



**B.A. PART-II**  
(Semester-III)

**HISTORY-PAPER-A**  
**HISTORY OF INDIA (1707-1950)**

**UNIT NO. 2**

**SECTION-B**

**Department of Distance Education**  
**Punjabi University, Patiala**

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**LESSON NO:**

**UNIT NO. 2**

- 2.1 : British Economic Policy in India : Land Revenue System, Trade : Growth of Industries
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**Note :** Students can download the syllabus from Department's website [www.dccpbi.com](http://www.dccpbi.com)

**LESSON NO. 2.1**

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**BRITISH ECONOMIC POLICY IN INDIA : LAND REVENUE SYSTEM,  
TRADE : GROWTH OF INDUSTRIES**

The East India Company (established in 1600 A.D.) was a company of the traders and merchants. Even their political motives in India were shaped by economic considerations. The collection of revenue was one of these basic considerations. Traditionally, land was the major source of state revenues in India. The establishment of British political control over Bengal, Bihar and Orissa after the battles of Plassey and Buxar in the second-half of the century led to the formulation of a land revenue policy for these areas.

**Land Revenue System :**

The Indian ruler had been taking a part of cultural produce as land revenue. It had done so either directly through its servants or indirectly through intermediaries, such as zamindar revenue farmers, etc. who collected the land revenue from the cultivator and kept a part of it as their commission. These intermediaries were primary collectors of land revenue, although they did sometimes own some land in the areas from which they collected revenue.

**The Permanent Settlement :**

We have seen that in 1765, the East India Company acquired the Dewani or control over the revenues, of Bengal Bihar and Orissa. Initially, it made an attempt to continue the old system of revenue collection though it increased the amount to be collected from Rs. 14,290,000 in 1772 and Rs. 8,180,000 in 1764 to Rs. 23,400,000 in 1771. In 1773, it decided to manage the land revenues directly. Warren Hastings auctioned the right to collect revenue to the highest bidders. But his experiment did not succeed. Though the amount of land revenue was pushed high by zamindars and other speculators bidding against each other, the actual collection varied from year to year and seldom came up to official expectations. This introduced instability in the company's revenue at a time when the company was hard pressed for money. Moreover, neither the ryot nor the zamindar would do anything know what the next year's assessment would be or who would be the next year's revenue collector.

It was at this stage that the idea first emerged of fixing the land revenue at a permanent amount. Finally, after prolonged discussion and debate, the Permanent Settlement was introduced in Bengal and Bihar in 1793 by Lord Cornwallis. It had two special features. Firstly, the zamindars and revenue collectors were converted

into so many landlords. They were not only to act as agents of the Government in collecting land revenue from the ryot but also to become the owners of the entire land in their zamindaries. Their right of ownership was made hereditary and transferable. On the other hand, the cultivators were reduced to the low status of mere tenants and were deprived of long standing rights to the soil, and other customary rights. The use of the pasture and forest lands, irrigation canals, fisheries, and homestead plots and protection against enhancement of rent were some of their rights which were sacrificed. In fact, the tenancy of Bengal was left entirely at the mercy of zamindars. This was done so that the zamindars might be able to pay exorbitant land revenue and demanded by the Company. Secondly, the zamindars were to give 10/11<sup>th</sup> of the rental they derived from the peasantry to the state, keeping only 1/11<sup>th</sup> for themselves. But the sums to be paid by them as land revenue fixed in perpetuity. If the rental of a zamindar's estate increased due to extension of cultivation and improvement on agriculture, or his capability to extract more from his tenants, or any other reasons, he would keep the entire amount of the increase. The state would not make any further demand upon him. At the same time, the zamindar had to pay his revenue rigidly on the due date even if the crop had failed for some reasons, otherwise his lands were to be sold.

The initial fixation of revenue was made arbitrarily and without any consultation with the zamindars. The attempt of the officials was to secure the maximum amount. As a result, the rates of revenue were fixed very high. John Shore, the man who planned the Permanent Settlement and later succeeded Cornwallis as Governor-General, calculated that if the gross produce of Bengal be taken as 100, the Government claimed 45, zamindars and other intermediaries below them received 15, and only 40 remained with the actual cultivator.

It was generally admitted by officials and non-officials alike that before 1793 the zamindars of Bengal and Bihar did not enjoy proprietary rights of the lands. The question then arises, why did the British recognize them as such? One explanation is that this was in part, the result of a misunderstanding. In England, the central figure in agriculture at that time was the landlord and the British officials made the mistake of thinking that the zamindar was his Indian counterpart. It is, however, to be noted that in one crucial respect the British officials clearly differentiated between the positions of the two. The landlord in Britain was the owner of land not only in relation to the tenant but also in relation to the state. But in Bengal while the zamindar was landlord over the tenant, he was further subordinated to the state. In fact, he was reduced virtually to the status of a tenant of the East India Company. In contrast to the British landlord, who paid a small share of his income as land tax, had to pay as tax 10/11<sup>th</sup> of his income from the land of which he was supposed to be the owner. He could be turned out of the land unceremoniously and his estate could be sold if he failed to pay the revenue in time.

Other historians think that the decision to recognize the zamindars as the proprietors of land was basically determined by political, financial and administrative expediency. Here the guiding factors were three. The first arose out of clever statecraft: the need to create political allies. The British officials realised that as they were foreigners in India, their rule would be unstable unless they acquired local supporters who would act as a buffer between them and the people of India. This argument had immediate importance as there were a large number of popular revolts in Bengal during the last quarter of the 18th century. So they brought into existence a wealthy and privileged class of zamindars which owed its existence to British rule and which would, therefore, be compelled by its own basic interests to support it. This expectation was, in fact, fully justified later when the zamindars as a class supported the foreign government in opposition to the rising movement for freedom. Second, and perhaps the predominant motive, was that of financial security. Before 1793 the Company was troubled by fluctuations in its chief source of income, the land revenue. The Permanent Settlement guaranteed the stability of income. The newly created property of the zamindars acted as a security of this. Moreover, the Permanent Settlement enabled the Company to maximize its income as land revenue was now fixed higher than it had ever been in the past. Collection of revenue through a small number of zamindars seemed to be much simpler and cheaper than the process of dealing with lakhs of cultivators. Thirdly, the Permanent Settlement was expected to increase agricultural production. Since the land revenue would not be increased in the future even if the zamindar's income went up, the latter would be inspired to extend and improve agricultural productivity.

The Permanent Zamindari Settlement was later extended to Orissa, the Northern Districts of Madras, and the District of Varanasi.

In parts of Central India and Avadh the British introduced a temporary zamindari settlement under which the zamindars were made owners of land but the revenue they had to pay was revised periodically. Another group of landlords was created all over India when the Government started the practice of giving land to persons who had rendered faithful service to the foreign rulers.

**Ryotwari Settlement:** The establishment of British rule in South and South-Western India brought new problems of land settlement. The officials believed that in these regions there were no zamindars with large estates with whom settlement of land revenue could be made and that the introduction of zamindari system would upset the existing state of affairs. Many Madras Officials led by Reed and Munro recommended that the settlement should, therefore, be made directly with the actual cultivators. They also pointed out that under the Permanent Settlement the Company was a financial loser as it had to share the revenues with the zamindars and could not claim a share of the growing income from land. Moreover, the cultivator was left at the mercy of the zamindar who could oppress him at will. Under the

system they proposed, which is known as the Ryotwari Settlement, the cultivator was to be recognised as the owner of his plot of land subject to the payment of land revenue. The supporters of the Ryotwari system claimed that it was a continuation of the state of affairs that had existed in the past. Munro said: "It is the system which has always prevailed in India." The Ryotwari Settlement was in the end introduced in parts of the Madras and Bombay Presidencies in the beginning of the 19th century. The settlement under the Ryotwari system was not made permanent. It was revised periodically after 20 to 30 years when the revenue demand was usually raised.

The Ryotwari Settlement did not bring into existence the peasant ownership. The peasant soon discovered that the large number of zamindars had been replaced by one giant zamindar in the state. In fact, the Government later openly claimed that land revenue was rent and not a tax. The ryot's rights ownership of his land were also negated by three other factors : (1) In most areas the land revenue fixed was exorbitant; the ryot was hardly left with bare maintenance even in the best of seasons. For instance, in Madras the Government claim was fixed as high as 45 to 55 per cent of gross production in the earlier settlement. The situation was nearly as bad in Bombay. (2) The Government retained the right to enhance land revenue at will. (3) The ryot had to pay revenue even when his produce was partially or wholly destroyed by drought or floods.

**Mahalwari System:** A modified version of the zamindari settlement, introduced in the Gangetic valley, the North-West Provinces, parts of Central India, and the Punjab, was known as the Mahalwari System; The revenue settlement was to be made village by village on estate (Mahal) be estate with landlords or heads of families who collectively claimed to be the landlords of the village or the estate. In the Punjab a modified Mahalwari System known as the village system or Bhai Chara system was introduced. In Mahalwari areas also, the land revenue was periodically revised.

Both the Zamindari and the Ryotwari systems departed fundamentally from the traditional land system of the country. The British created a new form of private property in land in such a way that the benefit of the innovation did not go to the cultivators. All over the country land was now made salable, mortgageable, and alienable: This was done primarily to protect the Government's revenue. If land had not been made transferable or salable, the Government would find it very difficult to realise revenue from a cultivator who had no savings or possessions out of which to pay it. Now he could borrow money on the security of his land or even sell part of it and pay his land revenue. If he refused to do so, the Government could and often did auction his land and realise the amount. Another reason for introducing private ownership in land was provided by the belief that only right of

ownership would make the landlord or the ryot exert himself in making improvements.

The British by making land a commodity which could be freely bought and sold introduced a fundamental change in the existing land system of the country. The stability and the continuity of the Indian villages were shaken. In fact, the entire structure of rural society began to break up.

From 1600 to 1757 the East India Company was basically a trading corporation which brought European goods or precious metal to India, and carried back Indian goods like spices, silks, gems and other stones, camphor, indigo and sulphur. This exchange gave some boost to Indian exports which entered the world through the English merchants. It was one of the reasons, the Indian rulers tolerated the company and gave their permission to it. However, by the 1720 the situation changed and the European Government started imposing duties upon Indian goods. As a result of this, Indian goods became more costly and India's trade suffered.

This change was due to two reasons. First was the beginning of the Industrial revolution in England which decreased British economic dependence upon other countries, and also gave her a power of beverage by which she could interfere with the world markets against any country. Indian goods, thus, lost not England's market but also was prevented from entering into those markets over which England had established its supremacy.

Secondly, there emerged a school of economists in England that demanded not only protection to British goods but also desired to curtail the trade monopoly of the East India Company what served the company was its political power which had increased considerably after it got Diwani rights in Bengal and Bihar after 1765.

The Company used its political power in Bengal to destroy her trade and commerce. The first to be hit were the handicrafts. The Bengal weavers were pressurized, even dictated to sell their goods to the company at lower prices. Sometimes they were paid such low prices as to actually result in loss. They were forbidden to work for Indian merchants. The company eliminated the Indian and other foreign merchants in order to keep the wages low. The servants of the company monopolized the raw cotton and made the weavers to pay an exorbitant prices for it. Above all, England imposed heavy duties upon Indian goods. By 1813 Indian produces lost not only English markets but also their market in India itself. Because they could not stand before the machine produced goods of the European nations. The industrial revolution further aggravated the situation. The industrial revolution produced a powerful class of British manufacturers. Since the profit of this class came from manufacturing, not from trade, so it wanted to encourage not imports of manufactures from India but in exports of its own products to India. It wanted

India to be a raw material producing colony for the British industries, especially the cotton textiles. Exports of British cotton goods to the East, mainly India increased from 156 in 1794, to nearly 110,000 in 1813. It was a 700% increase.

By an Act of the British Parliament in 1813 the company's trade monopoly in the East was abolished. With this, a new phase in Britain's economic relations with India began. India was to be a mere agricultural colony of industrial England.

India was opened for British goods on a nominal tariff-rates. In order to create a good market for these goods, the Indian authorities launched a campaign of conquest and modernization in India, India's foreign reserve rose rapidly. Imports of British cotton goods alone increased from 110,000 in 1913 to 6,300,000 in 1756.

On the other hand, Indian handicraft products continued to pay heavy duties on entry into Britain. England would not take in Indian goods on fair and equal terms even at this stage when British industry had achieved technological superiority over Indian handicrafts. Duties in Britain on several types of Indian goods continued too high till they ceased to be exports. For example, in 1824, a duty of 67.1/2% imposed upon Indian calicos, and a duty of 37.1/2% on Indian Muslims, Indian sugar had to pay a duty in England that was three times to its cost of production. In some cases these duties went as high as 400 per cent. As a result of this Indian exports to other countries fell rapidly.

Moreover, instead of exporting manufactured goods, India exported only raw materials like cotton, indigo, tea and foodgrains. In 1856, she sent out 4,300,000 worth of raw cotton only 810,000 worth of cotton finished goods, 2,900,000 worth of foodgrains, 1,730,000 work of Indigo, and 770,000 worth of raw silk. Britain also used India for exporting opium to China, though the same opium was never allowed to enter England, for fear of its bad effects upon national health.

Unlike the external trade, internal trade of India remained mainly into the Indian hands. It was particularly fine about north and western region of India. British succeeded in destroying Indian merchants and producers in Bengal. But they could not do so in Gujarat and Maharastra. In Western India as well as in Mysore and Punjab the Indian traders survived because the political power in these areas remained into Indian hands well up to the 19th century. Rajasthan *marwaris*, Gujarati *Parsis* and Punjabi *Khatris* competed with the British traders for the reason that they controlled the internal trade of India which had increased considerably after the arrival of Railways and the improvement in other means of communication and transport. Limited commercialization of agriculture also helped in the growth of trade.

### **Development of Modern Industries**

An important development in the second-half of the 19th century was the establishment of large scale machine-based industries in India. The machine age

in India started when cotton textile, jute and coal mining industries were started in the 1850's. The first textile mill was started in Bombay by Cowasjee Nanabhoy in 1853, and the first jute mill in Rishra (Bengal) in 1855. These industries expanded slowly but continuously. In 1879, there were 56 cotton textile mills in India employing nearly 43,000 persons. In 1882, there were 20 jute mills most of them in Bengal employing nearly 20,000 persons, By 1905, Indian had 206 cotton mills employing nearly 196,000 persons. In 1901, there were over 36 jute mills employing nearly 115,000 persons. The coal mining industry employed nearly one lakh persons in 1906. Other mechanical industries which developed during the second-half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries were cotton gins and presses, rice, flour and timber mills, leather tanneries, woollen textiles, paper and sugar mills, iron and steel works, and such mineral industrial as salt, mica and saltpetre. Cement, paper, matches, sugar and glass industries developed during the 1930's. But all these industries had a very stunted growth.

Most of the modern Indian industries were owned or controlled by British capital. Foreign capitalists were attracted to Indian industry by the prospects of high profits. Labour was extremely cheap; raw materials were readily and cheaply available; and for many goods, India and its neighbours provided a ready market. For many Indian products, such as tea, jute and manganese there was a ready demand the world over. On the other hand, profitable investment opportunities at home were getting fewer. At the same time, the colonial government and officials were willing to provide all help and show all favours.

Foreign capital easily overwhelmed Indian capital in many of the industries. Only in the cotton textile industry did the Indians have a large share from the beginning and in the 1930's the sugar industry was developed by the Indians. Indian capitalists had also to struggle from the beginning against the power of British managing agencies and British banks. To enter a field of enterprise, Indian businessmen had to bend before British managing agencies to dominating that field. In many cases even Indian-owned companies were controlled by foreign owned or controlled managing agencies. Indians also found it difficult to get credit from banks most of which were dominated by British financiers. Even when they could get loans they had to pay high interest rates while foreigners could borrow on much easier terms. Of course, gradually Indians began to develop their own banks and insurance companies. In 1914, foreign banks held over 70 per cent of all bank deposits in India; by 1937 their share had decreased to 57 per cent.

British enterprise in India also took advantage of its close connection with British suppliers of machinery and equipment, shipping, insurance companies, marketing agencies, government officials, and political leaders to maintain its dominant position in Indian economic life. Moreover, the Government followed a conscious policy of favouring foreign capital as against Indian capital.



The railway policy of the Government also discriminated against Indian enterprise, railway, freight rates encouraged foreign imports at the cost of trade in domestic products. It was more difficult and costlier to distribute Indian goods than to distribute imported goods.

Another serious weakness of Indian industrial efforts was the almost complete absence of heavy or capital goods industries without which there can be no rapid and independent development of industries. India had no big plants to produce iron and, steel or to manufacture machinery. A few petty repair workshops represented engineering industries and a few iron and brass foundries represented metallurgical industries. The first steel in India was produced only in 1913. Thus, India lacked such basic industries as steel, metallurgy, machine, chemical and oil. India also lagged behind in the development of electric power.

Apart from machine-based industries, the 19th century also witnessed the growth of plantation industries such as indigo, tea and coffee. They were almost exclusively European in ownership. Indigo was used as a dye in textile manufacture. Indigo manufacture was introduced in India at the end of the 18th century and flourished in Bengal and Bihar. Indigo planters gained notoriety for their oppression over the peasants who were compelled by them to cultivate indigo. This oppression was vividly portrayed by the famous Bengal writer Dinbandhu Mitra in his play *Neel Darpan* in 1860. The invention of a synthetic dye gave a big blow to the indigo industry and it gradually declined. The tea industry developed in Assam, Bengal, Southern India, and the hills of Himachal Pradesh after 1850. Being foreign-owned, it was helped by the Government with grants of rent-free land and other facilities. In time, use of tea spread all over India; and it also became an important item of export. Coffee plantations developed during this period in South India.

The plantation and other foreign-owned industries were hardly of much advantage to Indian people. Their salary profits went out of the country. A large part of their bill was spent on foreigners. They purchased most of their equipment abroad, Most of their technical staff was foreign. Most of their products were sold in foreign markets and the foreign exchange so earned was utilised by Britain. The only advantage that Indians got out of these industries was the creation of unskilled jobs. Most of the workers in these enterprises were, however, extremely low paid, and they worked under extremely harsh conditions for very long hours. Moreover, conditions of near slavery prevailed, in the plantations.

On the whole, industries progress in India was exceedingly slow and painful. It was mostly confined to cotton and jute industries and tea plantations in the 19th century and to sugar and cement in the 1930's. As late as 1946, cotton and jute textiles accounted for 40 per cent of all workers employed in factories. In terms of production as well as employment the modern industries development of India

was paltry compared with the economic development of other countries or with India's economic needs. It did not, in fact, compensate even for the development of the indigenous handicrafts; it had little effect on the problems of poverty and overcrowding of land. The paltriness of Indian industrialisation is brought out by the fact that out of a population of 357 millions in 1851 only about 2,3 millions were employed in modern industrial enterprises. Furthermore the decay and decline of the urban and rural handicraft industries continued unabated after 1858. The Indian Planning Commission had calculated that the number of persons engaged in processing and manufacturing fell from 10.3 millions in 1950 to 8.8 millions in 1951 even though the population increased by nearly 40 per cent. The Government made no effort to protect, rehabilitate, reorganise and modernise these old indigenous industries.

Moreover, even the modern industries had to develop without government help and often in opposition to British policy. British manufacturers looked upon Indian textile and other industries as their rivals and put pressure on the Government of India not to encourage but rather to actively discourage industrial development in India. Thus, British policy artificially restricted and slowed down the growth of Indian industries.

Furthermore, Indian industries, still in a period of infancy, needed protection. They developed at a time when British, France, Germany and the United States had already established powerful industries and could not therefore compete with them. In fact all other countries, including Britain had protected their infant industries by imposing heavy customs duties on the imports of foreign manufactures. But India was not a free country. Its policies were determined in Britain and in the interests of British industrialists who forced a policy of Free Trade upon their colony. For the same reason the Government of India refused to give any financial or, other help to the newly founded Indian industries as was being done at the time by the governments of Europe and Japan for their own infant industries. It would not even make adequate arrangements for technical education which remained extremely backward until 1951 and further contributed to industrial backwardness. In 1939, there were only 7 engineering colleges with 2,217 students in the country. Many Indian projects, for example, those concerning the construction of ships, locomotives, cars and aeroplanes, could not get started because of the Governments refusal to give any help.

Finally, in the 1920's and 1930's under the pressure of the rising nationalist movement and the Indian capitalist class the Government of India, was forced to grant some tariff protection to Indian industries. But once again the Government discriminated against Indian-owned industries. The Indian owned industries such as cement, iron and steel and glass were denied protection or given inadequate protection. On the other hand, foreign dominated industries, such as the match

industry, were given the protection they desired. Moreover, British imports were given social privileges under the system of imperial preference even though Indians protested vehemently.

Another feature of Indian industrial development was that it was extremely lop-sided regionally. Indian industries were concentrated only in a few regions and cities of the country. Large parts of the country remained totally underdeveloped. This unequal regional economic development not only led to wide Regional disparities in income also affected the level of national integration. It made the task of creating a unified Indian nation more difficult.

An important social consequence of even the limited industrial development of the country was the birth and growth of two social classes in Indian society the industrial capitalist class and the modern working class. These two classes were entirely new in Indian history because modern mines, industries and means of transport were new. Even though these classes formed a very small part of the Indian population, they represented new technology, a new system of economic organisation; new social relations, new ideas and a new outlook. They were not burdened by the weight of old customs and styles of life. A majority of them had an all-India look. They were also interested in India's industrialization.

## **RISE OF POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND THE SURVEY OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT UP TO 1905**

### **Introduction**

The second-half of the nineteenth century saw a good deal of political, social and religious awakening in India. This gave rise to the Indian National Movement which is an interesting and significant subject of Indian History. Though this movement was vast in scope and diverse in nature yet it was primarily led and manned by the Indian National Congress. It had to pass-through various phases before it was its culmination in the liberation of our country.

### **1. Birth and Growth of the Indian National Movement**

The Indian National Movement was neither the outcome of a single factor or force, nor did it emerge all of a sudden. Rather it was the cumulative result of a number of factors which had been operating since the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Thus, the causes responsible for the birth and growth of the Indian National Movement were various and manifold which can be studied under the following headings :

**(i) Social and Religious Reformation :** The nineteenth century was a period of great social and religious reformation. It marked the foundation of a number of socio-religious organisations like the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission, the Theosophical Society. Leaders of these organisations or movements were mere men of great vision and strong character. They rightly perceived that there could be no political rejuvenation of India without social and religious evils of the time and thus prepared a ground for the rise and growth of the Indian National Movement.

**Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) :** He was the founder of Brahmo Samaj in 1828 and the first among the social reformers. His motto was universal brotherhood both in social and religious reconstruction. He condemned idolatry, caste system, child marriage and untouchability. He also advocated female education and their right to property. His greatest contribution in the field of social reforms was his stand against Sati<sup>1</sup> He also fought for the political rights of the Indians and showed them the path of organised agitation. For his manifold socio-religious services he has rightly been compared by many scholars with Bacon and Martin Luther. Similarly, due to his advanced economic and political ideas he is rightly acclaimed as the “prophet of Indian nationalism.”

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1. An evil custom by which a Hindu widow burnt herself alive at the funeral pyre of her husband,

**Swami Dayanand (1824-1883) :** He was founder of the Arya Samaj and a great reformer of the last quarter of the nineteenth century. He not only fought against the social abuses but also worked for national awakening. His stirring slogans like 'India for the Indians' and 'Back to the Vedas' gave a new hope to the degenerated people. They learnt to love country and culture. He has elaborated his idea's in his book, known as 'Satyarth Parkash'

**Ramakrishna Mission and Theosophical Society :** Their role was no less significant. Swami Vivekanand, the celebrated disciple of Ramakrishna, won worldwide fame for Hindu religion. He taught his countrymen to take pride in their heritage.

Thus, religious and social reforms of the 19th century purged Hinduism of its unhealthy customs and traditions and developed among the Indians a love for their motherland and culture. This in consequence, prepared the way for the growth of the Indian National Movement.

**(ii) Western Education :** The spread of Western education through English language also had a great impact on the Indian minds. The study of English literature provided them with wise or new ideas, which went directly into their heads. The compositions of the English poets like Wordsworth, Byron and Shelley roused their spirit of patriotism. French slogans of Equality, Liberty and Fraternity gave them a message of hope and national self-confidence. The Indians also learnt Western political thought and philosophy. The writings of Locke, Spencer, Mill, Macaulay and Burke greatly influenced their way of thinking. The knowledge of English language also gave the Indians an opportunity to know about the history of Europe and now the world. They read about the great events like the French Revolution, the Greek war of independence and the American Revolution. They got a lot of inspiration from these in their struggle for freedom. English served as a link language for more than a century and thus helped the Indians in exchanging their views and drawing up schemes of concerted action. In short, Western education helped the growth of Indian nationalism in more than one way and made the Indians progressive and optimistic.

**(iii) Historical Researchers:** Nineteenth century saw the revival of the interest of the foreign scholars in India's past. Scholars like Sir William Jones, H.H. Wilson, Jacobi and A.B. Keith carried out historical researches and opened to the Indians a very vivid picture of the glory of ancient India. The excavators and archaeologists like Alexander Cunningham and Sir John Marshall also revealed the cultural greatness of India. These historical researches developed in Indians a new sense of pride and held before them a bright vision of their future. These in turn roused in them the feelings of nationalism and patriotism.

**(iv) British Policy of Exploitation :** British administrators of India were highly selfish. They always looked to the interests of British industry and commerce, and

never failed to exploit the resources of India to their advantage. Thus, India was made a market for the finished British goods and a supplier of raw materials. Her industry was paralysed by various unreasonable restrictions. Her trade was made to suffer on account of tariff manipulations. As a result, India became poorer and poorer. More than 75% of her population could not get even two square meals a day. The door of government services was closed to the educated Indians. This economic exploitation created a great dissatisfaction among the Indians and it went a long way in creating national awakening.

**(v) Racial Discrimination and National Distress:** The British policy of racial discrimination became much more pronounced in the post-mutiny period, i.e., after 1857. Lord Lytton who was the Viceroy of India from 1876 to 1880 enacted many discriminatory measures like the Vernacular Press Act and Arms Act, which roused a storm of indignation. The situation became more ugly and, unfortunate when the Europeans in India opposed the Liberty Bill of 1883. It should be noted here that this measure of Lord Ripon's Government sought to remove certain racial disabilities by empowering the Indian magistrates to try both Indians and Europeans. It may also be noted that the Europeans called the Indian judges as a "coloured babus". Some Indians reacted sharply to this attitude. For example, at a meeting in the Town Hall Calcutta, Mohan Ghose passed damaging remarks against the white officers. These feelings of racial self-respect also advanced the cause of Indian nationalism.

**(vi) Contribution of the Middle Class:** As a result of the British rule in India, a new middle class came up in the country. This consisted of Government officials, teachers, lawyers, doctors and some groups of merchants and landlords. They acquired Western education and provided the much needed leadership to the Indian national movement. It is interesting to note here that of the Congress Presidents during the first fifteen years, eleven were lawyers.

**(vii) Indian Press and Literature:** The Indian national movement was also inspired by the Indian press and literature. The well-known dailies like *The Amrit Bazar Patrika*, *The Indian Mirror*, *The Hindu*, *The Kesari* and *The Bengali* always advocated the cause of the Indians. They not only exposed the evils of the British rule but also gave a call for national unity. Some of them wrote in such a way as it imparted to the Indians a sense of national self respect and confidence. As a result of the efforts of the press, new spirit of nationalism did not remain confined to the selected few but spread over the length and breadth of the country. The writings of the literary figures like Bankim Chandra Chatterjee (the author of 'Vande Mataram' which remained our national anthem until 1947), Rabindra Nath Tagore and Keshav Chandra Dev also created a love for the national freedom. In short Indian Press and literature made a notable contribution to the cause of Indian nationalism.

**(viii) Modern Means of Communication:** Modern means of communication like, railways, roads and Postal service also helped the rise of Indian National Movement. They broke once for all the age-old isolation of the Indian villages and encouraged exchange of ideas. People began to travel with safety and speed from one part of the country to another and this made them progressive and enterprising. Modern means of communication also facilitated the growth of social and economic links, which in turn helped national unification and promoted the cause of Indian nationalism.

## **II. Organised Expression and the Indian National Congress**

As a result of the growth of nationalism in our country, there started a progressive movement in the political ideas and organisations. A large number of regional public bodies like British Indian Society, British India Association, India League, Indian Association and Bombay Association were formed, while these bodies served the cause of national unity, they could not be a substitute for much desired all India bodies. The necessity of forming some all-India political organization was felt actually during the Liberty Bill agitation of 1883.

**Foundation of Indian National Congress:** When the need of setting up a country wide organisation was being felt by Indian leaders, A.G. Hume, a retired member of the Indian Civil Service made a bold suggestion. In March, 1883, he addressed an open letter to the graduates, of Calcutta University in which he exhorted them to form an association for the moral social and political regeneration of the Indian people. This appeal soon found favour with the Indian leaders who lost no time and formed the Indian National Union. When Indian National Union held its session in Bombay in 1885, on the suggestion of Dadabhai Naroji it was renamed as the Indian National Congress. Thus, came into being the well-known national organisation which later on proved a very powerful instrument of national liberation.

The Indians are grateful to Hume for his sympathy with them. He made honest efforts towards the founding of the Indian National Congress. But it should be noted that the primary reason which had motivated Hume in this direction was the safety of the British Empire in India. He designed this all-India organisation to counteract to growing unrest in the country which at any time could prove disastrous to the British rule in India. He himself once said: "A safety-wall for the escape of great and growing forces, generated by our own action was needed." But still, in view of the fact that in those days the British Government was not prepared to regard sympathetically any political organisation founded by the Indian national leaders. Hume's efforts are commendable. Such was the distrust of political agitation in those days that had Hume been not an Englishman and a distinguished ex-official the authorities would have at once found some way or the other to suppress this organisation.

**The Aims, Objects and the Methods of the Indian National Congress**

The aims and objects of the Indian National Congress at the time of its inception were very simple, but with the passage of time, these changed. In earlier stages it demanded only piecemeal reforms but gradually, it set before it the objective of self government and then the aim of complete independence. There was also a gradual change in its methods. To begin with, it adopted the method of petition and deputations but as the time passed, it resorted to various movements like non-co-operation and civil disobedience.

**The Character of the Indian National Congress :** Some English critics of the Congress have tried to misrepresent its character. Lord Lytton observed that its members represented nothing but the social anomaly of their own position. It was also pointed out that the Congress had no right to speak for the great mass of their fellow countrymen. It is true that at the time of its formation it did not represent the whole nation, but nonetheless it had a much wider base, It was a national body to the extent that its doors were open to all classes and communities; it spoke in the name and on behalf of the nation, and its programme was broad based to accommodate the interests of all sections of the Indian society. Even though this great organisation was conceived by an Englishman (A.O. Hume) yet it was nursed by Parsi like Feroze Shah Mehta and Dada Bhai Naoroji and had the good wishes of the Muslims like Badr-ud-Din Tayabji.

**Moderate Nationalism**

With the foundation of the Indian National Congress, the leadership of the national movement also passed into the hands of the Congress leaders. Thus, by and large, the Congress and the Indian National Movement became synonymous and developed hand during the next twenty years. Since the Congress was led and controlled by the moderate nationalists during 1885-1905, those two decades are, therefore, known as the period of moderate nationalism

**Prominent Moderate Leaders:** From -1885 to 1905 moderate nationalists enjoyed 'most important position in the political life of the country. They held the leadership of the Congress and determined its programme and action. Their influence on the Indian National Movement was supreme. The Government looked upon them as leaders of the Indian public life and watched their activities with interest suspicion. Eminent moderate leaders were Dada Bhai Naoroji, Surendra Nath Bannerji, Feroze Shah Mehta, Gopal Krishan Gokhale, etc.

**Political Beliefs of the Moderates:** Moderate Congressmen firmly believed that the British rule in India was a great blessing. India owed her progress and prosperity to the British administration. They considered Western education, speedy means of communication, better system of justice, etc. as blessings of the British rule. They also held that the English nation was essentially just and good. If Indians could acquaint them with their problems and difficulties, it must try to



help them. In their opinion the British office in India were the chief obstacle between the Indians and the authorities in London. Convinced, as such, the Moderates favoured the maintenance of connections with England and pleaded for acknowledging with gratitude all that was given to the Indians in the form of concessions.

**Demands of the Moderates:** More important demands of the Moderates for which they agitated were : (i) The Indians should be appointed to the Indian Civil Service and higher military posts; (ii) Indian Civil Service examination should be held simultaneously in India and London; (iii) the Legislative Council should be recognised and enlarged and the representatives of the Indians should be included in them; and (iv) the Military expenditure should be reduced. From above it is clear that their demands were moderate in character.

**Methods of Moderates:** Moderates had great faith in peaceful and constitutional agitation. To achieve their objects, they propagated through the press platforms and annual sessions of the Congress. Press was their most powerful agency because many, congress leaders were themselves editors of many newspapers. The annual sessions of the Congress were also a very effective means because they attracted the attention of the Government. At the Congress sessions, policy of the Government was analysed and demands of the Congress were put forward in a forceful manner. Moderate also sent deputations and petitions to the government both in India and England.

**‘Moderates’ Propaganda in India and England:** Moderates propagated for their cause not only in India but also in England. They believed that if the British nation and parliament were properly informed about the Indian affairs, success would soon follow. Hence, on the suggestions of Dadabhai Naoroji and British friends they set up a paid Indian agency in London. They also formed the British Committee of the Indian National Congress and started a monthly paper called *India*. Various other committees and organisations also carried on their propaganda in England and helped the Congress deputation which visited England from time to time. Role of the British friends like John Bright and Charles Bradlaugh during the early years of the Congress was also very significant. Their sympathies and efforts gave an added weight to the Congress propaganda in England.

### **Achievement of Moderates**

The policy and programme of the moderate leaders did not find favour with the Indian young men. They ridiculed their methods and called them political mendicants. But this should not be little the importance of their work and patriotism. Moderates were men of patriotic favour who made a notable contribution to the progress of the Indian National Movement. It was under their leadership that the Indian National Congress regularly held its annual sessions, passed resolutions and sent deputations. They also focused the attention of the people and the Government

upon the grievances of the Indians. Their role in moulding the public opinion was commendable. In short, moderate Congressmen did appreciable work in the field of national awakening and political education of the people and deserve all praise for their selfless service.

### **British Attitude towards the Indian National Congress and the Indian National Movement from 1885-1905**

The Congress initially enjoyed Government's tolerance and even confidence because it had no anti-British bias and agitated for certain rights of Indians through constitutional means. Lord Dufferin, the Governor General of India from 1884-1888, welcomed its foundation in 1885. He hoped that this responsible public organisation would help bureaucracy in its administration. But the attitude of the Government changed. It adopted measures to weaken its influence on the people. It started creating hurdles in its way. For instance, in 1888 when the Congress planned to hold its annual session at Allahabad many obstacles were put in its way by the Government. Two years later in 1890, the Government of India issued a circular ordering Government servants not to attend its meetings. But all these efforts of the Government failed to check the influence of the Congress on the people and its progress. Rather the Indian National Movement grew stronger and the hostility of the Government increased its popularity.

### **RELEVANT PAGES OF BOOKS FOR FURTHER STUDY**

1. Majumdar R.C. : *History of the Freedom Movement of India*, pp. 229-416.
2. Singh, G.N. : *Landmarks in the Indian Constitutional and National Development*, pp. 137-147.
3. Sikri, S.L. : *A Constitutional History of India*, pp. 271-308.
4. Ram Gopal : *British Rule in India*, pp. 271-308.
5. Singh, Hira Lal : *Problems and Politics of the British in India*, pp. 216-236.

### **SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR YOUR PRACTICE**

- Q. Write notes on the following :
- (i) Foundation of the Indian National Congress, its aims, objectives and character.
  - (ii) Attitude of the British Government towards the Indian National Congress during 1882-1905.
  - (iii) Growth of the Indian National Movement till 1905.

**SELF CHECK EXERCISE**

1. Fill in the blanks: (i) Second-half of the century was the period of political, religious and social awakening in India.  
 (ii) During the nineteenth century many socio-religious organisations like.....were established.  
 (iii) .....was the founder of the Brahmo Samaj.
2. Who was the founder of the Arya Samaj ?
3. Whose disciple was Swami Vivekanand ?
4. In which period of Indian History did Sir William Jones and H.H. Wilson conduct their researches?
5. Who was the author of 'Vande Matram' ?
6. Who was the founder of the Indian National Union?
7. What was the period of moderate nationalism in the Indian National Movement?
8. In which year did the Government of India issue a circular ordering Government servants not to attend the meetings' of the Indian National Congress?

**Answers**

1. (i) Nineteenth (ii) Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Rama Krishan Mission Theosophical Society (iii) Raja Ram Mohan Roy.
2. Swami Dayanand
3. of Ramakrishan
4. Ancient Period
5. Bankim Chand Chatterjee
6. A.O.Hume
7. 1885 - 1905
8. in 1890

**RISE OF EXTREMISM AND ITS CAUSES, TERRORISM****Introduction**

In the early years of 20th century Indian nationalism entered a new phase. Many young nationalists, who found no satisfaction with the 'Moderates' programme, began to think in terms of extremism and direct action. The moderate Congressmen continued to control the Congress machinery, but had lost their former importance. The extremist nationalists with their new methods and ideology came in the forefront. The influence of the extremist nationalists became so dominant in the public life that the period from 1905-1919 is described as the period of extremism or militant nationalism.

**Causes of the Rise of Militant Nationalism (Or Extremism and Terrorism)**

Though the extremist movement became more active and alarming during the regime of Lord Curzon yet the factors and forces, which led to its rise had long been in operation. A brief account of these factors may be discussed as under :-

**Dissatisfaction with the Methods and Achievements of Moderates:**

The moderate Congressmen held the leadership of the Indian National Movement for more than twenty years (1885-1905). They continued to advocate the cause of their countrymen through constitutional methods. They were, no doubt, sincere in their efforts and intentions but despite all this, the achievements fell short of the nationalists expectation. Lala Lajpat Rai made no secret of his dissatisfaction with the Moderates, methods, when he observed, "After more than twenty years of more or less public agitation for concessions and redress of grievances, they have received stones instead of bread". This dissatisfaction with the methods and achievements of the Moderates gradually gave birth to a wing in the Congress which began to advocate the cause of aggressive or militant nationalism.

**Uncommon suffering of the Indians:** In the closing years of nineteenth century, the Indians were driven into the whirlpool of suffering. The famine that broke out in 1886 in the Southern parts of India proved very disastrous. It reduced the unfortunate Indians to utmost poverty and also caused a heavy mortality. To this havoc was added the misery of plague of 1897. The loss of lives ran into millions. The governmental efforts to combat this disease, which was then unknown to Indians, did not prove effective. The world opinion criticised the Indian Government, for its callousness and also held it responsible for the misfortunes of the bubonic plague which were followed by the famine of 1899 that also took a heavy toll of lives. Those unhappy experiences

turned the Indian against the Government and made them bold, brave and definite. They also lost faith in the Moderates methods and found the solution of their difficulties in aggressive nationalism. This change in their outlook became manifest when two British officers (Rand and Ayerst) were murdered. These murders in the words of Dr. Ishwari Prasad, "marked the dawn of a new phase in nationalism, the phase of extremism."

**Indian Humiliation Abroad:** By the early years of the 20th century, large number of Indians had settled in Africa, Hong Kong, Canada and America. Though many of them had grown very rich, yet they were despised by the Britishers and other Europeans. They were placed under various kinds of disabilities and did not enjoy even ordinary human rights. They were not allowed admission in some of the hotels and hospitals. Their children were debarred from receiving education in the first rate institutions. In Natal and Transvaal (South Africa), they had to pay even Poll Tax. Still worse was the fact that they could not travel in the first class compartments of the trains and were not allowed to remain outside their houses after 9. P.M. This degradation of Indians living abroad was attributed to their slavery at home. This feeling also made the Indians anti-British and thereby helped the growth of militant nationalism.

**Influence of Revolutionary Nationalism of the West :** Militant nationalism in India also drew inspiration from the revolutionary doctrines of the West. It may be noted here that the struggles for freedom waged by the nationalists in France, America, Italy and Germany, were characterised by force, violence and rebellions. The British had also shed blood of their king Charles I to keep their liberty unimpaired. All this disclosed to the young Indians that they could not achieve their object by constitutional methods. They should take recourse to aggressive and more effective methods.

**Reactionary Regime of Lord Curzon (1898-1905) :** Lord Curzon was great champion of British imperial interests. He remained the Governor-General of India for about seven years. During his period of administration, he undertook many measures to centralise and officialise such institutions which, hitherto, were enjoying some autonomy. Important amongst these measures were the Indian Universities Act (1904), Calcutta Corporation Act (1899); Official Secrets Act, etc. Lord Curzon also delivered provocative speeches in which he sometimes called the Indians dishonest and liars. Worse still, he disregarded the Indians point of view and their feelings. These ways and policies of the British Governor-General called forth the latent forces of aggressive nationalism which had been gathering strength for the last many years.

**Partition of Bengal (1905) :** In 1905, Lord Curzon proposed to divide the Bengal presidency into the following two separate administrative units: Eastern Bengal and Assam, and (ii) Western Bengal, Bihar, Chhota Nagpur and Orissa and this was a subtle attempt on the reactionary Governor-General to break up the political unity of the province and play the Hindus against the Muslims and thus weaken the new spirit of nationalism. Though there were violent protests against the policy of 'Divide and

rule' yet Lord Curzon carried through the partition in a most high handed manner. This led to the emergence of a great national movement in Bengal, which took no time in spreading to other parts of the country. Sixteenth of October 1906, was observed as a day of national mourning. This wide spread agitation was nothing but extreme or militant nationalism.

**Hindu Revivalism:** The moderate leaders of the Congress party were under the influence of western education and always believed that western culture superior to that of Indians. But people like B.C. Pal, Tilak and Arvind Ghosh started unfolding the beauties of Indian culture and religions. In 1893, in Chicago, the parliament of religions was held. It was represented by Swami Vivekanand, who revealed before the American public the Catholicity of the Indian Culture and the Hindu Religion. He had intense faith in the spiritual mission of India, but considered political freedom indispensable before the mission could be realized. B.C. Pal appealed in the name of 'Kali' & 'Durga' for acquiring strength and cultivating capacity to strike; Arvinda Ghosh remarked independence in the goal of life and Hinduism along with fulfill this aspirations of ours.

**Myth of European Supremacy:** The international events did have their bearings on the Indian Nationalism, In 1896, Italy was defeated by Abyssinia and in 1904-05, Russia by Japan. Thus, two European powers were defeated by Asiatic powers. The European invincibility myth was exploded. Young men of India began to study the Japanese ways of life and warfare.

### **Birth of Extremist Party**

As a result of the cumulative effect of the above mentioned causes, a left wing of the Congress began to be formed under the leadership of Tilak, Pal and Lajpat Rai. They had a parallel meeting to the Moderates in 1904 at Benaras. During 1905, differences between the two wings of the Congress became quite apparentas the partition of Bengal was very fresh. The rift widened on the visit of the Prince of Wales in 1906. The moderates wanted to pass a resolution of welcome, whereas extremists were opposed to it. The resolution was passed in the absence of Bengal delegates. Tilak wanted that resolution should be passed for passive resistance against the Government, but it was not carried.

**The Surat Split:** Before 1907 Lord Minto had discussions with moderates on the question of parliamentary reforms. The extremists fell offended by these negotiations. The Surat session of 1907, differences arose on the question of the election of the President of the Congress. Moderates wanted to favour Dr. Rash Behari Bose, whereas extremists proposed the name of Lala Lajpat Rai, but he declined to contest. Thus, Dr. Bose got elected but the next day of the session was violent, rowdyism and eventually police cleared the Pandal. Thus, all threats of passive resistance and boycott as means for achieving the end of the Congress on which Tilak and his followers were so keen, were permanently ruled out.

**Leadership of Bal, Pal, and Lal :** In these years of storm and stress, the extremists found three powerful leaders in the persons of Bal, Pal and Lal Bal Gangadhar Tilak; the first among these three, was a staunch patriot and a violent foe of the foreign Government. In his journal 'Kesri' he often attacked the foreign rule and its policy of repression. He also exhorted his countrymen to face the British repression with courage and determination. By his powerful speeches and popular slogans, he taught young Indians the much-needed philosophy of defiance. He made use of the religious institutions and historical traditions to inculcate the spirit of patriotism and nationalism. His contribution in creating disaffection against the British rule was great and uncommon. It may aptly be judged from one of his articles in which he wrote: "If thieves enter our home and we have not sufficient strength to drive them out, we should, without hesitation shut them and burn them alive."

Lala Lajpat Rai and Babu Bipan Chander Pal, who rallied round Tilak as his leading lieutenants also sowed the seeds of aggressive nationalism. Their writings and speeches put a new confidence and self-assertiveness in the people, particularly of the Punjab and Bengal. In short, the vigorous propaganda of the extremist leaders spread a popular belief that the constitutional methods of the Moderates could not improve the prevailing conditions and there was a need of direct action.

### **New Era of Revolutionary Activities in India (1907-1914)**

The rise of extremism in India, due to the above mentioned factors, soon attracted the attention of the government. It instantly adopted the policy of repression to check the growing agitation. This led to the emergence of revolutionary activities, of which Bengal, Maharashtra and Punjab were the most important centres. It is now desirable to briefly narrate activities as the centres.

**(a) Bengal:** As a result of the partition of Bengal (1905), there spread in the province a great excitement. In December 1907, the revolutionaries of Bengal made an attempt to blow up the train of Lt. Governor. A few days later, the district Magistrate of Decca was shot in the back. In 1908, a bomb misfired and killed Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy. An Indian inspector of police was shot in the street of Calcutta.

**(b) Maharashtra :** Revolutionary activities in Maharashtra were taken up by the Abhinava Bharat Society (the well-known revolutionary society of Nasik and by various branches. Their programme included the collection of arms and the training of young Indians in arms and explosives. The eminent revolutionary leaders of Maharashtra were Shyamji Krishna Verma, Chapekar and Savarkar brothers. In December, 1909, the District Magistrate of Nasik was shot dead.

**(c) Punjab :** Like Bengal and Maharashtra, Punjab also witnessed an outburst of the revolutionary activities. Here Lala Hardyal, Ajit Singh and Sufi Amba Prasad spread the revolutionary spirit. They were greatly helped by Lala Lajpat Rai. Taking advantage of the discontent caused by the Colonization Bill, Ajit Singh and Syed Haider, Razia formed the 'Indian Patriotic- Association'. Besides, there were some riots in Lahore

and Rawalpindi. In other parts of the country also, the revolutionary movement made some progress (e.g. in Madras).

### **Overseas Revolutionary Activities of the Indians**

As already explained, Indians living abroad were facing a strange situation. In spite of the fact that they were making good money, they did not enjoy due status and respect. Everywhere they were insulted and despised. In hotels, trains, parks and theatres, there was discrimination. Worse still, an ordinary Englishman would not like to sit besides the richest Indian abroad, because the latter was a member of the slave nation. This state of affairs created in the minds of the Indians a burning sense of shame against being despised as slaves. They also realised the value of liberty and democracy. The national movements of Ireland, Egypt, China and Turkey considerably added to the sentiments of Indian nationalists and inspired among them the love of their motherland.

**Ghadar Party and Berlin Committee, etc. :** The spread of political consciousness amongst the Indians living abroad led to the formation of Ghadar Party. As explained in its first revolution, its aim was the overthrow of the imperialist rule in India, and the building up, in its place, of national republic based on freedom and equality. This aim was to be achieved only through armed national revolution. The prominent members of the Ghadar Party was Sardar Sohan Singh Bhakhna, Lal Hardyal, Babu Visakha Singh, Pandit Kanshi Ram, etc. The central office of the party was known as 'Yugantar Ashram' and was situated at 436 Street, San Francisco. The Indian revolutionaries in Germany also established Indian "Independence Committee" in Berlin. This Committee was thoroughly modified in 1915, and made plans of sending arms to India to bring about a successful armed revolution. (Ghadar Party in detail in the 'B' Part).



**FREEDOM STRUGGLE****Jallianwala Bagh Massacre**

It was in Amritsar that disturbances reached their climax. Since February 1919, Amritsar had been in the thick of political activity. Dr. Saif-ud-Din Kitchlew, a barrister and Dr. Satyapal, a medical practitioner, had gained tremendous popularity among the people of Amritsar due to their eloquence, integrity and intense political agitation against the Rowlatt Bills. Ordinary people like shopkeepers, school teachers, and labourers regarded them as heroes and a symbol of Hindu Muslim unity. Miles Irving, the Deputy Commissioner, almost a nervous wreck and a puppet in G'Dweer's hands though Kitchlew and Satyapal as dangerous elements. From the end of March 1919, the political campaign against the Rowlatt Bills was gaining tremendous strength. Meetings speeches, and demonstrations were almost a daily occurrence. Reports were also reaching the local government at Amritsar of the grand success of the *hartals* in Delhi and Bombay. Kitchlew and Satyapal called for the *hartal* on 6th April in Amritsar which too proved a unique success. The Government took counter measures to stop it, but in vain. The people of Amritsar would seize every possible opportunity for expressing their resentment against the Government. The question arises why was it so? Firstly, it was due to the leadership of Kitchlew and Satyapal who were showing remarkable organisational skill in uniting the disgruntled elements. Secondly, the business community had greatly suffered in Amritsar due to the restrictions levied on their trade during the War, and felt locked in a stifling grip due to the imposition of the new income tax. People were suffering due to the shortage of necessities and rising prices. The educated classes particularly the lawyer class, felt outraged at the insults hurled on it by O'Dwyer. So, the business community, the professional classes, and the common people who worry only for their bread and butter found in Gandhi's call for the anti Rowlatt agitation a golden opportunity, for ventilating their grievances. These factors do not explain fully the reason why the political agitation took place on such a big scale. The Government was keeping a vigilant eye on the political activity in Amritsar, and the C.I.D. under the direction of Dholan Dass and Sukha Singh gave to the people sufficient cause for provocation by their uncouth and tactless methods. The Government feared that the 'dangerous Sikh elements' inhabiting the surrounding areas of Amritsar might fish in the

troubled waters. It must also be mentioned that the people of Amritsar are a solid, sentimental 'boastful', and bold people capable of showing reckless courage, not mistaking a shadow for the substance.

And if any precise date is to be given when demonstrations in Amritsar reached their climax, when Jallianwala Bagh seemed almost inevitable, then one could unhesitatingly mentioned the 9th April, Ram Naumi Day, a Hindu religious festival which in the context to events assumed a far more significance than normal in Punjab. People poured into the city from the surrounding countryside and ordinary scenes of fraternization took place. To an intelligent and sensitive witness at Amritsar, in the early days of April the dramatic upheaval was just round the corner. The local government was helpless in the face of mounting demonstration of Hindu-Muslim unity. It felt as though it had lost the initiative and was to play only a subservient role. The Government was determined to restore its prestige. So it decided to strike. When Irving saw the huge procession led by Dr. Hafiz Muhammad Basir from the verandah of the Allahabad Bank, he looked absolutely shattered, his hand shaking, in excitement. He felt outraged when he saw Muslim volunteers dressed like Turks, representing the Turkish army. This he represented as a direct insult to the Crown. Dr. Kitchlew told this writer that the procession was orderly, and meant absolutely no offence to the authorities. It bowed in respect of the Deputy Commissioner, and prayed, 'God save the King.' This writer cannot help thinking that the playing such a true at a moment when slogans of 'Gandhi-Ki-Jai', 'Satpal Kitchlew' Zindabad' were being raised, was bound to cause offence to the authorities even if there was no intention of doing so. Next day, Kitchlew and Satpal were called at deputy Commissioner's residence at 8 a.m. and quietly bundled off to Dharamsala in motor cars. Consequently, shops in the town were closed and thousands of people collected, and marched to the D.C.'s residence with a view of pleading for the release of their leaders. When the procession reached the Carriage, Bridge, the last strategic point for preventing it from entering the civil lines where the D.C. and other British officers lived, there was a direct confrontation between the people and the mounted troops.

The procession tried to move forward but the troops were determined to hold it. Eventually near the Foot Bridge, volleys were fired, and it is calculated that those killed were twelve and the number of wounded was twenty. The mob carrying the lead went back into the town, and indulged in violence, killing five Englishmen, and assaulting an English woman. Murder, arson and destruction had their way. But on the 11th and 12th April, the city was absolutely quiet. The civil authority had broken down. It began to be freely said in the town '*Ai Sada Raj Hai*' (it is our rule today).

Because of the events of 10th April Irving had requested O'Dwyer for military

reinforcement. To deal with the situation, Brigadier- General Dyer arrived at Amritsar on the 11th by 9 p.m. from Jullundur, and held a hurried conference with the Deputy Commissioner and the Superintendent of Police in the railway carriage at the city railway station. Thereafter Dyer went to the city *kotwali* (*police station*) and brought the city Inspector Mohammed Ashraf Khan with whom he held a long interview. On the 12th April he had the city reconnoitred by an aeroplane. The 13th April was the Baisakhi day which had a special significance for the people from adjacent who had come for a dip in the tank surrounding the Golden Temple. Dyer issued on the 13th April a proclamation forbidding the assemblies in the city. After the General's proclamation, a counter-proclamation was made by the leaders of the mob calling upon people to assemble that afternoon at 4.30 p.m. in Jallianwala Bagh. Accompanied by Captain F.C. Brings he arrived at the narrow entrance between 5 and 5.15 p.m. and started firing without giving any warning, and men started falling like leaves. Dyer, having fired, dispersed, and returned to his headquarters.

Why did Dyer do so? Why did he fire and continued firing? What was the provocation? And foremost question comes why did he fire without giving any warning to the assembled crowd? Surely the crowd collected was unarmed and peaceful. Even Winston Churchill said that it had no lethal weapons. Dyer had different reason of firing. Immediately after the event, he wrote to the General Staff Division that his force was small, and to hesitate might have induced attack. He believed that the speakers making seditious harangues in the Bagh were criminal revolutionaries. He thought that he was being mobbed and hemmed in. His force was small and so under the circumstances, the only way to save the situation from deteriorating was to strike, and strike hard. That was Dyer's understanding of the situation. But a few months later on August 19, when he appeared before the Hunter Committee and gave his evidence, he completely changed his ground, and walked more like a hero lionized by the Anglo-Indian press.

The sky was overcast and the dust disturbed by the crowd in the Bagh added to the gloom. Dyer stood on a raised platform inside the entrance for a while, stationed 25 Gurkhas on the left, and 25 Baluchies on the right, and ordered firing. It was about 5.15 p.m. At first the crowd shouted back '*Phokian*', '*Phokian*', (meaning blanks) imagining that was just a bluff. But they quickly lost there illusions however, as people began to crumble and fall. Dyer directed his troops to fire in the thick of the crowd. Briggs plucked at Dyer's sleeve as 'if in pain' and according to his bodyguard who stood about four paces rear' Dyer was quiet calm and rational 1750 round of 303 mark were fired within 'ten minutes' and there was two pauses of about a minute each during which Dyer surveyed the sence before him. The ammunition was almost exhausted. The bagh looked like

a battlefield with the corpses scattered about in heaps, and the wounded crying for help. Dyer along with the troops marched off the way he had come.

### THE IMPACT

Edward Thompson, a distinguished historian who later became an Oxford don and a close friend of Jawahar Lal Nehru noted that one S.K. Datta while thinking of Jallianwala Bagh stood weeping and saying “This ends the British connexion with India. India was and could never be the same again. The die had been cast, and the sun began to set on the British Empire which had stimulated poets to idealize its glory, and expound its ethics.” The Jallianwala bagh episode marks a turning point in the political destiny of India. In fact, our freedom struggle acquires a national character after this event, and Gandhi emerges as a national leader. Just a few months after the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the Indian National Congress held its annual session at Amritsar in December 1919 which Jawahar Lal Nehru, who was not a technical historian but who had a profound historical sense, described as the Gandhi Congress. Moderates were losing their ground and turning into extremists. Gokhale died in 1915, Dadabhai Naoroji in 1917, and Mr. Annie Besant receded in the background. Tilak had gone to England at the close of 1918 to pursue his libel action against Sir Valentine Chirol. But Gandhi became “*Wali*” for the Muslims, and ‘*Mahatama*’ for the Hindu. A new style of politics tinged, with a new idiom was evolved. It was an exhilarating experience to embark on an all India political agitation against the British Government. In a sense, India had found herself; it was probably her finest hour, a *tryst* with destiny.

Moved by the severity inflicted upon the unfortunate people at Jallianwala Bagh Rabindranath Tagore renounced his kingship and wrote to the Viceroy :

“The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in their incongruous context of humiliation and I for my part wish to stand, shorn of all special distinction, by the side of these of my countrymen who for their so called insignificance, are liable to suffer degradation not fit for human beings.”

Gandhi who had supported England during her hour of trial in the recruiting campaign, returned in protest to the Government his Kaiser-i-Hind Gold medal, and his Zulu war medal. C.F. Andrews felt outraged at the tragic event, and expressed his horror at the cruelties perpetrated by a ruthless Government. He wrote to the Government :

“I cannot feel that this harassing of the educated classes, the dealing of blow after blow to their self-respect will result in anything but evil..... moderates are finding it hard to remain so.”

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**LESSON NO. 2.5**

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**NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT**

The year 1920 marks the beginning of a new era—the Gandhian Era—in the history of our freedom struggle. It was for the first time that the Indian National Congress, as a body, was embarking on the policy of direct action against the government. The method and attitude of ‘Political mendicancy’ was discarded once for all.

**Why Gandhi started Non-cooperation ?**

The background of the Movement was an eventful as the movement itself. Gandhi was in cooperation with the British Government upto 1919 but within the next few months, he was transformed into an apostle of non-cooperation. This radical change in the attitude of the Mahatma was caused by a few important events which shook his faith in British fairness and sense of justice. In his own words, “The first shock came in the shape of the Rowlatt Acts. Then followed the Punjab horrors beginning with the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and culminating to the crawling orders, public floggings and other indescribable humiliations.”

In spite of the bitterness caused by the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and other black events, the Congress, which met at Amritsar in December, 1919, was ready to give a fair trial to the Montagu - Chelmsford Reforms though they were regarded as “inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing.” At the instance of Gandhi, the Congress even passed a motion of thanks for Montague. Thus it is clear that Gandhi and many other Congressmen were still prepared to cooperate with the British in the hope that Punjab wrongs would be redressed and the Khilafat question would be settled satisfactorily. But the policy adopted by the British Government in the succeeding months falsified all such hopes.

The disheartening attitude of the British Government regarding the Khilafat question led Gandhi to issue a statement on March 10 that “non cooperation is the only remedy left open to us.”

The Hunter Committee Report published on May 28, also proved a mere “whitewash”, which belittled Dyer’s crime as a “grave error” of judgement, passed upon an honest but mistaken conception of duty. This report and the deliberate show to the perpetrators of brutalities in the Punjab destroyed Gandhi’s faith in the British sense of justice. On July 28, he announced that non-cooperation would be started on 1st August, 1920, to redress the twin wrongs of the Punjab and Khilafat.

After the inauguration of non-cooperation on 1st August, Gandhi and Ali Brothers toured the country, explained the meaning and implications of the movement and mobilised public opinion.

### **Congress acceptance of Non Cooperation**

A Special session was held in Calcutta from 4th to 9th September, 1920 under the Presidentship of Lala Lajpat Rai. At this session Mahatma Gandhi moved the fateful resolution on Non Cooperation. Despite the opposition of C.R. Das, B.C. Pal, Mrs. Annie Besant, Jinnah and others the motion was carried. After the Calcutta Congress, Gandhi made a hurricane tour popularising Non-Cooperation among the masses.

The regular annual session of the Congress was held at Nagpur in December 1920. The resolution on Non-Cooperation was confirmed. Even C.R. Das and Lajpat Rai and other stalwarts, who had opposed it at Calcutta, now supported it.

At Nagpur, Gandhi was also able to secure the approval of the new constitution which vitally altered the characters and organization of the Congress. The goal of the Congress now was “*Swaraj* within the British Empire if possible and without, if necessary.” The means were changed from “Constitutional” to all peaceful and legitimate means.” Mahatma Gandhi became the acknowledged leader of the new movement for political liberation.

### **Programme**

The first thing that was emphasised in the resolution of the Nagpur Congress was that non-violence was an integral part of the Non-Cooperation campaign. The Programme had two aspects : (a) negative; and (b) positive aspects.

#### **Negative Aspects**

- (a) Surrender of titles and honorary officers and resignation from nominated seats in local bodies.
- (b) Refusal to attend Government *darbar*, official and semi-official functions held by government officials or in their honour.
- (c) Gradual withdrawal of children from schools and colleges owned, aided or controlled by the Government, and establishment of national schools and colleges in various provinces.
- (d) Gradual boycott of British courts by lawyers and litigants, and the establishment of private arbitration courts for the settlement of disputes with the help of lawyers.
- (e) Refusal on the part of military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia.
- (f) Boycott of elections to the reformed central legislature and provincial legislative councils.
- (g) Boycott of British goods.

### Positive Aspects

(1) The positive or constructive aspects of the programme included promotion of *Swadeshi*, especially *Khaddar* or home-spun and home-woven cloth. (2) Removal of untouchability among Hindus. (3) Promotion of Hindus (4) Promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity. (5) Prohibition of the use of alcoholic drinks. (6) Settlement of disputes through arbitration and panchayats. Further, a National Tilak Memorial Swaraj Fund of Rupees one crore was raised to finance the non-cooperation activities.

### Progress of the Movement

The response of the people to this remarkable campaign was enthusiastic beyond expectations. The country was profoundly stirred. Unparalleled scenes of devotion and sacrifice were witnessed everywhere. Throughout 1921 the movement acquired more tempo and vigour.

Several prominent lawyers such as Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das, Rajendra Prasad, M.M. Jayakar, Vithalbai Patel, Rajagopalachari and others gave up their lucrative practice and plunged into the movement. Subhash Chandra Bose resigned from the I.C.S.

Quite a few distinguished Musalmans like Maulana Azad, Dr. Ansari and Ali Brothers (Maulana Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali) also joined the struggle. Seth Jamnalal Bajaj gave up his title and donated a lakh of rupees for the maintenance of the non-cooperation lawyers. Hundreds of other persons renounced their titles and honours.

Boycott of schools and colleges was quite successful. Thousands of students left colleges and schools run by the Government. National schools, colleges and universities were started in different parts of the country such as the National Colleges at Calcutta and Patna, the Gujrat Vidyapeeth, the Bihar Vidyapeeth, Kashi Vidyapeeth, Tilak Maratha Vidyapeeth and the Bengal National University. A number of students of the Aligarh University also left it and founded the Jamia Millia Islamia, which was later shifted to Delhi.

The boycott of foreign cloth was quite successful. It was launched with bonfires of foreign cloth in every city and town. *Khaddar* became the national wear and handspinning was encouraged. It attained considerable success in Bengal, Bombay, Madras, and U.P. The boycott of liquor was also encouraging and provinces the excise revenue of the Government was reduced.

As regard the elections boycott, only moderates and liberals contested for the Legislative Councils but all the Congress candidates withdrew and in many places the majority of votes abstained from voting. This exposed to the world that the Legislative Councils elected under the new Act, had no claim to represent the people of India.

**Hindu Muslim Unity :** During the early phases of the Movement Gandhi

and Ali Brothers succeeded in bringing about such a unity of aims and activities between the Hindus and the Muslims, as was never witnessed before or has not been noticed ever since. This unprecedented cooperation between the Hindus and the Muslim for the common objectives was really remarkable aspect of the campaign which perturbed the British masters.

**Boycott of Duke of Connaught's Visit :** In February, 1921, when the Duke of Connaught (uncle of King George V) came to India to inaugurate the "Reformed" Councils and also to assuage the Indian feelings he was greeted with *hartals* wherever he went. This was another success of the Congress campaign.

**Government's Policy of Repression :** The Non-Cooperation Movement had a lot of ferment and commotion in the country, which caused serious worry to the British authorities. The Government of Lord Reading therefore adopted a policy of severe repression to curb the movement. The Congress and the Khilafat volunteer organizations were declared unlawful. At important centres of the agitation, public meetings and processions were consequently arrested. Thousands of people came forward to replace those who were consequently arrested. The police began to charge and assault the volunteers indiscriminately. hundreds of them were wounded and many were killed as a result of firing. Repression was more severe in U.P. However, people suffered imprisonment and injuries and the movement went on with gusto.

### **Chauri Chaura Incident (5th February, 1922) and the Suspension of the Movement**

The attention of the whole country was now centred on Bardoli where Gandhi was ready to lead the Campaign in person. But before the expiry of the period of 7 days, there occurred a serious case of mob violence at Chauri Chaura a small town near Gorakhpur in U.P. On February 5, 1922 an infuriated mob of 3000 persons, led by Congressmen, set fire to the *Thana* (police station) and burnt alive 22 policemen. It was shocking to the Mahatma who felt horrified at the growing violence on the part of the people because other such cases were also reported from Bareilly and Madras. Mahatma Gandhi, believer in non-violence in thought and deed, felt that the people had not imbibed the true spirit which was the base of his movement. He took it as a warning from God and made up his mind to suspend the movement. The Congress Working Committee, which met at Bardoli on February 11-12, confirmed his decision and resolved to concentrate on constructive programme.

### **Reaction to the Suspension**

The sudden stoppage of the movement which had raised the country to a very high pitch of enthusiasm came as a shock to many national leaders and sent a wave of resentment and anger among the rank and file of the Congress. C.R.



Das, Jawaharlal Nehru, Lajpat Rai, Ali Brothers, Subhash Chander Bose and others bitterly criticized Gandhi's action. Subhash Bose called it a "national clamity". Jawaharlal Nehru wrote, "We were angry when we learned of stoppage of struggle".

Gandhi had a hard time explaining the decision to his followers. At the A.I.C.C. meeting held in Delhi a few days later, a number of delegates particularly from Maharashtra and Bengal strongly attacked Gandhi's leadership. But Mahatma calmly withstood all the criticism and stuck firmly to his constructive programme.

### **Arrest of Gandhi (10th March)**

Taking advantage of the division the nationalist forces, the Government of Lord Reading arrested him on 10th March. He asked the court to award him "highest penalty that can be inflicted upon me for what in law is a deliberate crime, and what appears to me to be the highest duty of a citizen". The judge convicted him and sentenced him to six year's imprisonment. With the imprisonment of Gandhi, the Non-Cooperation Movement came to an end.

### **An Appraisal of the Movement**

Although the movement failed to achieve its declared objectives yet it is difficult to concede that it was a failure. In fact this first unarmed revolt against the British empire was a momentous event in the history of our liberation struggle. From beginning to end, it was sustained by the enthusiasm, devotion and self-sacrificing spirit of the people. It was a fight between what Gandhi called "the soul force" and the "material force."

The movement had created a new spirit of freedom and fearlessness. There was a general awakening of the masses to their political rights and privileges. Ordinary people, man, woman, rich and poor were ready to endure hardship and punishment. The fear of the *British Raj* was gone. It was the first political movement which had a predominantly mass character.

The Non-Cooperation Movement, by accepting and emphasising the constructive programme evolved by Gandhi, removal of social evils like untouchability and drinking, initiated a process of social regeneration which revolutionized the entire structure of the Indian society. The programme of starting national educational institutions, popularizing the use of *Khadi* (suitable to rural needs), boycotting of foreign goods, and setting up of panchayats etc., were such things as began to eat into the vitals of the British Raj in India, and the bureaucracy began to feel a deep concern about the Empire. The non-cooperation movement might have failed to bring Swaraj at that time but it was merely a retreat in the long drawn struggle for freedom.

**THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT**

The Congress Working Committee met on January 2, 1930 and after taking step to implement the Lahore resolution on the boycott of the legislative councils, fixed January 26, 1930 to be observed as the 'Independence Day' all over the country. On this day people were told in villages and towns all over the country to adopt the declaration framed and issued by the Congress Working Committee. The Independence Day was solemnly observed and it evoked great enthusiasm all over the country. But before actually starting the proposed Movement of Civil Disobedience, Mahatma Gandhi gave another chance to the authorities to come to terms with the nationalist aspirations by issuing a statement in his *Young India* of the 30th January in which, while thanking the Viceroy for his speech of January 25 trying to clarify his famous statement of 31st October, 1929 and making an attempt to allay the fears of the Indian nationalist, the Mahatma set down the following eleven Points and asked the Viceroy to satisfy the Indians with regards to these 'very simple but vital needs of Indians' :

1. Total prohibition.
2. Reduction of the rupee ratio to 4£.
3. Reduction in the land revenue by at least 50 per cent; and making it subject to legislative control.
4. Abolition of the salt-tax.
5. Reduction in military expenditure by at least 50 per cent.
6. Reduction in the salaries of the highest grade service to one-half or less so as the suit the reduced revenue.
7. Protective tariff for foreign cloth.
8. Passage of the Coastal Tariff Reservation Bill.
9. Discharge of all political prosecution and abrogation of Section 124-A of Regulation III of 1818 and the like the permission to all Indian exiles to return home.
10. Abolition of the C.I.D. or it should be placed under popular control.
11. Issuance of licences for the use of fire-arms for self-defence should be subject to popular control.

Mahatma Gandhi assured the Viceroy that if he could get some assurance about the acceptance of the above Eleven Points, the Government would then hear no talk of Civil Disobedience Movement; and the Congress with heartily participate

in any Conference where there would be perfect freedom of expression and demand. In the light of the Resolution for Complete Independence and the country giving enthusiastic response to the celebration of 29th January as the 'Independence Day' Eleven Points of Mahatma Gandhi however important they may be, seem to be inconsistent with the resolution of non-cooperation and accepting nothing less than Complete Independence. The country which was passing through serious excitement after the resolution of Complete Independence paid no serious attention to the above statement of Mahatma Gandhi.

### **Decision of Mass Movement**

Since the Viceroy failed to give any assurance of Mahatma Gandhi on his Eleven Points the Congress Working committee again met at Sabarmati Ashram, from February 14-16, 1930 and passed the resolution of civil disobedience.

### **Breaking of the Salt Laws**

Towards the end of February, 1930, Gandhi made up his mind finally with regard to the particular issue on which he would start his Civil Disobedience campaign. He chose the Salt Laws. Under the Salt Laws, manufacture of salt was a Government monopoly, although this commodity was easily available from sea water or other natural sources in India. Moreover, these laws also imposed a duty on salt adding to the burden of the people for whom salt was not only an essential article for human consumption but also for their cattle and agriculture. Even that Taxation Inquiry Committee of the Government of India had admitted that the bulk of it (Salt tax) is paid by those who were least able to contribute anything towards the state expenditure. Gandhi regarded that tax as 'the most iniquitous of all from the poor man's standpoint.' 'As the independence movement is essentially for the poorest in the land, the beginning will be made with this evil' declared Gandhi. He was to start his campaign of Civil Disobedience by violating these laws at the sea-shore of Dandi. This according to S. Gopal and other historians showed Gandhi's political instincts at their highest.

Before embarking on Civil Disobedience, Gandhi made a final bid for finding a way out by discussing the matter again with the British authorities. He wrote a long letter to the Viceroy on March 2nd in which he set out his reason why he considered the British Government in India to be a curse. He also told him that the Complete Independence Resolution of the Congress should have caused no alarm if the word 'Dominion Status' mentioned in his announcement of 31st October, 1929 had been used in its accepted sense. He informed him that if he (the Viceroy) could not set his way to deal with the evils of the British rule as outlined by Gandhi, then on 11th March he would proceed with the co-workers of his Ashram to defy the provisions of the salt Laws. In case the Viceroy still cared to discuss these matters with him and wanted him to postpone publication

of this latter, he would refrain from doing so on receipt of a telegram to that effect.

The Viceroy's reply to this was very brief and curt. He only expressed his regret that Gandhi should have been contemplating a course of action which was clearly bound to involve violation of the law or danger to the public peace. This was no surprise to Gandhi. Expressing his agony at the British attitude and his determination to go ahead with his plan he wrote on 12th March, 1930 :

"On bended knees I asked for bread and received stones instead..... I repudiate this law and regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotony of compulsory peace that is choking the heart of the Nation for want to free vent."

### **The Dandi March**

Meanwhile, the country was having with excitement and watching with concern the final decision of Gandhi. A revolutionary gave him only three year's time to try his non-violent method. On the other hand, came a writeup from New York which brought the message 'God Guard You' from Rev. John Holmes. Gandhi calmly in the midst of rumours that he was going to be arrested and deported, selection seventy-nine members of his Ashram to join his 241 mile march to Dandi. One of them was Haridas Thakoredas mazumder, who has long resided in the United states advocating the cause of India but had returned to the country on the eve of the Lahore Congress.

Having said the morning prayers in the solemn atmosphere on 12 March, 1930, Gandhi embarked upon his historic journey to Dandi to win independence Villagers watered the roads for miles, carpeted them with flowers, and cheered up the *Satyagrahis* as they trekked along. Enthusiasm in the country was remarkable. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote : 'As people followed the fortunes of the marching column of pilgrims from day to day, the temperature of the country went up. Gandhi reached Dandi on April 5, 1930 along with the band of 78 *Satyagrahis*. Next day, after his morning prayers, he took bath in the sea and picked up a lump of natural salt thus breaking the Salt Law of the Government of India. 'Hail Deliverer' was the cry of Sarojini Naidu who was standing nearby. Immediately after this, Gandhi issued a statement to the press in which he announced that it was now open to any one who would take the risk of prosecution under the Salt Law to manufacture salt whenever he wished and wherever it was convenient. He designated the week ending on 13 April as the National Week and called on the people to continue this war against the Salt Tax. This is how, the Salt *Satyagraha* at times called the Kindergarten stage of revolution was inaugurated in India.

### **Salt Satyagraha**

Gandhi made violation of the Salt Laws as his chief object. He announced his intention of raiding the salt depot of Dharasana in Surat District. As usual, he

communicated his decision in a long letter to the Viceroy and again requested him “to remove the salt tax and the prohibition on private salt making.” Otherwise he would reluctantly set out for Dharasana with his followers and demand possession of the salt works. But before Gandhi started for Dharasana, he was arrested and put in prison. Abbas Tyabji took up Gandhi’s place as leader of his Salt Satyagraha, but he was also arrested. Then Sarojini Naidu hurried to Dharasana, and directed the raid of 21 May; 2500 volunteers from all parts of Gujarat took part in it. A series of raids were made on the Wakala Salt Depot. It began on May 22, but the most significant raid took place on 1 June when nearly 13,000 participated in the action. Many other raids on salt depots also took place. Everywhere the volunteers were mercilessly beaten and arrested in large numbers.

The Govt. did not at first take the civil disobedience seriously but before a month had passed, the Government realised the gravity of the situation caused by a wide national movement and struck hard ruthlessly.

### **1. Repressive Laws**

New ordinances were passed, authorizing the Government to curtail the liberty of the individuals in various ways as indicated above. The Congress organization were declared unlawful and Government was authorized to confiscate their property. On 2nd April, 1930, the Government passed an Emergency Ordinance, called the Press Ordinance, reproducing the stringent provision of the repealed Press Act of 1910. According to the official statement of July, 1930, securities aggregating to Rupees two lakh and forty thousand were collected from 131 news papers, nine news papers declined to pay and suspended publication.

### **2. Arrests**

The defiance of law led to wholesale arrests. Even according to the official figures, more than sixty thousands were put behind prison bars. But this figure is somewhat misleading, for it gives only the numbers of those who were directly charged with political offences. But many *Satyagrahis* of Civil Resisters were sentenced on charges like stealing exercising intimidation, rioting and they are not included in the above numbers. These false charges were not challenged as the *Satyagrahis*, true to their creed, refused to take any part in the proceeding. The Working Committee estimated the number of those imprisoned at 75,000. Most of the leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru, were in prison, and finally Gandhi was arrested on 4th May, 1930.

### **3. Terrorism**

But the prosecution under the ordinances of ‘lawless’ laws formed only a minor part of the devices adopted by the Government to crush the movement. They inaugurated a veritable region of terror and employed both police and military to cow down the people by most ruthless and indiscriminate brutal assaults on unarmed and unresisting men and women.

**Conclusion**

To resolve the dead lock and find a permanent solution of Indian problem, a Round Table Conference was held in Nov. 2, 1930. For the first time, the representations of the Indian States were invited, but this conference was boycotted by the leading national party i.e. Congress Party. Through the efforts of T.B. Sopree, the Viceroy of India issued a statement on 25 Jan., 1931 that the Ban on the Congress Working Committee was removed and its members in the jail were released. On 5th March, 1931, Viceroy and Gandhi struck a pact known as Gandhi-Irwin pact and the Civil Disobedience movement was officially suspended. Gandhi as lone candidate of Congress party attended the IInd session of the Round Table Conference.

## **THE QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT**

Failure of Cripps Proposals and his sudden departure from India led to widespread disappointment and frustration in the minds of the Indian people. It was felt that the British Government had sent Cripps Mission to satisfy American and Chinese opinions and not to make any substantial concessions to India. The British Government also wanted to show to the world that because of differences and disunity among the Indians, the power could not be transferred to India. Both during and after the Cripps Mission, the Government of India was engaged in suppressing even the normal political and public activities. Some of the leaders like Rafi Ahmed Kidwai of U.P. were arrested under the Defence of India Act. Subhash Chandra Bose was inciting the Indian people through radio broadcasts to rise against the British and cooperate with Japan. Bitter anti-British feeling was growing among the Indians. Mahatma Gandhi wanted to end the imperialistic war through moral force of peace and persuasion. There was difference of opinion among the Congress leaders. In the meeting of the Congress Working Committee held at Allahabad from 27th April to 1st May, 1942, the differences came on the surface. Rajagopalachari moved a resolution that the League's demand for Pakistan be conceded and a joint Congress-League front be presented to the British Government. The resolution was defeated by an overwhelming majority of 120 to 15. There was a difference of opinion between Gandhi and Nehru regarding the Congress attitude to be adopted towards Japan. Mahatma Gandhi wanted withdrawal of the British and policy of "non-violent non co-operation" against Japan. Nehru wanted that free India should co-operate with the Allied powers against Fascist and Nazi militarism. A compromise resolution was however passed and it emphasised the unity of India, withdrawal, of the British, opposition to foreign troops in India and non-cooperation and non-violent resigned from the invader. Rajagopalachari refused to agree to this resolution and soon resigned from the Congress. In June, 1942, Gandhi and Nehru discussed their respective views. As Gandhiji put it, logic of facts overwhelmed Nehru who endorsed the struggle to be launched by Gandhiji. Azad and Sardar Patel also approved the policy of resistance against the British in India. All the leaders accepted that call of Gandhiji in the Spirit of compromise and moderation.

**The Aim and Objects** : The aims and objects of the resistance to be launched by the Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi were

discussed at Wardha in July 1942, by the Congress Working Committee. After a week of discussion, persuasion and compromise a resolution was adopted on 14th July, 1942 which declared that Cripps Proposals showed that there was no change in British attitude towards India, that there was frustration and ill-feeling against the British. The resolution stressed that the communal problem could not be solved because of the British policy of “divide and rule” and called for the establishment of Assembly of a Provisional Government of all sections of people and for convening a Constituent Assembly to adjust relationship among all parties and with England after their withdrawal from India. This relation was endorsed by the All India Congress Committee at Bombay on 8th August, 1942. It declared that the ending of British Rule in this country was a vital and immediate issue on which depended the future of the War and the success of freedom and democracy. Non-violence was declared as the basis of the movement. The A.I.C.C. made a fervent appeal to the British and the United States to respond to the call of reason. This resolution was described by the Government, the press and the people as the “Quit India Resolution” and the movement which started came to be known as the “Quit India Movement”. M.A. Jinnah and the Muslim League opposed this resolution and the programme of resistance.

The aim and objects of the movement were embodied in the resolution passed at Wardha on 14th July, and in Bombay on 8th August, 1942. These were:

1. To remove all foreign domination over India and to make her free and independent.
2. To build up a spirit of resistance to aggression among Indians by granting them freedom.
3. To achieve communal harmony by establishing Provisional Government.
4. To throw the great resources of India into the war against Nazism and Fascism.
5. To assist Asiatic nations under foreign domination to gain freedom.
6. To bring about a world federation which would ensure the disbanding of armies navies and air forces and mobilising the resources of the world for the good of mankind.

**Nature and Scope :** Thus the aims and objects of the Movement were not based on narrow national interests but on international needs and humanitarian consideration. The Movement was to be non-violent because Gandhiji described it as “Non-violent Non-cooperation” . and urged that under no circumstances, not even under provocation, should the people resort to violence.

The Movement was to include all sections of people in active resistance. The Muslims, the Sikhs, the Christians and Parsis were all invited by Gandhiji to participate in the Movement. The Princes, merchants and other rich people were also asked by him to join the struggle and take the lead. The students and



teachers were also directed to play important role in the process of resistance. Workers and peasants were called upon to strengthen the movement at the grassroots. Gandhiji also called upon public servants and members of armed forces to assist the cause of freedom and liberty.

The Movement did not mean only going to jail. It included other forms of resistance like refusal to pay taxes, refusal to obey orders, any refusal to work. Gandhiji was willing to encourage and start a general strike, if found necessary. He wanted to make the Movement “short and swift.”

The A.I.C.C. authorised Jawaharlal Nehru to explain the objects of the movement to the world. But in the early hours of the morning of 9th August, 1942, all the prominent leaders like Azad, Nehru, Gandhi, Patel, Rajendra Prasad, Acharya Kripalani, Asaf Ali, Mrs. Sarojani Naidu and others were arrested. The British authorities did not allow the leaders of the Congress Party an opportunity to explain the aims and the nature of the Movement. In the absence of the leaders who were imprisoned before they could issue any guidelines to the people, the Movement turned violent. There were disturbances all over the country. The people of Bihar, Bengal, Bombay and U.P. witnessed violent upsurge, communications were disrupted, electric and telephone wires were cut, police stations were attacked and burnt and trains and military vehicles were destroyed. The colleges, schools and universities were closed because many students and teachers joined the Movement. Workers began their strikes. There was both violence and public disorder. Socialist party under the leadership of Jaya Parkash Narayan, mobilised the common people against the Government.

The Government of India and the Provincial Governments let loose the forces of oppression. The Congress was declared an illegal organisation. Congress officers were arrested and imprisoned. Public meetings and processions were banned. The peaceful and spontaneous demonstration were banned and fired upon. *Lathi* charges were reported to disperse the mob. About 26,000 people were convicted and 18,000 were detained under the Defence of India rules.

Three Indian members of the Viceroy's Executive Council H.P. Mody, M.S. Aney and N.R. Sarkar resigned in protest against the repressive policy of the Government. All Parties Conference held at Delhi on 19th February, 1942 presided over by Sapru, failed to change or influence the policy of the British towards the Indian leaders. In 1943, Linlithgow was replaced by Sir Archibald Wavell as the Viceroy of India. He arrived in India on 18th October, 1943. On May 6, 1944, Gandhiji was released from the jail. The Mahatma took the initiative for opening negotiations with Lord Wavell with the object of breaking the deadlock. During 1943, Subhash Bose began his propaganda campaign against the British from the Far East but he was killed in a plane crash on 19th August, 1945. During the same period the Muslims League and its leader M.A. Jinnah consolidated

their position and continued to reiterate their demand for Pakistan. The efforts of Rajaji to bring Gandhiji and Jinnah closer failed to materialise. Gandhiji's move to resolve differences with Jinnah also failed. Thus Congress agitations during the Second World War failed to produce any tangible effect on British policy. Dr. Ishwari Prasad writes "The August revolution marks an epoch in the history of modern India. It was a revolt of the people against tyranny and oppression and can be compared with the fall of Bastille or October revolution of Russia.

**CONSTITUTION OF INDIA-ITS SALIENT FEATURES**

Indian Constitution is a unique document and it has many remarkable features which distinguish it from other constitutions. Constitution is not regarded only as a legal document but it is looked upon as a political document to serve the needs and aspirations of its people. The makers of the constitution were fully aware of the problems of Indian people, who were the victims of the colonial rule and obviously, therefore, they desired to frame an ideal constitution so that it could meet the growing needs of our people. The constitution of India has many peculiar features.

**I. Drawn from Different Sources**

It is sometimes alleged that our constitution has no originality and it has been framed after “ransacking all the foreign constitution of the World.” Even the critics have dubbed it as “a bag of borrows.” Professor M.P. Sharma has rightly maintained that the object of the makers of the constitution was not to frame an original constitution. What they wanted a good and workable constitution Dr. Ambedkar has aptly highlighted the credit of the founding fathers who gathered the best features of the existing constitution and needs of the country. So, it is a patch work but it is a beautiful patch work. The makers of our Constitution, therefore, had no hesitation to borrow or to draw upon the experience of other people in preparing a constitution which was to suit the needs of a multi-religious multi-lingual multi-racial society.

Our association with Great Britain made it natural for us to draw upon their political institutions. The adoption of parliamentary system of government and the Rule of Law in our system are obviously the British gifts to us. The influence of American Constitution is very much evident in the Chapter on fundamental rights and in provisions relating to the establishment of an independent judicial system. Our federal system is modeled on the constitutional system of Canada, Australia and South Africa. The Directive Principles of State Policy show the influence of the Constitutions of Ireland. The Amending procedure of our Constitutions is a unique feature which is a mixture of such procedures which find place in the constitutions of America and South Africa. The largest source of borrowing of course, has been the Government of India Act of 1935. In the words of Jennings, “The Constitution derives directly from the Government of India Act, 1935 and many of its provisions are copied almost textually.

Some critics of course, criticised our Constitution for being “slavish imitation” or

not suited to the genius of the people and even some went to the extent to saying that it would be un-workable. However, the history has proved otherwise and our constitution has survived while many constitution around us have withered away.

## **II. Written and Longhiest Constitution**

In the words of Prof. Jennings, the Indian constitution is the longest and most detailed constitution in the world. The original constitution (as enforced on 26th January 1950) contained as many as 395 articles and 8 schedules. Ninth schedule was adopted as a result of First Constitution Amendment Act (1950) for validating abolition of Zamindari.

The constitution has been amended after more than 77 times, so far and it continues, to be the lengthiest Constitution in the world. After the repeal and addition of several provisions, it has at present 395 articles and 12 schedules. The addition are made in the Article by adding A, B, C, etc. and hence the of Articles remains same. The extraordinary bulk of the constitution is due to several reason:

- (a) Our constitution unlike the constitution of USA, sketches not only the detailed provisions relating to governmental system at the Union level but also describes in equal detail. the structure and mechanism of state governments. In a federal policy, freedom is given to states to prepare their constitution but this was denied in our Constitution.
- (b) Apart from it, detailed provisions have been made regarding distribution of power and functions between the Union and the states in all respects of their administration and other activities. Provisions have also been inserted regarding matters connected with Inter-State relations, coordination and adjudication of disputes amongst the states.
- (c) Indian Constitution contains an elaborate provision for fundamental rights which specifies the basic liberties and freedoms for the people. It also enumerates limitation, and restrictions which have been placed on our fundamental rights. Besides a special chapter IV dealing with Directive Principles of State policy has been inserted in our Constitution and they have been declared as fundamental in the governance of our country to complete the task of social revolution.
- (d) The makers of the constitution also included in detail the provisions relating to the organization, structure, and functions of Supreme Court of India and also of the High Courts in the states including salaries allowances etc. of the judges.
- (e) Keeping in view the peculiar problems of the Indian people, adequate provisions relating to official language, safeguards for the minorities like Anglo-Indians, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes etc. have included.
- (f) Effective provision to ensure independent and impartial functioning of

the Union Public Service Commission and Election Commission have been included.

(g) Part X of the constitution contains emergency provisions which were considered essential to save the infant democracy which was passing through critical times in the wake of the partition of the country.

It is, therefore, not difficult to understand the circumstances and reasons which prompted the Founding Fathers to incorporate so many provisions in our constitution, the Framers wanted to frame an ideal constitution so that it could meet the growing needs of the Indian people. They also took adequate safeguards to avoid all loopholes and defects, which they noticed in the working of all the known constitutions of the world.

### **III. Form of Government of India : (Parliamentary System)**

The Constitution of India establishes a Parliamentary form of Government both at the Centre and in the States on the British model. The essence of the Parliamentary form of government is its responsibility to the legislature (Lok Sabha). The President is the head of the state. The real executive power is vested in Council of Ministers whose head is the Prime Minister, the Council of Ministers is collectively responsible to Lower House, i.e. Lok Sabha. Lok Sabha is directly elected on the basis of adult franchise normally for five years. The position is the same in that States. Such a government is therefore, called a responsible government. This form of government is different from the presidential form of government as in U.S.A. which is based on the theory of separation of powers and the President is the real executive. There the executive powers are vested in him. He is not responsible to the Lower House of Congress i.e. The House of Representatives. The members of Legislature are appointed by the President and are responsible to him alone.

The Indian Constitution provides for a Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister as its head to aid and advise of President. Under Article 75 (1), the Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President and other minister shall be appointed by the President on his recommendations. Every minister has to be a member of either House of Parliament. If he is not a member, he must become the member of Parliament within the period of six months. If however, not elected in this period, he is bound to resign from the Cabinet. Before a minister enters his office the President shall administer to him the oath of office and secrecy. The Minister holds office during the pleasure of the president.

According to Art 75 (2) the Prime Minister is the head of Council of Ministers and is appointed by the President. But in appointing the Prime Minister the President can hardly exercise his discretion since we have adopted the English Cabinet which works on the well accepted conventions. One of the well-established conventions in England is that, the leader of the Majority party of the Lower House is appointed Prime Minister. Hence, the provisions relating to the council

of minister should be interpreted in the light of British experience. The president's choice to select of Prime Minister is restricted to the leader of the party commanding majority in the Lok Sabha or to a person who is in a position to win the confidence of the majority in the House. Thus when a single political party has gained absolute majority in the Lok Sabha and has an accepted leader, the President's choice of selecting Prime Minister is a mere formality.

In the case of multiple party system as it prevails in India presently, if no party gains absolute majority and a coalition government is to be formed, the President can exercise a little discretion and select the leader of party, who in his opinion can form a stable ministry. For example since no party had clear majority in the 1996 general elections, the President S.D. Sharma invited the BJP, the single largest party in the house to form the government ignoring the claim of the National Front, an alliance of 13 parties 9 with support of the Congress form outside) only when B.J.P. was defeated on the floor of the house i.e. when it could not prove its majority, National Front was given the Chance to form the Government. This act of the president is in conformity with the traditions of parliamentary democracy because the foremost right to form the government belongs to single largest party in the house. A few other examples can also be cited, President Sanjiva Reddy selected Ch. Charan Singh Leader of Lok Dal as Prime Minister in 1979 after the resignation of Mr. Morarji Desai. Similarly the fall of B.P. Singh Government in Nov. 1989 the President appointed Mr. Chandra Shekhar, the leader of break-away Janata (S) with the support of Congress (I) as the Prime Minister. The other minister are appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister who has the final word in choosing the members of his team (Cabinet). This power of Prime Minister is also essential for the smooth functioning of principle of collective responsibility which is the basic principle of every parliamentary form of government. In England, this principal works on the well established convention, but in India this principle is ensured under Article 75 (3) of the Constitution. Alongwith this principle of collective responsibility to Lok Sabha, the principle, of individual responsibility of each minister to the Parliament also works. If the Minister takes action without the Cabinet's approval, the Cabinet may not retain him and at the same time contend that the responsibility is all his. According to Act 74 (1) The Prime Minister is constitutionally bound to communicate the decisions of the Cabinet and not merely render advice to the President. The President is in fact bound to accept the decision taken by the Cabinet. Because it is the. Prime Minister and his cabinet which is responsible to the House of People. There is no provision in the Constitution which makes the President responsible to the parliament.

In the dismissal of ministers, the President accepts the recommendations of the Prime Minister. If the Prime Minister feels that the presence of any minister is

detrimental to the efficiency, integrity of policy of Government. He may advise the President to dismiss him from the Cabinet. Shri M.C. Chagla. Shri T.T. Krishnamachari, Shri Ashok Mehta, Dr. C.D. Deshmukh and Shri Moraji Desai, Shri Charan Singh and Raj Narain had to resign as they had their differences with the Prime Minister.

Again the Cabinet has to resign if it loses the confidence of the Lok Sabha in keeping with an established convention of parliamentary type of Government. Prof. V.N. Shukla has rightly observed that if the President dismisses a ministry when he is satisfied on reasonable ground that it has lost the support of the people. It is no violation of the Constitution. The will of people must in the end prevail.<sup>5</sup>

#### **IV. Secularism**

A secular state means that in matters of religion it is neutral. It is the ancient doctrine in India that the state protects all religions but interferes in none. The state can have no religion of its own. It should treat all religions equally. The state must extend similar treatment to the Church, the Mosque, Gurudwara and the Temple. In a secular state, the state is only concerned with the relation between man and man. It is not concerned with the relation of man with god. It is left to individual's conscience.

Article 25 (1) guarantees to all citizens the freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practice and propagate any religion. This right is, however subject to public morality and health and to the other provisions of part III of the Constitution, under sub-clause (a) and (b) of clause (2) of Article 25 the state has the power (a) to regulate or restrict any economic financial or other secular activity which may be associated with religious practices, (b) to provide for (i) social welfare and reform and (ii) to throw open Hindu religious institutions of a public character to all classes and section of Hindus.

Religious liberty is subject to public order, morality and health. Thus, section 34 of the Police Act prohibits the slaughter of cattle or indecent exposure of one's person in public place. These acts cannot be justified on the plea of practice of religious rites. Further the state can regulate economic, financial and political activities associated with religious practices vide article 25 (2) The freedom to practice extends only to those activities which form part of the essence of religion.

The State under Article 25, clause (2) (b) is authorised to make laws for social welfare and reform. Under this, the state can eradicate social practices and dogmas which stand in the path of the country's onward progress. They do not affect the essence of any religion. Article 26 concedes freedom to manage religious affairs subject to public order, morality and health. However, it is significant to note that the right guaranteed by Article 25 is an individual religious denomination

or any section thereof. Under the Article 26 it may be added that a religion denomination or organisation is free to manage its own affairs in matters of religion. The state cannot interfere with exercise of this right unless it runs counter to public order health or morality. The Court, however, has the right to determine whether a particular right or ceremony is regarded as essential by tenets of a particular religion.

Article 27 provides freedom from the taxes for the promotion of and particular religion. This Article emphasises the secular character of the state. The public money collected by way to tax cannot be spent by the state for the promotion of any particular religion. The reason underlying this provision is the India being a secular state and there being freedom of religion guaranteed by the Constitutions both to individual and groups. it is against the policy of the Constitution, to payout of public funds any money for the promotion or maintenance of the particular religious denomination.

Article 28 prohibits religious instructions in the state aided institutions. The institutions are of four” kinds: (a) Institutions wholly maintained by the State, (b) Institutions recognised by the State. (c) institutions that are receiving aid out of the state fund, (d) institutions that are administered by the State but are established under any trust or endowment. In the institution of type (a) no religious instruction can be imparted (b) and (c) type of institutions religious instruction may be imparted only with the consent to the individuals. In the type (d) institutions, there is no restriction on religious instructions.

## **V. Federalism**

The most remarkable feature of the Indian Constitution is the being a federal constitution it acquires a unitary character during the time of emergency. During the proclamation of emergency, the normal distribution of powers between the Centre and the State undergoes a vital change. The Parliament is empowered to legislate not only on the subjects mentioned in the State List but also the Central Government is empowered to give directions to State as to the manner in which it should execute its executive power. The financial arrangement between the Centre and the State can also be controlled by the Union Government. Thus, during the proclamation of emergency all power are centralised in the Union Government and the Constitution acquires a unitary character. This does not happen only during the emergency. Even in time of peace, our constitution functions largely in a unitary manner.

The combination of federal and unitary system is a unique feature of the Indian Constitution. It is not only in times of war but also in times of peace that our Constitution functions as unitary. This feature of the Constitution can be better understood in the context of light of historical background upon which the federalism has been introduced in India and also in the light of experiences in other federal countries.



Further, the State Reorganization Act of 1956 introduced the novel feature of regional coordination and cooperation through the formation of zonal Councils to act in an advisory capacity. The meeting of zonal Council is held periodically under the Home Minister of the Central Government. It constitutes a novel experiment in federalism.

In the light of the aforesaid observations, Indian federal system may be characterised as a unique model or a unitary system with certain subsidiary federal features. Certain features provided in the constitution to go to support this contention.

The Union Government is so powerful that the autonomy of the states seems all illusory. From the federal point of view the division of powers between the Centre and States is wholly unfair. The Union List includes all the major item of national importance External affairs, Defence and the Defence Force, Arms and Ammunition, Atomic Energy, in all 97 items, The Centre exercises its overriding control over even the 52 items in the Concurrent list. The States have their control over 62 items of the State List. Further the residuary power have also been given to the Centre. In special circumstance, Parliament can breach into the State List and pass laws concerning matters included in that list. The 24th Amendment further curtailed the authority of the States of control law and order problems. The Centre has the power to deal with any grave situation of law (Art 257 A).

In matter of finance, states are terribly weak. The Planning Commission is a central agency and the states have to approach it for all kinds of assistance. It is true that it has all been specially laid down in the Constitution as to what taxes shall be assigned to or shared with the states, but the proportion of states has been felt to be determined by the President.

Article 250 provides that during the enforcement of a proclamation of Emergency, Parliament may make laws concerning any of the matters in the will remain in force until six months after the emergency.

The Central Parliament has such overriding Power that it can get political map of the Country changed. The Centre is empowered to modify the boundaries of the State. Thus the Centre in pursuance of these provisions, can change the boundary line of a state to its disadvantage. Thus the very existence of the state depends upon the sweet will of the Central Government.

Further the power of initiating a bill of amendment in the Constitution lies with the Centre alone. The State have limited say in matters of Constitutional amendments. Matters concerning the federal framework of the constitution have to be ratified by half of the state legislatures by simple majority.

The states in India do not share equality of representation in the Rajya Sabha as is the case in the United States of America where equal representation is

given to all the fifty states in the Senate, the upper house of Congress. Even the nominated element finds place in the Rajya Sabha. Further, states have to carry out central directions in addition to the delegation of some of its (the centre's) functions in relation to any matter co-extensive with its executive and authority. Certain types of bills (those dealing with the compulsory acquisition of private property imposing taxes on a declared essential items etc,) passed by the state legislature reserved by the Governor for the President's consideration.

Single citizenship, uniform Penal code, organisation of All India Services also add to the powers of the Central Government. Prof. K.C, Wheare has rightly summed up the nature of Indian Federalism, as "India is a unitary state with the subsidiary federal rather than a federal state with subsidiary features of unitary state." He called it a "Quasi federal state."

## **VI. Rigidity**

The nature of amending process in a constitution makes it either a rigid or flexible document. Whereas in his "Federal Government."<sup>7</sup> A rigid constitution is one which requires as special method of amendment for any of its provisions while in a flexible constitution any of its provisions can be amended by a ordinary legislative process. A written constitution is generally rigid. The Indian Constitution though written is sufficiently flexible. There, are only a few provisions of the Constitution which require the consent of the state legislatures. The rest of the provisions may be amended by a special majority of the Union Parliament. The fact that the Indian Constitutions has been amended during the 47 years of working 77 times disapproves the view taken by Sir Ivor Jennings who had characterised our Constitution as rigid for reason (a) that process of amendment is complicated and difficult, (b) that matters which should, have been left to legislation having been incorporated into the Constitution, no change in these matters is possible without going the. process of amendment.

The unwritten nature of the British Constitution makes it extraordinarily flexible. It is adaptable to changing circumstances capable of evolution which no other system can match. The Constitution of the United States in written and rigid. It remains a problem of prime political national importance to maintain, in the Constitution of India, a degree of flexibility to keep with the nation's social and economic progress and purpose. The British Constitution continue to evolve according to time and circumstances. Under a written constitution in India the necessary evolution can only be brought about by constitutional amendments and by the growth of conventions and practices within the limits set by the constitutional provisions from time to time. The makers of the Indian Constitution appear to have provided in the Constitution provision for amendment and the requisite degree of flexibility in the constitution combined with restrain upon undue tinkering with it.

The process of amendment of our Constitution has indeed taken away the initiative of the states. It violates, the sanctity of our federal scheme which leaves no initiative to the states. The position of the states becomes all the more weak, when the same party acquires majority at the centre as well as in the states. In respect of the procedure of its amendment, Article 368 leaves a big scope for taking the matters to the courts for adjudication. Thus, the way is opened for the lawyer's paradise. The makers of our Constitution were guided by the interests of the people, which alone could restore confidence among the people and that no part of it should prove a stumbling block to entail its own destruction under very compelling circumstances. For these consideration the constitution has been given a flexible nature with subsidiary touches of a rigid constitution so far as the formal federal structure is concerned.

### **VII. Preamble**

The Preamble to constitution sets out the main objectives which the government is intended to achieve. It is sort introduction to the statute and is many a times very helpful to understand the policy and the legislative intent. Though in an ordinary statute not much importance is attached to the Preamble. All importance has to be attached to the Preamble in Constitutional statute. The Constitution makers have given to the Preamble the place. Dealing with the Preamble in the *Berubari case*, The Supreme Court said, "The Preamble to the Constitution is key to open the mind of the makers, and shows the general purpose for which they made the several provisions in the Constitution. In a nutshell the Preamble contains the goals and aspiration of the people of India.

The Preamble serves several purpose:

- (a) It indicates the sources from which the constitution comes viz., the people of India.
- (b) It contains the enacting clause which brings into force the constitution.
- (c) It declares the great right and freedom which the Constitution of India intended to secure to all citizen and basic type of government and policy which was to be established as it has been explained in the preceding paragraphs.

It is ordained by the people of India through their representatives assembled in a sovereign Constituent Assembly. The Preamble declares in an unambiguous terms that it is the people of India who have adopted, enacted and given to themselves this Constitution. It declares, therefore that the source of authority under the constitution is the people of India and there is no subordination to any external authority.

The Preamble of the Constitution declares India to be a "Sovereign, Democratic, Republic." Sovereign power is that which is absolute and uncontrolled, In the words of Cooley, "A state is sovereign where there resides within itself a supreme

and absolute power acknowledging no superior.” The word “sovereign” emphasizes that India is no more dependent upon any outside authority. However, India is still a member of the Commonwealth of Nations, But her membership of the Commonwealth of Nations is not inconsistent with her independent sovereign status.

Following are the objectives which the Preamble secures to every citizen:

**Justice:** Social, economic and political

**Liberty:** Of thought, expression, faith, worship.

**Equality:** of status and opportunity and to promote among the people of India.

**Fraternity:** Assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the Nation. The Preamble enshrines the justifiable and non-justifiable part of our basic framework in the form of the Fundamental Rights and the Directive principle. In fact these well speak of democratic socialism to which the government is supposed to (though in the present liberalised economic policies, it may sound paradoxical) wedded. Dr. Radakrishnan significantly said the Preamble through these Rights and Principles aims at the elimination of the very vestige of despotism and every hair loom of inorganic traditions. The Preamble sets out plan of aims and objectives which the government is expected to carry out in practice to justify the great moral significance attached to these by the Founding Fathers of a constitution. However. one should not ignore that fact that the Preamble by itself is neither a source of power, nor a source of the deprivation of power.

The 42nd Constitution Amendment had amended the Preamble in following way:

- (a) In the Preamble to the Constitution for the words “Sovereign Democratic Republic” has been substituted, and
- (b) For the words “Unity of the Nation” the words ‘Unity and integrity of Nation has been substituted.<sup>12</sup> The Chairman of the amendment Committee of the Congress party. Sardar Swaran Singh rejected the contention that the Preamble to the Constitution could not be amended. It could be altered or changed because the preamble was a part of the Constitutional.

### **VIII. Fundamental Rights and Duties**

Like other modern Constitutions the Constitution of India guarantees basic liberties to the people. The fundamental rights are more elaborate and real than those found in any other constitution. Part III of our constitution specifies these rights and, these rights impose restrictions on the authority of the State. The legislature or executive is not expected to do any thing contrary to these fundamental rights. If they dare to do so, the judiciary shall set aside such encroachments if they seeks to violate the sanctity of these rights. The inclusion of fundamental rights in the Indian constitution was considered essential to preserve the unity and integrity our country. 44th constitutional amendment

has deleted “Right to property” from the list of fundamental rights to enable the state to achieve the desired goal of establishing socialist society in our country. The 42nd Constitution Amendment Act (1976) has introduced a list of ten duties which are enumerated in Article 51-A. Though these duties are not themselves enforceable in the courts nor their violation as such punishable, nevertheless, if a court, before which a fundamental right is sought to be enforced, has to read all part of the constitution, it may refuse to enforce a fundamental right at the instance of an individual who has patently violated any of the duties specified in Art 51-A. If so, the emphasis of the original constitution on fundamental right has been minimised.

### **IX. Directive Principles of State Policy**

The inclusion of Directive Principles of State policy, as observed by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar is a novel feature of the Indian constitution and they embody the basic objectives and ideals which the state must keep in mind while formulating policy and enacting new laws which have been declared as fundamental in the governance of the country. In reality they portray model of the Society which the Founding Fathers wanted to establish in India. The Directive Principles or State Policy are contained in part IV of the Indian constitution. If fundamental rights, seek to guarantee democratic order, the Directive Principles spell out a charter of social and economic democracy in our country.

Through 42nd Constitution Amendment Act, 1976 the state acquired a right to implement all Directives and no such laws could be declared void even though it abridges fundamental rights contained in Arts 14, 19, and 31. But in a later judgment the Supreme Court, has struck down Section 4 of the 42nd constitution Amendment Act which gave primacy to the Directive Principle over, Fundamental Rights. The Court held that the Section 4 of Article 31-C was beyond the amending power of the parliament and was void since it damaged the basic or essential features of the constitution by total exclusion of challenge in a court of law on the grounds that it took away or abridged rights for implementing Directive Principles.

### **X Independent Judiciary**

A democratic policy can survive if it has an independent Judicial system to ensure Rule of law in place of “Rule of men.” The makers of Indian Constitution were fully aware of the need for such a judicial system as the judiciary was to act not only as guardian of the constitution but also as protector of the basic liberties of the Indian People. The Constitution provides sufficient safeguards to enable the judges of Supreme Court and High Courts to work independently without any fear. Judges of these courts can be removed through an extremely difficult process. They are paid handsome salaries which are paid out of the Consolidated Fund of India. After retirement they are entitled to pensions.

## **XI Nature of Indian Parliament**

Indian Parliament is the creature of the Constitution of India. Its powers, rights, privileges and obligations are found in the relevant articles of the Constitution of India. The British Parliament on the other hand, is a sovereign law-making body and is not the creation of the Constitution which is unwritten. It is not only sovereign but uncontrolled and possesses unlimited powers. The Constitution of India has conferred on the Indian Parliament powers to make laws in respect of matters specified in the appropriate place and schedules and curtailed its right and powers under certain other articles and particularly by the articles relevant of fundamental rights.

The Parliament in India consists of President, Lower House (Lok Sabha) and Upper House (Rajya Sabha). The President, though an integral part of the Parliament, is not a member of the Parliament (either house). The general pattern of our Parliament is like that of the English Parliament. It is a nonsovereign law-making body like the American Congress as the legislative authority is conditioned by the Written constitution. It is interesting to note that though the system of Parliamentary Government has been adopted according to the British model; the American doctrine of judicial review has been engrafted upon it to a limited extent. So our Parliament is the supreme law making body but not the sovereign law making body.

The 42nd Constitution Amendment Act strengthened the position of the Indian Parliament and conferred on it power to amend any part of Constitution. But in a judgment issued on May 9, 1980 the Supreme Court struck down section 55 of Constitution (42nd) Amendment Act 1976 which has placed unlimited powers on Parliament to amend the constitution. This removed the fears that the amending power may be used for political purpose as was done by the Congress Government in its 19 month period of Emergency.

## **XII Parliament and Executive**

There exists identical relationship between Executive and the Parliament in India and between the Executive and the Parliament in Britain. The difference between the two systems consists of the fact that Britain has a hereditary sovereign while India has a President elected by an electoral College representing the Union and State Legislature. India has a written constitution which may be amended only in accordance with the provision and produces set out in the Constitution itself and requiring more than a simple majority in Parliament while Britain has an unwritten Constitution and its constitution can be changed by the Parliament through a simple majority which in effect is the majority in the house of Commons only.

The Indian system like the British is based on the principle of a unitary concept.

There is division of functions between the Executive and Parliament but there is no separation of powers such as the one prevails in a Presidential system like that of the United States of America. Parliament controls the Executive in every aspect of the latter's working. The Executive must at all times have the confidence of the parliament in the lower House (Lok Sabha) Lacking the confidence it must resign. In a very real sense and unlike again a presidential system, both Parliament and Executive are different aspects of one integrated whole. In India all the members of the Council of Minister alongwith the Prime Minister as its head, are members of Parliament itself. In this system there is an established convention that the Prime Minister should normally be a member of the elected chamber. Our constitution has adopted this model. The Parliament may censure the Government depends or upon which it stakes its position. In that situation the Executive Government must fall immediately. Conversely however the Prime Minister may advise the President to dissolve the Lok Sabha and call for a fresh general election thus ending the life of the Parliament (Lok Sabha only). The power to, dissolve is a very strong weapon in the hand of a Prime Minister, and is not uncommon in the use. A Prime Minister, with a slim majority in Parliament (as was the situation in 1969 when the Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi was left with minority support in a House of 525 members consequent upon the Congress party split in 1969) may decide upon a fresh election in the hope and expectation of increasing majority, so as to reduce dependence upon other party or the pressure of a strong opposition. This happened in India in 1971 and in Britain in 1970. The Indian Prime Minister returned with a greatly increased majority. The British lost the election altogether and resigned, thereby making way for the opposition to form the government. It may be noted here that the President under the 42nd Constitution Amendment has been made a symbolic head of the nation by inserting changes in Article 74 of the Constitution and has been deprived of his discretionary powers. He appears to be in fact a dummy figure. In certain circumstances, however, he can exercise tremendous power.

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