas as annual subscription fee. By then, a very important development occurred on the national scene.

The All India Khilafat Conference held in 1919 decided to withdraw all cooperation from the government if their demands were not met. Moreover, both Muslims and Hindus were against the Rowlatt Acts. Swami Shardhanand, an Arya Samajist, was asked by the Muslims to preach from the pulpit of the Jama Masjid at Delhi and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlu was given the keys of the Golden Temple in Amritsar. There was such an understanding amongst Hindus and Muslims in the context of Rowlatt Acts that it looked as if both the communities would equally share the burden of freeing the country from the foreign yoke. Logically, the Khilafat resolution of November 1919 encouraged Gandhiji to work for Hindu-Muslim unity. Immediately after the Nagpur session, there was an unprecedented national awakening among the people. The majority of the electorate refused to cast their votes in 1920. Students withdrew from schools. Many educational institutions on national lines came into existence--- Aligarh, Jamia Milia, Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Kashi Vidyapeeth, Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, etc. women showed greater enthusiasm and gifted away their jewellery. Bonfires of foreign cloth were made. Khadi became the symbol of freedom struggle.

Taking a cue from popular response, the Congress empowered its Working Committee to start civil disobedience. The government reacted. All important national leaders, except Gandhiji, were arrested in 1921. People demonstrated against the visit of the Prince of Wales. The annual session of the Congress at Ahmedabad in December 1921 reaffirmed its faith in non-violent, non-cooperation till Punjab and Khilafat wrongs were redressed and Swaraj established. People waited impatiently for the call from the Congress. In Punjab, the Sikhs started the Akali Movement started. In Malabar, the Moplahs started the anti-zamindari movement, strikes of workers and the struggles of peasants became common and no tax campaigns in Midnapore district.

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In February 1922, Gandhiji proposed mass civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes, unless all political prisoners were released within seven days and the Press made free. Within four days occurred the ugly incident at Chauri Chaura in February 1922. The incident led to the Working Committee meet at Bardoli. The Non-Cooperation Movement was withdrawn. One of the points in the resolution stated that the peasants should not withhold rent payments to zamindars. Even when the ryots had grievances, they should seek redress by mutual consultation and arbitration. Further, the Working Committee forgetting the earlier disappointments in implementing programmes adopted a constructive programme of charka, prohibition, and establishment of national educational institutions.

Motilal Nehru and Lala Lajpat Rai objected to the withdrawal of the movement. The former said, "Why should a town at the foothill of the Himalayas be penalised if a village at Cape Comorin failed to observe non-violence". Looking at the situation the government decided to come down heavily. Gandhiji was arrested in March and sentenced to imprisonment for six years. He invited the highest penalty to be imposed on him in the court. Soon the Khilafat movement lost its importance because of the changes within Turkey. Kamal Pasha of Turkey abolished the Caliphate in 1924. Since the non-cooperation movement petered out, the critics within the Congress felt outraged. The worst thing was that communalism raised its ugly head. Things went on like this for five years. But from 1927 onwards the situation began to change.

The suspension of the mass civil disobedience movement led a section of Congress people to organise a new party known as the Swaraj Party. The Swaraj Party was established as the Congress-Khilafat Swaraj Party. It was a political party established in January 1923 after the annual conference of the National Congress at Gaya in December 1922, which sought better self-governance and political freedom for the Indian people from the British Raj. It was inspired by the concept of Swaraj. Its leaders were Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das (President) of Bengal and Pandit Motilal Nehru (Secretary). They opined that the nationalists should enter the Legislative Councils and their non-cooperation with the government.

The Swarajists wanted more representation in the Congress offices, and an end to the compulsory obligation for Congresspeople to spin khadi cloth and do social service as a precondition for office. This was opposed by Gandhi's supporters, men like Vallabhbhai Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru and Rajendra Prasad, who became known as the "No Changers" as opposed to the Swarajists. Gandhiji grudgingly relaxed the rules on spinning and named some Swarajists to important positions in the Congress Party. He also encouraged the Congress to support those Swarajists elected to the councils, so as not to embarrass them and leave them rudderless before the British authorities. This idea was opposed by the "No-Changers" led by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, and Chakraborty Rajagopalachari. The 'No-changers' opposed council entry, advocated concentration on constructive work, and continuation of boycott and non-cooperation and quiet preparation for resumption of the suspended civil disobedience programme. But at the same time both sides (that is, the "No Changers" and the Swarajists) wanted to avoid a 1907-type split and kept in touch with Gandhiji who was in jail. Both sides also comprehended the implication of putting up a joint front to get a mass crusade to force the Government to announce reforms, and both sides acknowledged the necessity of Gandhiji's guidance of a unified nationalist front.

Das and Nehru accepted the Congress programme but would take part in Council elections. Bitter verbal battle broke out between the Swarajists and the "No-Changers", and even Gandhiji could not help it. The Swaraj Party aimed to destroy the reforms from within the legislatures by continuous obstructions. Swarajists had the support of the followers of Jinnah in Central Assembly but in the provinces their success was greater, especially in Bengal, Bihar, the United Provinces, The Central Provinces and Bombay. The Swaraj Party decided on reentering the Councils with the declared object of offering systematic obstruction to the Government to make the constitution of 1919 unworkable.

They did much to discredit the Dyarchy. They kept alive the spirit of opposition at a time when there was pause in the political activity of Gandhiji. At the Coconada Congress session of 1923 the Swarajists were permitted to enter the Councils. The Belgaun Congress session presided

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over by Gandhiji approved the compromise formula agreed earlier which allowed the Swarajists to carry on their work inside the legislature on behalf of the Congress party. Keeping these issues in mind, a conciliation was reached at a meeting in Delhi in September 1923. By 1924, the Swarajists position had faded because of extensive communal riots, split among Swarajists themselves on communal and responsivist-non-responsivist lines, and the death of C.R. Das in 1925 enfeebled it further.

They accused the non-responsivity like Motilal Nehru of being 'anti-Hindu' and a 'beef-eater'. Thus, the main leadership of the Swarajya Party restated faith in mass civil disobedience and pulled out from legislatures in March 1926, while another section of Swarajists went into the 1926 elections as a party in disorder, and did not fare well. By the end of 1926 the Swarajists mislaid much of their enthusiasm. The members who supported wrecking the government from within and those who advocated policy of uniform, continuous and consistent obstruction against the government decreased. The transformation in attitude of Swarajist party gave a new life to the system, though not much, and it appeared that for some time the British imperial machinery might be given some trial. At the same time some Indians also got an opportunity to expose the susceptibilities of British government and their tyrannical arrogance while governing and dispensing with the people of India.

The British could not be shaken and the Swarajists also grew disillusioned. Some of them left the party to join the ministries. But it has to be acknowledged that some of the Swarajists who joined the legislatures now and then cooperated with the government and instead of wrecking the government from within. The Indian business groups and the Swarajists cooperated well. The latter proved extremely beneficial in nudging the government to grant protection to Tata Steel industry in 1924 under the new policy of discriminating protection laid down by the Fiscal Commission of 1921. The Steel Production Bill of 1924 gave subsidy to the Tata Steel industry without protecting the interests of the workers. Furthermore, as the Congress captured local bodies and municipalities all over the country, they proved valuable in some areas for doing limited welfare work and also as a source of valuable patronage of funds. Although the elected ministers in the dyarchy had little power,

they had control considerable patronage which came with the capture of executive posts.

The Swarajists made it problematic for the British rulers to get the permission of the legislatures for their policies and suggestions. With coalition partners, they outvoted the Government several times, even on matters relating to budgetary grants, and passed adjournment motions. For example, in 1928, the government introduced a bill, called ironically the Public Safety Bill, in the legislative assembly to empower the Government to deport unwanted and dissident foreigners. The bill was defeated. When the government introduce this bill again, Vithalbhai Patel who was the President of the assembly refused to allow it. The debates in the legislatures, in which Indian members often outsmarted the government and condemned the government, were read with curiosity and eagerness all over the country. In 1925, the Congress handed over political work to the Swaraj Party.

This party primarily demanded free industrial expansion and development of heavy industries. The Swarajists succeeded in exposing the evil machinations of the imperial government in India, promoted the cause of Indian freedom selflessly and added parliamentary dimension to freedom struggle in India after 1922. It cannot be denied that the Swarajists provided a viable substitute to Gandhian mode of struggle and also a very successful alternate to mass movements.

Check your progress –

1. When was Congress was founded?

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2. When Gandhiji arrived in India?

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2.3 LETS SUM UP

Mahatma Gandhi revolutionised the national movement by giving a shape to struggle and leadership, which was the need of the moment. He introduced the masses to non-violent struggle and ahimsa. He raised the national consciousness by touring the country and infusing the spirit of nationalism and aroused the sentiments of the people against the colonial rule.

2.4 KEYWORDS

Gandhi, satyagraha, national movement, Congress party, Khilafat, non-cooperation, civil disobedience

2.5 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

Discuss the movement led by Swarajysts.

Discuss the advent of Gandhi.

2.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

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2.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Hint 2.2
2. Hint 2.2

UNIT 3 NATIONAL MOVEMENT

STRUCTURE

- 3.0 Objective
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 National Movement
- 3.3 Lets Sum Up
- 3.4 Keywords
- 3.5 Questions For Review
- 3.6 Suggested Readings
- 3.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.0 OBJECTIVE

After reading this lesson you will be able to:

- identify the causes that led the rise of Nationalism in India
- trace the emergence of Indian National Congress
- discuss the various stages of the National Movement in India
- list the names of prominent leaders of the Indian National Move men
- discuss the role of Gandhi in this Movement

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The rise of Nationalism is reflected in the spirit of Renaissance in Europe when freedom from religious restrictions led to the enhancement of national identity. This expression of Nationalism was furthered by the French Revolution. The political changes resulted in the passing of sovereignty from the hands of an absolute monarch to the French citizens, who had the power to constitute the nation and shape its destiny.

The watchwords of the French Revolution - Liberty, Equality and Fraternity - inspired the whole world. Many other revolutions like the American Revolution, the Russian Revolution, etc. also strengthened the idea of Nationalism. In this lesson, you will read about the rise of Nationalism in India which emerged in the 19th Century after the revolt of 1857.

3.2 NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Nationalism, ideology based on the premise that the individual's loyalty and devotion to the nation-state surpass other individual or group interests.

Nationalism is a modern movement. Throughout history people have been attached to their native soil, to the traditions of their parents, and to established territorial authorities, but it was not until the end of the 18th century that nationalism began to be a generally recognized sentiment molding public and private life and one of the great, if not the greatest, single determining factors of modern history. Because of its dynamic vitality and its all-pervading character, nationalism is often thought to be very old; sometimes it is mistakenly regarded as a permanent factor in political behaviour. Actually, the American and French revolutions may be regarded as its first powerful manifestations. After penetrating the new countries of Latin America, it spread in the early 19th century to central Europe and from there, toward the middle of the century, to eastern and southeastern Europe. At the beginning of the 20th century, nationalism flowered in Asia and Africa. Thus, the 19th century has been called the age of nationalism in Europe, while the 20th century witnessed the rise and struggle of powerful national movements throughout Asia and Africa.

Nationalism, translated into world politics, implies the identification of the state or nation with the people—or at least the desirability of determining the extent of the state according to ethnographic principles. In the age of nationalism, but only in the age of nationalism, the principle was generally recognized that each nationality should form a state—its state—and that the state should include all members of that nationality.

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Formerly states, or territories under one administration, were not delineated by nationality. People did not give their loyalty to the nation-state but to other, different forms of political organization: the city-state, the feudal fief and its lord, the dynastic state, the religious group, or the sect. The nation-state was nonexistent during the greater part of history, and for a very long time it was not even regarded as an ideal. In the first 15 centuries of the Common Era, the ideal was the universal world-state, not loyalty to any separate political entity. The Roman Empire had set the great example, which survived not only in the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle Ages but also in the concept of the *res publica christiana* (“Christian republic” or community) and in its later secularized form of a united world civilization.

From the end of the 18th century on, the nationalization of education and public life went hand in hand with the nationalization of states and political loyalties. Poets and scholars began to emphasize cultural nationalism first. They reformed the mother tongue, elevated it to the rank of a literary language, and delved deep into the national past. Thus, they prepared the foundations for the political claims for national statehood soon to be raised by the people in whom they had kindled the spirit.

Before the 18th century there had been evidences of national feeling among certain groups at certain periods, especially in times of stress and conflict. The rise of national feeling to major political importance was encouraged by a number of complex developments: the creation of large centralized states ruled by absolute monarchs who destroyed the old feudal allegiances; the secularization of life and of education, which fostered the vernacular languages and weakened the ties of church and sect; the growth of commerce, which demanded larger territorial units to allow scope for the dynamic spirit of the rising middle classes and their capitalistic enterprise. This large unified territorial state, with its political and economic centralization, became imbued in the 18th century with a new spirit—an emotional fervour similar to that of religious movements in earlier periods. Under the influence of the new theories of the sovereignty of the people and of individual rights, the people replaced the king as the centre of the nation. No longer was the king the nation or

the state; the state had become the people's state, a national state, a fatherland, or a motherland. State became identified with nation, as civilization became identified with national civilization.

That development ran counter to the conceptions that had dominated political thought for the preceding 2,000 years. Thitherto, the general and the universal had been commonly stressed, and unity had been regarded as the desirable goal. Nationalism emphasized the particular and parochial, the differences, and the national individualities. Those tendencies became more pronounced as nationalism developed. Its less attractive characteristics were not at first apparent. In the 17th and 18th centuries the common standards of Western civilization, the regard for the universally human, the faith in reason (one and the same everywhere) as well as in common sense, the survival of Christian and Stoic traditions—all of these were still too strong to allow nationalism to develop fully and to disrupt society. Thus, nationalism in its beginning was thought to be compatible with cosmopolitan convictions and with a general love of humankind, especially in western Europe and North America.

The first full manifestation of modern nationalism occurred in 17th-century England, in the Puritan revolution. England had become the leading nation in scientific spirit, in commercial enterprise, and in political thought and activity. Swelled by an immense confidence in the new age, the English people felt upon their shoulders the mission of history, a sense that they were at a great turning point from which a new true reformation and a new liberty would start. In the English revolution an optimistic humanism merged with Calvinist ethics, and the influence of the Bible gave form to the new nationalism by identifying the English people with ancient Israel.

The new message, carried by the new people not only for England but for all humankind, was expressed in the writings of the poet John Milton (1608–74), in whose famous vision the idea of liberty was seen spreading from Britain, “celebrated for endless ages as a soil most genial to the growth of liberty,” to all the corners of the earth.

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Surrounded by congregated multitudes, I now imagine that...I behold the nations of the earth recovering that liberty which they so long had lost; and that the people of this island are...disseminating the blessings of civilization and freedom among cities, kingdoms and nations.

English nationalism, then, was thus much nearer to its religious matrix than later nationalisms that rose after secularization had made greater progress. The nationalism of the 18th century shared with it, however, its enthusiasm for liberty, its humanitarian character, its emphasis upon individual rights and upon the human community as above all national divisions. The rise of English nationalism coincided with the rise of the English trading middle classes. It found its final expression in John Locke's political philosophy, and it was in that form that it influenced American and French nationalism in the following century.

American nationalism was a typical product of the 18th century. British settlers in North America were influenced partly by the traditions of the Puritan revolution and the ideas of Locke and partly by the new rational interpretation given to English liberty by contemporary French philosophers. American settlers became a nation engaged in a fight for liberty and individual rights. They based that fight on current political thought, especially as expressed by Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine. It was a liberal and humanitarian nationalism that regarded America as in the vanguard of humankind on its march to greater liberty, equality, and happiness for all. The ideas of the 18th century found their first political realization in the Declaration of Independence and in the birth of the American nation. Their deep influence was felt in the French Revolution.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau had prepared the soil for the growth of French nationalism by his stress on popular sovereignty and the general cooperation of all in forming the national will (the "general will"), and also by his regard for the common people as the true depository of civilization. The nationalism of the French Revolution was more than that: it was the triumphant expression of a rational faith in common humanity and liberal progress. The famous slogan "Liberty, equality, fraternity" and the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen

were thought valid not only for the French people but for all peoples. Individual liberty, human equality, fraternity of all peoples—these were the common cornerstones of all liberal and democratic nationalism. Under their inspiration new rituals were developed that partly took the place of the old religious feast days, rites, and ceremonies: festivals and flags, music and poetry, national holidays and patriotic sermons. In the most varied forms, nationalism permeated all manifestations of life. As in America, the rise of French nationalism produced a new phenomenon in the art of warfare: the nation in arms. In America and in France, citizen armies, untrained but filled with a new fervour, proved superior to highly trained professional armies that fought without the incentive of nationalism. The revolutionary French nationalism stressed free individual decision in the formation of nations. Nations were constituted by an act of self-determination of their members. The plebiscite became the instrument whereby the will of the nation was expressed. In America as well as in revolutionary France, nationalism meant the adherence to a universal progressive idea, looking toward a common future of freedom and equality, not toward a past characterized by authoritarianism and inequality.

Napoleon's armies spread the spirit of nationalism throughout Europe and even into the Middle East, while at the same time, across the Atlantic, it aroused the people of Latin America. But Napoleon's yoke of conquest turned the nationalism of the Europeans against France. In Germany the struggle was led by writers and intellectuals, who rejected all the principles upon which the American and the French revolutions had been based as well as the liberal and humanitarian aspects of nationalism.

German nationalism began to stress instinct against reason, the power of historical tradition against rational attempts at progress and a more just order, and the historical differences between nations rather than their common aspirations. The French Revolution, liberalism, and equality were regarded as a brief aberration against which the eternal foundations of societal order would prevail.

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That German interpretation was shown to be false by the developments of the 19th century. Liberal nationalism reasserted itself and affected more and more people: the rising middle class and the new proletariat. The revolutionary wave of 1848, the year of “the spring of the peoples,” seemed to realize the hopes of nationalists such as Giuseppe Mazzini, who had devoted his life to the unification of the Italian nation by democratic means and to the fraternity of all free nations. Though his immediate hopes were disappointed, the 12 years from 1859 to 1871 brought the unification of Italy and Romania, both with the help of Napoleon III, and of Germany, and at the same time the 1860s saw great progress in liberalism, even in Russia and Spain. The victorious trend of liberal nationalism, however, was reversed in Germany by Otto von Bismarck. He unified Germany on a conservative and authoritarian basis and defeated German liberalism. The German annexation of Alsace-Lorraine against the will of the inhabitants was contrary to the idea of nationalism as based upon the free will of humanity. The people of Alsace-Lorraine were held to be German by allegedly objective factors, preeminently race, independent of their will or of their allegiance to any nationality of their choice.

In the second half of the 19th century, nationalism disintegrated the supranational states of the Habsburgs and the Ottoman sultans, both of which were based upon prenational loyalties. In Russia, the penetration of nationalism produced two opposing schools of thought. Some nationalists proposed a Westernized Russia, associated with the progressive, liberal forces of the rest of Europe. Others stressed the distinctive character of Russia and Russianism, its independent and different destiny based upon its autocratic and orthodox past. These Slavophiles, similar to and influenced by German Romantic thinkers, saw Russia as a future saviour of a West undermined by liberalism and the heritage of the American and French revolutions.

One of the consequences of World War I was the triumph of nationalism in central and eastern Europe. From the ruins of the Habsburg and Romanov empires emerged the new nation-states of Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia, and Romania. Those states in turn, however, were to be strained and ravaged by their own internal

nationality conflicts and by nationalistic disputes over territory with their neighbors.

Russian nationalism was in part suppressed after Vladimir Lenin's victory in 1917, when the Bolsheviks took over the old empire of the tsars. But the Bolsheviks also claimed the leadership of the world communist movement, which was to become an instrument of the national policies of the Russians. During World War II, Joseph Stalin appealed to nationalism and patriotism in rallying the Russians against foreign invaders. After the war he found nationalism one of the strongest obstacles to the expansion of Soviet power in eastern Europe. National communism, as it was called, became a divisive force in the Soviet bloc. In 1948 Josip Broz Tito, the communist leader of Yugoslavia, was denounced by Moscow as a nationalist and a renegade, nationalism was a strong factor in the rebellious movements in Poland and Hungary in the fall of 1956, and subsequently its influence was also felt in Romania and Czechoslovakia and again in Poland in 1980.

The spirit of nationalism appeared to wane in Europe after World War II with the establishment of international economic, military, and political organizations such as NATO, the European Coal and Steel Community (1952–2002), Euratom, and the Common Market, later known as the European Economic Community and then as the European Community. But the policies pursued by France under Pres. Charles de Gaulle and the problem posed by the division of Germany until 1990 showed that the appeal of the nation-state was still very much alive.

Nationalism began to appear in Asia and Africa after World War I. It produced such leaders as Kemal Atatürk in Turkey, Sa'd Pasha Zaghūl in Egypt, Ibn Saud in the Arabian Peninsula, Mahatma Gandhi in India, and Sun Yat-sen in China. Atatürk succeeded in replacing the medieval structure of the Islamic monarchy with a revitalized and modernized secular republic in 1923. Demands for Arab unity were frustrated in Africa and Asia by British imperialism and in Africa by French imperialism. Yet Britain may have shown a gift for accommodation with the new forces by helping to create an independent Egypt (1922; completely, 1936) and Iraq (1932) and displayed a similar spirit in India,

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where the Indian National Congress, founded in 1885 to promote a liberal nationalism inspired by the British model, became more radical after 1918. Japan, influenced by Germany, used modern industrial techniques in the service of a more authoritarian nationalism.

The progress of nationalism in Asia and Africa is reflected in the histories of the League of Nations after World War I and of the United Nations after World War II. The Treaty of Versailles, which provided for the constitution of the League of Nations, also reduced the empires of the defeated Central Powers, mainly Germany and Turkey. The league distributed Germany's African colonies as mandates to Great Britain, France, Belgium, and South Africa and its Pacific possessions to Japan, Australia, and New Zealand under various classifications according to their expectations of achieving independence. Among the League's original members, there were only five Asian countries (China, India, Japan, Thailand, and Iran) and two African countries (Liberia and South Africa), and it added only three Asian countries (Afghanistan, Iraq, and Turkey) and two African countries (Egypt and Ethiopia) before it was dissolved in 1946. Of the mandated territories under the League's control, only Iraq, Lebanon, and Syria achieved independence during its lifetime.

Of the original 51 members of the United Nations in 1945, eight were Asian (China, India, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Turkey) and four were African (the same as in the League). By 1980, 35 years after its founding, the United Nations had added more than 100 member nations, most of them Asian and African. Whereas Asian and African nations had never totalled even one-third of the membership in the League, they came to represent more than one-half of the membership of the United Nations. Of these new Asian and African nations, several had been created, entirely or in part, from mandated territories.

After World War II, India, Pakistan, Ceylon (Sri Lanka), Burma (Myanmar), and Malaya (Malaysia) in Asia and Ghana in Africa achieved independence peacefully from the British Empire, as did the Philippines from the United States. Other territories had to fight hard for

their independence in bitter colonial wars, as in French Indochina (Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia) and French North Africa (Tunisia, Algeria). Communism recruited supporters from within the ranks of the new nationalist movements in Asia and Africa, first by helping them in their struggles against Western capitalist powers and later, after independence was achieved, by competing with Western capitalism in extending financial and technical aid. Chinese nationalism under Chiang Kai-shek during World War II was diminished with the takeover of the Chinese communists. But Chinese communism soon began to drift away from supranational communism, as the European communist countries had earlier. By the late 1960s, Russian and Chinese mutual recriminations revealed a Chinese nationalism in which Mao Zedong had risen to share the place of honour with Lenin. As Chinese communism turned further and further inward, its influence on new Asian and African nations waned.

Political and religious differences

Ambitions among new Asian and African nations clashed. The complex politics of the United Nations illustrated the problems of the new nationalism. The struggle with Dutch colonialism that brought the establishment of Indonesia continued with the UN mediation of the dispute over West Irian (Irian Jaya). In the Suez Crisis of 1956, UN forces intervened between those of Egypt and Israel. Continuing troubles in the Middle East, beginning with the fighting that accompanied the establishment of Israel and including inter-Arab state disputes brought on by the establishment of the United Arab Republic, concerned the UN. Other crises involving the UN included the India-Pakistan dispute over Jammu and Kashmir, the Korean partition and subsequent war, the four-year intervention in the Congo, the struggle of Greece and Turkey over newly independent Cyprus, and Indonesian and Philippine objection to the inclusion of Sarawak and Sabah (North Borneo) in newly formed Malaysia.

Many new nations, all sharing the same pride in independence, faced difficulties. As a result of inadequate preparation for self-rule, the first five years of independence in the Congo passed with no semblance of a

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stable government. The problem of widely different peoples and languages was exemplified in Nigeria, where an uncouth population included an uncouth number of tribes (at least 150, with three major divisions) that used an uncouth number of languages (more than 100 language and dialect clusters). The question of whether the predominantly Muslim state of Jammu and Kashmir should go with Muslim Pakistan or Hindu India remained unresolved long after the India Independence Act became effective in 1949. Desperate economic competition caused trouble, as in Israel where the much-needed waters of the Jordan River kept it in constant dispute with its water-hungry Arab neighbours.

Indian National Movement was the struggle between colonialism and anti-imperialistic forces that developed in India in the 19th and early 20th centuries. These forces were developed by the untiring activities of Nationalists. It remained as a forum of debate and rather than an instrument of action. Some remarkable changes occurred with the entry of Gandhi. He entered the Indian political scene in 1917 by organizing some local movements. It was with the Rowlatt Satyagraha and Non-cooperation movement that he emerged as a national leader and also started associating with the Congress. From then onwards Gandhi became one of the most significant leaders of the National Movement and National Congress as well. Gandhi led the Non-cooperation movement of 1920-21, Civil disobedience movement of 1930, Quit India movement of 1942 against the colonial authority. These were the periods when Gandhi acted as the ultimate authority of the Congress. The period in between were the periods of political oblivion in which Gandhi confined himself to Constructive Programme and social reform activities. Indian National Movement entered its important phase during the Gandhian period. A basic aspect of the dynamics of the national movement was the strategy it adopted in its struggle against colonial rule. This study attempts

to highlight Gandhian political strategy in the context of the National Movement. We believe that mass mobilization an important aspect of his strategy. Here we propose to take up a detailed study of the mobilization of the various sections of the society undertook by Gandhi in order to

organize a mass movement against an Imperialist Government. What is intended is not an evaluation of the specific programmes of Congress or an episodic narrative of the National Movement. The objective is to evaluate the political strategy adopted and applied by Gandhi in the National Movement. A focus on the overall strategy of the Indian National Movement has been lacking in almost all the existing studies of the movement and it might thus appear that the Indian National Movement had no clear-cut strategy. But in our study we are trying to establish that the whole movement was based on a specific strategy. Though large elements of this strategy of struggle evolved during the Moderate and Extremist phases of the movement, it was structured and completed during the Gandhian phase of the movement and in Gandhi's political practice. So this study focuses on the period, 1917-1947. Gandhi's contribution to Indian - and perhaps world history - is as a political leader whose political strategy and tactics and techniques of struggle moved millions into political action. It

is this aspect which has to be evaluated in detail. An effective critique of Gandhian leadership and its tactics at any specific period of time or its stand on political issue could be made only if the critique extended to and was based on an understanding of the Gandhian strategy. The study is both interpretative and analytical. Since in this study the primary importance is given to the critical examination of Gandhian Strategy, secondary works are also of great importance. For the present work the sources which we consulted are: the Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, the Private Papers that are available in National Archives and Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Home political files (NAI), AICC files (NMML) and also published works and a wide range of journals. The present work is divided into five Units.

Introduction to Nationalist Movement (1905-18):

Gradually, over the years, the trend of militant nationalism (also known as Extremism) had been growing in the country. It found expression in the movement against the partition of Bengal in 1905.

The Indian national movement even in its early days had increasingly made a large number of people conscious of the evils of foreign

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domination and of the need for fostering patriotism. It had imparted the necessary political training to the educated Indians. It had, in fact, changed the temper of the people and created a new life in the country.

At the same time, the failure of the British government to accept any of the important demands of the nationalists produced disillusionment among the politically conscious people with the principles and methods of the dominant moderate leadership.

Instead of conciliating the moderate nationalists, the British rulers denigrated and looked down upon them. Consequently, there was a strong demand for more vigorous political action and methods than those of meetings, petitions, memorials and speeches in the legislative councils.

The politics of the moderate nationalists were founded on the belief that British rule could be reformed from within. But the spread of knowledge regarding political and economic questions gradually undermined this belief. The political agitation of the moderates was itself responsible for this to a large extent.

The nationalist writers and agitators blamed the British rule for the poverty of the people. Politically conscious Indians were convinced that the purpose of the British rule was to exploit India economically, that is, to enrich England at the cost of India. They realised that India could make little progress in the economic field unless British imperialism was replaced by a government controlled and run by the Indian people.

In particular, the nationalists came to see that Indian industries could not flourish except under an Indian government, which could protect and promote them. The evil economic consequences of foreign rule were symbolized in the eyes of the people by the disastrous famines which ravaged India from 1896 to 1900 and took a toll of over 90 lakhs of lives.

The political events of the years 1892—1905 also disappointed the nationalists and made them think of more radical politics. On the other hand, even the existing political rights of the people were attacked. In 1898, a law was passed making it an offence to excite “feelings of disaffection” towards the foreign government.

In 1899, the number of Indian members in the Calcutta Corporation was reduced. In 1904, the Indian Official Secrets Act was passed restricting the freedom of the press. The Nattu brothers were deported in 1897 without being tried; even the charges against them were not made public.

In the same year, Lokamanya Tilak and other newspaper editors were sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for arousing the people against the foreign government. Thus, the people found that, instead of giving them wider political rights, the rulers were taking away even their few existing ones.

The anti-Congress attitude of Lord Curzon convinced the people more and more that it was useless to expect any political and economic advancement as long as Britain ruled India. Even the moderate leader Gokhale complained that “the bureaucracy was growing frankly selfish and openly hostile to national aspirations.”

Even socially and culturally, the British rule was no longer progressive. Primary and technical education was not making any progress. At the same time, the officials were becoming suspicious of higher education and were even trying to discourage its spread in the country.

The Indian Universities Act of 1904 was seen by the nationalists as an attempt to bring Indian universities under tighter official control and to check the growth of higher education.

Thus an increasing number of Indians were getting convinced that self-government was essential for the sake of the economic, political and cultural progress of the country and that political enslavement meant stunting the growth of the Indian people.

3. Growth of Self-Respect and Self-Confidence:

By the end of the nineteenth century, the Indian nationalists had grown in self-respect and self-confidence. They had acquired faith in their capacity to govern themselves and in the future development of their country. Leaders like Tilak, Aurobindo Ghose and Bipin Chandra Pal preached

the message of self-respect and asked the nationalists to rely on the character and capacities of the Indian people.

They taught the people that the remedy to their sad condition lay in their own hands and that they should therefore become fearless and strong. Swami Vivekananda, though not a political leader, again and again drove home this message.

He declared:

If there is a sin in the world it is weakness; avoid all weakness, weakness is sin, weakness is death. ... And here is the test of truth—anything that makes you weak physically, intellectually and spiritually, reject as poison, there is no life in it, it cannot be true.

He also urged the people to give up living on the glories of the past and manfully build the future. “When, O Lord,” he wrote, “shall our land be free from this eternal dwelling upon the past?”

The belief in self-effort also created an urge for extending the national movement. No longer should the nationalist cause rely on a few upper-class educated Indians. Instead, political consciousness of the masses was to be aroused.

Thus, for example, Swami Vivekananda wrote:

“The only hope of India is from the masses. The upper classes are physically and morally dead.” There was the realisation that only the masses could make the immense sacrifices needed to win freedom.

4. Grow of Education and Unemployment:

By the close of the nineteenth century, the number of educated Indians had increased perceptibly. Large numbers of them worked in the administration on extremely low salaries, while many others increasingly faced unemployment. Their economic plight made them look critically at the nature of British rule. Many of them were attracted by radical nationalist politics.

Even more important was the ideological aspect of the spread of education. The larger the number of educated Indians, the larger was the

area of influence of western ideas of democracy, nationalism and radicalism.

The educated Indians became the best propagators and followers of militant nationalism both because they were low- paid or unemployed and because they were educated in modern thought and politics, and in European and world history.

5. International Influences:

Several events abroad during this period tended to encourage the growth of militant nationalism in India. The rise of modern Japan after 1868 showed that a backward Asian country could develop itself without western control.

In a matter of a few decades, the Japanese leaders made their country a first-rate industrial and military power, introduced universal primary education and evolved an efficient, modern administration.

The defeat of the Italian army by the Ethiopians in 1896 and of Russia by Japan in 1905 exploded the myth of European superiority. Everywhere in Asia, people heard with enthusiasm the news of the victory of a small Asian country over one of the biggest military powers of Europe.

The newspaper, the Karachi Chronicle of 18 June 1905 expressed the popular feeling as follows:

What one Asiatic has done others can do. ... If Japan can drub Russia, India can drub England with equal ease. ... Let us drive the British into the sea and take our place side by side with Japan among the great powers of the world.

Revolutionary movements in Ireland, Russia, Egypt, Turkey and China, and the Boer War in South Africa convinced the Indians that a united people willing to make sacrifices could challenge even the most powerful of despotic governments. What was needed more than anything else was a spirit of patriotism and self-sacrifice.

6. Existence of a Militant Nationalist School of Thought:

From almost the beginning of the national movement a school of militant nationalism had existed in the country. This school was represented by

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leaders like Rajnarain Bose and Ashwini Kumar Dutt in Bengal and Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar in Maharashtra. The most outstanding representative of this school was Bal Gangadhar Tilak later popularly known as Lokamanya Tilak.

He was born in 1856. From the day of his graduation from Bombay University, he devoted his entire life to the service of his country. He helped to found during the 1880s the New English School, which later became the Fergusson College, and the newspapers the Mahratta (in English) and the Kesari (in Marathi).

From 1889, he edited the Kesari and preached nationalism in its columns and taught people to become courageous, self-reliant and selfless fighters in the cause of India's independence.

In 1893, he started using the traditional religious Ganpati festival to propagate nationalist ideas through songs and speeches, and in 1895, he started the Shivaji festival to stimulate nationalism among young Maharashtrians by holding up the example of Shivaji for emulation.

During 1896-97 he initiated a no-tax campaign in Maharashtra. He asked the famine-stricken peasants of Maharashtra to withhold payment of land revenue if their crops had failed. He set a real example of boldness and sacrifices when the authorities arrested him in 1897 on the charge of spreading hatred and disaffection against the government.

He refused to apologise to the government and was sentenced to 18 months' rigorous imprisonment. Thus he became a living symbol of the new national spirit of self-sacrifice. At the dawn of the twentieth century, the school of militant nationalists found a favourable political climate and its adherents came forward to lead the second stage of the national movement.

The most outstanding leaders of militant nationalism, apart from Lokamanya Tilak, were Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghose and Lala Lajpat Rai. The distinctive political aspects of the programme of the militant nationalists were as follows.

They believed that Indians themselves must work out their own salvation and make the effort to rise from their degraded position. They declared

that great sacrifices and sufferings were needed for this task. Their speeches, writings and political work were full of boldness and self-confidence, and they considered no personal sacrifice too great for the good of their country.

They denied that India could progress under the 'benevolent guidance' and control of the English. They deeply hated foreign rule, and they declared in a clear-cut manner that swaraj or independence was the goal of the national movement.

They had deep faith in the strength of the masses and they planned to achieve swaraj through mass action. They, therefore, pressed for political work among the masses and for direct political action by the masses.

7. A Trained Leadership:

By 1905 India possessed a large number of leaders who had acquired during the previous period valuable experience in guiding political agitations and leading political struggles. Without a trained band of political workers it would have been difficult to take the national movement to a higher political stage.

8. The Partition of Bengal:

The conditions for the emergence of militant nationalism had thus developed when in 1905 the partition of Bengal was announced and the Indian national movement entered its second stage.

On 20 July 1905, Lord Curzon issued an order dividing the province of Bengal into two parts: Eastern Bengal and Assam with a population of 31 million, and the rest of Bengal with a population of 54 million, of whom 18 million were Bengalis and 36 million Biharis and Oriyas.

It was said that the existing province of Bengal was too big to be efficiently administered by a single provincial government. However, the officials who worked out the plan had also other political ends in view. They hoped to stem the rising tide of nationalism in Bengal, considered at the time to be the nerve centre of Indian nationalism.

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Risley, Home Secretary to the Government of India, wrote in an official note on 6 December 1904:

Bengal united is a power. Bengal divided will pull in several different ways. That is what the Congress leaders feel: their apprehensions are perfectly correct and they form one of the great merits of the scheme. ... One of our main objects is to split up and thereby to weaken a solid body of opponents to our rule.

The Indian National Congress and the nationalists of Bengal firmly opposed the partition. Within Bengal, different sections of the population—zamindars, merchants, lawyers, students, the city poor and even women—rose up in spontaneous opposition to the partition of their province.

The nationalists saw the act of partition as a challenge to Indian nationalism and not merely an administrative measure. They saw that it was a deliberate attempt to divide the Bengalis territorially and on religious grounds—for in the Eastern part Muslims would be a big majority and in the Western part, Hindus—and thus to disrupt and weaken nationalism in Bengal.

It would also be a big blow to the growth of Bengali language and culture. They pointed out that administrative efficiency could have been better secured by separating the Hindi-speaking Bihar and the Oriya-speaking Orissa from the Bengali-speaking part of the province.

Moreover, the official step had been taken in utter disregard of public opinion. Thus the vehemence of Bengal's protest against the partition is explained by the fact that it was a blow to the sentiments of a very sensitive and courageous people.

9. The Anti-Partition Movement:

The Anti-Partition Movement was the work of the entire national leadership of Bengal and not of any one section of the movement. Its most prominent leaders at the initial stage were moderate leaders like

Surendranath Banerjea and Krishna Kumar Mitra; militant and revolutionary nationalists took over in the later stages.

In fact, both the moderate and militant nationalists cooperated with one another during the course of the movement.

The Anti-Partition Movement was initiated on 7 August 1905. On that day a massive demonstration against the partition was organised in the Town Hall in Calcutta. From this meeting delegates dispersed to spread the movement to the rest of the province.

The partition took effect on 16 October 1905. The leaders of the protest movement declared it to be a day of national mourning throughout Bengal. It was observed as a day of fasting. There was a hartal in Calcutta.

People walked barefooted and bathed in the Ganga in the early morning hours. Rabindranath Tagore composed the national song, 'Amar Sonar Bangla,' for the occasion, which was sung by huge crowds parading the streets.

This song was adopted as its national anthem by Bangladesh in 1971 after liberation. The streets of Calcutta were full of the cries of 'Bande Mataram' which overnight became the national song of Bengal and which was soon to become the theme song of the national movement.

The ceremony of Raksha Bandhan was utilised in a new way. Hindus and Muslims tied the rakhi on one another's wrists as a symbol of the unbreakable unity of the Bengalis and of the two halves of Bengal.

In the afternoon, there was a great demonstration when the veteran leader Ananda Mohan Bose laid the foundation of a Federation Hall to mark the indestructible unity of Bengal. He addressed a crowd of over 50,000.

For India, the making of national identity was a long process whose roots can be drawn from the ancient era. India as a whole had been ruled by emperors like Ashoka and Samudragupta in ancient times and Akbar to Aurangzeb in Medieval times. But, it was only in the 19th Century that the concept of a national identity and national consciousness emerged.

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This growth was intimately connected to the anti-colonial movement about which you have already read in lesson 4. The social, economic and political factors had inspired the people to define and achieve their national identity. People began discovering their unity in the process of their struggle against colonialism. The sense of being oppressed under colonial rule provided a shared bond that tied different groups together. Each class and group felt the effects of colonialism differently. Their experiences were varied, and their notions of freedom were not always the same. Several other causes also contributed towards the rise and growth of Nationalism. One set of laws of British Government across several regions led to political and administrative unity. This strengthened the concept of citizenship and one nation among Indians.

Do you remember reading the lesson Popular Resistance Movements? Do you remember the way the peasants and the tribals rebelled when their lands and their right to livelihood was taken away? Similarly this economic exploitation by the British agitated other people to unite and react against British Government's control over their lives and resources. The social and religious reform movements of the 19th century also contributed to the feeling of Nationalism. Do you remember reading about Swami Vivekananda, Annie Besant, Henry Derozio and many others? They revived the glory of ancient India, created faith among the people in their religion and culture and thus gave the message of love for their motherland. The intellectual and spiritual side of Nationalism was voiced by persons like Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Swami Dayanand Saraswati and Aurobindo Ghosh. Bankim Chandra's hymn to the Motherland, 'Vande Matram' became the rallying cry of patriotic nationalists. It inspired generations to supreme self-sacrifice. Simultaneously, it created a fear in the minds of the British. The impact was so strong that the British had to ban the song. Similarly, Swami Vivekananda's message to the people, "Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached", appealed to the Indians. It acted as a potent force in the course of Indian Nationalism.

The Indian National Congress was founded by Allan Octavian Hume in 1885. Hume was a retired Civil Service Officer. He saw a growing political consciousness among the Indians and wanted to give it a safe,

constitutional outlet so that their resentment would not develop into popular agitation against the British rule in India. He was supported in this scheme by the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, and by a group of eminent Indians. Womesh Chandra Banerjee of Calcutta was elected as the first President. The Indian National Congress represented an urge of the politically conscious Indians to set up a national organization to work for their betterment. Its leaders had complete faith in the British Government and in its sense of justice. They believed that if they would place their grievances before the government reasonably, the British would certainly try to rectify them. Among the liberal leaders, the most prominent were Firoz Shah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Dada Bhai Naoroji, Ras Behari Bose, Badruddin Tayabji, etc. From 1885 to 1905, the Indian National Congress had a very narrow social base. Its influence was confined to the urban educated Indians.

The congress placed its demands before the government always in the form of petitions and worked within the framework of law. It was for this reason that the early Congress leaders were referred to as 'Moderates'. During its first twenty years the Congress made moderate demands. The members placed their demands before the Government always in the form of petitions and worked within the framework of law. It was for this reason that the early Congress leaders were referred to as 'Moderates'. They asked for: (a) representative legislatures, (b) Indianization of services, (c) reduction of military expenditure, (d) education, employment and holding of the ICS (Indian Civil Services) examination in India, (e) decrease in the burden of the cultivators, (f) defense of civil rights, (g) separation of the judiciary from the executive, (h) change in the tenancy laws, (i) reduction in land revenue and salt duty, (j) policies to help in the growth of Indian industries and handicrafts, (k) introduction of welfare programmes for the people. Unfortunately, their efforts did not bring many changes in the policies and administration of the British in India. In the beginning, the Britishers had a favourable attitude towards the Congress. But, by 1887, this attitude began to change. They did not fulfill the demands of the Moderates.

The only achievement of the Congress was the enactment of the Indian Councils Act, 1892 that enlarged the legislature by adding a few non-

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official members and passing of a resolution for holding Indian Civil Services Examination simultaneously in London and in India. Many leaders gradually lost faith in the Constitutional process. Even though the Congress failed to achieve its goal, it succeeded in creating national awakening and instilling in the minds of the Indian people a sense of belonging to one Nation. They provided a forum for the Indians to discuss major national issues. By criticizing the government policies, they gave the people valuable political training. Though, They were not ready to take aggressive steps which would bring them in direct conflict with the Government.

The most significant achievement was the foundation of a strong national movement. The Britishers who were earlier supporting the Moderates soon realized that the movement could turn into a National force that would drive them out of the country. This totally changed their attitude. They passed strict laws to control education and curb the press. Minor concessions were given so as to win over some Congress leaders. The British Viceroy, Lord Curzon was a staunch imperialist and believed in the superiority of the English people. He passed an Act in 1898, making it an offence to provoke people against the British rulers. He passed the Indian Universities Act in 1904, imposing stiff control over Indian Universities. Curzon was out to suppress the rising Nationalism in India.

Curzon announced the partition of Bengal. The reason for partition was given as an attempt to improve administration. But the real aim was to 'Divide and Rule'. The partition was done in order to create a separate State for Muslims and so introduce the poison of communalism in the country. However the Indians viewed the partition as an attempt by the British to disrupt the growing national movement in Bengal and divide the Hindus and Muslims of the region. Widespread agitation ensued in the streets and in the press. People of different parts of India opposed the partition of Bengal all over the country. This opposition was carried on by organized meetings, processions and demonstrations etc. Hindus and Muslims tied 'rakhi' on each other's hands to show their unity and their protest.

Check your progress –

1. What is nationalism

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2. What is instigated the rise of Indian nationalism?

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3.3 LETS SUM UP

The Indian national movement was undoubtedly one of the biggest mass movements modern societies has ever seen. It was also popular and multi-class movement. It was basically the result of a fundamental contradiction between the interest of the Indian people and that of British colonialism. The Indian people were able to see that India was regressing economically and undergoing a process of underdevelopment. This anti-colonial ideology and critique of colonialism were disseminated during the mass phase of the movement. The Indian National Congress which emerged in 1885, championed the cause of Indian people. It derived its entire strength, especially after 1918 from the militancy and self-sacrificing spirit of the masses. Satyagraha as a form of struggle was based on the active participation of the people and on the sympathy and support of the non-participating millions. The non-cooperation movement, the civil-disobedience movement and the quit-India movement were the reflection of the popularity of the Congress. The Muslim League which formed in 1906 gradually widened its base. The move towards Pakistan became inevitable when Jinnah and the Muslim League basing themselves on the theory that Hindu and Muslim were two nations which must have separate homeland, put forward the demand for Pakistan.

3.4 KEYWORDS

3.5 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss about the rise of Indian nationalism.
2. How does the revolutions in the west inspired India?

3.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

Indian Nationalism: The Essential Writings by Irfan Habib

Indian Nationalism: An History by Jim Masselos

3.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Hint -3.2
2. Hint – 3.2

UNIT 4 -REVOLUTIONARY AND LEFT MOVEMENTS, PEASANT MOVEMENTS,- KISAN SABHA, BARDOLI SATYAGRAHA

STRUCTURE

4.0 Objective

4.1 Introduction

4.2 Various Movements

4.3 Lets Sum Up

4.4 Keywords

4.5 Questions for Review

4.6 Suggested Reading

4.7 Answers to check your progress

4.0 OBJECTIVE

Their main objective was to overthrow the colonial rule by armed revolution. They openly preached sedition, disloyalty and evolution and sought the support of Indian soldiers in organizing insurrection. Through sheer courage and self-sacrifice the young revolutionaries were able to inspire a large number of people. They organized a number of Secret societies to fulfill their objective. They therefore tried to create a revolutionary spirit among the people of the country and impart necessary training to prepare them for any strike. The society met their requirements of arms either by manufacturing them secretly, or by looting government armoury. Naturally these activities invited for heavy punishment but the revolution accepted this with open heart. The revolutionary movement was not confined to any particular part of the country, but flourished in different parts of India as well as foreign lands.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The revolutionaries were those who believed in overthrowing the British government in India by means of mass uprising. They wanted to organize a rebellion against the foreign government and even tampering with the loyalty of the army and guerilla warfare for overthrowing the foreign rule. This movement was a byproduct of repressive policy followed by the government towards the extremist in the wake of congress split at Surat. By the closing of 19th and beginning of 20th centuries certain events in the foreign countries profoundly influenced the revolutionary idea in the country. The large number of political assassinations in Europe, Emperor of Italy, prime minister of Spain, president of France, convinced young Indians that they can also achieve some objective by violence and force. Their conviction was further emboldened by the failure of the moderates.

4.2 VARIOUS MOVEMENTS

REVOLUTIONARIES

Revolutionary Activities in Maharastra:-

The authority of the sedition committee report, 1918, observed the first indications of revolutionary movement in India in Maharastra and among the Chitpavan Brahmins of the Poona district. These Brahmins were descendants of the Peshwas (chief ministers under Chhatrapati Shahu and tater rulers of Maharastra) which was overthrown by the East India Company under Lord Hastings. These Brahmins kept their love and devotion to swaraj and a certain discontent and longing for a return to power naturally remained. B. G. Tikak's (a Chitpavan Brahmin) inauguration of the Ganapati festival in 1893 and the Shivaji festival in 1895 injected some Pro-Swaraj and anti-British bias in the politics.

The Rand Murder at Poona, 1897

But the Maharashtra produced two Chepkar brother(Damodar and Balkrishna) who founded society for removal of obstacles to Hindu religions. Initially, this society merely provided physical and military training but later resorted to terrorist activities. They committed first political murder on 22nd June 1897. They targeted Mr Rand, the plague Commissioner of Poona. Their main grievance was that the Plague Commissioner was sending soldiers to inspect the houses of the plague afflicted people. The Chepkar brothers were brought, convicted and hanged. Tilak who praised the two brothers handwritten in his new papers Maharashtra”

Plague is more merciful to us than its humane prototype now reigning in the city” Subsequently Tilak was implicated for writing against the British Government. Shyamji Krishna Verma was another revolutionary in Maharashtra. Krishna Verma was connected with the Rand murder case and went to England to avoid punishment. In 1905, he started India Home rule Society which popularly known as India House in London. He also started a monthly journal called Indian Sociologist to spread his views.

Later on he instituted a fellowship to enable Indian youngmen to go abroad to train themselves for missionary activities. A group of Indian revolutionary including VD Savarkar, Hardyal and Madan Lal Dhingra became member of the Indian House. V D Savarkar along with Shyamji Krishna Verma continued vigorous revolutionary propaganda till 1905 and they shifted to Paris, due to the fear of British Police. In May 1907, the India House celebrated the golden jubilee of the Indian revolt of 1857 and V D Savarkar described it as, a war of Indian Independence. His idea and philosophy were published in his book entitled The Indian war of Independence Savarkar established a Abhinav Bharat Society in India.

The member of the society in India did a commendable job during the Swadeshi movement. The Society continued to impart training to the members in arms and ammunitions. The society grew very popular in short period of time and branches were established all over Maharashtra. The Society inspired the people for revolutionary

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movements. Another important member of India House was Madan Lal Dhingra. In 1909 he shot dead Col William Curzon, Political Agent to India Office. Dhingra was arrested and hanged. In 1909, the unpopular District Magistrate Mr Jackson was shot dead by Annant Laxman Kanhera.

The Ahmedabad Bomb case, the Satara conspiracy case were important terrorist activities in western India. Despite repressive policy of British Government, Maharashtra continued to be an important centre for revolutionary movements.

Revolutionary Activities in Bengal

Bengal was another important centre for strong terrorist activities. Growing education, unemployment, and growth of hostile attitude provided a climate for terrorist activities. Its early history is associated with the name of Pramatha Mitra. When Surendra Nath Mitra was imprisoned for defamation, he hatched a plot to rescue him from jail. For this purpose, he organized it. He proceeded to Barisal but waited in vain for the promised signal from the leaders in Calcutta. He also organized a secret revolutionary society, named Anusilan Samiti.

The members of the Samiti were young, were trained in young students in military drill, sword play. Boxing, wrestling and other kinds of activities. There were various branches of Anusilan Samiti and they were probably several secret societies acting independently of one another. Another group of revolutionary movements was formed by Barindra Kumar Ghose. The chief means of propaganda was the publication of books and periodicals to preach the gospel of revolution. The first book was Bhawani Mandira published in 1905, gives detailed plan of establishing religious society as basic centre of revolutionary activities. Another book was written by Abhinab Chandra Bhattacharya entitled "Bartaman Rananiti". It was published in 1907. This book was an eloquent plea for military training and necessity of war for achievements of Indian Independence. It discusses various military details, especially for those guerilla

warfare, which the youths will gradually become fearless and experts in sword play and other tactics.

The Yugantar (New Era) started in March 1906, openly preached sedition and disloyalty in order to create revolutionary mentality among the people. A number of select articles from the Yugantar were published in the form of a book entitled Mukti Koan Pathe (Which way is salvation). It denounces smallness and lowness of ideals of the National Congress. It further exhorts its readers to obtain the help of native soldiers. Barindra Kumar Ghosh and his friends were engaged in manufacturing bombs with a view to killing the British Government officials. The first bomb was prepared with the object of killing Sir Bamfylde Fuller for his oppressive measures. Prafulla Chaki was specially deputed to carry out the operation. But the plan was failed. Next an attempt was made to blow up the train in which the Lt Governor of Bengal was travelling on 6th December 1907. The train was actually derailed by a bomb near Midnapur.

The Muzaffarpur Murders and Alipore conspiracy case:

On 30 April 1908 an attempt was made to murder Mr. Kingford, the judge of Muzaffarpur (now in Bihar) who earlier as chief presidency Magistrate had awarded severe punishment to some young men for trivial offence. Prafulla Chaki and Kudiram Bose were charged with the duty of bomb-throwing. The bomb was by mistake thrown on the carriage of Mr. Kennedy, killing two ladies. Prafulla Chaki and Bose were arrested, Chaki shot himself dead which Bose was tried and hanged. The Government searches for illicit arms at Maniktala Gardens and elsewhere at Calcutta led to arrest of 34 persons including the two Ghose brothers, Arobindo and Barindra who were tried in the Alipore conspiracy case. During the trial Narendra Gosain, who had turned approver, was shot dead in the jail. In February 1907 the public prosecutor was shot dead in Calcutta and on 24 February 1910 a Deputy Superintendent of police met the same fate while leaving the Calcutta High Court. B.G. Tilak lauded the Bengal terrorists for their higher aim. In the Kesari of 22 June 1908 he wrote there is

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considerable difference between the murders of 1897 and the bomb outrage of Bengal.

Their (Chapekar brother) aim was specially directed towards the oppression consequent upon the partition, that is to say, towards the particular act. The Bengali bomb party had of course their eyes upon an extensive plain brought into view by the partition of Bengal. After two days the Muraepukkar garden was searched by the police. Thirty two persons including Arbindo Ghosh, Barindra Chandra Ghosh, and his principal associates were arrested and tried in the Alipore Conspiracy case. The accused in the Alipore conspiracy case were regarded as martyrs of the country. Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram who lost their lives became heroes of folk song sung all over the country. During their trial, Narendra Gosain, who had first divulged the secret to the police and turned out to be approver was murdered inside the jail, by two revolutionary prisoners, Kanai Lal Datta and Satyam Bose. The news of this death was hailed all over Bengal, and his murderers were regarded as heroes and martyrs. Bal Gangadhar Tilak praised the Bengal terrorist throughout the paper Keshri.

Revolutionary Movement in Madras Presidency

In Madras province, the people were excited by the eloquent speeches of Bipin Chandra Pal. Chidram Pilai openly spoke of complete independence. His arrest led to serious riot in Tuticorin and Tinnevely in which police opened fire in a defiant crowd. As he, who had ordered the firing at Tinnevely, was assassinated by Vanchi Aiyar shot himself.

Revolutionary Movement in Other Provinces:

The educated classes in the Punjab were affected by revolutionary ideas. The Punjab Government's proposals for modification of tenures in the Chenab Canal colony and the Bari Doab had spread widespread discontent among the rural masses. The Government of India acted promptly by vetoing the Canal colony legislation and arresting and deporting Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh under provisions of Regulation III 1818. Ajit Singh was released after 6 months and

later fled to Persia. Lal Chand Folak and Bhai Parmanand were arrested and sentenced to various terms of imprisonments. In December 1912 a bomb was thrown on Lord Harding on his state entry in Chandni Chowk, Delhi, killing his attendants. Bihar, Orissa and the U.P. were scenes of the Muzaffarpur and Nimez murders and the Benaras conspiracy case though these provinces were comparatively less attested by revolutionary movement.

The Ghadr Movement: Hardayal, an intellectual giant and a fire brand revolutionary from the Punjab, was the moving spirit behind the organization of the Ghadr party on November 1913 at San Francisco in the U.S.A. He was actively assisted by Ram Chandra and Barkatulla. The party also published a weekly paper, the Ghadar (Rebellion) in commemoration of the Mutiny of 1857. The Ghadar in its premier issue asked the questions. What is our name? Mutiny. What is our work? Mutiny. Where will Mutiny break out? In India. The Ghadar party highlighted the point that Indians were not respected in the world abroad because they were not free. Consequent upon complaints made by the British representative, the U.S. authorities launched proceedings against Hardayal, compelling him to leave the United States. With the outbreak of World War I, Hardayal and other Indians abroad moved to Germany and set up the Indian independence committee at Berlin. The committee planned to mobilize Indian settlers abroad to make all efforts - send volunteers to India to incite rebellion among the troops, to send explosives to Indian revolutionaries, and even organize an invasion of British India to liberate the country. The Komagata Maru case created an explosive situation in the Punjab. One Baba Gurdit Singh chartered a Japanese ship Komagata Maru for Vancouver and sought to carry 351 Sikhs and 21 Punjabi Muslims at that time.

The Canadian authorities refused permission to the ship to land and the ship returned to Budge, Calcutta on 27 September 1914. The inmates of the ship and many Indians believed that the British Government had inspired the Canadian authorities. The Government of India ordered all the passengers to be carried direct by train to the Punjab. The already explosive situation in the Punjab

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worsened with a band of fresh malcontents. Large-scale political dacoities were committed in the Jallandar, Amritsar and Ludhiana districts of the Punjab.

The Lahore conspiracy trials revealed that Punjab had come within an ace of widespread bloodshed. The Government of India unleashed repressive legislation to meet revolutionary activities. The prevention of seditious meetings Act (1907), the explosive substances Act (1908), The Indian criminal Law Amendment Act, (1908) The Newspaper (incitement to offences) Act, 1908, the press Act, 1910 and above all, the obnoxious multi-fanged Defence of India rules, 1915. A temporary respite in revolutionary activities came towards the close of World War 1 when the Government released all political prisoner arrested under the Defence of India Act. Further, the discussion about the new scheme of constitutional reforms (Government of India Act 1919) also created an atmosphere of conciliation and compromise. More so, Gandhiji's emergence on the national scene with promise of big achievements through non-violent methods also halted the pace of violent revolutionary activities.

Marxist

The Left movement in India began originally in Russia, heavily influenced by international politics. It's a movement not very clearly understood by the Indian masses, which has evolved into many shades. The Left movement kicked off with various Socialist and Communist Parties being formed, and also getting a lot of patronage within the Congress. In my paper, I hope to discuss the evolution of the Left movement, which majorly transforms into a discussion on the Communist Party of India giving a brief history and moving on the post-Independence period. The main objective of this paper is to understand the movement in context of India, it's influence and how in current days of turmoil it has become a contested ideology, all the while emphasising that like all other ideologies, we need to recognize and accept the fact that the Left isn't of one particular shade. During the 1920s, the National Movement was in full swing in India and had viewed the rise of various streams and methods for the fight. This was the age of Gandhian politics,

and the rise of the educated youth giving unprecedented support to the freedom struggle.

Due to the unrest among some classes about the inaction of the Moderates, revolutionary terrorism sprouted up in various parts of the country, with the cult of the bomb under the leadership of Lokmanya Tilak and his colleagues - Lala Lajpat Rai and Bakin Chandra, the trio being popularly called as 'Lal-Pal-Bal'. This led to the beginning of an alternative method of struggle contributing to the radicalization of the national movement. Add to this, the impact of the Russian revolution which drove the lesson that if common people - the workers, peasants and the intelligentsia could overthrow the might Czarist empire, and establish a socialist state with no exploitation of human beings, the same could be replicated by the Indians. Socialist doctrines became extremely popular with the Communist Manifesto of Karl Marx being released in English and Malayalam almost simultaneously and spreading to further regions. Print media contributed further to the cause with various Socialist weeklys being published. Certain fractions of the populations, dissatisfied with the Gandhian policies were more attracted to the same. A lot of youth associations were formed in Bengal, Punjab and to a certain extent, other princely states. Similar groups were formed by Indians living abroad. These groups started planning the liberation of India from abroad with the help of countries hostile towards the British. An example of this was the Ghadar Party formed in US in 1913.

The Russian Communist Party, its leaders, Lenin and the Communist International paid a great deal of attention of the revolutionary emigres on their soil. While the emigres had committed themselves to the idea of Communism, many of them didn't understand the concept clearly. However, just their support and stay abroad helped garner a lot of support from the Indian locals. The success of the revolution was further exaggerated with the ongoing depression in the capitalist economies. A group in Tashkent and Moscow should be given special focus which was granted a consultative status at the Third congress of the Communist International. This, according to one of the founding members of the Communist Party of India (henceforth, CPI) should be considered as the foundation date of the party. However, others disagree saying that MN

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Roy founded the party during the Kanpur Conference of 1925 where CPI was formally constituted. After 1925, the party couldn't hold any Congress due to various disturbances. Its first Congress was held sixteen years later, as the Meerut Conspiracy Case involving all the known Communist leaders of the time disintegrated whatever work had been done at Kanpur. The Meerut Trial, which continued for over three and half years, ended with the conviction of 27 persons made martyrs of the Communist. The anti-British attitude of the Communists favored them to win over the sympathy of the nationalists.

The Congress working Committee set up a Central Defence Committee, sanctioned a sum of Rupees 1500, and the eminent nationalist like J.L. Nehru, K.N. Katju, pleaded the defence case. Gandhiji visited the prisoners in the jail in the year 1929 s and expressed his sympathy to the Communist leaders. Consequently the Congress leaders of the Central Legislative Assembly strongly opposed the enactment of the Public Safety Bill, a bill that was directed against the Communists in India. In the course of long drawn out trial, the Communist leaders made political propaganda speeches, which received a wide coverage in the nationalist press. By 1934 the Communist Movement in India attained some respectability. During the Quit India Movement,

The CPI sought to distract the popularity of the Congress. They attempted to project a people's struggle not only against the foreign imperialism but also against the Indian exploiters. It attacked the petty bourgeoisie nationalist leadership of Gandhiji. However in July 1934, the CPI was declared an illegal organization. The movement however continued due to its member's active participation in the Quit India Movement and the spread of socialist ideas. The situation underwent a massive change as P.C Joshi took over in 1935, changed its earlier position of working within the ambit of the Indian National Congress, advocating the formation of a united front with socialists and other anti-fascists in the capitalist countries and with bourgeois-led nationalist movements in colonial countries. This change was brought about by the Dutt-Bradley Thesis, which advocated participation in the Indian National Congress (INC)'s movements. In 1939, P.C Joshi wrote in the party weekly, National Front, that the 'greatest class struggle today is our

national struggle' of which Congress is the 'main organ' , hence linking the main Communist ideology with the national movement.

Simultaneously, a number of socialist parties were also formed in the jails by a group of young Congressmen, the Congress Socialist Party (Henceforth, CSP) under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Dev in 1934. It's main objective was to transform the Congress and strengthen it, ideologically as well as in their objectives. It always remained a safe party, never challenging much and staying close to Nehru, earning the condemnation of other Left wing groups like being criticized for their refusal to support Subhash Chandra Bose in his confrontation with Gandhi and right wing INC.

The CSP was primarily divided into three currents : Marxist, Fabian and Gandhian, ending up in confusion, but the party lasted for quite some time due to its commitment to nationalism and socialism. Despite the fact that the Left cadres were among the most courageous, militant and sacrificing of freedom fighters, the Left failed in the basic task it had taken upon itself - to establish the hegemony of socialist ideas and parties over the nationalist movement. It's been argued that they couldn't understand the Indian reality completely. They couldn't work unitedly, but the discussion and organization of workers and peasants was one of its greatest achievements.

Politically and ideologically, the Congress as a whole was given a strong Left orientation, accepting that Indian society did not only suffer from British imperialism but also exploitation from within the society. The clash of ideas within the Left was represented in the internal crisis of the Congress while selecting their President in 1939 over which Nehru and Bose bickered publically. The Second World War broke out soon after, the CSP siding against Russia while CPI aligned with them. The Congress socialist was critical of the Congress leadership but failed to give any militant leadership to the fighting people. The CPI on the other contrary came out with what was called the 'proletarian path' - a program of organizing and leading militant struggles of the working class people. The CPI believes it was the victory of the anti-fascist forces which led to the attainment of freedom by India and few other

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neighbouring countries, this isolated the party from the other anti-imperialist forces. The party often accepted its mistakes and rectified them, and it emerged as an independent and growing political force, deeply rooted in the working masses in the country and the revolutionary movements abroad.

However according to the historians, the Communists or the Leftist concept of the Proletarian Internationalism could not be reconciled with India's national aspirations. Moreover the basic themes of Marxist communism, "class antagonism" and "violence" were alien to the Indian tradition. Henceforth the Leftist Movement led by the Communists could not make a progressive development in India. The CPI also refused to associate themselves with any religion, they understood caste but felt that class loyalty would erase caste differences, this didn't happen. Also, women were not given much representation which was another drawback. Hence, their popularity and actions remain highly contested, but the support of CPI after independence clearly proves this was not the entire truth.

During the first general elections of 1952, the CSP entered the elections as the biggest party after Congress but it lost face very badly as the CPI emerged as the second biggest party. It came very near to becoming the ruling party in Travancore - Cochin, and Madras, and the major opposition in West Bengal and Hyderabad. It became the ruling party in Kerala. Disintegration of the former CSP after this election was rapid. It was later that even the CPI suffered a split due to differences between their ideologies, one being pro-China and the other attempting to purge all pro-China elements from the party. This led to the formation of CPI(Marxist) which was pro - China and the other being CPI in 1964.

PEASANT MOVEMENTS

1. Champaran Satyagraha (1917):

The Champaran peasant movement was a part of the independence movement. After returning from South Africa, Gandhiji made the experiment of non-cooperation by leading the Champaran (Bihar) and

Kheda (Gujarat) peasant struggles. The basic idea was to mobilize the peasants and make them attain their demands.

The peasant movement of Champaran was launched in 1917-1918. The main aim was to create awakening among the peasantry against the European planters. These planters exploited the peasants without providing them adequate remuneration for their labor.

The European planters resorted to all sorts of illegal and inhuman methods of indigo cultivation. The peasants were not only exploited by the European planters but also by the local zamindars. It was in such a situation that Gandhiji took up their cause and launched the movement.

Some of the important causes of Champaran peasant struggle are as follows:

- i. The land rent was increased enormously.
- ii. The peasants were compelled by the European planters to grow indigo, which restricted their freedom of cultivation.
- iii. The peasants were forced to devote their best part of land to cultivate crops according to the wishes of the landlord.
- iv. The payment of wages was meager to the peasants, which was not sufficient to earn their livelihood.
- v. The peasants of Champaran were living under miserable conditions and were suffering from abject poverty.

The peasantry of Champaran suffered a lot in the hands of European planters, landlords, and government officials. Gandhiji, who returned from South Africa at this time, wanted to practise his non-cooperation and Satyagraha in India. The people of Champaran also accepted his leadership.

Unfortunately, in the end, the movement turned violent due to the incident of Chauri Chaura. Gandhiji was very unhappy with this incident. However, the Champaran struggle is considered part of the national movement. The Champaran Satyagraha took place in April 1917. In order to oppress the peasants of Champaran, the British government

adopted very serious methods. The peasants were tortured for not paying the excess rents.

Thus, the peasants of Champaran had to undergo severe suffering and misery. However, the movement has led to certain important outcomes. The Champaran Agrarian Act was assented by the Governor-General of India on 1 May 1918. The ideology of non-violence had given much strength to the peasants who participated in the movement. The movement also contributed to the growth of nationalism.

2. Kheda Peasant Struggle:

The peasantry of Kheda consisted mainly of Patidars who were known for their skills in agriculture. The Patidars were well-educated. Kheda is situated in the central part of Gujarat and was quite fertile for the cultivation of tobacco and cotton crops.

Some of the important causes for the Kheda struggle were:

- i. Reassessment of Kheda land was done by the government based on the cultivation of crops. On the basis of such data, the government increased the tax, which was not acceptable to the peasants.
- ii. There was a severe famine in Kheda, which resulted in the failure of crops. The government did not accept the failure of crops but was insistent on the collection of land tax, not taking the conditions of peasants into consideration. The peasantry made their inquiries and emphasized that the act of demanding the land tax in such famine conditions was not justified on the part of the government.

The Gujarat Sabha, consisting the peasants, submitted petitions to the higher authorities of the province requesting the suspension of the revenue assessment for the year 1919. But the officials rejected, the demands of the peasants regarding the non-payment of the taxes. When the government refused to consider the demands of the peasants, Gandhiji encouraged the peasants to resort to Satyagraha.

Thus, the Kheda Satyagraha was started in March 1919 under the leadership of Gandhiji, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, N.M. Joshi, and several others. This was a similar kind of experiment to Champaran based on non-violence. The government officials auctioned the peasants' cattle, confiscated their houses and took away their movable property due to the non-payment of land tax. The peasants were issued notices of fines and penalties by the government.

The movement was terminated owing to the acceptance of some of the prime demands of the peasantry.

Some of the achievements of the struggle were as follows:

- i. It was decided that the rich Patidars peasants will pay up the land rent and the poor peasants were granted remissions. Due to this decision the small and poor peasants who are the majority were very satisfied.
- ii. The movement also created an awakening among the peasants about their demands. The peasants also indirectly sought their participation in the independence struggle. The impact of success was also recognized among the peasants of Gujarat and in the neighboring states.

3. The Bardoli Movement in Gujarat:

During the British Raj, in the state of Gujarat, Bardoli Satyagraha of 1925 was a major episode of civil disobedience in the Indian Independence movement. In the year 1925, the taluka of Bardoli suffered from heavy floods and severe famine which affected the crops very badly. This situation led the farmers to face great financial troubles.

At the same time, the Government of Bombay Presidency raised the tax rate by 30 per cent. Without taking into consideration the requests and petitions of the civic groups who explained about the calamities which occurred in the taluka, the Government refused to reduce the tax rate. The farmers were in a very pitiable state whereby they barely had anything enough to pay the tax.

The activists of Gujarat such as Narahari Parikh, Ravi Shankar Vyas, and Mohanlal Pandya had a talk with the village leaders and sought the help of the prominent Gujarati freedom fighter Vallabhbhai Patel. Patel had

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earlier helped the Gujarati farmers in the Kheda Peasant struggle. He also served as the municipal president of Ahmedabad. He was respected by the common people of the state of Gujarat.

The request made by Patel to reduce the taxes was ignored by the Governor of Bombay. He indeed reciprocated by announcing the dates of collection of the taxes. Patel then instructed the farmers of Bardoli to refuse to pay the taxes.

Patel along with Parikh, Vyas, and Pandya divided the Bardoli into several zones each with a leader and volunteers. Patel also took the help of some activists of Gujarat who were close to the government in order to know the movements of the government officials.

He instructed the farmers to be on non-violent path and not to respond to the aggressive actions of police and officials. He reassured them that the struggle would not come to an end until the cancellation of all the taxes for the whole year and return all the seized property and lands to their owners.

The Government decided to crush the revolt. In order to terrorize and seize the property of the villagers, bands of Pathans from northwest India were gathered. The Pathans and tax inspectors intruded into the houses of the farmers and took away their property which also included cattle. The government started to auction the houses and the lands of the farmers. But no one from Gujarat or from entire India came forward to buy them.

The volunteers who were appointed by Patel in every village used to keep watch on the officials who were coming to auction the property of the villagers. As soon as the officials were about to enter into the village, the volunteer would give a sign to the villagers who would then leave the village and hide in the jungles. When the officials entered the village they would find the entire village empty and would not be able to make out who owned a particular house.

The people and the members of the legislative councils of Bombay were very angry at the terrible treatment of the farmers. The Indian members also resigned from their offices and extended support to the protest of the

farmers. Finally, an agreement took place by the initiation of a Parsi member of the Bombay government. According to it, the government agreed to restore the confiscated property and also cancel the revenue payment for the year and also cancelled the raise of 30 per cent until next year.

All the credit for the success of Bardoli movement was given to Patel and he in turn gave credit to the teachings of Gandhiji and to the determination of the farmers. Patel for the first time was given the title of “Sardar” (which mean a “leader” or “chief” in Gujarati and in many other Indian languages) by Gandhiji and his fellow satyagrahis. It was only after the Bardoli Satyagraha that Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel became one among India’s important leaders.

4. Moplah Rebellion in Malabar:

Moplahs were Muslim peasants settled in the Malabar region of Kerala. The social and economic background of the Moplahs was heterogeneous. Certain rich Moplahs earned their livelihood as traders and merchants.

Rest of the Moplahs worked as small agriculturalists who were the tenants of the big landlords. These landlords belonged to the high-caste Hindus. The Moplahs acquired the status of warriors by adopting the traditional ways of Nayers. The Moplah Peasant Movement started in August 1921.

During this time Malabar was under the British rule. The government officials in alliance with the Hindu landlords oppressed the Moplah peasants. The Moplah tenants agitated against the Hindu landlords and the British government. Most of their grievances were related to security of tenure, high rents, renewal fees, and other unfair exactions of the landlords.

Some of the causes of the Moplah peasant rebellion were as follows:

- i. The Moplah agitation was basically the struggle against the Hindu landlords who were called Jenmis. The relationship between the Moplahs and the Jenmis was quite unfriendly for a long time. The relationship was both economically and religiously antagonistic. The Hindu landlords began to suppress the Moplahs right from 1835.

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ii. There was a lot of insecurity in relation to land tenure. The Moplahs were often expelled from their land without prior notice.

iii. The Jenmis fixed the renewal fee at an exorbitant rate, which was the immediate cause for Moplah agitation.

iv. The Jenmis collected very high exactions from the Moplah tenants. Moreover, the Moplah tenants were discriminated against the Hindu tenants.

Another motivating factor, which caused the Moplah agitation, was the Khilafat move-ment. This movement took roots in Malabar also. The Moplahs actively took part in the Khilafat movement from which they got support for their peasant agitation. The British government was weakened as a result of First World War and it was not in a position to take military action at this moment. Taking advantage of this situation, the Moplahs increased their raids.

The final break to the Moplah rebellion came when a Khilafat leader and a highly reputed priest Ali Musaliar was arrested. The police opened fire on the unarmed crowd and many were killed. This has resulted in a clash in which the government offices were destroyed, records burnt, and the treasury looted. The rebellion soon spread to all the strongholds of the Moplahs. Mostly, the targets of the Moplah attacks were the unpopular Jenmis, police stations, treasuries, offices, and the British planters.

The Moplahs spared those Hindu landlords who maintained lenient relations with them. The Moplah rebels travelled several miles through the territory and attacked only the Hindu landlords. This gave a communal flavor to the peasant movement.

The most important aspect of the Moplah peasant struggle is the communalization of peasant agitation. Due to such communalization the Moplahs lost their sympathy among the Malabar people. Soon the rebellion was crushed by the Britishers and by December 1921 all resistance was stopped.

The main reason for the failure of the Moplah movement was that the movement took a communal flavor. The Moplahs took to violence as a method of agitation, which was another reason for the failure of the

movement. The movement also did not motivate the neighborhood peasantry for the usage of arms against the peasantry. The only tragedy in this struggle was that the landlords were Hindus, which resulted in such communal riots.

5. Peasant Revolt in Telangana:

This movement was started against the Nizam of Hyderabad. The agrarian structure followed the feudal system at this time. During this time, two kinds of land tenure systems were prevalent, namely, Ryotwari and Jagirdari. Under the Ryotwari system the peasants owned patta in their name and were the proprietors and registered occupants of the land.

The actual cultivators were known as shikmidars. The lands of chieftains were known as Khalsa lands. The Deshmukhs and Deshpandes were the hereditary tax collectors for the Khalsa villages. The jagirdars collected the tax in the jagir villages. The jagirdars and Deshmukhs exercised immense power at the local level.

The main commercial crops of the Telangana region were groundnut, tobacco, and castor seed, which were cultivated by the landowning Brahmins. The rise of Reddis and other peasant proprietors strengthened the higher castes. The urban groups especially the Brahmins, Marwaris, Muslims, and Vaisyas showed interest in gaining and acquiring the lands. This resulted in sliding down of the status of the peasant proprietors to that of tenants at will sharecroppers and landless laborers.

Some of the main causes for the rise of the Telangana movement are as follows:

- i. The Jagirdars and the Deshmukhs were the intermediaries and were responsible for collecting taxes from the cultivators. The cultivators were oppressed and exploited by these intermediaries who were appointed by the Nizam. They collected high taxes, manipulated the records which resulted in the discontentment among the poor peasants.
- ii. The Jagirdars and Deshmukhs exploited the small peasants and landless laborers. The Deshmukhs and the Jagirdars were called as “Dora”, which means the master of the village. In course of time, this exploitation was legitimized and was known as vetti system. Under this

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system, the landlord or a Deshmukh could force a family to cultivate his land, assign domestic or official works which was obligatory on the part of the peasant's family and was carried on from generation to generation.

iii. A system of slavery known as Bhagela was prevalent in the state of Nizams. Under this system, the tenants who have taken the loans from the landlords had to serve the landlord until the debt is repaid. Generally, the Bhagelas were expected to serve the landlords for generations as the landlords used to maintain records; which always showed that the Bhagelas are still indebted to them.

iv. The castes (Reddis and Kammas) who traditionally worked as traders and moneylenders wanted to pull down the domination of the Brahmins as agriculturists in the state.

v. The cultivation of commercial crops largely depended on the irrigation facilities, which were very meager in the Telangana region. Though the Nizam provided the irrigation facilities, most of these facilities were utilized by the big farmers only.

vi. The frequency of land alienation increased between 1910 and 1940. The land possession among the non-cultivating urban people such as the Brahmins, Marwaris, and Muslims has increased which resulted in reducing the small and tribal peasants into mere landless laborers.

The Telangana movement did not just erupt suddenly. There were many factors, which resulted in such insurrection. The condition of the peasants reached its saturation point by 1930. The agricultural economy also underwent many changes; it was transformed more into a market economy than a subsistent one. Such change did not improve the status of the tenants and sharecroppers.

The major sources of discontentment among the peasantry were the modes of production and exchange, which were mostly pro-capitalist and semi-feudal. There was severe fall of wholesale prices after the Second World War, which provided an opportunity to the moneylenders to tighten their grip on the indebted small farmers and poor tenants.

Due to the forces of change in the agricultural economy, the number of agricultural laborers also increased. There was lot of discontentment

among the peasantry and they were just waiting for a right opportunity to burst out and start a rebellion.

The major course of events which led to the Telangana Struggle was as follows:

i. The Communist Party of India initiated the Telangana Peasant struggle. The Communist Party started working in the Telangana region from 1936. Professor N.G. Ranga laid the regional level peasant organization that was affiliated to the All India Kisan Sabha, which was an organ of the CPI. The Communist activities increased in the districts of Hyderabad between 1944 and 1946. Therefore, a proper framework was all set to launch the peasant movement in Telangana.

ii. Severe famine struck the Telangana region in the year 1946. All the crops failed and there was shortage of the availability of food and fodder. The prices of food and other commodities increased. The year 1946 proved to be a crisis time for both the tenants and the sharecroppers. This year provided all the opportunities for launching a peasant struggle.

iii. The main objective of the Communist Party of India was to mobilize the peasantry. In order to achieve this objective, it undertook a campaign to propagate the demands of the poor peasants. The propaganda covered up to 300 to 400 villages. Though the peasants showed resistance to the government orders, the movement was going at a slow pace. However, only the Telangana local peasants participated in the mobilization of the peasantry.

iv. After the second conference which was held in March 1948, there was a revolutionary turn to the Telangana peasant struggle, and the peasants turned into an army and on a few occasions also fought guerilla wars.

v. Apart from the peasant agitation, a parallel para-military voluntary force was organized by Kasim Rizvi. The members of this organization were called Razakars. This organization worked against the peasants.

vi. The Indian army marched into the state of Hyderabad on 13 September 1948. The army was successful enough in suppressing the Nizam's army and the Razakars. The police action taken by the newly

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framed Central Government was quick in putting down the peasant movement.

The course of all these events resulted in the withdrawal of the peasant movement. The police action gave a death blow to the Telangana peasant movement led by the Communist Party. The movement suffered a lot due to this struggle. Around 2,000 peasants were killed while fighting with the Indian army and around 25,000 communists and participants were arrested. The number of detainees reached 10,000 by the end of July 1950. Thus, this gives a clear picture of the intensity with which the Telangana peasant struggle was fought.

Some of the consequences and outcomes of the Telangana peasant struggle are as follows:

- i. The Telangana peasant struggle had a participation of mixed class of peasantry. The major achievement of this peasant struggle was that it brought together the tenants, sharecroppers and landless laborers for the first time. The movement secured the strength of the poor peasants especially the tribal peasants who were the victims of bonded labor. However, the Kammas and Reddy castes who were rich class peasants gained a lot from the movement.
- ii. Another beneficiary from this movement was the Communist Party, which exercised its power over the whole state of Hyderabad for a long time. Though the party benefited from this struggle, there were certain losses also. The party got split into two groups due to differences in ideologies. While one group supported the struggle, the other group criticized it as a mere case of terrorism.
- iii. The Telangana Peasant struggle was a failure as far as the demands of the poor peasant classes are concerned. There were few gains for the rich peasant class, but the benefits for poor peasants such as tenants and landless laborers were very few.

Thus, the Telangana Peasant struggle can be said to be a handiwork of the Communist Party and did not come directly from the peasants. Not even one agrarian class took the initiative to start the movement. However, in spite of the failure of the Telangana movement it must be

agreed that it served as a great inspiration to the Communists of the entire country.

6. Tebhaga Movement in Bengal:

The word Tebhaga literally means three shares of harvests. It was a sharecropper's movement, which demanded two-thirds for themselves and one-third for the landlord. Earlier, the sharecroppers used to give fifty-fifty share of the produce on their tenancy. The crop sharing system at that time was known as barga, adhi, bhagi, etc., and the sharecroppers were called as bargadars or adhiars.

These sharecroppers seriously challenged the custom of sharing crops between the bargadar and the landlord in 1946-1947. During the harvest of 1946, the sharecroppers of a few north and northeastern districts of Bengal went to fields and cut down the crops and thrashed them on their own.

There were two reasons why this action led to the insurrection on the part of the sharecroppers. First, they demanded that the sharing of the produce into half was not justified. As the tenants made most of the labor and other investments and since the land owner's participation was very less in the production process the tenants believed that the latter should be getting only one-third of the crop share and not half of it.

Secondly, the tenants were required to store their grains at the granary of the landlord and had to share the straw and other byproducts of the grains on half-sharing basis. The tenants were not prepared to follow this rule. The tenants took the stand that the stock of the harvests would be stored at the tenants' compound and the landlord would not be getting "any" of the shares from the byproducts of the grains.

The Berigal Provincial Krishak Sabha organized the movement of Tebhaga. The sharecroppers under the leadership of the sabha mobilized themselves against the land-lords. However, the leadership also came from among the peasants. The movement spread across the 19 districts of Bengal, but its intensity was more seriously felt in certain districts only. The landlords refused to accept the demands of the tenants and called the

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police. The police arrested the tenants and many of them were put behind the bars.

This action made the tenants more furious and they started a new slogan to abolish the whole Zamindari system. The slogan also indicated that the rate of the rents which was raised by the peasants of the Tebhaga movement should be reduced.

In few places of the Tebhaga movement the peasants declared their zones as Tebhaga areas and many Tebhaga committees were set up in order to govern the area locally. Under the pressure of Tebhaga activists most of the landlords had come to terms with the Tebhaga peasants and withdrew the cases filed against them.

Such kinds of Tebhaga areas were established at the districts of Jessore, Dinajpur, and Jalpaiguri. Later on, the Tebhaga areas were established extensively at Midnapur and in other 24 paraganas. In early 1947, such developments led the government to introduce a bill in the Legislative Assembly.

The bill proposed to reform the bhagi system of the country, which caused the agrarian unrest. However, due to certain other political developments in the country the government could not enact the bill into a law. Moreover, the promises of the new government and the partition of Bengal led to the suspension of the Tebhaga movement.

The Tebhaga movement, to an extent, was successful, as it has been estimated that about 40 per cent of the sharecropping peasants were granted the Tebhaga right by the landowners themselves. The illegal exaction in the name of abwabs was also abolished.

The movement was, however, less successful in the East Bengal districts. In 1948-1950, there was another wave of Tebhaga movement in these districts. The government credited this to be a handiwork of the Indian agents which the general public believed and abstained themselves from involving in the movement. However, the East Bengal State Acquisition and Tenancy Act of 1950 was passed due to the initiation of the movement.

Check your progress –

1. What caused the revolutionaries to start attacking in Pune/

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.....
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2. When did bardoli satyagrah happened?

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4.3 LETS SUM UP

These movements created an atmosphere for post- independence agrarian reforms, for instance, ' abolition of Zamindari. They eroded the power of the landed class, thus adding to the transformation of the agrarian structure. These movements were based on the ideology of nationalism. The nature of these movements was similar in diverse areas.

4.4 KEYWORDS

Bardoli , Satyagrah, Kisan, Moplah

4.5 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What instigated the revolutionaries in Bengal?
2. What caused the Moplah riots?

4.6 SUGGESTED READING

A Revolutionary History of Interwar India Paperback – 30 Mar 2016 by Kama Maclean

Revolutionary Activities in India 1917 - 1936 Hardcover – 2015 by H.W. Hale

4.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Hint – 4.2
2. Hint – 4.2

UNIT 5 - STATES PEOPLES MOVEMENTS

STRUCTURE

- 5.0 Objective
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 State People's Movement
- 5.3 Lets Sum Up
- 5.4 Keywords
- 5.5 Questions For Review
- 5.6 Suggested Readings
- 5.7 Answers To Check Your Progress

5.0 OBJECTIVE

To learn about the people's movements in different princely states.

To know about its long term impact.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

There were about 600 states in India which were ruled over by Indian princes. They covered about one-third of India's territory and about one-fifth of India's population. Many of these states were so small as to be no more than zamindaris.

There were some like Hyderabad, which were large and had a population of several million people. These states were allowed to continue after the Revolt of 1857 though they were at the mercy of the British government. As they owed their existence to the British government, they were loyal supporters of the British rule in India. These states were ruled by the princes in a most authoritarian manner. People suffered from extreme economic and political disabilities in these states.

They had no civil rights and no law except that of the ruler and had to perform forced labour. While the people were oppressed, the rulers led opulent and degenerated lives. Any attempt at political, social and economic reform in these states was most ruthlessly putdown. The nationalist movement could not be fully national unless it concerned itself also with the liberation of the people of the Indian states from the oppression of their rulers.

5.2 STATE PEOPLE'S MOVEMENT

The Princes of India thus continued in their protected self-serving style of governing their States. This deceptive lull was quite suddenly shattered by the individualistic and out of the ordinary stand taken by the Nizam of Hyderabad who demanded the restitution of the province of Berar that Lord Dalhousie had taken over in 1853. The revenues from this rich cotton growing region had been used to support the contingent force maintained by Hyderabad, under the provisions of Wellesley Subsidiary Alliance, for use by the British. Mir Osman Ali's shrewdly worded letter of September 25, 1925 now challenged the very basis of British paramountcy.' The imperial rulers responded with aclearity. In a letter dated March 27, 1926, Lord Reading rejected outright the demand that the Nizam made.

In fact the Viceroy's reply took the form of an uncompromising statement on the absolute supremacy of the British Government over the Princely States and the inviolability of the Paramount Power.^ The correspondence between Mir Osman Ali, Nizam of Hyderabad and Lord Reading, Viceroy of India, was published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary on April 5, 1926. In the same month viceroialty changed hands. For the princes, the circumstances in which Irwin succeeded Reading were similar to those in which Minto had succeeded Curzon.^ They hoped that the new Viceroy would, like Minto, prove to be more sympathetic to their interests than his predecessor. During the post Montford Reforms years the Princes individually and through the Chamber of Princes sought to pin

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the British to a definition of 'Paramountcy'. The Government of India, while perusing a policy of offering expedient, even illusory 'protection' to the Princely states refused to codify the political practice the Princes so earnestly sought. That the British followed this policy, despite a fairly strong opinion against it, reiterated the 'imperialist' nature of the British objective in India. Irwin however felt that there was need to have an informal dialogue with the Princes (i.e. the Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes) of an 'exploratory nature',* through a sub-committee of his Executive Council, to understand their minds before the Statutory Commission that was to evaluate the ten years since the 1917 Reforms* arrived in India. Lord Birkenhead who had succeeded Lord Peel as Secretary of State at the India Office was quite skeptical about the viceroy's suggestion. "It is always a danger in discussion with the Princes that even the most informal remarks may be brought up again subsequently as 'pledges', and in a matter of this importance to the Princes we shall have to be especially cautious on this point."

He finally agreed to Irwin's scheme provided nothing that might be construed as a commitment was said by the Government of India. Thus Thompson was commissioned by Irwin to prepare a note that would serve as a basis for discussions in the subcommittee of his Council. In preparing his note Thomson was especially mindful of the conclusions of the Committee that had been appointed earlier by Lord Reading to investigate the dissatisfaction of the Princes about the economic and fiscal policies of the Government.' He began with an appraisal of princely apprehensions, "The Princes are afraid of the future... They are the last congenial autocrats in the world. Democracy has swept away others before their eyes.

The reflection that it may end in dictatorship brings them no balm. Such a dictatorship would mean their downfall. With the examples of Ireland and Egypt before them, they discount our assurances of protection and they are terrified lest out of deference to clamour or fetish of the people's will we should let all the powers of the Government of India pass to a responsible Government composed of

the type dominant amongst politicians, a type they dislike and distrust."* Thompson was able to suggest subtly two ways out of this problem. The first that in relationship with the Indian States the Viceroy should act in his capacity as the Crown Representative and independent of his status as Governor-General-in-Council, as head of the Government of India. This was exactly what Malconi Hailey had advocated in 1921, a move that Abhyankar had denounced as 'sinister'. The second was the establishment of a 'union' legislature based on a customs union, an idea borrowed from Bismark's 'Zollverine'. Irwin endorsed Thomson's view as he had no wish to see the Indian Princely States vanish from the face of the sub-continent, by forcing compulsory constitutional reforms in them. The debate that followed Thompson's recommendations saw a division of opinion. Blackett the Finance Member and Sir Alexander.

Muddiman, the Home Member were against the idea of protecting "the states in this manner from pressure of public opinion. Muddiman also thought that there was a tendency to think only in terms of the princes and asked whether their subjects would welcome the states conducting their relations only with the Viceroy.^ The idea of the Union Legislature on the other hand received a unanimous note. While Thompson suggested a unitary legislature made up of elected representatives from British India and nominated representatives from the Princely States, Thompson believed the rulers would be pleased for as he recorded in his note^o that although the growth of democracy and education would 'bring the despot down', the scheme would 'break his fall and tend to keep him on his throne with powers equal in extent to those of the autonomous "provincial governments of the future, and with his ceremonial position safeguarded permanently." At the end of the debate that ensued in the subcommittee it was however accepted that British Indian representatives would be likely to take exception to their association with representatives from the Indian Princely States who had been nominated by the Princes and not by popular vote. The committee therefore considered that "something in the shape of a federation" would be the only satisfactory solution." It was also accepted that it

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was imperative for the success of the scheme to start modestly, but the details of the form of association envisaged were not discussed.

The India Office recognised that to ask the Statutory Commission to report on matters pertaining to the Indian States would amount to stirring up a hornet's nest, the consequences of which might force the British to codify political practice to their detriment. Birkenhead in fact did not even want a mention of the term 'federation' as he felt that this would probably 'raise larger issues and frighten the princes'.¹ He suggested that an inquiry into the question of the Indian States should be disposed of first, so that conclusions therefrom would be available to the Statutory Commission as a basis of its separate investigations. Birkenhead's approval of a States' Committee was therefore dependent upon Irwin impressing these considerations upon the Chairman-designate of the Indian States Committee, Sir Harcourt Butler. Realising that Butler was likely to be 'out of touch' with the States, the Secretary of State instructed Irwin to inform the former Foreign Secretary that there could be no weakening of the paramountcy question as expressed in Reading's letter to the Nizam. It was quite clear therefore that the subsequent paramountcy recommendations of the Indian States Committee had been effectively prejudged before the Committee began its deliberations.¹

Thus expediency had dictated a two-fold plan through which to steer the British imperialism in tact. The first, as has been just mentioned was to give an 'official' cum 'we-are-partners' type illusion to the already nervous and subservient, though occasionally belligerent, Princes. The second was the policy of non-interference that had been initiated by Minto and elaborated upon in the subsequent years. Non-interference was heralded by the Princes unanimously and by the large part of the bureaucracy. By 1927 however there were a large number of political agents stationed in the Princely States, to carry out the mandate of the Government of India and India Office, who had become vocal in their criticism and dissatisfaction with 'non-interference'. In January 1927 Major A.S. Meek, Political Agent at Mahikanta in Western India forwarded a note to the Political Department with the remarkable title, "British India is advancing

along the lines of Evolution: The Indian States are on the road to Revolution."* It was Meek's contention that while British India had progressed towards self-government through education and a raised standard of living, this phenomenon was absent in almost all the Princely States.

The policy of non-interference had made this divide more pronounced together with the fact that the general attitude towards the states had become quite frivolous. That is to say that though administration in the Princely States was abominable in most cases, British officers posted there aware of the circumstances, condoned the same in 'light hearted good humour what common judgement would condemn as intolerable. Meek said that the peculiar relationship embodied in 'paramountcy' that existed between the Indian States and the British Paramountcy had divested the rulers of the responsibility for the safety and good government within their states and made them obsessively concerned with a strange phenomenon they called their 'izzat' (reputation, glory, status all rolled into one). Irwin considered Meek's note to be very 'interesting and suggestive', though he did not subscribe to the suggestion of a reversal of the policy of non-interference. He did however call for an informal conference of Political Officers at Simla in July 1927 to understand their views and appraise them of the mind of the central government. Irwin found that most of the officers were in a critical mood. "Lieutenant Colonel R.H. Chenevix-Trench, who had spent just a year as Revenue & Police Member of the Nizam's Council in Hyderabad, condemned 'non-interference' as it led to oppression and general misgovernment. He said that the policy was 'as short sighted as it was unworthy of the Imperial Government.'"

Lieutenant Colonel RJC Burke, at the time Resident in Baroda, supported Chenevix-Trench's view that the instructions in Butler's Political Manual left an officer with 'little initiative' and seemed to imply that 'he should content himself by sitting in his Residency and listening to bazaar or club gossip.' The AGG Central India E.H. Kealy, felt that though 'non-interference ought to be abandoned, it would undoubtedly be resisted by the Princes who would resent

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interference with the exercise of their sovereign rights. Furthermore it was conceivable that any attempt at changing the present *laissez-faire* would 'close the remaining gaps in their (Princes') rank, especially since the establishment of the Chamber of Princes had given the Princes' a sense of unity and opportunities for greater communication. In support of this view L.W. Reynolds, the AGG from Rajputana said that the inherent loopholes made it impossible to effectively of the Indian States Committee which made amply clear that its terms of reference did not include discussions, even a mention, of the subjects of the Princely States. The members of the Indian States Committee under the Chairmanship of Sir Harcourt Butler arrived in India early 1928. The only other two members were Sidney Peel, a financier and Professor W.S. Holdsworth, an eminent jurist.

The members of the Committee toured several states and collected oral evidence from witnesses in India and Britain. It also issued a questionnaire based upon its terms of reference.¹ The terms of reference were specifically restricted (1) To report upon the relationship between the Paramount Power and the States with particular reference to the rights and obligations arising out of a) treaties, engagements and sanads and b) usage, sufferance and other causes; and (2) To enquire into the financial and economic relations between British India and the States and to make any recommendations that the committee considered desirable or necessary for their more satisfactory adjustments.

When Irwin had announced the appointment of the Indian States Committee, the Standing committee of the Chamber of Princes had established a special organisation which had engaged the Right Honourable, Sir Leslie F. Scott, K.C., M.P. together with Mr. Stuart Bevan, K.C., M.P., Mr. Wilfrid A Grcone, K.C., Mr. Valentine Holmes and Mr. Donald Sommergele to prepare a Joint Opinion on their behalf. The Chamber of Princes appointed Kailash Narian Haksar, Dr. Rushbrook Williams and K.M. Panikkar to oversee the efforts of Sir Leslie Scott. The larger states however continued to remain aloof and chose to submit their own cases individually before the committee." Some of the smaller states — Rampur,

Junagad and a few Kathiawad states followed suit. Scott had prepared five volumes of evidence of encroachment on the rights of the states since the Mutiny. His Joint Opinion, he divided into three parts. The first was an interpretation of Paramountcy that established that the states were fully independent in matters concerning their internal administration. The second part concerned proposals for the Political Department. In fact, Scott advocated a virtual abolition of the Department, to be replaced by an "Indian States Council", members of which (and the Viceroy) were to solemnly swear to protect the interests and rights of the State.

The third part dealt with the relations between the states and British India wherein Scott suggested a 'Union Council' to discuss matters of common concern. Lord Irwin was cynical in his response to these proposals. He believed that Scott was not only misleading the Princes but also suffering from delusions of grandeur. "I am afraid that his trouble really is that he has convinced himself that his intervention at this juncture is one of the direct attempts of Providence to bring order into a disordered world and his critical faculty has suffered some obliteration under his enthusiasm.-' The Indian States Committee, that had been monopolised by Sir Leslie Scott on behalf of the Standing Committee, proceeded to dismantle Scott's contention. Acting upon instructions, Butler and his colleagues declared: 'The relationship of the Paramount Power with the States is not merely a contractual relationship, resting on treaties made more than a century ago. It is a living, growing relationship shaped by circumstances and policy, resting on a mixture of history, theory and modern fact.'

Moreover it is not true that the States were originally independent. 'Nearly all of them were subordinate or tributary to the Moghul Empire, the Maratha supremacy or the Sikh Kingdom and dependent upon them. Some were rescued, others were created by the British. The Committee therefore concluded: 'Paramountcy must remain paramount; it must fulfill its obligations, defining or adapting itself according to the shifting necessities of the time and the progressive development of the States.

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The Butler Committee rejected the idea of the Indian Council though it suggested more frequent discussions between the Standing Committee and the Political Department to reduce friction between the two. The Committee, however, put forward a new and novel theory of intervention. It stated that if a popular uprising occurred in a state that was not the outcome of a protest against the misgovernment of the ruler, but a popular demand for a change in the form of government, then the Paramount Power would be bound to take such measures as would satisfy the demand without eliminating the Prince. The Political Department acquiesced." Watson thought it 'unthinkable for many years to come' that the government would be required to interfere in this manner provided the autocratic rule of the princes was 'tolerably just and efficient.' Moreover, agitators who might stir up discontent could always be won over by a prudent ruler.

The Committee also suggested that an expert body be appointed to inquire into reasonable claims of the States for a share in the government's revenues accruing out of matters of common concern. Also that policies relating to excise and postal arrangements be decided by joint consultations. Endorsing the opinion reached by Irwin's executive in 1926 the Committee concluded that, "For the present it is a practical necessity to recognize the existence of two Indias... there is need for great caution in dealing with any question of federation at the present time so passionately are the princes as a whole attached to the maintenance in its entirety and unimpaired of their individual sovereignty within their states."* As soon as the Butler Committee presented its report in March 1929, the attention of the Princes was riveted upon its paramountcy recommendations that so horrified them. To the princes the recommendations seemed like an open invitation to their political opponents to encourage agitation for change.

The problem of the Indian States had grown much more acute after the Montford Reforms. The establishment of the Princes Chamber and the repercussions of the introduction of responsible government in the British provinces had cast a shadow on the Princely States. As we have outlined earlier subjects in several States, especially in

Western Maharashtra had begun to organise themselves. The total clamp on freedom of expression and association within State boundaries necessitated these Parishads, Mandals and Sabhas to hold meetings in British India. The Daxini Sansthan Hitvardhat Sabha spearheaded by Abhyankar as early as 1920, under the auspices of the Servants of India, was one of the earliest such bodies to plead the cause of the States' Subjects in a sustained manner. Often Abhyankar found himself alone and criticism poured in from all quarters, yet he did not dilute his strident pastures. Replying to V.S. Srinivasa Sastri on 23rd May 1926,[^] he wrote, "I really appreciate your opinion in the English columns of the Sansthani Swaraj.-

Bui I can state that my excuse is that I have lived and suffered under the autocratic rule of Indian Princes. I know the black side so much that it is difficult for me to hold any other view. British Indian Politicians - like you living at a distance are brought in touch with the bright side of the Indian states and do not or cannot imagine the other side of the shield. However, don't suppose for a moment, that I value any less the importance of peaceful and moderate language so far as these Princes are concerned. My policy has been as expressed by the Australian Statesman - "Hit hard no matter even though you are required to apologise later." I shall however be obliged to you to be corrected from time to time. As I have been looking to you with some feeling of respect and estimation as did my Guru Gokhale. In the case of the Indian states problems the greatest difficulty is that no one can get any lead or light from outside.

The Indian states' subjects and politicians therein are not at all - and British Indian Statesmen don't want to worry about these matters. But when the moribund condition of the Indian states is brought forward as an excuse for not granting a further installment of reforms is it not now necessary to think of the position of the Indian states in the future development of British India earnestly?

"Rajputana Seva Sangh and other organisations worked towards gaining political rights, as also did organisations in individual states

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- the Sangli State Peoples' Conference, Bhor Political Conference, Bhavnagar Praja Parishad, Cutchi Praja Parishad, Hyderabad State Peoples' Conference, Jainjiria State Subjects Conference, Miraj State Peoples Conference, Idar Praja Parishad among others. A distinct transformation was visible in the sessions of the States People Conferences that were being held simultaneously with sessions of the Indian National Congress as years rolled on after the 1917 Declaration.¹ The earliest efforts at forming an All India Institution about 1917 were however unsuccessful as in retrospect one might say of the efforts of Mr. Mansukhlal Rajeevbhai Mehta of Kathiawad. On the 5th March 1922, 26 prominent workers interested in the Indian States met at the Servants of India Society in Poona. Abhyankar and A.V. Patwardhan asked N.C. Kelkar, a prominent member of the Servants of India Society as well as the Indian National Congress to open the meeting. Kelkar asked Mr. Shukla, barrister from Rajkot, to chair it. The question of whether an All India States People Conference was needed was debated and the following were resolved: 1. An All India States People Conference be held in Bombay in August/September 1923. 2. A provisional committee be set up for the purpose. 3. The job of defining the role and aims of the All India States People Conference be entrusted to the conference.

The organisation of a Conference will therefore, be devoted to make the Princes realise that their best friends are, after all, their people working in harmony with the rest of India. A conference is, therefore, necessary to see how far this or the like aim common to the whole of the Native States of India is attainable, and if attainable to devise ways and means and permanent organisations for the maintenance of the struggle for the betterment of the States and the people.

"The impetus came however came when the Indian States Committee was announced and politicians in the Indian Princely States realised that the subjects were not within the purview of the terms of reference. Not to give up easily, these politicians sought a hearing of their plea by Sir Harcourt Butler, the Chairman, who recorded in his report that, "In the course of our enquiry we were approached by persons and

associations purporting to represent the subjects of Indian states. It was quite clear that our terms of reference did not cover an investigation of their alleged grievances and we declined to hear them, but we allowed them to put up written statements”

In fact in preparation of the arrival of Sir Harcourt Butler to India, G.R. Abhyankar, Amritlal Thakkar, A.V. Patwardhan, Professor K.T. Shah, Dr. Sumant Mehta, Manilal Kothari and Ramnarayan Chaudhary decided on the 1st April 1927 to convene a meeting on the 17th of that month with a view to

- 1) Formulate aims of political advance in the Indian States as integral parts of the Indian nation.
- 2) To debate the question of whether a larger conference should be convened.
- 3) Prepare for, if so determined of a representation to be laid before the forthcoming

Constitutional Commission embodying the aim of political advance in the Indian States. At the third meeting in May 1927 a manifesto to that effect was drafted by Abhyankar and unanimously accepted. The prime movers of the popular agitation, in order to obtain constitutional guarantees and a democratic, responsible government in the Princely States, consistently maintained that their demand was for a change in the form of government "under the aegis of their rulers. As early as 1922 Abhyankar had said, "The princes have combined in their Princes' Chamber for the protection of their rights, privileges and prerogatives. They are protesting against the encroachment of the Political Department of the Government of India and demanding freedom from many irksome restrictions. They are demanding representation in Imperial and International gatherings and express a desire to participate in Imperial and All India Policies. While they lay claims at participation they are not willing to delegate or allow power within their states to devolve upon their subjects.

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All their dealings with the Government of India are in-camera, not ever made public, and never consult or even inform of the many commitments the princes make on their (of the subjects) behalf to (he Government of India. Press is muzzled and there is no freedom of association. Elementary civic rights depend on the whims of the ruler. Taxation and legislation is arbitrary. State revenues are regarded as personal incomes. Education, sanitation, medical relief, industrialisation and other nation building activities are starved while local self-government is unknown

."Yet to Abhyankar a constitutional monarchy under the Indian Princes was distinctly preferable to benevolent despotism under alien rulers. We find that after the April 1927 meeting, there was almost no forward activity because of floods in Gujarat. It was not before the 20th November of that year when the 4th Executive Committee^{^*} meeting was called with G.B. Trivedi in Chair that things got moving again. Balwantray Mehta of Rajasthan agreed during the course of this session to work full time for the Conference. Five subcommittee were appointed to carry on propaganda and publicity to prepare the ground for the formal inauguration and launching of the All India States People Conference to be held at the Servants of [^][ndia^{^^}Society Office. Bomh [^].

The formal address of the Conference office was Ashoka Building, Princes Street, Bombay. A vigorous agitation marked the success of the Conference in advance and this was primarily due to the incessant efforts of Manilal Kothari, G.R. Abhyankar and Popatlal Chudgar. They held a number of political meetings in various Princely States - Kathiawad Agency, Idar, Jamnagar, Bhavnagar among others. Govindlal Motilal was elected Chairman of the Reception Committee with S.A. Brelvi, Editor Bombay Chronicle, and G.B. Trivedi, ex MLC from Bombay as Vice-Presidents. While A.V. Takkar and Balwantray Mehta of Servant's of India Society, G.R. Abhyankar, A.D. Sheth, Editor 'Santashtna', Rangildas Kapadia of Baroda Praja Mandal and Balkrishnalal Poddar, a merchant from Bombay were elected General Secretaries. Manikliil Trivedi of the Kathiawad Praja Mandal was Treasurer.

Thus at 3.00 p.m. on Saturday, 17th December 1927 the All India States People Conference (AISPC) was inaugurated by Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao of Ellore, who had been elected President of the Conference. In all 15,000 delegates from Princely States and British India attended. Addressing this impressive gathering Ramachandra Rao declared

"I refuse to believe that there is anybody in the Indian States, be he a prince or a peasant, who will not wholeheartedly subscribe to these ideals and not do his best to realise them. A large vision of Indian political destiny has permeated all classes of people throughout India and on this main question there is and there can be absolutely no difference between the people of British India and the Indian States. A free, strong, united, self-governing and self-supporting India is our aim and., the All India Congress Committee (Nehru Committee) has charged the working committee of the Congress to frame a scheme in consultation with the various political parties in the country. I sincerely hope that this committee and other political organizations will not content themselves with framing proposals relating only to British India leaving the position of the Indian States in the new constitution undefined. Ramachandra Rao severely criticized the Congress policy of non-interference in the affairs of the Indian States. In the several speeches that followed Amritlal Thakkar, Jamnalal Bajaj and Manaklal Kothari, all Congressmen and Gandhians, urged the AISPC to introduce a programme to promote 'Khaddar', temperance and the uplift of backward classes. The Conference urged the Congress to lend them constructive help, Manaklal Kothari (Kathiawad), B.S. Pathik (Udaipur), Ramnarayan Chaudhary (Ajmer), Dr. Gundappa (S. India), Chottalal Sutaria (Gujarath), Balwantray Mehta (Rajasthan) and Ramachandra Rao (Ellore) were deputed to meet Congress leaders and secure their support. Abhyankar and Popatlal Chudgar were to conduct publicity work. They demanded the use of manpower from the Indian States in the agenda to be followed for the indianisation of the British army. The States' leaders perceived that this would not only open substantial avenues of employment but simultaneously upgrade the States' Forces. Spurred

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on by Abhyankar they further demanded that all subjects of Princely India should be deemed eligible for the King's Commission and for admission to the Imperial Military Academy (now the Indian Military Academy) on the same terms as British Indian Subjects. The Conference demanded a review and alterations of the fiscal and opium policies so that the interests of the subjects would be subserved. Atiya Begaum demanded that the Princes declare their intention of giving the subjects the right to freedom of speech and press and the security of person and property, while D.V. Gokhale warned against doing anything that might alienate the subjects, "

The rulers must realise" he said, "that they exist to subserve the interest of the people or they would suffer the same fate as autocrats the world over.

"Sharing the platform during this hallmark Conference were personalities like Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas, Fenner Brockway, a prominent Labour M.P. who lent sterling support to the AISPC Delegation in London 1928-29, Shri Dhairyasheelrao Gaikwar, Sir Lallubhai Samaldas, S.A. Brelvi, A.V. Thakkar, Laxmidas Tairsee, Sumant Mehta, Atiya Begaum, D.V. Gokhale, Sir Jugmohandas Varjimandas, Seth Jannalal Bajaj, B.F. Bharucha and Motichand Kapadia. The conference ended at 9 p.m. on the 18th December and Rs.6,000 had been collected in subscriptions and donations. Abhyankar drafted the formal 14 point Resolution. Thus the first All India States People Conference brought to the surface popular demands for responsible government and civil liberties under the aegis of the Indian Rulers,^"

thus setting the tone of agitation for popular rule in the Indian states. The Resolution adopted at the first AISPC began by reiterating the principle goal. It was resolved to

- 1) educate public opinion.
- 2) urged rulers to a) establish representative institutions on an elective basis in the sphere of local self government, legislation, taxation and general control of administration, b) budget and revenue be submitted to popular vote c) revenues of the states and personal

expenditure of princes be separated and submitted to popular vote d) establishment of an independent judiciary and judicial functions to be completely separated from executive functions and e) the princes must cease interference.

3) that it was the inherent right of the subjects to determine the form and character of government and bring about necessary changes.

4) The speedy attainment of 'Swaraj' for India as a whole and that the States be brought into constant relations with British India and people of the States be assigned a definite place and an effective voice in all matters (of) common concern in any new constitution that may be devised for the whole of India.

5) That the plea that the Princes have treaty obligations to the British Crown wholly independent of the Government of India for the time being has no foundation whatsoever and it is detrimental to the attainment of Swaraj.

6) That the Princes must publicly promulgate elementary rights of citizenship, right of association and meeting, free speech, press and security of person and property.

7) Faith in self-reliant efforts to ameliorate the condition of people and therefore to start organisations in the States to do constructive work of 'Khadi', temperance, uplift of backward classes, establishment and reform of Village Panchayat and local self-government institutions.

8) Abolition of compulsory labour and slavery.

9) Abolition of the separate education that was being imparted to the Princes at the Rajkumar Colleges which were illconceived, illsuited and denationalised them.

10) The principle of intervention in the internal affairs was not based on any definite principles that it was not being exercised for the promotion and safeguard of the rights of the people, that principles of intervention should be defined, codified and published.

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11) That the Expert Committee appointed by the Secretary of State for India-in-Council at the request of the Indian Princes and without any reference to and representation of the subjects will seriously prejudice the right and liberties of the people and unduly increase their burdens, so that such a committee was unacceptable to the subjects.

12) That wanton expenditure caused by Princes staying away from their states was unacceptable.

13) That the Executive Committee of the AISPC was authorised to secure cooperation of political organisations in British India and collaborate with them in devising a new Constitution for the whole of India including the States. Reactions to the formation of the All India States People Conference were quick to come by both in India and England.

While the Indian Press was divided in their reception to the AISPC, the press in England was decidedly pro-Princes. This was primarily because until now none of the States leaders or those of British India had ever addressed the English public on matters pertaining to the Indian States. The Princes on the other hand new England and the Continent well and had years of a headstart in both overt and covert propaganda. As we have already noted the proceedings of the Simla Conference between the Viceroy and the Princes in 1927 had been in camera.

Soon after, in view of the imminent Indian States Committee and consequent stepped up activities of States leaders a delegation of the Princes went to London with a view to protecting their own interests and creating a favourable public opinion to their cause. Thus one newspaper in London was to write,

"Anglo-Indian pundits like Lord Sydenham, Lord Meston and Sir Michael O'Dwyer have suddenly conceived great affection for the Indian States and the perpetuation of their treaty rights." While another prominent daily noted that, "

It has been suggested in the press that the Indian Princes are being used at the present juncture as a sort of a smoke screen for vitiating the judgement of the Royal Commission on the subject of an Indian Constitution, it has also been stated that the object of the Conference (at Simla) was to find a solution for checking the democratic onrush in British India and that under the guise of safeguarding their existing status, rights and dignities Indian Princes are being advised and incited to oppose a grant of full constitutional freedom to India and to retard India's advance to Swaraj. As you are aware Colonel Haksar and Dr. Rushbrook Williams left for England immediately after the Simla Conference and received a good deal of attention from the English press. They have issued a statement on behalf of the Princes that they are not opposed to the legitimate aspirations of India to become fully self-governing but that the position and status of the Princes as guaranteed in the treaties be maintained."

As if to further confirm the above, His Highness the Jamsaheb of Nawanagar declared that the Princes supported aspirations in British India and did not want to interfere with it nor wanted any interference in the affairs of Princely States. Reacting to the propaganda launched by the Princes, and the tacit support from the British, Abhyankar reacted sharply. Referring to the Imperial rulers as "British trustees" he said, "They are not anxious to advance the cause of national freedom in British India and still less for the promotion of constitutional reforms in the Indian states. For a long time British statesmen have sought moral justification for British rule in India and have repeatedly asserted that in governing of 319 million people of India, Great Britain is discharging a solemn trust. They have declared that British policy in India is not in any sense dictated by British interests and that the welfare of India alone is the determining factor in the formulation of their policy. They have even gone so far as to declare that the people of India and Great Britain are partners."

The Executive Committee held its second meeting on the 7th January 1928 to discuss means of raising funds, setting clear definitions and parameters of programmes to be undertaken. It was also

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resolved at the meeting that the AISPC would work with the Congress subcommittee to prepare a Draft Constitution, if invited to do so. B.S. Pathak, Professor K.T. Shah, P.L. Chudgar, Maneklal Mehta, Amritlal Sheth and G.R. Abhyankar were coopted for this work. The third Executive Committee stretched over two days - the 19th - 20th May of the same year. The Executive Committee recorded a criticism of the Butler Committee and its terms of reference that made no mention to either representation to the subjects of the Princely states nor reforms in them.

The minutes of the meeting referred to the Butler Committee as "prejudicial". The proposals formulated at the session of the Chamber of Princes held in Bombay, the views that the Indian rulers expressed in the press both in India and abroad, and the Leslie Scott Scheme, these the Executive Committee said amounted to the "derailment of Swaraj." G.R. Abhyankar, Ramachandra Rao, and S.G. Vaze were deputed to study the Leslie Scott Scheme and prepare a report. The Committee also authorised Abhyankar to work with D.V. Gundappa, N.C. Kelkar, Manilal Kothari, and B.S. Pathik to prepare a tentative scheme for the future government in the Indian States and their relations vis-a-vis the Government of India. It was only when it was established beyond doubt that the Butler Committee was to carry out an in-camera inquiry in London with an utter disregard to the aspiration of the States' subjects and the efforts of their leaders to gain a bonafide status and representations that the 4th Executive Committee recorded that "in view of the impending changes in the status of the Indian States and the activities of some leading princes in connection with the work of the Butler Committee, it has become necessary to send a delegation to England to state our case before the British public." The deputation to England was to consist of Diwan Bahadur Ramachandra Rao, the President, G.R. Abhyankar, the general secretary, and Amritlal D. Sheth, MLC, while Popatlal Chudgar who accompanied them did so at his own expense.

The Deputation was also authorized to lead evidence before the Butler Committee if invited. In retrospect it is obvious that the States leaders were quite unaware of the pro-reforms and democratization lobby

within bureaucracy in the Government of India. It also speaks volumes of the fact that no matter how divergent and critical the views, the British always subserved imperial interests, never losing sight of their duty to and the dignity of the Crown. At the same time, though, opportunity was afforded at all levels of hierarchy to air their views frankly and freely.

Perhaps the greatest single obstacle that the popular movements faced at the All India level was the total lack of support from the Indian National Congress. Despite this we find that the leaders of the States plodded on relentlessly educating the public both in India and abroad, trying to win constructive support from the Congress as an organisation and congress leaders in their individual capacities. While Gandhi was anxious to promote the social upliftment programmes - eradication of untouchability and self reliance through the spinning wheel - he was adamant about lending the states support at a political level. Abhyankar, though he never became a member of the Indian National Congress, understood the benefits that would accrue to the people of the states from Gandhi's social work programmes, and initiated them in Sangli. In this connection Abhyankar continued to correspond with the Mahatma.

In a letter dated 8th February 1933," written from the Yeravada Central Prison, Poona, Gandhi wrote, "My dear Abhyankar, will you please go through this letter (a copy enclosed) and do whatever you can in connection with the money. Get hold of it or let it be sent to me, and do please advise me as to the best method of using part of it in connection with untouchables in Sangli." It appears that a lawyer Mr. Chhapkhane of Sangli claimed to have been authorised by the Mahatma during his visit to Sangli to both collect funds and spend them for promoting the social work programmes. He seems to have sought to use these claims to be the Mahatma's "representative" in Sangli and this inevitably led to unnecessary controversy and unpleasantness, much to Gandhi's chagrin. Once again the Mahatma still incarcerated at Yeravada sought Abhyankar's help in a letter dated 9th March 1933.

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"Here is a copy of my further correspondence with Sjt. Chhapkhane. I suggest your seeing him and fixing up whatever is possible. He is so definite about what happened during my visit to Sangli that it is difficult to contradict him without unimpeachable evidence or to believe that he is guilty of saying what is not true. Sjr Joshi will perhaps show my letter to you."

It is quite possible that Abhyankar had hoped to be able to convince Gandhi of lending political support for his movement in the States, through the acceptance of Congress programmes of Khadi and untouchability. Gandhi however belied Abhyankar's hope for he maintained that the fight was against British Imperialism first and foremost. That opening up two fronts was not expedient for the Congress. Whether it was only a matter of expediency or whether the Congress did not wish to antagonise the strong and rich lobby of the Princes, who were natural allies of the British, many of whom donated to the Congress funds in the hope of buying support for their cause, and whose support the Congress undoubtedly needed to secure greater reforms to achieve a responsible and democratic government in the British provinces, is a question open to debate. Perhaps then, the attitude to the popular movement in the Indian Princely States was, in the nascent years of this century, based on mutual expediency and use that the Indian National Congress and the Indian Princes had of each other.

Check your progress –

1. Nizam was ruler of which princely state?

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2. Discuss about the Chamber of Princes.

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53 LETS SUM UP

The states which organized Praja Mandal were Mysore, Hyderabad, Baroda and Kathiawar. In 1927, these movements were organized at a national level called All India States People Conference (AISPC). The main leaders were Balwant Rai Mehta, Mani Lai Kothari, G R Abhyankar. In 1927, in order to enquire into the centre-state relations, the Harcourt Butler Committee was appointed . In 1929, under the leadership of J. L. Nehru Congress passed a resolution endorsing the demand of AISPC. The States People wanted to be treated like Indian citizens. J.L.Nehru at Lahore session said, "the Indian states cannot leave apart from rest of India, the right to determine...must lie with the people of states."

5.4 KEYWORDS

Princely states, Praja Mandal, Nizam, Nawab, Maharaja

5.5 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What were the demands kept in the state people's movements?
2. Who was the Maharaja of Baroda?

5.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

- .R. Ashton: British Policy towards the Indian States 1905-1935. Curzon Press, London, 1985
- d. Adrian Severs, Documents and Speeches on the Indian Princely States. Vol.II, B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi 110052, 1985.

5.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Hint – 5.2
2. Hint – 5.2

UNIT 6 - WORKING OF CONGRESS AND NON-CONGRESS PROVINCIAL MINISTERS

STRUCTURE

6.0 Objective

6.1 Introduction

6.2 Congress And Non Congress Provincial Ministers

6.3 Lets Sum Up

6.4 Keywords

6.5 Questions For Review

6.6 Suggested Readings

6.7 Answers To Check Your Progress

6.0 OBJECTIVE

There was a difference of opinion among the Congressmen in relation to these reforms. After reading this unit you will:

be aware of the various opinions prevailing among the Congressmen in relation to the question of constitutional reforms, learn about the elections of 1937 and the various aspects related to them, know about the functioning of the Congress ministries in various provinces during 1937-39, be aware of the problems faced by the Congress ministries during this period, and understand the reasons for the resignation of these ministries.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This Unit deals with the political developments during the years 1936-39. This was the period when the Congress gave up the path of confrontation and went for constitutional politics. However, unlike the

Earlier Swarajist phase, its present aim was to give the constitutional methods a trial and the Congressmen worked for their success. But this is not to say that there were no differences among the Congressmen regarding the constitutional methods. In fact every decision taken up by the Congress was strongly debated upon before its adoption. Though there was an agreement on the basic issue of fighting British imperialism, Congressmen disagreed on the methods to be adopted. It was during this period that the Left Wing was making its presence felt within the Congress. The Right Wing and the Left Wing discussed and debated on various issues. After a hectic debate the Congress decided to contest the elections in 1937 and was successful in forming governments in seven provinces. The Congress ministries functioned for a little more than two years. They had to sort out a number of problems during their short tenure in the office.

6.2 CONGRESS AND NON CONGRESS PROVINCIAL MINISTERS

Formation of Congress Ministry in Bihar The programme of reinvigoration and revitalizing the Congress had been successful as demonstrated by its success in the elections to the provincial assemblies. The Congress had secured an absolute majority in six Provinces, namely Bihar, Orissa, United Provinces, the Central Provinces, Madras and Bombay and the Congress Working Committee had outlined, as discussed in the previous Unit, the guidelines for its newly elected legislators. An analysis of these guidelines suggests that the intentions of the Congress lay elsewhere than the offices and all that it wanted was to use it in order to build up again a bigger and more intense form of mass struggle. The AICC, which subsequently met in Delhi, endorsed the Working Committee's resolution

"on the extra-parliamentary activities of the of the Congress members of legislatures, mass contacts, and the Congress policy in the legislatures"

and reiterated its resolve to carry out the struggle both inside and outside the legislatures: In the event of the British Government still persisting with New Constitution, in defiance of the declared will of the people,

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The All India Congress Committee desires to impress upon all Congress members of the legislatures that their work inside and outside the legislature must be based on the fundamental Congress policy of combating the New Constitution and seeking to end it, a policy on the basis of which they sought the suffrage of the electorate and won their overwhelming victory in the elections. That policy must / inevitably lead to dead-locks with the British Government and bring out still further the inherent antagonism between British imperialism and Indian nationalism, and expose the autocratic and undemocratic nature of the New Constitution.

The AICC took up the issue of the acceptance of office that had so far generated diverse forms of response groups within the Congress. It finally decided in favour of the acceptance of office in the Provinces where the Congress commanded a majority in the legislature. It required the leader of the Congress party in the legislature to be satisfied and able to state publicly that the Governor would not use his "special powers of interference or set aside the advice of Ministers in regard to constitutional activities". The AICC, accordingly, directed the Congress legislators to elect their leaders who would accept office only on a public undertaking to abide by the condition of non-interference by the Governors. ' Rajendra Prasad subsequently had to shoulder the onerous responsibility of facilitating the formation a Congress Ministry in Bihar. He was also president of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee. Accordingly, he called a meeting of the BPCC and the Congress M.L.As, and told them what he desired. He abhorred the idea of dissensions and rivalries with in the Congress legislators. There were several names in the fray and a vigorous campaigning launched in their support. Obviously not liking this he thought of working out a unanimous decision as regards the leader of the Congress legislature party in Bihar as that would eliminate the possibility group rivalries.

Rajendra Prasad had never visualized this kind of situation throughout his political career. Opposed to group and sectarianism, he tried from the very beginning to discourage those tendencies. He rebuked the proponents of different nominees and told them "not to talk in terms of groups" or otherwise. Consequently, the meeting authorized Rajendra

Prasad "to consult prominent Congressmen of every district and after gauging their opinion to give my decision as who should be the leader of the party'. He accepted the decision "as it would obviate voting and the attendant wrangles."

Selecting a Leader to Lead the Ministry Rajendra Prasad, indeed, faced an intricate situation because the responsibility of selecting the leader had been thrown over him. The issue was crucial for the future / development of the freedom struggle in Bihar. He was liable to be misunderstood and faulted later on as it happened in this as well. There were four contenders for leadership in the fray, namely, Shri Krishna Sinha, Anugrah Narayan Sinha, Syed Mahmud and Ram Dayalu Sinha. In addition, it was, indeed, a difficult choice for Rajendra Prasad, to take any one of them. Mahmud had been a member of the AICC and the working committee for many years and had been General Secretary of the Congress and the Khilafat Committee. Ram Dayalu Sinha was a reputed Congressman. Anugraha Narayan Sinha was a capable organizer and administrator and so was the case with Sri Krishna Sinha. Rajendra Prasad was well aware about their abilities but after meeting these leaders themselves and ascertaining the views of the party M.L.A's he finally decided in favour of Shri Krishna Sinha as leader of the Bihar legislator Party. Apparently the crucial factors, weighing in his mind, were the acceptability and popularity of the leader to the people and the candidate's own willingness to shoulder the responsibility, which had to be, as Mahatma Gandhi put it, 'a crown of thorns'. His decision, in favour of Shri Krishna Sinha, was also determined by his likings and eagerness for a consensual type of approach towards an issue, and which was quite characteristic of Rajendra Prasad's politics and philosophy throughout his life. Other than selection of a candidate through consensus, there were, apparently, no other considerations in his mind in selecting Shri Krishna Sinha. In his own words:

‘Among these, Dr. Mahmud had been a member of the AICC and the Working Committee for many years and had been General Secretary of the Congress and the Khilafat Committee. Since he had been working outside the province, he was not so well-known as the other persons. Ram Dayalu Sinha was a reputed Congressman who was strongly

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supported by some, but a section of the Congressmen, even including some from his own district, were strongly opposed to him. So he was ruled out. Anugraha Narain Sinha was a capable organizer and Unit Three administrator, but he told me that he did not want the honour and that others were canvassing for him despite his unwillingness. Sri Krishna Sinha had won great popularity in the province by his oratory, dauntless courage and self-sacrifice. After weighing all factors I decided that the mantle of leadership of the legislature party should fall upon S.K.Sinha.”

administrator, but he told me that he did not want the honour and that others were canvassing for him despite his unwillingness. Sri Krishna Sinha had won great popularity in the province by his oratory, dauntless courage and self-sacrifice. After weighing all factors I decided that the mantle of leadership of the legislature party should fall upon S.K.Sinha.

Nevertheless, his decision aroused displeasure and protests in some quarters of political opinion. He had the charges of canvassing in favour of Sri Krishna I Sinha at the cost of others. Muslims, particularly the non-Congress ones, held him responsible for ignoring Syed Mahmud because he was a Muslim. Remaining unperturbed, Rajendra Prasad however felt no regrets as he had done, he thought, the best of what he could have done in the given situation. To quote him:

Some people were annoyed at this and protested that, having made my choice, I canvassed for that man and enlisted the support of the representatives from the districts. It was not correct and even it were so, there was nothing wrong in it and I / woul(l not have hesitated to acknowledge it. The fact was that the consensus of opinion favoured the election of either / S.K.Sinha or AN .Sinha and, as the latter did not like to run for leadership, my choice fell on S.K.Sinha. I told them wanted to present the names of both of them being proposed. Eventually, only S.K.sinha was proposed for leadership and he was unanimously elected.”

However, a more sensitive and extremely disturbing allegation Rajendra Prasad had to bear was that he had ignored Syed Mahmud because the latter was a Muslim. This caused a considerable amount of bitterness among the Muslims, particularly among the non-Congress Muslims.

They launched a propaganda that Syed Mahmud had worked longer in all-India circles and was better known than Sri Krishna Sinha. To Rajendra Prasad this kind of charge was unimaginable, as these sorts of thoughts, did not occur to him even in his wildest of dreams. They even represented the matter to Maulana Azad, who in turn retorted to them that had he been in Rajendra Prasad's place, "perhaps his decision too would have been the same".

Reminiscing about this episode, almost a decade later, Rajendra Prasad wrote in his Autobiography: Looking at the whole affair in retrospect, even today I feel I committed no mistake in preferring Dr. Sinha to Dr. Mahmud but on such occasions when a person has to be chosen for a particular job in the interests of the nation, one man has to be singled out and that is all I did. I had a sense of satisfaction for having done the right thing and that is how I feel even today.

Rajendra Prasad successfully resolved the leadership in Bihar and the entire credit for this should go to his persuasive skills, coupled with his straightforwardness and politics of consensual approach to any problem. This in fact ensured unanimous election of Sri Krishna Sinha as the leader of the Congress Legislative Party in Bihar. Subsequently, when the Congress ministry was formed in Bihar under the leadership of Sri Krishna Sinha as premier among the erstwhile contenders, Anugrah Narain Sinha, Syed Mahmud and Ram Dayalu Sinha not only accepted Sri Krishna Sinha as the leader of the Bihar legislature party but also joined the cabinet as ministers. There were no differences of opinion as regards leadership issue in the U.P. and Madras. Just as Govind Ballabh Pant was the only person, the people of U.P. could think of, it was impossible to think in terms of a rival to C. Rajagopalachari in Madras. Bombay selected Balasaheb Kher?

The election was not so smooth in central Provinces and Orissa where a good deal of bickering, dissensions and group rivalries took place. Later, Congress Ministries were also formed in the North-Western Frontier province and Assam. Functioning of the Ministry and the Constraints of the Colonial Constitution The Congress had now launched itself on a novel path of experiment. It was committed to liquidate British rule and,

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instead, it had taken upon itself the charge , and that too, under a constitution which was framed by the British who had hoped to "destroy the effectiveness of Congress as an all India instrument of v revolution", by way of deceptive provincial Autonomy? The constitution also yielded only partial power to the Indians. This power too, moreover, could be taken away from the Indians whenever the British so desired. To quote Rajendra Prasad:

“The British government did not want to discard the constitution which it had framed after so much labour and on which it prided itself so much. It perhaps thought that Congressmen would not be able to resist the lure of office for long and if it succeeded in getting ministries formed of persons willing to work the constitution, it would be cause split in the Congress ranks and wean away some weak men from the party”.

The Congress was now required to function both as a Government in the provinces and as the opposition to the centre where the effective state power lay. "It was to bring about social reforms through the legislature and administration in the / provinces and at the same time carry on the struggle for independence and prepare the people for the next phase of mass struggle". To help coordinate and carry out the activities of the Congress Ministries according to the laid down principles of the Congress , therefore, a central control board, known as the Parliamentary Sub-Committee was formed which consisted of Rajendra Prasad, Sardar Patel and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as its members.

Whether the Congress should accept the office was the issue to be engaged with. Earlier Rajendra Prasad has thought it wise to leave the matter for the AICC to decide after the elections were over and the results known. But now the elections were over and results out so the matter needed to be resolved. The Congress had already raised objections to the Governor's special powers. The provinces were to be governed under a new system based on provincial autonomy. The elected ministers controlled all provincial departments but the Governors, appointed by the British Government retained special powers. They could veto legislative and administrative measures, especially those concerning minorities, the right of civil servants, law and order and British business interests. The

Governor also had power to take over and indefinitely run the administration of a province. Thus, both political and economic powers remained in the British hands.

That the acceptance of the office was conditional has already been made clear by the resolution adopted by the AICC. Rajendra Prasad had always argued, as discussed in the previous Unit, for an appropriate occasion that would have enabled the Congress to take a decision in this regard. Way back, in a letter to Nehru ~nDecember 1935, he had expressed his opinion :

“As it strikes me it is not right to put it as if it were a question of acceptance or non-acceptance of offices. So far as I can judge, no one wants to accept offices for their own sake. No one wants to work the constitution as the Government would like it to be worked. The question for us are altogether different. What are we to do with this constitution? Are we to ignore it altogether and go our way? Is it possible to do so? Are we to capture it and use it as we would like to use it and to the extent it lends itself to be used in that way It is not a question to be answered a priori on the basis of pre-conceived notions of a so called pro-changer or no-changer, cooperator or obscurantist.

However, the Congress remained firm in its stand and did not succumb to the temptations of office as the British had visualized. On Gandhiji's advice the AICC subsequently, in March 1937, took a decision that it would not assume responsibility unless the Governors had given assurances to the effect that they would not exercise those special powers. The leaders of the Congress legislators, therefore, insisted on such assurances to which the Governors refused, on the ground that they had no authority for nullifying the constitution in that manner. The issue of formation of the Congress ministries, consequently, remained in abeyance and the stalemate continued. The Government had, however, no intentions of discarding the constitution on which, though Rajendra Prasad, it prided itself so much. The governors subsequently proceeded, in the six provinces where the Congress was in absolute majority, to form interim ministries that could have functioned for a maximum period of six months without going to the legislatures. The government

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thought and hoped that they might be able to cause split in the Congress ranks and wean away some weak men. Subsequently, in Bihar, the Governor called Muhammad Yunus, the elected leader of the independent Muslim Party's legislature group and the latter formed an interim ministry, which was "just a farce", in the words of Rajendra Prasad, "to show people that the constitution was being worked". On the day, the Yunus ministry was sworn in, hostile demonstrations, led by Jayprakash Narayan, were held in Patna. Jayprakash Narayan was arrested and sentenced to imprisonment but was released by Yunus before the completion of the term.

The Government dreams of breaking the Congress, however, did not materialize with swearing in of this puppet ministry. However, Yunus tried to play his cards but he did not succeed in his efforts to persuade even a single Congressman to walk in to his cabinet.

During the period of constitutional deadlock, which continued for three months, Rajendra Prasad decided to engage himself in carrying out constructive activities and disseminating Congress point of view to the masses at large. The Bihar Provincial Congress Committee organized celebration of National Week from six to 13 April 1937 in various places of Bihar. It was marked by sale of khadi, enrolment of Congress volunteers and holding of meetings. In the first week of May 1937 Rajendra Prasad addressed the Gaya District Political Conference, which was held Gaya where he largely concerned himself with dealing with the constitutional issues the Congress was engaged with. This political conference also adopted one very important resolution recommending the abolition of Zamindari, which until now the Congress had not taken up in its programme. Rajendra Prasad also visited Champaran and addressed there the Champaran District Political Conference at Dharka where one very fascinating thing happened.

On his exhortation, some people decided to devote themselves to further the constructive programme of the Congress. Among these, there was person, Ram Lakhan Singh from Chatauna (Darbhanga), who was an old nationalist worker. He had been deeply influenced by Mahatma Gandhi ever since his visit in 1920. Now under the influence of Rajendra Prasad,

he was impressed so much that he decided to establish a Gram Seva Ashram at Angarghat, east of Samastipur, which became an important centre of/ constructive activities.

Rajendra Prasad wanted the mass contact programme of Congress to be taken up by the people. He was also quite eager to spread the message of the Congress constructive programme. Accordingly, a National Educational Conference was . ' organized at the Sadaqat Ashram, at Patna from five to 7 May 1937. He along with others present there decided to start a number of National Schools, both of the Middle and Secondary standards, under the auspices of Bihar Vidyapith. The Government, however, did not allow the stalemate to continue for long. The interim ministries had functioned for three months when His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, made a statement on 21 June 1937, in which he indirectly mentioned that the Governors would possess the special powers but these, would not be used normally.

Viceroy's statement brought an end to the constitutional deadlock which had continued for three months. This assurance on the part of the Government was acceptable to the Congress. The Congress Working Committee, therefore met at Wardha, on 8 July 1937 and decided that "Congressmen be permitted to accept office when they are invited thereto", provided they agreed to work "in accordance with the lines laid down in the Congress election manifesto and to further in every possible way the Congress policy of combating the new Act on the one hand and of prosecuting the constructive programme on the other".

Gandhiji also explained the meaning of office acceptance in Harijan on 7 August 1937: "These offices have to be held lightly, not tightly. They are or should be crowns of thorns, never of renown. Offices have taken in order to see if they enable us to quicken the pace at which we are moving towards our goal." Earlier he had also advised Congressmen to use the Act of 1935 "in a manner not expected by them (the British) and by refraining from using it in the way intended by them.

The Problem of Composition of the Ministry

The Congress was able to get its point of view accepted by the Government. Anticipating the development to take place soon, a

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meeting of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee was held to consider the question of the personnel of the Congress cabinet. The Governor consequently invited Sri Krishna Sinha, the leader of the Congress legislature to form the Government. Rajendra Prasad learnt this while returning after the meeting of the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee held at Masarak, a place in erstwhile Saran district. Rajendra Prasad took upon again, on himself the task of facilitating a smooth formation of the Congress ministry in Bihar, which was, in his own words, "a knotty problem". "The problem of selecting ministers presented limitless difficulties". Rajendra Prasad thought that the number of ministers should not be more than the number of the members of the Governor's Executive Council. He had criticized other Provinces where Congress ministries had been formed and the number of ministers was larger than that of the earlier Executive Councils in order to avoid possible bickering we thought of limiting the cabinet to four.

Another contentious issue, he came across, was regarding giving representation to the depressed classes in the Bihar cabinet. Rajendra Prasad held the opinion "that one of the ministers should be a Harijan". The Bihar Provincial Congress Committee concurred with the idea. However, there were two contenders, Jagjiwan Ram and Jagla! Choudhary for the post. Jagjiwan Ram had risen above the temptation of office and refused Yunus's offer to him for a ministerial portfolio. He also enjoyed support and backing of the "the depressed classes party". Jagla! Choudhary, "equally prominent Congressman", who had responded to the call of the Congress since 1920, given up his studies in the final year of the Calcutta Medical College and "had been devoting himself solely to the Congress constructive work".

Rajendra Prasad conveyed his concurrence and the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee decided to name Jaglal Choudhary as a minister and Jagjiwan Ram as a Parliamentary Secretary. Possible larger rancor and bickering could thus got avoided in the larger interest. Rajendra Prasad had again resolved the issue in his typical manner of consensual approach, which, however, was neither always successful in the long term nor acceptable to everyone. For time being, alone it sorted out the problem and hat too superficially.

A number of M.L.As of depressed classes later resented the inclusion of Jaglal Choudhary into the ministry, at the cost of Jagjiwan Ram. Rajendra Prasad had, indeed, a hard time in managing the formation of ministry and then selecting the ministers. He was again facing with the issue of representation of Chhotanagpur in the Bihar Ministry. Ramnarain Singh, a Congressman and a member of the Central Legislative Assembly, charged him for ignoring Chhotanagpur. He argued that Chhotanagpur was a backward area and that the Congress had not given proper attention to its development. He also brought this issue to Rajendra Prasad, and in order to put forth his argument he said that Rajendra Prasad had not cared to stay for a considerable period in Chhotanagpur. Rajendra Prasad dismissed the matter in lighter vein: "I retorted light heartedly that during the last 20 years or so, at no other place had I lived for as long as in Chhotanagpur, because it was in Hazaribagh Jail that I served my sentences.'

Rajendra Prasad, nevertheless, felt wretched. Freedom movement, for him, did not allow any liberty for furthering self-interests. The conceding of this demand would have brought Ramnarain Singh himself in the Bihar Cabinet and causing his subsequent resignation from the Central Assembly and then his election to the Bihar Assembly within six months after a sitting member had made way for him. In his opinion, this would have also incurred the displeasure of the Chhotanagpur M.L.As who would have taken it as a slur on themselves. Rajendra Prasad, therefore, did not compromise on the issue in favour of Ramnarain Singh, and consequently leaving him in bitterness and in quandary.

On 20 July 1937, the Congress ministry in Bihar was sworn in under premiership of Sri Krishna Sinha. The others included in the ministry were Anugrah Narain Sinha, Syed Mahmud and Jaglal Choudhary. Ram Dayalu Singh and Abdul Bari became Speaker and Deputy Speaker respectively. The formation of ministry in Bihar was welcomed in almost all the quarters and celebrations held all over Bihar.⁴⁶ These were marked by flag hoisting, processions and meetings. In addition, National Flags were hoisted on a large number of school buildings, including Government Zila Schools and on buildings under the control of the local bodies. The Congress had been able to form ministries in eight out of the

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eleven provinces. In five provinces, the Congress had absolute majority and formation of the ministry had posed no difficulty. In Bombay, the Congress with the help of other nationalist groups secured a majority. Similarly, in the Frontier Province and Assam the Congress parties joined the nationalists groups to form the ministries.

However, in the Punjab, Sind and Bengal it remained in minority and could not form the Government. The Immediate Tasks of the Ministry Rajendra Prasad after the formation of the ministry in Bihar took upon himself the arduous and difficult responsibility of a philosopher and guide. Accordingly, he "advised all the ministers to live near each other, failing which to meet everyday for mutual consultations". He felt that "they should regularly apprise each other of the / working of their departments so that every minister would know about all the departments and they would be able to work as a team". This was necessary because, he felt that "when an important decision was taken they could discuss the matter jointly to be able to pool the fact and experience".

Elsewhere in the provinces, where the Congress had secured absolute majority and was in position to form the government the process of formation of the ministries was not quite smooth. The prospect of power and offices had proved to be quite tempting and the occasion demanded a firm, principled and tactful handling. Orissa was such a province where the situation had snowballed into such an impasse. Pandit Nilkantha Das, a veteran and "foremost Congressman", had "impressed to some of his friends his desire to be elected leader of the Legislature Party". "Nilakantha Das, thus, aspired to be Chief Minister as he felt that his position and status in the province fully fitted him for that office'. However, the members of the Provincial Assembly did not favour this idea on the ground that "when the Governor invited a Congressman to form a ministry it would be a member of the Assembly that he would call and not an outsider.

The Congress Parliamentary Board, faced with these problems, entrusted Rajendra Prasad, who was also a member of the Congress Parliamentary Board, to deal with the situation. Consequently, Rajendra Prasad went to Orissa to familiarize himself about the situation. He became quite

sympathetic to Nilakantha Das who had, in his own words, "worked tirelessly during the provincial elections and could claim some credit for the Congress success". But the real problem, in his opinion, was before the new Congress M.L.A.S, who did not want to elect as leader a person who was not a member of the Assembly". Rajendra Prasad had faced a rather similar problem in Bihar after he had successfully ensured the formation of Sri Krishna Sinha ministry there.

There he had not allowed Ramnarain Singh to join the Bihar cabinet because he was not a member of the Bihar Legislative Assembly and was a member of the Central Assembly. He decided, therefore, to settle the leadership issue of Orissa, along that line only, which favoured a member of the provincial legislature. Accordingly, on his suggestion Congress Parliamentary Board decided that the leader of the legislature party should be a member of the Assembly.

Another problem Rajendra Prasad tried to resolve in Orissa was the issue of giving representation to a Muslim in the Orissa ministry. It was a very complicated problem because the number of Muslim members in the Assembly was very small. There was a non-Congress Muslim minister in the erstwhile Interim ministry. But as of now there was no Congress Muslim M.L.A. "Such of those Muslims", in the words of Rajendra Prasad, "as were able and could have been eligible for the post of minister were not elected on the Congress ticket and were unwilling now to join the Congress". Rajendra Prasad could not resolve the problem and left Orissa with a sense of despondency. His predicament was more than obvious when he stated that in spite of his best efforts he " did not succeed and leaving the vacancy to be filled later in consultation with Maulana Azad," and he left Orissa.

Rajendra Prasad's inability in resolving the problem of inclusion of a Muslim member in the Orissa ministry was not an isolated phenomenon, as regards similar developments elsewhere, especially in U .P. The Congress in Uttar Pradesh, where it was in absolute majority, had as well to reckon with this problem. Except for Rafi Ahmed Kdwai, all the other Muslims were there elected as independents. A few of them were sympathizers of the Congress and, therefore, were willing to arrive at

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some sort of settlement with it. This was, however, not acceptable to some prominent Congressmen there. Finally, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, and an independent Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim were included in the Uttar Pradesh Congress ministry. /"

Mohammed Ibrahim subsequently resigned his seat to be re-elected as a Congress candidate. A larger issue involved here was whether the Congress could have allowed the independent Muslims M.L.A.S, who did not subscribe to the Congress programme and ideology, to join the ministries and work out some sort of a coalition government. It has been argued that this would have resulted in strengthening the Muslim mass base of the Congress. However, in Rajendra Prasad's understanding, the situation did not demand this understanding as the Muslim League had not yet acquired any great prestige and popularity at this stage. He was, therefore, thoroughly against any such.

He further justified his argument with reference to the resignation of the Congress ministries later on:

“Resignation from office was a great weapon with the Congress, which was as constitutional as it was effective in bringing the Governors round in case of differences. Had the Congress included any non-Congressmen in the cabinet without their signing the Congress pledge, it would have found it difficult to wield this weapon of resignation. “

He was opposed to this idea on other grounds as well:

“Then there is the principle of joint responsibility. It is considered essential that all ministers should belong to one party, unless it be that the party position is such that a coalition cabinet has to be formed, so that they might carry on the administration jointly and not pursue independent and contradictory policies.” The entire processes of negotiations and yielding concessions had considerably caused bitterness in the mind of Rajendra Prasad. He regarded the efforts of so groups, especially the Muslim League, tantamount to negating the British system of parliamentary democracy to which the Congress was 'wedded' to. "I do not think", he thought, "the idea that India should have a system of Government other than democratic crossed any one's mind unless it be that of Muslim Leaguers".

He further expressed his anger that it was the Muslim League "which expressed the view on one or two occasions that India as a whole should not have full democracy". Rajendra Prasad's attention was subsequently, drawn towards the developments of North-West Frontier provinces. The Congress has not secured a majority there and a ministry of the No-Party Muslims had been formed. After the Congress had come to power in six provinces, the interim ministry was defeated in Assembly. Rajendra Prasad along with Maulana Azad was given the responsibility by the Congress Parliamentary Board to look in to the affairs. Consequently, he went there to help the Congress group form a government. Soon a Congress led government under the leadership of Dr. Khan Saheb was formed.

The formation of the ministries changed the entire psychological atmosphere in the country. An exciting atmosphere prevailed everywhere. People felt as if they were breathing the very air of victory and people's power. The Congress ministries were aware of the people's expectations that it was a great achievement. Khadi clad men and women who had been in prison until other day were now ruling in the secretariat and the officials who were used to putting the Congressmen in jail were now taking orders from them. Indeed the Congress ministries had now a dual responsibility to carry out. The struggle for independence had to be continued and they had to use their power in the legislature to improve administration and to carryout socio-economic reforms as promised in the election manifesto. Though Rajendra Prasad was not personally in the ministry yet the responsibility of assisting them, particularly the Bihar ministry, devolved upon him.

They sought his advice on all the important matters of policy. The manner, in which he guided the Bihar ministry in carrying out its land legislation, was typical of his ~ consensual approach and method of working. The Bihar ministry, though constrained by various factors, carried out several measures for the amelioration of the suffering masses. It repatriated the political prisoners from Andaman Nicobar Islands to Hazaribagh central jail observed 30 January 1938 as political prisoners' day and demanded the release of all political prisoners. Subsequently on

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the refusal of the governor to release the political prisoners, the Bihar ministry tendered its resignation on 26 February 1938.

The Haripura Session of the Congress, held between 19 and 21 February 1938, approved the action of the Bihar ministry. The ministry withdrew its resignation on 26 February only after the governor had yielded to its demand of releasing the political prisoners. The government finally released the political prisoners on 12 March 1938 and this in turn, no doubt, increased the prestige and credibility of the Congress in Bihar.

These apart the Bihar ministry undertook other measures like extension of civil liberties, removal of ban from all associations, and lifting restrictions on the Newspapers. Three committees were set up, one to enquire into the causes and extent of corruption in the public service of the province, another to enquire into the administration of the Santhal Parganas, and the third committee to enquire into and report on conditions of life and work of labourers. It also started new Wardha Training School at Patna for training of Wardha system of teachers, the mass literacy campaign and additional facilities for the training of woman teachers. It further encouraged the co-operative movement and the co-operative bank was encouraged to expand its activities in villages. Cottage industries were encouraged in rural areas.

It also appointed a Labour Enquiry Commission with Rajendra Prasad as chairman and Abdul Bari, Radha Kamal Mukherjee, Jagat Narayan Lal and H.B. Chandra as members and R.K. Saran as Secretary on 17 March 1938. Agrarian Legislation However, one of the most important measures the Bihar ministry undertook was the legislation of Bihar Tenancy (Amendment) Act, which sought to provide relief to the tenants of Bihar from the hardships they had to bear under an iniquitous system of land tenure. Rajendra Prasad played a very crucial role in enactment of this legislation. He was convinced from the very beginning that the tenure of the ministries may not prolong for a long time and hence whatever had to be done should be undertaken on an urgent basis. He, therefore, laid stress on the necessity of working out an amicable settlement between the representatives of the Zamindars and those of the Kisans:

“When the Congress took over the reins knowing that tenancy reform was bound to come and thinking that it would be better to have the question settled amicably, zamindars representatives, on their own initiative, approached the Ministry and offered their help and cooperation in instituting tenancy laws to ameliorate the lot of the kisans and suggested negotiations. The Ministry welcomed the idea, and I agreed with it, as a settlement between the zamindars and the kisans would facilitate early legislation. With the overwhelming strength of the Congress in the Assembly, it would be no doubt beyond the power of the zamindars to prevent an ameliorative measure but they could certainly resort to dilatory tactics and delay the successful operation of the Act. “

Rajendra Prasad was also aware about the other constraints that might hinder the proposed agrarian legislation. Landlords, being rich and resourceful, were capable of organizing themselves against any legislation by the Congress ministry. On the other hand, the cultivators were incapable of any joint and concerted action on their behalf. Further, the Congress had pledged to demonstrate that the new constitution was unworkable.

It was likely that after working for sometime, the ministries might have to leave the offices. He was convinced, therefore, that an amicable solution of the problem had to be found out soon so that the peasants were benefited. As Rajendra Prasad was not keeping well and without him the talks could have been an exercise in futility the different parties, the leaders of zamindars, the kisans and the government agreed to hold it at Sadaqat ashram only. "I was not quite well and my friends spared me the inconvenience of going elsewhere". However the best course would have been, he thought, that the Kisans and the Zamindars themselves would have settled the matter: Though we understood the problems of the kisans, who had always supported the Congress and reposed faith in it, and wanted to help in their solution, we would have liked it better if the kisans and zamindars had agreed to meet and decide for themselves. Rajendra Prasad was highly sympathetic towards kisans and was very concerned to protect their interests. He also wanted to keep their awakening alive so that Congress was not weakened and they were saved them from any possible repression, which might have been let loose in

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the eventuality of no settlement being made. He expressed his apprehensions in his letter to Jawaharlal Nehru:-

“ I do not think the kisan sabha has instigated the tenants to loot but there is no doubt the situation is largely due to the general awakening among the kisans and the anti-zamindar feeling which prevails. I do not think the kisans are organized enough to withstand repression which may follow and they may become demoralized ... ! am anxious that the awakening among the tenants should not be allowed to die down under the repression which is bound to come and which has commenced. I am equally anxious that the Congress organization should not be allowed to break down as is likely if we do not intervene and bring about a settlement. “

A settlement is becoming more and more difficult after the intervention of the police and more and more complications are bound to arise. In law the tenants will have no case, and are not resourceful enough even to fight it out in courts. The Zamindars, on their part, were also not free from apprehensions regarding the proposed tenancy legislation. They had viewed it with serious doubts and had not much confidence regarding the intentions of the Congress ministry. They were, ~ therefore, in Rajendra Prasad's opinion, determined to protect "their legitimate and just rights"

Congress leaders had started holding meetings of representatives of different classes. In one such meeting at Samiya, which was attended by the representatives of landlords and big kastkars of the locality, Congressmen and kisan Sabhaites and the local Congress leaders tried to impress upon them that the view points of the Congress ministry was "entirely based upon the policy of general good of the province."

They also declared that the Congress "had no ill will and hatred against zamindars and big kastkars". They further advised the Zamindars to "win the confidence of the tenants" and take measures to "ameliorate the conditions of the peasantry"

The Zamindars also, Rajendra Prasad was confident, were "sympathetic" to the tenants' demands despite their suspicions and reservations against the Congress ministry. Not interested in tussle with the peasantry or the Congress they favoured the idea of a satisfactory reconciliation of the

agrarian problem of Bihar. The Central Zamindars Association, in a letter addressed to Rajendra Prasad, wrote that they were "anxious to remove the real grievances of the tenants" if there were any and to do their "best for improving the condition of the agriculturists and the agriculture." In the same letter they complained also drew his attention towards behavior of "many responsible persons of the Congress Committee" delivering "inflammatory and irresponsible speeches in the kisan meetings and in the meetings organized by the Congress."

Check your progress –

1. From which parties Nehru and Rajendra Prasad represented?

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2. Which party represented Muslims?

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6.3 LETS SUM UP

After the end of the Civil Disobedience Movement in May 1934, Congress decided to launch a programme to bring about constitutional changes. In the meanwhile the Parliament passed the Government of India Act, 1935, making a provision for an all-India federation and provincial autonomy.

The federal part of the Act was never introduced but provincial autonomy came into operation from 1937. Though new constitutional reforms fell far short of India's national aspirations. Congress decided to contest the elections to the assemblies in the provinces under the new Act of 1935. In the elections, Congress obtained an overwhelming majority in most of the provinces.

The Muslim League fared badly even in provinces predominantly inhabited by Muslims. After a deadlock over the question of the exercise

of the special powers of interference by the Governor of a province and clarification of the position by the Viceroy, Congress decided to work in the provinces.

6.4 KEYWORDS

Muslim League, Nehru, Jinnah Congress Party

6.5 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss the functions of the Congress Ministers.
2. Discuss the functions of the Muslim League Ministers.

6.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

Indian National Movement by Bipan Chandra

India's Struggle for Independence from 1857 to 1947 by Bipan Chandra

6.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Hint – 6.2
2. Hint – 6.2

UNIT 7 BIRTH OF MUSLIM LEAGUE – GROWTH AND ACTIVITIES AND DEMAND FOR PAKISTAN

STRUCTURE

7.0 Objective'

7.1 Introduction

7.2 Muslim League and Pakistan

7.3 Lets Sum Up

7.4 Keywords

7.5 Questions For Review

7.6 Suggested Readings

7.7 Answers To Check Your Progress

7.0 OBJECTIVE'

To learn about the birth of Muslim League

To learn about the birth of Pakistan

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Since the onset of the Second World War on September 3/ 1939, the Congress grew more persistent in the pursuit of its aim of India's independence. On the other hand, the Muslim League became more keen for its recognition as the representative body of Muslims and acceptance of Muslims as a separate nation as also a separate State in the north-western and eastern zones of India, The league was to render all possible help in the prosecution of the war, if the Government assured to accept these demands. The British Government realized that whereas the Congress demand had the immediate consequence of departure of the British from India the League's demand not only had no effect on the then policies of the British Government but also contained a potential prospect of blunting the very edge of the national movement.

7.2 MUSLIM LEAGUE AND PAKISTAN

The Muslim League story from 1937 onwards is quite hazy. All that is generally held and documented is that stung by the Congress refusal to accommodate two Leaguers in the UP ministry, Muslim League party launched a massive offensive against the Congress government, successfully generated a fear psychosis among Muslims about their fate in a 'Hindu' state and reaped a rich harvest by becoming a mass organization by 1939. The partition, it is argued, was a logical consequence of this phenomenon.

That the process of Muslim League becoming a mass organization could not possibly have been so smooth, without its own problems and complexities and entirely determined by what happened in 1937, is proposed to be demonstrated in this

Presumably many of them would have migrated to Pakistan after 1947. There exist very few authoritative works on Muslim League focusing on the organization, its composition, different strands within it, and its political ideological development. Regional case studies are even more scarce. The all India, homogenous character of Muslim League, devoid of any regional variations, has been readily assumed, even though not stated explicitly. For a good account of the public activities of Muslim League, British government records, League's official publications and newspapers provide useful data. But a more comprehensive study of the organization must await the unearthing of more material.

Two other important sources of information on Muslim League are biographies of Jinnah,⁵ and general works on communal politics. Given the Jinnah centred focus of the studies on the League, he occupies as important a place in the works on Muslim League as League does in his biographies. This is also indicative of the role that he played, or is assumed to have played, in the political development of Muslim League. The narratives on communal politics also provide a comprehensive coverage of the League activities. Muslim League story in UP for the 1930s has to be extrapolated from these diverse sources.

Crisis

If Jinnah was hoping that the immediate post-election period was going to be one of consolidation for Muslim League in UP, he would certainly have been disappointed. In spite of having done well at the polls in UP, the League party found itself facing the grim prospects of divisions in its own ranks and being dismissed by British government and Congress. Instead of bringing about any consolidation, the post-election developments were to witness a phase of crisis for Muslim League in UP which was to last through the year.

As has been pointed out earlier, the political existence of League depended, at this stage, largely upon being granted the status - both by British government and Congress - of an organization representative of Indian Muslims. This acknowledgment was particularly crucial for League because such a status did not flow from the election results and could therefore not be assumed. In other words, in spite of performing well at the polls in UP, there was nothing in the election results at the all India level which even remotely imparted the much needed and desperately sought position to Muslim League. Unfortunately for League, this acknowledgment did not come about immediately after the elections. Haig did not make League's participation a pre-condition for ministry formation.

This amounted to an official acknowledgment of Congress's capacity to represent Muslims and thereby fulfilling the constitutional obligation of 'adequate minority representation' provided in the instrument of instructions in the Act. The British, needless to say, did not do it out of any love for Congress. Faced with the grim possibility of the constitution not taking off the ground, Haig would have been too relieved to see Congressmen willing to enter office. He would not want to do anything to delay or jeopardize the prospects of the formation of the Congress ministry by questioning Congress's credentials in providing the 'Muslim' component to the ministry. During the elections Muslim League had not been the government's favoured party-that position belonged to NAPs.

Linlithgow had been apprehensive of League's capacity to whip up communal frenzy. About Jinnah also, there was general apprehension and distrust in the British government around 1937. Haig, on his part,

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saw no reason to elevate Muslim League to the status of the spokesman of the Muslims- Jinnah's ultimate objective. So, if the British government did not bestow upon League the status of a representative Muslim organization, which it did not at this stage, and if Congress also did not concede the same, which it did not and could not without surrendering its claim to be a secular organization representing all Indians irrespective of religion, caste and province, there was little League could do to save itself from political oblivion.

This was not all. The crisis of league was not confined only to the indifference shown to it by the other principal actors in the political arena. The opposition by the Shia Political Conference and the formation, in Lucknow, of Azad Muslim League in opposition to All India Muslim League tended to suggest that not all Muslims of UP, at this stage, showed an inclination to rally behind Muslim League. The weekly note of the UP Intelligence reported that Azad Muslim League, formed with the objective of countering Muslim League and expressing solidarity with Congress, seemed to be gaining influence among poor Muslims of UP. Upon Jinnah's arrival in Lucknow for the annual session of Muslim League, Azad Muslim League staged a black flag demonstration of about fifty people. This led to a minor clash between the followers of the two Leagues. Desertion to Congress by Muslim Leaguers such as Suleman Ansari and Saiduddin Khan added to the crisis of Muslim League in UP.

That Jinnah's dictates would not be followed blindly by some UP Leaguers became clear when seven members of Muslim League Parliamentary Board requested Jinnah to respond favourably to the offer made by Rajendra Prasad to renew talks with Jinnah held earlier in 1935. Pressures to arrive at a settlement with Congress also came from outside the province. M.A.H. Ispahani, the businessman and a Muslim Leaguer from Bengal close to Jinnah, requested him to give "best consideration" to Rajendra Prasad formula and impressed upon Jinnah that "I will certainly welcome a settlement that is honourable and dignified."

Jinnah's response was, however, evasive. Pressure kept mounting on Jinnah, accompanied by threats of resignations} Jinnah's plight had been

compounded by a loss of prestige on account of his alleged use of Quran and cries of 'Islam in danger' during Jhansi bye-election. It was felt that he no longer retained his earlier nationalist approach and that he had started moving towards extreme communalism. This meant a loss of some liberal support that Jinnah had enjoyed so far.

The media also increasingly became critical of him. Perhaps the biggest blow that struck the UP League was a comprehensive defeat at the Bijnor-Garhwal bye-election. For the Muslim rural constituency of Bijnor and Garhwal in Rohilkhand and Kumaun divisions, respectively, Hafiz Mohammad Ibrahim, the then Muslim League candidate, had been elected unopposed. Subsequently he resigned from League to join Congress and was made a minister in the Congress government. Since then he had been the main target of attack by Muslim League. Maulana Hasrat Mohani, in a speech, accused Hafiz Ibrahim of being a party to the prohibition of cow slaughter.

In the face of fierce opposition by Muslim League, Hafiz Ibrahim resigned his seat and decided to seek re-election from the same constituency, this time on a Congress ticket. The Bijnor bye-election, because of its nature, became a trial of strength between the two parties. Supporters of League and Congress often clashed with each other during the election campaign. A bomb was thrown at a Congress procession canvassing for Hafiz Ibrahim.

Green flags were unfurled and religious appeals were made by both the sides. Non-Muslims also addressed the gatherings from the Congress side. Local leaders like Pandit Anusuya Prasad, provincial leaders like Mohan Lal Saksena and all India leaders like Nehru gave their active support in what had become the real test of popularity among Muslims.

From Muslim League side Jinnah made passionate appeals for Muslim unity. The degree of hostility displayed towards each other during the election campaign was unprecedented. A Congress worker was stabbed by a Muslim Leaguer. Disturbed by this deterioration in public standards, Nehru complained of the stabbing to Nawab Ismail Khan, a known anti-imperialist and a Congress sympathizer within Muslim

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League. Ismail Khan replied that "the (League) volunteer in question had sufficient provocation to justify the act."

In their election speeches Muslim Leaguers emphasized that Congress wanted to suppress and eliminate Urdu, would stop tazia processions from being taken out, would forcibly stop cow slaughter, and would force Muslims to wear dhotis instead of pyjamas. They also levelled charges against Congressmen of bribing the Ulema. Shaukat Ali was reported to have said in one of his election speeches that local officials like Tahsildars and Patwaris and influential Hindu landlords (who were not Congressmen) were not only campaigning for the Congress candidate but also threatening Muslim peasants to vote for Congress.

Nehru complained that he was accused of snatching and tearing off a flag bearing Allah-0-Akbar on it in Najibabad town in district Bijnor. Congressmen did not lag behind. The intelligence report noted an increase in "rowdyism by some Congress workers" during the election campaign. A Muslim League meeting in the town of Najibabad ended in chaos while in Bijnor a League meeting was disrupted by Congressmen who threw stones at the dais and did not allow anyone to speak. Ismail Khan complained to Nehru that Ahrar leaders made passionate religious speeches verging on "obscenity and vulgarity."

According to the Star of .Irulli!, a pro-Muslim League paper, cries of "Allah-0-Akbar" were heard at the Congress election meetings; Congress volunteers wore green clothes and inscribed Allah-0-Akbar on the tri-colour flag. The results were a shattering blow to Muslim League. Hafiz Ibrahim, the Congress candidate, won the election getting 77.57% of the votes as against a mere 22.43% by his Muslim League rival, Maulvi Abdus Sami. Muslim Leaguers put down the Congress victory to the use of religious symbols and the efforts of the Jamaitul-Ulema-i-Hind, branded by Leaguers as "a band of unscrupulous and irreligious rogues."

Jinnah acknowledged the demoralization that had set in the UP League: "The United Provinces has its difficulties because they (Muslims) have not got a band of leaders who could work together and keep up sustained efforts and unfortunately there is not a single man of outstanding

position there who could command the respect and the confidence of the people generally. Anyhow this movement will throw up men and United Provinces will soon come into its own. There is nothing to despair. Loss of one or two elections is not going to make the slightest difference. It seems a temporary disappointment and we cannot always win."

The Bijnor-Garhwal election was a significant one not only because it led to further deterioration in the Congress-League relationship but also because it crystallized and reinforced the prejudices held by the leaders of the two organizations against each other. Nawab Ismail Khan was convinced that a lot of the political hooliganism in evidence was a product of the "advent of democracy" that had been "let loose" in the country as a result of Congress accepting office. What made this democracy even more dangerous was the fact that Congress had chosen to grab power all by itself and used their majority status in the legislatures to treat Muslim League with utter contempt. This, along with the anti-League propaganda carried on even by non-Congress Hindus, had, according to Ismail Khan, convinced Muslims that the Congress government "virtually means a Hindu Government."

Ismail Khan informed Nehru: "The patience of the Mussalmans is well-nigh exhausted and if they, therefore, hit back, it may be occasionally below the belt. You should not feel greatly horrified." This was how he sought to explain the Muslim League aggression displayed during and after the elections. Nehru found it inexplicable that Congress and Muslim League, essentially political rivals, should be seen and treated as representing Hindus and Muslims, respectively. Communal propaganda and activities created an atmosphere which was detrimental to the growth of healthy politics. "This seems to me a great disservice to any community and to the nation for progress comes through the development of a political mentality in a group. Nationalism is obviously a higher ideal than communalism in so far as politics is concerned." (emphasis added) Bijnor-Garhwal election is also important in so much as it closed certain channels of communication which had existed between Nehru and those League leaders who had previously been sympathetic to Congress.

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Nehru's admiration for Ismail Khan's nationalism and latter's "profound respect" for Nehru's "sincerity of purpose and honesty of profession" had prompted them to write to each other to explore the areas of differences and remove misunderstandings. At the end of the correspondence they discovered that as leaders of the two organizations they had very little in common. The differences between Muslim League and Congress were not based on any political misunderstanding, but on their past record, different ideological approaches and perceptions of politics and indeed very different political trajectories charted out for the future. Episodic commonalities could not wish away these aspects. Muslim League was a growing organization and had changed very rapidly from 1934 onwards. It was not (as some of the Congressmen may have imagined) drifting involuntarily but marching very consciously towards extreme communalism. Nehru's reference to nationalism obviously being a higher ideal than communalism would have made little sense to League leadership. To return to Bijnor election, apart from the election defeat, Muslim League leadership was also encountering problems in setting up branches.

It was reported that the efforts to organize branches of Muslim League in Jhansi district met considerable opposition from local Muslims. The Leader was convinced that a "definite rupture" in UP League was imminent. It also reported that for the Bulandshahar bye-election, to be held in December, League was not able to organize regular election work as most of their supporters had "deserted the field by joining the Congress." If any further proof of a disintegrating League was needed, it was provided in Meerut where the district conference of the Jamaitul-Ulema-i-Hind, held on 30 October, was attended by 4000 Muslims. Muslim League meeting, held the next day, attracted only 200 to 300 Muslims. In what could be termed as the first round of the battle between Congress and Muslim League, the former had clearly emerged as the winner.

The end of 1937 began to offer glimpses of the possible consolidation of Muslim League in UP. To be more precise it was the Lucknow session of Muslim League held in October 1937 that initiated a phase of political strengthening for League, even though there were significant overlaps

between the phases of crises and of consolidation. The Lucknow session was a landmark in Muslim League politics because it facilitated a coming together of different groups within Muslim League and diverse strands in Muslim communal politics under the umbrella of Muslim League. It was also at the Lucknow session that the agenda of the League was articulated fairly sharply. The session was referred to as the "opening of another glorious Unit of Muslim history in India" by *Star of India*, a newspaper from Calcutta which functioned as a spokesman of 'Muslim viewpoint' in politics.

Haig called it a declaration of war against Congress and the *Pioneer* accused Jinnah of leading his community back to the barren fields of isolation. There was much about the Lucknow session which signified a definite consolidation for Muslim League. In a nutshell it was at the Lucknow session that League took a decisive leap forward in two directions - anti-imperialism and anti-Congressism. The two strands were linked together through communalism, that is to say, both were motivated and fostered essentially by communalism. This meant that the Lucknow session set in motion the process of Muslim League transforming itself into a definite, uncompromising, communal organization. All these were to have implications in the years to follow.

Overcoming Dissensions This consolidation occurred at many levels. First, there was a tiding over of internal dissensions. As has been pointed out earlier, in spite of the best efforts of Jinnah to achieve unity in the ranks, Muslim League remained divided among broadly three strands which could be identified as loyalist, exclusivist and anti-imperialist. Although the three had agreed to come together under the League umbrella, each refused to merge its identity into the other. Each strand was also working towards transforming Muslim League in its own direction. The loyalists, mainly landlords, some of whom (like Chhatari and Yusuf) had temporarily abandoned Muslim League before the elections and had received a setback afterwards, were now trying to explore ways of either returning to the League fold or trying to forge ties with it.

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The exclusivists, or the followers of Jinnah (like Zahirul Husnain Lari) were trying to push Muslim League ahead as a communal organization without coming close either to Congress or British government, wanting to remain more or less equidistant from both. The third group - anti-imperialists - consisted of Congress sympathizers such as Wazir Hasan, Suleman Ansari, Ali Zaheer, Khaliquzzaman and Nawab Ismail Khan on the one hand and anti-Congress Leaguers like Shaukat Ali and Maulana Hasrat Mohani on the other. They were also called the 'left wingers' within Muslim League. This strand had expressed dissatisfaction with the slogan of 'full responsible government' and had favoured the adoption of a sharper and more unambiguous expression of anti-imperialism. Some of them also worked towards cooperation with Congress.

When that did not come about, most of Congress sympathizers - except Khaliquzzaman and Ismail Khan - joined Congress, thereby weakening this strand within Muslim League. Jinnah had resisted the change in the creed of Muslim League, but Lucknow provided an opportunity for the convergence of these various strands. Creed of League was, therefore, changed to 'full independence' at the Lucknow session. This must have pleased those desirous of independence. Moving the resolution, Hasrat Mohani explained that the new creed of Muslim League was 'full independence' and not 'complete independence' (as in the Congress resolution at Lahore in 1929) because "its interpretation by the Congress had made it meaningless." They contained a clause regarding safeguarding the rights and 'interests' of Muslims.

This, explained Hasrat Mohani, had been done to satisfy the moderates. It was for the same reason that there had been no reference to the severance of the British connection. "It was possible within the terms of the resolution to remain within the British fold, if necessary." Anti-imperialists and moderates were not the only ones to be pleased. Chhatari expressed satisfaction at the new turn that Muslim League had taken and promised support: "I can assure the Muslim public that every member of the Independent Part² wholeheartedly agrees with and supports the policy and programme of the League."

Why did the loyalist landlords feel so agreeable towards the change in Muslim League in an anti-British direction? Perhaps it was the clarification made by Hasrat Mohani regarding the possibility of achieving independence within the British fold. Or, more likely, it was their perception that they desperately needed the support of Muslim League as an ally in the Legislative Assembly against the Congress the "positively anti-Islamic and idolatrous" song, *Bande Matram*, on Muslims. Jinnah's presidential address concentrated almost entirely on attacking Congress. He was emphatic that "No settlement with the majority is possible " He accused the Congress leadership of double standards:

"Those who talk of complete independence the most mean the least (of) what it means." He charged Congress with alienating Muslims by pursuing a policy "which is exclusively Hindu " Obviously taking almost direct digs at Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, and Gandhi, Jinnah declared: The Congress High Command speaks in different voices. One opinion is that there is no such thing as Hindu-Muslim question and there is no such thing as Minorities' question in the country. The other high opinion is that if a few crumbs are thrown to the Mussalmans in their present disorganized and helpless state, you can manage them. They are sadly mistaken if they think that the Mussalmans can be imposed upon

The third opinion is that there is no light to be seen through the impenetrable darkness; but as the Congress goes on acquiring strength and power so the past promises of the blank cheques remain unfilled and unsigned. Interestingly Congress was no longer rebuked for its economic radicalism or socialism but for being a Hindu party which, on becoming a government, had ushered in a 'Hindu Raj'. What made Jinnah so bitter against the organization of which he had been a member till 1920? Was it a part of his new strategic design or did he feel simply let down by Congress?

Was he retaliating against Congress for making overtures to Muslims or was he merely stating the truth when he accused Congress of being a Hindu party and government? The question of Congress having become a Hindu force requires a detailed elaboration and will be taken

up later. But the other questions can be examined here. Jinnah could not possibly have been upset about Congress refusing to government. Congress had already threatened to implement their agrarian programme. Muslim League's anti-imperialism could, therefore, be put up with so long as it did not bring League closer to Congress. The manner in which the Lucknow session proceeded must have been reassuring to Chhatari as it completely ruled out any proximity developing between League and Congress. Indeed if there was one theme which dominated the session, it was that of anti-Congressism. A resolution strongly condemned the Congress government for imposing cooperate with Muslim League (as he pointed out in his speech), because, as has been examined earlier, Jinnah himself did not want it and did all he could to stop ~aliquzzaman from reaching out to Congress leadership. It is therefore more likely that he was reacting to the Congress decision to launch the Muslim mass contact programme.

He may also have been reflecting the general deterioration in the Congress-League relationship during the two bye-elections. More importantly Jinnah's new mood was indicative, not so much of hurt as of initiating a new strategy. His priorities of bringing about Muslim unity have been spelt out earlier in this thesis. That he had not been successful in it may have also conveyed to him the futility of pursuing open ended politics. Clearly it was not enough to bring Muslims of different shades and opinions on a common platform. They had also to be homogenized through the instrumentality of a defined ideology powerful enough to accommodate Muslims from diverse political streams. In other words strong communalism would have appeared to Jinnah the only.

Support from Bengal and Punjab

There was another way in which the Lucknow session contributed to League's consolidation. Notable among those present at the session were the premiers of Punjab and Bengal. Jinnah's pre-election efforts at making inroads into the two most important Muslim majority provinces had proved futile. Under the circumstances the coming together of A.K.Fazlul Huq and Sikander Hyat Khan, the premiers of Bengal and Punjab, respectively, was nothing short of a feather in the cap for Jinnah.

Among other things, it amounted to an acknowledgment, by the regional leaders, of Jinnah as the all India leader of Indian Muslims. Why did the two regional bosses shun Jinnah's overtures before the elections? Having ignored him earlier, why did they come around to accepting his terms in October 1937?

To take up the Bengal story first. In the period between the declaration of the 1935 Act and the elections, different loose political formations among Bengal Muslims had crystallized themselves into two political parties - United Muslim Party (UMP) led by Nazimuddin and dominated by landlords and businessmen, and Krishak Praja Party (KPP) led by A.K.Fazlul Huq and representing the interests of the tenantry. Formed in 1936, KPP had grown out of Nikhil Banga Praja Samiti which had been founded by Fazlul Huq in 1929. KPP represented Muslim tenantry and was a non-communal body in so far as it had a sizable Hindu presence in it. The class character of the two parties was such that the two could not possibly merge into each other. When efforts were made to bring the two groups together, conflict arose as to who should be the leader of the united Muslim party. In essence, the conflict was about who would be the premier of Bengal. The question remained unresolved and reduced all negotiations to naught. Muslim League in Bengal did not count very much and represented only a handful of non-Bengali-businessmen based in Calcutta (e.g., the Ispahani brothers). For gaining a successful entry into Bengal politics Jinnah had to, therefore, conduct negotiations with both KPP and UMP or, at any rate, with any one of the two organizations .. In a bid to mobilize maximum Muslim support, Jinnah invited as many as 40 prominent Muslims from Bengal to attend the first meeting of AU India Muslim League Parliamentary Board to be held in Lahore in June 1936. Only two of them - M.A.H.Ispahani and Abdur Rahim Siddiqui -attended. Apparently 'Muslim politics' in Bengal at this stage showed a greater inclination towards settling provincial matters and cared little about inter-regional communal solidarities.

Jinnah now decided to intervene more directly by actually going to Bengal. His immediate concern was to bring the two groups into the League fold or, failing to do that, have an electoral understanding with at least one of them. Jinnah was understandably more keen on KPP

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because of it being a more popular party in Bengal and its leader Huq being an old Muslim Leaguer. Huq initially showed an inclination towards Jinnah's initiative but the younger members of the party demanded the acceptance, by Muslim League, of the abolition of zamindari in Bengal without any compensation to the landlords. This was unacceptable to Jinnah as he had not, as yet, abandoned the hope of a settlement with the UMP, with its strong landlord presence and access to financial resources, so vital for fighting the elections. KPP also wanted to reserve its right to contest the general (non-Muslim) seats, maintain its separate identity in Bengal and carry on its own radical programme.

In other words, for a settlement, Muslim League in Bengal would have to merge itself into KPP and not hope for the contrary. Also, it was not possible to have a united front of Muslims in Bengal; Jinnah would have to choose between KPP and the UMP. As it happened, Jinnah succeeded in arriving at an understanding with UMP which agreed to liquidate itself into Bengal Muslim League Parliamentary Board. Thus ended all possibilities of a League-KPP rapprochement. Enraged by Huq's defiance, Jinnah called him a "rift in the lute."

Muslim League accused Huq of being a Congressman: "Muslim voters Beware! Do you want Congressmen to rule Bengal? If not, send Fazlul Huq to the wall, smash up the pp (Praja Party)." Election results were such that various contestants were forced to reconsider their earlier positions. A total of 119 Muslim seats were shared among Muslim League (43), KPP (36) and Independents (36). Congress, though with the largest number of seats (47 general and five reserved), was an unlikely contestant for forming the government, given the prevailing indecision of the electors on the question of office acceptance discussed earlier. Congress support for a KPP ministry under Huq's leadership could not materialize because of differences over the release of political prisoners. The result was a coalition government led by Fazlul Huq and supported by Muslim League and non-Congress Hindu legislators. In his cabinet of eleven, Huq gave ministerial positions to five Hindus and four Muslim Leaguers. However, the selection of ministers was strongly resented by KPP members on the grounds that nine out of the eleven ministers were landlords and six of them had actually been elected from special

constituencies. 28 prominent leaders of KPP issued a statement to this effect. "This was the beginning of Fazlul Huq's rupture with the Krishak Praja Party' and his increasing vulnerability forcing him to cement his alliance with Muslim League.

These, then, were the specific reasons which prompted Huq to submit to Jinnah's dictates. The very texture of politics and society in Bengal motivated him to seek and nurture cross-communal political formations. The decision of not leaning on all India communal forces paid rich dividends to the extent that he was able to form a government in Bengal giving adequate representation to non-Congress Hindus. But, during the election campaign, his party had not been able to live up to its non-communal character. Constantly accused by Muslim League of being an ally of Congress and having to face a Muslim electorate, KPP had contested the elections as virtually a 'Muslim' party. The pressures of communalism had begun to surface. Even after the elections, though he was able to form a government, to be able to sustain a stable support base he had to choose between his radical agrarian base in KPP and his alliance with Muslim League. It was, therefore, his inability to successfully resist the pressures of communalism combined with a desire for a lasting political alliance with Muslim League which threw Huq into the extended arms of Jinnah. Their meeting was reported in the newspapers as a "memorable re-union" and was portrayed as the coming together of two titans. "They embraced each other amongst cheers of Allah-0-Ak:bar. Thereupon Huq announced that he and his party would forever remain under the banner of the League without any reservation." Huq's speech at the session was a continuation of the anti-Congressism unleashed by Jinnah: "None could be more selfish, deceptive, hypocritical and scheming than a Congressman".

Congressmen on acceptance of a salary of Rs. 500 for the Congress ministers. Another 'act of hypocrisy' by Congress was the very decision to accept office which, according to Huq, was the Congress reaction to the presence of eight Muslim premiers. In other words, Congress decision to accept office merely reflected their wish to throw most of Muslim premiers and ministers (32 in all the provinces) out of the ministries. Watching the treatment meted out to Muslims in Bihar and

other provinces, he declared, there was no choice left for Muslims but to unite under one banner. He reminded Muslims that Islam was in danger and promised his audiences that if Muslims were ill-treated in Muslim minority provinces, the Bengal ministry would retaliate by oppressing the non-Muslim minorities in Bengal. 66 The Punjab story was similar to Bengal in some ways. The Unionists, Ahrars and Khaksars were some of the 'Muslim' groups active in Punjab with the Unionist party, consisting of a group of Muslim, Hindu and Sikh agriculturists, formed in 1923 .by Mian Fuzli Husain and Sir Chhotu Ram, as the most powerful amongst them.

Demand For Pakistan

The Hindu-Muslim tension had become very grave in this period. The Arya Samajist said that "every Arya Samajist should get a lathi and a knife for self-defence". At meetings of Arya Samaj, the audience were exhorted to enlist in the Hindu Volunteer Corps. One Kundomal of Hyderabad distributed short iron dandas amongst the local Hindus and offered another fifty to the Hyderabad Arya Samaj , Arya Vir Dal, on the line of Khaksar, was organised, who praded with lathis in xiniforms for the protection of Hindus, Amil Sheva Dal and Yogi Physical Culture resolved that Hindus should arm themselves with defensive weapons, .The Hindus refused to purchase newspapers from Muslim vendors, A Moulvi at an idgah meeting in Dadu District advised Muslims not to purchase sweetmeats from Hindu halwais as they were made in an impure way. It was alleged that the Hindus of Hyderabad distributed "four thousand lathis, hundreds of spears and had stored acid, on account of which the authorities were warned that the Muslims could not be held responsible for any breach of the peace", Syed Ahmed of Karachi said that Khaksars were to be organised in order to re-establish Muslim rule in India lost since the time of Shah Jehan and Aurangzeb, On November 16, Hyat accused the Sind Ministry of "dancing at the beck and call of Hindus, who in order to eliminate Muslims were endeavour-ing to usurp Muslim rights to so great an extent that they were now interfering in the religious affairs of the Muslims",

The Qurbani (November 16) alleged that the Sind Muslims were making daily attacks against the life, honour and property of Hindus. The Dawat-e-Islam (Sukkur) was equally violent in its attacks on Hindus. The Islah (November 20) condemned Hindu propaganda against Muslims and opined that a Civil War would result if such propaganda continued. The K\miar (November 21) alleged that Muslim police at Sukkur failed to prevent Muslim rioters from attacking Hindus and burning Hindu houses and even helped Muslims to do so, Al-Wahid, Qurbani, Dharamvir, Dawat-e-Islam, Sindh and Sind Zamindar were warned not to publish any article on Manzilgah for one month, Zamindar, Ahsan and Shahbaz (Punjab newspapers) held the Sind Government responsible for the Sukkur riots.

A poster in Karachi refers "to the heartless and oppressive manner in which innocent and oppressed Muslims of Sukkur have been ruined and compares the conditions at Sukkur to those obtaining in the days of Hilakookhan and Changezkhan", On January 7, 1940, Jinnah reiterated League's demand for recognition as the sole, authentic and representative organization of Muslims in India. Nehru stated that the Congress did not recognize the League as sole representative of Muslims. On January 10, 1940, Nehru at Ghaziabad declared that "there could be no question of settlement with government or of return of Congress ministries to office until question of India's freedom finally settled". Linlithgow, in view of the Congress-League conflict, thought that their differences "would strengthen Britain's hold on India for many years". Having carefully considered negotiated with numerous parties and Individuals, he favoured maintenance of "the political status quo". Nehru, interpreting this Viceroy's policy, wrote to Gandhiji:

"The same old game is played again, the background is the same, the various epithets are the same and the actors are the same and the CO results must be the same". Notwithstanding the fact that the Congress and the Government were drifting apart, but there was still a possibility of modus Vivendi between them, Nehru came to know that Jinnah "was in a cooperative mood and invited Jinnah to join the

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Congress in protesting against India being plunged into the war, without her consent. Hence, by appealing to Jinnah's patriotism, he wrote: "Our dignity and self-respect as Indians has been insulted". Jinnah seemed cordial, but he did not commit himself and continued the conversations. Muslim League Appeasement of the British The Muslim League, "neither accepted nor rejected the Viceroy's statement, but asked for further discussion and clarification". The League commended the assurance of giving weight to the interests of the minorities and condemned the amendment of the Federal part of the Act and, on the whole, demanded that the whole constitutional problem should be considered afresh. After the Congress Ministries had resigned in October, 1939, the Governors in the Non-Muslim majority states and the Muslim League in the Muslim majority provinces had taken over the provincial administration, the Viceroy began "to lean more on the support of the Muslim League" and "with the Congress in wilderness and Jinnah's hands considerably strengthened, waverers among the Muslims began trickling into the League."

For all practical purposes Jinnah was given a veto on further constitutional progress and an "adroit politician that he was, he made the very most of the situation". It was then generally held that the question of minorities was given more importance than it deserved in the light of Zetland's speech declaring the Congress demand for self-determination to be unacceptable, 146 On November 5, 1939, Jinnah addressed the Viceroy/ asking for assurance on the following four points:-"

(1) that as soon as circumstances permitted, or immediately after the war, the entire problem of India's future constitution (apart from the Government of India Act, 1935) would be examined and reconsidered *die novo*;

(2) that no declaration would, either in principle or otherwise, be made or any constitution be enacted by His Majesty's Government or Parliament without the approval and consent of the two major communities of India;

(3) that His Majesty's Government would try to meet all reasonable national demands of the Arabs in Palestine; and

(4) that Indian troops would not be used outside India against any Muslim power or country".

Up to that moment, the League had not created any difficulty nor had embarrassed the British in their war prosecution but the provinces, where the League had a dominant voice, "had been left free to cooperate with the British Government pending their consideration with regard to the assurances they had asked for in particular that the British Government should make no declaration regarding the future constitutional problems of India and the vital issues that were raised in that connection without their approval and consent", Jinnah's Five Points The Congress on September 15, 1939, had resolved that the issue of war and peace was to be decided by the Indians, and the British Government in view of the growing discontent and increasing gravity of the situation, had declared that the Viceroy's Executive Council would be expanded to include in it the representatives of major political parties. The Congress was against the formation of the coalition ministries as an interim settlement during the War. Meanwhile, in November, 1939, the Muslim League put forth five points before the Congress for an interim settlement:-"

- (1) Establishment of coalition ministries in the provinces;
- (2) Congress acceptance of the formula that no legislative measure affecting Muslims would be passed by a Provincial Lower House of two-thirds, if the Muslim representatives in that House were opposed to it;
- (3) An undertaking from the Congress not to fly their flag on public institutions;
- (4) An understanding as regards the singing of Bande Matram;
- (5) Congress undertaking to cease its hostile campaign against the Muslim League",

The above proposals did not bring any fruitful results and the gulf between the Congress and the League rather widened, Jinnah, after the resignation of the Congress ministry felt "relief at the termination of the majority tyranny which was so ruthlessly exercised in the course of the last 27 months'.

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Jinnah observed the 'Day of Deliverance' on December 22, 1939, and released the following statement, which was "vitriolic attack on the Congress Party":-"That the Congress Ministry both in the discharge of their duties of the administration and in the Legislature have done their best to flout the Muslim opinion, to destroy Muslim culture, and have interfered with their religious and social life, and trampled upon their economic and political rights; that in matter of differences and disputes the Congress Ministry invariably have sided with, supported and advanced the cause of the Hindus in total disregard and to the prejudice of the Muslim interest". -Expressing strong resentment, Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to Jinnah, in December, 1939;-"It thus seems that politically we have no common ground and that our objectives are different. That in itself makes discussion difficult and fruitless". Obviously, these communications marked the turning point of Jinnah's policy with his assertion that the British Government should revise the whole problem of -India's future constitution de novo, as, according to him, "no new constitutional scheme for India could be evolved, and implemented without the consent and approval of the Indian Muslim League".

By the end of 1939, the Hindu-Muslim unity had almost completely evaporated in the air. Nehru had put his heart on the constituent assembly elected on the basis of adult franchise, and Jinnah's proposal for constituent assembly was Utopian. Indifference of the Viceroy The Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, was, on the one hand, taking a sympathetic view of the activities and demands of the Muslim League, and, on the other, was becoming increasingly antagonistic towards the Congress for its resolution of conditional accord with regard to the War Aims, He became so resolute .In his policy against the Congress that proposals of some well-wishers to bridge the gulf between the Congress and the Government were turned down by the Viceroy. For instance, G.D, Birla "laid stress on the fact that it was of vital importance to make some move, but the Viceroy was not disposed to take any action".

The problem of constitutional development in India became a subject of discussion in England. Sir Stafford Cripps, in December, 1939, on his way to China, stayed for a few days in India and stated to the press that "some kind of Constituent Assembly (not necessarily quite in the form

advocated by the Congress) should be set up after the w Cripps endorsed the conception of the British people that "when the next move was to be made India's constitution should, to the largest possible extent, be framed by Indians in India". Viceroy* s Offer In January, 1940, the Viceroy in Bombay ^offered "India "dominion status" of the "Statute of Westminster variety" at the end of the war, in which Gandhiji saw "germs of an honourable settlement", but when the two met in February in Delhi and the Viceroy told Gandhlji "to examine the entire field of constitutional progress in consultation with the representatives of all parties and interests in India", the Congress was again disillusioned, Tje British view was to enact the 1935 Act for:

"(a) an immediate expansion of the executive council; and after the war (b) the revival of the federal scheme to expedite the achievement of dominion status". On Febniary 3-6, 1940, the League Working Committee met in New Delhi, and Jinnah proclaimed that Western democracy was unsuited for India. To break the deadlock, Fazlul Haq, on February 4, suggested that a coalition government should be set up in provinces for the duration of war. The Viceroy, on February 5, met Gandhiji and pleaded to break political deadlock. The Viceroy also met Jinnah on February 6, Lord Zetland appealed on February 11, to the Congress leaders to "escape from the tyranny of phrases".

Pakistan Resolution

However, in the course of political unsettlement, chaos and distur-bances in the country, the Lahore resolution was adopted on March 23,1940, which "India's newspaper headlines next day pronounced" as 'Pakistan Resolution' and "so it remained". Jinnah replied hard opposition almost from all parties and Non-League Muslim organizations, but Jinnah, a bom orator, distorted and silenced the drxjms being beaten against him. Consequently, a large number of Muslims, mostly aristocrates and high bom, who sided with Jinnah on communal grounds, joined the League and along with them the Muslims of other sects also followed Jinnah's plank of 'Islam in Danger' or a 'Muslim Pak Homeland'. Jinnah had, by then, created a large number of his followers throughout India and had stood fast to his position and ambition for the creation of Pakistan, To

vitalise this goal, he observed 'Pakistan Day' on April 19, 1940, and thousands of League meetings were held in the country.

Sikander Hyat' s

Sir Sikander Hyat Khan found the concept of partition of India "insupportable till the bitter end, for it was at once a repudiation of his Unionist Party's basic platform of Hindu-Muslim-Sikh coexistence, and his potential to win personal leadership over the League". He became aware of the fact that "his days of aspiring to supreme leadership of the Muslims of India was numbered". News of Sikander's rivalry at the League's Subject Committee on March 23, 1940, flashed out and an angry crowd of young Muslims shouted "Sikander Murdabad" (Death to Sikander), but when Jinnah came out of the pandal, they shouted "Quaid-i-Azam Zindabad" (Long Life to Quaid-i-Azam). Scheme Based on Anglo-Egyptian Agreement (1922) The Hindu (Madras) in early March, 1940, published a scheme broadly based on the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement of 1922, which sought that India would be free to draft her own constitution at the end of the war with complete freedom subject to the condition:

1) the constitution to be acceptable to the Muslims and other minorities;

(2) a prior agreement between the representatives of Britain and India 'in a spirit of friendly accommodation' - a phrase used in the Anglo-Egyptian agreement - on (a) defence, (b) British interests, and (c) the Indian states." Such a declaration could be coupled with an offer from the Viceroy accepting the principle of a provisional national government at the centre, the details of which could be worked out by a conference of the premiers of the eleven provinces", Gandhiji accepted this formula, but response from the British side was negative. Congress Session, Ramqarh The Congress at the Ramqarh session held on March 19-20, 1940,

presided over by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, reiterating its demand for "complete independence" formally resolved: "nothing short of Complete Independence can be accepted by the people of India" and that no

permanent solution was possible "except through a Constituent Assembly". This session reiterated the demands of September 14, 1939, for the declaration of British war aims, forever, the session felt that Civil Disobedience was "the only course left" (emphasis added). The session did not take any extreme action when England was involved in a life-and-death struggle with the Germans, as Gandhiji, on April 6, 1940, wrote: "We do not seek our independence out of Britain's ruin". Nehru on May 20, 1940, stated: "Launching a Civil Disobedience campaign at a time when Britain is engaged in a life-and-death struggle would be an act derogatory to India's honour". He later observed: "Congress which had been on the verge of civil disobedience could not think in terms of any such movement while the very existence of free England hung in balance".

When the Congress was engaged in deciding about launching a Civil Disobedience Movement, the Muslim leaders belonging to different non-League parties were thinking over the possibility of creation of Pakistan due to constitutional deadlock between the Congress and the League. They wanted true settlement between the two major parties. To evolve a common solution, they held meetings and conferences, such as the Azad Muslim Conference of April, 1940, The White Paper In view of the divergent claims of the Congress, the League, the Depressed Classes and the Princes, and particularly abrupt ending of conversation of Gandhiji with the Viceroy, on February 5, 1940, Linlithgow preferred to adopt a policy of "wait and see".

Check your progress –

1. Who opposed the demand of Pakistan?

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2. Who is called the father of Pakistan?

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7.3 LETS SUJM UP

The Muslim League was founded in 1906 to safeguard the rights of Indian Muslims. At first the league was encouraged by the British and was generally favourable to their rule, but the organization adopted self-government for India as its goal in 1913. Jinnah and the Muslim League led the struggle for the partition of British India into separate Hindu and Muslim states, and after the formation of Pakistan in 1947 the league became Pakistan's dominant political party. In that year it was renamed the All Pakistan Muslim League. But the league functioned less effectively as a modern political party in Pakistan than it had as a mass-based pressure group in British India, and hence it gradually declined in popularity and cohesion. In the elections of 1954 the Muslim League lost power in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), and the party lost power in West Pakistan (now Pakistan) soon afterward. By the late 1960s the party had split into various factions, and by the 1970s it had disappeared altogether.

7.4 KEYWORDS

Jinnah, Pakistan, Muslim League

7.5 QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. Discuss the demand for Pakistan.
2. Discuss the stand of Congress Party in the demand of Pakistan.

7.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

India's Struggle for Independence by Bipan Chandra

The Wonder That Was India by AL L Basham

7.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Hint – 7.2
2. Hint – 7.2