

# HISTORY OF INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT II

Course Code: B21HS22AN



**Ancillary Course**  
History For UG Programmes

SELF LEARNING MATERIAL



**SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY**

The State University for Education, Training and Research in Blended Format, Kerala



# SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

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Access and Quality define Equity.

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Semester - III

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OPEN UNIVERSITY

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**B21HS22AN**  
**History of Indian**  
**National Movement II**  
**Semester - III**



SREENARAYANAGURU  
OPEN UNIVERSITY

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Dear

I greet all of you with deep delight and great excitement. I welcome you to the Sreenarayanaguru Open University.

Sreenarayanaguru Open University was established in September 2020 as a state initiative for fostering higher education in open and distance mode. We shaped our dreams through a pathway defined by a dictum 'access and quality define equity'. It provides all reasons to us for the celebration of quality in the process of education. I am overwhelmed to let you know that we have resolved not to become ourselves a reason or cause a reason for the dissemination of inferior education. It sets the pace as well as the destination. The name of the University centres around the aura of Sreenarayanaguru, the great renaissance thinker of modern India. His name is a reminder for us to ensure quality in the delivery of all academic endeavours.

Sreenarayanaguru Open University rests on the practical framework of the popularly known "blended format". Learner on distance mode obviously has limitations in getting exposed to the full potential of classroom learning experience. Our pedagogical basket has three entities viz Self Learning Material, Classroom Counselling and Virtual modes. This combination is expected to provide high voltage in learning as well as teaching experiences. Care has been taken to ensure quality endeavours across all the entities.

The university is committed to provide you with a stimulating learning experience. The present material caters to the syllabus of Indian History as an ancillary discipline. It has adequate space for disseminating the basics of the discipline to a new learner with the required emphasis on the formation of ideas and institutions, including cultural identities. We earnestly desire that the ancillary course in Indian History will enthuse learners to relate their understanding to the broad framework of core disciplines. We assure you that the university student support services will closely stay with you for the redressal of your grievances during your studentship.

Feel free to write to us about anything that you feel relevant regarding the academic programme.

Wish you the best.



Regards,  
Dr. P. M. Mubarak Pasha

01.12.2023

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# BLOCK - 01

## **Gandhi and National Movement**



# Unit 1

## The Advent of Gandhi

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ familiaise themselves with Gandhi's political struggle in South Africa
- ▶ appreciate the basic principles and strategies of Gandhi
- ▶ narrate the context of Gandhi's entry into the Indian struggle against the British rule
- ▶ acquaint with the popular struggles like Champaran Satyagraha, Kheda Satyagraha, and Ahmedabad Satyagraha

### Prerequisites

The entry of Mahatma Gandhi into India's freedom struggle marked a new phase in the history of the Indian National Movement. The years of his participation witnessed an entirely different phase of mass struggle and mass mobilisation. Gandhi called for a nationwide mass satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act in March 1919. This was his first attempt to mobilise the people of India.

However, it was not his first ever struggle for freedom and civil rights. It is, therefore, necessary to begin his story of struggle from 1893, when he was a twenty-five-year-old barrister. He was in South Africa when he began to think seriously about the racial discrimination and arrogance, and exploitation of the colonial rulers and its impacts on the colonies and its people.

The unit will specifically deal with the Gandhian Era in Indian politics, the methods of his struggle and the popular struggles he led in India. This also mentions the nature of the struggles he followed in Africa and their applicability in India.

### Keywords

Racial Discrimination, Satyagraha, Passive Resistance, Champaran Satyagraha, Kheda Satyagraha, Ahmedabad Satyagraha



## Discussion

### 1.1.1 Gandhi in South Africa

Let us begin our discussion with the story of Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa. Young barrister Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi reached Durban (a city in South Africa) in 1893 for a one-year contract to resolve the legal issues of a Gujarati merchant, Dada Abdullah. Surprisingly, he was the first Indian barrister to have come to South Africa. In South Africa, he faced numerous instances of racial arrogance and discrimination from the whites. These personal experiences made him realize that the Indians were also facing the same in South Africa.

Young Gandhi was not ready to accept the racial insults that he faced in South Africa. In 1893, while travelling from Durban to Pretoria, he encountered one of the most distressing moments of his life. Though he was travelling with a first-class ticket, a white co-passenger demanded that he leave the first class compartment. Since Gandhi protested, he was pushed out of the compartment as the train reached the Pietermaritzburg railway station. His luggage was also thrown on the platform. Gandhi was, therefore, forced to spend the night in the waiting room without an overcoat in the height of winter. However, he managed to continue the journey next day with the help of Abdulla Sheth and the General Manager of the railway.

The later part of the journey was on a stagecoach. On stagecoach the coachman, who was white, assaulted him and asked him to vacate the seat and sit on the footboard. He was also barred from lodging at the hotel nearby. These were the occasions of severe humiliation from the Europeans, and its indelible impressions prepared the ground for his transformation from Mohandas to Mahatma.

After reaching Pretoria, he summoned a meeting of the Indians there. He taught English to anybody who wanted to learn and called them to organise themselves against exploitation and protest against oppression. His demonstrations and words were popularised through the press as well.

After completion of his legal duty in South Africa, Gandhi was set to leave for India. However, on the eve of his departure, he raised the issue against a bill that proposed to take away the voting rights of Indians, which was being passed by the Natal legislature. At this juncture, the Indians in South Africa did not allow him to return and asked him to lead the struggle for them. Gandhi agreed to stay for a month and led the battle. However he stayed in South Africa and led the struggle against discrimination against Indians till the Government passed Indian Relief Act in 1914.

#### 1.1.1.1 Gandhian Methods of Struggle in South Africa

The period of Gandhi's political activities in Africa was a long one. A brief outline of the struggle is given here to bring out the political ideologies and methods he employed in Africa and India later on. The initial phase of his work in Africa can be called the 'moderate' phase. In this phase, he followed the method of sending petitions and memorials to the South African legislature. However, in 1906, he gave up his moderate approach to the struggle.

The second phase of the struggle began in 1906 using the tactic of passive resistance or civil Disobedience. The non-violent civil disobedience movement was a successful experiment, forcing the opponents to compromise. His methods in South Africa became the base for his struggle in India's freedom fight. Gandhi returned to India with the newly evolved Gandhian way of struggle.



### 1.1.1.2 Result of Gandhian Methods

The South African experiment equipped Gandhi to lead the Indian struggle for freedom. Gandhi took this as an opportunity to unite the Hindus, Muslims, Christians and Parsis.

The experiments in South Africa allowed Gandhi to develop his style of politics and leadership and try new struggle techniques. He took the struggle from the 'moderate' phase to the 'Gandhian' phase in South Africa. The Government of South Africa approved the Indian demands relating to poll tax, registration certificates and marriages in accordance with the Indian rites.

### 1.1.2 Gandhi in India

Before discussing Gandhi's major philosophies and methods and their popularity in the national movement, a brief outline of the socio-economic situation in India during World War I is necessary. Gandhi emerged as an undisputed leader of the Indian national movement from the initial phase. The increase in defence expenditure resulted in national debt, which meant heavy war loans, an increase in taxation, customs duties, etc. The burden of these increased expenditures fell on the common people.

Along with the economic distress, there was underproduction of food crops and crop failures in 1918-19 and 1920-21, affecting many people. The result of this scarcity was a famine-like situation in the provinces. The rural people were the worst hit by the war. The economic impact of World War I on the people was severe. There was an increase in the price of industrial goods and food crops. The outcome of all these was a decline in exports and a crisis in the market.

Another major economic development of the period was the growth of industries. The

official policy towards industries changed after World War I. Jute and textile industries flourished all over the place. Eventually, the industrial magnates of the place became loyal to the British because of their lenient attitude towards industries. The significant impact of the growth of industries was the growth of the working class. The working class sections led to many strikes against the unethical and exploitative attitude of industrialists and the British Government.

Therefore, World War I brought an unhappy situation in the social and economic spheres. The common people had to struggle to achieve their least minimum necessities. World War I also changed the attitude of the youth towards Western civilisation. It is said that all the charms and glitters of the West faded, and the youth began to understand the real face of the British. It was in this phase that Gandhi arrived in India.

#### 1.1.2.1 Gandhi and His Experiments in India

Judith Brown described the nationalist movement in India before the arrival of Gandhi as "politics of studied limitation". Gandhi returned to India in January 1915. He was welcomed in his native land. His struggles in South Africa were well known to the masses in India. On the advice of Gokhale, Gandhi decided that he would not take any public opinion on any Indian political issue for at least a year. He travelled around the country, seeing and studying the actual situation. He then organised his *Ashram* in Ahmedabad. He even stayed away from the Home Rule Movement.

Gandhi was convinced that the only feasible method of agitation would be Satyagraha. Therefore, he didn't join any political association or mass struggle. However, he



was not politically idle. From 1917 to 1918, he was involved in three significant struggles- the Champaran Satyagraha in Bihar, Kheda and Ahmedabad Satyagraha in Gujarat.

### 1.1.3 Champaran Satyagraha (1917)

In the early nineteenth century, the European planters forced the Champaran cultivators to cultivate indigo on 3/20<sup>th</sup> of their holdings. This system was known as the “Tinkathia System”.

Towards the close of the nineteenth century, the emergence of the German synthetic dyes forced indigo out of the market. The declining demand for indigo made the situation worse for the cultivators. The cultivators were also charged heavily for necessities like clothes, salt, and kerosene. But the price of everything cultivators had to sell did not rise, including rice, oil seeds and others.

The farmers in Chambaran began to resist the system from 1908. Raj Kumar Shukla, a local man, approached Gandhi to find a solution to the problem. On the arrival of Gandhi, the Commissioner ordered him to leave Champaran. Gandhi refused to leave and decided to take the punishment for his disobedience. However, the Government of India did not want to make an issue of it and ordered the Bihar government to retreat and allow Gandhi to proceed with the inquiry.

Gandhi enquired about the grievances. He and his fellows toured the villages and collected the statements of the peasants. Meanwhile, the British Government appointed a “Commission of Inquiry” to study the whole issue. The Government nominated Gandhi as one of its members. Gandhi had little trouble persuading the Commission to abolish the ‘Tinkathia system’. He proposed that the peasants be compensated for illegally enhancing their dues. The enquiry committee

made the Champaran Agrarian Act in 1917. The Act abolished the ‘Tinkathia system’. As a compromise with the planters, he agreed that they refund only twenty-five per cent of the money they had taken illegally from the peasants. Neither the peasants nor the planters were happy with the agreement. However, this struggle became the first successful experiment of Satyagraha in the Indian political movement.

### 1.1.4 Ahmedabad Satyagraha (1918)

After the success of Champaran Satyagraha, Gandhi turned his attention to the problem of workers in Ahmedabad. Ahmedabad was famous for its textile industry and mill. During 1918, there was a decline in textile production. The workers were agitating against the owners of cotton textile mills for a pay increase. During this period, there was a skirmish between the mill owners and workers on the ‘plague bonus’ question of 1917. During the outbreak of the plague, to retain the workers, the owners paid a 75% bonus to the workers. The owners wanted to withdraw the bonus once the epidemic had passed. However, the workers were against the withdrawal of the bonus because the workers faced hardship in the rise in the price during the War.

The British Collector asked Gandhi to negotiate with the mill owners and to arrive at a compromise. Gandhi approached one of the mill owners, Ambalal Sarabhai, for a wage enhancement. Many workers went on strike in a meeting to find a solution to the issue. Taking this as an opportunity, the owners withdrew their agreement. The mill owners offered a twenty per cent bonus and threatened to dismiss all who did not accept it.

Gandhi advised the workers to strike since the mill owners were adamant. After studying the production cost, profit of the industry and



cost of living, the workers demanded a thirty-five per cent increase in wages. The strike was supported by Ambalal Sarabhai's sister Anasuya Behn. After some days, the workers slowly withdrew from the strike. In this situation, Gandhi decided to go on a fast to strengthen the workers. The fast put pressure on mill owners. Eventually, they accepted the hike of thirty-five per cent wage as demanded.

### 1.1.5 Kheda Satyagraha (1918)

The peasants of the Kheda district in Gujarat were in extreme distress due to the failure of crops. The appeal of the peasants for revenue relief from the government was denied. The peasants were also in a debt trap due to the plague of 1916. Mohanlal Kameshwar Pandya and Shankarlal Parikh, two local leaders of Kheda, appealed to the Bombay Government for revenue relief and also approached Gujarat Sabha in Ahmedabad for help. They also informed Gandhi about the distress while he was at Champaran.

The Gujarat Sabha urged the Bombay Government to postpone the revenue demand. Since the Government didn't agree, the Sabha suggested the peasants not to pay the land revenue. Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Indulal Yagnik and others joined the movement. In February 1918, Gandhi and the Gujarat Sabha members visited the villages in Kheda. Since the Government did not respond to

the peasants' demands, Gandhi called for a satyagraha.



Fig 1.1.1 Gandhi during Kheda Satyagraha 1918

The Kheda Satyagraha was a united protest and it resulted in the Government making an agreement for both the parties. Accordingly, the tax for the current year and the following year were suspended. Apart from this, all confiscated properties were returned.

The Champaran, Ahmedabad and Kheda Satyagraha demonstrated Gandhi's method of politics. The protest earned him the respect and commitment of many young political workers.

### Recap

- ▶ Gandhian method of struggle in south african has two phases: Moderate and Gandhian phase.
- ▶ The first phase of the Gandhian method of struggle was called the Moderate phase.
- ▶ The second phase is passive resistance or Civil Disobedience.
- ▶ Gandhi returned to India in January 1915.

- ▶ Involved in three significant struggles - Champaran in Bihar, Kheda Satyagraha in Gujarat, and Ahmedabad Satyagraha.
- ▶ The Champaran Satyagraha was against forceful indigo cultivation or the system of *Tinkathia*.
- ▶ The British Government appointed a “Commission of Inquiry” and passed Champaran Agrarian Act in 1917.
- ▶ The Ahmedabad satyagraha was against the distress of textile workers of Ahmedabad.
- ▶ The Kheda Satyagraha was against the distress of peasants due to plague.

## Objective Questions

1. When and where did Gandhi arrive in Africa?
2. What was his initial phase of struggle called?
3. When did the second phase of the struggle in Africa begin?
4. What was the method used in the second phase in South Africa?
5. When did Gandhi return to India?
6. Which was the most popular method of struggle used by Gandhi in India?
7. Where did Gandhi set up his Ashram?
8. Which are the three significant Satyagraha of Gandhi?
9. Why did Champaran Satyagraha cultivators agitate?
10. What is the *Tinkathia* System?

## Answers

1. 1893, Durban
2. Moderate phase
3. 1906
4. passive resistance or civil disobedience
5. January 1915
6. Satyagraha
7. Sabarmati, Ahmedabad
8. The Champaran in Bihar, Kheda Satyagraha in Gujarat , and Ahmedabad satyagraha
9. Against the *Tinkathia* system
10. Forcing the cultivators to cultivate indigo on 3/20<sup>th</sup> of their holding

## Assignments

1. Discuss the political significance of Gandhi's experiments in Africa.
2. Discuss the social, economic and political conditions that led to a struggle in Kheda, Champaran and Ahmedabad.

## Suggested Readings

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## Unit 2

# Ahimsa and Satyagraha

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ introduce the political philosophy of Gandhi
- ▶ aware the concept of Satyagraha and Ahimsa
- ▶ familiarise with the significance of the principles of Satyagraha and Ahimsa
- ▶ explain the significance of the Gandhian ideology in the national movement

### Prerequisites

Gandhi's political ideology was one of the most influential ideologies in the history of the freedom struggle. He has shaped his ideologies with respect to social needs. Through his struggles, he taught people the path of non-violence and truth. The political experiments in South Africa helped him to shape his methods and ideologies to a large extent. The concepts of passive resistance and the Satyagraha were the major methods in his struggle. Later, these ideologies became the backbone of his struggles in India. He propagated that in order to achieve freedom, peaceful measures have to be taken rather than harming others using arms.

This unit will look into the major ideology of the Gandhian political thought- Satyagraha and Ahimsa.

### Keywords

Ahimsa, Satyagraha, Swaraj, Passive Resistance, Hind Swaraj

### Discussion

#### 1.2.1 Truth, Ahimsa and Satyagraha

*“ My religion is based on Truth and Non-Violence. Truth is my God. Non-violence is the means of realizing him ”...*

*--Mahatma Gandhi*

Gandhi derived his political ideas from various thinkers and philosophers like Henry David Thoreau, John Ruskin, Leo Tolstoy and others. According to Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, he was equally influenced by Vaishnavism and Jainism. As his ideas and philosophies were continuously evolving, it is, therefore, very problematic to make an exact idea of his



ideologies. *Ahimsa* and Satyagraha were great significant to the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. These are the most important socio-political weapons that Gandhi employed to achieve his goals.

### 1.2.1.1 Meaning of *Ahimsa* and Satyagraha

When we say Satyagraha and *Ahimsa*, what does it actually mean?

The word *Ahimsa* means Non-violence, which implies not harming anybody or oneself. However, *Ahimsa* can also mean love and charity. It includes non-violence in thoughts, words and actions.

The word Satyagraha implies firm devotion to truth. The idea of Satyagraha is that the protestors are capable of changing the heart of the oppressor by displaying their moral strength. In this, non-violence or *Ahimsa* is one of the cardinal principles.

The methodology to achieve truth is Satyagraha. Mahatma Gandhi's idea of Satyagraha, where *Satya* means 'truth' and '*agraha*' means 'perseverance', implies the path of truth. Through this method, Gandhi emphasized the need to search for the truth. The general understanding of the truth is that one must speak the truth only. However, for Gandhi, truth is not just in speech but also in thought and action. Therefore, Satyagraha implies the implementation of truth and *Ahimsa*. *Ahimsa* is the backbone of Satyagraha.

Gandhi utilized the principles of Satyagraha and *Ahimsa* to achieve social change. It should contain a solution to the human problem. It should fight against injustice, settle disputes, for effective democracy, for peace and establish social order.

In Satyagraha, one must believe in self-suffering rather than harming others. As a moral weapon, Satyagraha is a peaceful

protest against all evils of society, laws and customs which restrict one's freedom and consciousness.

### 1.2.1.2 Principles and Application of Satyagraha

The basic aim of Satyagraha is to evoke goodness in humanity. Whenever there is a conflict or wrong, which can be changed with the application of Satyagraha, a satyagrahi must follow certain morals. A satyagrahi must convince himself or herself to follow the truth or to find the truthfulness of the cause.

After careful investigation, if he finds the cause of suffering is true, he or she must see if the people who suffer from the cause are in need of getting rid of it. In simple words, a satyagrahi must know whether the people are willing to struggle. As soon as the satyagrahi understands the depth of the issue, he or she must approach the wrongdoers and try to convince them in gentle language. In this struggle, a satyagrahi must make sure that he or she is ready to suffer. If many people show their willingness to join the Satyagraha, they are given strength in their decision.

Gandhi employed and experimented with several techniques of Satyagraha for social, economic, and political causes. Some of the important techniques are as follows.

#### a. Fasting

Fasting is one of the most effective method of Satyagraha. Gandhi insisted that this technique must be used when all other techniques fail. Gandhi used this technique in his struggle in South Africa.

#### b. Non-cooperation

Non-cooperation is a technique to settle disputes and correct unjust government. It should mean resisting all domestic, public,



political and social injustice. Gandhi officially adopted the non-cooperation method of Satyagraha in the special session of the Indian National Congress at Calcutta during the Punjab and Khilafat issue.

### c. Civil Disobedience

This is the technique of disobeying the rules and laws of the government. It was also meant to acquire social and political justice. The disobedience programme should be followed in a non-violent manner.

### d. Picketing

The method of picketing was first employed in his South African struggle. It was aimed at pressuring the government and creating a spirit of freedom among the protesters.

Other techniques of Satyagraha include self-suffering, strikes, hartals, writing books, weeklies and pamphlets, boycotts etc. The ideas of *Ahimsa* and Satyagraha stand as a social and political weapon against all odds and injustice.

## 1.2.2 Hind Swaraj (1909)

*Hind Swaraj*, or *Indian Home Rule*, is a book authored by Mahatma Gandhi in 1909. The book was published in English in 1910 in Johannesburg. The book was written in the form of dialogue, which gives an idea of Gandhi's political ideologies. The book inspired the people to work for India's independence from the British Government. The book contains Gandhi's criticism of British domination in India.

Sekhar Bandyopadhyay has given an analysis of the book in his work *Plassey to Partition*. Accordingly, *Hind Swaraj* is often proclaimed as an "authentic statement of his ideology". In the book, Gandhi presented a civilizational concept of India. He asserts

that India constitutes a nation or *Praja*. Industrial Capitalism was held responsible for the conflicts. Gandhi also proclaimed that the Indians themselves were responsible for the enslavement because the Indians embraced Capitalism and its allied political structure. Gandhi also provided a solution to avert the situation, which is considered moral and utopian. Through the book, Gandhi proclaimed that the Indians must avoid greed and lust for consumption and also return to the villages based on self-sufficiency as those of earlier times.

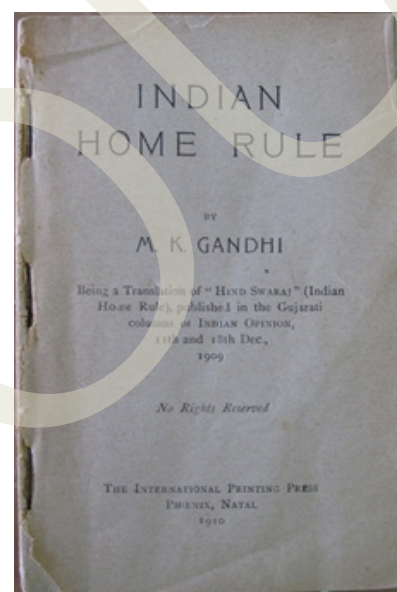


Fig 1.2.1 Cover page of the book Indian Home Rule

Through the book, Gandhi addressed the meaning of *Swaraj* and the non-violent means to achieve *Swaraj*, Satyagraha, and passive resistance. Gandhi urged the Indians to boycott English customs, laws, and industry and asked the people to adopt the traditional ways. Gandhi also encouraged to reject violence and follow the policy of non-violence and passive resistance. According to the book, Passive resistance is a method of securing the right through the means of personal suffering. This method does not employ resistance by

arms. Gandhi, therefore, followed the idea of non-violence in achieving his goals. There are three major concepts of the Gandhian ideology- Truth, *Ahimsa* and Satyagraha.

*Hind Swaraj* was initially banned by the British government but then translated into English and published in 1912. Again in 1938, an edited version of the book was published, which inspired the independence movement. Chapters 13 to 20 of the book contains the theory of Satyagraha or truth force. Satyagraha is a system of the non-violent ideology of Gandhi. He asserted that the Indian idea of compassion and humanity will get rid of foreign influence rather than opting for violent means. He insisted that violence will harm the troublemaker physically, but through non-violence, one can transform the opponent positively without a physical encounter.

The main focal point of the book was *swaraj* and the ways to attain *swaraj*. The word *Swaraj* means self-rule. Gandhi opined that a mere transfer of power from the British would never bring *swaraj*. In that case, the *swaraj* would be nothing but “English rule without Englishmen”. He calls such a state not ‘Hindustan’ but ‘Englishstan’. Attaining *Swaraj*, in his view, is different. He wrote, “It is *Swaraj* when we learn to rule ourselves”. *Swaraj* is, therefore, ‘home-rule or self-government or self-rule’ for the people of India. His technique to achieve *Swaraj* was Satyagraha.

## Recap

- ▶ Ahimsa and Satyagraha are socio-political weapons to achieve goals and social change.
- ▶ Ahimsa means Non-violence.
- ▶ Satyagraha implies firm devotion to truth.
- ▶ Emphasized the need to search for truth.
- ▶ The method to follow in Satyagraha is to find the truth, struggle and approach wrongdoers and convince them.
- ▶ Techniques include fasting, non-cooperation, Civil Disobedience, picketing etc.
- ▶ *Hind Swaraj*, or Indian Home, is a book written by Mahatma Gandhi in 1909.
- ▶ Book is in the form of dialogue.
- ▶ The idea of Swaraj, Satyagraha and passive resistance is the content of the book.
- ▶ Passive resistance is a method to secure rights through personal suffering.
- ▶ The Gandhian ideology includes Truth, Ahimsa and Satyagraha.
- ▶ The British government banned the book.
- ▶ Swaraj is home rule or self-rule. It is the ability to rule ourselves.



## Objective Questions

1. What do you understand by the term *Ahimsa*?
2. What are the techniques of Satyagraha?
3. Who wrote the book 'Hind Swaraj' ?
4. When was the book 'Hind Swaraj' published?
5. What is another name for the book 'Hind Swaraj'?
6. What, according to the book 'Hind Swaraj', is the best method to secure rights?
7. Who banned the book 'Hind Swaraj'?
8. Which chapter contains the theory of Satyagraha?
9. What was the main focus of the book 'Hind Swaraj'?
10. What is the meaning of 'swaraj'?

## Answers

1. Non-Violence
2. Fasting, non-cooperation, Civil Disobedience, picketing
3. Gandhi
4. 1910
5. Indian Home Rule
6. Passive Resistance
7. The British Government
8. Swaraj and the ways to attain swaraj
9. Self-rule
10. Self Government

## Assignments

1. Discuss the significance of *Ahimsa* and Satyagraha in the Indian Freedom Struggle.
2. Analyse the political ideology of Gandhi and its influence in the history of the freedom struggle.



## Suggested Readings

1. Chand, Tara, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 2017.
2. Chandra, Bipin, *Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India*, Delhi: Har-Anand, 2010.
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## Unit 3

# Non-cooperation and Khilafat

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ discuss the stages of growth of the non-cooperation and Khilafat movement
- ▶ acquaint with the background of the Non-cooperation movement
- ▶ describe the impact and result of the Non-cooperation movement

### Prerequisites

In the previous units, we have seen the emergence of Gandhi, his ideas and methods and some of his initial investments in struggles like Champaran, Kheda and Ahmedabad Satyagraha. The next important event that strengthened the Indian National movement was the Khilafat movement and the Non-cooperation movement. The enactment of the Montague-Chelmsford reform and the Rowlatt Act in 1919 actually ignited the struggle against the British government. Gandhi used this as an opportunity to use his methods as a weapon against the oppression of the British. Therefore, we can say that the anti-Rowlatt Satyagraha became the base for the Non-Cooperation movement. Both the movements gathered momentum under Mahatma Gandhi. By this time, Gandhi's popularity in his previous movements made him a popular figure in the Indian National movement. After the enactment of the unpopular Rowlatt Act, Gandhi launched his first all-India mass struggle.

### Keywords

Rowlatt Bill, Rowlatt Act, Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, Non-Cooperation Movement

### Discussion

During 1919-1922, the Indian National movement entered into a new phase of mass struggle. Two mass movements were organized

in 1919-1922 to oppose the British- the Khilafat movement and the Non-cooperation movement. Both movements emerged out of two different causes, but the plan of action of both movements was the same.

### 1.3.1 Background of the Movement

The First World War impacted the world in different ways. It was visible in terms of economic hardship and change in power and politics. Meanwhile, in India, the year 1919 marked a significant event in the history of British India. The period saw the enactment of the Rowlatt Bill, the emergence of Gandhi, the emergence of the pan-Islamic movement, and the passing of the Government of India Act of 1919 on the basis of the Montague-Chelmsford report.

Some of the major causes of the movement were

#### a. Montague-Chelmsford Reforms (December 23, 1919)

The Government of India Act of 1919 was enacted on the basis of the Montague-Chelmsford Report, which was published on 8<sup>th</sup> July 1918. The Report comprises recommendations for the constitutional developments in India. It also proclaimed that the goal was the establishment of a Responsible Government in India. The report eventually culminated in the enactment of the Government of India Act of 1919.

The Government of India Act of 1919 or the Indian Council Act of 1919 is one of the causes for the mass movement. The introduction of Dyarchy in the province brought discontent among the nationalist. The Act failed to satisfy the demand of the Indians.

Some of the major features of the Act of 1919 are as follows:

- i. Introduction of Dyarchy, that is, two classes of administration- Executive Council and the Ministers
- ii. The executive head of the province was the Governor.
- iii. The Subjects are divided into two-(a)

Reserved and Transferred.

- iv. The Governor is responsible for the subjects in the reserved list. The Reserved lists include law and order, irrigation, land revenue, etc.
- v. The transferred lists were under the purview of the ministers. The subjects include education, local government, health, public works, etc.
- vi. The Ministers were nominated by the elected members of the Legislative Council. These Ministers were responsible to the people.
- vii. The Secretary of the State shall interfere in the matters of the reserved list but cannot interfere in the transferred list.
- viii. In the legislature, the size of the provincial legislature increased.
- ix. Introduction of communal and class electorate.
- x. Establishment of a Public Service Commission.

All the above-mentioned developments became the background for the mass movement against the British government. Along with these, the Khilafat issue added fuel to the fire. The movement helped to gain support from the Muslims. Therefore, one can say that the Khilafat issue provided the immediate background for the movement.

#### b. Rowlatt Act

The Rowlatt Bill was passed by the British government to expand the authority over the Indians. In 1917, the then Governor-General Chelmsford appointed a committee under Justice Sydney Rowlatt. The Committee was appointed to investigate revolutionary activities and to suggest legislation to curb such activities. The Committee is known as the Rowlatt Committee.

The Rowlatt Bill was approved in March



1919 by the Imperial Legislative Council. The Rowlatt Act gave sanctions to the government to imprison any person without any trial or conviction. The aim of the Act was to imprison the nationalists without giving a warning. The Act, therefore, allowed the government to bring changes in the penal code and provided authority to search the place and arrest a person without any warrant. If any person is arrested, he or she can be detained for two years.

Gandhi believed that the Rowlatt Act was against the democratic right of the people. Hence, he decided to launch a nationwide satyagraha against the Act in 1919. Gandhi campaigned for the people to join the Satyagraha and formed a 'Satyagraha Sabha' in February 1919. A nationwide hartal, along with fasting and prayer, was summoned on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1919. However, Delhi observed hartal on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1919 due to confusion in dates. In several other places, hartals turned into violence and disorder. Punjab faced severe repression from the government, especially in Amritsar and Lahore. Gandhi tried to visit Punjab to help the people, but the government deported him to Bombay.

#### **c. Jallianwala Bagh Massacre (13<sup>th</sup> April 1919)**

In Amritsar, the situation was the worst. After the hartal on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1919, the administration was handed over to military authority under Brigadier General Dyer. Dyer banned all public meetings and hartals. Meanwhile, two local leaders, Satyapal and Kitchlew, were arrested by the British government. On 13<sup>th</sup> April 1919, an unarmed crowd gathered at Jallianwala Bagh(Punjab) in order to protest against the arrest of the leaders on the eve of the Baisakhi celebration. General Dyer ordered his troops to open fire without any warning. Thousands of people

were killed and wounded.



Fig 1.3.1 Jallianwala Bagh memorial, Amritsar

The act of General Dyer shook the whole country. Martial Law was imposed with immediate effect in Punjab on the same night. Opposing the British attitude, the famous poet Rabindranath Tagore surrendered his knighthood.

The Hunter Commission was appointed by Edwin Montague to investigate the Punjab incident. The Commission justified General Dyer's action, except that he should have given a warning first. They also gave justification to the imposition of Martial Law in Punjab.

#### **d. Economic Hardship**

After the First World War, the world economy faced severe setbacks. The price of daily commodities increased, which affected the common people. The imports declined tremendously. As a result, the Indian industry suffered. Production fell, many factories were closed, and unemployment increased. Apart from these, the peasants were overburdened with heavy taxation. At the political level, the nationalists protested because the British government failed to keep their promise. The alarming issues increased the discontentment of the people against the British government.

### **1.3.2 Khilafat Issue**

During the First World War, Turkey associated with Germany and Austria against



Britain. The Sultan of Turkey was the Caliph of the Islamic World, and the Indian Muslims considered him their spiritual leader. After the war, the British removed the power of the Khalifa in Turkey. Hence, the Muslims started the Khilafat movement in India to restore the position of Khalifa in Turkey.

The main demand of the activists was that the Ottoman Caliph should enjoy his empire, the Arab land should remain under Muslim rule, and the Khalifa's control should be retained in all Muslim sacred places.



Fig 1.3.2 Ali brothers, leaders of the Khilafat movement

In 1919, a Khilafat Committee was formed in Bombay. Seth Chhotani was the President, and Maulana Shaukat Ali was its Secretary. Other leaders of the movement include Maulana Azad, Hakim Amjad, Muhammad Ali, Shaukat Ali and Hasrat Mohani. The actions of the Committee were confined to meetings, petitions and deputations to restore the power of the Khalifa. However, some leaders were dissatisfied with the methods. They called for a countrywide national movement.

In 1919, the All India Khilafat Conference was held in Delhi, which advocated non-cooperation with the British government for the first time. Gandhi was in touch with the Khilafat leaders, and he was a special guest to the Khilafat Conference in November 1919. In February 1920, Gandhi suggested

to the Committee to adopt a non-violent non-cooperation movement. On 9<sup>th</sup> June 1920, the Khilafat committee at Allahabad collectively accepted the decision of non-cooperation and asked Gandhi to lead the movement.

The Khilafat Committee and the Indian National Congress outlined the non-cooperation movement in different stages:

- a. Resignation of the titles and honorary posts
- b. Boycott of government-affiliated schools and colleges, law courts, and foreign clothes
- c. Resignation from the civil service
- d. Resignation from the post of Police and Army services
- e. Non-payment of taxes

### 1.3.3 Towards Non-cooperation Movement

Gandhi succeeded in securing the support of the Congress for the movement. Finally, the special Calcutta session (September 1920) permitted the adoption of the programme of non-cooperation. The main opposition was led by C. R. Das. He disagreed with the idea of boycott the elections.

The Congress supported Gandhi's plan for non-cooperation till Punjab and the Khilafat wrongs were removed and the Swaraj was established. The main aim of the Non-Cooperation movement, that is, swaraj, was added at the Nagpur Session of the Indian National Congress in December 1920.





Fig 1.3.3 News of Non-Cooperation

### 1.3.3.1 The Nagpur Session of INC (1920)

The Nagpur session of INC, in December 1920, accepted the resolution passed at the Calcutta session. The opposition to boycott the election was then a non-issue, and C.R Das agreed to proceed with the non-cooperation. The Nagpur session of the Congress was important for several reasons. Firstly, the goal of the movement changed from the attainment of self-government to the attainment of Swaraj by peaceful means. Gandhi promised that if the programme was implemented, Swaraj would be ushered in within a year. Secondly, the new constitution of the Congress was introduced. The changes were as follows:

- a. The Congress formed a Working Committee of fifteen members.
- b. The Formation of All India Congress Committee of 300 members.
- c. The Formation of the Congress Committee from town to villages.
- d. Provincial Congress Committees were organized on a linguistic basis.
- e. The Congress membership made open to all adults.

The Non-cooperation movement had two main aspects:

- a. The constructive programme comprised the nationalisation of education, promotion of indigenous goods, popularising *charkha* and *khadi*, etc
- b. Destructive programmes included the boycott of law courts, educational institutions, elections, official functions and the British goods.

The Non-Cooperation Movement gathered more momentum from January 1921. Gandhi, along with the Ali brothers, undertook a nationwide tour. The movement received support from all sections of the society. A large number of students joined the movement. The educational boycott was successful in Bengal and Punjab. C.R. Das and Subhas Chandra Bose played a major role in promoting the movement. The Swadeshi spirit was restored in the minds of the people.

The boycott of law courts by lawyers was not as effective as the educational boycott. Many lawyers like C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru, C. Rajagopalachari, Vallabhbhai Patel and others gave up their practice. The most successful boycott was the boycott of foreign cloth. The volunteers would collect the clothes from house to house and burn the clothes. Another plan of the movement was the picketing of toddy shops. The boycott movement showed that the revenue of the government was reduced tremendously.

### 1.3.3.2 New Challenges and Events of the Movement

In 1921, Mohammed Ali, at the All India Khilafat Conference held at Karachi on 8 July, stated that it was “religiously unlawful for the Muslims to continue in the British Army”. Due to this statement, Mohammed Ali, along

with his friends, were arrested. On 4<sup>th</sup> October 1921, the Congress passed the resolution of whatever Mohammed Ali said. The resolution was adopted on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1921. However, the government ignored the whole incident.

The next dramatic event happened with respect to the official visit of the Prince of Wales, on 17 November 1921. The day the Prince landed in Bombay was declared a day of hartal all over the country. Several violent protests and riots occurred in various parts. In Bombay, Gandhi addressed the meeting in front of the Elphinstone Mills compound and lit a huge bonfire of foreign clothes. The police opened fire, and the three-day turmoil resulted in the death of nine people. The whole event of violence made Gandhi worried. When the Prince of Wales landed, the streets were empty, and everything was shut down. The Congress Volunteer Corps emerged as parallel police meanwhile.

#### 1.3.3.3 The Last Phase of the Movement

The government carefully observed the development of the movement and collected reports on it. They took measures to curb the movement. The Congress Volunteer Corps was declared illegal, and all those who claimed to be its members were arrested. C.R. Das was the first to be arrested. By the end of 1921, all major leaders were arrested except Gandhi. The British government continued the repression; public meetings were banned, and raids in the Congress and Khilafat offices became common. An attempt for negotiations was initiated by Malaviya, but it was unsuccessful.

In January 1922, Gandhi explained the position of the Non-Cooperation Movement at the All Parties Conference. On 1<sup>st</sup> February 1922, Gandhi sent an ultimatum to the Viceroy, reading that he could stage mass Civil Disobedience if the political prisoners

were not released and repressive measures not restricted.

The fate of the movement was decided by the **Chauri Chaura incident** on 4<sup>th</sup> February 1922. Annoyed by the behaviour of policemen, a section of the crowd attacked the Police Station at Chauri Chaura in the Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh. The police opened fire. The enraged mob set fire to the police station and killed twenty-two policemen. On hearing the incident, Gandhi decided to withdraw the movement. After the incident, Gandhi withdrew the non-cooperation management and called it a “Himalayan Blunder”. He persuaded the Congress Working Committee to approve his decision, and thus, on 12<sup>th</sup> February 1922, the Non-Cooperation Movement came to an end.

Gandhi's decision to withdraw from the Non-Cooperation Movement was critiqued by Motilal Nehru, C.R Das, Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose. They argued that Gandhi did not withdraw from the movement because of the violence of the Chauri Chaura incident. He withdrew it because the actions of the Chauri Chaura showed the growing militancy of the Indian masses and their willingness to launch an attack on the government. The critics argued that there was a tendency of growing radical approaches of the people to launch violence, this indicates that the movement was going out of Gandhi's control. The Congress Working Committee of 12<sup>th</sup> February 1922 published its resolutions. The resolution is popularly known as the **Bardoli Resolution**. The Bardoli Resolution contains clauses which urged the peasants to pay taxes and tenants to pay the rent. Therefore, Subhas Chandra Bose called the movement a ‘national calamity’.

#### 1.3.3.4 Impact of the Movement

The Non-Cooperation movement has



great significance in the history of the freedom struggle, irrespective of its failure. Gandhi emphasised the need to eradicate caste discrimination, communalism and untouchability. During the movement, people of all castes and creeds worked together, and they even ate and slept together when they were in jail. This act weakened the caste distinctiveness and increased the growth of social mobility. It implies that the lower caste people tried to raise their social status. The movement showed the unity between the Hindus and Muslims.

The economic boycott helped the Indian industries to flourish well. There was a tremendous decline in imports of foreign goods. This increased anxiety among the British industrialists. Therefore, the Indian industries benefitted from the boycott of foreign goods. The popularisation of *charkha* and *khadi* set the spread and the growth of Indian handloom clothes. The handloom industry saw a boom in these periods.

In the political field, the Non-Cooperation and Khilafat movement brought all communities and classes together to a new dimension of the National movement. The movement strengthened over the course of time when severe repressive measures were imposed. Mass participation of the people became an integral part of the movement. Scholars viewed that the feeling of self-esteem increased among the people. And therefore, the movement boosted the morale and dignity of the people.

### 1.3.4 The Swaraj Party (1923)

The withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation movement was followed by the arrest of Gandhi. During this period, many began to question the Gandhian ideology. C. R Das and Motilal Nehru advocated a new form of political activity against colonial rule.

They suggested that the nationalists should withdraw the boycott of the Legislative Council and one must enter the Council to obstruct the work of the Council. However, the proposal of boycotting the Legislative Council was rejected by the INC session at Gaya.

C.R. Das and Motilal resigned from the Congress and, on January 1, 1923, proclaimed the creation of the Swaraj Party or the Congress-Khilafat Swarajya Party. C. R Das was the president, and Motilal was one of the secretaries of the new party. The Party adhered to entering the legislature by any means. Meanwhile, the Congress members were split into 'pro-changers' and 'no-changers'. The supporters of the Legislative Council entry programme are called 'pro-changers'. Those who supported the boycott of the legislative Council were the 'no-changers'.

The pro-changers were headed by C.R Das, Vithal Bhai Patel, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Motilal Nehru. The no-changers included leaders like Ansari, Rajagopalachari, Kasturiranga Iyengar, Rajendra Prasad and Vallabhai Patel. The no-changers wanted to stick to the constructive programme of Gandhi.

The Swaraj party issued its manifesto on October 14, 1924, in Allahabad. The Swaraj party did not dislocate from the Congress and claimed to be its integral part. The party professed non-violence and non-cooperation.

Major aims of the party:

- a. Achieving Dominion Status to India
- b. Gaining the right to frame a constitution for India
- c. Attaining swaraj or self-rule
- d. Control of municipal bodies



- v. Federation of Asian Countries for promoting trade and commerce in 1928.

The Swarajist contested in elections as a separate group within the Congress Party in 1923. The Swaraj Party won 42 out of 104 seats in the Central Legislature in 1923. Hence, the parties aim to obstruct the functioning of the Council was a success. They boycotted all the official functions held by the government.

In Bengal, they made the dyarchy unworkable. The Swarajists were able to secure economic benefits for the workers, like reduction of salt duty, improved working conditions, protection of trade unions, abolition of excise duty on cotton, etc. They were also able to defeat the Public Safety Bill

However, the Swarajists could not coordinate their struggle inside the Council. The policy to obstruct the functioning of the Council had flaws. The death of C. R. Das in 1925 further deteriorated the party. During the period, there was a division among the Swarajists. They were divided into 'responsivists' like Madan Mohan Malaviya, and Lala Lajpat Rai and 'non-responsivists' like Motilal Nehru. The responsivists tried to protect the interests of the Hindus and cooperated with the government. The lack of cooperation among the Swarajists was seen in the 1926 election. In the election, the party won only 40 seats in the Central Legislature.

## Recap

- ▶ The Rowlatt Act was passed in March 1919.
- ▶ The Committee was formed under the leadership of Justice Sydney Rowlatt.
- ▶ The Committee was appointed to investigate revolutionary activities and to suggest legislation to curb such activities.
- ▶ Gandhi formed a Satyagraha Sabha in February 1919.
- ▶ On 13<sup>th</sup> April 1919, General Dyer opened fire on the peaceful protestors at Jallianwala Bagh.
- ▶ The Hunter Commission was appointed to look into the massacre.
- ▶ The Hunter Commission gave the report in favour of the government.
- ▶ The Government of India Act of 1919 to introduce responsible government in India was another cause of the Non-Cooperation movement.
- ▶ The Act introduced dyarchy in the province.
- ▶ Swaraj was added to the major objective of the movement in the Nagpur session of the Congress (December 1920).
- ▶ The Nagpur session of INC accepted the resolution of the Calcutta Session.
- ▶ The new constitution of Congress was implemented in the Nagpur Session.
- ▶ Two aspects of the Non-Cooperation movement: Constructive and destructive programmes.
- ▶ Chauri Chaura incident was on 4 February 1922.
- ▶ At the Bardoli Resolution, the Non-Cooperation movement was withdrawn.



## Objective Questions

1. In which year was the Rowlatt Act passed?
2. Who formed the Satyagraha Sabha?
3. When was the Satyagraha Sabha formed?
4. Who opened fire to the masses at Jallianwala Bagh?
5. When did the Jallianwala Bagh massacre take place?
6. Which movement was called the “Himalayan blunder” by Gandhi?
7. Which Act brought dyarchy to the province?
8. Who was the first president and Secretary of the Khilafat Committee formed in 1919?
9. Which Khilafat Committee session accepted the decision of the Non-Cooperation movement?
10. Which Congress Session adopted the Non-Cooperation movement?

## Answers

1. 1919
2. Mahatma Gandhi
3. February 1919
4. Brigadier General Dyer
5. 13<sup>th</sup> April 1919
6. The Non-cooperation Movement
7. The Government of India Act of 1919
8. Seth Chhotani was the president, and Maulana Shaukat Ali was the Secretary
9. Allahabad session of Khilafat Committee
10. Calcutta session (September 1920)

## Assignments

1. Discuss the role of the Swaraj Party in the National movement.
2. Analyse how people respond to the Non-Cooperation and Khilafat movements.
3. Give an account of the Montague-Chelmsford Reform of 1919 and the introduction of dyarchy in India.

## Suggested Readings

1. Chand, Tara, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 2017.
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# Unit 4

## Revolutionary Terrorists

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will :

- ▶ appraise the revolutionary terrorist activities in India during the freedom struggle
- ▶ elucidate the ideologies and methods of revolutionaries
- ▶ assess the role of women in the freedom movement

### Prerequisites

The worsened economic situation of the world economy after the First World War brought several miseries and stagnation in all the countries. The situation was accompanied by the imposition of heavy taxation to refill the empty treasury. The British government witnessed a series of mass movements against political and economic problems. The introduction of the Rowlatt Bills, and subsequent issues that happened did not provide a smooth political situation for the government.

Gandhi's call for hartals, strikes and non-cooperation received great support from people. The event at Jallianwala Bagh increased the political consciousness among the people. The launch of non-cooperation and boycotts received momentum. However, the incident at Chauri Chaura infuriated the young minds. Many young men like Chandra Shekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Manmathnath Gupta, and others didn't appreciate Gandhi's methods. Thus, they were drawn to violent means, so India witnessed the revival of revolutionary activities.

### Keywords

Revolutionary, Terrorism, Association, Hindustan Socialist Republican Association, Bhagat Singh

## Discussion

### 1.4.1 Revolutionary Trends

The sudden suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement devastated young Indian minds. Many started to question the strategy of the national movement. They were not attracted to constructive work. Many got inspired by violent methods and believed that violent methods alone would free India. In this situation, revolutionary terrorism was revived. Some of the new leaders of revolutionary terrorist politics were Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee, Surya Sen, Jatin Das, Chandrashekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Shiv Varma, Bhagwati Charan Vohra and Jaidev Kapur.

#### 1.4.1.1 The Birth of Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) - 1924

The revolutionaries were influenced by the Bolshevik revolution, the increase of working-class trade unionism and the emergence of new communist groups. The revolutionaries in India were influenced by these ideologies and led their activities to achieve freedom.

Two separate aspects of revolutionary terrorism were one in Punjab, U.P and Bihar and the other in Bengal. The revolutionaries of Punjab and U.P. set up an organisation called the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) in 1924. The association was founded by Ramprasad Bismil, Jogesh Chatterjee and Sachidranath Sanyal at Kanpur. The objective of HRA was “to establish a Federal republic of the United States of India by an organised and armed revolution”. They aimed to overthrow the British colonial rule and create a Federal Republic of the United States of India. The basic principle of the state would be adult franchise.

#### 1.4.1.2 The Kakori Conspiracy Case (1925)

The most important action of the HRA was

the Kakori Robbery. On 9<sup>th</sup> August 1925, ten men of HRA, including Ramprasad Bismil, Chandrasekhar Azad, Rajen Lahiri and others, stopped a train at Kakori near Lucknow. They looted the office of the railway station. The government’s reaction was very harsh. They issued arrest warrants and arrested a large number of young men, and started legal proceedings against them in the name of the Kakori conspiracy case. Ashfaqulla Khan, Ramprasad Bismil, Rashan Singh and Rajendra Lahiri were executed, and four others were sent to Andamans for long-term imprisonment.

#### 1.4.1.3 The Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA)

The Kakori case was a major disappointment to the revolutionaries of north India. The young men from U.P such as Bejoy Kumar Sinha, Shiv Varma and Jaidev Kapur and Bhagat Singh, Bhagwati Charan Vohra and Sukhdev in Punjab decided to reorganise the HRA under the leadership of Chandrashekhar Azad. All of them met at Feroz Shah Kotla Ground in Delhi on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> of September 1928. They changed the name of the party from the Hindustan Republican Association to Hindustan Socialist Republican Association. The HRA aimed to establish a Federal Republic of the United States of India a socialist state with universal adult franchise.

#### 1.4.1.4 Activities of HSRA

##### a. Simon Commission and HSRA

On February 3, 1928, the Simon Commission arrived in Bombay. The Commission was appointed to report on the political situation in India. It was a white men Commission as there were no Indian members in it. There were anti-Simon Commission protests everywhere, including the demonstration at Lahore led by Lala Lajpat Rai. Lajpat Rai died as a result of a brutal lathi charge while he was leading





the anti-Simon Commission demonstration at Lahore on 30<sup>th</sup> October 1928.

The death of Lala Lajpat Rai, who is known as *Sher-e-Punjab*, was seen as a challenge by the members of the HSRA. Hence, on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1928, Bhaghat Singh, Chandrasekhar Azad and Rajguru assassinated John P. Saunders, a police officer who was allegedly involved in the lathi charge at Lahore. The revolutionaries left a leaflet written in English and escaped. And the police failed to arrest them.

#### **b. Central Assembly Bomb Case (1929)**

The HSRA planned to bomb the Central Assembly Hall in Delhi under the leadership of Bhagat Singh and B.K Dutt on 8<sup>th</sup> April 1929, against the Public Safety Bill and the Trade Disputes Bill. These bills would reduce the civil liberties of the Indian citizens. Bhagat Singh felt that the workers should be awakened in order to take a new turn in their life. The Central Committee of HSRA at first decided to send Jaidev Kapoor and B.K Dutt to throw the bomb at the Assembly. But Bhagat Singh was accompanied by B.K Dutt. The bombs were relatively harmless. They threw leaflets on behalf of HSRA and gave the message, "It takes a loud voice to make the deaf hear". Both the revolutionaries were arrested.

Bhagat Singh and B.K Dutt had to face legal procedures in the Assembly Bomb case. The court found them guilty, and they were transported for a life sentence on June 12, 1929. However, Bhagat Singh was taken to Lahore to face the trials of the Lahore Conspiracy case for killing the police officer Saunders.

#### **c. Lahore Conspiracy Case**

Bhagat Singh had to face trial for the Lahore Conspiracy Case. Even in jail, the revolutionaries of the HSRA fought for

better living conditions and facilities for all the prisoners in the jail. For the Lahore Conspiracy and Assembly Bomb case, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were sentenced to death. The verdict was carried out on 23 March 1931.

#### **d. Chittagong Armoury Case (1930)**

The HSRA members soon began to organize themselves in new groups inspired by the Anushilan and Yugantar parties. Among the new group was the Chittagong group led by Surya Sen, who was one of the active participants in the Non-Cooperation movement at Chittagong. He was also the Secretary of the Chittagong District Congress Committee. Sen was arrested and imprisoned for two years, from 1926 to 1928, for his radical activities.



Fig 1.4.1 Chittagong Armoury Raid

Surya Sen gathered other revolutionary young minds like Anant Singh, Ganesh Ghosh and Lokenath Baul. While Bhagat Singh was in prison facing the Lahore Conspiracy case, Surya Sen and his followers planned a revolutionary action in Bengal. This is called the Chittagong Armoury Raid. Their aim was to challenge the armed power of the British.

Their plan was to occupy two main armouries in Chittagong and seize their arms with the help of revolutionaries. Then they decided to disconnect all telephone and

telegraph systems and dislocate the railway communication system between Chittagong and the rest of Bengal. They decided to execute the plan on 18<sup>th</sup> April 1930.

A group of six revolutionaries led by Ganesh Ghosh captured the Police Armoury. Another group captured the Auxiliary Force Armoury. The raid commenced in the name of the Indian Republican Army, Chittagong Branch. After the raid, the revolutionaries dispersed into neighbouring villages and formed small groups and continued their raids on the government for a few years. Surya Sen was arrested on 16<sup>th</sup> February 1933 and was executed on 12th January 1934. Many of his co-fighters were caught and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

#### 1.4.1.5 Impact of Revolutionary Activities

The government introduced several repressive Acts. In Chittagong, the oppressive measures established a reign of terror. Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested for delivering speech in Calcutta condemning imperialism and praising the heroism of the revolutionary terrorists.

A remarkable aspect is the participation of young women in Bengal. Under the leadership of Surya Sen, they provided shelter, acted as messengers, and fought with guns. Some of the prominent revolutionary women were Pritilata Waddedar and Kalpana Dutt. Kalpana Dutt was tried along with Surya Sen and given a life sentence.

The new revolutionary terrorist believed that instead of killing an individual or showing heroism, the group action could better aim at the colonial state. Their aim was to demoralize the bureaucracy.

### 1.4.2 Bhagat Singh and Revolutionary Terrorism

Born in 1907, Bhagat Singh was one of the most popular leaders of the nationalist movement. He was an enthusiastic leader who made an effort to spread the idea of socialism among the youngsters. He urged them to read Socialist literature and organised several study circles. Bhagat Singh and his comrades worked to spread the idea of revolution. Bhagat Singh, therefore, declared that “the real revolutionary armies are in villages and in factories”. Before his arrest in 1929, Bhagat Singh relinquished revolutionary terrorism and turned towards Marxist ideology. He then believed that popular mass struggle could lead to a successful revolution. Therefore, he promoted the establishment of Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha in 1926.



Fig 1.4.2 Bhagat Singh

Bhagat Singh and his comrades worked to widen the scope and definition of revolution. Singh was very well aware of the danger of communalism and often said that communalism was as big an enemy as colonialism. He required the people to be free from the captivity of religion and superstitions. He, therefore, struggled for self-emancipation and humanity and against the narrow concept of God and communalism.

The revolutionary groups had an important role in creating consciousness among the masses, especially the youth. With the death of Chandrasekhar Azad in February 1931, revolutionary terrorism started to decline in Punjab, U.P and Bihar. The death of Surya Sen put an end to revolutionary activities in Bengal. Despite its limitations, the activities of revolutionaries spread the idea of social consciousness and nationalist consciousness.

### 1.4.3 Participation of Women in the National Movement

Gandhi said, *“When the history of India’s fight for independence comes to be written, the sacrifice made by the women of India will occupy the foremost place”*.

The stories of women freedom fighters and their sacrifice occupy the foremost place in the history of Indian Freedom struggle. Women began to participate in India’s freedom struggle during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Some of the early participants include Bhima Bai Holkar, Rani Channama of Kittur, and the famous Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi. Women participated in the anti-imperialist struggle were in large numbers. Some of them are Sarojini Naidu, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay and Mridula Sarabhai; A.V. Kuttimalu Amma, Accama Cherian and K.K Saramma in Kerala; Hansa Mehta and Usha Mehta in Bombay, etc. Besides Indian women, there were Irish women like Annie Besant and Margaret Cousins who fought against the British imperialist forces.

Among the women freedom fighters from Kerala, the most popular was A.V Kuttimalu Amma. She has been active in the freedom movement since 1926. Her participation in the upliftment of the Harijans and the women is worth mentioning. Kuttimalu Amma

united the women folk of Malabar for the national struggle through organizations like Mahila Sangh. She led the women to picket shops selling foreign clothes in Calicut. She participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement with her 2 month-old child. In the protest, she was arrested and sentenced to two-year imprisonment. Kuttimalu Amma is one of the founding members of the All Kerala Women’s League.



Fig 1.4.3 Some women participants

Women’s participation in the freedom movement gathered momentum during the Gandhian phase, Gandhi gave new direction and focus to the women participants in the struggle. Women like Mridula Sarabhai remained close associates of Gandhi in his struggle. She was one of the trusted followers of Gandhi and was sent to various places to gather information or to talk to the masses.

Women’s participation in the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movement was limited. However, one of the prominent faces was Bi Amma (Abadi Bano Begum), the mother of the Ali Brothers (Maulana Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali). She did not allow patriarchy and purdah to cross her way. She has been sent to jail several times.

Women’s participation attained popularity during the Civil Disobedience movement of 1930-33. The historic Dandi March started from Sabarmati Ashram, and Gandhi declared that no woman should participate in the March.

However, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya rushed to Surat and took part in the movement. She then convinced Gandhi of the need to include women in the mass struggle.



Fig 1.4.4 A.V Kuttimalu Amma and other freedom fighters

The participation of women in revolutionary terrorist activities was one of the remarkable aspects of the period. We have already discussed some of the major women participants like Pritilata Waddedar and Kalpana Dutt. Apart from these people, two school girls of Comilla (present-day Bangladesh), named Santi Ghosh and Suniti Chowdhury, murdered the District Magistrate. In February 1932, Bina Das shot at the Governor while receiving her degree at the Convocation.

The participation of women in the Quit India Movement was even more significant. Women produced pamphlets, circulated literary works, ran the Congress radio and

so on. One significant contribution was the set up of Freedom Radio in Bombay by Usha Mehta and others. According to Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, female participation in the Quit India Movement was not much visible. Some prominent women, like Sucheta Kripalini and Aruna Asaf Ali were responsible for leading the movement. However, it is to be mentioned that the participation of the women at the rural level was significant. Many female folks joined the rallies and took the initiative in spreading the movement.

The involvement of women expanded during the Tebhaga movement. The movement saw the formation of Nari Bahinis, or women's brigades and resisted the colonial powers. Similar participation was witnessed in the Telangana movement of Andhra Pradesh.

Subhas Chandra Bose and INA played another significant role in experimenting with women in military activities. The INA decided to add a women's regiment named Rani of the Jhansi Regiment. The women who joined the company were given training and were prepared for combat duties.

Women went to jail in large numbers during the Civil Disobedience and Quit India Movement. In the jail, they learned to spin, sing nationalist songs, educate themselves, learn new languages, etc. Some of the active members of the movement were Sarojini Naidu (the Nightingale of India), Kasturba Gandhi, and Pritilata Waddedar of the Chittagong Indian Republican Army. Thus, in the 1940s, the Indian women participated in the national movement despite of class, caste and religious barriers.



## Recap

- ▶ The change in the strategy of movement from non-violence to revolutionary terrorism.
- ▶ Some leaders were Surya Sen, Jatin Das, Chandrashekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh, and Sukhdev.
- ▶ The revolutionaries of Punjab and U.P set up an organization called Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) in 1924.
- ▶ Objective: Establish a Federal republic of the United States of India.
- ▶ Changed the name from Hindustan Republican Association to Hindustan Socialist Republican Association.
- ▶ The Chittagong Armoury Raid aimed to challenge the arms power of the British.
- ▶ Surya Sen was arrested on 16 February 1933 and was executed on 12 January 1934.
- ▶ In Kerala, A.V. Kuttimalu Amma, Accama Cherian and K.K Saramma were the active members.
- ▶ Women's participation in the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movement was limited.

## Objective Questions

1. When was the Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) formed?
2. What was the main aim of HRA?
3. Who founded the HRA?
4. What was the Kakori Robbery case?
5. When was the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) formed?
6. What was the main aim of HSRA?
7. What were the major cases of HSRA?
8. Who helped to establish the Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha in 1926?
9. Who led the Chittagong Armoury Raid?
10. What was the motto behind the Assembly Bomb Case?

## Answers

1. 1924
2. Establish the Federal Republic of the United States of India
3. Ramprasad Bismil, Jogesh Chatterjea and Sachidranath Sanyal at Kanpur



4. HRA members looted official railway cash
5. September 1928
6. Establish a socialist republic
7. Assembly bomb case, Lahore Conspiracy case, Chittagong Armoury Raid, Killing of the police officer Saunders
8. Bhagat Singh
9. Surya Sen
10. Against Public Safety Bill and the Trade Disputes Bill

## Assignments

1. Discuss the objectives and ideologies of HSRA.
2. Analyse the main activities of revolutionary terrorists in Bengal.
3. Discuss the role of Women in revolutionary activities in India during the freedom struggle.

## Suggested Readings

1. Chand, Tara, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 2017.
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# BLOCK - 02

## Mass Struggle

# Unit 1

## Civil Disobedience Movement and Poorna Swaraj

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ review the nature of the Civil Disobedience Movement
- ▶ evaluate the movement in terms of a broader mass struggle
- ▶ explain the achievements, programmes, patterns and limitations of the movement

### Prerequisites

In February 1922, Gandhi decided to withdraw the Non-Cooperation movement. He felt that the movement was turning violent and that in many places satyagrahis needed to be trained. Politically, within the Congress, many leaders became tired of mass struggle, and they wanted to participate in the elections to the Provincial Council to bring change. The leaders argued that they could oppose British policies within the Council through election.

During that time, C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru formed the Swaraj Party within the Congress to argue for a return to council politics. But this opinion was opposed by leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose and others, who wanted a radical mass agitation. Many other factors influenced the call for a nationwide mass movement. The first factor was the economic depression as the period saw a decline in the demand for agricultural products and decreased exports of agrarian products. The peasants found it difficult to sell their products and pay the revenue. Meanwhile, the country faced severe turmoil economically, politically and socially.

### Keywords

Fourteen Points, Civil Disobedience, Poorna Swaraj, Salt Satyagraha



## Discussion

### 2.1.1. Background

The withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1922 adversely affected the movement in all spheres and the people felt dejected. The British Government continued with their repressive measures to crush the movement. The emergence of revolutionary thinking in the early twentieth century brought significant changes in the mass movement. The approach to the freedom struggle, the methods and ideologies witnessed changes.

The Act of 1919 stipulated that its functioning would be assessed after ten years. However, in September 1924, Motilal Nehru proposed that the prospects of the Act should be assessed as early as possible. This proposal was passed by the Indian National Congress despite the Government's opposition. As a result, the Government announced the creation of an Indian Statutory Commission. This is called the "Simon Commission".

#### 2.1.1.1 Simon Commission

The announcement and formation of an all-White Simon Commission in November 1927 was the immediate cause of the Civil Disobedience Movement. The Commission was formed to recommend whether India is ready for constitutional progress or not. The Commission was called the Simon Commission under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon. The people responded immediately because there was no single Indian in the Commission. The nationalists called for a boycott of the

Commission. The Commission was boycotted by the Liberal Federation led by Tej Bahadur Sapru, the Indian Industrial and Commercial Congress, Hindu Mahasabha, and the Muslim League.

The Congress turned the boycott into a popular movement. A nationwide boycott and protest was declared. On the Commission's arrival day, 3rd February 1928, all major cities and towns observed complete hartals. The Commission was greeted with the slogan "Simon, Go Back." People were on the streets, participating in mass rallies and demonstrations. Wherever Simon went, Calcutta, Lahore, Lucknow, Vijayawada and Pune, people greeted him with black flags.



Fig 2.1.1 John Simon in India

The police suppressed the boycott with lathis. Lathi charges were common and frequent during the period. The police beat up major political leaders. The worst incident was in Lahore, where Lala Lajpat Rai was hit by lathis on 30 October, 1928. He died due to severe injury. It was for avenging his death that Bhagat Singh and others shot the white police officer Saunders



Fig 2.1.2 Agitation against Simon Commission

### 2.1.1.2 Nehru Report

Lord Birkenhead, the Conservative Secretary of State, was responsible for the selection of the Simon Commission. He had been bothered by the inability of the Indians to formulate specific constitutional reforms. The nationalist leaders felt that they should arrive at a decision on the Constitution that India needs. This challenge was taken up in the meetings of the All Parties Conference held in February, May, and August 1928. Under the leadership of Motilal Nehru, a committee was formulated to look into the matters of the Constitution. The Committee produced a report popularly came to be called the **Nehru Report**.

The Nehru Report demanded Dominion Status as the form of Government in India. The Report rejected the principle of separate communal electorates. Since the Muslims were in minority, seats would be reserved for the Muslims at the Centre and in the province. The Report further supported the adoption of universal suffrage, equal rights for women,

freedom to form unions, and detachment of the state from any religion.

### 2.1.1.3 Fourteen Points of Jinnah

With few exceptions, the Muslim League led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah did not support the Nehru Report. Jinnah and others wanted the reservation of seats even in the Muslim-majority provinces. Jinnah, therefore, proposed the “Fourteen Points” in 1929, which rejected the Nehru Report.

#### The major declaration of Jinnah’s Fourteen Points includes

- i. The future Constitution should be federal, with residual powers bestowed in the province.
- ii. A uniform autonomy to all provinces.
- iii. Representation of minorities in all legislatures and other elected bodies.
- iv. In the Central Legislature, the Muslim representation shall not be less than one-third.





- v. Communal group representation shall be through a separate electorate.
- vi. The territorial distribution must not affect the Muslim majority in Punjab, Bengal and North West Frontier Province (NWFP).
- vii. All communities shall be granted full religious liberty.
- viii. One-third representation of the Muslims in both central and provincial cabinets.
- ix. No bill shall be passed if three-fourth of members oppose it.
- x. Separation of Sindh from Bombay.
- xi. Reforms should be introduced in NWFP and Baluchistan.
- xii. Granting Muslims an adequate share in all services.
- xiii. The future Constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim culture.
- xiv. No change shall be introduced in the Constitution without the province's consent.

#### 2.1.1.4 Towards Civil Disobedience Movement

##### Poorna Swaraj

The radicals led by Jawaharlal Nehru have also objected to the Nehru Report. Radical nationalists like Jawaharlal Nehru were dissatisfied with the declaration of Dominion Status. Instead, their slogan was "Complete Independence". In December 1928, the Calcutta Session of the Congress supported this cause. Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Bose, Satyamurti and other delegates accepted "Poorna Swaraj" or 'complete independence' as the goal of the Congress.

Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and others gave two years for the Government to accept the proposal for Poorna Swaraj. The Congress decided that if the Government did not accept the Constitution based on Dominion Status at the end of the year, the Congress would only adopt complete independence as its goal. They also decided to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement to attain the goal.

The Viceroy of India, Lord Irwin, on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1929, made the Irwin Declaration stating that India would be granted Dominion Status. He also promised a Round Table Conference when the Simon Commission submitted its report. Two days later, the nationalist leaders issued the Delhi Manifesto. In the meeting, they demanded that the purpose of the Round Table Conference is not to discuss granting Dominion Status but to formulate a scheme for its implementation.

However, the Irwin Declaration triggered problems in England. The politicians and general public did not favour India obtaining dominion status. Therefore, on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, Lord Irwin called a meeting with Jinnah, Nehru, Gandhi and Tej Bahadur Sapru and told them he was in no position to give the dominion status soon. This marked the beginning of confrontation with the Government and the initiation of the Civil Disobedience Movement.

#### 2.1.1.5 The Lahore Session and Salt March

The Lahore Congress is very significant in the history of the Civil Disobedience Movement. It was in the Lahore Session that the Congress passed a number of resolutions, including 'Swaraj'. The resolutions passed by the Congress conveyed the clear message that:

- a. Dominion Status is no longer acceptable.
- b. 'Swaraj' means complete independence or "Poorna Swaraj".

- c. A Civil Disobedience Movement would be launched whenever needed.
- d. The Congress was to boycott the first Round Table Conference.
- e. All future elections will be boycotted.

The Indian National Congress authorized the launch of the Civil Disobedience movement and non-payment of taxes in the historic Lahore Session in 1929. The Lahore Session has also asked the members of the Legislature to resign their seats. In February 1930, the Congress Working Committee invested Gandhi with full power to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement. The Working Committee admitted that the movement aimed “desperately in search of an effective formula”.

Gandhi submitted the demand to Lord Irwin stating that the Government should accept the minimum demand of Eleven Points reduction of agricultural tax, abolition of salt tax and salt monopoly, releasing all political prisoners and protection of the Indian textile industries. On 31<sup>st</sup> January 1930, Gandhi announced an eleven-point ultimatum to Lord Irwin. He said that if the Viceroy accepted these demands, there wouldn't be a Civil Disobedience Movement, and the Congress would participate in any Conference. Irwin was not willing to accept the demand. Therefore, on 12<sup>th</sup> March, Gandhi began the historic ‘Dandi March’ and violated the salt law. However, the movement gathered momentum in the historic salt Satyagraha in 1930.

### 2.1.2 Salt Satyagraha



Fig 2.1.3 Dandi March 1930

Gandhi began to argue against the salt tax by the end of February 1930. Salt was an important part of an individual diet. The British Government controlled the sale and production of salt by imposing heavy taxes on it. This tax was a burden to the common man.

On 12 March 1930, Gandhi inaugurated the historic Civil Disobedience Movement through Dandi March. This march aimed

to break the salt law imposed by the British Government. Gandhi and seventy-eight members of the Sabarmati Ashram marched from Sabarmati to Dandi. On reaching Dandi's coast in Gujarat, Gandhi broke the Salt Law by collecting natural salt from the seacoast on 6 April 1930. The breaking of Salt Law marked the inauguration of the Civil Disobedience Movement.





Fig 2.1.4 Gandhi breaking the Salt Law

While Gandhi was marching to Dandi, the Congress leaders at various regions were working on launching salt satyagraha regionally. Similar protests were carried out after breaking the Salt Law all over India. In Tamil Nadu, C. Rajagopalachari led the salt march from Trichy to vedaranyam on the Thanjavur coast. K. Kelappan walked from Calicut to Payyanur in Malabar to break the Salt Law. In Assam, Satyagrahis marched to Naokhali to break the law. Similar protests were carried out throughout the nation.

The Government retaliated with severe measures. The arrest of famous leaders added fuel to the movement. On 14 April, Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested for breaking the salt law. There were massive protests against this in Madras, Calcutta and Karachi. On 23 April, in the North West Frontier Province, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan's arrest led to mass agitation and demonstrations. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan was behind the band *Khudai Khidmatgars*, known as the Red Shirts. This group of revolutionaries played an active role in the Civil Disobedience Movement.

#### 2.1.2.1 Spread of the Movement

The speedy spread of the movement made the Government show their force against the

anti-imperialist movement. On 4 May 1930, Viceroy Irwin ordered the arrest of Gandhi. There was a massive protest against Gandhi's arrest. The police could not handle the massive crowd in the streets. In Maharashtra, the textile workers went on a strike on 7th May, and along with other residents, burnt the liquor shops and attacked the symbols of the Government authority. The Government suppressed the strike by imposing martial law after 16th May.

Another incident was that on 21<sup>st</sup> May 1930, there was a protest at Dharasana Salt Works (Gujarat). The satyagraha was led by Sarojini Naidu. The Satyagraha was against the excessive salt tax imposed by the British Government. The protestors marched towards the police barricade that had sealed the Dharasana Salt Works. The police beat the protestors, resulting in two deaths.

The period witnessed another no-tax campaign against the Chowkidari tax. The Chowkidars were the small police force in rural areas paid through the tax imposed on the villages. They were hated because sometimes they functioned as government spies. The movement against the Chowkidari tax first began in Bihar. In many places, the people refused to pay tax, resulting in the resignation of Chowkidars. The social boycott was encouraged against those who refused to resign. The Government reacted by confiscating property instead of their taxes. The matter further worsened when the Government occupied the Congress 'Ashram' in Bhagalpur. The occupation triggered demonstrations and rallies. The visit of Rajendra Prasad was welcomed with a rally. However, the rally was broken up with a lathi charge in which Rajendra Prasad was severely wounded.

In Kheda, Bardoli and Jambusar (Gujarat), people were determined to follow a no-tax movement. Here, the people refused to pay the land revenue. In Maharashtra, Karnataka and Central Province, the disobedience of forest law was the method of satyagraha. The tribal populations in these areas were the most severely affected group as they were restricted from using the forest. In U.P., a no-revenue, no-rent campaign was followed. The no-revenue movement was the refusal to pay revenue to the Government. The no-rent movement urged the tenants not to pay rent to the zamindars.

However, by the end of April, violent clashes began abruptly in several areas like Chittagong, Peshawar, etc. In mid-May, Gandhi was arrested. This event was followed by a textile strike in Sholapur. All these led to the commencement of a mass movement which was not based on non-cooperation but on violation of laws to achieve complete independence.

### 2.1.2.2 Impact of Salt Satyagraha

a. The Salt Satyagraha marked the beginning of new forms of agitation.

- b. The movement witnessed the participation of women in large numbers.
- c. Women who hadn't stepped out from their homes and stayed in purdah, mothers, widows, and unmarried girls stood outside the liquor shop, persuading the customers and shopkeepers.
- d. The participation of youth and students was also meaningful.
- e. The use of Khadi was promoted.
- f. The Congress party was declared illegal.
- g. The Boycott of foreign clothes.
- h. Showed the power of the people, including the depressed class and women.
- i. The new feature of the Civil Disobedience Movement was the massive participation of business people. They provided the finance and support to the movement. Along with them, the workers and the peasants also supported the movement.

## Recap

- ▶ The formation of an all-White Simon Commission in November 1927.
- ▶ The chairman of the Commission was Sir John Simon.
- ▶ The Commission was welcomed with the slogan "Go back, Simon".
- ▶ A committee under Motilal Nehru was formed.
- ▶ Motilal Nehru submitted the report called the Nehru Report.
- ▶ The Nehru Report defined Dominion Status.
- ▶ The report rejected the principle of separate communal electorates.
- ▶ The Muslim League, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, did not support the Nehru Report.
- ▶ Jinnah proposed the "Fourteen Points" in 1929.
- ▶ In December 1928, the Calcutta Session of the Congress supported Poorna Swaraj or Complete Independence.



- ▶ The Irwin Declaration of 31<sup>st</sup> October 1929 stated that India would be granted Dominion Status.
- ▶ The Salt Satyagraha was launched in 1930 against the imposition of the salt tax.
- ▶ On 12th March 1930, Gandhi inaugurated the Civil Disobedience Movement through Dandi March.
- ▶ Gandhi broke the Salt Law by collecting salt from the sea coast on 6th April 1930.

## Objective Questions

1. When was the Simon Commission set up?
2. What was the purpose of the Simon Commission?
3. Who selected the members of the Simon Commission?
4. Who presented the Nehru Report before the All Parties Conference 1928?
5. Which was the desired form of Government according to the Nehru Report?
6. Who proposed the “Fourteen Points” and rejected the Nehru report?
7. Who declared ‘poorna swaraj’ as the main aim of the Congress?
8. Who was the Viceroy of India during the Civil Disobedience Movement?

## Answers

1. November 1927
2. To check whether India is ready for constitutional progress
3. Lord Birkenhead
4. Motilal Nehru
5. Dominion Status
6. Muhammad Ali Jinnah
7. Jawaharlal Nehru
8. Lord Irwin



## Assignments

1. Analyse the impact of the Civil Disobedience Movement in India.
2. Discuss the activities of the Swaraj Party in the mass movement.
3. Evaluate the response of the people to the Civil Disobedience Movement.

## Suggested Readings

1. Chand, Tara, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 2017.
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## Unit 2

# Gandhi Irwin Pact and Round Table Conferences

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to

- ▶ have a knowledge of the political developments after the Salt Satyagraha
- ▶ describe the provisions of the Gandhi-Irwin pact
- ▶ explicate the causes that led to the Round Table Conferences and its resolutions
- ▶ acquaint with the reforms introduced through the Round Table Conferences

### Prerequisites

We have seen the Government's attitude towards the Civil Disobedience Movement. Throughout the 1930s, the perspective of the Government was uncertain. People opposed the arrest of Gandhi and other significant leaders for breaking the salt law. When Abdul Gaffar Khan was arrested in April 1930, an angry crowd demonstrated in the streets of Peshawar. Many were killed in the demonstration. The Government retaliated with brutal measures. Many peaceful satyagrahis were attacked, women and children were beaten up, and many more people were arrested.

Gandhi was forced to withdraw from the Civil Disobedience Movement in such a situation. Even after the ban, the Congress Working Committee was not declared unlawful till the end of June. Meanwhile, the publication of the Simon Commission report, with no mention of Dominion Status, further upset the political leaders. There were a series of arrests that changed the course of the National Movement.

### Keywords

Gandhi-Irwin Pact, Round Table Conference, Communal Award, Poona Pact

## Discussion

The publication of the report of the Simon Commission and its negligence to mention the Dominion status made the moderate political leaders unhappy. Madan Mohan Malaviya and M.S. Aney were arrested in the protest. In the wake of frequent protests and arrests, Viceroy Irwin suggested a Round Table Conference and announced the goal of Dominion Status. Irwin also accepted the suggestion made by the forty members of the Central Legislature that Tej Bahadur Sapru and M.R. Jayakar would be allowed to explore the means for peace between the Congress and the Government. Hence, Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru were taken to Yerwada jail to meet Gandhi to discuss the possibilities of a settlement. Nothing came of the talk, but a small section decided to participate in the Round Table Conference in London.

### 2.2.1 First Round Table Conference (1930)

The first Round Table Conference was convened in London on November 1930. The Conference was presided over by British Prime Minister MacDonald. The Round Table Conference was the first meeting between the British and the Indians. The Conference was convened after the submission of the Simon Commission report. The representatives with broader political interests participated in the Conference. However, the Congress did not attend the Conference since they were busy leading the Civil Disobedience Movement.

A total of 89 representatives were present at the Conference. In the Conference, Jinnah demanded a separate representation for the Muslims and acceptance of his Fourteen Points. At the same time, B. R. Ambedkar demanded the representation of the Schedule Castes. However, it is seen that any discussion on the Constitution without Congress was

meaningless. Ramsay MacDonald hoped that the Congress would participate in the deliberations next year.

The conference ended with announcing the release of Gandhi and other members on 25<sup>th</sup> January. Meanwhile, liberal leaders like Tej Bahadur Sapru, V. S. Shashtri and M. R. Jayakar urged Gandhi to meet with Lord Irwin. This meeting led to the Gandhi-Irwin Pact on 5 March 1931.

### 2.2.2 Gandhi-Irwin Pact (1931)

Gandhi signed the Pact on behalf of the Congress and Lord Irwin on behalf of the Government. The essence of the Pact was:

- a. The Civil Disobedience Movement was discontinued.
- b. Immediate release of all political prisoners not imprisoned for violence.
- c. The remission of all fines not yet been collected.
- d. Return the confiscated land which was not yet sold to third party.
- e. The Government agreed to the right to make salt for consumption in villages.
- f. Right to peaceful and non-aggressive picketing.
- g. The Viceroy agreed to withdraw repressive ordinances of the Civil Disobedience Movement.
- h. The Congress would participate in the next Round Table Conference.

The young Congress leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Chandra Bose and other Left leaders were unhappy with withdrawing from the Civil Disobedience Movement. They argued that the withdrawal meant giving up the demand for complete independence and



the goal of Dominion Status. For the common masses, the Pact seemed to be a betrayal.



Fig 2.2.1 Gandhi on his way to meet Viceroy Irwin

The young Congress leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, Chandra Bose and other Left leaders were unhappy with withdrawing from the Civil Disobedience Movement. They argue that the withdrawal meant giving up the demand for complete independence and the goal of Dominion Status. For the common masses, the Pact seemed to be a betrayal.

The Congress wanted Gandhi to negotiate the death sentence of Bhagat Singh and his comrades for the Lahore Conspiracy Case. The Government agreed to postpone the execution. But the British Government worsened the situation by secretly executing Bhagat Singh with two other prisoners eighteen days after the Irwin Pact.

### 2.2.2.1 Aftermath of the Pact

The Congress met at Karachi on 29<sup>th</sup> March 1931 to approve the Gandhi-Irwin Pact or the Delhi Pact. The deaths of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru created discontent

among the people, especially the youth. Gandhi was greeted with a black flag along his route to Karachi. The Congress recognised the Delhi Pact and re-announced the goal of 'Poorna Swaraj'. The leaders trusted Gandhi and authorised him to represent the Congress in the Second Round Table Conference.

The Karachi session became important for its resolutions on Fundamental Rights and the National Economic Programme. For the first time, the Congress declared the Swaraj. Therefore, the resolution granted fundamental rights to the masses, freedom of speech, assembly, and press, equality before the law, elections based on universal adult franchise and free and compulsory education. The resolution also promised exemption from rent, agricultural relief, better working conditions for workers, control of money lending, limited working hours, protection of women, and the formation of trade unions. Also, it encouraged the state ownership of industries and means of transport.



Fig 2.2.2 Gandhi in Karachi (1931) after the Gandhi-Irwin Pact

### 2.2.3 Second Round Table Conference (1931)

Lord Willingdon was succeeded by Lord Irwin. Gandhi attended the second Round Table Conference as a representative of

the Congress. The Second Round Table Conference was convened in London in September-December 1931. It was based on three principles of the federation, responsible Government and reservation and safeguards.

At the Conference, Gandhi claimed that the Congress alone represented the political India and claimed they had the right to represent the princes, landed nobility, educated classes and all minorities. However, this claim was rejected. Another key feature of the resolutions was Gandhi's demand for the immediate establishment of a responsible Government at the Centre and Provinces.



Fig 2.2.3 Second Round Table Conference

However, the participation of Gandhi in the Second Round Table Conference was fruitless. The negotiations with the Minorities Committee fell apart on the issue of a separate electorate. The Committee demanded a separate electorate for the Muslims, the depressed classes, Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians and Europeans.

B. R. Ambedkar appealed for a separate electorate for the depressed classes. Gandhi opposed the demand put forth by Ambedkar by stating that the 'so-called untouchables' could not be classified as a separate class. The

Conference was considered to be a disaster, with the talk failing to reach a decision. Gandhi returned to India with an empty hand on 28 December 1931. The Congress Working Committee met the next day and recommended the Civil Disobedience Movement.

#### 2.2.4 Third Round Table Conference (1932)

The Third Round Table Conference was convened from November to December 1932 in London to discuss future constitutional reforms in India. The Congress boycotted the Conference, and only 46 delegates attended the Conference. The Third Round Table Conference brought about the publication of a White Paper in 1933.

#### 2.2.5 The Second Phase of the Civil Disobedience Movement

While Gandhi was in London, the Government of India secretly prepared plans to fight with the nationalists. The Government decided to launch a hard and immediate blow against the national Movement and to arrest Gandhi. For this, they formulated ordinances which resulted in the imposition of Martial Law in several places.

By 1931, Congress resumed the no-rent campaign to ease the U.P. economic crisis. In revenge, the Government arrested workers of the Congress Party. In the North-Western Frontier Province, the Government continued the severe repression against the non-violent Khudai Khidmatgars (The Red Shirts). The Khudai Khidmatgars were declared illegal, and Abdul Gaffar Khan was arrested.

Seeing the violence, Gandhi decided to open communication with the Government. On 31<sup>st</sup> December, Gandhi asked for permission to meet the Viceroy. However, the Viceroy refused to meet Gandhi. Gandhi





was arrested on 4 January 1932 and sent to Yerawada Jail in Pune. On 4 January 1932, the Congress launched a strike against the Government. The Government imposed the “Civil Martial Law”. According to the law, civil liberties shall not exist and authorised the Government to seize the people and property at their wish. Therefore, in early 1932, the Civil Disobedience Movement was recalled, and the movement entered its second phase.

The All-India Congress Committee, the Congress Working Committee and many local Congress bodies were banned by the Government. According to the report, 32458 people were imprisoned by April 1932.

### 2.2.6 Communal Award (1932)

The divide and rule policy of the British was then expressed in the announcement of the Communal Award in August 1932. This is also called the Ramsay MacDonald Award. The Award allotted to each minority a seat in the legislature. The elections to the legislatures were to be carried through separate electorates, meaning that the Muslims should be elected only by the Muslims and the Sikhs only by the Sikhs. The depressed classes were recognised as the Schedule Caste and as a separate community. The depressed classes were also granted a separate electorate.

The Congress opposed separate electorates for the Muslims, Sikhs and Christians as it would encourage communal notions. The main criticism against the Communal Award was that the aim of this announcement was to divide the Indian people and prevent the growth of national consciousness. Hearing the declaration of the Communal Award, Gandhi started a fast unto death on 20 September 1932 in Yerawada prison. He was against granting a separate electorate. Gandhi saw the award as an attack on Indian unity and nationalism. It will create harm to both Hindus and the

depressed classes. Once the depressed class is treated as a separate entity, the question of abolishing untouchability would not arise.

### 2.2.7 Poona Pact, 24 September 1932



Fig 2.2.4 Ambedkar with Jayakar, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru after meeting Gandhi in Yerawada Jail after signing Poona Pact.

Worried by Gandhi's fast unto death, Madan Mohan Malaviya called for a Conference of various groups. An agreement was signed between Gandhi and B. R. Ambedkar on 24 September 1932. In the meeting, a joint electorate of the Hindus was agreed upon, but with two provisions:

- a. One hundred forty-eight seats in the different provincial legislature shall be reserved for the depressed classes instead of the 71 provided by the Communal Award.
- b. Twenty percent of the seats shall be reserved in the Central Legislature for the Depressed Class.

The Congress also promised to promote literacy among the Harijans. Gandhi accepted the Poona Pact, and he broke his fast.

The Communal Award and subsequent events made the Civil Disobedience Movement weak. By 1933, the mass Civil Disobedience Movement was replaced by individual Civil Disobedience. In August 1933, Gandhi was

arrested again. However, he was released due to his ill health. Gandhi saw the decline of the Movement and decided to take a leave from the Congress and work among the Harijans.

Gandhi started the campaign to remove untouchability after breaking his fast in the Poona-Pact period. To uplift the untouchables, he founded Harijan Seva Sangh in 1932. His targeted reforms included temple entry, common use of wells, etc.

The failure of the Civil Disobedience Movement indicates that the goal of the Congress for Dominion Status or swaraj remained unachieved. The Movement could not influence the Constitution making as well. However, the Movement had several positive aspects. It created a sense of national consciousness among the people. For the Indian National Congress, the movement gathered mass support from the people and recruited them to the party irrespective of social base.

### 2.2.8 The Aftermath of Round Table Conferences: White Paper (1933)

After the Round Table Conferences, the British Government submitted its proposals as a 'White Paper' in March 1933. The proposal was titled 'Proposal for Indian Constitutional Reforms'. A Parliament Joint Select Committee was appointed to consult Indian opinion on matters penned in the White Paper. Lord Linlithgow was appointed as the Chairman of the Joint Committee and was appointed to prepare a Report on the future Constitutional reforms of India. Twenty-one delegates from British India and seven from Indian states also became members of the Committee.

The report of the Committee was published in October 1934. This Committee Report and the White Paper became the basis of the

Government of India Bill of December 1934, introduced by Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State of India. Once passed by the British Parliament, the Government of India Bill became known as the Government of India Act 1935.

### Government of India Act 1935

In August 1935, the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act of 1935. The Act provided conditions for the establishment of the All India Federation. It is based on the union of the British Indian provinces and the Princely States.

#### Major provisions of the Act were

- i. At the centre, the Act provided a 'federation of India' comprising the British Indian provinces and the princely states. The princely states joined through the "Instrument of Accession".
- ii. Dyarchy, introduced in the Act of 1909, was withdrawn from the province. Instead, the provinces were governed by a new system called provincial autonomy or responsible Government.
- iii. Three divisions of subjects were made in the legislative powers between the federation and its units. Under the federal legislature comes subjects like defence, external affairs, railways, etc. Under the provincial legislature, subjects like law and order, local self-government, education and public health were included. The concurrent list comprised criminal laws, contracts and newspapers. The subjects in the concurrent list come under the purview of both federal and provincial legislature.
- iv. Defence and foreign affairs remained outside the federal legislature.



- v. Federal legislature comprises two chambers. Council of states with 250 members and a federal assembly of 375 members.
- vi. The franchise was limited to one-sixth of the adults.
- vii. The Act divided the British Indian provinces into two governor's provinces and five Chief Commissioner's Provinces.
- viii. The Provisions made for the establishment of a federal court.
- ix. Establishment of federal railway authority.
- x. The Secretary of State of India shall continue as the Crown's agent. He was responsible only to the British parliament.
- xi. The governors appointed by the Government have special powers.
- xii. Women were given franchise rights.
- xiii. Both economic and political powers were withheld by the British.

## Recap

- ▶ The First Round Table Conference was held in 1930, presided by British Prime Minister MacDonald.
- ▶ The Congress did not participate in the first Round Table Conference.
- ▶ The First Round Table Conference accepted Jinnah's Fourteen Points and a separate electorate.
- ▶ The Gandhi-Irwin Pact (1931) followed the first Round Table Conference.
- ▶ The Pact resulted in the withdrawal of the Civil Disobedience Movement, the release of prisoners, etc.
- ▶ The Karachi session of INC declared the goal as Swaraj.
- ▶ Gandhi attended the second Round Table Conference (1931).
- ▶ The Third Round Table Conference was convened from November to December 1932.
- ▶ The third Round Table Conference resulted in the publication of the White Paper in 1933.
- ▶ The British announced the Communal Award in 1932, with five separate electorates.
- ▶ The Report became the base for the Government of India Act 1935.

## Objective Questions

1. When was the first Round Table Conference convened?
2. Who presided over the first Round Table Conference?
3. What was the demand of Jinnah in the first Round Table Conference?
4. What was the result of the first Round Table Conference?
5. When was the Gandhi-Irwin Pact signed?
6. Which session of INC approved the Gandhi-Irwin Pact?
7. Why was the Karachi session of INC significant?
8. When was the Second Round Table Conference convened?
9. Which Round Table Conference session did Gandhi attend?
10. Who was the Viceroy at the period of the Second Round Table Conference?

## Answers

1. 12th November 1930, London
2. The British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald
3. Separate representation of Muslims and acceptance of Fourteen Points
4. Gandhi-Irwin Pact
5. 5th March 1931
6. Karachi Session
7. For Fundamental Rights and the National Economic Programme decisions
8. September-December 1931
9. The Second Round Table Conference
10. Lord Willingdon

## Assignments

1. Discuss the relevance of Salt Law and Dandi March in the Civil Disobedience Movement.
2. Trace the changes that occurred in the national movement after the decline of the Non-Cooperation movement.



## Suggested Readings

1. Chand, Tara, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 2017.
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## Unit 3

# Emergence of Communist Party

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will able to:

- ▶ narrate the background of the Communist Party in India
- ▶ appreciate the ideology and programmes of Left parties in India during the national movement
- ▶ have an acquaintance with the methods of struggle by the Communists
- ▶ explain the emergence of the Congress Socialist Party in India and their ideology and influence in the Indian national movement

### Prerequisites

Before discussing the emergence of left-wing politics in India's struggle for independence, it is important to know the roots of the communist ideology. The evolution of the Communist ideology owes its origin to the Russian Revolution. The Bolsheviks Party (Communist) led by V. I. Lenin defeated the Czarist regime in Russia and declared the formation of the first Socialist State. The emergence of this Soviet Government influenced the world by rejecting the imperialist ideology in China and parts of Asia. The Bolshevik Party followed the Socialist doctrine, especially Marxism.

The supporters of the Communists' ideology believed that if the workers and peasants could defeat the Czarist empire and establish a social order, then the Indians also could achieve victory against British imperialism. The socialist movement of Britain and Russia, therefore, made a profound impact on the development of Leftist groups in India. The improvements in the industrial sector and subsequent growth of trade and workers union further strengthened the communist ideology.

Several Socialist Communist Parties came into existence during the Non-Cooperation Movement. The Unit will uncover the evolution of Left politics and its major programmes in the struggle for independence.



## Keywords

Communism, Communist Party of India, Meerut Conspiracy case, Congress Socialist Party

## Discussion

As we discussed above, the Socialist revolutions in Britain and Russia impacted the growth of the Left movement in India significantly due to the industrial developments in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, and the existence of a large working population. Gradually, these functional groups began to organize themselves to protect their rights and demanded better working conditions and wages. Eventually, these organized efforts led to the formation of trade unions in India. The Socialist ideas became very popular during the period. Unemployment and economic depression in the world attracted attention towards Socialism and Marxism. Therefore, the growth of trade unionism and the development of socialist ideas among the working class prepared the ground for the emergence of the Leftist Parties.

The socialist ideas were spread through the medium of the press. The early socialist thinkers published their ideas and proposals through weekly magazines and books. Some of the prominent publications were as follows. In Bombay, S.A. Dange published a pamphlet, *Gandhi and Lenin*. He started the first socialist weekly, *The Socialist*. In Punjab, Ghulam Hussain and others published *Inquilab*. In Madras, M Singaravelu founded the *Labour-Kisan Gazette*.

### 2.3.1 The Formation of the Communist Party in India

The Indian revolutionaries were attracted by the Soviet Union and its revolutionary commitments. The commitment made them to visit the Soviet Union and be witness to the developments. The most well-known among the Indian revolutionaries was M. N Roy. Roy,

along with Lenin, worked for the Communist International's policy. Roy took part in the Second Congress of Communist International in Russia in 1920. Seven Indians, headed by M.N Roy, met at Tashkent in October 1920 and set up the Communist Party of India (CPI). After attending the Third Congress of the Communist International in 1921, Roy attempted to bring the Communist groups in India together as Communist International. However, this plan failed.



Fig 2.3.1 M N Roy

After this, between 1922 to 1927, a number of such organizations were formed. Some of them are discussed below. In December 1925, Satyabhakta organized the 'Indian Communist Conference' at Kanpur. Maulana Hazrat Mohani was the Chairman of the Reception Committee. The summoning of the Conference under the Presidentship of Singaravelu Chettiar is regarded as the formal beginning of Indian communism.

In 1925, the independent Communist groups in India came together at Kanpur and founded an All-India organization under the name of the Communist Party of India (CPI). S. V. Ghate was elected as the first secretary

of the party. Some of the other parties formed were as follows. The Labour Swaraj Party of the Indian National Congress was organized by Muzaffar Ahmed, Kazi Nazrul Islam, and Hemanta Kumar Sarkar in Bengal in November 1925. In the same year, the Congress Labour Party was organized in Bombay. In 1926, Kirti Kisan Party in Punjab was also formed. The Labour Kisan Party of Hindustan had already been working in Madras from 1923.

In 1928, all these provisional organizations were renamed the Workers and Peasants Party (WPP). The WPP was formed as an All-India Party. The fundamental objective of the WPP was to work along with the Congress to give a radical alignment. The Party worked as 'the party of the people'. They organized workers' and peasants' movements and aimed to attain socialism.

Within a short period, the WPP proliferated. Slowly, the communists influenced the Congress as well. Jawaharlal Nehru and others welcomed WPP's effort to radicalize the Congress. The WPP's contribution to the working class struggle of 1927-1929 was also significant.

### 2.3.1.1 Major Conspiracy Trials

#### (i) Peshawar Conspiracy Case

The Communists had to face a series of conspiracy trials from the Government. The

Government aimed to isolate the communists from the national movement. One was the Peshawar Conspiracy Case, a set of five legal cases that took place between 1922 to 1927. It was a trial against Mujahid, who tried to infiltrate to India from Russia to start a communist movement.

#### (ii) Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case (1924)

In 1924, the Government tried to destroy the activities of the Communist movement initiated by S.A Dange, Muzaffar Ahmed, Nalini Gupta and Shaukat Usmani in the Bolshevik Conspiracy Case. All four members were imprisoned for four years.

#### (iii) Meerut Conspiracy Case (1929)

It was a conspiracy case against the Communist Party. In March 1929, the Government arrested thirty-two political and trade union activists, including three British Communists (Philip Spratt, Ben Bradley and Lester Hutchinson) who came to India to organize trade union movements.

The Government aimed to disorganize the trade union activities and isolate the Communists from the national movement. Therefore, the thirty-two accused were put on trial at Meerut. This is called the Meerut Conspiracy Case.



Fig 2.3.2 Prisoners of Meerut Conspiracy

The Congress nationalist leaders took the defence of the prisoners. Gandhi visited the prisoners in Meerut to show their solidarity. Speeches made by the prisoners in the court were published in nationalist newspapers, thus spreading communist ideas amongst the masses. Therefore, one can argue that the Government's view to isolate the communists from the mainstream helped them to spread their ideologies.

### 2.3.1.2 CPI and Split From the Congress

By the conclusions of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, the Communist Party broke their connection with the INC and declared the Communist Party as a class party of the workers. They proclaimed that the Congress had become a supporter of imperialism. Also, The Communists argued that the slogan of Poorna Swaraj was a fake attempt. The Gandhi-Irwin Pact of 1931 was declared as proof of Congress's betrayal of nationalism.

The Workers and Peasants Party was also dissolved. Gradually, the Communists split into several groups. The Government took this as an opportunity and declared CPI illegal in 1934.

In 1935, the Communist Party was reorganized under the leadership of P.C. Joshi. Radical changes occurred at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International in Moscow in August 1935. At the Conference, the Communist decided to change its earlier position and advocated the formation of a united front with Socialists and others. During that period, the Indian communists started participating in the national movement led by the INC.

The Communist Party urged its members to participate in the national movement with the Congress. In 1938, the Party accepted

the Congress as "the central mass political organization of the Indian people" ranged against imperialism. Together with the Congress, the Communist Party organized the peasants and working class. By 1936-42, the Communists led major peasant movements in Kerala, Andhra, Bengal and Punjab.

### 2.3.1.3 Jawaharlal Nehru and Socialism

Jawaharlal Nehru conveyed the ideas of socialism to the national movement and became the symbol of socialism and socialist ideas in India. His socialist idea was that freedom could not be defined in terms of politics but must have socio-economic content. Nehru propagated the ideas of socialism through his books and articles. He declared that "political freedom would be meaningful if it led to the economic emancipation of the masses". Therefore, he saw the need to establish a socialist society.

Nehru developed an interest in the economic questions of the peasants after the peasant movements of 1920s. He then attended several international Congresses against colonial oppression, where he came into contact with the communists. Gradually, he started to accept Marxism.

In 1928, Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose organized the 'Independence for India League' to fight for complete independence. Nehru's idea of socialism became prominent during 1933-36. He proclaimed his commitment towards socialism in the Lucknow Congress in April 1936. During this period, Nehru developed a complex relationship with Gandhi. He criticized Gandhi on several issues like preaching harmony between exploiters and exploited, propagating the idea of trusteeship, etc.

Even in difference, Nehru defended Gandhi for his radical and revolutionary role



in the freedom struggle. He said that Gandhi's actions and teachings increased the national consciousness tremendously.

### 2.3.2 The Formation of Congress Socialist Party

The collapse of the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1934 resulted in opposition within the Congress. A group of young Congressmen formed the Socialist Party of young congressmen who were disappointed with the Gandhian strategy. Socialism, Marxism and Communism attracted this group of young congressmen. Many of them were against the design of CPI and were trying to find a new alternative.

Eventually, they formed the Congress Socialist Party (CSP) in Bombay in October 1934 under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Dev and Minoo Masani. Major propositions of the Party were:

- a. The primary struggle in India was the national struggle for freedom.
- b. Nationalism was necessary to attain socialism.
- c. The Socialists must work inside the Congress.

The CSP wanted a broad base of Socialist organizations bringing workers and peasants together. The CSP stood for the workers' demands and worked to abolish the capitalist zamindari system. Some early socialists were Jaya Prakash Narayan, Yusuf Meherally, Achyut Patwardhan, Ashok Mehta, M.R. Masani, Acharya Narendra Dev, and Ram Manohar Lohia.

The CSP worked mainly to strengthen and transform the Congress. According to Jayaprakash Narayan, the transformation of the Congress was seen in an ideological and

organizational sense. From an ideological understanding, the members of the Congress were pushed to follow the socialist vision.



Fig 2.3.3 Jayaprakash Narayanan

The CSP leaders were divided into three ideologies: Marxism, the Fabian and the Gandhian ideology. However, the CSP could not make many changes. The CSP rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan and boycotted the Constituent Assembly. In February-March 1947, CSP opened its gate to non-Congressmen.

#### Programmes of the CSP

1. Work for the acceptance of CSP by the INC.
2. Organize the workers and peasants for their economic uplift.
3. Organise Youth League.
4. Resist the British Government in the struggle.
5. Resist any negotiations with the British Government.

The CSP meeting in Bombay adopted various comprehensive programmes. Some of them include:

- ▶ To transfer all powers to the masses
- ▶ The socialization of key industries like steel, cotton, jute, etc
- ▶ There should be a state organization of foreign trade
- ▶ Abolish the compensation given to





- the princes and the landlords
- ▶ Redistribute the lands among the peasants
- ▶ The state must encourage cooperative and collective farming
- ▶ Adult franchise on a practical basis
- ▶ The state shall not discriminate between religion, sex, etc
- ▶ For the peasants, the Bombay session of CSP adopted various measures like the abolition of landlordism, encouragement of cooperative farming, exemption of rent and taxes, reduction in land revenue, etc

## Recap

- ▶ The Socialist revolutions in Britain and Russia impacted the growth of the Left movement in India.
- ▶ The socialist ideas were spread through the medium of the press.
- ▶ Seven Indians, headed by Roy, met at Tashkent in October 1920 and set up the Communist Party of India (CPI).
- ▶ In 1924, Satyabhakta organized the All India Communist Party at Kanpur (AICP).
- ▶ In 1928 the Workers and Peasants Party (WPP) was formed.
- ▶ The Peshawar Conspiracy Case was a trial against Mujahid.
- ▶ The Meerut Conspiracy Case (1929) Government arrested 32 political activists and put them on trial at Meerut.
- ▶ The CPI split from the Congress and tried to work independently.
- ▶ The Congress Socialist Party (CSP) in Bombay in October 1934.
- ▶ The CSP under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Dev and Minoo Masani.
- ▶ The CSP leaders were divided into three ideologies: Marxism, the Fabian and the Gandhian ideology.

## Objective Questions

1. Who set up the Communist Party of India?
2. When was CPI formed?
3. Who organized the All India Communist Party at Kanpur?
4. Who organized the Labour Swaraj Party of the Indian National Congress (1925)?
5. When was the Congress Labour Party organized in Bombay?
6. Who were the three British Communists who came to India to organize the trade union movement?
7. When did the Government declare CPI illegal?

8. Who reorganized CPI in 1935?
9. When was the Congress Socialist Party formed?
10. Who formed the Congress Socialist Party?

## Answers

1. M. N Roy
2. 1920
3. Satyabhakta
4. Muzaffar Ahmed, Kazi Nazrul Islam, and Hemanta Kumar Sarkar
5. 1926
6. Philip Spratt, Ben Bradley and Lester Hutchinson
7. 1934
8. P.C Joshi
9. 1935
10. Jayaprakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Dev and Minoo Masani

## Assignments

1. Trace the circumstances that led to the emergence of the Left movement in India.
2. Enumerate the significant differences between the Communist Party of India and the Congress Socialist Party.
3. Discuss the main objectives and programmes of the Congress Socialist Party.
4. Discuss the impact of the programmes of CSP on national politics?

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# Unit 4

## Organization of Peasants and Workers

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to acquaint with:

- ▶ the nature and characteristics of the peasant and worker's movement
- ▶ the ideologies of these movements
- ▶ the major peasant struggles during the freedom struggle
- ▶ the changing trends of the freedom movement through these struggles

### Prerequisites

The public expression of dissatisfaction by the peasants was a familiar feature of the nineteenth century. The peasants were empowered at the beginning of the twentieth century, which enabled them to fight for their rights. The organization of the peasants and workers inaugurated a new phase in the struggle for independence. The struggle was not just for attaining swaraj from the colonial rulers but also from the long-term exploitation and miseries of the peasants and workers.

The working class agitations in India are said to have commenced by the end of the 19th century. There were several agitations and strikes in the industries at Bombay, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Surat, Madras, etc. They were held in tea plantations and railways as well. The most spontaneous agitations were against economic distress and grievances.

### Keywords

Kisan Sabha, Eka movement, Malabar rebellion, Bardoli Satyagraha, AITUC

### Discussion

Due to extensive repressive measures from the British Government, the landlords and intermediaries, the discontent of the peasants grew tremendously. The effects of World War I further exerted the peasants to raise their

voices against all the oppression. The hike in prices of commodities and high prices for salt, cloth, kerosene and other necessities brought a situation of unsettling among these people. Along with these, the Government imposed arbitrary revenue demands, increased land tax, forced labour and other kinds of exploitation.



Three major peasant struggles: the Kisan Sabha and Eka movement in Awadh (U.P.), the Mappila rebellion in Malabar and Bardoli Satyagraha in Gujarat are detailed below:

### 2.4.1 Kisan Sabha in Awadh

After the annexation of Awadh in 1856, the *talukdars* or big landlords, accumulated strength in the second half of the nineteenth century. The situation led to excessive rent extraction, illegal revenue extraction, renewal fees or *Nazrana*, arbitrary eviction or *Bedakhli*, and other levies that made life miserable for the peasants. The rising food prices after the First World War made things difficult for the people. The tenants of Awadh were on the verge of protest.

The members of the Home Rule League in U.P. were the early forerunners who initiated the process of organizations of the peasants. The U.P Kisan Sabha was established in February 1918 with the efforts of Gauri Shankar Misra, Indra Narain Dwivedi, and Madan Mohan Malaviya.

Towards the end of 1919, the peasant activities increased at the grass root level. By 1920, the Kisan meetings became common in Awadh. In this region, a powerful peasant movement emerged under the leadership of Baba Ramachandra. Other leaders of the movement were Thinguri Singh, and Durgapal Singh. The movement gained momentum when Baba Ramachandra was arrested.

Meanwhile, the Deputy Commissioner of Pratapgarh, Mehta, promised the kisans to investigate the forwarded complaints. The Kisan Sabha at Pratapgarh became the main centre of activity because many complaints were registered with the sabha on the payment of taxes. Gauri Shankar Mia tried to negotiate with Mehta to look into the issues of *Bedakhli* and *Nazrana*. The situation changed when

Mehta went on leave. The landlords used this opportunity to strike. During the strikes, the leaders and thirty-two kisans were arrested.

The Non-Cooperation movement and the change in the path of agitations also brought changes in the Kisan movements. Some of the earlier leaders, like Madan Mohan Malaviya, preferred to stick to constitutional means. This led to the establishment of the Kisan Sabha. Soon the Oudh Kisan Sabha at Pratapgarh was established on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1920. This new body tried to integrate all grass root Kisan Sabhas. Through the efforts of Jawaharlal Nehru, Mata Badal Pande, Baba Ramchandra, and Kedar Nath, over 300 kisan sabhas were brought under this new Kisan Sabha.

The Awadh Kisan Sabha asked the peasants to refuse to till the *Bedakhli* land and not to offer unpaid labour. The Awadh Kisan Sabha showed strength in the rally held at Ayodhya on 20 and 21 December, 1920.

In January 1921, the nature of the peasant movement changed tremendously. The protestors followed the method of looting the bazaars, houses and often clashed with the police. The Government tried to suppress the violence. By March, the Seditious Meetings Act was passed, which stopped all political meetings. The Government also passed the Oudh Rent Amendment Act. The Act brought relief to the peasants. And slowly, the movement disappeared.

### 2.4.2 Eka movement

Towards the end of 1921, peasant discontent arose again in Awadh. The main centres of disputes were Hardoli, Bahraich and Sitapur. The movement here grew under the name of *Eka* or unity movement. The campaign was against the extraction of rent that was fifty per cent higher than the recorded rent and the oppression of revenue collector *Thekedars*.



The movement changed its leadership from the Congress to Madari Pasi. Slowly, the movement lost its contact with the Congress leaders. The Eka movement included small zamindars who were disappointed with the Government because of high revenue demand. By March 1922, severe repression from the Government led the movement to an end.

### 2.4.3 Mappila Rebellion (1921)

In August 1921, peasant discontent awakened in the Malabar district of Kerala. Mappila, who were Muslim tenants, rebelled to eradicate the grievances related to lack of security of tenure, renewal of fees, high rent and landlord exploitation.

The Malabar District Congress Conference held at Manjeri in April 1920 supported the tenants' issues and demanded framing of a law to control landlord-tenant relations. The Manjeri conference was followed by the formation of the Tenants Association at Kozhikode.

The Khilafat issue gave an impetus to the Mappila rebellion. Both movements merged in Kerala. The authorities could not distinguish between the Khilafat and the tenants meeting. The growing popularity of the movement made Gandhi visit Kerala. On 18<sup>th</sup> February, all leaders of the Khilafat movement, Yakub Hasan, U.Gopala Menon, P. Moideen Koya and K. Madhavan Nair, were arrested. Therefore, the leadership of the Khilafat movement was passed into the hands of Mappila leaders.

The Mappilas began to exhibit signs of turbulence and violence against the authority. The immediate cause of the rebellion was when the District Magistrate of Eranad E.F. Thomas raided the mosque at Tirurangadi on 20<sup>th</sup> August 1921. The raid was conducted to arrest Ali Musaliar, a Khilafat leader. They

found only some other leaders and arrested them. However, the news spread that the Mambrath mosque, of which Ali Musaliar was the priest, was raided and destroyed by the British Army.

Hearing the news, Mappilas of Kottakkal, Tanur and Parappanangadi met at Tirurangadi. The leaders met the officials and demanded the release of the arrested volunteers. The people were peaceful, but the police opened fire on the crowd. In the fire, many were killed. A clash followed between the protestors and the Government. The protesters destroyed Government offices, its records were burnt, and they even looted the treasury. The rebellion then spread to Eranad, Valluvanad, and Ponnani taluks.



Fig 2.4.1 Captured Mappila prisoners

In the first stage of the rebellion, the attacks were focused on landlords, mostly Hindus, kutchcheris (courts), police stations, treasury, offices and the British planters. The rebels burned the records of wealthy landlords. The British Government then declared martial law and suppressed the revolt. However, the movement took a communal tone.

A special battalion of the police called the Malabar Special Force suppressed the rebellion. One of the tragic incidents of the revolt was the 'Wagon Tragedy'. On 20<sup>th</sup> November 1921, Mappilas were carried as

prisoners in a closed railway goods wagon from Tirur to Coimbatore. Sixty-seven of the ninety prisoners died of suffocation when the train reached Podanur. Sumit Sarkar calls this incident “The Black Hole of Podanur”.

The peasant movements in U.P and Malabar gave impetus to the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movement.

#### **2.4.4 Bardoli Satyagraha (1928)**

The Bardoli satyagraha was a no-tax movement launched in Bardoli taluk of Surat district in Gujarat in 1928. The Satyagraha was against a thirty per cent increase in tax over the existing assessment. The Congress leaders protested against this hike in revenue demand and set up the Bardoli Inquiry Committee. The report of the Committee was published in July 1926 and concluded that the increase in assessment was unjustified. The Congress leaders, members of the Legislative Council also took up the issue. In July 1927, the Government reduced the increased estimate to 21.97 per cent.

Vallabhai Patel took the leadership of the movement. Patel reached Bardoli on 4<sup>th</sup> February and held meetings with the Congress leaders and peasant representatives. Patel wrote a letter to the Governor of Bombay and asked him to appoint an independent enquiry. On 12<sup>th</sup> February, the occupants of the Bardoli taluk passed a resolution. Accordingly, the occupants of the lands refused to pay the revised revenue assessment until the Government appointed an independent tribunal. This marked the beginning of the Bardoli Satyagraha.

Judicial Officer Broomfield and Revenue Officer Maxwell conducted an enquiry on this matter. The Commission concluded that the increase in the assessment is unjustified. The Government then reduced the enhancement

to 6.03 per cent. This is called the Bardoli Resolution.

#### **2.4.5 The Peasant Movement in the 1930s**

The commencement of the Civil Disobedience Movement witnessed the participation of the peasants in the national movement in large numbers. The political atmosphere created after the Simon Commission and the Great Depression of 1929 further increased the intensity of the movement. The peasants were agitated over the fall in prices of their products and increased revenue demands and rents. During the Civil Disobedience Movement, no-rent and no-revenue campaigns were started in different parts of the country.

In U.P., a powerful peasant movement arose against the increase in rent and forced labour in the 1930s. Gandhi urged the peasants to pay only a part of the revenue demands. However, in several places, the announcement resulted in non-payment of rent to the Zamindars. The local leaders resorted to militant actions in the name of the Congress. Meantime, in 1931, the Congress leadership authorized the non-payment of rent. And in 1936, the Congress supported a call for the abolition of landlordism. In Bengal, Bankim Mukherji led the peasants of Burdwan against the canal tax. There was resentment in Odisha, Punjab, Bihar, and Andhra.

#### **2.4.6 Working Class Movements**

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, there were several strikes, like the textile mill strike in Bombay, Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Surat, and Madras. The period also witnessed strikes in railway and tea plantations. However, the nature of these strikes indicates that they were spontaneous and unorganised revolts to redress immediate grievances.

In the pre-Gandhian phase, several attempts were made to organise the workers strike and improve the workers' conditions. In Bengal, the Workingmen's Club was founded in 1870 by Sasipada Banerjee. In Bombay, Narayan Meghajee Lokhanday started the Bombay Mill and Mill hands Association in 1890.

The mainstream nationalist movement in the initial stage did not take up the issue of workers and labour questions. The nationalists paid less attention to the concerns of the workers. They have concentrated their activities on the struggle against the British.

The negligence changed with the beginning of the Home Rule League in 1916, the Rowlatt Satyagraha in 1919, the Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movement of 1920-22. There was a rebirth of working-class activity from 1919 to 1922. The working class became organised, and they began to fight for their cause.

Along with the above-mentioned causes, the economic distress of World War I, the influence of the Russian Revolution and the formation of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) created a situation favourable for the formation of working-class organisations. All these factors initiated an era of general strikes and trade unionism. Therefore, the years from 1918 to 1922 is very important for the working class.

The Madras Labour Union, formed in April 1918, is considered as the first trade union in India. The major leaders of the Union were B.P. Wadia a nationalist leader and an associate of Annie Besant. The organisation was based on the workers of Carnatic and Buckingham Mills in Madras.

Another noteworthy development was the formation of the Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association (TLA) in 1918. It was founded

by Gandhi with 14000 workers along with Anasuya Sarabhai and Sankarlal Banker in Ahmedabad. The Association opted for the methods of trusteeship and arbitration.

#### 2.4.6.1 All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) 1920

The All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) was formed in 1920. Lokamanya Tilak, who was in close pursuit with Bombay workers, made a major effort in its formation. Lala Lajpat Rai was the first president of AITUC. Dewan Chaman Lal was its General Secretary. The AITUC published its first manifesto in its first session and exhorted the workers to organise themselves and intervene in national politics. In the second session of AITUC, Chaman Lal moved the resolution in favour of Swaraj. Other leading AITUC supporters were C.R Das, C.F Andrew, J.M Sengupta, Subas Bose, Jawaharlal Nehru, and Satyamurti.



Fig 2.4.2 Lala Lajpat Rai, President AITUC

In 1920, there were 125 unions with 250,000 members. The participation of workers in the national movement was also significant. In April 1919, after the repression in Punjab and Gandhi's arrest, the Ahmedabad working class organized strikes, agitations and demonstrations. Government buildings were

set on fire in Ahmedabad, and telephone and telegraph wires were cut off. The Government responded to this strike with repression, which led to the death of twenty-eight people and wounded others.

The Railway workers agitated for economic causes and against racial discrimination. Between 1919 and 1921, railway workers called for agitations supporting the Rowlatt satyagraha, Khilafat and Non-Cooperation movement. In April 1919, the North-Western Railway workers called for an All-India general strike. In November 1921, when the Prince of Wales visited Bombay, the workers responded with a strike. In Bombay, the textile factories were closed, and workers protested on the streets.

#### **2.4.6.2 Working Class Movement After the 1920s**

The working class movement gathered momentum after the 1920s. This time, the movement was encouraged by the emergence of the Left Bloc. Various Left ideological trends began to influence the national movement during this period. Different Communist groups organised themselves into the Workers and Peasants Parties (WPP) under the leadership of S.A Dange, Muzaffar Ahmed, P.C Joshi and Sohan Singh Josh. The WPP functioned as a left-wing within the Congress.

However, over the period, the Communist ideology became popular. This influence was visible in AITUC as well. In Bombay, the textile workers resorted to a general strike in April-September 1928. During the strike, the Gimi Kamgar Union, led by the Communists, acquired a pre-eminent position. In the AITUC, too, the Communists acquired a dominant position. This resulted in the split of the AITUC.

The workers under communist and nationalist influence participated in the national movement widely. In November 1927, the AITUC members participated in the demonstration against the Simon Commission. The Government launched a two-pronged attack on the labour movement, seeing its immense growth and intensity. The Government enacted the Public Safety Act and Trade Union Disputes Act to suppress the workers' movement.

The participation of the workers in the Civil Disobedience movement was significant. The textile workers of Sholapur, Karachi, mill owners of Calcutta and mill workers of Madras clashed with the Government. In Bombay, the Great Indian Peninsular Railwaymen's Union launched a Satyagraha when Gandhi breached the salt law on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1930.

The worker's movement witnessed a decline from 1931 to 1936. The workers' participation in the Civil Disobedience movement was also meagre. However, the movement gathered momentum during 1937-1939. Meanwhile, the Communists rejoined the AITUC in 1935. A powerful left consolidation was led by Jawaharlal Nehru comprising the Communists, the Congress Socialists and the Left nationalists.

The formation of the Congress Ministries in 1937 resulted in an increase in working-class activities. The AITUC supported the Congress in the 1937 election. Between the period 1937-1939, the number of trade unions increased. In 1938, the National Federation of Trade Unions came together with AITUC.

The period also witnessed certain notable strikes. The general strike of the jute workers in Bengal in 1937 lasted for 74 days. The strike was supported by the Congress. In 1938, another strike occurred in Bombay textile



industry. The strike was against the Industrial Dispute Bill introduced by the Congress ministry in the province. Apart from these strikes, there were issues in Kanpur, Madras, Jamshedpur and other places. By 1938, strikes had reached their maximum. To restrict labour militancy, the Congress Ministry passed the Bombay Industrial Disputes Act in 1939.

The workers actively participated in the Quit India movement as well. Immediately after the arrest of Gandhi on 9th August 1942, followed by the Quit India Resolution, there were strikes and hartals all over the country. It is observed that the Tata Steel Plant was closed for thirteen days due to strikes. In Ahmedabad, the textile strike lasted for three and a half months.

In 1945, the workers held strikes and demonstrations to support the INA prisoners. The workers have also demonstrated their agitation against the RIN mutiny. They fought with the police and military, leading to the death of 250 workers.

The above picture gives us the idea that trade unions emerged to protect the interest of the workers. They worked along with the nationalist leaders to improve their working conditions, against long working hours and hazardous working conditions, and to improve basic amenities.

## Recap

- ▶ The U.P Kisan Sabha was established in February 1918.
- ▶ The Oudh Kisan Sabha at Pratapgarh was established on 17 October 1920.
- ▶ The peasant discontent of the peasants of Awadh.
- ▶ The Eka movement fought against the oppression of revenue collector *thekedars*.
- ▶ The Mappila rebellion of 1921 was against the high revenue extraction of land-lords.
- ▶ The Khilafat issue gave impetus to the Mappila rebellion.
- ▶ The Government suppressed it with the Malabar Special Force.
- ▶ Wagon Tragedy on 20th November 1921.
- ▶ Bardoli satyagraha under Vallabhai Patel
- ▶ Formation of All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) in 1920
- ▶ Lala Lajpat Rai was its first president, and Dewan Chaman Lal was the General Secretary of AITUC.
- ▶ Split in AITUC
- ▶ Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association (TLA) was established in 1918.
- ▶ The Communists re-joined the AITUC in 1935.





## Objective Questions

1. Who established the U.P Kisan Sabha?
2. When was the U.P Kisan Sabha established?
3. What was the aim of the Eka movement?
4. Who was the Khilafat leader in Kerala?
5. Which mosque at Malabar was set to be raided during the Malabar rebellion?
6. How was the Malabar rebellion suppressed?
7. When did the Wagon Tragedy happen?
8. Who called the Wagon Tragedy “The Black Hole of Podanur”?
9. Who took the leadership of the Bardoli Movement?
10. What was the result of the Bardoli Resolution?

## Answers

1. Gauri Shankar Misra, Indra Narain Dwivedi and Madan Mohan Malaviya.
2. February 1918
3. Fought against the extraction of rent and Thekedars
4. Ali Musaliar
5. Mambrath mosque
6. With the support of Malabar Special Force
7. On 20th November 1921
8. Sumit Sarkar
9. Vallabhai Patel
10. Reduction of tax enhancement to 6.03 per cent

## Assignments

1. Discuss the nature of the peasant and working-class movement during the Indian National Movement.
2. Trace the contributions of the working class in India’s struggle for freedom.
3. How did AITUC unite the working-class movement in India? Explain.

## Suggested Readings

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# BLOCK - 03

## **Towards Independence**

# Unit 1

## The Second World War and the National Movement

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ acquaint the circumstances that led to the political changes in India after the II world War
- ▶ realise the attitude of the British Government towards growing national movement
- ▶ illustrate the British imperial strategy in India during World War II
- ▶ evaluate the drawbacks and failures of the proposals of the British Government

### Prerequisites

Before we discuss the impact of World War II on the national movement, it is relevant to have a picture of the political background of India. The withdrawal of the Civil Disobedience Movement and subsequent political changes with the introduction of the Government of India Act of 1935 brought about significant changes to the national struggle. The Act of 1935 introduced provincial autonomy, and the Government announced elections to the provincial legislature in 1937. The Congress won in 7 out of 11 provinces. Therefore, the Congress formed a government.

Two years after the formation of the Congress Ministry, in September 1939, World War II broke out. The period during World War II is significant because the period witnessed the intensification of the Indian demand for independence. The Congress and the Working Committee successfully spread the idea of unity and national consciousness among the people.



## Keywords

Council Entry, Individual Satyagraha, August Offer, Cripps Mission

### 3.1.1 India Before World War II

Following the failure of the Civil Disobedience Movement, the Congress decided to return to its old programme of action. That is known as Council Entry or participating in the elections. In 1934, the Swarajya party revived at a Conference held in Delhi. At the Conference, Nehru declared that “there is no choice but to contest elections” ‘.

The decision to contest the election was for two reasons. Firstly, cancellation of repressive laws and, secondly, the rejection of the White Paper Proposal of the Round Table Conference. In the elections of 1937, the Congress won with a majority in the Legislative Assemblies of Madras, Central Province, United Province, Bihar and Odisha. Out of 1585 seats in the Provincial Assemblies, the Congress won 707 seats. The Congress victory in the 1937 election and the formation of ministries changed the concentration of power in the country.

#### 3.1.1.1 Subhash Chandra Bose and the Tripuri Session

After the elections of 1937, the Congress had to face a crisis in leadership. The crisis revolved around the Presidential elections of the Congress. In 1939, Subhash Chandra Bose announced his candidature for the Presidential elections of the Congress. However, his candidature was opposed by Sardar Patel, Rajendra Prasad and J.B Kripalani and four other members of the Congress Working Committee. They nominated Pattabi Sitaramayya as the candidate for the post. However, on 29<sup>th</sup> January 1939, Bose was again elected as the President by 1580 votes.



Fig 3.1.1 Subhash Chandra Bose

Some internal problems arose in the Tripuri session of the Congress, which was held from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> March 1939. In his presidential address, Bose advocated a programme of giving the British Government a six-month deadline to grant independence. If they did not, a mass Civil Disobedience Movement would be launched. However, Gandhi believed that it was not the right time to launch a mass movement because neither the Congress nor the people were ready for a fight.

Another problem was that Bose had misjudged his popularity and the significance of his majority. The Congressmen voted him for his militant politics, not because they wanted him to become their national leader. At Tripuri, Govind Ballabh Pant made a resolution showing full faith in Gandhi's leadership. Therefore, he, along with majority support, asked Bose to nominate a working committee in accordance with Gandhi's wish.



However, Gandhi refused to accept this and said he would nominate a committee of his choice.

Bose was not ready to accept the challenge. Bose wanted Gandhi to be the leader of the movement with his constructive methods. Eventually, Bose resigned from the post, and Rajendra Prasad was elected in his place. Subhash Bose and his supporters formulated the Forward Bloc. This was a new political party within the Congress. Bose called for an All-India protest against the AICC resolution on 9<sup>th</sup> July 1939. The Working Committee took corrective action against Bose for this behaviour. He was removed from his position as President of the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee and barred from holding any office for three years.

### 3.1.2 India During the World War II

We all know that World War II broke out in September 1939. The War was between the Axis powers comprising Germany, Italy and Japan and the Allies, including France, Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. The main reason for World War II was the German attack on Poland in 1939 and the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbour in 1941. In 1939, the Allies declared War on Nazi Germany.



Fig 3.2.2 Indian troops in France

India was a part of the British Empire during the period. Therefore, the outbreak of World War II brought changes in Indian

politics as well. Along with the changes in Indian politics, the War brought significant changes in the British policies and variations in the strategies of the Congress. The Viceroy of India during the period was Lord Linlithgow.

Lord Linlithgow declared India's participation with England in the war without consulting the Indian leaders. The British Parliament authorized the Government of India to exercise emergency power in case of the war. As a result, India became a part of the Allied nations. About twenty lakh soldiers were sent from India to fight under the British command.

The Indian troops were sent to North Africa and South-East Asia despite the protest from the Indian leaders. The British Government in India responded with repressive measures. The British Government curbed the autonomy of the Provincial Government, and restrictions were imposed on the civil liberties of the Indians.

The reaction of the Congress was immediate. The majority of the Congress leaders questioned how India could assist others when India was a colonised nation. Therefore, a meeting of prominent leaders was held in Wardha from 10<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> September, 1939. The Congress Working Committee invited Subhash Bose, Acharya Narendra Dev and Jayaprakash Narayan for the meeting.

Gandhi advocated a sympathetic attitude towards the Allied power. He was in favour of supporting Britain in the War. The Congress decided that instead of supporting both parties, the Congress should utilize the opportunity to gain freedom by launching a Civil Disobedience Movement. Jawaharlal Nehru argued that India should not join the War until India gained independence, nor should India take advantage of the situation by starting a Civil Disobedience Movement. Gandhi did

not receive any support from others.

The British Government's reaction was different. The Viceroy, Linlithgow, on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1939, dwelled on the differences among the Indians. He tried to use the Muslim League and the Princely States against the Congress and refused to define Britain's war aim. As an emergency action, the Viceroy offered to set up a Consultative Committee whose advice might be sought by the Government in case of emergency.

The Viceroy also promised that at the end of the War, the British Government would consult representatives of different communities and parties in India on how to modify the Act of 1935.

### 3.1.2.1 Resignation of the Congress Ministries

The reactions of the Indian people and national leaders to the Viceroy's proposal were sharp. Gandhi argued that the British Government was continuing the policy of Divide and Rule. The Working Committee on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1939 rejected the statements of the Viceroy and decided not to support the War. The Congress Working Committee also called the Congress Ministries to resign from the position as a mark of protest. The resignation took place between 27<sup>th</sup> October and 15<sup>th</sup> November 1939. After the resignation, no Ministries could be formed in the six Congress Provinces. Making a decision was not an easy task. By the Act of 1935, the Government imposed the Governor's rule.

Even at this point, the Congress was not ready to launch a mass movement. The Congressmen showed sharp disagreement in taking more time for satyagraha. Gandhi and the dominant leaders gave justification for not launching an immediate movement. The justifications were:

a. Because of the Allies ' cause, they should not be embarrassed by the action of the war.

b. Lack of Hindu-Muslim Unity

c. The atmosphere of the country was not suitable for a mass struggle. Neither the Congress nor the people were ready for a struggle.

d. The Congress organization became weak and corrupted.

Therefore, at this juncture, importance was given to continuing the political work among the people, preparing them for struggle and strengthening the Congress organization, etc. When common people were strong and ready, the time to launch satyagraha would be decided. All these views were summarized in the resolution at the Ramgarh Session of Indian National Congress in March 1940.

### 3.1.2.2 August Offer 1940

When Britain was facing wartime pressure, the Government decided to issue a declaration in order to get Indian support in 1940. The "August Offer" declaration was made through the Viceroy Linlithgow on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1940.

It proposed the following:

- i. Setting up a representative body to frame the Constitution after World War II
- ii. An increase in the number of Indians in the Executive Council of the Governor
- iii. Establishment of an Advisory War Council
- iv. The British Government assured the minorities that they would not hand over the power to "any system of government whose authority was denied by large and powerful elements in Indian national life".

However, the August Offer didn't satisfy the Congress and Muslim League. The Congress argue that the Offer seemed to deny the right to complete freedom. Therefore, the Congress demanded 'complete freedom' instead of 'Dominion Status'. The Muslim League called this Offer 'progress'. However, they were not satisfied because the Government didn't consult political groups regarding expanding the Viceroy's Council. The proposal was considered as an encouragement to Muslim separatism.

After the rejection of the August Offer by the Indian authorities, the British Government established Cripps Mission in 1942. To attain aid from India for the War, the British modified the Offer.

### 3.1.2.3 Individual Satyagraha/ Delhi Chalo Movement

The Congress leaders and the common people were losing their patience. The Government was not ready for any constitutional developments until the Congress agreed with the Muslim communalists. The Government kept passing orders, restricting freedom of the press and expression. Throughout the country, the workers were harassed and imprisoned.

The Government was planning to crush the Congress if they organized any mass movement. In that situation, the people believed that it was the time to show their strength and prove that patience was not a sign of their weakness.

The Congress asked Gandhi to lead the movement. He decided to initiate a satyagraha on an individual basis by some selected individuals in every locality. The satyagrahis

demanding freedom of speech to preach against India's participation in the War. The first Satyagrahi was Vinoba Bhave on 17<sup>th</sup> October 1940. Jawaharlal Nehru was the second. The Satyagrahis would inform the district magistrate prior to where they are going to make an anti-war speech. A Satyagrahi could be arrested only if he or she completes the speech. And if the satyagrahis are not arrested, they will continue to repeat the speech to the other villages. This movement is known as the Delhi Chalo movement.

**The individual satyagraha had two main purposes;**

a. It gives expression of strong political feelings among the Indians. This made the British accept the Indian demand.

b. Opportunist elements were removed from the Congress. The People are politically educated and mobilized.

By 15<sup>th</sup> May 1941, over 25000 satyagrahis were arrested for participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement.

### 3.1.2.4 Cripps Mission (1942)

In 1941, two major changes occurred in British politics. The Nazi Germany occupied Poland, Belgium, Holland, Norway and France. On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1941, Germany launched an attack on the Soviet Union. On 7<sup>th</sup> December, Japan attacked the American fleet at Pearl Harbour. In 1942, Japan occupied Rangoon. Soon India realized that the War was at its doorstep. Winston Churchill reported to the King that Burma, Ceylon, Calcutta and Madras might fall into the hands of the Axis powers.





Fig 3.3.3 Stafford Cripps and Mahatma Gandhi

The Indian leaders became worried about the safety and defence of India. Gandhi condemned Japanese designs for Asia and asked the people to boycott Japanese items. The Congress Working Committee became anxious about the situation. Superseding Gandhi's and Nehru's objections, the Congress Working Committee offered full cooperation in defence of India and the Allies. The Congress Working Committee agreed to support Britain because Britain agreed to give full independence after the War.

As the situation worsened during the War, President Roosevelt of the U.S.A. and President Chiang Kai Shek of China, and the Labour Party leaders pressured the British P.M Churchill to seek active cooperation of the Indians in the War. To secure Indian cooperation, the British Government sent a mission headed by the Cabinet Minister Stafford Cripps to India in March 1942. Sir

Stafford Cripps arrived in India on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1942 and spent three weeks consulting various Indian leaders.

Cripps announced that the British policy in India was the "earliest possible realization of self-government in India". However, the Draft declaration brought disappointment among the people.

#### **The major proposals of the Mission are:**

- i. The Mission stated that the object of the British Government was the creation of the Indian Union having the "Dominion Status". The power will be transferred to the new Government except for defence, which shall continue with the British Crown until the War.
- ii. The Establishment of a Constitution-making body to frame a new constitution for India after the War is over.
- iii. The Constituent Assembly shall contain elected representatives from the Legislative Assemblies and the Princely states.
- iv. The Constitution thus framed will be based on two conditions. If any Province chose to reject the Constitution, they could frame a new constitution if the British Government agreed. Such provinces shall be given the same status as the Indian Union. Secondly, a treaty shall be signed between the British Government and the Constitution making body to cover all matters arising during the power transfer.
- v. The Princely states were given the authority to choose whether to follow the new Constitution or not.
- vi. The Indian Union would be given the authority to choose whether to split from



the British Commonwealth or to remain a part of it.

**The Cripps mission and its proposals were rejected. Some of the reasons were :**

- i. The Congress objected to the provision of Dominion Status. They wanted complete independence.
- ii. The princely states in the Constitution were represented not by the people of the state but through the nomination of the rulers.
- iii. The Congress demanded full control over the Defence.
- iv. The proposal had provisions for the partition of India. The Cripps proposal indirectly accepted the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan.

v. The British Government declined to admit the demand for an immediate power transfer to the Indians.

vi. It failed to provide a separate electorate system for the constituent Assembly.

vii. Inadequate representation of the Muslims in the Provincial Assemblies.

An important reason for the decay of the Cripps mission was the incapacity of the Cripps to bargain and negotiate. Cripps has been told not to go beyond the Draft Declaration. Stafford Cripps returned home, leaving a frustrated Indian behind. It was also seen that the Mission was not sent with a frank desire to give freedom to the Indian people. Instead, it was considered a 'coup de main' to calm the allied nations.

## Recap

- ▶ The Congress decided to participate in the elections.
- ▶ The Congress won with a majority in the Legislative Assemblies.
- ▶ Subhash Bose was elected as the President of I.N.C. in the Tripuri Session.
- ▶ Lord Linlithgow declared India's participation with England in the Second World War without consulting the Indian leaders.
- ▶ The Congress demanded independence in return for their service.
- ▶ The Congress Ministries resigned in 1939, rejecting the Viceroy's proposal.
- ▶ To get Indian support, the British announced the August Offer.
- ▶ Rejection of the August Offer led to the Cripps Mission in 1942.
- ▶ The Congress initiated individual satyagraha instead of mass satyagraha.
- ▶ The Individual Satyagraha was also called Delhi Chalo Movement





## Objective Questions

1. Who declared India's participation in World War II?
2. Who set up a Consultative Committee for War-related advice?
3. When did the Congress Ministries resign?
4. Which session made the resolution of the Civil Disobedience Movement?
5. Who declared the August Offer?
6. When was the August Offer declared?
7. What was the demand of the Congress when the August Offer was declared?
8. What was the result of the August Offer?
9. When was the Cripps Mission established?
10. Who was the leader of the Cripps Mission?

## Answers

1. Lord Linlithgow
2. Lord Linlithgow
3. 1939
4. Ramgarh Session of I.N.C. in March 1940
5. Linlithgow
6. 8<sup>th</sup> August 1940
7. Complete freedom
8. Cripps Mission
9. 1942
10. Sir Stafford Cripps

## Assignments

1. Discuss the Bose-Gandhi issue.
2. Analyse the significance of individual satyagraha in the national movement.
3. Discuss the Indian people's attitude towards World War II.

## Suggested Readings

1. Chand, Tara, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 2017.
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## Unit 2

# Quit India Struggle

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to

- ▶ describe the background, causes and impact of the Quit India Movement
- ▶ narrate the people's response to the Quit India movement
- ▶ acquainted with the major incidents that led to the Quit India movement
- ▶ explain different phases of the Quit India movement

### Prerequisites

The Quit India Movement has been described as one of the mass anti-imperialist struggles that happened during India's struggle for Independence. The word 'Quit India', translated as "*Bharat Chodo*", is one of the powerful slogans launched by the nationalists. The slogan was officially launched following the failure of the Cripps Mission. We have already seen the arrival of Sir Stafford Cripps and his Declaration of granting autonomous dominion and not complete independence.

After the failure of the Cripps Mission in April 1942, Britain was unwilling to offer a constitutional advancement for India. Instead, Britain was determined to continue India's partnership for the War. The Mission also had the seeds of communalism. In this situation, after the departure of Cripps, Gandhi drafted a resolution for Quit India. The movement witnessed a wide range of mass participation from all sections of the society. They exhibited the spirit of nationalism and unity before the imperial Government. However, during the movement, they faced severe repression as well.

### Keywords

Quit India Resolution, Wavell Plan, Shimla Conference, Congress Working Committee

## Discussion

### 3.2.1 Reasons for the Launch of the Quit India Movement

After a series of negotiations with the British Government, the launch of the Quit India Movement became inevitable. What could be the reason for the launch of the movement? The first reason is the failure of the Cripps Mission in 1942 and the reluctance of the British Government to grant complete independence. In this vague situation, Gandhi drafted a resolution for Quit India at the Congress Working Committee meeting in Mumbai.

The second reason is the popular discontent, the rising price of goods and war-time shortages in the country. The Government's seizure of boats in Bengal and Odisha to prevent their usage by Japan created considerable anger among the people. Along with this, the growing feeling of the British collapse enhanced the situation.

The third reason is the British withdrawal from Malaya and Burma. The evacuation at a crucial time indicates that the British have left the people to their fate. The betrayal of the British indicates that the only option left is to pursue help from Japan. The nationalist leaders became worried about the weakened character of the people. If Japan occupies Malaya and Burma, the people might not resist at all. To boost their capacity to resist Japanese violence, a movement was necessary. In India, the people began to withdraw their savings deposits from banks and post-office and started hoarding gold, silver and coins. The incident is an indication of declining faith in the British.

#### 3.2.1.1 Quit India Resolution

The Congress Working Committee at Wardha on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1942 accepted the idea of

the Quit India movement. After this, the All-India Congress Committee met in Bombay in August to approve the decision. The meeting was held at Gowalia Tank. The people welcomed the decision of the Congress with huge enthusiasm.

In the meeting held at Gowalia Tank, Gandhi delivered his speech. Gandhi addressed the people and urged the people to "Do or Die". According to Bipan Chandra, Gandhi's speech continued instructions to various sections of the people. The Government servants were not asked to resign but should openly announce their commitment to the Congress. The soldiers also should not leave their post but be instructed to 'refuse to fire on our people'. The Princes were asked to accept the dominion of their people and not to provide homage to a foreign power. The people of the Princely States were asked to declare their allegiance to the Indian nation, and they would only accept the leadership of the Prince. The students were asked to leave their studies until independence was achieved. Gandhi urged the peasants to refuse to pay the land revenue.



Fig 3.2.1 Jawaharlal Nehru and Gandhiji during AICC meeting at Bombay when Quit India Resolution

Gandhi placed the instructions before the Working Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1942. However, the Government did not respond



to these instructions or try to negotiate with the Congress. On 9<sup>th</sup> August 1942, all political leaders were arrested and taken to unidentified destinations. The arrest took the movement into a violent phase.

### 3.2.1.2 Phases of Movement

After the arrest of leaders, the movement went through three phases. They are mentioned below.

#### First Phase

The first phase was marked by wide-scale disturbances in the country through strikes and rallies. The sudden attack by the Government made the people angry. In Bombay, people gathered at Gowalia Tank, where a mass meeting had been scheduled. At the Gowalia Tank Maidan, there were clashes with the authorities. On 9<sup>th</sup> August, similar incidents of clashes were reported from Ahmedabad and Pune. On the 10<sup>th</sup> August 1942, hartals, protests, demonstrations and processions were organised against the law in Delhi, Kanpur, Prayagraj (Allahabad), Varanasi and Patna



Fig 3.2.2 Gowalia Tank Maidaan where Quit India Movement was launched

From 11<sup>th</sup> August 1942, the situation worsened. Apart from hartals, the mobs began to destroy buildings of the government. This period came to be known as the “Great August Uprising”.

#### The Second Phase

The second phase of the movement was marked by the militant nature of the movement. The massive support from the students, villagers, peasants and workers can be seen in this phase, and this phase also marked the focus being switched to rural areas.

In all these upheavals, the Government responded harshly. The working of the press was suppressed. The Publications like *The National Herald* and *Harijan* were ceased. The villagers in the rural areas also participated in the protest. It is said that after 9<sup>th</sup> August, the people’s protest became tremendous. They devised a variety of ways to express their rage. In some places, people attacked police stations, post offices, courts, railway stations and other Government buildings. The National Flag was hoisted in front of Government buildings. It was also recorded that crowds numbering a few hundred physically removed the railway tracks. Some places reported the collapse of bridges, and telephone and telegraph wires were disconnected.

In schools and colleges, students went on strike all over the country and distributed newspapers, *patrikas*, etc, to spread the news. Thus they became the couriers for the underground works. The Workers also participated in the movement enthusiastically. They called for strikes in many places. In Ahmedabad, the mills were closed for three and a half months. In Bombay, the workers did not go to work for a week following the arrests on 9<sup>th</sup> August.

In Bihar and Eastern U.P, the reaction to the arrests was more intense. It almost attained the character of a rebellion. The news of the arrest was advanced to the interior villages through students. The students of Banaras Hindu University decided to spread the message of Quit India. They raised the slogan of “Thana



Jalao” (Burn police station), “Angrez Bhag Gaya” (Englishmen have fled) etc.

In the rural areas of Bihar and U.P, the villagers began to attack all symbols of Government authority, including offices. The Government tried to suppress the rebellion, but the rebellion gathered impetus. The reports say that the Tirhut division in Bihar was completely cut off from the rest of the country for two weeks. In Patna, after the firing at the secretariat, the Government lost its control over the people. The reports also said that eight percent of the police stations were captured.

The period also witnessed the physical assault on the Europeans. At Fatwa, the crowd killed two R.A.F. officers, and their bodies were paraded through the town. A similar incident of killing was reported from Monghyr when the villagers killed two R.A.F. officers. In Bihar and U.P major centres of resistance were Azamgarh, Ballia and Gorakhpur in eastern U.P and Gaya, Bhagalpur, Saran, Pune, Shahabad, Muzaffarpur and Champaran in Bihar.

### Third Phase

The third phase of the movement was marked by the formation of several local governments and underground organizations. The brutal suppression by the Government succeeded when the mass phase of the struggle ended. However, underground networks were gaining strength under the leadership of Aruna Asaf Ali, Ram Manohar Lohia, Sucheta Kripalani, etc. The Underground groups were active in Bombay, Poona, Satara, Baroda, Gujarat, and Kerala. The Congress Socialists led these groups. These leaders and underground groups kept the spirit of national movement through their activities all over the country. They collected money and distributed

bombs, arms and dynamite to Underground groups.

The Underground groups have a pattern of activity. These include organizing disruption of communication, explosion of bridges, cutting telegraph wires, and derauling the trains. In some places, they attacked government officials and police informers. Broadcasting news amongst the villagers was another part of their activity. One of the significant contributions is the setting up of Congress Radios. These radios were operated in Bombay and Madras. The Congress Radio continued till November 1942, when the Government seized it.

The movement changed in February 1943, when Gandhi decided to fast on 10th February in jail. He declared that the fast would continue for twenty-one days. Gandhi's fast was the reply to the Government's oppression against the Quit India Movement. Gandhi condemned the people's violence and held that the Government was responsible for it. He said the violence of the people is the “leonine violence of the state”. This statement had provoked the people.

The news of Gandhi's fast received an immediate and inspiring response from the people. There were hartals, demonstrations and strikes all over the country. Calcutta and Ahmedabad were active in the protest. The prisoners in jail went on ‘sympathetic fast’. Public meetings were held that demanded the release of Gandhi.

The demand for release was printed in newspapers outside India like *Manchester Guardian*, *New Statesman*, *Nation*, *News Chronicle* and *Chicago Sun* etc. The people across the world, like the British Communist Party, Women's International League, Ceylon State Council, U.S. Government, and



Australian Trade Unions too, brought pressure on the British Government.

A Leaders' Conference was held in Delhi on 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> February, attended by all prominent leaders who demanded the release of Gandhi. The most important blow to the Government's prestige occurred when three Indian members of the Viceroy's Executive Council resigned. They were M. S. Aney, N. R. Sarkar and H. P. Mody. But the British Government refused to show any concern for the Indian issue. Winston Churchill remarked, "...This hour of triumph everywhere in the world was the time to crawl before a miserable old man who had always been our enemy...". However, Gandhi was successful in many aspects of the Quit India Movement. It invoked public morale, strengthened the anti-imperialistic feeling, and provided an opportunity for political activity.

### Setting up of Parallel Governments

One of the significant features of the Quit India Movement was the emergence of a "parallel government" in some parts of the country. The first parallel Government was proclaimed in Ballia in East U.P. in August 1942 under the leadership of Chittu Pande. Tamluk, the Midnapur district of Bengal saw the emergence of Jatiya Sarkar on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1942. The Jatiya Sarkar took relief work, gave grants to schools, set up courts and distributed surplus paddy to the needy, and organized Vidyut Vahini, an armed organization.

Satara in Maharashtra saw the longest and most effective parallel Government. Nani Patil formed the parallel Government named Prati Sarkar. They set up the People's Court of Nyayadan Mandals to bestow justice. They set up village libraries and encouraged education. The Prati Sarkar continued to function till 1945.

### 3.2.1.3 Popular Participation in the Movement

The Quit India Movement was significant in terms of popular participation. The youths were at the forefront of the struggle. Women, especially college and school girls, played an important role. Aruna Asaf Ali and Sucheta Kripalani were some of the active organizers. Usha Mehta was an important member in the formation of the Congress Radio.

Workers' participation in the movement was also prominent. They called for strikes and hartals for the movement. The peasants were another category of people. In Bengal, Maharashtra, Andhra, Gujarat and Kerala, peasants actively participated in the movement. The peasant activity was concentrated on attacking the British symbols of authority. The lower-level Government officials and police supported the movement by providing information, shelter and monetary support. Therefore, the corrosion of loyalty to the British Government was one of the important aspects of the Quit India Movement.

The participation of the Muslim masses and the Muslim League in the movement was meagre. However, it has to be noted that there was an absence of communal clashes. This indicates that even though they didn't support the movement, they did not evoke hostility against others. The Communist participation, irrespective of the stand of the Communist Party, was also significant.

### 3.2.1.4 Significance of the Movement

The Quit India movement demanded independence on an immediate basis. Any negotiations with the British should be for the transfer of power. The leaders understood that independence was not a matter of bargaining. With the release of Gandhi on 6<sup>th</sup> May 1944, political activities again gathered momentum. The Congress continued to follow their

construction works. The Congress emphasized the reorganization of the Congress Party. For this, the Congress Committees were revived under different names like Congress Workers Assemblies or Representative Assemblies.

The Congress then took the task of training workers and conducted membership drives and fund collection. During the period, Viceroy's attention was diverted to formulating an offer called Wavell Plan or Simla Conference. The Congress leaders were released from jail to participate in the Simla Conference of June 1945. This marked the end of a period of confrontation.

### 3.2.2 Wavell Plan (1945)

By May 1945, World War II ended when Japan surrendered. India was facing the post-war economic crisis of price rise, scarcity of essential items and the Great Famine in Bengal. During this time, the tension between Hindus and Muslims was at its peak. To discuss the issues of Hindu-Muslim, Gandhi and Muhammad Ali Jinnah met in September 1944. However, the meeting did not lead to any resolution.

In the meantime, the British Government appointed Lord Wavell as the Viceroy of India. Before assuming as Viceroy, Wavell worked as the Chief of the Indian Army and therefore understood the Indian situation. He worked to solve the issues in India. At first, he released the members of the Congress Working Committee arrested during the Quit India Movement.

As a second step, Wavell visited London to discuss a solution to the issues between the Congress and the Muslim League. Wavell decided to present a formula which was acceptable to both parties. The plan of action was officially announced by L.S. Amery, who was the Secretary of State for India, on 14<sup>th</sup>

June 1945.



Fig 3.3.3 Lord Wavell

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#### Major proposals:

- i. The Formation of a new Viceroy's Executive Council comprising only Indians except the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief.
- ii. In the Council, there will be equal representation of the Hindus and Muslims. There will be representations of minorities as well.



- iii. All portfolios, including Home, Finance, and External Affairs, were to be held by the Indians.
- iv. The defence of India would be in the hands of the British until the power was transferred.
- v. The Viceroy would have the veto power, but its use would be negligible.
- vi. The Viceroy would convene a conference for recommending members to the Council from all the parties. A separate list would be taken if a joint list was not agreed upon. This was the Simla Conference.

The Wavell Plan was criticized for various aspects. Instead of asking all the parties to propose the members to the Executive Council, the plan has seats based on religion and caste. Mahatma Gandhi criticized the use of the term 'caste-Hindus'. In the backdrop of this, Gandhi did not attend the Simla conference.

Secondly, even though the plan proposed changes in the Executive Council, there was no guarantee for complete independence. The Wavell Plan neither contains any reference for the future constituent Assembly.

### 3.2.2.1 Shimla Conference (1945)

The Shimla Conference was a meeting between the Viceroy Wavell and major political leaders. The meeting aimed to

resolve the issues of Muslim representation. Lord Wavell invited 21 political leaders to discuss the Wavell Plan on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1945 to Shimla. Gandhi did not attend the Conference. Lord Wavell acted as the President of the Conference.



Fig 3.3.4 Lord Wavell meeting the leaders

The different parties agreed on three proposals.

- i. An interim administration of British India by an Executive Council.
- ii. Action against Japan.
- iii. Indianisation of all portfolios except the war portfolio.

In the meantime, a General Election had been held in Britain, which brought the Labour Party to power. The Labour Party sought to transfer power to India as soon as possible. The new Government sent a Cabinet Mission to India, thereby leading to the failure of the Wavell Plan.

## Recap

- ▶ Quit India, translated as “Bharat Chodo.”
- ▶ Failure of Cripps Mission and World War II discontent led to the launch of the movement.
- ▶ The idea of Quit India was accepted by the Congress Working Committee at Wardha on 14<sup>th</sup> July 1942.
- ▶ Gandhi urged the people to “Do or Die”.
- ▶ Students participated with the slogan “Thana Jalao” (Burn police station), “An-grez Bhag Gaya.”
- ▶ The Congress Radio was set up for underground activities.
- ▶ Satara in Maharashtra saw the longest and most effective parallel Government.
- ▶ Viceroy formulated an offer called Wavell Plan.
- ▶ The Congress leaders were released from jail to participate in the Simla Conference of June 1945.
- ▶ Wavell first released the Congress Working Committee members.
- ▶ The Wavell Plan to discuss the issues between Hindus and Muslims.
- ▶ The Shimla Conference was a meeting between the Viceroy Wavell and major political leaders.
- ▶ Lord Wavell acted as the President of the Conference.

## Objective Questions

1. Which Congress Session accepted the Quit India Resolution?
2. What was the result of the Quit India Movement?
3. When was the Wavell Plan formulated?
4. Who announced the Wavell Plan?
5. What was the result of the Wavell Plan?
6. When was the Shima Conference Conveyed?
7. What was the slogan of the Quit India Movement?
8. Where was the slogan Bharat Chodo officially announced?
9. When and where was the first parallel Government formed?
10. Who formed the first Parallel Government in U.P?





## Answers

1. Warda Session on 14th July 1942
2. Wavell Plan
3. 14th June 1945
4. L.S. Amery, the Secretary of State for India
5. Shima Conference
6. 25th June 1945
7. Bharat Chodo
8. During the August Revolution
9. Ballia in East U.P. in August 1942
10. Chittu Pande

## Assignments

1. Analyse the nature of Quit India Movement.
2. The Indian National Movement gained momentum during the World War II period. Discuss.
3. Discuss the objectives of the Quit India Movement

## Suggested Readings

1. Chandra, Bipin, *Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India*, Har-Anand, Delhi, 2010.
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## Unit 3

# Indian National Army

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to

- ▶ discuss the formation and the activities of INA
- ▶ access the British attitude towards INA
- ▶ explain the popular response to the activities of INA
- ▶ know about INA trials

### Prerequisites

The world witnessed significant developments at the end of World War. One of the significant changes happened in Britain when the Labour Party came into power. The victory of the Labour Party brought changes in India as well. However, the nation was still in the imperialistic framework. Civil liberties were restored, and elections were declared. All these changes have been discussed in the previous unit.

During the course of the Quit India Movement, Subhash Chandra Bose was repeatedly questioning the intentions of the British authority. He was placed under house arrest in Calcutta. This was done to prevent him from continuing political activities. Meanwhile, he escaped from the prison and fled to Berlin. There he fought for India's independence through the Indian National Army.

After the formation of INA, they led a series of revolts which resulted in the capture of INA officials by the British. They were sentenced to prison and were brutally attacked. The Indian National Army officers were court-martialed between November 1945 to May 1946. These trials were carried on charges of sedition, torture, murder or aiding murder during World War II. There are several early trials as well. By 1943 and 1944, court martials were initiated against those who supported INA and its activities. However, these trials did not receive public support or sympathy. The election campaign took up the issue of the release of INA prisoners by the British. This campaign received massive ground support. The newspapers spread the news of the trials as Red Fort trials.

## Keywords

Subhash Chandra Bose, Indian National Army, Red Fort Trials, Cabinet Mission

## Discussion

### 3.3.1 Indian National Army

The idea of the Indian National Army (INA) was first proposed in Malaya by Mohan Singh. Mohan Singh was an Indian officer of the British Indian Army. When he decided not to join the British Army, he went to Japan for help. Major Fujiwara, a Japanese army officer, persuaded him to collaborate with the Japanese for Indian independence. With his support, he made an army of the Indian prisoners. Japan handed over the Indian prisoners to Mohan Singh. He tried to recruit these prisoners to the Indian National Army.

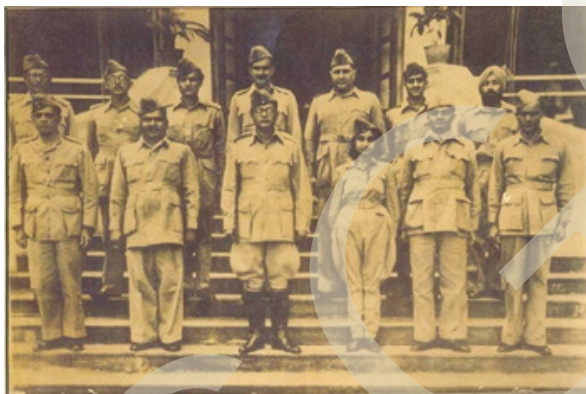


Fig 3.3.3 Indian National Army

In 1942, a conference of the Indians was held in Tokyo and formed the Indian Independence League (IIL), where Rash Behari Bose was elected as the President of the League. The League was established to foster Indian nationalism and to obtain Japanese support for India's struggle for independence.

The Conference was then followed by another Conference in Bangkok in June 1942. At the Conference, a decision was taken to

raise the Indian National Army or *Azad Hind Fauj*. The fall of Singapore brought 45000 Indian prisoners of War into the army. By 1942, forty thousand men expressed their willingness to join the INA. The Army made clear that the INA would go into action only if the INC and the people of India invited them. Many have seen INA as a means of checking the misconduct of the Japanese against India in South-East Asia.

The outbreak of the Quit India Movement gave an impetus to the activities of INA. In Malaya, Anti-British demonstrations were organized. The first division of INA was formed on 1st September 1942 with 16,300 men. Japan agreed to support the idea of an armed Indian wing, expecting an Indian invasion. However, by December 1943, serious differences emerged between Indian Army officers over the role of INA. Eventually, Mohan Singh and Niranjana Singh Gill were arrested. Japan wanted only a force of 2000 men for the INA. At the same time, Mohan Singh wanted to raise an army of 20,000.

The second phase of INA began when Subhash Chandra Bose was brought to Singapore on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1943. After founding the Forward Bloc, Subhash Chandra Bose was put under house arrest. However, he managed to escape to Berlin via Moscow. Bose found limitations in the Gandhian methods and sought to take the anti-British struggle. From the Berlin Radio Station, he propagated anti-British sentiments. There, he raised a "Free India" unit of Indian prisoners of War in Germany, Rome and Paris.

Bose was handed over the leadership of INA when Bose was invited to attend the Bangkok



Conference of the Indian Independence League on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1943. After a series of discussions, the Indian Independence League ceded the leadership of INA to Subhash Bose. Bose went to Tokyo on 11<sup>th</sup> May 1943 and talked with the Prime Minister Tojo. In the meeting, Tojo declared that Japan had no territorial intention on India. Bose returned to Singapore and set up the Provincial Government of Free India on 21<sup>st</sup> October 1943.

The Provincial Government, set up by Bose, declared War on Britain and the United States. Subhash Bose set up two headquarters for INA. One is in Rangoon and another is in Singapore. From here, he began to re-organize INA. The recruits to the army were taken from civilians, funds were gathered for the work, and even a women's regiment was formed called Rani Jhansi Regiment.

One of the INA battalions commanded by Shah Nawaz was allowed to accompany the Japanese army to the Indo-Burma Forest and participate in the Imphal Campaign by early 1944, INA reached Kohima and the outskirts of Imphal, but the tide of war had turned against Japan by then. The failure of the Imphal campaign made the Japanese forces retreat from Imphal slowly. This retreat suppressed the hopes of INA in liberating the nation.

The retreat continued till mid-1945, which finally ended when Japan surrendered to the British in South East Asia. The INA men were brought back to India. Those who were brought back were threatened with punishment. The INA prisoners were defended by a panel of lawyers comprising Nehru, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Bhulabhai Desai during their trials at Red Fort.



Fig 3.3.2 Nehru with Sapru, during the Red Fort Trials

### 3.3.1.1 INA Trials (1945)



Fig 3.3.3 Newspaper cutting of INA trials

As we have discussed, after the failure of the Imphal campaign, the members of INA were captured in South East Asia and sentenced to jail. On 16<sup>th</sup> August 1945, the Government announced limiting the trials of guilty INA members. The Congress leaders took up the issue of INA trials and, in the post-war session of the AICC session held in Bombay from 21<sup>st</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1945, adopted a resolution declaring support to the members of INA.

An INA Relief and Enquiry Committee was formed to provide small sums of money and food to the men on their release. The Congress authorized the Central INA Fund Committee, the Mayor's Fund in Bombay and AICC to collect funds for the trials. The



newspapers called INA men the most heroic patriots and criticized the INA trials. The pamphlets called these people "Patriots, Not Traitors". The people observed INA day on 12th November and INA week from 5<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> November 1945.

Altogether there were ten INA trials. However, we will be discussing the important three among them. The first trial of the Red Fort Trail began in November 1945.

### 3.3.1.1 The Red Fort Trail (1945)

The Three officers, P.K Sahgal, G.S Dhillon and Shah Nawaz Khan, were charged with treason, murder and granting assistance of murder. The Government planned to do the trial in front of the public to show the activities of the INA. But when the events unfolded, the Government had completely underestimated the political outcome of INA trials.

The first trial was opened on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1945, and continued for two months. The trial was that of Shah Nawaz Khan, Gurubaksh Singh Dhillon and Prem Sahgal against the background of general elections in India. The three were charged with "waging war against the king contrary to the section 121 of the I.P.C".

In the trial, the defence tried to argue that the people fighting for freedom could not be tried for sedition. Despite that, the three of them were found guilty and charged. But the Commander-in-chief forgave their sentence and set them free on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1946. The three officers were welcomed as heroes and public meetings were organized in Delhi and Lahore. They celebrated the victory against the British.

### 3.3.1.2 The Second trial (1946)

The second trial occurred on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1946, these were the trials of Captain Abdul

Rashid, Captain Shinghara Singh Mann, Captain Munawar Khan, Captain Allah Yar Khan and others. Captain Abdul Rashid preferred to be defended by a Muslim League Defense Committee rather than by the Congress.

On 11<sup>th</sup> February 1946, the Muslim League, Indian National Congress and the Communists went in protest against trials. Between 11<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> February, another wave of revolt happened in Calcutta. The student wing of the Muslim League and the Communist Student Federation joined the protest along with workers. Section 144 was imposed on the streets of Calcutta. The People held meetings in different parts of the country to show their solidarity.

Law and order in the city were restored after three days of brutal repression. In this, eighty-four people were killed, and three hundred were injured. The revolt soon spread to East Bengal and other major cities of India.

General Auchinleck, the commander-in-chief, then withdrew the sentence of the three INA officers. Because any further action from the Government would increase the intensity of the mass upheaval and any attempt at sentence would lead to chaos in the country or probably it may lead to mutiny.

### 3.3.1.3 The Third Trial (1946)

The third trial was on 18<sup>th</sup> February 1946, around the Royal Indian Navy mutiny. In January 1946, the Royal Indian Air Force (RIAF) men went on strike for various grievances. However, the most challenging issue came when the Royal Indian Navy (RIN) started a mutiny in February 1946.

The mutiny was a revolt of Indian naval ratings (non-commissioned officers and sailors), soldiers, police personnel and the civilians against the British Government. On



18<sup>th</sup> February 1946, 1000 naval ratings of HMIS Talwar mutinied due to the hardship and racial discrimination in the Royal Indian Navy (RIN). The ratings took control over ships and guns.

The ratings from Talwar were joined by those from Castle and Fort Barracks when the rumour of firing had spread. Angered at the Government's behaviour, the ratings seized the Congress flags and often threatened the ordinary Europeans.

Admiral Godfrey, the Flag Officer Commanding RIN, broadcast over the radio to the mutineers to surrender. The mutiny broke out in Bombay and then spread to Karachi. In Karachi, the HMIS Hindustan led the revolt.

According to the report, 20,000 ratings from 78 ships and 20 shore establishments had taken part in the revolt. The Royal Indian Air Force (RIAF) also supported the project. Strikes of RIAF were reported from Marine Drive, Andheri, and Sion areas.

#### 3.3.1.4 Impact of the INA Trials

According to Bipan Chandra, the INA revolt affected the 'traditional bulwarks of the Raj'. A tide of pro-INA sentiments submerged the significant sections of the Government employees, loyalists and the armed forces.

The Governor General of the Northwest Frontier Province warned that "every day that passes now brings more well-disposed Indians to the anti-British camp". The growing nationalist sentiments reached its zenith in the INA trials. It went into violent confrontations with the authorities in 1945-46.

The INA trials showed a pattern of upsurge. In the first stage, a group defied authority and it was repressed. In the second stage the people in the city joined the revolt. In the third stage the people in the other parts of the

country showed their support. The three trials gave an expression of militancy to the popular minds. The actions of the mob were fearless.

The RIN mutiny had impacted popular consciousness. It liberated the minds of the people. It has also been observed that the RIN mutiny marked the end of British rule. The upsurge took the form of an extreme, direct and violent conflict with the authority. In all these revolts, only the militant section participated. There was no space for liberal and conservative groups.

However, the movement was short-lived. One lakh workers went on strike in Calcutta, but the workers were not organized in the rest of the cities. The upheaval was confined to the urban areas. This urban concentration made it easy for the authorities to deploy troops and suppress the upsurge.

All these mutinies showed communal unity rather than the unity of the people. The organizations only came together for specific cases, like Rashid Mi's trial. The communal unity evident in the RIN mutiny was limited despite the Congress, League, and the Communists joining the mutiny. It was seen that the Muslim ratings went to the Muslim League to seek advice for future action, while the rest went to the Congress and Socialists.

The RIN mutinies demonstrated the erosion of bureaucracy and the commitment of the armed forces. According to Bipan Chandra, the three revolts extended its earlier nationalist activities. The three revolts fostered anti-imperialist sentiments through the Congress in their election campaign. The Home Department made an enquiry committee, and they concluded that these 'disturbances' were the outcome of an "inflammatory atmosphere created by the intemperate speeches of the Congress leaders. The sending of the Cabinet Mission had an impact on the RIN revolt.

### 3.3.2 Cabinet Mission

On 18th February 1946, the Bombay Naval strike began. On 19<sup>th</sup> February 1946, in the House of Commons, the Prime Minister Clement Atlee announced the decision to dispatch the Cabinet Mission. The British Cabinet took the Mission on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1946. But the announcement of the Mission was made on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1946.

The three-member Mission headed by Lord Pethick Lawrence (the Secretary of State for India), Stafford Cripps (President of Board of Trade) and Lord Admiralty, Mr

A.V Alexander visited India. The Mission discussed the two main issues-procedures for framing the Constitution and forming the interim Government.

The overall result of the three INA trials was that the members were found guilty of waging War. However, they were not sentenced to death but dismissed from services. The members of INA were welcomed as heroes of the country. The nation celebrated its victory over the British Government. These trials raised the enthusiasm to attain independence and consciousness of the people.

### Recap

- ▶ The idea of the Indian National Army (INA) was first proposed in Malaya by Mohan Singh.
- ▶ The Prisoners were recruited to INA.
- ▶ In 1942, a conference of Indians was held in Tokyo and formed the Indian Independence League (IIL).
- ▶ The League was established to foster Indian nationalism and to obtain Japan's support for India's struggle for independence.
- ▶ The first division of INA was formed on 1st September 1942
- ▶ The second phase of INA began when Subhash Chandra Bose was brought to Singapore on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1943.
- ▶ Bose re-organized INA
- ▶ INA prisoners faced trials at Red Fort.
- ▶ For INA prisoners, lawyers comprising Nehru, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Bhulabhai Desai appeared.
- ▶ The first trial was against Shah Nawaz Khan, Gurubaksh Singh Dhillon and Prem Sahgal.
- ▶ The third Trial was around the Royal Indian Navy Mutiny on 18th February 1946.
- ▶ The three-member Mission of Lord Pethick Lawrence, Stafford Cripps and First Lord Admiralty A.V Alexander.
- ▶ The mission was sent to frame the Constitution and form an interim government.



## Objective Questions

1. Who proposed the idea of the Indian National Army (INA)?
2. Who asked Mohan Singh to collaborate with the Japanese Army?
3. When did the Indian Independence League (IIL) formed?
4. Who was the elected President of IIL in 1942?
5. Which Conference took the decision to raise INA or Azad Fauj?
6. Who founded Forward Bloc?
7. When did Subhash Bose take charge of INA?
8. Which were the two headquarters of INA?
9. Which campaign led to the arrest of INA officers?
10. When was the INA trials announced?

## Answers

1. Mohan Singh
2. Major Fujiwara
3. 1942, Tokyo
4. Rash Bihari Bose
5. 1942 conference at Bangkok.
6. Subhash Chandra Bose
7. 1943
8. Rangoon and Singapore
9. Imphal Campaign
10. 16th August 1945

## Assignments

1. Discuss the role of INA in the struggle for Indian independence.
2. Analyse the people responding to the INA trials.
3. Describe the role of World War II in the formation of INA.

## Suggested Readings

1. Chand, Tara, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 2017.
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# Unit 4

## Peasant Struggles

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to

- ▶ evaluate the peasant movements of 1930s
- ▶ elucidate various dimensions of peasant movements
- ▶ acquaint with the peasant organizations of the period

### Prerequisites

Peasants in India represent a vast majority of people comprising landless agricultural labourers, artisans, tenants and other socially deprived people. The peasant category was the most adversely affected by the new imperialist regime. The introduction of land reforms and other initiatives of the imperialist notions adversely affected their livelihood and survival.

The nationalist leaders and social reformers took up the issue of the peasants from the beginning. We have already seen the early peasant awakening and early peasant associations after 1920. However, that was not the end of the movement. The peasant movements of the 1930s aimed for a nationwide awakening of all the peasants for their improved life and living conditions. Scholars viewed that the rise of this awakening was due to two crucial political and economic developments. The first was the Great Depression, which began in India in 1929 and the second, a new phase of mass struggle launched by INC in 1930.

The present unit will look deeply into the causes of the awakening of the peasant movement after the 1930s.

### Keywords

All India Kisan Sabha, *Karshaka Sangham*, Tebhaga Movement, Telangana Movement

## Discussion

### 3.4.1 Peasant Struggles

The peasant movements were the result of economic and political conditions during the period. The economic change that happened during the period was the Great Depression. The Depression that hit India from 1929-30 brought a decrease in agricultural prices. The already penniless peasants were burdened with high taxes and rents. The Government was reluctant to reduce taxation rates even during the period of misery. Therefore, the peasants had to continue to pay the taxes, resulting in high debts.

A significant change in the political scenario was the emergence of a new phase of national movement in India. The Civil Disobedience Movement that launched in the 1930s soon took the issue of taxation. Soon in many places, a no-tax, no-revenue campaign was initiated. The Peasants were successful in many movements like Bardoli Satyagraha (1928), Eka movement etc. In the U.P. Gandhi asked the peasants to pay only fifty per cent of the legal rent. In Gujarat, Surat and Kheda, the peasants refused to pay taxes. Here their lands were confiscated by the government. In Bihar and Bengal, the movement was launched against the Chowkidari tax. Similar satyagraha was witnessed in many parts of India.

The Civil Disobedience Movement contributed to the peasant movement in another way. The movement gave birth to a new generation of young nationalists, influenced by the Left ideology propagated by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose, the Communists and others. When the Civil Disobedience Movement was withdrawn, these young men began to organize the peasants.

#### 3.4.1.1 All India Kisan Sabha (1936)

The formation of the Congress Socialist Party (C.S.P.) in 1934 also helped the movement to a great extent. In its activities, the Communists also participated. The cooperation of C.S.P. and the Communists led to the all-India body coordinating the Kisan movement. The efforts established the All-India Kisan Congress in Lucknow in April 1936. This organization was led by N.G Ranga and other Kisan leaders. Later, the organization changed its name to the All India Kisan Sabha.

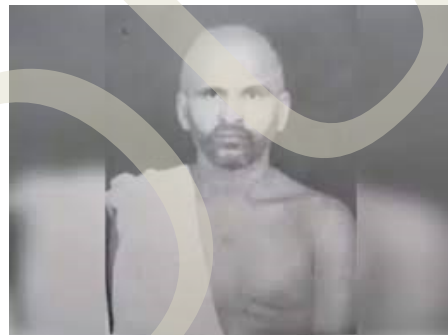


Fig 3.4.1 Swami Sahajanand Saraswati

Swami Sahajanand, the founder of the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha of 1929, became the elected President. N. G Ranga became the General Secretary. Jawaharlal Nehru, Ram Manohar Lohia, and Sohan Singh Josh participated in the first session. The first Conference brought a Kisan Manifesto and a periodic bulletin edited by Indulal Yagnik.

The Kisan Manifesto was finalized at the session of the All-India Kisan Committee in Bombay. The agrarian program of the Congress influenced the Manifesto adopted at the Faizpur Session. The major points of the Manifesto include:

The reduction of land revenue and rent to fifty per cent



- (a) A ban on debts
- (b) Abolition of feudal levies
- (c) Security of tenants
- (d) A living wage for agricultural labourers
- (e) Recognition of the peasant union

The second session of the All India Kisan Congress held at Faizpur in Maharashtra was presided by N.G Ranga. The Congress marched over 200 miles from Manmad to Faizpur.

### Growth of the Peasant Movement

The formation of the Congress Ministries in 1937 marked the beginning of a new phase of the peasant movement. By that time, the political atmosphere of the country had changed. The changes, like increased civil liberties and a sense of freedom, became the hallmark of the peasant movements after 1937. Various agrarian legislation like debt relief, restoration of lands, and security of tenure to the tenants provided an impetus for the mobilization of the peasantry.

The principal form of mobilization was through conducting kisan conferences. The conferences were addressed by local Kisan leaders or all-India leaders. The Kisan leaders will mobilize the masses by conducting village tours, holding meetings, etc. Cultural shows were included in such meetings to spread the messages of the peasant movements.

#### 3.4.1.2 Karshaka Sangham in Malabar

In Kerala, a peasant movement developed due to the efforts of many C.S.P. leaders. They set up the *Karshaka Sangham* (peasant association). The main demand of *Karshaka Sangham* was the abolition of feudal levies or *akrama pirivukal*, renewal fees or the practice of *polichezhuthu*, advance rent, and stopping

the eviction of the peasants. The peasants of Kerala also demanded a reduction of taxes, rent and debt burden, and landlords should use proper measures for measuring the grain, ending the corrupt practice of landlords' managers. The *Karshaka Sangham* formed a village-level unit for the movement.

The *Karshaka Sangham* formed jathas or processions to the janmis house, placed their demands before them, and secured immediate redressal. Therefore, the main demand of these jathas was the abolition of feudal levies like *vasi*, *nuri*, etc.

The *Karshaka Sangham* of Kerala also organized a powerful agitation and demanded the amendment of the Malabar Tenancy Act of 1929. A uniform resolution was passed to demand the amendment of the Act on 6<sup>th</sup> November 1938. This day is observed as Malabar Tenancy Act Amendment Day.

A committee headed by R. Ramachandra Nedumgadi was appointed by the All Malabar Karshaka Sangham to inquire into the land possession problems. The Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee approved the recommendations of the Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> November 1938. In December 1938, two jathas started from Karivellur in North Malabar and Kanjikode in South Malabar. Both the jathas joined at Chevayur near Calicut, where the All Malabar Karshaka Sangham was holding their Conference. The public meeting held on the same day was presided by P. Krishna Pillai, the C.S.P. and later communist leader. The meeting passed the demands of the amendments in the Tenancy Act.

T. Prakasam, the Andhra Congress leader who was the revenue minister in the Congress Ministry in Madras Presidency, toured throughout Malabar in December 1938. A Tenancy Committee was set up with three left-wing members. The *Karshaka Sangham* units

and its members held meetings to mobilize the peasants and collected evidence to submit to the Committee. In 1940, the Committee submitted its report. However, no immediate progress happened with the report as the Congress Ministry had already resigned. But the campaign successfully mobilized the peasants and created awareness among the tenants about their rights. The Madras Congress Ministry had passed legislation for debt relief, and the *Karshaka Sangham* welcomed this.

### 3.4.1.3 The Peasant Movement in Andhra

In coastal Andhra, the peasants were mobilized on an unparalleled scale. The Andhra Provincial Ryots Association and Andhra Zamin Ryots Association were already working against the exploitation of Government and the Zamindars. N. G Ranga had been running the Indian Peasants Institute in his village Nidubrolu in Guntur village, and had trained the peasants to become active workers for the peasant movement.

One political development during the period was the defeat of many Zamindar candidates in the 1937 elections. The defeat boosted the confidence of the peasants. In Andhra, struggles were launched against the Bobbili, Munagala zamindar, and Kalipatnam zamindaris. At Kalipatnam, the struggle was over cultivation and fishing rights.

In 1938 the Provincial Kisan Conference organized a peasant march from Itchapur in the North. The march covered 130 days, nine districts, met many peasants and collected many petitions. On 27<sup>th</sup> March 1938, these petitions were presented to the provincial legislature in Madras. One of the main demands of the peasants was debt relief. The Congress Ministry appointed a Zamindari Enquiry Committee in response to the demands. But the legislation related to the demands could

not be passed before the Congress Ministries resigned.

Another notable feature of the peasant movement in Andhra was the organization of the Summer Schools of Economics and Politics for peasant activists. The training schools were organized at Kothapatnam, Mantenavaripalarn and other places. These schools were addressed by the Left Communist leaders like P.C Joshi, Ajoy Ghosh and R.D Bharadwaj. The schools delivered lectures on Indian economy, national struggle and Marxism.

### 3.4.1.4 Peasant Movement in Bihar

Swami Sahajanand, the founder of Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha, along with the leaders of All India Kisan Sabha and the left-wing leaders, made an effort to spread the kisan sabha organization to the villages of Bihar. The Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha held meetings, rallies, conferences and demonstrations in 1938 to popularise the peasant movement. They worked for zamindari abolition, stopping illegal levies, etc.

The Congress Ministry initiated legislation to reduce rent and restore *Bakasht* land to the peasants. The *Bakasht* lands were those lands which the tenants lost to the zamindars, during the Depression years, for not paying the rent. In these lands, the peasants continued to cultivate as mere sharecroppers. However, the legislation formulated an agreement with the zamindars caused discontent among the Kisan leaders. According to the legislation, the tenants will get a certain portion of their land on condition that they have to pay half the sale price of the land. In addition, certain lands had been exempted from the law.

The *Bakasht* issue created a struggle between the Kisan Sabha and the Congress Ministry. Several struggles emerged in Bihar,



like in Monghyr district, at Reora in Gaya district, in Darbhanga etc. The movement in these places adopted the methods of satyagraha, forcible sowing and harvesting of crops. The zamindars reacted with severe measures. Clashes with zamindars became a common scene. The Police often intervened in the clash and arrested the leaders and activists. While in some places, the Government tried to bring compromise.

The movement of the *Bakasht* issue reached its peak in 1938 and 1939. But by August 1939, the pace of the movement decreased. However, the movement resumed in 1945 and continued till the zamindari system was abolished.

#### 3.4.1.5 The Peasant Movement in Punjab

Punjab was another centre of the peasant movement. Here, the peasants were organized as *Kirti Kisan*. The Punjab Kisan Committee was formed in 1937 under the guidance of the Congress and Akali activists. The main demand of the Committee was the reduction of taxes and suspension of debts.

The two immediate causes for the agitation in Punjab were the resettlement of land revenue of Lahore and Amritsar districts and the increase in canal tax or water rate. Huge demonstrations were organized against these regulations. The continuous demonstrations and struggles led to the formation of Lahore Kisan Morcha in 1939.

The mobilization of the peasants occurred in other parts of the country as well. They demanded the security of tenure, abolition of feudal levies, reduction of taxes and debt relief. In Bengal, the peasants of Burdwan agitated and secured concession on canal tax. In Surma Valley, in Assam, the peasants struggled for no-rent and against Zamindar's oppression. In Gujarat, the main demand was

the abolition of hali (bonded labour). The peasants could achieve that too.

#### 3.4.1.6 Peasant Struggle After World War II

The outbreak of World War II resulted in a series of political events in the country. The period saw the resignation of the Congress Ministry and severe repression against left-wing and kisan sabha. Many Kisan leaders left the kisan sabha in 1943. Even with the problem, the kisan sabha continued their movement, especially during the Bengal Famine of 1943.

The end of World War II marked a new stage of the peasant movement. The peasants began to assert their demands with new vigour. Many struggles of 1939 were renewed. The peasants demanded the abolition of the Zamindari system.

Some of the popular movements are the Tebhaga and Telangana struggle

#### Tebhaga Movement in Bengal (1946-47)

*Tebhaga* means three shares of the harvest. The movement was to reduce the share of produce from one-half to one-third. The peasants must pay these shares to the Jotedars, the intermediary landowners. The movement appeared in North Bengal and districts of Dinajpur and Rangpur in East Bengal, and Jalpaiguri and Malda in West Bengal. The Bengal Provincial Kisan Sabha organized the movement.

In 1946, the sharecroppers of Bengal declared that they would no longer pay half share of produce to the Jotegars, but only one-third could be given. The Bengal Land Revenue Commission, or Floud Commission, has already made these recommendations to the Government.





Fig 3.4.2 Tebhaga Movement

In 1946, the sharecroppers of Bengal declared that they would no longer pay half share of produce to the Jotegars, but only one-third could be given. The Bengal Land Revenue Commission, or Floud Commission, has already made these recommendations to the Government.

Floud Commission is a land revenue commission established by the Government of Bengal in 1938. The Commission had reviewed the miserable conditions of the Bengal agricultural sector. The Commission has exposed the exploitations that prevailed in the bargadars system, where the peasants were forced to give half of the produce as rent.

In September 1946, the Bengal Provincial Kisan Sabha called for a mass struggle to implement the recommendations of the Floud Commission. Along with the distress of the bargadars (sharecroppers), the Hajong tribes demanded the substitution of their rents in kind into cash rents. The Tebhaga movement led by the Kisan Sabha soon clashed with the Jotedars, with sharecroppers instating storing the crops in their godowns, not in the godowns of Jotedars.

In January 1947, the movement received a lift when the Muslim League led by Suhrawardy published the Bengal Bargadars Temporary Regulation Bill in *Calcutta*

*Gazette* on 22nd January 1947. The peasants from nearby also joined the struggle. In many places, the peasants tried to move the produce stored in Jotedars godown to their own. This resulted in clashes between them.

The Jotedars appealed to the Government and Police for help. The Government came up with repressive measures to suppress the peasants. Many clashes were reported from different parts. The most important one was the clash at Khanpur, in which twenty peasants were killed.

The movement was almost dead by the end of February. The Muslim League Ministry failed to pursue the bill in the Assembly. However, in 1950, the Congress Ministry passed the Bargadars Bill, which incorporated the demands of the movement.

### Telangana Movement (1946-51)

In Andhra, Telangana movement continued from 1946 to 1951 against the Nizams of Hyderabad and feudal oppression. The movement is important for its participation of women along with men, even in guerrilla fights.

The Telangana movement was against the feudal oppression by the landowners of Andhra Pradesh. The C.P.I. (Communist Party of India) launched it through the Kisan Sabha. In Andhra, two types of land tenure systems prevailed: *Khalsa* or *Diwani* and *Jagirdari*. The Khalsa land tenure is similar to the Ryotwari system, where the peasants owned pattas in their registered names, and the actual owners were Skhikmidars. In the jagirdari system, crown lands were granted to the noblemen or Nizams for their service.

In the rural economy, the intermediary landlords, namely jagirdars and Deshmukh, exploited the villagers through extracting



extra-economic coercion called *vetti* or forced labour. Under this system, the intermediary landlords could forcefully cultivate the land with the peasants.



Fig 3.4.3 The guerrillas of Telangana Struggle

The Communists led the movement in the Nalgonda district in 1946. The movement then spread to the neighbouring districts of Warangal and Bidar. The movement was, therefore, against the illegal extraction of the feudal aristocracy. The demands of the movement were numerous. Some of the prominent demands were;

- a. To increase wage
- b. Abolition of *Vetti* or forced labour
- c. Against illegal extraction.
- d. Against eviction from land
- e. Against the imposition of grain levy.

In June 1947, the Nizam of Hyderabad announced that after the withdrawal of the British, Hyderabad would remain independent and won't be joining the Indian Union. At this Declaration, the Congress leaders decided to launch a satyagraha. However, the movement turned upside down when the Nizam unleashed a reign of terror with the aid of Razakars. The Razakars were the newly recruited armed bands. To resist the oppression, the peasants

under the leadership of the Communist party organized volunteer Guerrilla squads called *Dalams*.

The movement took a new turn when the peasants started a guerrilla fight in 1948. The peasants set up their own "People's Committee" or *Sangams* in their villages. These committees took over the land and maintained their army and military. The immediate spark for the movement was obtained from the death of Doddi Kommarayya, the sangham leader, on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1946. The death of Kommarayya enlarged the strike, and the movement got support from large peasant groups in neighbouring villages. By the end of July, the movement spread to 300-400 villages.

The police conducted search operations in the village due to increased violence. The Andhra Mahasabha, organized in 1928, was banned by the Nizam Government. The armed resistance continued till 1950 until the Indian Army crushed the movement. In 1951, the movement was finally called off.

The history of the movements showed that the immediate demands of the peasant movements in the pre-independence period were the reduction of taxes, abolition of illegal cesses, ending the exploitation of the landlords and their agents, reduction of debts, returning the seized lands and security of tenures. The Kisan movements transformed the peasant's consciousness. All the movements followed similar methods of struggle like satyagraha, meetings, conferences, rallies, demonstrations, and formations of kisan sabhas etc..

## Recap

- ▶ The Great Depression and changing national movements affected the peasantry.
- ▶ All India Kisan Congress in Lucknow in April 1936.
- ▶ Later, the organization changed its name to the All India Kisan Sabha.
- ▶ The first Conference brought a Kisan Manifesto, which was finalized at the All-India Kisan Committee session in Bombay.
- ▶ The Formation of *Karshaka Sangham* in Kerala under the efforts of C.S.P. leaders.
- ▶ The *Karshaka Sangham* demanded the amendment of the Malabar Tenancy Act of 1929.
- ▶ The Andhra peasants worked against the exploitation of the Zamindars.
- ▶ The Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha worked in Bihar for peasants.
- ▶ In Bihar, legislation was passed to reduce rent and restore Bakasht land.
- ▶ The Tebhaga movement was to reduce the share of produce from one-half to one-third.
- ▶ The Telangana movement was against the feudal oppression by the landowners of Andhra Pradesh.
- ▶ The peasants set up their own “People’s Committee” or *Sangham* in Andhra villages.

## Objective Questions

1. When was the All-India Kisan Congress established?
2. Who led the All-India Kisan Congress?
3. Who was the founder of Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha?
4. Who announced the Kisan Manifesto of Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha?
5. Which session of the Kisan Committee adopted the Manifesto?
6. Who presided over the Faizpur session of the Kisan Committee?
7. Which day is observed as Malabar Tenancy Act Amendment Day?
8. When was the Lahore Kisan Morcha formed?
9. What was the aim of the Tebhaga movement?
10. Who published the Bengal Bargadars Temporary Regulation Bill?



## Answers

1. April 1936
2. N.G Ranga
3. Swami Sahajanand
4. Indulal Yagnik
5. Faizpur Session
6. N.G Ranga
7. 6th November
8. 1939
9. Reduce the share of produce to one-third
10. Suhrawardy

## Assignments

1. Discuss the relationship between the peasant's movement and the national movement.
2. Describe the major issues faced by the peasants in India during the British period.
3. Trace the nature of the peasant movement in India.
4. Discuss the changes that occurred in the peasant movement in India.

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1. Chand, Tara, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi, 2017.
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# BLOCK - 04

## **Prelude to Partition**

# Unit 1

## Challenges of Communalism

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ▶ discuss the meaning of Communalism
- ▶ acquaint with the different elements of Communalism
- ▶ review the rise and growth of Communalism in India

### Prerequisites

Religion is a powerful tool that shapes the identity of a person or group in a society. India is a multi-religious nation, so it is important to check how religion shaped the group's identity and what are the challenges that religion poses in the society. Society and religion play a very important role in the evolution of Communalism. The major challenge of Communalism in India was the unification of a heterogeneous society.

We have learned that the Indian National Movement was against Communalism and has never supported communal forces. However, the national leaders could not fully regulate or counter the challenges of communalism in the country. The reason could be because of the failure of the national leaders to negotiate with the communal leaders. There were persistent communal riots between religious communities. The unit will try to explain the meaning, elements and growth of communalism in India.

### Keywords

Communalism, Extreme Communalism, Communal Riots, Fiscal Policy, Public Finance, Private Finance, Laissez Faire Policy



## Discussion



Fig 4.1.1 Communalism in Indian politics

See Figure 4.1.1; what we see is the close connection of communalism with politics. In today's politics, communal affiliation has become a significant aspect. Communal intolerance has led to clashes between different religious groups. Over the years, the community has been instrumental in the creation of vote banks in electoral politics. Communalism, therefore, remains a persistent issue in the political life of the country.

### 4.1.1 Definition of Communalism

Before discussing the rise and growth of communalism, it is essential to understand the definition of the term. According to Satish Chandra, Communalism is an ideology that shapes the vision of a community. He underlines that Communalism comprises three basic elements:

- i. Communalism is the belief that people who follow the same religion have a common interest. This idea is considered as the first foundation of communal ideology. It emerged with the notion of socio-political communities, which are based on religion. These communities have their own leaders.

- ii. The second element denotes that people from different religious communities do not share a common secular interest.
- iii. The third element shows a stage in which relations between religious communities are seen as conflicting, aggressive and rival. The communalists at this stage believed that the Hindus and the Muslims could not have a common secular interest.

Bipan Chandra, therefore, asserts that communalism is an ideology upon which communal politics is created.

#### 4.1.1.1 Three Stages of Communalism

The beginning of communal ideology is seen in the first stage. At this stage, many nationalists neglect the elements of mutual disagreement and interest of religion-based communities. The people in this category see themselves as Nationalist Hindus, Nationalist Muslims, and not just Nationalists.

The second stage of communalism is described as liberal communalism. It is also described as moderate communalism. The liberal communists believe in and follow communal politics but still follow liberal, democratic, humanist and nationalist values. Even when they consider India's distinct religion-based communities, Chandra believes that these divergent communal interests would be brought into harmony. The harmony thus will build India as a nation. For example, communal organizations like Hindu Mahasabha, Muslim League, All Brothers, functioned when M. A Jinnah, Madan Mohan Malaviya, and Lajpat Rai worked within the second stage of communalism.

The third stage of communalism is extreme communalism, working in a fascist mode. This kind of communalism is based on hatred and fear. In the third stage, communalism tends to use violence in language, and deeds,

calling for a war and furthering enmity against opponents. At this stage, communalism declares that their 'culture' is in danger. To explain, be it "Muslim Culture" or "Hindu Culture", their own culture was seen in danger of being suppressed and annihilated. The extremity of this stage is that both Muslims and Hindu communalists will put forward the theory that the Muslims and the Hindus constitute separate nations. The mutual hatred or antagonism cannot be reversed. Bipan Chandra noticed that after 1937, the Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) resorted to extreme communalism.

#### 4.1.1.2 Origin of Communalism in India

The communal consciousness appeared as a result of the transformation of Indian society. The transformation was due to the impact of colonialism and the urge to struggle against the exploitation of colonialism. At that time, some of the common interests were the region's economic, political and administrative reorganisation, an effort to make India a nation and the formation of modern social classes. The changes that occurred in society obviously had a new political orientation in the mid-nineteenth century.

The new political process necessitated the spread of new ideas of nationalism and the notion of class struggle. But whatever the new ideas and processes, the people were still bound to old ideas of identities like caste, race, religion, etc. Bipan Chandra argues that such conventional commitments eventually gave way to new political ideas. In India, he witnessed religious consciousness had transformed into communal consciousness.

Bipan Chandra, therefore, argues that communalism was an offshoot of colonial exploitations of the Indian economy, under-development and the incapacity of the colonial

powers to develop the Indian economy. The economic stagnation which resulted from colonial rule created antagonism among the middle class.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the absence of modern industrial development, an under-developed education system, health, and unemployment made the living situation worse for the educated middle class. The Great Depression of 1929 further worsened the situation when the rate of unemployment increased.

In this situation, the nationalist leaders were working for a long-term solution by fighting to overthrow colonial rule. Therefore, the middle class formed the backbone of the national movement from 1905 to 1947.

Because of economic stagnation, the unemployment rate was increasing. The educated youth compete with each other for government jobs and in professions like law and medicine. In an attempt to get more and more opportunities, the middle class used all their means, including educational qualifications, nepotism, bribery and caste, and provincial and regional identities. The caste and religious clout was used for their prospect to compete. Eventually, certain middle-class sections benefited from communalism, especially in acquiring government jobs.

Gradually, the educated middle class from the rural areas started to seek jobs beyond their land boundaries. They started to migrate to towns and cities in search of jobs and professions through the system of communal reservations and nominations. The development of the middle class through communal reservations widened the social base of communalism.

Another aspect favouring communal politics was the reservation of jobs and seats in colleges based on communal and caste



identities. Without sufficient opportunities in industry, commerce and educational ventures, Government service was the only source of employment for the middle class. The Government controlled most of the employment for teachers, doctors and others. People understood that communal politics could be used to exert pressure on the Government to reserve jobs and seats in the colleges based on communal lines. Therefore, in 1937, communal politics was organized around government jobs, educational concessions etc. Bipan Chandra viewed that though the communalists speak for 'communities', the reservations and other rights, they haven't demanded or taken up the issue of masses. This indicates that the communal politics of the time was confined to their community, not to everyone.

Bipan Chandra holds that communalism developed as a weapon of the economically and politically conservative social classes and political forces. These include semi-feudal landlords, merchants, moneylenders and the colonial state. The social, economic and political interest of the communalists intentionally encourage communalism because of the capacity of the communal ideas to twist and avert popular struggle, to prevent the masses from understanding the main reason accountable for their social condition, to prevent unity in the nation, to turn the masses from the real socio-economic interest of the nation.

#### **4.1.1.3 Growth and Spread of Communalism**

The British policy of Divide and Rule can be considered as the reason for the growth of communalism. The colonial power used communalism to counter and weaken the national movement. They considered it as the problem of the minority. The increasing Hindu-Muslim divergence in the nation was

the main justification for continuing the British rule. Therefore, they provided theories like the civilizing Mission, the White Man's Burden, etc.

Communalism was not an essential part of the colonial policy of Divide and Rule. Every section of the society was manipulated to prevent the country's unity. The British prepared the ground to set region against region, caste against caste, province against province, and the Right against Left. In all these, the communal division tends to survive till the end.

Communalism was strongly promoted by the British. Bipan Chandra, therefore, described communalism as the "channel through which the politics of the middle classes were placed at the service of colonialism and the jagirdari classes". In effect, communalism was the root cause which enabled the colonial rulers to narrow the social base of the people.

Another strong factor for the growth of communalism was the noticeable Hindu tone of the nationalist propaganda at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Many extremists of the period showed strong Hindu feelings and propagated the Hindu ideology. They tried to emphasize the relevance of ancient Indian culture. Tilak's propagation of the Shivaji festival and Ganesh Puja is an example. The Hindu tinge opened the way for Hindu Communalism. Eventually, the nationalists failed to eliminate these ideologies from the nation. Bipan Chandra viewed that the growing Hindu communalism resulted in the growth of Muslim tinge. However, the Hindu tinge was not the main reason for communalism. Like the British Government, the nationalists also failed to check the growth of communalism.

The communal and inaccurate view of Indian history was the major device for the spread of communal consciousness. These two



points, therefore, became the basic constituent of communal ideology. According to Bipan Chandra, the teachings of Indian history from a communal point of view is the reason for the rise and growth of communalism. The textbook spread the idea of communalism through poetry, drama, novels, short stories, magazines, newspapers, pamphlets, and classroom teaching.

James Mill started the beginning of teaching history from a communal perspective in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. He described an ancient period of Indian history as Hindu and medieval periods as Muslim periods. The basic character of India was identified with the religion of the ruler. Eventually, the culture and society regarding the Hindu or Muslim characters were also described.

The Hindu communalists propagated the imperialist view that the medieval rulers were anti-Hindu, exploited the Hindus and made forcible conversions. They described the Muslim ruler as a 'foreign rule' because of their religion. The basic contribution of the Muslim rule was the development of the economy and technology. They never accepted the contributions made in religion, philosophy, art, literature and society.

In turn, the Muslim community upheld the "Golden Age of Islamic achievement" in West Asia. They propagated that "all Muslims were the rulers of medieval India or at least the beneficiary of Muslim rule". They glorify all Muslim rulers.

According to scholars, religious pluralism was another factor in the growth of communalism. Religious pluralism is the coexistence of several religions in India. Bipan Chandra argues that religion was not the cause of communalism. Because there is a huge difference between religion as a belief system and ideology. However, the communal

divide is based on differences in religion. Religion was used as a mobilizing factor by the communalists.

#### 4.1.1.4 The British Rule and Communalism

It is, therefore, important to answer how the British nurtured communalism in the country.

- i. Firstly, by treating the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs as separate communities. The colonial rulers argued that India was neither a nation-state nor nation in the making nor did it comprise nationalities but consisted of "structured, mutually exclusive and antagonistic religion-based communities".
- ii. Secondly, the British extended their official favour and patronage to the communalists.
- iii. Thirdly, the colonial rulers tolerated the communal press, persons, and agitators.
- iv. Fourthly, they accepted the demands of the communalists. The British, therefore, strengthened the communal organizations and their politics in India. For example, the Communal Award of 1932 was given fair acceptance.
- v. Fifthly, the British accepted the communal organization and their leaders. The leaders were considered the 'spokespersons of their community'. In comparison, the nationalists were considered those who represented the elite.
- vi. Lastly, colonial rulers supported communalism through a policy of non-action. The Government failed to keep a check on the growth of communal organizations and activities. The Government has also failed to take action against the propagation of communal



ideas, press, literature and other means. In contrast, the British rewarded the communal intellectuals and government servants by providing titles, honours and high salaries.

The failure of the Government was also seen in suppressing the communal revolts. The revolts were not crushed forcefully. The Government failed to take proper measures to prevent the communal riots and situations as with the nationalists.

## Recap

- ▶ Communalism is an ideology that shapes the vision of a community.
- ▶ The first stage of communalism is the beginning of the ideology of communalism.
- ▶ The second stage of communalism is described as liberal communalism.
- ▶ The third stage of communalism is extreme communalism.
- ▶ It was an offshoot of colonial exploitations of the Indian economy.
- ▶ In 1937, communal politics was organized around government jobs, educational concessions.
- ▶ The British policy of Divide and Rule can be considered the reason for the growth of communalism.
- ▶ Another factor for the growth of communalism was the Hindu tone of nationalist propaganda.
- ▶ The communal and inaccurate view of Indian history was the major device for the spread of communal consciousness.
- ▶ Religious pluralism was another factor in the growth of communalism.

## Objective Questions

1. What is considered the reason for the growth of communalism?
2. What was the justification provided by the British for the implementation of the policy of Divide and Rule?
3. Who propagated the Shivaji festival and Ganesh Puja?
4. Which colonial scholar taught history from a communal perspective?
5. Who divided Indian history into 'Hindu, Muslim and foreign rule'?

## Answers

1. The British policy of Divide and Rule
2. Civilising Mission and the White Man's Burden
3. Bal Gangadhar Tilak
4. James Mill
5. James Mill

## Assignments

1. Discuss various aspects of Communalism that favoured its growth in India.
2. Discuss the major social classes that favoured the growth of communalism in India.
3. Analyse different ways by which the British encouraged and nurtured communalism.

## Suggested Reading

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## Unit 2

# Two Nation Theory

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ identify the roots of separatism in India
- ▶ assess the relevance of the Two-Nation theory in history
- ▶ discuss various communal organizations and their ideologies
- ▶ describe the rise and growth of communal organizations like Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League

### Prerequisites

Various communal organizations nurtured the idea of communalism. The communal principles were given strength through internal and external support. Some of the prominent organisations were the All India Muslim League and the All India Hindu Mahasabha. These organizations opposed each other and made each other the prominent communal organizations of the period. Though their political activities were for their community, the differences in ideology made these organizations rivals.

Various theories, like the Two Nation Theory, fostered the subsequent growth of communalism. These became the base for the Partition of the country. There was the gradual alienation of the Muslims from the mainstream national movement. Their focus was the creation of separate land for the Muslims. These tendencies were also evident in the Hindu communal organizations' activities. The process of Partition became possible because the people were also attracted to the communal ideologies of these organizations.

### Keywords

Simla Deputation, liberal communalism, extreme communalism, Two Nation Theory

## Discussion

The colonial authorities and the communalists together evolved as a powerful medium in the spread of communalism. The partnership eventually culminated in the Minto-Morley reforms of 1909. The reform brought provisions of a separate electorate for the Muslims. Under the system, the Muslim voters were given separate constituencies, where only Muslims could only stand as candidates and only they could vote in such constituencies. A separate electorate turned the situation more viable for communal violence.

We should understand the fact that there were no communal feelings in India before the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Hindus and the Muslims fought side by side in the revolt of 1857. During the struggle, some Muslim intellectuals noticed that the Muslims lagging behind in getting modern education and government jobs. They blamed the Government policies for the lag.

Syed Ahmed Khan began his educational activities without any communal bias. He founded numerous scientific societies in the 1860s. The Aligarh College was one of the important foundations for education that targeted both Hindus and Muslims.

Communalism in India started in 1880's when Syed Ahmed Khan used it against the national movement. Syed Ahmed believed that the Muslim shares in administrative posts and in professions could be increased only by showing loyalty to the colonial rulers. He then organized the jagirdari elements among the Muslims. Bipan Chandra argues that he and his followers gradually laid the foundations of communalism in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Muslims thought that the British support was needed to safeguard the interest of the minority Muslim community. Hence,

they decided to oppose the Indian National Congress.

Sayed Ahmed declared that the Congress was a "Hindu body whose major objectives were against Muslim interests". He criticized the Congress for founding its principle of social equality among the low-caste and high-caste born. He opposed all democratic elections stating that they would lead to "Muslims falling into a condition of utmost degradation". However, he did not create a political organization. He asked the Muslims to remain politically passive, that is, non-agitational. The Muslim communalists continued their loyalty to the British even after the death of Syed Ahmed in 1898. They openly supported the British during the Swadeshi Movement in 1905.

### 4.2.1 The Simla Deputation

On 1 October 1906, a Muslim deputation comprising 35 delegates led by Aga Khan met Lord Minto at Shimla. The Simla Deputation claimed special privileges for the Muslims on three grounds. The Simla Deputation marked the beginning of separatism. Lord Minto agreed to safeguard the rights and privileges of the Muslims. After the Simla Deputation, the Muslims held a meeting to support the Partition of Bengal. Eventually, they understood the need for a political organization.

#### 4.2.1.1 All-India Muslim League

Nawab Habib Abdulla of Dacca took the initiative to form a Muslim political organization. On 30 December 1906, a meeting was held at Dacca. The meeting decided to form a political association called the All-India Muslim League.

The All-India Muslim League was founded by zamindars and upper-class Muslims like Agha Khan, the Nawab of Dacca and





Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk. According to Bipan Chandra, the Muslim League was founded as a loyalist, communal, conservative political organization. The League supported the Partition of Bengal, raised the slogan of separate Muslim interests, demanded a separate electorate and worked to safeguard the interests of the Muslims in government services.

The first annual session of the League was held in Karachi on 29 December 1907. The main programme of the Muslim League was to fight for consolidation and extension of a separate electorate for the Muslims.

#### 4.2.1.2 The Punjab Hindu Sabha

Like the Muslim organization, the Hindus, also founded their political organization to spread their communal ideas and programmes. The Punjab Hindu Sabha was created in 1909. U.N Mukherjee and Lal Chand founded the Sabha. The Sabha was formed against the national politics of the Indian National Congress for trying to unite Indians as a single nation. In his booklet “Self-Abnegation in Politics”, Lal Chand described the Congress as the ‘self-inflicted misfortune’ of the Hindus. The first session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha was held in April 1915. The session was conducted under the presidency of Maharaja of Kasim Bazar.

#### 4.2.2 Spread of Liberal Communalism

The younger Muslim intellectuals soon became dissatisfied with the upper-class leadership of the Muslim League. They were more interested in modern and radical ideas. During the period, the Ahrar movement was founded under Maulana Mohammed Au, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Hasan Imam, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and Mazhar-ul-Haq. The movement gained support from the orthodox

Muslim schools. The young Muslims soon became active in the Indian National Congress. Among them was Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who was invited to join the League when Aga Khan resigned from the Presidentship of the League.

The positive relationship with the Congress eventually led to the Lucknow Pact of 1916. The Congress and the League signed the Pact and put forth their common political demands before the Government. The Pact accepted the demand for a separate electorate, weightage system and reservation of seats for the minorities in the legislature.

During the movement against the Rowlatt Act and Khilafat and the Non-Cooperation movement, Hindu-Muslim unity spread throughout the country. The entire nation raised the slogan of “Hindu-Muslim ki Jai”, suggesting the unity of both the communities. However, when the Non-Cooperation Movement was withdrawn in 1922, the people felt disappointed. The communal riots became a repeated issue during the time. By this period, the Muslim League once again became active and sidelined all nationalist and liberal elements.

The Hindu Mahasabha was again revived in 1923. The Sabha declared their objectives as “to maintain, protect and promote the Hindu race, the Hindu culture and the Hindu civilization for the advancement of a Hindu Rashtra”. The Hindus and the Muslims tried to teach the fear of being deprived, surpassed, threatened and dominated. These years witnessed movements like the Sangathan and the Suddhi movements among the Hindus and the Tanzeem and Tabligh movements among the Muslims.

The nationalists could not resist the communal pressure, and they began to adopt ‘communal or semi-communal positions’. It

was due to communalist pressure that there occurred a split among the Swarajists. After the split, a group called ‘responsivists’ offered their assistance to the Government so that the interest of the Hindus might be safeguarded. Lajpat Rai, Madan Mohan Malaviya and N.C Kelkar joined the Hindu Mahasabha and fought for Hindu communal solidarity. These groups carried strong campaigns against the secular congressmen. Eventually, this led to communal violence in several parts between 1923-24.

The anti-Simon Commission protest movement and the Civil Disobedience Movement from 1930-1934 pushed the communalists into the background. Many Muslims led by the Congress, Jamiat-ul-Ulama-i-Hind, and the Khudai Khidmatgars went to jail. The communal leaders got a chance to come to the limelight during the Second Round Table Conference. Many Muslim communalists and Hindu communalists tried to win the British’s support to safeguard their communal interests.

The communal parties and organizations remained weak till 1937. Many communal intellectuals joined the national struggle and socialism. Moreover, in order to bring energy to communalism, the British announced the Communal Award, which accepted all major demands of Jinnah’s Fourteen Points of 1929.

### 4.2.3 Extreme Communalism

After 1937, communalism assumed an extremist and virulent form. Extreme communalism was based on the ideas of hatred, fear and irrationality. The issues of domination and suppression became the major theme of this communalism. They often unleashed campaigns against the followers of other religions. Bipan Chandra viewed that the extreme communalists used one principle “The bigger the lie, the better”. Communalism, at

the extreme phase, began to mobilize popular mass opinion, organising mass movements against the extremist communal politics of the urban lower classes.

The transformation of liberal communalism into its extreme can be explained in the background of the following developments:

- i. The emergence of the Congress as the dominant political force after the Civil Disobedience Movement.
- ii. Various political parties of the landlords suffered a decline.
- iii. The youths and workers turned to the Left, and the national movement began to adopt radical positions in its programmes and actions.
- iv. The Zamindars and Jagirdars switched to communalism for their class defence.
- v. The outbreak of World War II in 1939 further strengthened communalism. The resignation of the Congress Ministries and the demand for complete independence put the British in difficulties. In order to counter the nationalist demand and to divide Indian opinion, the British supported the demands of the Muslim League. The Muslim League was given the power to veto any political settlement.
- vi. The Congress decided to initiate a massive campaign to work among the Muslims called the Muslim Mass Contact Programme. The campaign was conducted under the guidance of Jawaharlal Nehru.

In the election of 1937, both Muslim League and Hindu Mahasabha contested on liberal communal lines. But they could manage only very few seats. The Muslim League won 109 out of 482 seats under a separate electorate.



At this point, the communalists realized that they would be cast off from the scene if they did not adapt themselves for militant and mass movements. However, the Muslim Mass Contact Programme further boosted the growth of militant communalism.

#### 4.2.4 Muhammed Ali Jinnah and Two Nation Theory



Fig 4.2.1 Muhammad Ali Jinnah

Muhammed Ali Jinnah came back to India in 1906 as a Barrister who held the principles of secularism and liberal nationalist ideas. He joined the Congress and acted as the secretary to Dadabhai Naoroji. He was said to be an opponent of the Muslim League when it was founded. From 1906 onwards, Jinnah propagated the themes of national unity. Hence, he received the title the “Ambassador of Hindu Muslim Unity” from Sarojini Naidu.

His first steps towards communism were when he entered the Central Legislative Council from Bombay under the system of

a separate electorate. After this, he joined the Muslim League in 1913. As the Muslim spokesperson, he convinced the Congress to accept separate electorates and communal reservations. However, he continued his commitment towards nationalism during this period.

He resigned from the Central Legislative Council when the Government passed the Rowlatt Act. During the 1920s, he left the Congress due to disagreement with the Congress. The activities of Jinnah in 1924 was mainly to safeguard the interests and rights of the Muslims. His politics was based on the idea that “Muslims should organize themselves, stand united and press every reasonable point for the protection of their community”.

Jinnah was further separated from the mainstream politics when the Congress organized a mass movement in 1930. He then decided to stay in Britain. In 1936, Jinnah returned to India and revived the activities of the League. Throughout the period, Jinnah spoke for freedom and the Hindu-Muslim cooperation. He then decided to participate in the legislative elections. But the poor election results made him think of options to stick to his semi-nationalist and liberal communal politics and to do so, Jinnah decided to follow the course of extreme communalism.

The two-nation theory was a concept that emphasized a separate state for the Muslims. The two-nation theory dwelled upon three attributes. Firstly, Jinnah believed that the Hindus and Muslims were not two communities but should be considered as two different nations. Secondly, Hinduism and Islam are not different religions but distinct in the social order. Hence they require a separate territory for their existence. Thirdly, the Hindus and the Muslims follow two different religious philosophies. Jinnah believed that

the Hindus and the Muslims, therefore, could not live together as a community. Hence the Muslims should have an independent state. They demanded Pakistan, a separate country for the Muslims.

The Congress opposed the theory and its demand for Pakistan. The Congress agreed to the separation only in the areas

where the influence of the Muslim League was predominant. Hence, it was decided that Punjab, Bengal and Assam were to be partitioned. Along with the Congress, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, known as 'Frontier Gandhi,' opposed the idea of the two-nation theory.

## Recap

- ▶ The colonial authorities and the communalists together evolved as a powerful medium in the spread of communalism.
- ▶ The initiative to form a Muslim political organization was taken by Nawab Habib Abdulla of Dacca.
- ▶ Agha Khan, the Nawab of Dacca and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk were the founders of All India Muslim League.
- ▶ The first annual session of the League was held in Karachi on 29 December 1907.
- ▶ Its main programme was to fight for a separate electorate for the Muslims.
- ▶ The first session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha was in April 1915.
- ▶ The Lucknow Pact accepted the demand for a separate electorate, weightage system and reservation of seats for the minorities in the legislature.
- ▶ There was a split amongst the Swarajists, who wanted to adopt communal or semi-communal positions.
- ▶ The communal parties and organizations remained weak till 1937.
- ▶ After 1937, Communalism assumed an extremist form.
- ▶ Jinnah joined the Muslim League in 1913.
- ▶ The two-nation theory was a concept that emphasized a separate state for the Muslims.
- ▶ The Congress opposed the theory and its demand for Pakistan.
- ▶ Along with the Congress, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, known as 'Frontier Gandhi', opposed the idea of the two-nation theory.



## Objective Questions

1. Which Act brought a separate electorate in India?
2. Who led the Muslim Deputation to meet Lord Minto at Shimla?
3. Who took the initiative to form a Muslim organization in 1906?
4. Which meeting resulted in the formation of the All-India Muslim League?
5. Who were the founders of the All-India Muslim League?
6. Who founded The Punjab Hindu Sabha?
7. Whose booklet was *Self-Abnegation in Politics*?
8. Who presided over the first session of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha?
9. Which Pact accepted the demand for a separate electorate for the Muslims?
10. Who received the title 'Ambassador of Hindu Muslim Unity'?

## Answers

1. Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909
2. Aga Khan
3. Nawab Habib Abdulla of Dacca
4. Simla Deputation
5. Agha Khan, the Nawab of Dacca and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk
6. U.N Mukherjee, and Lal Chand
7. Lal Chand
8. Maharaja of Kasim Bazar
9. Lucknow Pact
10. Muhammed Ali Jinnah

## Assignments

1. Describe the line of actions adopted by the nationalists to curb communal violence.
2. Discuss the role of communal organizations in spreading communal ideologies.
3. The British helped the growth of communalism and communal organizations. How?



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## Unit 3

# Cabinet Mission Plan

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ▶ explain the background for the appointment of the Cabinet Mission
- ▶ access the major proposals and recommendations of the Cabinet Mission
- ▶ interpret the base of the Constituent Assembly
- ▶ discuss the major criticism of the cabinet mission

### Prerequisites

With the end of World War II, India's struggle for independence entered a new phase. The Quit India Movement and INA revolts increased the determination of the Indians. During the INA trials, the British Government felt it was practical to set the INA prisoners free from legal proceedings. The changed attitude of the Government was because of the change in the balance of power in the world. After the war, the economic and military power of the British shattered.

Moreover, the change of the Government in Britain changed the political scenario of the British land. The British Government also understood that they could no longer rely on Indian personnel for administration and military to suppress the freedom movement. Lastly, the Indian people became strong and determined to fight against the humiliation of foreign rule.

The country's large-scale labour unrest and strikes made the situation harder for the Government. The peasant movement after 1945 took a militant form. The princely states of Hyderabad, Travancore, Kashmir and others started popular upsurges and revolts.

### Keywords

Simla Conference, Rajaji Formula, Direct Action Day, Interim Government, Constituent Assembly

## Discussion

### 4.3.1 Simla Conference (1945)

We have seen severe unrest among the Hindus and the Muslims during the post-war period over communal issues. Between 1942 and 1943, ministries of the Muslim League were installed in Assam, Sind, Bengal and North-West Frontier Province. Jinnah wanted autonomy of the Muslims in the central Government. The Congress tried to meet the Muslim demands through political negotiations but was unsuccessful.

In April 1944, C. Rajagopalachari proposed a solution. This is popularly called the “Rajaji Formula”. The main proposals for the negotiations were as follows:

- ▶ A post-war commission would demarcate the regions where the Muslims were the majority.
- ▶ There will also be a referendum of the adult population to decide whether they would prefer Pakistan.
- ▶ In Partition, there would be a mutual agreement to run certain services like communication and defence.
- ▶ The Border districts shall choose to join either of the two states.
- ▶ Implementing these schemes shall be possible after the full transfer of the power.

In July 1944, Gandhi planned to talk with Jinnah. However, Jinnah did not agree to Rajaji’s proposal, so the Jinnah-Gandhi talk failed. This was an issue raised again when Wavell was appointed as a Viceroy. Wavell started to negotiate with the national leaders. His effort eventually culminated in the Simla Conference.

The Simla Conference (1945) was convened to settle the political unrest of the country. In 1945, Wavell convinced Churchill for a Congress-League coalition government in India. His idea was to resolve the issues between the Congress and the League. A conference was convened at Shimla to discuss the formation of the Indian Executive Council. But the Simla Conference of June-July 1945 failed when Jinnah demanded equal representation of seats. He wanted half of the Executive Council to be filled by Muslims only. He claimed that the right to nominate all Muslim members of the Cabinet should be for the Muslim League only. The second demand of Jinnah was the maintenance of veto power by the Viceroy. The Congress refused to accept this. Wavell called off the meeting.

#### General election 1945

In 1945, general elections held in England brought the Labour Party to power. Clement Attlee became the Prime Minister. Lord Pethick Lawrence as the Secretary of State for India and Lord Stafford Cripps as the President of the Board of Trade. Attlee decided to hold the General Elections in India as a first step.

The main parties contested were the Congress and the Muslim League. In the results of the Central Assembly, the Congress secured a majority of seats, while the Muslim League also won almost every Muslim seat. The Congress secured a majority in the provincial legislature in Bombay, Madras, United Province, Bihar, Odisha and Central Province. In the North West Frontier Province, the Congress secured 30 seats, while the League could manage 17 seats.

The British Government, therefore, set a Cabinet Mission to India in March 1946 to negotiate with the Indian leaders the terms for the transfer of power to the Indians.



### 4.3.2 Cabinet Mission (1946)

The British sent a Cabinet Mission to India to discuss independence. The Cabinet comprised Lord Pethick Lawrence, Stafford Cripps and A.V Alexander. On 15 March 1946, Attlee made a statement that “a minority will not be allowed to place a veto on the progress of the majority” and “minorities should be able to live free from fear”, which is different from the Wavell Plan.

The Cabinet Mission arrived in India on March 1946 and spent three weeks discussing with the leaders of the major political parties. The main aim of the Cabinet Mission was to make necessary arrangements for the interim Government.

Both the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League did not reach an agreement, which made the resolution difficult. Gandhi was against the ‘two-nation theory’; and the formation of two constitution-making bodies. Nehru favoured the federation of autonomous units. Creating two lists would give a choice to either be free or delegate to the centre.

Jinnah wanted nothing less than a partition. He believed it was good to have two nations: India and Pakistan. According to Wavell, the demand for Pakistan was stronger only among the Muslims in the minority provinces.

The Cabinet Mission announced its recommendations on May 1946. The Mission proposed:

- i. The Unity of India shall be retained.
- ii. The Cabinet Mission was convinced that Pakistan was not practical. The demand for Pakistan will never resolve the issue of the communal minority.
- iii. The Cabinet Mission planned a two-tiered federal plan. The Plan aimed to maintain

national unity with regional autonomy. There is a federation of provinces and states. The federal centre comprising the British Indian provinces and Princely states shall control the defence, foreign affairs, and communications.

- iv. The Union would have an Executive and Legislature comprising the representatives of the British Indian and Princely states.
- v. The subjects not covered in the Union list shall be placed in the provinces.
- vi. The Princely States would retain all residuary powers, and those lists were not to be ceded to the Union.
- vii. The Mission rejected the idea of elections to the Constituent Assembly based on a universal adult franchise. Instead, a complicated method was suggested. Firstly, each province should be allotted a total number of seats according to the population. Secondly, the seats allotted to a province should be divided on the basis of the ‘main community’ in proportion to their numerical strength. Thirdly, the representatives of each ‘main community’ in a province should be elected by the community members to the Legislative Assembly through a single transferable vote.
- viii. The Mission grouped the provinces into three sections. Group A comprises Madras, Bombay, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Central Provinces and Odisha. Group B consists of Punjab, NWFP, Sind, and Group C consists of Bengal and Assam.
- ix. An interim government shall be formed while the Constitution is in the making. This Interim Government will exert power until a permanent constitution is

agreed upon.

On 6 June 1946, the Muslim League passed a resolution accepting the Cabinet Mission Plan. And the League authorized Jinnah to negotiate with the Viceroy regarding the Interim Government. Similarly, On 24 June 1946, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution accepting the proposal but rejected forming an Interim Government. The Congress disagreed with the proposal of the Interim Government because they felt that the Muslim League was given disproportionate representation.

On 29 July 1946, the League withdrew their acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan. He announced that they would resort to Direct Action to achieve Pakistan. This is known as the Bombay Resolution. The Muslim League rejected the Mission based on two accounts:

- i. The proposal of the Mission would lead to a Constituent Assembly with a Hindu-dominant majority.
- ii. The grouping of provinces was considered optional by the Congress, and the League considered it permanent and fixed.

#### 4.3.2.1 Direct Action Day (16 August 1946)

Jinnah announced the Direct Action Day to achieve Pakistan on 29 July 1946. 16 August 1946 was fixed as Direct Action Day. Jinnah declared, “Today we have said goodbye to the constitution and constitutional method. Today we have also forged a pistol and are in a position to use it”.

Trouble first exploded at Calcutta and then in some Hindu minority districts in East Bengal. For three days, violence took place against the Hindus. There were killings, arson, rape, looting, etc. The violence of Calcutta was of such a magnitude that the incident came to be known as “The Great Calcutta Killing”. In

Calcutta, the Government under the Muslim League headed by H. S. Suhrawardy assisted the rioters.

Meanwhile, the British Government in Calcutta remained silent. Nor the Central Government took any action despite the horrific incident. The violence in Calcutta spread to East Bengal as well. In the absence of protection from the Government, the Hindus organized themselves and thus ensued counter-violence.

The communal trouble at Noakhali and Tippera in East Bengal began on 10 October 1946. Unlike in Calcutta, the region witnessed the abduction of women and forced marriages. The Government showed little interest in controlling the violence. The Congress sent Gandhi to study the situation at Noakhali. He stayed at Noakhali and visited the Hindus and the Muslims and their homes. However, Noakhali was polarised that even Gandhi’s Mission was only partially successful.

Direct Action Day became a tool to press the demand of the Muslim League. The effects of what were happening in Calcutta made the Viceroy to think of the need to bring the Muslim League into the Interim Government. Nehru called this effort “Shaking hands with the murder”. Jinnah was against the idea of joining the Interim Government and warned that installing a Congress Interim Government would result in unprecedented consequences. The violence in East Bengal forced the Congress leaders to accept the Interim Government.

To make matters worse, the communities that were not directly involved in violence participated in the revenge. To avenge the violence against the Hindus of Noakhali, the Hindus of Bihar unleashed violence on the Muslim minority areas and engulfing the





Punjab from March 1947 onwards. The Direct Action violence brought down the non-League Coalition Ministry of Punjab. The violence spread to Lahore, Multan, Rawalpindi and Amritsar.

### 4.3.3 The Interim Government (2 September 1946)



Fig 4.3.1 Members of first Interim Government

On 6 August 1946, the Viceroy Lord Wavell invited Nehru to propose the formation of an Interim Government. The Interim Government took oath on 2 September 1946. The League was not invited to join the Government because of their Direct-Action Day proposal of 1946.

The Interim Government comprised 12 members, including 3 Muslims nominated by the Congress. Nehru was chosen as the vice president. Those twelve members were Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Dr Rajendra Prasad, M. Asif Ali, Sarat Chandra Bose, Dr John Mattai, Sardar Baldev Singh, Jagjivan Ram, Shafaat Ahmad Khan, Syed Ali Zaheer and Covesji Hormusji Bhabha. In the beginning, two seats were left vacant but were later filled by two Muslims.

On October 1946, the Muslim League

agreed to join the Interim Government. To make space for the five league nominees, three existing members of the Interim Government, Sarat Chandra Bose, Shafaat Ahmad Khan and Syed Ali Zaheer, resigned from the Government. Though the League joined the Government, they were not ready to form the Constituent Assembly.

#### 4.3.3.1 The Constituent Assembly (9 December 1946)

The Constituent Assembly was designated to write the Constitution of India when India attained independence. It was the result of the Cabinet Mission Plan. The elections for Constituent Assembly were held between July and December 1946. The Congress won all general seats except nine. The Muslim League won all reserved seats for the Muslims. As mentioned above, according to the resolution of 29 July 1946, the Muslim League did not join the Constituent Assembly.



Fig 4.3.2 Constituent Assembly

The Congress chose nominees from the 'Caste Hindus', Scheduled Caste Hindus, Adivasis, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians and the Parsis. The representatives of the Princely States did not join the Assembly until 1947.

The Constituent Assembly began to function in December 1946 under the

Presidentship of Rajendra Prasad. Following the commencement of the Constituent Assembly, Jawaharlal Nehru moved the Objective Resolution. The Objective Resolution envisaged the Indian Union as an “independent sovereign republic”. The Objective Resolution was based on the ideas of social, political and economic democracy. It envisages guaranteeing all rights to all sections of society and providing adequate safeguards to the minority sections.

The Assembly was suspended for several weeks to provide a space for the Muslim League and the Princely States. The Working Committee of the Muslim League met at Karachi on January 1947 and passed a resolution that pointed out the different nature of the Constituent Assembly from those mentioned in the Cabinet Mission Plan. Therefore, they called the Constituent

Assembly ‘His Majesty Government’ and declared the Assembly invalid and illegal. The Muslim League demanded the dissolution of the Assembly.

The Muslim League rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan and the Constituent Assembly. Through all these activities, it was confirmed that they were adhering to the Direct Action Day Plan. In reply, the Congress issued an ultimatum. According to the ultimatum, the Muslim League was asked either to withdraw from the Ministry or the League members in the Assembly to resign unless the League changed its Karachi Resolution. The Congress put forth the demand on 5 February 1947 to the Viceroy for the resignation of the Muslim League members from the Interim Government. All these political situations led Attlee to rise into action. His interference led to the Attlee Declaration of 1947.

## Recap

- ▶ In April 1944, C. Rajagopalachari proposed a solution. This is popularly called the “Rajaji Formula”.
- ▶ The Failure of the Jinnah-Gandhi talk resulted in the Simla Conference.
- ▶ The Simla Conference was a failure.
- ▶ In 1945, general elections held in England brought the Labour Party to power.
- ▶ Attlee decided to hold the General Elections in India.
- ▶ The British Government sent a Cabinet Mission to India in March 1946 to negotiate with Indian leaders the terms for the transfer of power to Indians.
- ▶ The Cabinet Mission arrived in India on March 1946
- ▶ The main aim of the Cabinet Mission was to make necessary arrangements for the interim Government.
- ▶ Jinnah wanted nothing less than a partition.
- ▶ The Formation of Interim Government in the Cabinet Mission.
- ▶ Jinnah announced the Direct Action Day to achieve Pakistan on 29 July 1946.
- ▶ Communal riots occurred after the announcement of Direct Action Day.
- ▶ Nehru was chosen as the vice president
- ▶ On October 1946, Muslim League agreed to join the Interim Government.
- ▶ The Constituent Assembly began to function in December 1946 under the Presidentship of Rajendra Prasad.



- ▶ The Constituent Assembly was designated to write the Constitution of India.
- ▶ Jawaharlal Nehru moved the Objective Resolution.
- ▶ The Muslim League rejected the Cabinet Mission Plan and Constituent Assembly.

## Objective Questions

1. When was Rajaji Formula proposed?
2. When was the Simla Conference conveyed?
3. Who convened the Simla Conference?
4. Who presided over the Cabinet Mission?
5. When did the Cabinet Mission declare its recommendations?
6. What was the Bombay Resolution?
7. When was the Interim Government formed?
8. Who was the Vice President of the Interim Government?
9. Who was the elected President of the Constituent Assembly?
10. Who moved the Objective Resolutions in the Constituent Assembly?

## Answers

1. April 1944
2. 1945
3. Lord Wavell
4. Lord Pethick Lawrence
5. May 1946
6. Direct Action to achieve Pakistan
7. 2 September 1946
8. Jawaharlal Nehru
9. Rajendra Prasad
10. Jawaharlal Nehru

## Assignments

1. Discuss why the Cabinet Mission was rejected?
2. Discuss Cabinet Mission and its demand for Pakistan.
3. Is the Cabinet Mission a success or failure? Give your Comments.

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# Unit 4

## Independence & Partition

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ become proficient in the events that led to independence
- ▶ discuss the background of the Partition of India
- ▶ assess the effects of Partition
- ▶ describe the efforts of leaders in achieving independence
- ▶ identify the merits and demerits of Partition of India

### Prerequisites

The failure of the Cabinet Mission Plan and the League's aversion to the Interim Government made the situation worse for the British. The League declared the Constituent Assembly illegal and proceeded with the policy of Direct Action. The Congress demanded to modify the attitude of the League or resign from the Interim Government. Jinnah felt that they should fight for Pakistan. For him, the Interim Government is a civil war by other means. The disruption tactics convinced the Congress leaders of the ineffectiveness of the Interim Government. On 5<sup>th</sup> February 1947, the nine interim Government members wrote to the Viceroy demanding League's resignation. Jinnah pursued a direct proposal for Pakistan.

The country was moving very close to complete independence after forming the Interim Government. Scholars viewed that the Independence-Partition reflected the success and failure of the anti-imperialist movement led by the Congress. The Congress succeeded in building a national consciousness among the people, which was shown in the Quit India Movement. However, they could not integrate the Muslims into the nation. Hence, the success and failure of the national movement were reflected in India's Independence and its Partition.

### Keywords

Attlee's Declaration, Mountbatten Plan, Partition, Independence



## Discussion

### 4.4.1 Attlee's Declaration



Fig 4.4.1 British Prime Minister Clement Attlee

The League's resignation from the Interim Government forced the British Government to take the required measures. The British Prime Minister Attlee realized the importance of another policy for the country. He also understood the need to appoint a new Viceroy who could deal with all the unstable situations effectively. He, therefore, appointed Lord Mountbatten as the new Viceroy of India. Attlee then made two significant declarations. One about the date of withdrawal and the other about the appointment of the Viceroy.

The developing crisis was defused when Attlee made his first declaration in the Parliament on 20 February 1947. According to the declaration, the date for the British withdrawal from India was fixed on 30 June 1948. He believed that the declaration of date for the transfer of power to India would shock the political parties and leaders, resulting

in an agreement to avert the constitutional crisis. Attlee declared that the British would quit India after transferring power "into responsible hands not later than June 1948".

After the declaration of the withdrawal date, the people were convinced that the British were sincere about conceding independence. The Attlee Government accepted the need for a final date because they could not deny the truth of Wavell's assessment of the decline of the British Government. Therefore, the 20 February declaration accepted Viceroy Wavell's interpretations of the Indian situation.

The second declaration was regarding the appointment of Lord Mountbatten as the new Viceroy of India, replacing the Viceroy Lord Wavell. Mountbatten was charged with the task of termination of British rule by 30 June 1948.

### 4.4.2 Mountbatten Plan

Lord Mountbatten came to India on 22 March 1947 as India's last Governor General and Viceroy. On his arrival, he took necessary measures for the transfer of power to India. For two months, Mountbatten discussed with the political leaders and parties the Plan for the transfer of power. A Plan, agreeable to both Congress and League was arrived on June 1947. The Viceroy announced the Plan in the House of Commons on 3 June 1947. Hence, the Plan came to be known as the 'June 3<sup>rd</sup> Plan'. The Plan was also called Plan Balkan, Partition Plan or Dickie Bird Plan.

Mountbatten was given direction from His Majesty's Government to discover the options of unity and division of the country till October 1947 in the form of a power transfer. Within two weeks of arrival, Mountbatten understood he would not push the Cabinet Mission Plan. Jinnah was adamant about nothing less than a sovereign state.



The main feature of the Mountbatten Plan was the Partition of India. It proposed the Partition of Punjab and Bengal. The League's demand for Pakistan was approved to the extent that it would be created. Nehru rejected these proposals because instead of creating a sense of security and stability in the nation, they would encourage the tendencies of chaos and weakness. Jinnah, too, rejected the Partition of Punjab and Bengal by insisting that the Partition was a "truncated or mutilated, moth-eaten Pakistan".

The Congress wanted to maintain the unity of the country. Mountbatten supported the goodwill of the Congress to maintain the unity

of the country. But he insisted that unity was possible if India was to remain in the British Commonwealth. Therefore, he proposed another alternative plan to transfer the power.

The Mountbatten Plan sought an early transfer of power based on the Dominion Status to the two states, India and Pakistan. The Congress was willing to accept Dominion Status because they felt that they must assume full power immediately and meet the situation in the country at the earliest. For Britain, the Dominion Status offered a chance to keep India with the Commonwealth, even if temporarily.



Fig 4.4.2 Lord Mountbatten, Jawaharlal Nehru and Jinnah agreement on partition

On 3 June, Mountbatten announced his new Plan and proposed the date of transfer of power from August 1947 to June 1948. The British declared their aim was neither interfering in framing the Constitution nor disrupting the functioning of the existing Constituent Assembly. However, it was made clear that the Constitution thus framed

should not be forced upon other parts of the country that were unwilling to accept it. Under such circumstances, choosing which part of the country they wanted to join became significant, India or Pakistan.

The British also declared that they would refuse to take responsibility for growing communal tension. Sardar Vallabhai Patel

said to the Viceroy that “the situation was one where you won’t govern yourself, and you won’t let us govern”.

According to the Plan,

- ▶ There was provision for the Partition of Punjab and Bengal.
- ▶ The Hindu-majority provinces that accepted the Constituent Assembly were given no choice but to accept India or Pakistan.
- ▶ While the Muslim-majority provinces like Bengal, Punjab, Sind, NWFP and Baluchistan could decide whether to join India or Pakistan.
- ▶ The provincial assemblies decided the decisions of the Muslim-majority provinces. A referendum was carried out in North West Frontier Provinces regarding the matter. In the NWFP, the followers of Frontier Gandhi, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and his Khudai Khidmatgar group boycotted the referendum. Khan Abdul Jaffar Khan anticipated the Muslim population of NWFP to join Pakistan.
- ▶ In Baluchistan, the Quetta Municipality and the tribal representatives would be consulted.
- ▶ In Bengal, if Partition occurred, a referendum would be held in Muslim-majority areas of Sylhet, located in Assam, a non-majority Muslim province. This referendum aimed to know whether Sylhet would continue to be part of Assam or amalgamated into a new province of the newly composed district of Bengal. However, in Sylhet, the majority voted

to favour the amalgamation of the new province.

- ▶ A Boundary Commission appointed by the Governor General would be set up to decide the Partition of Bengal and Punjab issues. The Two Boundary Commission was set up under the chairmanship of Sir Cyril Radcliff to demarcate the boundaries.

#### 4.4.3 Indian Independence Act July 1947

On 20 February 1947, with the declaration of Attlee, the British rule would end by 30 June 1948. The main concern was that the power would be transferred to the responsible Indian hands. When the League protested, the British Government clarified that the Constituent Assembly of India would frame the Indian Constitution. On 3 June 1947, Lord Mountbatten announced the Mountbatten Plan. The immediate effect of the Plan was the legislation of the Indian Independence Act of 1947.

The British Parliament approved the Indian Independence Act in July 1947. The Act made legal provisions for the transfer of power to India. The major provisions were as follows:

- ▶ Acknowledged the end of British rule in India.
- ▶ Setting up two independent Dominions, known as India and Pakistan, on 15 August 1947.
- ▶ The Indian Dominion includes all of British India except territories of Pakistan - West Punjab, Baluchistan, North West Frontier Province, Sind and East Bengal.
- ▶ Each Dominion will have a Governor-General appointed by Her Majesty and represent Her Maj-



esty for the Government of the Dominion. The legislature of each Dominion would have full powers to make laws. After 15 August, no act passed by the British would have validity in either of the Dominions.

- ▶ The British Government would cease to have any responsibility for the Government of India.
- ▶ The Two Dominions would continue to be governed by the Act of 1935 until the Constituent Assembly made alternative plans.
- ▶ A new Constituent Assembly was to be formed in Pakistan.
- ▶ Abolished the position of Secretary of State for India and transferred its functions to the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs.
- ▶ It granted freedom to the princely states either to join Indian Dominion or Pakistan or to remain independent.
- ▶ The Act designated the Governor General of India and the provisional governors as nominal heads of the state.
- ▶ Discontinued the appointment to civil services and reservation of posts by the Secretary of States for India.

#### 4.4.3.1 Towards Partition

Bipan Chandra viewed that if the abandonment of responsibility was apathetic, the speed with which it was done made it even worse. For the transfer of power, seventy-two days were given. The several two-day timetables for the transfer of power and division of the country were a disastrous decision. The senior officials in India, like

Punjab Governor Jenkins and Commander-in-Chief Auchinleck, felt that the peaceful division could take at least a few years.

The Partition Council had to divide the assets in a few weeks. There was no transitional institutional structure to tackle the problems of the division of the country. Mountbatten, hoped to be the Governor General of India and Pakistan, would provide necessary assistance. But the Partition still remained a quarrelsome issue. Neither Jinnah nor the Muslim League ever declared the rights of the non-Muslims in Pakistan. This causes anxiety amongst the religious minorities in Punjab and Bengal.

In Punjab, since the 1930s, the Akali Dal had been speaking for a separate land for the Sikhs. Such demands were repeated after the Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League in 1940. The creation of 'Khalistan' was opposed by the Shiromani Akali Dal. The anxiety to preserve the integrity of the Sikh community was given serious consideration by the Cripps Mission and Rajagopalachari formula. In order to prevent the subjugation to the Muslim majority rule, the Sikhs demanded separate land in the eastern and central parts of Punjab. This territorial vision of the Sikh resulted in the 'Azad Punjab of 1942' and 'Sikh state in 1944'. However, scholars viewed that their demand was not separatist.

In 1946, Tara Singh, before Cabinet Mission, on behalf of the Sikh, asserted they opposed the creation of Pakistan. If that is likely to occur, Punjab will remain a separate state, with the option to join the federation of India or Pakistan. The relationship between the Sikhs and the Muslims deteriorated when the Khizr ministry resigned. This resulted in the outbreak of violence in March 1947.

The Akali Dal, under Maharaja of Patiala, started mobilizing jathas for the cause of Sikh



life, property, and shrines and the Partition of Punjab was demanded. When the Partition was agreed upon on the 3 June Mountbatten Plan on the basis of population, the Sikhs found that they would lose significant properties and important shrines in the Muslim majority division of west Punjab. So, a group encouraged by the British advocated a third line: opting for Pakistan and having an autonomous region there, thus retaining the identity and unity of the Sikh community. However, this option was not favourable to the Sikh community.

The Punjab massacres that accompanied Partition were the final accusation of Mountbatten. Mountbatten caused a delay in announcing the Boundary Commission Award. A senior army official Brigadier Bristow was appointed in Punjab in 1947 with a view that the Punjab tragedy would have never occurred if the Partition had been delayed for a year. By 12 August 1947, the Boundary Commission Award was ready. But Mountbatten declared it after Independence Day so that the responsibility would not fall on the British.

#### 4.4.4 Independence

By late June, the decision to partition became certain. The Bengal Assembly on 20 June 1947, and the Punjab Assembly on 23 June 1947, decided to favour Partition. Accordingly, West Pakistan and East Pakistan would be given to Pakistan, and the rest would be part of the Indian Union. Following this, against the wish of Abdul Gaffar Khan, regions like Baluchistan, NWFP and Sind joined Pakistan.

The next step was the appointment of two Boundary Commission by Mountbatten. Both the Commission was under Sir Cyril Radcliffe. The Commission aimed to define the international frontiers of India and Pakistan

within six weeks.

Meanwhile, the Indian Independence Act was sanctioned by the British Crown on 18 July, and the Act was implemented during 14 -15 August 1947. Jinnah left for Karachi on 7 August 1947. On 11 August, the Constituent Assembly elected him as the first president. On 14 August, Jinnah was sworn in as the Governor General of the Dominion of Pakistan.



Fig 4.4.3 People celebrating the First Independence Day, Mumbai

The constituent Assembly of the Indian Union met on the night of August 14-15, 1947. India's independence was declared at midnight. Nehru gave his historic 'Tryst with Destiny' speech. Lord Mountbatten asked Nehru and Patel to continue as Governor General of the newly formed Indian Dominion. Mountbatten continued in the office till 21 June 1948. After him, C. Rajagopalachari became the first and last successor.

The enjoyment was mixed with pain and suffering. The dream of national leaders for a unified India had been devastated. The independence of both the countries was accompanied by communal violence, brutalities troubling thousands of people in both India and Pakistan. Lakhs and lakhs of





people had to leave the country into two states.

The Partition of India was a severe blow to the national leaders. The strongest reaction came from Gandhi. He was in opposition to the Partition of the country. He toured the affected parts of the country and consoled the people. He spent Independence Day on fasting and spinning. The tragic event occurred when a 'hate-filled Hindu fanatic' on 30 January 1948 killed Gandhi.



Fig 4.4.4 People migrating in trains during partition time

With the achievement of Independence, India succeeded at the first step, that is, overthrowing British rule. However, India had to face more challenges in nation building. These include backwardness, prejudice, inequality, etc. The people of India were prepared to face the challenges and build a strong society.

To achieve their goal, the next step was the framing of the Constitution. On 26 January 1950, India became a sovereign Democratic Republic. India adopted the Constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly, which was finalized on 26 November 1949. With the framing of the Constitution, India officially ceased to have any constitutional link with the British. The office of the Governor General was abolished. The President of the Constituent Assembly and the Head of the Republic, Rajendra Prasad, became the first president of India.

## Recap

- ▶ Attlee made two declarations, one about the date of withdrawal and the other about the appointment of the Viceroy.
- ▶ The date for the British withdrawal from India was fixed on 30 June 1948.
- ▶ The Mountbatten Plan was announced on 3 June 1947.
- ▶ The Mountbatten Plan, also called the June 3 Plan, Plan Balkan, Partition Plan or Dickie Bird Plan.
- ▶ The main feature of the Mountbatten Plan was the Partition of India.
- ▶ The Mountbatten Plan proposed the Partition of Punjab and Bengal.
- ▶ This territorial vision of the Sikh resulted in the 'Azad Punjab of 1942' and 'Sikh state in 1944.'
- ▶ A senior army official Brigadier Bristow was appointed in Punjab in 1947.
- ▶ The Punjab massacres caused a delay in announcing the Boundary Commission Award.

- ▶ Accordingly, West Pakistan and East Pakistan would be given to Pakistan, and the rest would be part of the Indian Union.
- ▶ Appointment of two Boundary Commissions by Mountbatten.
- ▶ On 14 August, Jinnah was sworn in as the Governor General of the Dominion of Pakistan.
- ▶ India's independence was declared at midnight on 14-15 August 1947.
- ▶ India celebrated its independence on 15 August 1947.
- ▶ Mountbatten continued in the office till 21 June 1948.
- ▶ On 26 January 1950, India became a sovereign Democratic Republic.

## Objective Questions

1. When did the British decide to leave India?
2. When did Lord Mountbatten take charge as Viceroy?
3. Who was the last Governor General and Viceroy of India?
4. When did the Mountbatten Plan was announced?
5. Whose words were “truncated or mutilated, moth-eaten Pakistan”?
6. What was the date for the transfer of power according to the Mountbatten Plan?
7. Who opposed the idea of Khalistan?
8. When was the Boundary Commission Award announced?
9. Who headed the two Boundary Commissions?
10. Who was the first president and Governor General of Pakistan?

## Answers

1. 30 June 1948
2. 22 March 1947
3. Lord Mountbatten
4. 3 June 1947
5. Jinnah
6. 15 August 1947
7. Shiromani Akali Dal
8. 12 August 1947
9. Sir Cyril Radcliffe
10. Muhammed Ali Jinnah



## Assignments

1. Analyse the reasons that made the Congress agree to Partition.
2. Discuss the result of Partition.
3. Describe how the British Government resolved the issues of Partition.

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1. Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar, *From Plassey to Partition and After: A History of Modern India*, Orient Longman, New Delhi, 2004.
2. Chandra Bipan et al., *India's Struggle for Independence*, Penguin Books, 1988.
3. Bipan Chandra, *History of Modern India*, Orient Black Swan, 2009.

# BLOCK - 05

## **Legacy of National Movement - I**

# Unit 1

## Formation of the Indian Republic

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ assess the development of the Indian Republic
- ▶ analyse the process of the Constitution-making
- ▶ discuss various participations in the making of the Indian Republic
- ▶ identify the background of independence and partition

### Prerequisites

The history of independent India began with the Declaration of Independence on 15 August 1947. The administration of the British crown, which began in 1858, came to an end with a prolonged struggle and sacrifices. The British exploited the masses economically and politically by subjugation. The Indian National Congress took a leading role in mobilizing people. National leaders fought against the British Raj and brought the concept of freedom and people's unity to the public. The Indian National Congress took the initiative in organizing people as the concept of independence gained national attention, and individuals from all over India battled for it, regardless of religion, caste, or class.

The national movement ignited the integration of the people through various means like satyagraha and boycotts which formed the basis of the Non-Cooperation movements, Civil Disobedience Movements, Quit India movements, peasants and workers movements. The long-drawn-out struggle for freedom resulted in the declaration of the Indian Independence Act of 1947. On the path to independence, India faced a painful partition that led to the creation of Pakistan.

The partition had a significant impact on the lives of Indians. Following independence and partition, there were violent clashes between Hindus and Muslims. It was difficult for national leaders to deal with the consequences of partition. The country also had to deal with the Princely States and their integration into the Union. As a result, it is critical to comprehend the events and processes that led to the formation of the Indian Union and Constitution.



## Keywords

Attlee's Declaration, Mountbatten Plan, Constitution, Pakistan, Integration of Princely states

## Discussion

### 5.1.1 The Constituent Assembly

The formation of the Indian Union can be traced back to the foundation of the Interim Government in India. The Interim Government was formed as a provisional government and its task was to assist in transforming India into an independent nation. The provisional government remained in office until 15 August 1947, when the Indian Dominion was created. The Interim Government was formed from the

Constituent Assembly of 1946, which began drafting the Constitution for independent India.

The elections to the Constituent Assembly were held in July 1946. Of the 296 seats allotted to British India, the Congress won 199 seats and the Muslim League 78 seats. The Four seats remained vacant because the Sikhs refused to join the Assembly. The Constituent Assembly met for the first time in the Library of the Council Chamber, Delhi and elected Rajendra Prasad its permanent President.



Fig 5.1.1 Nehru attending the Constituent Assembly meeting to frame Constitution of Independent India

The most important event of the Constituent Assembly was its Objective Resolution. Jawaharlal Nehru proposed the Objective Resolution during the first session of the Constituent Assembly. The Objective Resolution of 1946 reflects the aspirations of the Indian Constitution. He introduced the Resolution on 13 December 1946 and the Constituent Assembly adopted the Resolution on 22 January 1947.

**The Resolution proclaimed the following aspects:**

- India is a sovereign and independent republic.
- India will comprise the territories of the British Raj, Princely States, and regions which opt to choose the Indian Dominion.
- The Constitution, its power and authority shall derive from the people.
- The Resolution agreed to protect the rights and needs of minorities.
- All the territories and their people shall be



provided justice, equality, and freedom.

The above-listed objectives were enlisted in the Preamble of the Constitution, and these objectives became the core of the Indian Constitution.

### 5.1.2 Background Before Independence

While Indian leaders were busy drafting the core of the Constitution, the Muslim League's demand for Pakistan became more persistent. However, the Congress does not want the subcontinent to be divided. To achieve their demand for the separate nation of Pakistan, the League declared August 19, 1946 to be Direct Action Day. As a result of the announcement, there was widespread violence between Hindus and Muslims.

The Viceroy thought of two ways to control the violence by employing the military by entrusting the government authority to the Congress and the Muslim League to form a coalition government. The Viceroy persuaded Nehru to form an Interim Government. He was asked to keep five quotas of seats reserved for the Muslim League. Although the Muslim League did not initially join the Interim Government, it did so subsequently with the aim of disrupting the operation of the Interim Government.

### 5.1.3 Attlee's Declaration Towards Partition and Independence

On 20 February 1947, the British Prime Minister Attlee sent Lord Mountbatten when the League refused to join the Constituent Assembly and cooperate with the Cabinet Mission. When the Congress demanded the resignation of the League members from the Constituent Assembly, the British decided to quit India on a fixed date. By this time, Viceroy Mountbatten announced the

Mountbatten Plan, which the Congress and Jinnah accepted on 2 June 1947. The Plan was also known as the June Third Plan. According to the Plan, it is declared that the purpose of the British Government was neither to frame any ultimate institution nor to interrupt the functioning of the existing Constituent Assembly. The Constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly could not be applied to places unwilling to join the Indian Domain. It was, therefore, necessary to ascertain the wishes of the people. The Congress and the Muslim League accepted the 3<sup>rd</sup> June Plan. However, the extremists in both communities were against it even as Mountbatten hoped to revive the Cabinet Mission scheme in India.

The proposal of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 then followed the Mountbatten Plan. The Act made legal provisions for the transfer of power. It set up two dominions, India and Pakistan, on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947. The Western Punjab, Eastern Bengal, Sindh and North West Frontier Province were jointly known as Pakistan. The division was a sorrowful event for the Indians. After the partition, many places witnessed communal riots between the Hindus and the Muslims, especially in Punjab and Bengal. The Partition affected India economically too as most of the jute and cotton mills were left in India, but much of the cotton and jute plantations were in Pakistan. This resulted in the closure of these industries. Areas which were abundant in wheat, rice and other products were located in Pakistan, which caused severe food shortages in India. The newly formed government was not prepared for the two-way migration of people. The violence occurred on both sides of the India-Pak borders. The worst cases of violence were reported in Punjab and Bengal.



Fig 5.1.2 Newspaper showing Independence news

At midnight, as the 15 of August dawned, Jawaharlal Nehru declared India as an independent nation. He said, “With independence, a new life and freedom arose in India”. The Constituent Assembly worked as a parliament house. The first Prime Minister was Jawaharlal Nehru, and the first Governor-General was Lord Mountbatten. On 14 August 1947, the dominion of Pakistan came into being with Muhammad Ali Jinnah as its first Governor-General.

### 5.1.4 Integration of Princely States

Under the Indian Independence Act, the British paramountcy over the Princely States lapsed on 15 August 1947. It means that states would become sovereign entities when

the British left India. The Congress did not approve of the right of any state in India to declare its independence. The problem of integrating the princely states into the Indian Union was one of the serious issues which the Congress leaders faced. They found that if the princely states declared their independence and were reluctant to join the Indian Union, it would destroy the integrity and unity of the country.

Before the Declaration of Independence, nearly 550 provinces were independent, and the British had no control over their affairs. During independence, the British declared that these provinces were also free, along with India. Therefore, the Princely states were given the right to join either India or Pakistan. But if these states remained independent, it might create problems. The credit of integrating the princely states goes to Sardar Vallabhai Patel and V.P Menon. Sardar Patel persuaded the princes to join the Indian Union. A total of 14 provinces joined India. After negotiations, a settlement was arrived at, and all the Princely States also agreed to join India, except Hyderabad. Junagadh and Kashmir signed the Instrument of Accession and Stand Still Agreement with India before 15 August 1947.

The Nawab of Junagadh wanted to accede to Pakistan, but a popular uprising against him forced him to flee to Pakistan. The Maharaja of Kashmir acceded to India in October 1947 when Pakistani troops invaded Kashmir. The Nizam of Hyderabad was also forced to join the Indian Union under the pressure from internal issues and Indian military actions against him.

### 5.1.5 Formation of New Constitution

The Constituent Assembly drafted the Indian Constitution under the chairmanship of Bhimrao Ambedkar. On 29 August 1947,



the Constituent Assembly established the Drafting Committee. Ambedkar gave shape to the Constitution on 26 November 1949. But it was fully established on 26 January 1950. In this way, India became completely independent, and the day was celebrated as Republic Day.

India was declared a secular and democratic republic nation with a parliamentary system of governance. The parliamentary system was based on the principles of adult franchise, which meant that all adult men and women were guaranteed the right to vote. The Constitution guaranteed all citizens certain fundamental rights like freedom of speech, expression, and

freedom to assemble peacefully. All citizens are treated equally before the law and it was guaranteed that no citizen shall discriminate or be discriminated against based on caste, colour or creed.

With the framing of the Constitution and its implementation, India achieved its long-cherished struggle for national unification and independence. The legacy of the national movement implies the promise towards economic and political independence, economic development, ending inequality and oppression. Therefore, independent India reflects the legacy of national movement through its Constitution.

## Recap

- ▶ The formation of the Indian Union can be traced back to the foundation of the Interim Government in India.
- ▶ The task of the provisional government was to assist in transforming India into an independent nation.
- ▶ The Interim Government was formed from the Constituent Assembly of 1946.
- ▶ The most important event of the Constituent Assembly was the Objective Resolution.
- ▶ The Objective Resolution of 1946 reflects the aspirations of the Indian Constitution.
- ▶ The Constituent Assembly adopted the Resolution on 22 January 1947.
- ▶ On 20 February 1947, the British Prime Minister Attlee sent Lord Mountbatten as Viceroy when the League refused to join the Constituent Assembly and cooperate with the Cabinet Mission.
- ▶ Mountbatten hoped to revive the Cabinet Mission scheme in India.
- ▶ The proposal of the Indian Independence Act of 1947 then followed the Mountbatten Plan.
- ▶ The Western Punjab, Eastern Bengal, Sind and North West Frontier Province are jointly known as Pakistan.
- ▶ At midnight on the intervening night of 14 and 15 August, Jawaharlal Nehru declared India as an independent nation.
- ▶ On 14 August 1947, the dominion of Pakistan came into being.
- ▶ The Constituent Assembly drafted the Indian Constitution under the chairmanship of Bhimrao Ambedkar.



- ▶ On 29 August 1947, the Constituent Assembly established the Drafting Committee.
- ▶ Ambedkar gave shape to the Constitution on 26 November 1949.
- ▶ The day the Constitution was fully established, 26 January 1950, is celebrated as Republic Day.

## Objective Questions

1. When were elections to the Constituent Assembly held ?
2. Where did the Constituent Assembly meet for the first time?
3. Who was elected the permanent President of the Constituent Assembly?
4. When did the Constituent Assembly adopt the Objective Resolution?
5. When did the Congress and the League accept the Mountbatten Plan?
6. Who said, “With independence, a new life and freedom arose in India”?
7. When did the Dominion of Pakistan come into being?
8. Who drafted the Indian Constitution?
9. When was the Constitution given shape?
10. When was the Constitution fully established?

## Answers

1. July 1946
2. Library of the Council Chamber, Delhi
3. Rajendra Prasad
4. 22 January 1947
5. 2 June 1947
6. Jawaharlal Nehru
7. 14 August 1947
8. Bhimrao Ambedkar
9. 26 November 1949
10. 26 January 1950





## Assignments

1. Discuss the consequences of the partition of India.
2. Analyse the major challenges faced by newly independent India.
3. Describe how the Princely States were assimilated into the Indian Union.

## Suggested Reading

1. Chandra, Bipan, *Communalism in Modern India* (2nd edn.), Delhi: Vikas, 1987.
2. Chandra, Bipin, *Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India*, Delhi: Har-Anand, 2010.
3. Chandra Bipan et.al, *India's Struggle for Independence*, Penguin Books, 1988.
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2. Chandra Bipan et.al, *India's Struggle for Independence*, Penguin Books, 1988.

# Unit 2

## Integration of Native States

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ▶ identify the challenges faced in the integration of princely states
- ▶ describe the ways in which this integration took place
- ▶ describe the events that led to the Accession of Princely States like Travancore, Manipur, Junagadh, Hyderabad and Kashmir

### Prerequisites

15 August 1947, the day India attained independence, was celebrated with much excitement and joy. This day was the culmination of the sacrifices of the national leaders, and the appalling struggles of common people. There was a large-scale exodus of citizens from both nations. Food and other supplies were in short supply for the populace.

The immediate goal was to restore political stability and law and order as the leaders had to find solutions to the issues of racial unrest, rehabilitation of immigrants from Pakistan, defense of Muslims, and Communist uprisings.

### Keywords

Instrument of Accession, States Department, Internal autonomy

### Discussion

#### 5.2.1 Integration of Princely States

Before attaining independence, it was announced that the princely states would also acquire legal independence with the end of the British rule in India. The British Government insisted that the princely states were free to join India or Pakistan or remain independent if they wished.

The right to decide was left to these states' Princes, not to the people. National leaders considered this a serious issue that would deteriorate the country's integrity.

Sardar Vallabhai Patel and V.P. Menon were charged with integrating the princely states with the Indian Union. Some states showed patriotism and realism by joining the Constituent Assembly in April 1947. But



the majority of states stayed away. The most prominent among them were Travancore, Bhopal and Hyderabad. These states announced their wish to remain independent.

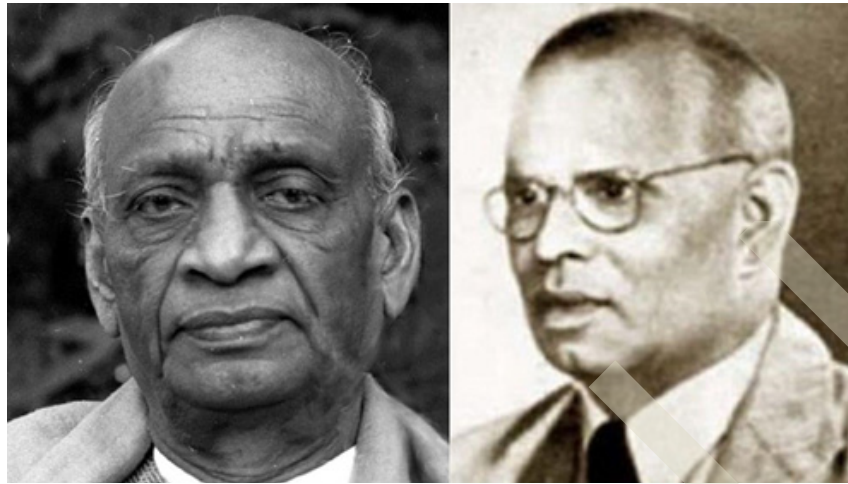


Fig 5.2.1 Sardar Patel and V.P. Menon

On 27 June 1947, Sardar Patel assumed the charge of the newly created “States Department” with V.P. Menon as its secretary. Patel was fully aware of the danger that the independence of princely states posed to the country. Patel’s first step was to appeal to the princely states to accede to the Indian Union. He tried to convince the Princes about the issues of foreign relations, defence and communication. He also said that he would not be able to restrain the agitated populace of the states after 15 August. Two states, including Jammu & Kashmir, and Hyderabad, did not join the Union until 1948.

Before 15 August 1947, he negotiated with the princely states to join the Indian Union. The rulers signed the ‘Instrument of Accession’ with the Indian Government. Bikaner and Baroda were the first ones to join the Union. However, Junagadh signed an agreement acceding to Pakistan. The Instrument of Accession was a legal tool that was used to accede princely states to newly independent India or Pakistan.

#### 5.2.1.1 Travancore

Travancore was a Southern Indian state strategically placed for its maritime trade. The Diwan of Travancore, C.P Ramaswami Iyer, was invited to Delhi by Jawaharlal Nehru to persuade him to join the Union. However, he refused to sign the Instrument of Accession.

The Diwan was unpopular among the people and the Communists of Travancore. The tension between them resulted in several clashes between the Diwan and the Communists. Among them, the most important was the Punnapra-Vayalar riot in 1946. During this time, the Diwan declared its independence and unwillingness to join the Indian Union. Subsequently, Diwan faced several attempts of assassination. His survival from the assassination made him change his mind. Therefore, on 30 July 1947, Travancore joined the Indian Union.

#### 5.2.1.2 Manipur

Some days before the independence, Bodhachandra Singh, who was the Maharaja of Manipur, signed the Instrument of

Accession with the Indian Government. The Government assured him of the internal autonomy of Manipur. Under pressure from the public, the Maharaja held elections in Manipur in June 1948. After that, the state became a constitutional monarchy. Thus, Manipur was the first Indian state to hold an election based on a universal adult franchise.

Within the Legislative Assembly of Manipur, there were differences among different parties regarding a merger with India. The State Congress wanted the merger, while other parties opposed this decision. In this context, the Government of India pressured the Maharaja of Manipur to sign the Merger Agreement in September 1949. The Maharaja signed the agreement without consulting the elected Legislative Assembly of Manipur. This caused anger and resentment in Manipur.

### 5.2.1.3 Junagadh

Junagadh was a small state on the coast of Saurashtra. Geographically, Junagadh was surrounded by Indian territory, so the state had no geographical continuity with Pakistan. When Junagadh declared their wish to join Pakistan on 15 August 1947, the Indian leaders realised the threat that this could cause. However, the Hindu population in Junagadh wanted to join India.

In the Junagadh case, Nehru and Patel agreed that the final voice should be that of the people, which should be done through a plebiscite. However, going against this approach, Pakistan accepted Junagadh's decision to join the Pakistan Union. On the other hand, people did not accept the ruler's decision to join Pakistan. They organized a movement against the Nawab of Junagadh and forced him to flee and established a provisional government. The Diwan of Junagadh, Shah Nawaz Bhutto, invited the Government of India to intervene. The Indian

troops marched into the state, and a plebiscite was held in February 1948. According to the plebiscite, most people favoured joining India, and hence the issue of Junagadh's accession was resolved.

### 5.2.1.4 Kashmir

India and Pakistan bordered the state of Kashmir. The ruler of Kashmir, Hari Singh, was a Hindu, while the majority of its population was Muslims. During the time of independence, Raja Hari Singh did not accede either to India or Pakistan. He decided to stay out of both and continue as an independent ruler because of the fear that democracy could unseat him and communalism in Pakistan. However, the popular political forces led by Sheikh Abdulla of the National Conference wanted to join India. Gandhi declared in August 1947 that Kashmir was free to join India or Pakistan according to the people's will.

But Pakistan refused to accept the people deciding the issue of Accession. On account of this, on 22 October 1947, several Pathan tribesmen, supported by the Pakistani army attacked Kashmir and pushed towards Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir. The ill-trained troops of Maharaja could not withstand the invading forces. Therefore, on 24 October 1947, the Maharaja appealed to India for its military assistance.

Jawaharlal Nehru did not support the Accession of Kashmir without the people's will. But Mountbatten, the Governor-General, insisted that under international law, India could give military assistance to Kashmir only if the state assured its Accession to India. Sheikh Abdullah and Sardar Patel supported this decision. And on 26 October 1947, the Maharaja acceded to India. The Maharaja also agreed to install Abdullah as the head of the state administration. Even though the





National Conference led by Sheikh Abdulla and Maharaja wanted the complete Accession of Kashmir to India, the Government of India

proclaimed that it would hold a poll on the accession decision once peace and law had been restored.



Fig 5.1.2 Integration of Kashmir

After the Accession of Kashmir, the Cabinet decided to send troops to Srinagar. Gandhi supported this decision. On 27 October 1947, about 100 planes with men, material and weapons joined the battle against the invaders. The raiders were driven out of Srinagar and the Kashmir valley. However, they had already gained control over certain parts of the state before Indian intervention and hence the armed conflict continued for months.

On 30 December 1947, the Government of India agreed with Mountbatten's suggestion to refer the Kashmir problem to the United Nations Security Council. Instead of taking note of the aggression by Pakistan, the Security Council supported Pakistan. They ignored India's complaint and replaced the 'Kashmir question' before the U.N. with the 'India-Pakistan dispute'. This means that instead of considering the issue as a 'Kashmir question', the problem is now considered an India- Pakistan dispute.

The United Nations Security Council approved numerous resolutions on the issue of Kashmir. India and Pakistan accepted a ceasefire on 31 December 1948, which still prevails. According to this resolution, the state was divided along with the ceasefire line. In 1951, the U.N. passed a resolution that called for a referendum to be held under the supervision of the U.N, only after Pakistan withdrew its troops from Kashmir. Since then, the issue of Kashmir has been the major issue between India and Pakistan. India regarded the Accession of Kashmir as final and irrevocable and Kashmir as an integral part of India. Pakistan continued to deny this claim of India, prolonging the conflict which dominated bi-lateral relations to this day.

#### 5.2.1.5 Hyderabad

Hyderabad was the next princely state which declared its decision to stay independent. The Nizam of Hyderabad was the third Indian ruler who did not accede to the Indian Union. Pakistan supported the Hyderabad Nizams to



expand its armed force. Patel made it clear that India would not bear “an isolated spot which would destroy the very union which we have built up with our blood and toil”.

In November 1947, the Government of India signed a Stand Still Agreement with the Nizam. The Nizam of Hyderabad during 1946-47 was Mir Osman Ali. The Stand Still Agreement was encouraged because it was hoped that the Nizam would introduce representative Government in the state, making the merger easier. But the Nizam had thought of other plans. He asked for the service of a British lawyer Sir Walter Monckton to negotiate with the Government of India. Meanwhile, the Nizam hoped that he could strengthen his military force and make India accept his sovereignty or accede to Pakistan.

Meanwhile, three major political developments took place in Hyderabad. There was the rapid growth of a communal organization named *Ittihad ul Muslim* and its paramilitary wing, the *Razakars*, in the state. On 7 August 1947, the Hyderabad State Congress organized a satyagraha movement to force democratization of the Nizam. As a result of attacks by the *Razakars* and the suppression by the state, many people fled the state and took shelter in temporary camps. By that time, the Communists led the struggle and it was gaining strength in the Telangana region. The Telangana movement gathered momentum due to the state's repression, and the peasants organized a defence against the attack of the *Razakars*.

By June 1948, Sardar Patel wanted the speedy Accession of Hyderabad to the Indian Union. Despite the provocations by the Nizams, the Government of India remained calm for several months. But the Nizam continued encouraging violence and supported the *Razakars*. On 13 September 1948, the Indian Army marched into Hyderabad. The Nizam surrendered after three days. Finally, Hyderabad acceded to the Indian Union in November. The Government of India decided not to punish the Nizam. He was retained as the former ruler of Hyderabad and given a privy purse of five million rupees. Privy Purse is a payment made to the Princely States as a part of their agreement to join the Indian Domain. With the Accession of Hyderabad, the integration of princely states into the Indian Union was completed. The Accession of Hyderabad marked another triumph of Indian secularism as most of the ordinary Muslims joined the anti-Nizam struggle.

The second stage of the integration of princely states began in December 1947. Sardar Patel forced the Government to complete the integration process within one year. Smaller states merged with the neighbouring states or merged to form ‘Centrally Administered Areas’. Many smaller states were consolidated to form new unions. Some of them were Madhya Bharat, Rajasthan, Saurashtra Patiala and East Punjab States Union (PEPSU), and Travancore-Cochin. Mysore, Hyderabad, Jammu, and Kashmir retained their original form as separate states.





Fig 5.1.3 Coverage of accession of Hyderabad (Times of India edition of 18 September 1948)

In return for the surrender of authority, the rulers of the major states were given a privy purse in perpetuity, which was free of all taxes. The privy purse amounted to Rs. 4.66 crore in 1949. The Constitution later guaranteed these

amounts to the rulers. The rulers were also guaranteed succession and granted the right to retain certain privileges like keeping their titles, flying personal flags and gun salutes.

## Recap

- ▶ The British Government insisted that the princely states were free to join India or Pakistan or remain independent if they wished.
- ▶ Sardar Vallabhai Patel and V.P. Menon were charged with integrating the princely states.
- ▶ Travancore did not accept the Instrument of Accession in the beginning. Later joined the Indian Union.
- ▶ The Government of India pressured the Maharaja of Manipur to sign the Merger Agreement in September 1949.
- ▶ Junagadh declared their wish to join Pakistan.
- ▶ The people of Junagadh were against joining Pakistan.
- ▶ The Diwan of Junagadh, Shah Nawaz Bhutto, invited the Government of India to intervene.
- ▶ During the time of independence, Kashmiri ruler Raja Hari Singh did not accede either to India or Pakistan.
- ▶ On 26 October, the Maharaja acceded to India.
- ▶ In November 1947, the Government of India signed a Stand Still Agreement with Nizam of Hyderabad.
- ▶ On 7 August 1947, the Hyderabad State Congress organized a satyagraha movement to force democratization of Nizam.
- ▶ The Nizam surrendered to the Indian Union.
- ▶ Hyderabad was given a privy purse.
- ▶ The second stage of the integration of princely states began in December 1947.

## Objective Questions

1. Who were in charge of integrating princely states?
2. Who assumed the charge of the States Department?
3. When did Travancore join the Indian Union?
4. Which was the first Indian state to hold elections based on the universal adult franchise?
5. Which Princely State joined India through a plebiscite?
6. When did Kashmir accede to India?
7. Which princely state signed a Stand Still Agreement with India?
8. Who was the Nizam of Hyderabad during the period of independence?



## Answers

1. Sardar Vallabhai Patel and V.P. Menon
2. Sardar Vallabhai Patel
3. 30 July 1947
4. Manipur
5. Junagadh
6. 26 October 1947
7. Hyderabad
8. Mir Osman Ali

## Assignments

1. Discuss the major challenges that India faced immediately after independence?
2. Examine integration of Princely States and its challenge to nation-building?
3. How did Hyderabad accede to the Indian Republic?

## Suggested Reading

1. Chandra, Bipan et.al, *India's Struggle for Independence*, Penguin Books, 1988.
2. Chandra, Bipan et.al, *India's Struggle Since Independence*, Penguin Books, 2000.
3. Dube, Ishita Banerjee, *A History of Modern India*, Delhi: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
4. Sarkar, Sumit, *Modern India, 1885-1947*, Delhi: MacMillan, 1985.
5. Tara Chand, *History of Freedom Movement in India*, The Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, 2019.

## Reference

1. Chandra Bipan et.al, *India's Struggle Since Independence*, Penguin Books, 2000.

## Unit 3

# Indian Constitution & the Idea of India

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to:

- ▶ assess the importance of the Constitution in the process of nation-building
- ▶ discuss about the making of the Indian Constitution
- ▶ examine how the Indian Constitution was enacted
- ▶ discuss the components of the Constituent Assembly

### Prerequisites

The Indian Constitution is regarded as being the world's longest written constitution. The Constitution specifies general rules of government and guarantees fundamental rights. The fundamental characteristics and components of the Constitution must be understood. The Nehru Report of 1928 made clear the early attempts to draft a Constitution. Various Acts were passed for governance during colonial rule. These Acts do not, however, contain the elements necessary for a sovereign nation. After gaining independence, the first task was to draft a personal constitution that would bind the nation as a whole.

The Constitution was prepared after debates and discussions in the Constituent Assembly. It was accepted by the Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949 and came into force on 26 January 1950.

### Keywords

Constitutional Development, Constituent Assembly, Indian Constitution, Enactment





## Discussion

### 5.3.1 Origin of the Indian Constitution

The Indian Constitution came into effect on January 26, 1950. As a result, the day is known as the Republic Day. Prior to 1950, the 26 of January was known as Independence Day. On January 26, 1930, people in villages, mohallas, and towns took the independence day pledge in large and small groups. As a result, the 26 of January became significant for many people and national leaders. On this day, the new Republic of India was established, commemorating the people of India's sacrifice and perseverance.

The evolution of the constitution began before January 26, 1950. The origins of the Constitution can be traced back to the long struggle for independence from the British Raj and the movement for responsible and constitutional government in the princely states.

The essential principles of the constitution are the notions of parliamentary democracy, republic nation, civil liberty, and social and economic justice. More than all these, it is the spirit of democracy which is the essence and foundation of the Constitution. The idea of democracy was spread through the national struggle and mass participation of the people. It enforces a place for an adult franchise after independence.

The print media popularised the idea of freedom of expression. The leaders who fought the colonial government understood the relevance of the press in spreading their ideologies. Many newspapers like *Leader*, *Bombay Chronicle*, *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, *The Hindustan Times*, and others functioned as 'unpaid organs' of the national movement. The history of these newspapers and

magazines ensured the freedom of expression, which became the essential principle in the Constitution.

### 5.3.2 Constitutional Development

Gandhi remarked in 1922, "Swaraj...will not be a free gift of the British Parliament. It will be a declaration of India's full self-expression." The statement clarified that the British would not introduce any constitutional reforms on their initiative. They could make some changes under pressure from Indian leaders.

Some scholars argued that the British government initiated the majority of constitutional reforms in India, allowing India to become aware of its rights. They claimed that the British government instituted constitutional reforms in 1861, 1892, 1909, 1919, and 1935, which served as the foundation for modern, responsible, and constitutional government. This argument, however, was refuted by the fact that each concession made fell short of what the Indians had demanded.

The Indian leaders did not abandon the constitutional legacy of the pre-independence period while they were writing the Constitution. The Indian Constitution thus borrowed provisions from the Government of India Act of 1935. This indicates that though the leaders rejected the unsuitability of the old Acts, they never hesitated to retain the legacy of the old Acts and its values.

At the beginning of the 1880s and 1890s, the British Government thought India should be granted a responsible government. However, the national movement of the twentieth century advocated the doctrine of self-determination or the right to frame their constitution. For example, the Congress-Muslim League demanded constitutional reforms, which resulted in the Congress-League Pact of 1916,

which demanded the elections of the four-fifth members of the provisional legislature through an adult franchise.

The British, in 1919, introduced the constitutional reforms with the assertion that the time and pace of the constitutional reform would be decided by the British alone. Another significant development of constitutional reforms happened with the Commonwealth of India Bill of 1925. Accordingly, the leaders pressed the need to place India as a Self-Governing Dominion. At this juncture, Motilal Nehru, proposed the resolution for the Round Table Conference to recommend the schemes for the protection of minorities and the constitution of India. This was the first time when demands for a constitution were spelt out. This resolution came to be known as “the National Demand” and was passed by the Central Legislative Assembly.

Against the “National Demand” resolution, the British Government sent the Simon Commission in November 1927 to recommend constitutional changes. Against this, the All Parties Conference appointed a committee in May 1928 with Motilal Nehru as the chairman to determine the principles of the Constitution of India. It was the historic Nehru Report submitted on 28 August 1928, which outlines a draft constitution of India. It laid emphasis on securing the people’s fundamental rights like the freedom of profession, freedom of religion, freedom of ethics, equality before the law and equal rights for men and women, right to assemble, and right to education among them.

A boycott of the Simon Commission followed the Nehru Report. In 1930, the Congress declared the mass Civil Disobedience Movement. It, therefore, became clear that the Indians were unsatisfied with the British constitutional provisions and wanted nothing

less than to frame their own constitution.

After 1934, the demand for the Constituent Assembly became frequent. In the elections of 1936, the Congress won majority of seats, seven out of eleven provinces, and decided to form ministries. The leaders declared they were not ready to accept the existing constitutional framework. The Congress Working Committee Session at Wardha during 27-28 February 1937 decided to favour the new office and reminded the legislators of the demand for a Constituent Assembly as soon as possible.

In July 1937, Nehru pressed the legislators to introduce resolutions in the assemblies rejecting the constitution provided by the Act of 1935 and demanding a Constituent Assembly. The congress provinces wanted the Government of India Act 1935 to be repealed and replaced by the Constitution for a free India, which the Constituent Assembly framed, based on adult franchise. On 17 September 1937, the Central Legislative Assembly introduced a resolution recommending the replacement of the Act of 1935. Later, the Haripura Session of the Congress also demanded the repeal of the Act of 1935.

With the events following the outbreak of World War II, the Congress demanded that India be recognized as an independent nation and entitled to frame its constitution. The British made the August Offer of 1940 to secure Indian support for the war. The British also agreed to set up a body to devise the framework of the new constitution of India. However, the questions of how the body was to be constituted and issues of adult suffrage were not mentioned. This led the Congress to proceed with individual Civil Disobedience Movement to protest against the issues of the August Offer. In March 1942, when the British collapsed in Southeast Asia, the



Prime Minister Winston Churchill announced the dispatching of Sir Stafford Cripps to recommend the procedure for setting up the Constituent Assembly.

For the first time, the British accepted that the constitution would be the responsibility of the Indians alone. The Government also accepted the idea of a Constituent Assembly. However, the Cripps Mission was a failure. The Mission was followed by the historic Quit India Movement and Gandhi's 'Do or Die' declaration. Gandhi said that the provisional Government of free India would create a scheme for a Constituent Assembly.

The victory of the Labour Party in July 1945 initiated a fresh attempt. The Viceroy, Lord Wavell, on 19 September 1945, promised to summon a constitution-making body. On 19 February 1946, the British Government sent a Cabinet Mission to resolve the issues of freedom and constitution-making. The Mission that arrived in India discussed the issues and schemes of freedom and the constitution with the national leaders. The Mission proposed that the best way to set up a constitution-making body was through an election based on an adult franchise. However, any attempt to formulate these new steps through election would delay the formulation of the new constitution. Therefore, it was decided that the newly elected legislative assemblies of the province would elect the members to the Constituent Assembly. The members of the Constituent Assembly would be elected based on one representing the population.

The Cabinet Mission suggests the division of power between the Union and the provinces. The Constituent Assembly, after electing their representatives and chairman, should be divided into two sections. The provisional representatives should decide the constitutions of the provinces. The Union of

India was set up to deal with foreign affairs, communication and defence. However, the criticism came from the League, who rejected the Constituent Assembly at every stage.

### 5.3.3 The formation of the Constituent Assembly

The Constituent Assembly is to have 389 members. Of this, 296 were from British India and 93 from the princely states. In the election held in August 1946, the Congress won by securing 208 seats, and the Muslim League won 73 out of the 78 Muslim seats. Since the Constituent Assembly was not based on an adult franchise, it was not a true representative body. Constant opposition to the Assembly came from the Muslim League. The Muslim League refused to join its deliberations. Even in the face of opposition, the Constituent Assembly summoned its first annual session on 9 December 1946.

Two hundred-seven members attended the first session. The Muslim League refused to join the session. Consequently, the 76 Muslim members stayed away from the session. On 11 December, Rajendra Prasad became the elected President of the Assembly. On 13 December, Jawaharlal Nehru moved the famous Objectives Resolutions. The Objectives Resolutions were passed in the next session, 20-22th January 1947. The third session of the Assembly was held from 28 April to May 1947. The Muslim League still did not join.

On 3 June 1947, the Mountbatten Plan was proclaimed. The Plan made it clear that India was to be partitioned. This completely changed the perspective of the Constituent Assembly, as Cabinet Mission Plan was no longer relevant. When India became independent, the Constituent Assembly became a sovereign body. It was responsible for formulating the Constitution as well as making ordinary laws.

The works of the Constituent Assembly were then organized into five stages.

- i. The Committees were asked to present reports on basic issues.
- ii. B. N Rau prepared the initial draft based on the reports of these committees.
- iii. The Drafting Committee under Dr B.R Ambedkar presented the draft constitution. This was published for public discussions and comments.
- iv. The draft constitution was discussed, and proposed amendments.
- v. Adoption of the constitution.

### 5.3.4 Enactment of the Constitution

On 4 November 1948, the first reading of the draft of the Constitution was introduced in the Assembly by B. R Ambedkar. The second draft reading started on 15 November 1948 and ended on 17 October 1949. During this period, many amendments were proposed and discussed. The third reading of the draft started on 14 November 1949. The Draft Constitution was passed on 26 November 1949. Out of 299 members of the Assembly, 284 members signed the constitution.

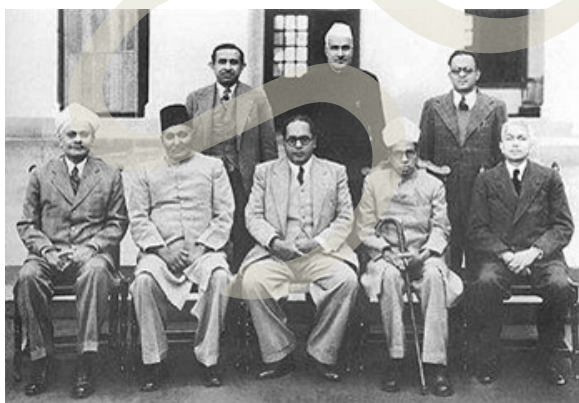


Fig 5.3.1 Members of Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly

The constitution, adopted on 26 November 1949, contained a Preamble, 395 Articles and 8 Schedules. Dr B. R Ambedkar had a prominent part in making the Constitution. He is therefore known as the ‘father of the Constitution of India’.

### 5.3.5 Main provisions and features of the Indian Constitution

The constitution of India envisages a certain set of rules which the laws of the country follow. It provides an outline for a democratic and parliamentary form of Government. The Constitution provided a basic structure that could not be altered. It comprises a list of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles. The Fundamental rights guarantee against encroachment by the state. The Directive Principles are a set of directives to the state to introduce reforms to make fundamental rights effective.

The Congress has been demanding adult suffrage since the 1920s. It adopted the principle of adult suffrage for the success of democratic rule. Adult suffrage envisages that all adults are allowed to vote after completing a defined age limit. In India, the age limit is 18 years.

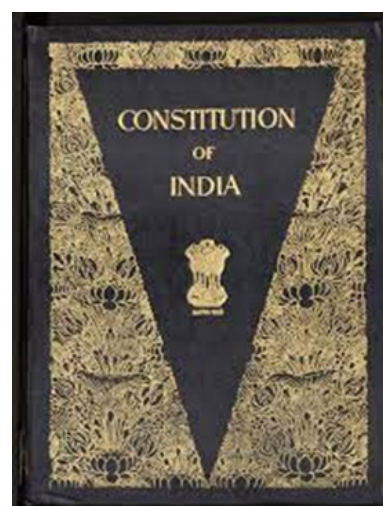


Fig 5.3.2 Constitution of India



According to Justice S. M. Sikri, the Constitution's basic features were the republican and democratic form of Government, the secular feature of the Constitution, the detachment of powers between the legislature, executive and judiciary and the federal structure. Some other features were free and fair elections, the rule of law, judicial review, freedom of individuals, unity and integrity of the nation, equality, economic and social justice, fundamental rights and directive principles, independent judiciary, etc.

The main features of the Constitution are listed below:

i. The Lengthiest written Constitution: The Constitution of India currently consists of a Preamble, 470 Articles and 12 Schedules. It contains fundamental principles for governance and detailed administrative provisions.

ii. The Constitution was derived from various sources. The Constitution of India has borrowed most of its provisions from the Constitution of other countries and from the Government of India Act of 1935. B. R. Ambedkar remarked that the Constitution of India had been framed after 'ransacking all the known Constitutions of the World'. The American Constitution inspired the Fundamental Rights. The Directive Principles are from the Irish Constitution. The political part of the Constitution was taken from the British Constitution. Other provisions were drawn from the Constitutions of Canada, Australia, Germany, France, Russia, etc.

iii. The Rigid and Flexible Constitution. The Indian Constitution is classified as rigid and flexible. A rigid Constitution is one that requires special procedures for amendments. A flexible Constitution means it can be amended like ordinary laws.

iv. The Constitution established a federal system. It contains the features of the federation, like two Governments-central and the state, with the division of powers, a written Constitution, the supremacy of the Indian Constitution, the rigidity of the Indian Constitution, bicameralism and independent judiciary.

v. However, the Constitution also contains non-federal or unitary features like a strong centre, single constitution, flexible constitution, etc.

vi. The Constitution of India is based on a Parliamentary form of Government. This system is based on the principle of cooperation and coordination between the legislature and the executive. In this system, the majority party rules the country. There is a collective responsibility of the executive to the legislature.

vii. The Indian constitution is based on an integrated and independent judiciary. The Supreme Court is the top judicial body. Below it comes the high court and the state-level court. The Supreme Court is the highest court of appeal, protector of the fundamental rights of the citizens and the Constitution.

viii. The Constitution of India envisages a secular state. It does not support any particular religion as the official religion of the Indian State. The term 'secular' was added to the Indian Constitution by the 42 Amendment Act of 1976. As a secular state, it promotes equality of law, secures the liberty of the citizens, non-discrimination of the citizens, equal opportunity, freedom of religion and so on.

ix. The Indian Constitution provides single citizenship.

x. The Constitution of India has emergency provisions enabling the President to face



emergencies. The Constitution envisages National Emergencies, State Emergencies and three types of emergencies. They are the Financial Emergency.

## Recap

- ▶ The essential principles of the constitution are the notions of parliamentary democracy, republic nation, civil liberty, and social and economic justice.
- ▶ The Indian Constitution thus borrowed provisions from the Government of India Act of 1935.
- ▶ Another significant development of constitutional reforms happened with the Commonwealth of India Bill of 1925.
- ▶ The resolution for the Round Table Conference is known as National Demand.
- ▶ The Nehru Report emphasizes securing the people's fundamental rights.
- ▶ The Congress Working Committee Session at Wardha decided to favour the demand for a Constituent Assembly.
- ▶ On 17 September 1937, the Central Legislative Assembly introduced a resolution recommending the replacement of the Act of 1935.
- ▶ The Viceroy, Lord Wavell, on 19 September 1945, promised to summon a constitution-making body.
- ▶ On 19 February 1946, the British Government sent a Cabinet Mission to resolve the issues of freedom and constitution-making.
- ▶ The members of the Constituent Assembly shall be elected based on one representing the population.
- ▶ The Cabinet Mission suggests the division of power between the Union and the provinces.
- ▶ Constant opposition to the Assembly came from the Muslim League.
- ▶ The Constituent Assembly summoned its first annual session on 9 December 1946.
- ▶ On 3 June 1947, the Mountbatten Plan was proclaimed. The Plan made it clear that India was to be partitioned.
- ▶ The Drafting Committee under Dr B.R Ambedkar presented the draft Constitution.
- ▶ The Draft Constitution was passed on 26 November 1949.
- ▶ The Constitution of India envisages a certain set of rules which the laws of the country follow.



## Objective Questions

1. From where did the Indian Constitution borrow its provisions?
2. What was the demand of the Congress-League Pact of 1916?
3. When did the Commonwealth of India Bill pass?
4. Which Bill pressed the need for Self-Governing Dominion?
5. Where did the demand for the Constitution spell for the first time?
6. When did Nehru submit the Nehru Report?
7. Which Congress Session voted in favour of the Constituent Assembly?
8. Which Congress Session demanded the repeal of the Act of 1935?
9. Which Mission was sent to propose a Constitution-making body?
10. When did the Constituent Assembly summon its first annual session?

## Answers

1. Government of India Act of 1935
2. Election through universal adult franchise
3. 1925
4. Commonwealth of India Bill
5. Round Table Conference
6. 28 August 1928
7. Wardha Session
8. Haripura session
9. Cabinet Mission
10. 9 December 1946

## Assignments

1. Discuss the role of the Indian National Congress in the constitution-making of India.
2. Analyse various limitations of the Constitution of India?

## Suggested Reading

1. Chandra, Bipin, *Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India*, Delhi: Har-Anand, 2010.
2. Chandra, Bipan et.al, *India's Struggle for Independence*, Penguin Books, 1988.
3. Chandra, Bipan et.al, *India's Struggle Since Independence*, Penguin Books, 2000.
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3. Sarkar, Sumit, *Modern India, 1885-1947*, Delhi: MacMillian, 1985.



# Unit 4

## Preamble and Basic Principles

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ▶ describe the meaning and significance of the Preamble, Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles
- ▶ assess the evolution of the Preamble
- ▶ identify the basic rights mentioned in the Constitution
- ▶ differentiate between the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles
- ▶ analyse the salient features of Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles

### Prerequisites

The Preamble can be simply defined as a means to know the Constitution's content. It was recorded in the beginning of the Constitution. If we go through the Preamble, we will get to know the philosophy and goals of the Indian Constitution. It was passed for the overall development of the people. It is therefore written on behalf of the people by the members of the Constituent Assembly.

The peculiarity of the Indian Constitution is that it has written rights, lists of rights and a declaration of rights. This peculiarity marked its difference with the British Constitution. From the beginning, the British rejected the Indian demands for a list of rights. Indians, after independence, because of the colonial experience, developed a list of rights which was written down. The rights mentioned in the constitution showed the 'advanced democratic thought' of the country.

### Keywords

Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles of State Policy

## Discussion

### 5.4.1 The Preamble of the Constitution

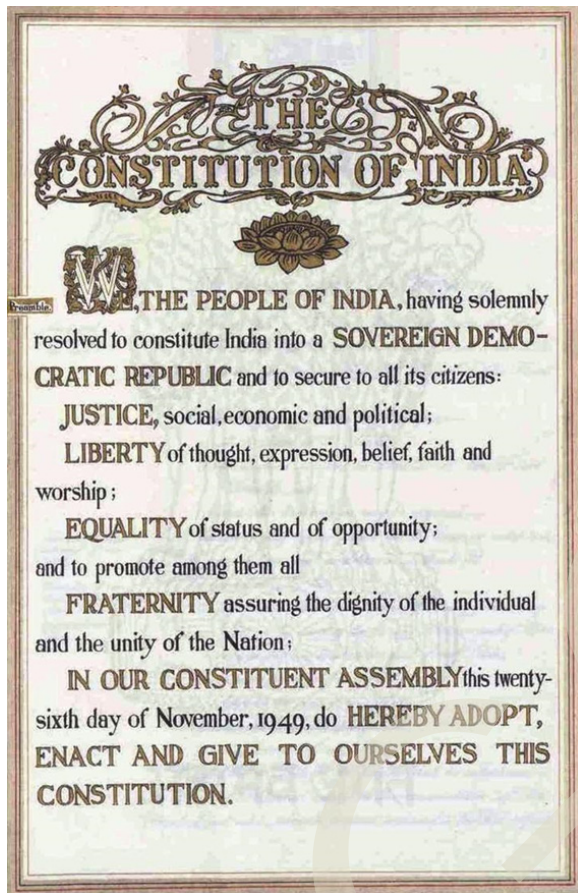


Fig 5.4.1 Preamble of the Indian Constitution

The Preamble is the basic principle philosophy of the Constitution. It was based on the Objectives Resolution drafted by Jawaharlal Nehru. The Preamble was introduced in the Constituent Assembly in the first session on 13 December 1946. It was adopted on 22 January 1947.

The Preamble states that the people of India in the Constituent Assembly made a sincere effort to secure all citizens, “Justice, social and economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; Equality of status and opportunity; and to

promote among them all, Fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation”. The Preamble has been revised by the 42 Constitutional Amendment Act of 1976. After this Amendment, three new words, Socialist, Secular and Integrity, were added.

The Preamble states that the Constitution derives its authority from the people of India. It also declares that India is a sovereign, Socialist, Secular Democratic and republican polity. The Preamble also specifies the objectives of the Constitution as justice, liberty, equality and fraternity.

The Preamble symbolizes the basic philosophy and values of the Constitution. It contains the Constituent Assembly’s vision and reflects the national leaders’ aspirations. K.M Munshi, who was a member of the Drafting Committee of the Constituent Assembly, said that ‘Preamble is the horoscope of our sovereign democratic republic’.

### 5.4.2 Keywords in the Preamble

#### 1. Sovereign

The word sovereign implies that India is neither a dependent state nor a dominion of any other nation. This states that India is an independent state. No authority is above it, and the country is free to conduct its affairs.

#### 2. Socialist

The term Socialism was added by the 42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment of the Constitution in 1976. It promotes democratic Socialism. Democratic Socialism believes in a ‘mixed economy’ where the private and public sectors co-exist. The idea aims to end poverty, ignorance, disease and inequality of opportunity.





### 3. Secular

The term secular was also added through the 42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment. The Indian Constitution guarantees equal status for all religions in the country, regardless of their strength.

### 4. Democratic

The Democratic principles are based on the doctrine of sovereignty, that is the possession of supreme power by the people. The Indian Constitution provides a representative parliamentary democracy. In this system, the executive is responsible to the legislature for all its policies. Some other characteristics were the universal adult franchise, elections, rule of law, absence of discrimination, etc.

### 5. Republic

In a republic, the head of the State is elected directly or indirectly. The term indicates that the country has an elected head, the President. He/ she is elected for a fixed period of five years.

#### 5.4.3 Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles

The concept of Fundamental Rights was in an embryo form in the Constitution of India Bill of 1895, and the idea was predominant in the Nehru Report 1928. The Constituent Assembly did not reject the need for Fundamental Rights. The question they faced was how to distinguish between the immediate rights, like political rights and those that could be granted over time, like social and economic rights. The solution to the problem was borrowed from the concept of the Irish Constitution. And thus, encoding the social and economic rights as 'Directive Principles of the State Policy'.

The Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles are the conscience of the

Constitution. The Fundamental Rights lie in part III of the Constitution, and the Directive Principles of the State Policy lie in part IV of the Indian Constitution. The Part III of the Constitution is described as the Magna Carta of India.

The Fundamental Rights are guaranteed and protected by the Constitution, which is the law of the land. They are 'fundamental' in the sense that they are the basic and essential laws for the people's material, moral and spiritual development. The Fundamental Rights are meant to encourage the ideas of political democracy. These rights prevent the establishment of despotic rule in the country and protect the rights and freedoms of the citizens.

The Fundamental Rights are justiciable, while the Directive Principles are not justiciable. The Fundamental Rights contain traditional civil and political rights, while the Directive Principles contain new economic and social rights. The distinction between these two rights is important because the State could not straightaway guarantee political and civil liberties under the Fundamental Rights; it could only secure economic and social justice. Therefore, the Directive Principles could not be made justiciable. Non-justiciable, which citizens could not go to the court if the rights mentioned in the Directive Principles could become justifiable if they were incorporated into the laws.

#### 5.4.4 Fundamental Rights

The Fundamental Rights are divided into six parts. These rights were incorporated in Articles 12 to 35 of the Constitution.

##### i. Right to equality (Article 14-18). This Article consists of

- a. Article 14: Equality before the law and guarantee the equal protection of the law

- b. Article 15: Prohibition of discrimination based on religion, race, caste, etc
- c. Article 16: Equality of opportunity
- d. Article 17: Abolition of Untouchability
- e. Article 18: Abolition of titles

**ii. Right of Freedom (Article 19-22). This Article consists of**

- a. Article 19: Freedom of speech and expression, assembly, association, residence, profession, movement
- b. Article 20: Protection in a conviction for offences
- c. Article 21: Protection of life and liberty
- d. Article 21 A: Right to elementary education
- e. Article 22: Protection against arrest and detention

**iii. Right Against Exploitation (Article 23-24). This comprises of**

- a. Article 23: Prohibition of human trading and forced labour
- b. Article 24: Prohibition of child labour

**iv. Right to Freedom of Religion (Article 25-28). The right includes:**

- a. Article 25: Freedom of free profession, practice and propagating of religion
- b. Article 26: Freedom to accomplish religious affairs
- c. Article 27: Freedom from payment of taxes for the promotion of religion
- d. Article 28: Freedom from attending religious instruction

**v. Cultural and Educational Rights (Article 29-30). This comprises:**

- a. Article 29: Protection of language, script and minority culture
- b. Article 30: Protecting the right of minorities to establish educational institutions

**vi. Right to Constitutional Remedies. (Article 32). These include:**

- a. This comprises the right to move to the court to enforce fundamental rights. These include Habeas Corpus, Mandamus, Prohibition, Quo-warranto and Certiorari

**vii. The Right to Property (Article 31).**

The right to property was removed from the Fundamental Rights by the 44<sup>th</sup> Amendment Act of 1978. It is made a legal right under Article 300 A in Part XII of the Constitution. Hence, at present, there are only six Fundamental Rights.

The Fundamental rights ensure the protection of individuals and minorities from arbitrary state actions. However, three Articles provide protections against the action of other individuals. They are Article 17, Article 15 (2) and Article 23. Article 17 abolishes untouchability. Article 15 (2) says that no citizen shall suffer discrimination based on caste, religion, sex, or place of birth. Article 23 prohibits forced labour. The State shall protect these rights of the citizen from violation by other citizens.

If the right of the citizen is denied, he/she can approach the Supreme Court or High Court for relief. And the Fundamental Rights cannot be suspended except in case of a declaration of Emergency. The Courts have the right to check whether these rights were



violated. If the rights are violated, they can employ effective remedies like issues of writs like Habeas Corpus, Mandamus, Prohibition, Quo-warranto and Certiorari.

#### 5.4.4.1 Features of Fundamental Rights

Major characteristics of the Fundamental Rights are as follows:

- i. The Fundamental Rights are available against the arbitrary actions of the State and individuals.
- ii. The State can impose some restrictions on these rights. However, whether such rights are reasonable is to be decided by the courts.
- iii. They are justiciable.
- iv. The Supreme Court guarantees them.
- v. They can be suspended during the National Emergencies.
- vi. Their application is restricted while martial law is enforced.

#### 5.4.5 The Directive Principles of State Policy

Articles 36 to 51 enumerated in Part IV of the Constitution enumerated the Directive Principles of State Policy. The ideas of Directive Principles were borrowed from the Irish Constitution.

As mentioned before, the rights mentioned

in the Directive Principles are excluded from the purview of the Courts. The Directive Principles are the guidelines or instructions issued to the legislatures and executives. The spirit of the Directive Principles is contained in Article 38 of the Constitution. Article 38 states that "...the state shall strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice, social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of the national life..." This implies that the State shall ensure that all citizens have adequate means of livelihood, ensure equitable distribution of resources and check the concentration of wealth among the few.

The State should also ensure that there should be equal pay for equal work for both men and women, check on the health of the workers, ensure healthy working conditions, and protect children and pregnant women. All citizens should have the right to work, to education and to public assistance during old age, sickness, etc. The Directive Principles ensure the protection and improvement of the environment and safeguard the forest and wildlife of the country.

The Preamble, the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles together make it clear that the Indian Constitution aimed at creating an egalitarian society by protecting individual freedom.

## Recap

- ▶ The Preamble is the basic principle philosophy of the Constitution.
- ▶ The Preamble was based on the Objectives of Resolution.
- ▶ The Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles are the conscience of the Constitution.
- ▶ The Fundamental Rights lie in part III of the Constitution.
- ▶ The Directive Principles of State Policy lie in part IV of the Indian Constitution.
- ▶ The Fundamental Rights are guaranteed and protected by the Constitution.
- ▶ The Fundamental Rights are justiciable, while Directive Principles are not justiciable.
- ▶ The Fundamental Rights are divided into six parts.
- ▶ If the right of the citizen is denied, he/she can approach the Supreme Court or High Court for relief.
- ▶ And the Fundamental Rights can be suspended during the Emergency period.
- ▶ Articles 36 to 51, mentioned in Part IV of the Constitution, enumerated the Directive Principles of State Policy.
- ▶ The Directive Principles are the guidelines or instructions issued to the legislatures and executives.

## Objective Questions

1. What was the base of the Preamble?
2. When was the Preamble introduced in the Constituent Assembly?
3. When was the Preamble amended?
4. What was added to the 42<sup>nd</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act of 1976?
5. Where was the idea of Fundamental Rights first found?
6. Which Constitution provided the base for the Directive Principles?
7. Which part of the Constitution contains the Fundamental Rights?
8. Which part of the Constitution contains the Directive Principles?
9. Which part of the Constitution is called the Magna Carta of India?
10. Which Article comprises the Fundamental Rights?

## Answers

1. Objective Resolution
2. 13 December 1946
3. 42 Constitutional Amendment Act of 1976



4. New words - Socialist, Secular and Integrity - were added
5. Nehru Report 1928
6. Irish Constitution
7. Part III
8. Part IV
9. Part III
10. Articles 12 to 35 of the Constitution

## Assignments

1. Discuss the relation between the Objectives Resolution and Preamble.
2. Discuss the classification of the Directive Principles.
3. Describe the difference between Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles.
4. Analyse the criticisms of the Directive Principles.

## Suggested Reading

1. Chandra, Bipan et.al, *India's Struggle for Independence*, Penguin Books, 1988.
2. Chandra, Bipan et.al, *India's Struggle Since Independence*, Penguin Books, 2000.
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# BLOCK - 06

## **Legacy of National Movement- II**

# Unit 1

## Ideals of Secularism & Democracy

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ▶ familiarise with the meaning of secularism and democracy
- ▶ assess the importance of secularism and democracy for the country
- ▶ discuss the Nehruvian idea of secularism and parliamentary democracy
- ▶ analyse of the features of the parliamentary democracy

### Prerequisites

When a country is made up of various cultures and communities, how can a democratic state ensure equality for all of them? How should democracy work in such a country? When India gained independence from its long colonial rule, it faced these challenges. To work in the Indian situation, political leaders attempted to incorporate several ideas such as secularism, parliamentary democracy, and liberalism. Among these are the concepts of secularism and democracy. As a country dealing with rampant communal violence and disruption, the concept of secularism contains solutions to the problem.

The Indian Constitution promotes secularism and adheres to parliamentary democracy to unite the difference and diversity in the country. The conditions of religious minorities in neighbouring Pakistan and Bangladesh remind us of the importance of continuing secularism for the people. The Indian Constitution ensures that every citizen has the right to practice and profess any religion and prohibits discrimination based on religion. Secularism is one of the doctrines which opposes all forms of religious domination. Therefore, secularism is an important principle for a democratic state to function.

We all know that India adopted a parliamentary form of government with the independence of the country. This system was based on the principles of universal adult franchise. The concept of democracy depends on providing equality to the people. It ensures people are provided with all rights and privileges, protects against discrimination and ensures freedom.

## Keywords

Secularism, Democracy, Secular State, Indian Model, Parliamentary Democracy

## Discussion

### 6.1.1 Meaning of Secularism

Secularism is one of the most important aspects of nation-building and integration. Jawaharlal Nehru employed the idea of secularism for national growth and development. Secularism means the separation of religion from the state and politics. It requires that the state should not discriminate against a citizen on the grounds of his or her religion. The people of India accepted secularism as a basic value which was guaranteed by the Constitution and decided to build a secular state and society.

#### 6.1.1.1 Secular State and Indian Model of Secularism

After independence, the persistent communal violence made leaders think of better solutions to resolve the issues. They found that the only way to prevent religious discrimination is through imparting education. Individuals with rational mindset will contribute towards reducing community superstition and prejudices. In modern societies, the state possesses enormous power to navigate people in the right path. It is, therefore, relevant to know how these states functioned as a means to eliminate communalism and religious discrimination in society to promote harmony.

The state ensures that no religious group is dominant over the others. For this, the first thing was ensuring the elimination of religion from the Government's functioning. We know that the Papal States of Europe in medieval times were governed by priestly order. Such states were called Theocratic States. In such states, the Government cannot ensure proper

differentiation between religious and political affairs, which lead to hierarchical order, oppression, neglecting the freedom of religious minorities and others. Therefore, if a state has to ensure peace, freedom, and equality, and they have to keep aside its religious affiliation.

Then what could be done to ensure the separation of state and religion? Scholars think that a secular state can eliminate the problems of communalism to a considerable extent. A secular state will refuse to be theocratic and have no alliance with any particular religion. A secular state must be least dedicated to religious ideologies. Such a state should work to ensure peace, religious freedom against oppression and discrimination.

India, therefore, adheres to its principles of secularism. With the 42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment of the Constitution, the Preamble asserted that "India is a secular nation". This means that it does not give priority to any particular religion or its followers.

The constitution reveals that the makers of the Constitution took the utmost care to ensure that no religion is opposed or promoted. The provisions of secularism were incorporated into the Constitution through various articles like Article 14, Article 15, Article 16 (1), 25-30 and 51 A. Among these, Article 25 guarantees the freedom of conscience, the freedom to profess any religion, and the right to practice and propagate any religion. The Constitution guarantees the following features of secularism:

- a. The State will not be identified or controlled by any religion.
- b. The state will guarantee the right to practice and profess any religion.



- c. There shall be no discrimination based on his/her religion.
- d. It secured the fraternity of the Indian people, which assured the unity of the nation.
- e. The State will treat all religions equally.

The Indian model of secularism differs from Western secularism in different ways. Western secularism ensures that the state will not intervene in the affairs of the religion, and the religion will not hinder the affairs of the state. Indian secularism, on the other hand, did not focus only on the separation of religions but also ensured inter-religious equality.

The Secularism adopted by the Indian Constitution was not an anti-religious concept. Alternatively, it prevented the discrimination of citizens based on religion. The debates and discussions in the Constituent Assembly led to two major views of secularism. One is the Gandhian view, and the other is Nehru's view.

According to Gandhi, secularism is based on 'sarva dharma sambhav', which is the equality of all religions. According to him, one cannot separate religion from public life. Hence, it is important for the society. He, therefore, asked men to respect other religions and practices.

While Nehru's idea is based on the concept of *Dharma Nirpeksha*, it means that religion should be a private matter. According to Nehru, secularism was not only a political doctrine but a revolutionary concept that comprised all religions. The core aspects of secularism were

- i. Emphasis on religious freedom suggests that no one shall discriminate on the grounds of any religion.
- ii. Nehru emphasizes the neutrality of the state in religious matters.

- iii. In minorities, Interests are very important.

### 6.1.2 Democratic political systems

After independence, India's most significant achievement was enforcing political democracy and civil liberties. Each citizen's rights and privileges today is the result of democratic rule. Democracy is a form of government in which the rulers are chosen by popular vote. However, it is not always the rule of the people. A democratic form of government has certain characteristics. They are as follows:

- a. In a democracy, the final decision is taken by the leaders elected by the people.
- b. A democratic form of government is based on free and fair elections.
- c. Each adult citizen has the right to vote, and these votes have value. Thus democracy is dependent on the principles of political equality.
- d. A democratic government rules according to the laws of the Constitution.

One of the greatest achievements of independent India was its secular, federal, and multi-party political system. Political stability has been a defining feature of independent India. Changes in the political system occurred through constitutional and democratic means. People believed in the electoral system and believed that it would determine who would rule the country. As a result, increased voter participation in the election process aided India's political stability.

Parliamentary democracy, according to Jawaharlal Nehru, is a critical factor in integrating religious, social, and linguistic groups. He believed that parliamentary democracy would promote the country's stability and flexibility. Parliamentary

democracy ensured that social formations received equal shares. People would be able to achieve social justice and equality through democracy, as well as reduce inequality. Nehru argued that democracy is necessary to maintain national unity.

## Recap

- ▶ Secularism for national growth and development.
- ▶ Secularism means the separation of religion from the state and politics.
- ▶ The state ensures that no religious group is dominant over others.
- ▶ The 42nd Amendment of the Constitution states that India is a secular nation.
- ▶ The Indian model of secularism is different from those of the West.
- ▶ Religion should not be a private matter.
- ▶ Democracy is a form of government in which the people elect the rulers.
- ▶ Parliamentary Democracy is grounded on the rule of the Constitution.
- ▶ Parliamentary Democracy ensured equal shares to social formations.

## Objective Questions

1. What is secularism?
2. What is a theocratic State?
3. Which amendment of the Constitution ensured India a secular state?
4. Which articles of the Constitution ensured secular principles?
5. What rights do Article 25 guarantee to the citizens?
6. What was the main feature of Western secularism?
7. What is Gandhi's idea of secularism?
8. What is Nehru's idea of secularism?
9. What is *Dharma Nirpeksha*?
10. What type of Democracy did India adopt?

## Answers

1. Separation of religion from state and politics
2. A state governed by priestly order
3. 42<sup>nd</sup> Amendment
4. Article 14, Article 15, Article 16 (1), 25-30 and 51 A





5. Freedom of conscience, the freedom to profess any religion, and the right to practice and propagate any religion
6. The state will not intervene in the affairs of the religion and vice-versa
7. *Sarva Dharma Sambhav*
8. *Dharma Nirpeksha*
9. Religion is a private matter
10. Parliamentary Democracy

## Assignments

1. What is the role of secularism and democracy in nation-building?
2. What makes Indian secularism distinct from others?

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1. Sarkar, Sumit, *Modern India, 1885-1947*, Delhi: Macmillian, 1985.
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## Unit 2

# Nehru and New India

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ▶ assess Nehru's idea of New India
- ▶ identify various methods used for the progress of the nation after independence
- ▶ discuss various programmes initiated under Nehru
- ▶ analyse the nature of the electoral process, democratic institutions, and administrative structures of independent India
- ▶ describe the initiatives brought in the field of education, science and technology and the Panchayati Raj system

### Prerequisites

Independent India grew with the support of efficient leadership and dedication. The role of political parties like Congress was also to be mentioned. Among the political leaders, the role played by Jawaharlal Nehru and his followers is of immense significance. Nehru and the Deputy Prime Minister, Sardar Patel, took decisive action for building the foundations of strong administration for India. There were also the learned leaders Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, Dr Rajendra Prasad, and C. Rajagopalachari, who possessed sharp intellect and practical wisdom. Together these leaders with single minded dedication for the building up of the new nation.

Apart from the Congress party, the Socialists like Acharya Narendra Dev and Jayaprakash Narayan, the Communists like P.C Joshi, Liberal Communist Syama Prasad Mukherjee, and B.R Ambedkar made an effort to bring the nation as a unified entity. The political leaders shared a common goal of social and economic change and democratization of the polity and society. Nehru's commitment to the values of democracy were well-known among these. Bipan Chandra regards the year 1951-1964 as the year of 'Hope and Achievement'. The year marked high hopes and aspirations for nation-building.



## Keywords

The electoral process, Democratic Institutions, Administrative Structure, science and technology, education, Community Development Programmes

## Discussion

Jawaharlal Nehru declared in April 1953 that "...I shall not rest content unless every man, woman and child in the country has a fair deal and has a minimum standard of living...". The words signify that the immediate and long-term requirement of the country was attaining economic stability. The national leaders knew India would face instability in every aspect of polity, economy and society. The country began its reconstruction of the polity and economy to achieve progress. Nehru and others aimed at the long-run progress of the nation instead of short-term achievement.



Fig 6.2.1 Jawaharlal Nehru, Homi Bhabha, and Ratan Tata

During the periods, the people experienced

the advancement of democracy, civil liberties, secularism, scientific outlook, and economic development. There was discontentment among the intellectuals regarding the slow pace of national development, especially regarding the problems of poverty, unemployment and land reforms. Though there were some limitations and weaknesses, some of the areas received commendable impetus. Some of them were the consolidation of the nation and solving the language and tribal problems, planned economic development, evolution of foreign policy, electoral process, setting up of administrative apparatus, and development of science and technology. This unit will discuss these achievements in detail.

### 6.2.1 Growth of the Electoral Process

The achievement of the electoral process began with the framing of the Constitution after 1947. Indian democracy took its great step with the first general elections held in 1951-52. This was the first biggest experiment in democracy. The elections were held according to the universal adult franchise; that is, those who are twenty-one years of age or above have the right to vote. At that time, over 173 million people had no experience with elections. The biggest question at that time was how the people would respond to this election opportunity.

Many people were doubtful about the prospects of such elections. They said that democratic elections were not suited to a caste-ridden, illiterate society like India, and in such cases, only a benevolent despotism would work.

The election system of India was based on the directives mentioned in the Constitution. The Constitution put in place an Election Commission headed by Chief Election Commissioner to conduct elections. The Election Commission was an independent body. The task of the Government was to make the illiterate common masses aware of the election process. The candidates were to be identified with symbols assigned to each party.

The first general election after independence was marked by vigorous election campaigns by political leaders, especially Jawaharlal Nehru. In Bipan Chandra's words, he showed remarkable energy, covered nearly 40,000 kilometres and addressed 35 million people as part of the election tour. In fact, Nehru was at the Centre of the election campaign. He made communalism the central issue of the campaign. In his view, the main struggle was between the secular and communal forces.

The elections were conducted in a fair, impartial and orderly manner. However, some places reported minor violence. The election process was completed in May 1950. The result was that Rajendra Prasad was elected as the first President of the Indian Republic and Dr S Radhakrishnan as its Vice President.

The response of the people to the new political process was welcoming. According to the reports, nearly 46.6 percent of the eligible people cast their votes. This indicates that the people participated in the elections with utmost care. Some people treated elections as a festival. A remarkable feature of the election was the participation of women. The reports say that at least 40 per cent of the women cast their votes.

#### 6.2.1.1 Strengthening of Democratic Institutions



Indian leaders, especially Nehru,

strengthened the foundation of Indian democracy by establishing institutions of the democratic system. This gradually attracted people to the parliamentary form of Government. Civil liberties and independence of the court were nurtured.

Nehru treated the parliamentary system with respect and tried to maintain its dignity, prestige and power. He made a forum for public opinion and promoted Question Hour sessions, and also encouraged to attend the parliamentary debates. The Opposition also played its role by respecting parliament and its procedures and keeping the standard of the parliament. Despite the domination of the Congress, the Opposition strengthened during this period. Nehru gave respect to the Opposition parties in the parliament. The Opposition influenced the policies of the Government through ideologies.

Under the leadership of Nehru, the cabinet system evolved healthily. His effort was to make the cabinet a chief agent of collective policy-making.

The establishment of Federalism was another feature of the Indian polity during the Nehruvian period. Respecting the autonomy of the State, Nehru did not impose any decision on the State Government. He trusted the state leaders and Government to understand the State's issues and problems. He will guide, advise or urge the State Government but not force them to implement any policies which are out of constitutional boundaries.

At the same time, Nehru did not permit the dying of the authority of the Central Government. He always tried to distinguish sharply between the centralization of power and the Centre's domination over the State. The major reason that led to the pleasant relationship between the Centre and the State was the same party rule in both the Centre and the State.

During this period, the supremacy of the civil Government over the armed forces was established. The Indian Armed Forces were non-political and accepted civilian control and leadership. Nehru was worried about the probability of intervention of armed forces in politics and Government, as happened in France and Germany. To avoid such a possibility, Nehru initiated various measures. He kept the size of the armed force small and refused the expansion of the army to a large scale. The expenditure on defence was kept low. He abandoned the British colonial practice of recruiting men as a martial class and recruited them as a heterogeneous group, representing every region and section of the society. India was therefore protected from the danger of militarism.

### 6.2.2 The Administrative Structure

After the independence, it was to be decided whether India should follow the British administrative apparatus. The pivot in the system was the Indian Civil Service (ICS). The political leaders understood that if India had to replace the British administrative system, they had to begin with the change of ICS. Nehru was a critic of the Indian Civil Service because of their liberalism and British legacy. He, therefore, declared that they would scrap it and give place to another. At the same time, Sardar Patel did not favour the sudden discontinuity of trained administrators. Nehru accepted Patel's position because he realized there was no alternative structure to depend on for the administration.

The administrative structure made during the colonial period was to maintain law and order and collect revenue. Gradually, this structure was adapted to the needs of the democratic and developing society and made capable of executing new economic and welfare policies. Nehru was aware of the inadequacy of the system to understand the

problem of the people and to implement the task. He thought that the situation could be cured in two ways:

- i. Firstly, through educating the whole administrative structure.
- ii. Secondly, by putting new person where it is needed.

However, these two steps were not taken. Rather, the newly joined IAS officers were formed in the old ICS pattern. The administration did not improve but deteriorated over the year, becoming inefficient and unapproachable. The attitude of the bureaucracy toward the people, especially the police, became uncooperative. Above all, there was corruption among the bureaucrats. Nehru and other leaders were aware of the issues of corruption in public administration. He took stern action against corruption allegations.

### 6.2.3 Development of Science and Technology

A major achievement of the Nehruvian era was the development of science and technology. Nehru was aware that the development of science and technology was important for the country's development. Nehru believed that it was science alone which could resolve the problems of hunger, poverty and superstition. Accordingly, the Scientific Policy Resolution was passed by Lok Sabha in March 1958. It admits the role of science and technology in economic, social and cultural advancement.

India's first national laboratory, the National Physical Laboratory, was established on 4 January 1947 for scientific growth. This was followed by the setting up of seventeen national laboratories. To emphasize the importance of science and technology, he assumed the chairmanship of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research.



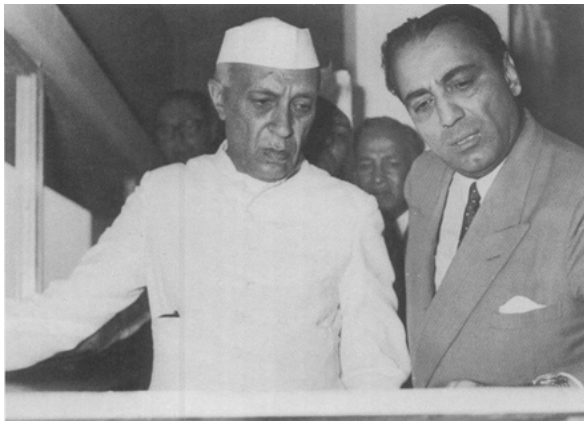


Fig 6.2.2 Nehru and Homi Bhabha

In 1952, the first five Institute of Technology was set up to organize and train technical persons at Kharagpur, Madras, Bombay, Kanpur and Delhi. In order to develop the scientific urge, the expenditure on scientific research increased. There was also an increase in the number of undergraduate students in agriculture.

India was one of the first nations to identify the relevance of nuclear energy. Nehru was convinced that nuclear energy would bring global revolution in social, economic and political areas. In August 1948, India set up the Atomic Energy Commission with Homi. J Bhabha as its chairman to further the Department of Scientific Research. In 1954, the Government shaped a separate Department of Atomic Energy under Nehru with Homi Bhabha as secretary. The Government set up the first nuclear reactor in Trombay, Bombay.

India also took steps to advance space research. The Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) was launched in 1962. The Government also established a Rocket Launching Facility at Thumba (TERLS). Defence Minister Krishna Menon made a significant effort to develop defence research. India gradually kickstarted a programme to improve scientific temperament by establishing and funding research institutes.



## 6.2.4 Social changes

Indian society was moving towards social change during the Nehruvian era. The concept of new social order was included in 1955 by the phrase ‘socialist pattern of society’ and officially accepted by the Congress at its Avadi session. The idea of a new social order was then incorporated into the objectives of the Second and Third Five Year Plans.

Several important measures of social reform were then incorporated in the Nehru years. One of the important measures was land reform, along with planned economic development, and expansion of public sectors. They also undertook labour legislations like the right to form trade unions, call for strikes and security of employment. The Government also took measures towards equitable distribution of resources and wealth. Expansion of health and social services was also initiated.

The Government ensured laws against untouchability. To abolish untouchability, Anti-Untouchability Law was passed in 1955, which made the practice of untouchability a serious offence. The Government also implemented the reservation of seats in educational institutions in favour of Schedule Caste and Schedule tribes. Measures were taken to improve their social conditions. Provisions were made through grants, scholarships, hostel accommodation, granting loans and giving legal services. A Commission of Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes was appointed to implement these measures and constitutional provisions.

Nehru supported the revision of laws regarding women’s rights. A major step was taken when Hindu Code Bill was moved in parliament in 1951. The Bill received Opposition from various conservative sections of society. Hence, Nehru postpones the enactment of the Bill for support. He made the issue of Bill for the elections of 1951-52.

After returning to power, the Government passed the Hindu Code Bill in four separate acts. This introduced monogamy, the right to divorce, raised the age of consent and marriage, and gave the right to women to inherit property. However, Nehru did not enact the Uniform Civil Code. This would involve changes in Muslim personal law, especially monogamy and inheritance. The Bill was not passed because of strong Opposition. Bipan Chandra noticed that the process of social reform among Muslims was slow when compared to others. Consequently, social change has been slow among Muslim women. Nehru was willing to make changes only when Muslims were ready for it.

#### 6.2.4.1 Education

The leaders were very well aware that imparting better education is the instrument of social change, economic progress and democratic society. It was urgent because, in 1951, only 16.6 per cent of the total population was literate. To curb illiteracy, the Constitution guaranteed free and compulsory education to every child upto the age of fourteen.

The Government provided money to develop primary, secondary, higher and technical education. Nehru urged the State Government to take necessary steps to expand education. He asked the State Government not to reduce expenditure on primary education. The Nehruvian period witnessed the expansion of education, especially for girls. Between 1951 and 1961, the enrolment of girls in schools tripled. By 1964, the number of universities increased. The number of girl students increased in colleges as well.

#### 6.2.4.2 Community Development Programmes

The country witnessed two major developments for rural uplift. One was the Community Development Programme and

the Panchayati Raj, which were introduced in 1952 and 1959 respectively. These two programmes laid down the foundations of the welfare state at the village level. The basic aim of this Programme was to improve and change rural life and to bring a quality of living standard among the rural people.

The Community Development Programme covered all aspects of rural life, from improving agricultural methods to improving communication, health and education. The Programme also aimed at self-reliance and self-help by the people. These programmes were, therefore, people's movement for their own welfare.

The Programme achieved its result in agricultural development, food production, the construction of roads, tanks, wells, schools, health centre buildings, etc. The support of the population increased with time. However, the Programme failed to achieve one of its basic objectives: the involvement of people in the development activity. Over the period, the activities of the Programme became highly bureaucratic and official.

Another radical step was taken in the Panchayati Raj system. According to the system, they would transfer rural development and administration responsibility to the people. The Panchayat would act as an instrument of improvement of the life of the people and would increase self-reliance. It became a tool of social change as well. However, the system was disproved when the State Government took little enthusiasm. The State curbed the powers and functions of the Panchayati Raj and denied their funds. The Panchayats also became highly politicized when politicians gathered support in the village. Moreover, the benefits of Community Development Programmes and other benefits were gathered among the rich peasants and capitalists. The

basic weakness of both systems was that they ignored the issues of class division in rural society. The landless and marginal society remained powerless. Rich and economically sound capitalists dominated the village.

## Recap

- ▶ The first general elections held in 1951-52 were the first biggest experiment in democracy.
- ▶ Elections were based on a universal adult franchise.
- ▶ The election system of India was based on the directives mentioned in the constitution.
- ▶ Elections are conducted by the election commission headed by the chief election commissioner.
- ▶ The Election Commission was an independent body.
- ▶ Rajendra Prasad was the first elected President of India.
- ▶ Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was the first elected vice-president of India.
- ▶ Followed the parliamentary system.
- ▶ The cabinet system received importance.
- ▶ Established Federalism as an important feature of democracy.
- ▶ The supremacy of the civil government over the armed forces.
- ▶ Took measures to check the growth of armed forces.
- ▶ Nehru tried to scrap Indian civil service but was unsuccessful.
- ▶ A scientific policy resolution was passed by Lok Sabha in March 1958.
- ▶ India's first national laboratory, the national physical laboratory, was set up on 4 January 1947.
- ▶ In 1952, the first five Institutes of Technology were set up.
- ▶ In August 1948, India set up the atomic energy commission with Homi. J Bhabha as its chairman.
- ▶ The Indian National Committee for Space Research (INCOSPAR) was set up in 1962.
- ▶ Work for a socialist pattern of society.
- ▶ The Hindu code bill was moved to parliament in 1951.
- ▶ To abolish untouchability, the anti-untouchability law was passed in 1955.
- ▶ A commission of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes was appointed.
- ▶ Enrolment in schools increased.
- ▶ Two major developments were the community development programme and the Panchayati Raj, which were introduced in 1952 and 1959 respectively.



## Objective Questions

1. What was the basis of the elections of 1951-52?
2. Who is eligible to vote according to the adult franchise?
3. Who was the head of the Election Commission?
4. What was the duty of the Election Commission?
5. Who was the first elected President of the Indian Republic?
6. Who was the first elected Vice-President of the Indian Republic?
7. When was Scientific Policy Resolution passed?
8. Which is India's first national laboratory?
9. When was the National Physical Laboratory set up?
10. When was the first five Institute of Technology set up?
11. Where were the first five Institutes of Technology set up?
12. When was the Atomic Energy Commission set up?
13. Who was the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission?
14. Where was the first nuclear reactor set up in India?
15. What is INCOSPAR?
16. When was Indian National Committee for Space Research set up?
17. Where is India's Rocket Launching Facility situated?
18. Which Congress Session accepted the idea of a socialist pattern of society?
19. Which Five Year Plan incorporates the idea of a socialist pattern of Society?
20. When was Anti-Untouchability Law passed?
21. When was Hindu Code Bill moved to the parliament?
22. When was Community Development Programme introduced?
23. When was the Panchayati Raj system introduced?

## Answers

1. Universal Adult Franchise
2. Those who were twenty-one years of age or above
3. Chief Election Commissioner
4. Conduct elections
5. Rajendra Prasad
6. Dr S Radhakrishnan
7. March 1958
8. the National Physical Laboratory
9. 4 January 1947
10. 1952
11. Kharagpur, Madras, Bombay, Kanpur and Delhi
12. August 1948
13. Homi. J Bhabha

14. Trombay, Bombay
15. Indian National Committee for Space Research
16. 1962
17. Thumba
18. Avasi session
19. Second and Third Five Year Plan
20. 1955
21. 1951
22. 1952
23. 1959

## Assignments

1. Discuss the role of Nehru in nation-making.
2. How successful were the programmes and initiatives of Nehru for the development of the nation?
3. Examine the merits and demerits of the policies of Nehru.
4. Explain Nehru's scientific temper and his effort for the development of science and technology.
5. Discuss the merits and demerits of Community Development Programmes.
6. How did the Panchayati Raj system change the village-level administration?

## Suggested Reading

1. Sarkar, Sumit, *Modern India, 1885-1947*, Macmillian, Delhi, 1985.
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## Unit 3

# Concept of Development

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ▶ discuss the meaning and features of mixed economy
- ▶ describe the reason behind the adoption of a mixed economy
- ▶ discuss the role of economic Planning in the growth of the country
- ▶ analyse various Five Year Plans and their motives
- ▶ identify the economic conditions of India after independence

### Prerequisites

The development of India also depends on the capacity to take industrial transformation within the framework of democracy. We have seen the economic condition of India during the colonial period. India could not participate in the modern industrial transformation during the colonial period. What we faced were poverty, deprivation, exploitation and the ruin of agriculture. All these processes made economic growth much more difficult.

The newly formed Government of independent India had to solve the issues of the economy in order to achieve economic progress and industrial and agricultural transformation. After two hundred years of the first industrial revolution, trying industrial transformation was one of the most challenging tasks. India needed a comprehensive economic development plan, including all aspects of the economy, agriculture, industry, power, finance and so on. With the establishment of the Planning Commission in 1950, India got the opportunity to access resources and ensure their proper utilization. The Planning, therefore, indicates the allocation of resources and their systematic utilization for the overall development.

### Keywords

Economic planning, Mixed Economy, Five Year Plan, National Planning Commission

## Discussion

### 6.3.1 Nehru's Concept of Development

The economic development of the country is aimed at the removal of poverty and the implementation of welfare policies. Jawaharlal Nehru remarked, 'A high rate of economic growth sustained over a long period is the essential condition for achieving a rising level of living for all citizens.'

While undertaking the economic development task, India had certain advantages which eased the transformation process. Firstly, India had a small but independent industrial base. This Indian-owned and controlled industrial base began to emerge between 1914 and 1947. When India gained independence, these Indian entrepreneurs captured about 75 per cent of the market for industrial produce in India. This was the base for rapid independent industrialization. A class of entrepreneurs brought growth and was thus an asset to India. For example, Tatas, Birlas, Singhanias, etc.

Secondly, India has a broad societal consensus on the path of development. Almost all parties, like Socialists, Capitalists and Communalists agreed on agendas like economic development strategies, rapid industrialization, preventing foreign dominations, abolition of zamindari, etc. Most importantly, India made a stern effort to plan industrial development within democracy and civil liberty.

The three main pillars of the development strategy of Nehru were industrial and agricultural growth, the development of the public sector and a mixed economy. He popularised economic Planning as part of Indian consciousness. India promotes a mixed economy along with the private sector. In the

long run, his economic Planning was to gain growth of the economy by controlling basic industries and strategic sectors of the economy.

### 6.3.2 Planning

The Indian leaders were aware that an independent India required a comprehensive economic development that comprised all industries, agriculture, banking, finance and so on. These works were coordinated with the 'National Planning Commission'. The Commission was essential for India to achieve its goal to its fullest. In 1938, under Jawaharlal Nehru, the National Planning Committee (NPC) was set up to draw a comprehensive development plan.

State planning is essential to ensure the direct participation of the state in the production process through the public sector. The Karachi Resolution of 1931 envisaged that the State should own and control key industries, resources, railways, waterways and public transport. Nehru and NPC also promoted the public sector and partial nationalization.

The support for the public sector was elaborated in the Plan of Economic Development for India, called as Bombay Plan, authored in 1945. The Bombay Plan identified that the main cause of India's dependency on the advanced countries was the absence of the indigenous capital goods industry. It was sensed that developing capital goods and other heavy industries required huge finance and would take time for returns. In this situation, the public sector would play a crucial role.

Therefore in 1947, when the Economic Programme Committee laid down the areas like defence, key industries, and public utility were to be started under the public sector. Nehru wanted the Planning and public sector



to be introduced democratically. For Nehru, Planning had to be 'consensual' and not a 'command' performance. This implies that the formulation of Planning must be universal and accepted without coercion or command.

Based on this idea, the Planning Commission of India was established on 15 March 1950. Nehru was the first Chairperson of the Commission. The Planning was carried through Five Year Plans (FYP) by the Planning Commission. Planning Commission became the Niti Ayog in 2015, with the Prime Minister as the official chairman of the Commission.

The First Plan (1951-56) focussed on the primary sector. At the end of the Plan, five Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) were established. The University Grants Commission was set up to take care of higher education. The first Plan tried to resolve the after effects of partition, like refugee issues resulting from migration. The Plan target was to achieve a growth rate of 2.1 per cent, and

the actual growth rate was 3.6 per cent.

P.C Mahalanobis drafted the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61). The Second Plan focused on the development of the public sector and industrialization. This was called as Mahalanobis model, developed in 1953. The Second Plan attempted to gather the optimal investment allocation for economic growth. The Plan was focused on a closed economy centred on importing capital goods. During the period, Hydroelectric power projects and five steel plants were established with the help of the Soviet Union, Britain and West Germany. The Plan emphasized the production of coal. Also, the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR) and Atomic Energy Commission of India were established. The amount was allocated to power and irrigation, communication, transport, etc. The Plan has also stressed equity. The target rate was 4.5 per cent, and the actual growth was 4.27 per cent.



Fig 6.3.1 Nehru, Moraji Desai, JRD Tata and S.S Bhatnagar during the foundation ceremony of Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR)

The Third Five-Year Plan (1961-66) stressed agricultural improvement and growth in wheat production. The Plan shifted its focus towards the defence industry and the Indian Army. The construction of dams was another feature. Many primary schools were established. The state was made responsible for secondary and higher education, and was based on John Sandy and Sukhamoy Chakraborty's model. The Plan target was to achieve a growth rate of 5.6 per cent, and the actual growth rate was 2.4 per cent.

The year 1966-1968 was declared "Plan Holidays" due to the failure of the Third Plan. Three annual plans were drawn during this period. The priority of the annual Plan was given to the problem of drought, agriculture, and the industrial sector. The Government declared the "Devaluation of Rupee" to increase the export of the country. The main reason for the planned holiday was the lack of resources and increased inflation.

The Fourth Five-Year Plan (1969-74) was introduced under Indira Gandhi. This Plan was based on Gadgil Formula, where emphasis was given to stability and progress towards self-reliance. The Government nationalized 14 Indian banks and introduced the Green Revolution to advance agriculture. The Drought Prone Area Program (DPAP) was launched during this period. The Plan target was to achieve a growth rate of 5.6 per cent, and the actual growth rate was 3.3 per cent.

The Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78) stressed increasing employment and poverty alleviation programme like *garibi hatao*. The Government amended the Electricity Supply Act in 1975 and introduced the Indian National Highway System. The Minimum Needs Programme was introduced, which aimed to provide basic needs. D.P Dhar prepared this programme. However, the

Moraji Desai Government rejected this Plan. The Plan target was to achieve a growth rate of 4.4 per cent, and the actual growth rate was 4.8 per cent.

After the Fifth Five-Year Plan, the nation witnessed a period of instability. This was termed Rolling Plan (1978-80). The Fifth Plan was rejected by Janata Party and introduced Sixth Five-Year Plan. However, this Plan was rejected by re-elected Congress Government and made a new Sixth Year Plan. The Rolling Plan aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the Plan annually, and a new plan was created the next year after the evaluation.

The Sixth Year Plan (1980-85) witnessed the beginning of economic liberation. This was achieved by eliminating price control. The Plan introduced family planning to control overpopulation. The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) was founded on 12 July 1982 under the recommendation of the Shivaraman Committee. The target growth was 5.2 per cent, and the actual growth rate was 5.7 per cent.

The Seventh Plan (1985-1990) was under the period of Rajiv Gandhi. It laid stress on improving productivity, technology, and generating employment. It emphasized anti-poverty programmes and aimed at gaining sustained growth by 2000. The target growth was 5.0 per cent, and the actual growth rate was 6.01 per cent.

The year 1990-1992 was a period of Annual Plans. This was because of economic instability. During this period, Liberalisation, Privatisation, and Globalisation (IPG) were introduced to contend with the problem of the economy.

The Eighth Year Plan (1992-97) promoted the modernization of industries under P.V





Narasimha Rao. The plan's main goal was to control population growth, reduce poverty, and create employment, tourism, and infrastructure development. The Plan also involved the Panchayati Raj, Nagar Palikas and NGOs. The target growth was 5.6 per cent, and the actual growth rate was 6.8 per cent.

The Ninth Five-Year Plan (1997-2002) was formulated during the period of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. It aimed to eliminate poverty and witnessed the joint effort of the public and private sectors for economic growth. The focus was also given to the advancement of the socially depressed classes, developing their self-reliance, and the country's primary education. The target growth was 7.1 per cent, and the actual growth rate was 6.8 per cent.

The Tenth Year Plan (2002-07) promoted comprehensive growth and equitable development. It targeted 8 % GDP growth per year. It focused on means to reduce poverty and create employment. The target growth was 8.1 per cent, and the actual growth rate was 7.6 per cent.

The Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012) was a significant one that it focussed on higher education, distance education. The main aim of the Plan was the rapid and inclusive growth. Other focus includes the reduction of gender inequality, establishing environmental sustainability, provide clean drinking water, increase the growth rate of agriculture, industry and service sector at 4 percent, 10 percent and 9 percent respectively. The target growth was 9 percent, and the actual growth rate was 8 percent.

The Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) was the last five-year Plan aimed at "Faster, More Inclusive and Sustainable Growth". The Plan aimed at providing electricity in all villages, strengthening infrastructure projects,

removing gender and social gaps in enrolment to schools, improving access to higher education, opportunities in non-agricultural sectors, reducing malnutrition, and providing drinking water and access to banking. The target growth was 9 per cent, and the actual growth rate was 8 per cent.

With the dissolution of the Planning Commission, no plans are made for the economy. Therefore, the last Plan was the Twelfth Plan.

### 6.3.3 Mixed Economy in India

After the independence, while deciding the economic system, Jawaharlal Nehru chose to devise a hybrid of capitalism and socialism, known as 'mixed economy'. The mixed economy intended at the joint operation of the public and private sectors. The term mixed economy is used for any economy where one can see the co-existence of multiple modes of ownership and control.

During the Five-Year Plan period, Indian policymakers decided that the State should provide all facilities for the developing companies. It was also decided that economic development should contain both private and public participation. Here emerges the concept of the mixed economy so that both the private and public sector industries could contribute to economic development.

The concept of the mixed economy was first spelt in the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948. The IPR 1948 emphasized the attainment of social justice through increasing production. It emphasized the right of the state over the industries.

The concept of a mixed economy was given definite shape with the announcement of the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956. The IPR 1956 modified the IPR 1948. The Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 classified



industries into three categories. The first category comprised the industries under the state's responsibility. These include arms and ammunition, atomic energy, iron, steel etc. The second category of the industry comprised that industry which could be nationalized. In this category, the private sector industries were allowed to expand. The third category comprised the rest of the industries. It was in the private sector and placed under the economic and social policy of the Government. There are other Industrial Policy Resolutions which provided emphasis on the mixed economy. The IPR of 1970, 1973, and 1980 ensured the optimum utilization of resources, profits, economic justice, and strengthening agriculture through the public and private sectors.

The Five-Year Plans provide significant emphasis on the mixed economy. The Second Year Plan (1958-61) emphasized the

independence of public and private sectors. The Third Year Plan took measures to curb the concentration of wealth through the public sector. The Fourth Year Plan gives dominance to the public sector. The Fifth Plan states that the public sector should ensure the proper distribution of resources.

### Main features of a Mixed economy

- i. Aimed at the participation of private and public sectors.
- ii. The mixed economy is aimed at planned economic development and Government control.
- iii. A mixed economy permits private property. It also ensures fair distribution of income and wealth.
- iv. The prices of essential commodities were in the hands of public sectors.

## Recap

- ▶ The three main pillars of the development strategy of Nehru were industrial and agricultural growth, the development of the public sector and a mixed economy.
- ▶ India promotes a mixed economy along with the private sector.
- ▶ National Planning Commission was established to formulate plans for economic development.
- ▶ Karachi Resolution ensured the state ownership of key industries.
- ▶ Plan of Economic Development for India, called as Bombay Plan.
- ▶ Economic Programme Committee laid down the areas of the public sector.
- ▶ The Planning Commission of India was recognized on 15 March 1950.
- ▶ Prime Minister was the Chairperson of the Planning Commission.
- ▶ In 2015, Planning Commission became the *Niti Ayog*.
- ▶ The Economic Planning was carried through Five Year Plans (FYP).
- ▶ P.C Mahalanobis drafted the Second Five Year Plan.
- ▶ The third Plan is based on John Sandy and Sukhamoy Chakraborty's model.
- ▶ The year 1966-1968 was declared "Plan Holidays."
- ▶ *Garibi Hatao* in the Fifth Plan.



- ▶ Rolling Plan from 1978-80.
- ▶ Economic liberalisation in the sixth plan.
- ▶ Liberalisation, Privatisation, and Globalisation (IPG) were introduced during 1990-92.
- ▶ Total of twelve five-year plans.
- ▶ The mixed economy is aimed at the joint operation of the public and private sectors.
- ▶ The concept of the mixed economy was first spelt in the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948.
- ▶ The concept of a mixed economy was given definite shape with the announcement of the Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956.

## Objective Questions

1. Who set up the National Planning Committee (NPC)?
2. When was the National Planning Committee set up?
3. When was the Plan of Economic Development for India formulated?
4. What is the other name for the Plan of Economic Development for India formulated?
5. When was the Planning Commission of India established?
6. What was the focus of the First Five Year Plan?
7. Which Plan proposed the establishment of IITs?
8. Which Plan was called the Mahalanobis Plan?
9. Which Plan established Hydroelectric power projects and five steel plants?
10. Which Plan is called John Sandy and Sukhamoy Chakraborty's model Plan?
11. When was Plan Holidays declared?
12. Which plan is based on Gadgil Formula?
13. Which plan launched Drought Prone Area Program (DPAP)?
14. Which plan introduced the *Garibi Hatao* programme?
15. When was National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) founded?
16. Which Plan was the last Five Year Plan?
17. What was the aim of the Twelfth Year Plan?
18. Where was Mixed Economy first mentioned?
19. Which Plan emphasized the independence of public and private sectors?

## Answers

1. Jawaharlal Nehru
2. 1938
3. 1945
4. Bombay Plan
5. 15 March 1950
6. Public sector
7. First Five-Year Plan
8. Second Five-Year Plan
9. Second Five-Year Plan
10. Third Five-Year Plan
11. 1966-1968
12. Fourth Five-Year Plan
13. Fourth Five-Year Plan
14. The Fifth Five-Year Plan
15. 12th July 1982
16. Twelfth Year Plan
17. Faster, More Inclusive and Sustainable Growth
18. Industrial Policy Resolution of 1948
19. The Second Year Plan (1958-61)

## Assignments

1. Explain the Nehru-Mahalanobis Plan.
2. What were the economic crisis and achievements of the economy after the 1960s?
3. Discuss the features, merits and demerits of a mixed economy.
4. Why did India adopt a mixed economy?
5. What is the role of the private sector in a mixed economy?



## Suggested Reading

1. Sarkar, Sumit, *Modern India, 1885-1947*, Macmillian, Delhi, 1985.
2. Chandra Bipan et al., *India's Struggle Since Independence*, Penguin Books, 2000.
3. Dube, Ishita Banerjee, *A History of Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, Delhi, 2015.

## Reference

1. Chandra Bipan et al., *India's Struggle Since Independence*, Penguin Books, 2000.

## Unit 4

# Nehru's Foreign Policy

### Learning Outcomes

After the successful completion of the unit, the learner will be able to :

- ▶ assess the importance of foreign policy for a country's development
- ▶ evaluate the nature of foreign policy formulated under Nehru
- ▶ analyse the challenges of India's foreign policy
- ▶ describe the relationship with the neighbouring countries
- ▶ analyse the concept of the Non-Aligned Movement
- ▶ assess the relevance of the Non-Aligned Movement in today's world
- ▶ discuss the goals and achievements of NAM

### Prerequisites

The post-independent period witnessed India's effort to pursue self-determining foreign policy. Jawaharlal Nehru stands as the architect of India's foreign policy. He realized the importance of maintaining friendly relations with the neighbouring countries for overall development. This relation is significant to mould ourselves to speak for our rights at the global level. India subsequently found expression in the international arena.

Foreign policies are significant because they ensure the interaction between governments and institutions of government. India secured her control over foreign policy after the independence. The newly independent country, India, jumped into world affairs with the beginning of the Cold War between the U.S. and USSR. Jawaharlal Nehru was in a dilemma as to which bloc India should choose. He was aware that alignment with any one bloc meant the loss of newly won independence. At this juncture, Nehru sought a non-alignment policy in foreign affairs. The term 'non-alignment' indicate the foreign policies of those countries who refused to join the two blocs led by the Superpowers. Instead of joining the two powers, these countries ought to adopt an independent course of action.

As the first to become independent, India encouraged other newly independent nations to follow the Non-Alignment policy, in that way, speeding up the process of democratization of international relations. The foreign policies nurtured by Nehru aimed to promote international world peace. For example, Nehru acknowledged the threat of nuclear weapons and strongly opposed their utilization after the Hiroshima incident.





## Keywords

Non-Aligned Movement, foreign policy, China and Pakistan, Nuclear Policy, Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

## Discussion

### 6.4.1 Evolution of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)

The non-aligned Movement evolved out of the constant efforts of the non-aligned states against the imperial and colonial powers. Jawaharlal Nehru from India, Gamal Abdal Nasser from Egypt and Josip Broz Tito from Yugoslavia initially built this Movement. Among these leaders, the role of Nehru is worth mentioning. His vision of rising neo-imperialism and insecurity faced by smaller states made a major contribution to the emergence of this Movement.



Fig 6.4.1 Nehru, Nasser and Tito during the establishment of Non-Aligned Movement

As a first step, he tried to organize an Asian Front. In 1947 he convened the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi. In April 1955, Nehru and other leaders of Indonesia, Burma, Sri Lanka and Pakistan convened an Afro-Asian Conference at Bandung, Indonesia, to organize the newly independent African states from colonial rule and create

an Asian-African Front. Both conferences emphasized the importance of economic and political insecurity that the newly independent countries faced. However, the Bandung conference was a failure. After the Conference, the African countries have either joined the Western military alliance or joined the power bloc.

After the Bandung Conference, the leaders found it necessary to organize and identify the non-aligned states. Yugoslavia made an effort to unite these states. Therefore, the beginning of this Movement was from Brioni, in Yugoslavia. In June 1956, Tito discussed with Nehru and Nasser the possibility of allying. The efforts eventually led to the convening of the first Non-Aligned Conference at Belgrade in 1961.

The five basic principles of the Non-Aligned Movement were:

- i. Independent foreign policy
- ii. Opposition to colonialism
- iii. Should not be a member of any power bloc
- iv. Should not have concluded any treaty with the two powers
- v. Should not have provided any military support to the superpowers

These five principles were applied for countries to be members of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The First Summit of NAM at Belgrade in 1961 was attended by 25 countries and discussed the situations in Berlin, the question of representation in the People's Republic of

China, the Congo Crisis and apartheid.

Forty-six countries attended the Cairo Summit of 1946. The Conference emphasized the need for disarmament and peaceful settlement of international disputes and urged the member government to stand against apartheid and colonialism. The Third Summit was held in Lusaka in 1970, demanded the withdrawal of foreign forces from Vietnam and urged the member countries to boycott Israel. The next Summit was held at Algiers in 1973 and repeated the objectives of NAM, like standing against imperialism and apartheid. It encouraged trade and technical cooperation among the member states. The NAM summit at Colombo asked for fundamental change in the world monetary system. In this Summit, it was proposed that the Indian Ocean be acknowledged as a zone of peace.

The Summit held in 1989 was the last one to be held before Yugoslavia disintegrated. The Summit gave a call against international terrorism, smuggling and drug trafficking. The tenth Conference at Djakarta held in 1992 was the first Conference of NAM after the Cold War. The main issue discussed at the Summit was the strengthening of the NAM.

One of the important decisions taken by the 113 NAM summit members was to call for disarmament. India was one of the leading members who fought against the monopoly of nuclear power countries. The NAM moved a resolution through the U.N. to completely eliminate all nuclear weapons. India, therefore, signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968. India's position on NPT was significant because 111 out of 113 members of the NAM had already signed NPT. This Summit, therefore, called for a total prohibition of transferring all nuclear-related equipment and facilities.

#### 6.4.1.1 Goals and Achievements of NAM



The basic objective of India's foreign policy was the policy of Non -Alignment. This policy served the purpose of the struggle against colonialism.

It condemned racial discrimination and injustice and fully supported the anti-apartheid Movement in South Africa.

Another objective was promoting world peace and disarmament. The Non-Aligned Movement derived its ideology from Nehru's experience of non-violent struggle. Gandhi and intellectuals like Einstein and Russel also inspired him. Nehru, therefore, made India's role for global peace, nuclear and general disarmament.

It worked for economic equality. The NAM called for establishing a New International Economic Order (NIEO). The newly independent countries remained as raw material-producing countries, which sold their products to the developed countries at a low price and imported manufactured goods at a higher price. In order to end this economic exploitation, NAM put forth the need to restructure the international economic and monetary system.

#### 6.4.1.2 Nehru and Non-Alignment

Non-Alignment is an apolitical concept which adopts the principle of neutrality. It stood for an active role in world affairs, friendship and cooperation with all countries. It is based on taking an independent position on issues of national interest.

Nehru gave shape to the idea of non-alignment and organized unity through the non-aligned Movement. The immediate background for the emergence of this Movement was the division of the world into two power blocs after World War II. One bloc was led by the U.S. and the Western powers, and the other bloc by the Soviet Union.

Nehru's idea was that the newly independent poor countries of Asia and Africa had nothing to gain from joining the power blocs. For the newly independent countries, these power contests were of no relevance. India's need was to fight poverty, illiteracy, and diseases. Therefore, their areas depended on 'peace', not war. India, therefore neither joined nor approved of the Bagdad Pact, Manila Treaty, SEATO and CENTO.

India was not in complete favour of maintaining neutrality. The Non-Alignment has meant freedom to decide issues on their merit, to understand what is right or wrong and then make a stand favouring the right. The Non-Alignment symbolizes the struggle of India and other newly independent countries to strengthen their sovereignty and independence from colonialism and imperialism.

The major function of India's foreign policy was to promote and protect Indian economic interests. The Non-Alignment allowed India to develop economic relations with other countries. India got capital, technology, machinery and food from the Western countries. She also depends on the Soviet Union for the development of public-sector industries. India's dependency on various types of equipment for defence and others indicates successful, friendly relations with other countries. At the same time, India has maintained active membership in various U.N. bodies and in IMF and World Bank.

### 6.4.2 India and Relations with Neighbours

Till 1962, India maintained friendly relations with all her neighbours except Pakistan. With Nepal, India signed a Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950. This treaty gave Nepal unrestricted access to commercial transport through India. The border issue with

Burma was settled cordially. India had to face serious problems with Pakistan and China, and its relationship with them is discussed below.

#### 6.4.2.1 India-China Border War

The major crisis in India's foreign policy was in the background of Chinese aggression in October 1962. India adopted friendly relations with China from the very beginning. The Congress was sympathetic to China's resistance to imperialism and called for boycotting Japanese goods when Japan occupied China. India was the first to identify the new People's Republic of China on 1 January 1950. In 1950 China occupied Tibet. India was unhappy with the move but did not question China's decision. The annexation removed the historical buffer between China and India. Therefore, in 1954, India and China signed a treaty which recognized China's right over Tibet, and the two countries agreed to govern based on *Panch Sheel*.

Between 1957 and 1959, the Chinese occupied the Aksai-China areas. In 1959, there was a revolt in Tibet, and the Dalai Lama fled Tibet along with the refugees. India gave Dalai Lama asylum. China was unhappy with the situation. Soon in October 1959, the Chinese opened fire on an Indian patrol near the Kongkha pass in Ladakh. Then Chou-En-Lai was invited for talks to Delhi in April 1960.

On 8 September 1962, the Chinese forces attacked the Thagla Ridge and removed Indian troops. After a week, China once again attacked the Indian post in Arunachal Pradesh. The second wave of attack came the next month. Nehru sought assistance from Britain. Twenty-four hours later, the Chinese declared their withdrawal.

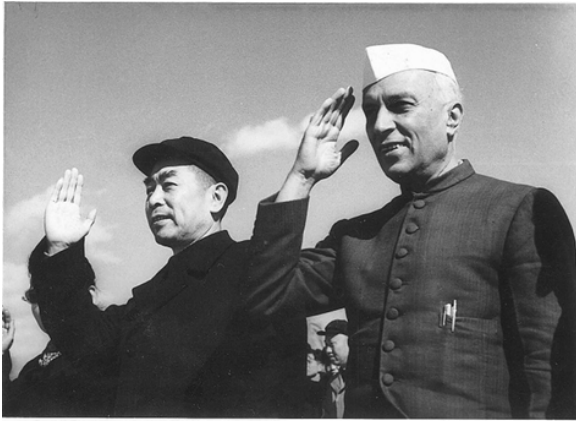


Fig 6.4.2 Nehru and Chou-En Lai

The China war injured India in several ways. The Soviet Union continued to be impartial during the conflict. Nehru's close associate, V Krishna Menon, had to leave the cabinet. Nehru was also criticized for his inexperienced assessment and lack of military preparations. A no-confidence motion against the Nehru government was moved for the first time.

India took a long time to recover from the attack. India's relations with other countries were also affected by the Chinese attack, and this is termed the 'China factor'. It was in 1976 that diplomatic relations were restored between India and China. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the then External Affairs Minister, visited China in 1979. Later Rajiv Gandhi became the first Prime Minister to visit China.

#### 6.4.2.2 Relation with Pakistan

The Pakistani invasion of Kashmir in October 1947 unleashed a chain of tension between the two countries. We have already discussed the accession of Kashmir to the Indian Union. It was decided based on the popular verdict. When the popular verdict in Kashmir did not favour Pakistan, they decided to send tribesmen aided by armed forces to invade Kashmir. The Maharaja appealed Indian Government for help, and India could

only send help only if Kashmir acceded to India. This eventually led to the signing of the Instrument of Accession, which declared Kashmir an integral part of India.

A more serious conflict between the two countries began in 1965 when Pakistan launched an armed attack in the Rann of Kutch area of Gujarat. An attack on Jammu and Kashmir followed this. India counter-attacked and the clash resulted in the second Indo-Pak war with the subsequent intervention of the United States and the Soviet Union. After the attempted invasion of Kashmir, India placed the issue before the world. India asked United Nations to interfere in the conflict. The Security Council passed Resolution 211 to end the fight and negotiate the settlement of the Kashmir Problem. Both the U.S. and the United Kingdom accepted the decision of the U.N. by cutting off arms supply to both countries. India accepted the armistice on 21 September, and Pakistan accepted it on 22 September, 1965.

The peace treaty did not resolve the issue of Kashmir. In this situation, the Soviet Union interfered as the third-party mediator. Negotiations were concluded in Tashkent in January 1966, where both parties agreed to give up territorial claims and agreed to withdraw armed forces from the disputed territory. This declaration, however, did not solve the crisis, leading to a third war in 1971, which resulted in the creation of the Independent State of Bangladesh.

#### 6.4.3 Nuclear Policy

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was the agreement signed by major nuclear and non-nuclear power countries with the intention to curtail the spread of nuclear technology. When the United States and the Soviet Union signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963, the leaders hoped that more





countries would sign an agreement for the ban of nuclear technology. The NPT continued as an important step to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. The treaty faced its major drawback when the two nuclear powers, France and China, did not sign the agreement.



Fig 6.4.3 Signing of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

Since China conducted its nuclear test in October 1964, India was also pressured to conduct nuclear tests. However, Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri was silent on this demand. Later, he granted the authorization for the nuclear test. In the late 1964, he authorized the Atomic Energy Commission to work on the nuclear weapon. In 1974, India exploded its first nuclear weapon. The first nuclear test was conducted on 18 May 1974 at Pokharan, Rajasthan.

## Recap

- ▶ Jawaharlal Nehru from India, Gamal Abdal Nassar from Egypt and Josip Broz Tito from Yugoslavia were the people behind Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
- ▶ The first step of NAM was to create an Asian Front.
- ▶ NAM aimed to build an Afro-Asian Unity.
- ▶ First Summit of NAM at Belgrade in 1961.
- ▶ NAM stood against colonialism, racial discrimination, disarmament and economic equality.
- ▶ NAM established a New International Economic Order.
- ▶ The major function of India's foreign policy was to promote and protect Indian economic interests.
- ▶ China occupied areas of India between 1957 and 1959.
- ▶ The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty was the agreement signed by major nuclear and non-nuclear power countries with the intention to curtail the spread of nuclear technology.
- ▶ In 1974, India exploded its first nuclear weapon.



## Objective Questions

1. Who were the leaders of NAM?
2. Where was the Afro-Asian Conference convened?
3. What was the aim of the Bandung conference?
4. Where does the first Non-Aligned Conference convey?
5. How many members attended the first Summit of NAM?
6. Where and when did the second Summit of NAM occur?
7. What is NPT?
8. What is NIEO?
9. Where did China attack India on 8 September 1962?
10. Who signed the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963?
11. When did India explode its first nuclear weapon?
12. Where did India explode its first nuclear weapon?

## Answers

1. Jawaharlal Nehru from India, Gamal Abdal Nassar from Egypt and Josip Broz Tito from Yugoslavia
2. Bandung, Indonesia
3. Create an Asian-African Front
4. Belgrade in 1961
5. 25 countries
6. Cairo Summit in 1946
7. Non-Proliferation Treaty
8. New International Economic Order
9. Thagla Ridge
10. United States and the Soviet Union
11. 1974
12. Pokaran, Rajasthan

## Assignments

1. Discuss the achievements and failures of Nehru in foreign affairs.
2. Discuss the role of Indira Gandhi and Rajeev Gandhi in foreign affairs.
3. What is the relevance of the Non-Aligned Movement in today's world?
4. Discuss the critics and Debates of the non-Aligned Movement.



## Suggested Reading

1. Sarkar, Sumit, *Modern India, 1885-1947*, Macmillian, Delhi, 1985.
2. Dube, Ishita Banerjee, *A History of Modern India*, Cambridge University Press, Delhi, 2015.

## Reference

1. Chandra Bipan et al., *India's Struggle Since Independence*, Penguin Books, 2000.

# Model Question Paper Sets





# SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

QP CODE: .....

Reg. No: .....

Name : .....

THIRD SEMESTER **B.A. ARABIC/SANSKRIT/ PHILOSOPHY**  
EXAMINATION  
ANCILLARY COURSE- **B21HS22AN- HISTORY OF INDIAN NATIONAL**  
**MOVEMENT- II**  
(CBCS - UG)  
2022-23 - Admission Onwards  
**MODEL QUESTION PAPER - SET 1**

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

## SECTION A

*Answer any **ten** questions of the following. Each question carries **one** mark.*

**(10X1 = 10 Marks)**

1. When was the Simon Commission setup?
2. Who was the author of the work 'Hind Swaraj'?
3. Who led the band 'Khudai Khidmatgars' (Red Shirts)?
4. Which campaign led to the arrest of INA officers?
5. Who received the title "Ambassador of Hindu - Muslim Unity" from Sarojini Naidu?
6. Who led the Boundary Commission in 1947?
7. Who was the first Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission?
8. Who led the Bardoli Satyagraha in 1928?
9. Which princely state signed a 'Stand Still Agreement' with India?
10. Who wrote the work 'From Plassey to Partition and After'?
11. Which Indian Council Act introduced Dyarchy in provinces?
12. Which session of the Indian National Congress passed the resolutions on Fundamental Rights and the National Economic Programme?
13. Who drafted the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61)?
14. Who was entrusted with the task of termination of British rule by 30th June 1948?
15. Who was considered as the 'father of the Constitution of India'?



## SECTION B

Answer any **five** questions of the following. Each question carries **two** marks.

(5X2 =10 Marks)

16. 'Tinkathia' system
17. Dyarchy
18. Wagon Tragedy
19. Poorna Swaraj
20. Two Nation theory
21. Panchayati Raj system
22. Federal system
23. Delhi Chalo movement
24. Rajaji formula
25. Non-Aligned Movement

## SECTION C

Write short notes on any **six** questions of the following. Each question carries **five** marks.

(6X5 = 30 Marks)

26. Meerut Conspiracy Case
27. Dandi March
28. Poona Pact
29. National Planning Commission
30. Direct Action Day
31. Directive Principles
32. Secularism
33. Constituent Assembly
34. INA Trial
35. August Offer
36. Mixed Economy
37. Kisan Sabha





## SECTION D

Answer any **two** questions of the following. Each question carries **ten** marks.

**(2X10 =20 Marks)**

38. Analyse the course of the Civil Disobedience Movement in India.
39. Discuss the revolutionary terrorist activities in India during the freedom struggle.
40. Evaluate various measures taken by the Government for the progress of the nation after independence.
41. Discuss the process of the Constitution Making in India.



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THIRD SEMESTER **B.A. ARABIC/SANSKRIT/ PHILOSOPHY**  
EXAMINATION  
ANCILLARY COURSE- **B21HS22AN- HISTORY OF INDIAN NATIONAL**  
**MOVEMENT- II**  
(CBCS - UG)  
2022-23 - Admission Onwards

**MODEL QUESTION PAPER - SET 2**

Time: 3 Hours

Max Marks: 70

**SECTION A**

*Answer any **ten** questions of the following. Each question carries **one** mark.*

**(10X1 = 10 Marks)**

1. When did Gandhi arrive in South Africa?
2. Who said, "With independence, a new life and freedom arose in India"?
3. In which city did the mill workers strike take place in 1918?
4. When did India test its first nuclear weapon?
5. In which year was "Hind Swaraj" published?
6. Who founded 'Punjab Naujawan Bharat Sabha'?
7. What was the Government of India Act of 1919 also known as?
8. When was the Panchayati Raj system introduced in India?
9. In which year was the Swaraj Party established?
10. Who led the Boundary Commission in 1947?
11. In which year was the Nehru Report published?
12. Who drafted the Second Five Year Plan (1956-61)?
13. Which Pact accepted the demand for a separate electorate for the Muslims?
14. Who promoted the Shivaji festival and Ganesh Puja as a method to foster national unity?
15. When was the National Planning Committee set up?



## SECTION B

Answer any **five** questions of the following. Each question carries **two** marks.

**(5X2 =10 Marks)**

16. Two Nation Theory
17. HSRA
18. Poorna Swaraj
19. Cripps Mission
20. Telangana Movement
21. AITUC
22. Satyagraha and Ahimsa
23. Rowlatt Act
24. Chauri Chaura Incident
25. Indian National Army

## SECTION C

Write short notes on any **six** questions of the following. Each question carries **five** marks.

**(6X5 = 30 Marks)**

26. Poona Pact
27. Salt Satyagraha
28. Instrument of Accession
29. Cabinet Mission
30. Government of India Act of 1935
31. Congress-League Pact
32. Round Table Conference
33. Constituent Assembly
34. All India Kisan Sabha
35. Indian Independence act
36. Non-Aligned Movement
37. Five Year Plans

## SECTION D

Answer any **two** questions of the following. Each question carries **ten** marks.

**(2X10 =20 Marks)**

38. Analyse the role of Jawaharlal Nehru in the emergence and development of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).
39. Explain the factors that contributed to the growth of communalism in India.
40. Critically analyse the Cripps Mission of 1942 and its proposals for India.
41. Explain the role of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel towards the integration of princely states into the Indian Union.



## സർവ്വകലാശാലാഗീതം

വിദ്യായാൽ സ്വതന്ത്രരാകണം  
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# History of Indian National Movement II

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