

UNIT – 5
EMERGENCE OF MODERN INDIA :
PRE-COLONIAL AND COLONIAL INDIA
INDIAN NATIONALIST MOVEMENT, POST-INDEPENDENT INDIA

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5.0. Objective :

The Objective of this lesson is to get an overview of modern Indian history. After the fall of Mughal empire, the European trading companies such as Portuguese, British, Dutch, French, Danes and French established their trade centres in India. The English East India company finally captured the Indian territories, overpowered the Indian production, trade and commerce and started the colonial rules.

The purpose is to give a brief introduction of Indian history under colonial rule, its struggle for independence, and the post-colonial/independent contemporary India.

5.1. Introduction :

The coming of the European trading companies, the establishment of colonial rule and the anti-colonial movement by the people of India are the main events around which the colonial history of modern India revolved. Indian national movement has many dimensions starting mainly since 1857 and ultimately achieving independence in 1947. The rise of Indian nationalism against the exploitation and discrimination of British rule gave birth to Indian National Congress. The most active and effective phase of national movement was the Gandhian Phase (1920-1947). This resulted in the declaration of Indian independence on 15th August 1947. Thus post-colonial India emerged as the largest democracy of the world.

5.2. Pre-Colonial India :

Pre-colonial India was under the Mughal dynasty broadly (1526-1707) and later on under the later Mughals (1707-1857). The great Mughals especially under Akbar achieved political unification, administrative uniformity, economic prosperity and cultural cordiality and progress. But the decay of the Mughal empire gradually appeared since the days of Shahjahan. Under Aurangzeb the disintegrating forces threatened the integrity of Mughal empire.

Disintegration of Mughal empire started with the death of Aurangzeb in 1707. Rise of Marathas and Peshwas and rise of autonomous states like Bengal, Awadh, Hyderabad, Mysore and the invasions of Irani Nadirshah (1739) and the Afghan Ahmad Shah Abdali (1761) are the main historical events which further made the Mughal empire invertebrate or weaker. Among these there emerged the succession states like Awadh and Hyderabad due to the weakening of central authority of the Mughals and the claim of the provincial Mughal governors as independent unit. The rise of the Maratha, Afghan, Jat and Sikh occurred because of the discontent and the revolt of the local chiefs, zamindars and peasants.

5.3. Colonial India :

Colonial phase of Modern Indian History coincides with the 18th century with later Mughal period overlapping each other. The word colonial means the control over the resources of a weaker or underdeveloped country by a powerful country in order to strengthen its own resources through its political, economic and social policies. India became a colony of England since the 18th century.

The background of the rise of colonialism is associated with long developments. The discovery of new sea routes, accompanied by the Industrial Revolution necessitated the European countries to search for new markets for their finished products in other countries of the world. Asia, Africa and Latin America were the most sought after regions. The race for colonising the new territories increased among them which gave birth to Imperialism and Colonialism.

5.3.1. The Coming of European Trading Companies

Mercantalism developed during the transitional period of European economy which means the ideology of making huge profits in overseas trade by safeguarding their own interest. This led to the rivalry between the European nations for control over trade.

Leading European nations that involved in trade wars in India were Holland, Portugal, England and France. In these trade wars in India, the East India company of England emerged victorious.

The Portuguese were the first to trade with India. Vasco-da-Gama discovered a new sea-route to India in 1498 which encouraged Portuguese to establish their control over Calicut, Cochin, Goa, Daman, Diu, Bassein and Salsette on the western coast of India. But later on, because of the British and Dutch interventions their possessions were reduced to confine in Goa, Daman and Diu by the end of 16th century.

In the 17th century, the English East India Company was granted a charter on 31st December 1600 from Queen Elizabeth- I of England to have an exclusive right to trade with the East. It established its first factory (warehouse) in Surat in 1608. The Dutch East India Company was formed in 1602, the Danish East India Company in 1616 and the French East India Company in 1664.

5.3.2. The Commercial Rivalries

European companies combined trade with conquest. From the beginning, the British East Indian Company had a plan of territorial conquest and control. It succeeded in eliminating the Portuguese and the Dutch companies from trading with India. On the other hand, French East India Company was gaining importance. In the mid-18th century, English and French trading companies had equal sway over India. Hence, the rivalry to oust the other company between the French and the British resulted in three Carnatic wars between 1746-63. The defeat of France in the Carnatic wars paved the way for the consolidation of the British empire in India.

5.3.3. British East India Company and its Expansion in Bengal

While the British East India company was engaged in South, trying to put an end to the French territorial aspirations in India, problems started in Bengal between the Company and the Nawab of Bengal, Sirajuddaulah. As the Nawabs of Bengal had been asserting their power and autonomy since the death of Aurangzeb and not granting trade concessions to the British company, the conflict gradually became inevitable. Like the previous Nawabs Murshid Quli Khan and Alivardi Khan, the present Nawab Sirajuddaulah (1756) was also annoyed with company's activities like misuse of *Dastaks* i.e. special certificates for free transaction of goods from one place to another and the fortification activities of their factories. The company also had the Zamindari rights over three villages for the maintenance of the factory.

5.3.4. Battle of Plassey

Nawab Sirajuddaulah attacked the English factory of Kasimbazar in June 1756 and captured it. Many Britishers, who were imprisoned in a small space died of suffocation. Lord Clive was sent to

Bengal from South India to control the affairs. He hatched a conspiracy against Sirajuddaulah in which Mir Jafar, Rai Durlabh, Khadim Khan, Jagat Seth and Amir Chand helped Clive.

A decisive battle was fought between Sirajuddaulah and the forces of Lord Clive at Plassey (near Murshidabad) on 23rd June 1757 in which the Nawab was badly defeated and later on killed. By the Treaty of Alinagar (in Calcutta) the English got back all their forts, got the right to fortify Calcutta and also other financial and territorial benefits. This battle paved the way for British rule in India.

5.3.5. Battle of Buxar

Battle of Buxar (1764) was another stepping stone in the foundation of British rule in Bengal. Mir Jafar, was made the new Nawab but he could not meet the increasing demands of payments and gifts of the company officials. In September 1760 Mir Qasim was made the new Nawab who was son-in-law of Shujauddaulah. He was an able administrator who tried to improve the administrative and military condition of his state, granted the *zamindari* of Burdwan, Midnapur and Chittagong to the East India Company and paid a huge amount to the company officials as a reward for their help. Still, their relations deteriorated and conflict started.

Mir Qasim shifted his capital from Murshidabad to Monghyr (Munger) in order to avoid the British interference also fortified the new capital and organised an army of 40,000 trained soldiers. The British officers turned offensive and attacked the Nawab's army at Patna which was defeated. The massacre of the British prisoners at Patna by Mir Qasim is known as Massacre of Patna. In the mean time Mir Qasim signed an alliance with the Nawab Shujauddaulah of Awadh and the Mughal emperor Shah Alam II. The combined forces of the three powers started a battle with the British at Patna which culminated into the battle of Buxar in October 1764. These allied forces were decisively defeated by the British under the command of Hector Monroe. The battle came to an end with the Treaty of Allahabad in 1765.

The political control of India thus passed from the Mughal ruler to the British in India and the richest province of India Bengal came under the British possession. With the establishment of a dual government in Bengal i.e. the grant of Diwani to the English company, there began a series of political, administrative and economic policies on the part of the British to colonise India absolutely. The consequences for the people of Bengal were disastrous; the company did not care for their welfare; the Nawab did not have any power to help them.

5.4. Colonial Expansion and Consolidation :

Between 1757 and 1857 various Governor Generals of the British East India Company made consistent efforts to expand and consolidate the colonial rule. On one hand the British followed a diplomacy of forming opportunistic war alliances with other Indian kingdoms against a specific state and on the other hand introduced the measures to have an effective administrative control through the powerful army.

The state of Mysore, the Marathas, Sind and Punjab were defeated in different military battles after which the system of Subsidiary Alliance was imposed on them. Awadh was incorporated into the British Empire on the pretext of misgovernance. Another policy used for annexing other important states of India, was the Doctrine of Lapse, adopted by Lord Dalhousie in 1856.

5.4.1. Anglo-Mysore Wars

Mysore emerged as a powerful independent state in the 18th century. Haider Ali (1761-1782) and his son Tipu Sultan (1782-1799) established their powerful presence with closeness to the French East India company. Both the rulers had some training of the French techniques of warfare and their army was also trained by the French military experts. The British East India Company in order to block the French influence in the region considered the rise of Mysore as a threat to British power and tried to sign treaties with Hyderabad and Marathas.

Altogether four Anglo-Mysore wars were fought in the span of 33 years during 1767-1769, 1780-1784, 1790-1792 and March-May 1799 respectively. In first two wars, Haider Ali succeeded in exercising upper hand. But after his death during the second Mysore war, Tipu continued to fight and even managed to extract the 'Treaty of Manglore' from the British Company in 1784.

- 1 The third Anglo-Mysore war led to Tipu's submission in 1792 and the siege of Seringapatam, the Capital of Mysore. Tipu had to surrender a large portion of his dominion and huge amount on money.
- 1 The fourth Anglo-Mysore war lasted for three months. Tipu Sultan was defeated. He was found dead on 4th May 1799.

In these battles the Nizam of Hyderabad and Marathas gained territories.

The kingdom of Mysore was restored to Maharaja of Mysore who accepted the Subsidiary Alliance system initiated by Lord Wellesley.

5.4.2. Anglo-Maratha Wars

Meanwhile, the crushing defeat of the Marathas by the forces of Afghan Ahmad Shah Abdali in 1761 had temporarily shattered the Maratha power. But, Madhava Rao, the son of great Bajirao Peshwa, succeeded in maintaining unity among the remaining Maratha chiefs and thus soon recovered the lost prestige and power of the Marathas. The English also got apprehensive of the growing Maratha power. Very soon the English took advantage of the internal dissensions in the Peshwa family which appeared due to the death of Madhav Rao in 1772.

Between 1775 and 1818 three Anglo- Maratha wars took place. The first war (1775-1782) ended in 1782 with the Treaty of Salbai bringing no specific gains for any party. The second war saw the gain to British as they were able to capture Orissa and some areas of Agra and Delhi.

The third Anglo-Maratha war was decisive and finally defeated the Marathas. The Marathas had to accept the Subsidiary Alliance offered by the British.

5.4.3. Annexation of Sind and Punjab

The annexation of Sind and Punjab to the British empire took place 1830 onwards. The cause behind was an apprehension of attack by Russia via Afghanistan on the north-western region of India. Sind was a state located on the route to Afghanistan. Similarly Punjab was a buffer state between the British Indian Empire and Afghanistan. A prolonged war with Afghanistan between 1838 and 1842 was fought and indirect Company rule was established. In order to make their gain permanent and safe the British captured Sind after a military showdown under the Governor Generalship of Sir Charles Napier.

Punjab too became a victim to the British annexation in 1849. Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the founder of Sikh Empire, was a powerful ruler, who was defeated by the British forces after a valiant resistance.

5.4.4. The System of Subsidiary Alliance

The system of subsidiary alliance was introduced by Lord Wellesley to have a political control over the various autonomous states of India. This was a policy in which the British offered protection to any Indian ruler, whose security was threatened from external attacks and internal dissensions. The terms and conditions Indian ruler had to accept were :

- 1 The state would hereby be known as subsidiary state and the company would provide the British troops for protection of the Indian ruler whose cost would be borne by the state.
- 1 A British Resident or official was to be placed in the court of the ruler for assistance.
- 1 The ruler could no longer employ any European except English in the service or form any alliance with any other power or declare war against any power without the knowledge of the British.
- 1 The Subsidiary State would have to acknowledge the Company as a paramount power.

Thus, this system meant a total surrender to the British control in respect of rule and diplomatic relations.

5.4.5. Doctrine of Lapse

Lord Dalhousie, who ruled India as Governor General between 1848 and 1856 initiated this new policy (Doctrine of Lapse) to annex the Indian states on one pretext or the other. According to the Doctrine, any princely state or territory under the direct influence (paramourcy) of the British East India Company as a vassal state of the subsidiary system, would automatically be annexed if the ruler was either "manifestly incompetent or died without a heir." This also denied the traditional right of the Indian ruler to adopt a child in absence of a natural heir to the throne. This created resentment among the Indian rulers considering it as illegitimate. The immediate victims of this policy were Satara, Jhansi and Awadh. This contributed to the outbreak of the revolt of 1857.

5.5. The Administrative Consolidation of British Colonial Expansion :

The expansion of the British East India Company (between 1757-1857) also necessitated the consolidation in the form of administrative set up and reforms. By this time the British company had Carnatic, Bombay, Bengal and Awadh under its control. The British created three Presidencies with the headquarters at Madras (Chennai), Bombay (Mumbai) and Calcutta (Kolkata) which covered the British regions. Each Presidency was put under a Governor.

5.5.1. The Regulating Act of 1773

The Regulating Act of 1773 enacted by the British Parliament in order to put a check on the company's arbitrary activities, was the first founding regulation. According to this, the Company established a capital in Calcutta and appointed its first Governor General Warren Hastings (1773-1785) putting the governors of Bombay and Madras under him, appointed a council of four persons in advisory capacity and a Supreme Court was established at Fort William in Calcutta.

In order to fulfil the Colonial and Administrative objectives, British India Company developed three main pillars of administration - Civil, Army and Police services.

5.5.2. Civil Services

Civil Services formed the most important organ and the Company on British pattern, established and elaborate system of bureaucracy. In an Indian district the collector exercised power and authority in matters of revenue collection and maintenance of law and order. He was assisted by police officers, judges and *darogas*. His office was referred to as collectorate.

The company servants of officer rank were required to be trained as civil servants. Lord Wellesley founded Fort William College for their training. Until 1857, no Indian was appointed to any high post in the civil services of the company. Indians were recruited only to lower jobs like clerks, subordinate officers etc.

5.5.3. The Army served as the instrument for extending, defending and safeguarding the British interests and its empire. Hence, the high posts of the British army were filled by the English on the decent remuneration. The Indian Sepoys or Soldiers although in large number were paid less than their European counterparts.

5.5.4. Police Force was essential to maintain law and order and help in the work of tax collection - Lord Cornwallis created Police Force in 1792. The District was divided into various thanas and in each thana *Daroga* was posted. It later on became an instrument to silence the popular protest voices.

5.5.5. Judicial System was another part of British administration which has left its legacy even today. In 1772 a *Diwani* (Civil) and a *Faujdari* (Criminal) *Adalat* (Court) was set up at the District level. Lord Cornwallis introduced a number of reforms known a 'Cornwallis Code', the revenue collector was to remain the incharge of revenue collection only and the judicial powers of civil courts were given to a new official, the District Judge. Uniformity of *Justic* administration was the most important feature. Later on Indian Penal Code (IPC) was framed and enforced in 1860. The two main principles of Judicial administration were Rule of law and Equality of law.

5.6. Colonial Agrarian Policies :

The colonial aim of British East India Company was to extract as much revenue as possible from the rich provinces of India and to earn more and more profit from trade. The East India Company was granted the Diwani or the revenue control of Bengal by the Mughal Emperor following the Battle of Buxar, the company focussed mainly on the collection of huge amount from the Zamindars and the peasantry. This resulted in an economic disturbance in the agrarian set up of Bengal, the artisans and peasantry started leaving the villages due to not fulfilling the undue demands of selling the goods at low prices.

Lord Charles Cornwallis was sent to India in 1784 as the new Governor General of the British territories in India in order to bring some solid and positive agrarian reforms.

5.6.1. Permanent Settlement in Bengal, 1793

It was a permanent contract of settlement, between British East India Company and Bengal landholders i.e. *Zamindars* and *Talukdars*, introduced by Lord Cornwallis in 1793.

Now, the Zamindars were made the owners of the land. They were expected to collect the assessed revenue from the peasants, who became their tenants, and deposit it with the company. The total revenue to be paid was calculated on the basis of last ten years records of the yield and the measurement of land. The revenue amount was fixed and the settlement was made permanent. The Zamindars were required to pay 10/11 th of the revenue to the British government and were allowed to keep the remaining 1/11th.

This system proved to be beneficial for the company and the Zamindars but worsened the condition of peasantry. The peasantry was crushed under the triple burden of government, the zamindars or landlords and the moneylenders. The burden was excessive and no incentive for cultivation or to grow the new commercial crop was left. This resulted in lot of discontent, followed by peasant revolts.

5.7 Indian National Movement :

The Nationalist Movements in India were mass movements emphasizing and raising questions concerning the interests of the people of India. In most of these movements, people were themselves encouraged to take action.

5.7.1 Revolt of 1857-Sepoy Mutiny

The first of such important movements was the revolt of 1857 which was a great and direct challenge to the British rule on a vast scale. Though the greased cartridges are said to be the immediate cause of the revolt, yet it was clearly a product of the accumulated grievances of the Indian masses.

Causes

The Indian Rebellion of 1857 had diverse political, economic, military, religious and social causes. The **sepoys** (Indian native soldiers) both Hindus and Muslims were asked to use gun powder cartridges despite the widespread belief that the cartridges contained cow or pig fat. Loading of these cartridges required tearing open the greased cartridges with one's teeth. This insulted both Hindu and Muslim religious practices. The unpleasant grease, by itself, could hardly cause such a mighty resistance. In fact, various political, social, religious, economic and military causes were responsible for the terrible revolt.

Among the political causes were the refusal of pension to the adopted son Nana Sahib of late Peshwa Baji Rao II, denial of the claim of the adopted son of the ruler of Jhansi as the true heir to the throne, annexation of Awadh on the charge of misgovernance and disbanding of army of Awadh which snatched away livelihood of nearly sixty thousand families, and the declaration that Bahadur Shah Zafar II will be the last Mughal Emperor and his sons will lose the Imperial title.

The social reforms introduced by the British in India added fuel to fire of discontent among the masses. The abolition of Sati, ban on female infanticide and support to widow marriage were deeply resented by Indian masses. They looked upon these well-intentioned measures as attack on their social beliefs.

The promotion of Christianity by Christian Missionaries was another major factor. The Christian missionaries tried to convert Indians into their religion by offering them certain facilities and privileges. This alarmed both Hindus and Muslims. The Christian preachers spoke against local religious practices and scriptures which angered Indian masses. The spread of western education-created doubt in Indian minds that their cultural heritage is in danger.

As a result of industrial revolution, the machine - made English cloth destroyed the local textile industry, the weavers lost their jobs and opposed the British. **Zamindars** were accepted as land owners, who exploited the peasants. The peasants wanted to free themselves from the tyranny. High custom duty on Indian goods which were exported to England, ruined the Indian handicraft industry. On the top of these heavy taxation made the life of common people miserable. That led to a common dissatisfaction among the people.

Indian soldiers were considered to be inferior to their Europe counterparts and were paid low salaries even when they were better than British soldiers. Indian soldiers were also ill-treated by British officers. The General Service Enlistment Act of 1856, passed for new recruits, made them to serve anywhere in the empire. This Act caused great resentment and anger among the Indian soldiers against the British.

Start and Spread of Revolt

The revolt started on May 9, 1857 when ninety sepoy at Meerut refused to use greased Cartridges. They were arrested and imprisoned. The revolt spreaded to many parts of India like Awadh, Rohikhand, Doab, Bundelkhand, Central India, Bihar along with Bengal army. Rebels captured Delhi on May 11, 1857 only to be recaptured by British forces on September 22, 1857. Similarly, Nana Sahib and Tantiya Tope captured Kanpur on June 26, 1857 killing many Britishers. The British brought in their trained forces and captured Kanpur. Lakshmibai, the Rani of Jhansi also rebelled against the British. However, she was killed on 17th June 1858, fighting gallantly. In Bihar, the rebellion was led by Kunwar Singh, Zamindar of Jagdishpur and his brother Amar Singh, supported by Commander Pir Ali. Kunwar Singh was killed fighting the British in April 1858. Begum Hazrat Mahal led the revolt in Awadh. Britishers lost their important Generals like Henry Lawerence, Neil and Havelock. Consequently, the British Commander-in- Chief Colin Compbell challenged Hazrat Mahal, who fought bravely but lost and Lucknow was recaptured by British. Begum Hazrat Mahal escaped to Nepal.

Causes of Failure of Revolt

The 1857 revolt was eventually suppressed by the British by 1859 and the British authority over India was re-established. The main reasons for the failure of the revolt were lack of unity among revolutionaries, absence of a unanimous leader, non-availability of modern weapons, regional character of movement as it was confined to North India only and control of British over the transport and communication systems.

Effect of Revolt of 1857

The revolt had far-reaching results as the Indian Empire was now placed directly under the British Crown and Queen Victoria was proclaimed as the Empress of India. With this the rule of Mughals and Peshwas came to an end. India was placed under the control of the Viceroy. The number of Sepoys was reduced and British soldiers was increased. One of the important effect was that Indian rulers were assured that their states would not be taken over. They were also given the authority to declare their adopted sons as their legal heirs.

5.7.2 Rise of India Nationalism

After the Revolt of 1857, the British excesses and exploitation by moneylenders and Zamindars led to a national awakening among the Indians. Consquently, Indian leadership emerged both at National and Provincial levels. People like Dadabhai Naoroji, Surendra Nath Banerjee and A.O. Hume founded various political organisation. At the same time many social and religious reform movements started in the 19th and 20th centuries in different parts of the country. Social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Swami Vivekanand, Balgangadhar Tilak, Gopal Krishna Ghokle, Lala Lajpat Rai etc. criticised the prevailing social evils in the society, Socio-Religious consciousness aroused by these reformers led to the birth of nationalism in India.

With the introduction of railways and road services, people of different regions and castes came into contact causing exchange of ideas. The feeling of brotherhood developed among Indians, even the cast-based differences began to wither away. People began to think that British rule is the cause of their miseries. The uniform language of instruction reduced the language and cultural differences. The thoughts of philosophers like Voltaire, Rousseau, J.S. Mill, Locke, and Thomas Paine made the people of India realise the importance of nationalism, democracy, the duties and rights of citizens, and human rights.

The activation of Indian Press, both National and Regional, played important role in creating national consciousness among the people. The newspapers, owned or edited by the Indians supported the Nationalist cause and became very critical of Government's policies. They voiced the grievances of the Indians and highlighted their demands.

Writers and poets from all over the country, through their writings and poems exercised a considerable influence over the minds of the public. Writer and poet Bankim Chandra Chatterjee whose well known song **Vande Matram** from Novel Anand Math, infused the spirit of nationalism in each and every Indian. Munshi Prem Chand highlighted the poverty of Indian villages and held Englishmen responsible for this. Sharat Chand Chatterjee, Rabindranath Tagore, Subramnya Bharti etc. also attacked British Government and its policies. India as a Nation and Indian as individuals were subjected to insults, humiliation and contemptuous treatment. They were not allowed to enter European hotels, clubs and train compartments. It increased the racial bitterness, which in turn, added fuel to the fire of nationalism.

Some immediate acts of British Government were also responsible for rise of nationalism, one of the most important being the vernacular press act 1878 under which vernacular newspapers were not allowed to write anything against the government.

5.7.3 The History of Formation of India National Congress

In the post-1857 period, Indian nationalism developed and assumed emotional character. In Bengal in 1867 an organisation known as **Hindu Mela** was established to promote national feeling among Hindus. By 1880, this organisation faded away owing to the establishment of other associations. The first Indian organisation formed in England by first generation of Indian Students, Pheroza Shah Mehta, Badruddin Tyabji, W.C. Banerjee and Manmohan Ghose in 1865 as **Indian Society**. They ventilated Indian grievances and countered misrepresentation about India in English press. In 1866, this was superseded by the East India Association led by Dada Bhai Naroji. Its branches were soon established in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras. More organisations came up, mostly in Bengal.

The foundation of the **Indian Association in** 1876 provided much-needed relief to political aspirations of the people. However its character was only of a provincial organisation. In order to accord it National Status, its president Surenindra Nath Banerjee toured different provinces during 1877-78. This tour developed a sense of unity among Indians of different regions.

The Indian Association started questioning many of the decisions taken by the Britishers. Lord Lytton's repressive measures like the Vernacular Press Act and the Arms Act 1878 were opposed. The former sought to impose restriction on freedom of the vernacular press and latter tried to limit the possession of arms. These measures helped in intensifying discontent against the foreign rule.

At this time need for all India political organisation was felt. An All India National Conference was called at Calcutta in December 1883, which was attended by more than 100 delegates from all

over India. The second session of All India National Conference was held in Calcutta in December 1885. About the same time, the first session of All Indian National Congress was held in Bombay. As both the organisation, had same agenda, the former merged with the Congress in December 1886.

5.7.4 Foundation of Indian National Congress

The foundation of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885 was an unprecedented historic event in the history of India. The initiative was taken in 1885 by a retired civil servant Allan Octavian Hume (A.O. Hume), a Scot by birth and a democrat by aptitude. He got in touch with the prominent Indian leaders and organised with their co-operation the first session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay (Mumbai). This session was presided over by W.C. Banerjee, an eminent Barrister and a British Loyalist of Calcutta and attended by 72 delegates.

The congress was to serve as the movement against the foreign rule and not a political party. Within a year, the membership of the Congress swelled to 436. Soon their membership increased to thousands. Women like Kadambini Ganguli, first woman graduate of Calcutta University joined Congress and addressed Congress session of 1890.

5.7.5 The Moderate Phase (1885-1905)

The period from 1885 to 1905 is generally described as moderate phase of Congress. Some prominent Congress leaders like W.C. Banerjee, Dadabhai Naoroji, Badruddin Tyabji, Gopal Krishna Gokhale etc. were against direct confrontation with British. They presented their grievances to the Government in the form of petitions and appeals. However, the British Government paid little heed to the demands of Congress.

The Moderate phase was soon overshadowed by the revolutionary nationalists headed by Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal (popularly called Lal, Bal, Pal). They favoured the direct action against the government which included strikes, demonstration, dharna, boycott etc.

5.7.6 Second Phase of National Movement (1905-1919)

The India's freedom movement was greatly affected by the Partition of Bengal into West Bengal and East Bengal by Lord Curzon in 1905. Anti-partition movement started in Calcutta in August 1905. Idea of Swadeshi and Boycott movements were adopted to pressurise the Government. These were targeted mainly against the partition of Bengal. The idea behind **Swadeshi** (made in India) was to encourage the growth of Indian Industries. The movement also led to the boycott of foreign goods imported to Indian markets. Congress giving away the policy of persuading the British rulers by appeals, extended its support to Swadeshi and Boycott movement.

To pacify Indian agitators, British made certain constitutional reforms which also included introduction of the system of communal electorates. Both Hindus and Muslims started electing the members of their own community and created dissensions. Obviously, the British followed the policy of divide and rule to consolidate their own position in India. They encouraged Muslims to start a new organisation like Congress. Consequently, All India Muslim League was formed.

At this time India experienced wave of nationalism which created panic among the British. Some secret societies were formed, like **Yugantar** by Bipendra Nath Datta and **Abhinav Bharat** by V.D. Savarkar. Militants like Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki were hanged who planned to kill an unpopular judge. The nationalists became active in different parts of the world. In 1913, Hindustan Garar Party was organised in USA.

During the World War I Indian soldiers rendered service to the British cause on the promise, that after the war Indians will be accorded '**Self rule**'. The promise was not fulfilled by the British Government. At about the same time **Home Rule** League was formed by Bal Gangadhar Tilak in Pune and similar organisation was launched by Annie Besant in Madras. The main objective of these organisations was Home Rule or Swaraj.

5.7.7 Entry of Gandhi in the National Movement

The period between 1919 to 1947 is of special significance in the history of India's Nationalist movement. Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi (b. Oct 2, 1869), a Barrister had bitter experience in South Africa where apartheid (discrimination on racial ground) was being practised by the British. Gandhi developed the doctrine of **Satyagraha** (follow the path of truth) to oppose British oppressions.

5.7.8 Rowlatt Act and Jalianwalla Bagh Massacre

Meanwhile the Rowlatt Act was passed in March 1919, which gave the Government unlimited powers to suppress violence. Mahatma Gandhi started a Satyagraha against the repressive measures. 6th April 1919 was observed as Satyagraha Day to which people responded in large number.

On April 13, 1919 when a peaceful meeting was being held at Jalianwalla Bagh in Amritsar (Punjab) to protest against the arrest of two frontline leaders of the movement, British General Dyer entered the park and resorted to indiscriminate firing at the assembled crowd. As a result hundreds of people were killed and many wounded.

The Jalianwalla Bagh massacre brought Gandhi to the forefront of Indian politics. He decided to organise a Passive Resistance Movement, described as the weapon of the weak, protesting the unprovoked firing. A wave of mass demonstrations, strikes and riots engulfed many regions of India. The incident marked a turning point in the history of freedom struggle.

5.7.9 Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-1924)

Mahatma Gandhi launched the non-cooperation movement in 1920 in the background of Rowlatt Act, Jalianwalla Bagh massacre etc. In the Calcutta session of 1920 Congress adopted the resolution of Non-cooperation. In the first place Gandhi launched a constructive programme by popularising **Khadi** to attain self-reliance. The *Charkha* became the symbol of Swadeshi. Secondly, the destructive aspect of the movement included boycott of British goods, legislatures, law courts, banks, offices and educational institutions, and returning of titles and honours given by the British. Mahatma Gandhi returned his title of Kaiser-i-Hind to the government. Many great lawyers like Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das etc. gave up their highly profitable profession. Thousand of students responded to the Congress appeal and joined the freedom movement. Women also showed their great enthusiasm. Bonfires of foreign clothes were held throughout the country. **Khadi** production started on a large scale.

During the visit of Prince of Wales to India in Nov. 1921, Hartals (strikes) were observed all over the country. Disturbed by the unexpected progress of Non-cooperation movement, Britishers decided to crush the movement by resorting to repressive measures. Public assemblies and processions were banned. Many organisations including Congress were declared unlawful. Many top leaders were arrested, demonstrators were beaten mercilessly, even women were not spared. Mahatma Gandhi was not arrested as the British Government apprehended large scale protests.

In the meantime the incidence of **Chauri-Chaura**, on 5th February 1922 at Gorakhpur, occurred where a Police Station was set on fire and 22 policemen were burnt alive. Fearing large scale violence Gandhi withdrew the non-cooperation movement.

Suspension of Non-cooperation movement was bitterly criticized by some top leaders of Congress like C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru which resulted in formation of **Swaraj Party**. This party successfully won a dominant position in the Central Legislative Assembly. The party was also successful in getting the Rowlatt Act repealed.

5.7.10 Simon Commission

In March 1922, Gandhi was arrested on the charge of sedition. On his release in February 1924, Gandhi plunged into constructive work of promoting **Khadi**, promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity and removal of untouchability.

In 1927, British Government appointed Simon Commission to suggest measures for constitutional reforms in India. This was opposed by public as it did not have any Indian as its member. The commission was shown black flags with slogans of "Simon go Back". The Government tried to suppress the movement. A peaceful boycott procession in Lahore was lathicharged in which prominent leader Lala Lajpat Rai lost his life in November, 1928. None of the political parties of India accepted Simon Commission report.

5.7.11 Nehru Report

In the same year a Nehru led committee drafted the constitution asking for a Dominion status for India with fully responsible government, complete autonomy for the provinces with residuary powers with centre and secular status to India. Committee's recommendation were not accepted by the British as well as Muslim League headed by Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

On 31st December 1929, Indian National Congress in Lahore passed the resolution of **Purna Swaraj** (complete independence).

During this Lahore session of congress presided over by Jawahar Lal Nehru tri-colour was hoisted and 26th January, 1930 was declared as the Independence Day. In his speech Nehru said that British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. He demanded **Purna Swaraj** or complete independence.

5.7.12 Revolutionary Nationalist Movement

The withdrawal of non-cooperation movement made youth restive and they resorted to revolutionary activities. Hindustan Republic Association members robbed government treasury at **Kakori** on 9th August, 1925. Number of revolutionaries were arrested and Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan, Roshan Singh and Rajendra Lahiri were hanged.

In another major incidence Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw bombs in Central Assembly and raised the slogan 'Inqlab Zindabad'. On 23rd March 1931, Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev were hanged at Lahore on the charge of killing Saunders, who was responsible for the death of Lala Lajpat Rai. In 1930 Indian Republican Army took over the police armoury at Chittagaon. Later in the same year revolutionaries killed Inspector General of Police inside the Writers Building. As a revenge to Jalianwala Bagh Udham Singh Shot the Lt. Governor O'Dwyer of Pub jab in Caxton Hall, London.

Although the British Government crushed these movements, the sacrifices made by revolutionaries made the Indian masses aware and added an urge for freedom.

5.7.13 Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-1931, 1932-1934)

It was the second great movement on the call of Gandhi which is known as Dandi Salt March. On the historic day of 12th March 1930 Gandhi inaugurated the Civil Disobedience Movement by conducting the Dandi March where he broke the Salt Laws imposed by the British Government. This march was from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi situated on the shore of Arabian sea led by Gandhi with 79 ashramites. Sarojini Naidu and other women also participated. The Satyagrahis on the 6th April manually made salt under Gandhi's leadership there. This Dandi Salt March had immense impact on the entire nation and very soon this act of violation assumed an all India character.

The programme of the Civil Disobedience Movement incorporated besides the breaking of the Salt Laws, picketing of shops selling foreign goods and liquor, bonfire of clothes, refusal to pay taxes and avoidance of offices by the public officers and schools by the students. The response was overwhelming. Men, women, students, public servants, advocates, all took active part in the picketing exercises. The British Government took repressive measures and imprisoned Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. This movement had great impact in mobilising the masses against the British rule.

5.7.14 Gandhi-Irwin Pact.

Gandhi - Irwin Pact was signed on 8th March 1931 according to which Gandhi agreed to suspend the Civil Disobedience Movement and to participate in the Second Round Table Conference. The Government released all Satyagrahis from prison.

5.7.15 Second Round Table Conference

Second Round Table Conference was held in September 1931 at London. Gandhi joined the conference on 12th September along with Sarojini Naidu. But he was disappointed as the British Government did not commit anything positive regarding complete independence. Moreover he could not gather the support of Muslim representatives there.

The Viceroy Lord Willington, in the absence of Gandhi adopted the policy of repression which was a breach of Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Consequently, on 3rd January 1932 Civil Disobedience Movement was resumed. Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel and other congress leaders were arrested. The Civil Disobedience Movement could not gather the momentum of the first phase. The Congress was declared illegal. Still it challenged the British power on large scale. The Civil Disobedience Movement was called off on 7th April, 1934.

5.7.16 The Government of India Act, 1935

The Simon Commission Report submitted in 1930 formed the basis for the Government of India Act 1935. It received the royal assent on 4th August 1935. The Act continued and extended all features of Indian constitution such as popular representation, communal representation and the safeguards devised in Montague-Chelmsford Act of 1919. But, in addition certain new principles were introduced. The Act provided for a federal type of government, introduced provincial autonomy, abolished dyarchy in provinces and made ministers responsible to the legislative and federation at the centre.

The Act was condemned and rejected by the Congress. Instead the Congress demanded the convening of a constituent Assembly elected on the basis of adult franchise to frame a constitution for an independent India. However, later the Congress agreed to participate in the election of 1937 provided by the Act. Congress had won overwhelmingly in most of the Indian provinces under the British rule. Muslim League faced miserable defeat. Congress formed its ministry in seven provinces including Bihar.

5.7.17 Second World War and the Further Developments

In the Second World War (1939-1945) the Government of India joined the war without consulting the Congress. Congress objected on the ground that when India is still not liberated how can it support the Allied forces fighting in the defence of freedom. The Congress ministers resigned in all the provinces.

The Muslim League took an opposite stance, did not resign and required the resignations of the Congress ministers. The Lahore session of Muslim League in 1940 gave the Two nation Theory considered, for the Muslims of Indian subcontinent, a distinct and separate nation from the Hindus.

5.7.18 Cripps Mission

The Individual Satyagraha Movement led by Gandhi convinced the British public opinion to send a delegation to India to open negotiations. Cripps Mission headed by Sir Stafford Cripps reached India on 23 March 1942 and stayed for 20 days. Finally it provided Dominion status to India after the war. It also provided for a constitution committee and the provinces to be free to frame their own constitution. The Congress strongly objected to the last clause which permitted provinces to secede from the proposed union. Thus the Cripps Mission failed.

5.7.19 Quit India Movement (1942)

It was the third largest mass movement on the call of Mahatma Gandhi supported fully by the All India Congress Committee. On 9th August the mass protest broke out to oust the British from Indian Soil. 'Do or Die' was the dictum of Gandhi. He said, 'we shall either free India or die in the attempt'.

This resulted in a mass arrest of the Congress members and ban on Congress. It gathered mass support. There were widespread protest in the form of burning the post offices, police stations, rail tracks, bridges etc. A large number of young generation-students became martyr. The Quit India movement was forcefully pacified and it lasted only for a short period. Still it shook the foundation of British rule and awakened a new confidence in the people.

5.7.20 Indian National Army Under Subhash Chandra Bose

The Indian National Army (Azad Hind Fauz) was the manifestation of Subhash Chandra Bose's transformation from a Gandhian freedom fighter to an armed revolutionary. The British power was challenged by him. On July 4, 1944 Bose gave a call 'Delhi Chalo' and proclaimed in Burma 'Give me blood and I shall give you freedom'.

5.7.21 Cabinet Mission

The change in the government in Britain changed the attitude of the colonial powers towards India's Independence. Now the Clement Atlee of Labour Party became the new Prime Minister. He and his government was in favour of granting independence to India. In 1946 Cabinet Mission was sent to India which comprised Lord Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A.V. Alexander. The Mission envisaged the establishment of a Constituent Assembly to frame the constitution as well as an interim government. The Muslim League accepted the plan on June 1946, while maintaining its claim for a separate Muslim state. The Congress also partially accepted the plan.

On 2nd September 1946, an interim government was formed. The Congress members led by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru joined it but the Muslim League did not join as it had already withdrawn its earlier acceptance of the Cabinet Mission Plan. The League decided on mass agitation for getting a separate state Pakistan.

5.7.22 The Indian Independence Act, 1947

The National movement was heading towards an inevitable partition of India. Tensions, defiance and distrust was negatively widespread. In March 1947, Lord Mountbatten replaced Lord Wavell as the Viceroy of India. The Mountbatten Plan was announced on 3rd June 1947 which was incorporated into a Bill and passed as Indian Independence Act, 1947. The Act laid down detailed measures for the partition of India and speedy transfer of political powers to the new governments of India and Pakistan.

The **partition of India** led the geographical division of Bengal and Punjab. Bengal was divided into West Bengal and East Bengal. Similarly Punjab province was partitioned into West Punjab and East Punjab. West Bengal and East Punjab formed the Indian territory and East Bengal and West Punjab became the part of the Dominion of Pakistan.

Pakistan became independent on 14th August 1947 with Liaqat Ali as its Prime Minister and M.A. Jinnah as its President. India became independent on the 15th August 1947. Jawaharlal Nehru became India's first Prime Minister and Dr. Rajendra Prasad its first President.

Thus, the joy of India's independence from the British rule was overshadowed by the pain and violence of partition. The aftermath of the partition is a sad development which is still being felt by the people of both the countries.

5.8 Post Independence India :

Immediately after independence, Indians plunged into a number of problems. First of these coming out of India's partition, as a result of which millions of people migrated to India from Pakistan. Indian Government resolved the problem of rehabilitation efficiently by providing shelter and food to displaced people. Problem of integration of princely states was solved due to the farsightedness of Sardar Patel.

India lost Mahatma Gandhi due to assassination on 30th January 1948, which sent a shock wave all over India.

As India needed her own constitution, a constituent Assembly was formed in 1946. Under the chairmanship of Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, constitution was drafted. The draft was approved by the Assembly and came into force on 26th January 1950 (now celebrated as Republic Day).

India now sought to develop its own foreign policy which was based on peaceful co-existence and removal of disparities between rich and poor countries. After the Second World War India did not join either USA or USSR power block. The policy of **Non-Aligned Movement** (NAM) and **Panchsheel** (a Sino-Indian Agreement) was followed by India instead.

After solving initial problems of the new Republic, India now set to develop itself economically. Under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, India launched its First Five Year Plan based on the Directive Principles of the constitution in 1951. Presently the Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17) is in operation. This plan has set a target of 9 percent average growth of Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

During these plans India achieved considerable development in various sectors. Steel Plants, Dams, Factories etc were established which were described by the Prime Minister of India Pandit Nehru as 'New Temples of India'.

5.9 Questions for Exercise :

1. What do you understand by the growth of Colonialism in India?
2. How did the British East India Company establish its power in Bengal ?
3. Write a note on the revolt of 1857.
4. Discuss the role of Gandhi in the Freedom Struggle of India.
5. Write the salient features of The Government of India Act, 1935.
6. Describe the contribution of the revolutionaries in the freedom struggle of India.

5.10 Suggested Readings:

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| C | Bipan Chandra, | Modern India, 1986 |
| C | Shailendra Nath Sen, | An Advanced History of Modern India, MacMillan, 2010. |
| C | Sumit Sarkar; | Modern India, 1885-1947, 1983 |

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