

General Knowledge Today



Prelims Indian History-1: Prehistory and Indus Valley

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Prelims Indian History-1: Prehistory and Indus Valley

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Model Questions

Prelims MCQ Topics

Classification of Prehistoric Period, Palaeolithic Age, Narmada Man, Lower Palaeolithic Period, Various cultures in Lower Palaeolithic era, Middle Palaeolithic Period, Upper Palaeolithic Culture, Important Palaeolithic sites in India, Mesolithic Era, Tools of Mesolithic Era, Changes in Life in Mesolithic Era, Important Mesolithic Sites, Neolithic Revolution, Mehrgarh Culture and Chalcolithic Era. Indus Valley Civilization: Extent, Origin, Sites, Life, Decline. Prelims Model Questions.

Note: Kindly check the Prelims Model Questions in the end of this module.



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Pre-History

Prehistoric period belongs to the time before the emergence of writing. It is believed that man learnt writing only about 5000-8000 years ago during the Neolithic period. The earliest known Neolithic writings are *Dispilio Tablet* (found in Greece) and *Tărtăria tablets* (found in Romania). Both of these belong to 6th millennium BC. Thus, Prehistory began with appearance of the human beings about five lakh years ago, and finished with the invention of writing about 6-8 thousand years ago.

Classification of Prehistoric Period

Three classes of prehistoric period are stone, bronze and iron ages, with the later two overlapping with historic age.

Stone Age is divided into three periods viz. Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic. Out of them, Palaeolithic (longest) and Mesolithic represent hunting-gathering stage while the Neolithic represents the stage of food production, i.e. plant cultivation and animal husbandry.

Palaeolithic Age

The term Palaeolithic was coined by archaeologist John Lubbock in 1865. Palaeolithic Age spanned from 500,000 years ago {when tool making members of *Homo erectus* had arrived} till 10,000 BC. It is divided into three periods viz. *lower Palaeolithic*, *middle Palaeolithic* and *upper Palaeolithic* ages. The transition from each of these phases to successive phases was slow and marked by increased fineness in the stone tools and technology of the time as follows:

- Lower Palaeolithic age tools – Handaxe and cleaver
- Middle Palaeolithic age tools – Flakes
- Upper Palaeolithic tools – Flakes and blades

Further, this division is not uniform around the world because of several factors such as time lag, climatic vagaries, great distances, numerous geographical and physical barriers etc. Palaeolithic age finally ended with the end of Ice Age in about 10,000 BC.

Narmada Man – the only stone age fossil from India

Narmada Man or *Narmada Human* is the earliest *Homo* species of Indian sub-continent. This fossil was found on banks of Narmada River in Hathnora Village of Madhya Pradesh in 1982. Narmada Man used to live 2.5 Lakh years ago and belonged to *Homo erectus* species, which was first among the three *Homo* species (*Homo habilis*, *Homo ergaster* and *Homo erectus*) to acquire tool making skills. These three species predate *Homo sapiens sapiens*, to which we belong. The importance of Narmada man is that it is only authentic record of a *Homo* species fossil from *Stone Age in India*.

Lower Palaeolithic Period

In lower Palaeolithic phase, the tools were mainly hand axes and cleavers with some flakes also. These tools were relatively blunt and have been found all over India except plains of Indus, Ganga



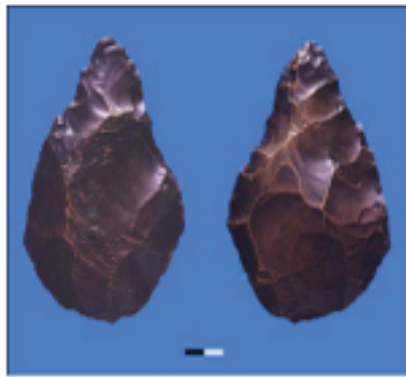
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and Brahmaputra {because raw material may not be available in these plains to make tools}. Many Palaeolithic tool assemblages were found around Tapti, Godavari, Bhima and Krishna rivers. The raw material used for making tools was mainly quartzite and chert but quartz and basalt was also used.

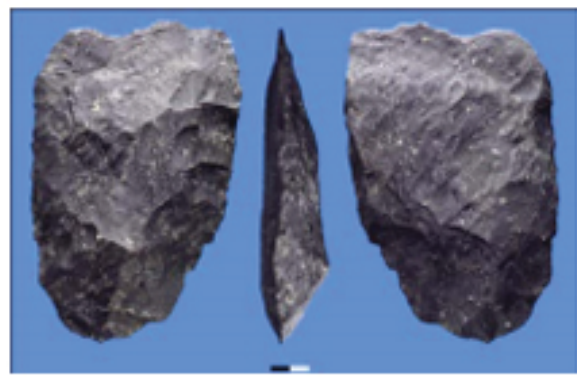
Tools of Paleolithic Era



Chopper



Handaxe



Cleaver

Various cultures in Lower Palaeolithic era

The Palaeolithic period in India shows several distinct cultural and technological traditions.

Soan Culture

Extensive deposits of pebble tools and choppers found in the Soan river (a tributary of Indus) valley in Pakistan along with some other similar sites in nearby area are collectively called Soan culture or Sohan culture.

Madrasian Culture

Father of Indian Pre-history Robert Bruce Foote had discovered hand axes near Chennai and called it Madrasian culture. Foote was a geologist of the Geological Survey of India.

Nevasan Culture

Some Middle Palaeolithic era flake tools, scrappers, borers etc. were found at Nevasa site (Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra) in the valley of river Godavari and are called Nevasan culture.

Acheulian culture

Acheulian culture was named after the French site of St. Acheul, which was *first effective colonization of the Indian subcontinent* and is almost synonymous with the lower Palaeolithic settlements in India. Most of the sites in India including those in peninsular India, Deccan, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, East and North East have been categorized in Acheulian culture.

Middle Palaeolithic Period

The lower Paleolithic cultures slowly transformed into the middle Palaeolithic by shedding some of the tool types; and by incorporating new forms and new techniques of making them. In comparison to the lower Palaeolithic era, the tools in middle Palaeolithic became *smaller, thinner and lighter*. Due to this, middle Palaeolithic period is also known as Flake tool industry.

Further, there was also a significant change in the choice of raw material for making tools. While



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quartzite, quartz and basalt continued to be used, in many areas they were replaced or supplemented by fine-grained siliceous rocks like chert and jasper.

Important Middle Palaeolithic Sites in India included Luni valley, around Didwana, Budha Pushkar in Rajasthan; Valleys of the Belan, Son river, Narmada river and their tributaries in central India {including Bhimbetka} and some sparse sites in Chota Nagpur plateau, Deccan plateau and Eastern Ghats.

Upper Palaeolithic Culture

Upper Palaeolithic culture developed during the later part of the upper Pleistocene. The Upper Palaeolithic period has recorded a rich panorama of fossils in the peninsular rivers of India. One important discovery is of the ostrich egg shells at over 40 sites in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, which shows that ostrich, a bird adapted to arid climate, was widely distributed in western India during the later part of the upper Pleistocene. There were very important changes in the Palaeolithic-environment which had its own impact on the distribution and living ways of the humans. Some of them were as follows:

- There was extremely cold and arid climate in the high altitude and northern latitudes.
- There was extensive formation of deserts in North west India
- The drainage pattern of western India became almost defunct and river courses shifted “westwards”.
- Vegetation cover over most of the country thinned out during this period.
- Coastal areas of south-eastern Tamil Nadu, Saurashtra and Kutch developed quartz and carbonate dunes as a result of the lowering of the sea level.
- During terminal Pleistocene south-westerly monsoons became weak and the sea level decreased by scores of metres.

Due to the harsh and arid climate, the vegetation was sparse though the faunal fossils show presence of grasslands. The human population faced rusticated food resources and that is the reason that the number of Upper Palaeolithic sites is very limited in the arid and semi-arid regions. The most opulent archaeological evidence of this period comes from the Belan and Son valleys in the northern Vindhyas , Chota Nagpur plateau in Bihar , upland Maharashtra, Orissa and from the Eastern Ghats in Andhra Pradesh.

Tools of Upper Palaeolithic Era

The tools of Upper Palaeolithic Era are further refined upon the lower and middle periods and *show a marked regional diversity with respect to the refinement of techniques and standardization of finished tool forms*. Man also used prototypes of traps, snares and nets during the upper Palaeolithic times. The advancement in tools is evident from bores in stones, grinding slabs etc. The bored stones are still used by fishermen as net sinkers in riverine fishing and marine fishing. The use of grinding stones



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might have been for processing plant foods such as wild rice.

Another important discovery of upper Palaeolithic period was of rubble built in circular form. Further, the upper Palaeolithic settlements also show a distinct trend being associated with permanent sources of waters.

The earliest form of art by humans also belongs to upper Palaeolithic period in the form of rock paintings.

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Important Palaeolithic sites in India

Lingsugur in Raichur district, Karnataka was the first site to be discovered from India. Apart from this, some of the important Palaeolithic sites in India are as follows:

- Lidder river Pahalgam , Kashmir
- Sohan valley Punjab,
- Banks of River Beas, Banganga, Sirsa Haryana,
- Chittorgarh and Kota, Rajasthan,
- River Wagoon, Kadamali basins Rajasthan.
- River Sabaramati and Mahi basins (Rajasthan & Gujarat),
- Basins of river tapti, Godavari, Bhima and Krishna
- Koregaon, Chandoli and shikarpur (Maharashtra),
- River Raro (Jharkhand),
- River Suvarnrekha (Orissa),
- Ghatprabha River Basin (Karnataka).
- Belan Valley, Allahabad
- Sinsgi Talav, Didwana , Nagaur Rajasthan
- Hunsgi, Gulbarga in Karnataka.
- Attirampakkam in Tamilnadu

Mesolithic Era

The transition from the Palaeolithic period to Mesolithic period is marked by transition from *Pleistocene period to Holocene* and favourable changes in the climate. The climate became warmer and humid and there was expansion of flora and fauna contributed by increased rainfall. This led to availability of new resources to humans.



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Tools of Mesolithic Era

The Mesolithic tools smaller in size and better in finishing (more geometric) than the Palaeolithic age and are called *Microliths*. These microliths are tiny tools of one to five centimetres length, made by blunting one or more sides with steep retouch.



The main tool types are backed blades, obliquely truncated blades, points, crescents, triangles and trapezes. Some of the microliths were used as components of spearheads, arrowheads, knives, sickles, harpoons and daggers. They were fitted into grooves in bone, wood and reed shafts and joined together by natural adhesives like gum and resin. Use of bow and arrows for hunting has been documented by Mesolithic man in rock art of that period. The Bored stones, which had already appeared during the upper Palaeolithic, became common during this, and the Neolithic and Chalcolithic periods. These are believed to have been used as weights in digging sticks and as net sinkers. Similarly, shallow querns and grinding stones also occur at several sites. These new technological elements led to enhanced efficiency in hunting, collection and processing of wild plant foods.

Changes in Life in Mesolithic Era

Domestication of Plants and Animals

The economy of early period of Mesolithic age was based on hunting, fishing and food gathering. Slowly domesticating crops and animals made their way into human life. By 6000 BC, food production became prominent part of Mesolithic life. Agriculture had not fully developed by was only a prototype of domestication of crops and animals. The earliest evidence of domestication of animals has been provided by Adamagarh in Madhya Pradesh and Bagor in Rajasthan. Some examples of earliest cultivation of plants around 7000-6000 years back have been found near Sambhar lake in Ajmer Rajasthan, Mehrgarh in Pakistan etc.

The first animals to be domesticated were dog, cattle, sheep and goat and the first plants to be cultivated were wheat and barley. *This new subsistence economy based on food production had a lasting impact on the evolution of human society and the environment.* In the humid lands, extending from the



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middle Ganga valley to China and Southeast Asia, rice cultivation and domestication of pig was accomplished probably around the same time because rice and pig existed in wild form in this region. The cultivation of yams and taro also took place in this region. Domesticated animals proved to be useful not only for meat but also for milk, hide, agricultural operations, and transport.

Nomadism to Sedentary settlements

The favourable climate, better rainfalls, warm atmosphere and increased food security led to reduction in nomadism to seasonally sedentary settlement and increased population. They moved to new areas such as nearby rivers which provided water. First human colonization of the Ganga plains took place during this period.

Disposal of dead and making of Graves

The sedentary settlements lead to beginning of the tradition of various ways of intentional disposal of the dead. *The first evidence of intentional disposal of the dead comes from Mesolithic Era* Mesolithic human burials have been found at Bagor in Rajasthan, Langhnaj in Gujarat, Bhimbetka in Madhya Pradesh etc. The dead were buried in graves both in extended and crouched position {in crouched position knees are bent and the upper body is brought forward and down}. In some cases two individuals were buried in a single grave. The dead were occasionally provided with grave offerings which include chunks of meat, grinding stones, stone, bone and antler ornaments, and pieces of haematite.

Mesolithic Art

The Mesolithic man was a lover of art, evident from the paintings in several thousand rock shelters in the Vindhyan sandstone hills in central India. The paintings have been found in both inhabited and uninhabited shelters. The paintings are made mostly in red and white pigments, made from the nodules found in rocks and earth. The subject matter of the paintings are mostly wild animals and hunting scenes, though there are some related to human social and religious life such as sex and child birth. These Rock arts are paintings {petrographs} and engravings {petroglyphs} done in rock shelters or natural caves. In India also, most of the rock art, especially paintings and carvings, have been known to exist from the Mesolithic Age, which continued to Neolithic Age, Iron Age and early historic period. This art not only reflects the cultural life of the times but also a fine aesthetic sense comparable to modern paintings.

Important Mesolithic Sites

- In Rajasthan, Bagor is almost largest Mesolithic site in India. Other major Mesolithic sites in Rajasthan are Tilwara, Pachpadra basin and Sojat Area etc.
- In Gujarat, mesolithic sites include those on banks of river Sabarmati asuch as Akhaj, Valsana, Hirpur, Langhanj etc.
- In Uttar Pradesh, Sarai Nahar Rai, Morhana Pahar and Lekkahia are important Mesolithic



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sites.

- In Madhya Pradesh, Bhimbetka along with Adamgarh, Chaturbhujnath Nala are major Mesolithic sites.
- In Jharkhand Chhota nagpur plateau is a major Mesolithic site in India.
- In Odisha, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar, Sundergarh are major mesolithic sites.
- In South India, Mesolithic sites are abundant in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

Neolithic Revolution, Mehrgarh Culture and Chalcolithic Era

The Neolithic period began around 10700 to 9400 BC in Tell Qaramel in Northern Syria In South Asia the date assigned to Neolithic period is 7000 BC and the earliest example is Mehrgarh Culture.

The Neolithic Revolution

The human settlements in the Mesolithic era got more sedentary and this was the beginning of establishment of villages. Man now could keep cattle, sheep and goats and protect crops from pests. In due course, as the efficiency of agricultural production improved, some farmers were able to generate surplus food. As a consequence, a section of the population were freed from the task of food production and their talents and energies were diverted to tasks such as the production of pots, baskets, quarrying of stone, making of bricks, masonry and carpentry.

This was the beginning of the new occupations such as the oil presser, washerman, barber, musician, dancers etc. This transition from hunting-gathering to food production is called the **Neolithic revolution**. Around 6000BC, the smelting of metals such as Copper began which was used for raw material to be used in tool production. Later, Tin was mixed with copper and bronze appeared which stronger metal than both tin and copper was. *Use of bronze for tools led to the invention of wheel which revolutionized transport and pottery production.*

Mehrgarh Culture

Mehrgarh is located on the Bolan River, a tributary of the Indus, at the eastern edge of the Baluchistan plateau overlooking the Indus plain. It is supposed to be the oldest agricultural settlement in the Indian subcontinent. Despite being an agriculture settlement, the Mehrgarh people used only stone tools so considered a part of Stone Age. This culture flourished from 7000BC to 2600 BC and showed improvisation in almost every area of life until it was abandoned.

Important Facts about Mehrgarh

- The main domesticated animals in Mehrgarh were cattle, sheep, goat and water buffalo while the main cultivated plants were wheat and barley.
- Houses made in mud and mud-bricks, created rooms to store grains, buried dead under floors of houses where they lived, used ornaments of steatite, turquoise, sea shells etc.
- Domesticated cotton for the first time. Used pottery decorated with images of birds, animals.
- Learnt use of making stone beads, copper smelting, timber, terracotta, commercial



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transactions.

- The first evidence in human history for the drilling of teeth in a living person was found in Mehrgarh.

Mehrgarh was discovered after discovery of Indus Valley Civilization and it is now seen as a precursor to the Indus Valley Civilization. The above features of Mehrgarh have changed the entire concept of the Indus civilization.

Other Important Neolithic Sites

- In Kashmir valley, Burzahom (meaning place of birth) and Gufkral (meaning cave of the potter) are important Neolithic / Chalcolithic sites.
- In Uttar Pradesh, Belan valley is a Neolithic site known as earliest rice-farming community in India.

Chalcolithic Period

Use of metals along with stones began with the Chalcolithic or Eneolithic period with abundant use of Copper. The economy of this period was based upon agriculture, stock raising, hunting and fishing. The earliest settlements of the Chalcolithic period in India range from the Gangetic basin to Chhotanagpur Plateau.

Salient Features

- The use of painted pottery is a hall mark of the Chalcolithic period. Chalcolithic pottery ranges from red ware, deep red ware to deep brown and black, pictographic red and black and polished red.
- The burial practice was another striking feature and the dead were buried in a particular direction all over a particular area. In Kashmir, the people of Neolithic settlements used to bury dogs with their masters.
- The largest site of the Chalcolithic period is Diamabad situated on the left bank of the Pravara River.

Some Chalcolithic Cultures

- Ahara Culture: The sites of Ahar Culture were Aahar (Rajasthan), Balathal, Gilund etc. The distinctive feature is black and red ware.
- Kayatha Culture: Located in Chambal and its tributaries, the sturdy red slipped ware with chocolate designs is main feature
- Malwa Culture: Narmada & its tributaries in Gujarat. One of the largest Chalcolithic settlements.
- Svalda Culture: The well-known sites are in Dhulia district of Maharashtra.
- Prabhas & Rangpur Culture: Both of them are derived from the Harappa culture. The polished red ware is the hall mark of this culture.



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Indus Valley Civilization

The Bronze Age Indus Valley Civilization or Harappan Civilization was the culmination of a long and sustained cultural evolution in the Indus Valley and surrounding areas. The term “Indus Valley Civilization” was used by John Marshall for the first time. The people of this civilization were definitely in touch with the other civilizations especially with Mesopotamian civilization.

Extent

As the three of the world’s civilizations developed along the river banks {Egyptian on Nile, Mesopotamian on Tigris–Euphrates, Chinese on the Yangtse}, the Indus valley civilization developed on bank of Indus and several other nearby rivers such as *Ghaggar– Hakra*, the now dried up *Saraswati* and the *Drasadvati*. Centre of the civilization was in Sind and Punjab and from there, it spread in all directions.

Its westernmost point was Suktagendor in South Baluchistan while easternmost point was Alamgirpur in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh. In North, it extended Afghanistan while in South, its extent was up at least Maharashtra state. So far, around 1400 settlements have been discovered, most of which are located on river banks. This civilization was largest of the four ancient urban civilizations of Egypt, Mesopotamia, South Asia and China and covered an area of around 1.3 million square kilometers. This area is triangular in shape and no other ancient civilization was extended to such a large area.

Origin and Period

Indus Valley civilization is now considered as a continuation of the neolithic Mehrgarh culture which flourished between 7000BC to 5000BC. The overall period assigned to Indus Valley Civilization is 3300–1300 BC, with its mature period between 2600 to 1900 BC.

Some people call Indus Valley people as Proto-Dravidians, who might have been pushed to south in mature Harappan phase when Aryans, with their advanced military skills commenced their migration around 2000BC.

Indus Valley Sites

Harappa

Harappa is the first discovered site of this civilization excavated in 1921 by a team led by Daya Ram Sahni. It was a major urban centre during its mature phase surrounded by extensive walls. It is located in Punjab Province, Pakistan, on an old bank / bed of the River Ravi. Its location along old course of Ravi provided access to trade networks, aquatic food and water for drinking and cultivation. Due to this, Harappa remained occupied for a long time. Further, Harappa was also a meeting point of trade routes coming from east.

Archaeologists have divided Harappa in five different phases of which oldest is Ravi aspect / Hakra (3300-2800BC), followed by Kot Dijian or Early Harappa (2800-2600BC) followed by Mature



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(2600-1900BC), Transitional (1900-1800BC) and Late Harappa (1800-1300BC) phases.

Important Findings of Harappa

The important material findings at Harappa include pottery, chert blades, copper or bronze implements, terracotta figurines, seals and sealing, weights, etc. This apart, the two rows of granaries with brick platforms, a citadel on elevated platform, a supposed workmen's quarter, vanity case, furnaces, crucibles for bronze smelting etc. have also been found. Harappa also is the only site which yields the evidence of coffin burial. A copper bullock cart is another notable finding.

Mohen-jo Daro

Mohenjo-Daro (mound of dead) was excavated by a team led by R.D. Banerjee in 1922. It is located in the Larkana District of Sindh Pakistan on bank of Indus River.

Important Findings of Mohenjo Daro

Notable findings at Mohenjo-Daro are the magnum opus **Great Bath**, uniform buildings and weights, hidden drains and other hallmarks of the civilization. This is the site where most unicorn seals have been found. Mohenjo-Daro is also sometimes known as largest urban centre of the civilization. The famous bronze dancing girl, seal of supposed Pashupati, steatite statue of bearded priest, numerous terracotta figurines are another notable findings of Mohenjo-Daro.

Great Bath

The most famous building found at Mohenjo-Daro is a great bath. It is a 6×12 meter specimen of beautiful brick work. The water for the bath was provided from a well in an adjacent room. The floor was made up of bricks. Floor and outer walls were bituminized so that there is no leakage of water. There are open porch's on four sides of the bath. There is use of Burnt bricks, Mortar and Gypsum in the Great bath but **NO use of stone** is there.

Kalibangan

Kalibangan (black bangles) is in Hanumangarh district of Rajasthan. It was located on the banks of now dried up Sarwaswati River; and flourished for at least 5 centuries. The site was first discovered by Italian Luigi Pio Tessitori and was later excavated extensively by A Ghosh.

Important Findings at Kalibangan

The oldest ploughed field, evidence of earliest recorded Earthquake (which might have ended this city itself), Fire-Altars, Charging bull, tiled floor, two kinds of burials (circular and rectangular graves), bones of camels etc. are important findings of Kalibangan. Further, this site was different from Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro in the following respects:

- The bricks in other sites were baked ones, while Kalibangan bricks are earthen ones.
- There was no drainage system in Kalibangan.

Due to these, Kalibangan is not considered a well planned city as comparable to other important sites of Indus Valley.



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Dholovira

Dholavira is located in Rann of Kutch of Gujarat. It is relatively a new discovery, excavated in 1990s by a team led by R S Bisht. It had several large reservoirs, an elaborate system of drains to collect water from the city walls and house tops to fill these water tanks.

Dholavira versus Harappa & Mohenjo Daro

Harappa, Mohenjo-Daro and Dholavira are called the nucleus cities of the civilization. Unlike the Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro where there are two settlements, in Dholavira 3 citadels or principal divisions have been found which have been duly protected by fortifications. There is an open ground out of the fortifications. In Dholavira there has been found the inner enclosure of the citadel too which has not been found in any other cities of the Harappan culture.

Important Findings of Dholavira

One of the most important findings of Dholavira has been a signboard with Indus Script.

Lothal

Lothal is located in Ahmadabad, Gujarat. It was a coastal town {three important coastal towns of IVC are Lothal, Suktagendor and Balakot} and had different type of town planning. The city was divided into six sections and each section was built on a wide platform of unripe bricks. *Entry to the houses were on Main Street while other sites of IVC have lateral entry.*

Important Findings of Lothal

Important findings of Lothal include an artificial dockyard {which makes it an important sea link}, rice husk {rice husk has been found only at Lothal and Rangpur}, bead making factory etc. Lothal is thought to have direct sea trade links with Mesopotamia because of finding of an Iranian seal from there.

Suktagendor

Suktagendor was located around 55 kms from the shore of Arabian Sea on the Bank of Dasht River near the Iran Border. It was an important coastal town along with Lothal and Balakot (in Pakistan) and is considered to be the western border of Indus Valley Civilization. It was originally a port and later cut off from the sea due to coastal upliftment. The conclusion has been drawn up that Suktagendor had trade relationships with Babylon.

Other

Kot Diji

Kot Diji was a pre-harappan site and located on the left bank of River Sindh. This city was destructed by Force or some fire. A tar is the major object found here. Statues of bull and mother goddess are other things found in Kot diji.

Ropar

Ropar in Punjab was excavated under Y D Sharma. There is another site Bara near Ropar, which shows an evidence of the decaying culture of pre harappan era.



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Mittathal

Mittathal is located in the Bhiwani district of Haryana. A terracotta cartwheel has been found. Weights of stones have also been found. The evidence of residence outside a Citadel have been found in Mittathal. The site gives evidences of rise, flourishing and fall of Harappa civilization.

Chanhu-Daro

Chanhu Daro is situated 130 kms south of Mohenjo-Daro in Sindh and is the only harappan city which does not have a fortified citadel The Chanhu Daro has given evidence of factories of various figurines, seals, toys, bone implements so it has been interpreted that it was a settlement with lots of artisans and was an industrial town.

Banawali

Banawali is located in Hissar district of Haryana. High quality barley has been found at Banawali.

Alamgirpur

Alamgirpur is located in Meerut in Uttar Pradesh and is considered to be easternmost boundary of Indus Valley. Important findings of Alamgirpur include pottery, plant fossils, animal bones and copper tools.

Surkotda

Surkotda is located in the Bhuj area of Gujarat and has provided evidence of the first actual remains of the horse bones.

Rangpur

Rangpur is located 50 kms from Ahmadabad in Gujarat. This along with Lothal are two sites where rice husk has been found by archaeologists.

Rakhigarhi

Rakhigarhi in Hissar, Haryana is one of the largest sites of Indus Valley.

Bhagatrav

Bhagatrav is located in Bharuch district of Gujarat along the Arabian Sea coast and seems to have remained an important port of the Indus valley.

Salient Common Features of Entire Civilization

The common features of all the Indus valley civilizations are as follows:

- A common script which remains undeciphered so far.
- Proper Town planning in all Indus valley cites except few such as Kalibangan. Presence of cooking area, water reservoir in houses.
- Presence of a fortified citadel in almost all urban centres.
- Presence of residential and non-residential buildings. Absence of temples of special places of worship except few altars at some sites.
- Use of standard weights and measurements
- Pottery of wheels and bead making industries



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- Practice of burying the dead.

Life at Indus Valley Civilization

Most knowledge about the life at Indus Valley comes from the remains of the cities of Harappa and Mohen-Jo Daro. Important aspects of social, economic and religious life are discussed below:

Administration: Was there any central authority in Indus Valley?

Cities are the symbols of the Indus Valley civilization characterized by the density of population, close integration between economic and social processes, tech-economic developments, careful planning for expansion and promotion of trade and commerce, providing opportunities and scope of work to artisans and craftsmen etc. This was a sort of urban revolution, which could not have been possible without the strong central authority, specialized economic organization and socio-cultural unity.

The size and architectural complexity of all large Harappa cities mean something in terms of a socio-cultural development. The lay-out of the streets, the presence of a large-scale drainage system with its requirement for constant tending, the monumental citadels, all can be taken *asan indication of tendencies toward a strong central government.*

Another feature of Harappan urbanization was the elaborate craft specialization and the contacts with other reasonably distant parts of Asia. But the greatest challenge to the archaeologists is their failure to get any idea of the Harappan urban institutions. For example, we almost know nothing about the form of the state and the economic institutions.

Maritime commerce with Mesopotamia was a part to their life, but the knowledge of inner working of these complex Harappan urban economic institutions completely eludes us.

Language

Not a great deal of knowledge we have because the Harappa script has not been deciphered. In the Indus Valley Civilization, the style of script seems to be *Boustrophedon* i.e. written from right to left in first line and from left to right in second line. This language was pictographic and was engraved on seals, copper tablets, bone, ivory etc. However, such scripts is not seen on bricks.

Religion

Most prominent religious figures are Unicorn, so called Pashupati / Proto-shiva,, seven mothers (*sapta matrika*) and compound creatures. The later three are now inculcated in Hindu religion. The mother goddess was dominant shows that the **society was predominantly matriarchal.** There was a division of labour and society was diversified and stratified. The people were scholars, artisans, traders, warriors and businessmen. The protoshiva or pashupati seems to be the only one male deity as depicted on seals. He is surrounded by four wild animals viz. an elephant, a tiger, a buffalo and a rhinoceros. Apart from this there 2 deer's beneath the seat of the deity. The headdress of the deity



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has two horns. It wears a number of bangles. There is an inscription of seven letters on top.

This representation has at least three concepts which are usually associated with Shiva viz., that he is (i) Trimukha (three-faced), (ii) Pashupati (Lord of animals), and (iii) Yogisvara or Mahayogi. The first two aspects are apparent from the seal itself. The deity is sitting cross-legged in a Padmasana posture with eyes turned towards the tip of the nose which evidence the Yogisvara aspect of the deity. The deity is always nude save for a cincture round the waist.

Linga Worship

Stone symbols of both male and female sex organs have been found which gives in indication that Phallus or Linga worship was in practice.

Tree Worship and other rituals

The peepal tree has been depicted on many seals which gives a sense that it might be a sacred tree. Humped bull seems to be a venerated animal and there are **evidences of snake worship** and **snake charmers**. No temples, No special places of worship, no castes. The people had a sense of arts and crafts and it is proved by the toys, figurines, bangles, stone statues, metal statues, etc. The people were expert in making seals.

Talisman

On a seal is depicted a six-rayed motif which may signify the sun. Swastiks and cross signs were harbingers of good luck. A shell inlay, shaped like a heart, was probably used as a Talisman.

Food

Both veg and nonveg life. There are evidences of cultivation of Wheat, Barley, Rice, Date, melon, lemon etc. people were cattle herders and used milk and milk products. There are evidences that people made sweets. Half burnt bones give evidence of nonveg life.

Dress

A figure of a bearded man has been found in Mohenjo-Daro which indicated that they used sewn clothing's. The cloth used to cover the torso in the upper part of the body in such a way that it kept right hand Free. There are evidences that they people took interest in cosmetics and had great aesthetic sense. Men kept long hair and kept bread or also shaven beard.

The people of Indus valley civilization were aware of Bronze mirrors, Ivory Combs, antimony rods but **NOT hair dyes**.

Sports and Entertainments:

The large number of terracotta figurines and toys such as cart, bull, elephant, monkeys, chariots; whistles etc. indicate that the children entertained themselves. There are no clear evidences of Music in the civilization; however, the finding of a dance girl bronze figurine gives some insight about the social entertainment.

Science & Technology

The Harappan civilization was the womb of mathematics from where both the concept of numbers and



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the numerical system originated. The numerical system developed by the Harappan included symbols for most numbers and several innovations for mathematical manipulations such as addition and multiplication.

The Harappan numerical system is decimal and additive multiplicative in usage. There are symbols for numerical for 4 to 100, 1000 and their derivatives. The numerical system which was first used by the Harappan later found its way into other ancient civilization.

These people are known to have constructed the world's first tidal port at Lothal at the head of the gulf company. They possessed a **high degree of knowledge relating to the ebb and flow of tides** and carried on brisk overseas trade with other civilizations.

They were also conversant with the medical sciences and used various herbs and drugs to treat diseases. The people of Indus valley Civilization practiced **Trephination** which is kind of medical intervention making a burr hole in the skull to treat migraines and mental disorders. The evidences of Trephination have been found at Lothal, Kalibangan and Burzahom but not at Harappa or most other sites.

Tools, arms and weapons

They are made up of Copper and Bronze. They were unaware of the use of Iron. The Harappan people were generally peace loving and had not much arms and weapons in their kitty.

Burial Practice

All Indus valley sites have distinct burial of the dead practice. Surkotda and Dholavira are two sites where the burial practice resembled the megalithic practice.

Economy

The economy was based upon agriculture as well as trade. Commerce was important and there were links from overseas places.

Agriculture

The agriculture was in flourishing condition which was due to timely and good rains. They sowed many crops including the rice, wheat, cotton, barley etc. Other crops were dates, melon, pea etc.

Predominantly Rainfed Crops as Irrigation was based upon the rainwater but also the sources of irrigations were available. Wheat and barley were the most important Harappan Crops.

In Harappa, 3 principle varieties of Wheat were sown; three varieties of barleys were also sown. The cultivation of lentils, mustard, linseed, Sesamum has been found. The Finger millet, Ragi, Bajra, Jawar were cultivated and it seems that they diffused from Africa.

Animal Husbandry

The humped bull was domesticated animal, other were buffalo, pigs, elephants, donkeys, goats and sheep's. Only Surkotada has given an evidence of domestication of Horse. Generally Horse is absent in the civilization.



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The goats, cows and Sheep were commonly domesticated in the mature harappan phase but the evidences of Buffalo have not been found in that much quantity.

Transportation

The carts and chariots were means of transport. For sea trade big boats were there to serve the purpose.

Relations with Other civilizations

Indus Valley people had established trade relations other contemporary civilizations by 2000BC. They conducted trade with other civilizations including Mesopotamia, Babylon by land as well as sea route. The historical records of Mesopotamia mention a place **Meluha** which seems to be either name of Indus River region or India itself. These records describe wood, copper, gold, ivory, and exotic birds (like peacocks) being exported from Meluha. The Harappans traded grain, copper utensils, mirrors, elephant ivory, cotton cloth, lapis lazuli (a semi-precious gemstone), and ceramic jewellery for gold, silver, marine shell, copper, tin, lead, jade, and amethyst. Some of these were crafted into ornaments and exported.

In various cities of Mesopotamia, the Harappan seals have been found which prove these relationships.

Weights and Measurements

The weights and measurements were calibrated to a considerable extent. The measures were standardized and perhaps there is binary system in use. A scale made up of Elephant tusk has been found at Mohenjo-Daro and Lothal.

Finance, Business and Industry

There was use of many kinds of metals including Gold, Silver, Copper, Lapis Lazuli, Turquoise, Amethyst, Alabaster, jade etc. It is thought that Jade came from Central Asia, Turquoise came from Iran, Amethyst came from current Maharashtra and Lapis lazuli came from Afghanistan.

A Jewellery hoard has been found at Allahdino, an Indus valley Site near congregation of Indus River and Arabian sea. It has a necklace of 36 carnelian beads, Bronze spacer beads and a copper bead covered with Gold foil and 20 Gold lumps.

The trade was multifaceted. It was operated on intraregional as well as interregional basis and had a guild system coupled with nomadic trade. There are no evidences of monetary exchange.

Well developed stoneware industry. The manufacturing of the stone bangles was most prevalent in Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro. Harappan civilization had an Economic Zone. This economic zone was along the bank of the Sirhind river.

Metallurgy

These people were aware of Gold, Silver, Copper, Brass, Bronze and Tin but did not know much about Iron. Copper was the most widely used metal. Ganeshwar in Sikar District of Rajasthan is



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supposed to be the supplier of Copper to the cities of Indus Valley; however, the largest hoard of Copper came from Gungeria.

Pottery

A large variety of pottery, both plain and decorated, has been found. Harappanwares were shaped on a potter's wheel. The potters wheels, being made of wood, have not survived. The kilns in which the pots were baked have been unearthed. The heating was skilfully controlled as most of the pottery was carefully fired. Once the vessel was shaped on the wheels, the ochre was painted over it. Then the designs were painted on this red surface with a brush in black.

Bowls and other utensils were made with soft stones like alabaster. Such utensils have been discovered in Baluchistan and in the valley of the Indus.

Seals

The seals were used throughout the length and breadth of this civilization. Made of steatite, these seals range in size from 1cm to 5cm. Seals are either square or rectangular in shape. Square seals have carvings and inscription while rectangular have only inscription. Most frequently engraved animals on Indus Valley Seals are the humpless bull and unicorns.

Arts and Architecture

The Harappans were not artistic people. Their architecture was completely utilitarian. There is no trace of ornamentation in houses and public buildings nor there are traces of paintings or monumental sculpture anywhere in the remains.

At the same time, the Harappans seem to have excelled themselves in producing works of art of small compass. Their notable artistic achievement was in their seal engravings, especially those of animals. The best are those of the humped bull, buffalo, rhinoceros and the tiger. These figures exhibit powerful naturalism and appear to be the work of craftsmen whose arts are to be seen also in amulets and other objects.

Indus Valley: Critical Analyses

Comparison of Indus Valley and Mesopotamian Civilization

Both Indus Valley and Mesopotamia are oldest civilizations of the world. Both traded with each other. The key comparisons of Indus Valley and Mesopotamian civilization are as follows:

- While theory of Kingship or a ruler class has not been proved for Indus Valley, the Mesopotamians were ruled by a priest King, who was considered to be divine. That King solved disputes, led administration and had an army too.
- While no special places of worship have been found in Indus Valley, it is assumed that these people worshipped nature. However, presence of different religious objects such as seals, statues etc. indicate that Indus Valley might be having a polytheistic religion. In Mesopotamia also, polytheism was present but the Mesopotamians also built temple for worship.



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- The *Harappan society seems to be a matriarchal society*, evident from so many statues of female deities. On the other hand, *Mesopotamia across its history became more and more a patriarchal society*, one in which the men were far more powerful than the women.

Question of Decline of Indus Valley Civilization

Decline set in around 1900 BC and after 1700 BC, little remained in Harappan civilization. However, it did not come to an abrupt end within particular decade or century. Until recently, it was believed that Indus Cities were destroyed by the Aryans who entered India from Iran and Afghanistan through northwestern passes such as the Bolan and the Khyber. The evidences of this theory were two pronged. *Firstly*, there is a reference in the *Rig-Veda*, that Indra destroyed hostile people of Hariyuppa (Harappa) called Dasyus who lived in forts called *Pur* (Thus, one name of Indra is Purandhar, destroyer of *Pur*). *Secondly*, there was a discovery of some skeletons of men, women and children from the lower city of Mohenjo Daro, killed during the so-called last massacre. Most ardent propounder of this theory was Sir Mortimer Wheeler.

However, most scholars and archaeologists dismiss the Wheeler's theory to be too simplistic. The argument against this is that a *Pur* of Rigveda was not a fort of Indus Valley but *just a structure of filmy ramparts and stockades etc* Further, Rig-Veda never mentions anything about some of the recognizable features of the sites such as streets, houses, wells, drains, granaries etc.

Another theory considers a combination of natural and socio-economic factors behind decline of the Indus cities. The natural factors could be geological and climatic. It is believed that the Indus Valley region experienced several tectonic disturbances which caused earthquakes. These upheavals not only disturbed their life but also changed courses of rivers or dried them up. The modern satellite imagery confirms dramatic shifts in the river courses, which might have caused great flood cutting the food producing areas from urban centres. This is evident from the quantities of silt layers in the upper levels of Mohenjo Daro indicating heavy floods.

Another natural reason might be changes in patterns of rainfall. During the mature Harappan age in 2500 BC, there was a great rise in the amount of rainfall, but by the beginning of the second millennium BC it had dropped dramatically thus affecting food production adversely. With the rivers shifting their courses, the rainfall declining and sufficient food failing to arrive from the countryside, there was a slow but inevitable collapse of the Indus system. Its final outcome was catastrophic for the Mature Harappan phase.

This decline theory of environment degradation was given by John Marshall. The dogma says that cutting of forests for agriculture and timber for fuel may have resulted in the barren land and silting of rivers. It has been postulated that in Saraswati region, the civilization declined mainly because of the shifting of the river channels.



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Claim of the Indus Civilisation being a Vedic Civilisation

What is the rationale for describing the Harappan Civilisation as the Saraswati Civilisation? To what extent is it a credible rationale?

Some Indian historians make a claim essentially on the basis of the Puranas that Indus valley Civilization was one of the tribes / Janas of the Vedic civilization Puranas provide long lists of ancient dynasties, and the so-called Uttanapada Dynasty of Manu Swayambhuba of the tenth millennium BC is considered as the first of the dynasties that continue for thousands of years.

This claim is also made to describe Harappan civilization as Saraswati Civilization. Many Indus Valley sites like Kalibangan, Rakhigarhi, Banawali, Dholavira, Lothal are believed to be located along the Saraswati River.

However, this cannot be a credible rationale unless there are archaeological or any other types of evidence for claiming a continuity of Indian kingship from such an early period. The claim is thus treated with scepticism and the belief that no waves of migrants entered India after the tenth millennium BC is considered false. However, the claim finds resonance among Hindu religious nationalists imbued with the idea of *Hindutva*.

Prelims Model Questions

1. Which among the following is / are the features of the Neolithic Era in India?
 1. Earliest cultivation of crops
 2. Earliest domestication of the animals
 3. First human colonization of the Ganges plains in IndiaChoose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2

[C] Only 3

[D] None of them

Answer: [D] None of them

All the above happened in Mesolithic era.

2. Which among the following is / are the hallmark features of Neolithic revolution?
 1. A transition from hunting-gathering to food production
 2. A transition from plenty of use of copper to Iron
 3. Rise of domestication of various types of plants and animals

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1

[B] Only 2 & 3



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[C] 1, 2 & 3

[D] Only 1 & 3

Answer: [D] Only 1 & 3

3. The Mesolithic era is known for many activities which were done by humans for the first time. Which among the following started during Mesolithic era?

1. Domestication of Plants and Animals

2. Intentional disposal of the dead

3. Painting and arts on rocks

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1

[B] Only 1 & 2

[C] Only 2 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [B] Only 1 & 2

4. With reference to the Early Mesolithic era, consider the following statements:

1. This period is known for substantial increase in human population

2. The climate in this period became warm, marked with increased rainfall

3. The core economy of this period was agriculture

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 is correct

[B] Only 1 & 2 are correct

[C] Only 2 & 3 are correct

[D] 1, 2 & 3 are correct

Answer: [B] Only 1 & 2 are correct

5. With reference to the subject matter of Prehistoric paintings at Bhimbaitaka, consider the following statements:

1. The most painted animals were deer and stag

2. There is a little depiction of birds

3. Human forms have been depicted generally with bows and arrows

Which among the above statements is / are correct?

[A] Only 1 is correct

[B] Only 1 & 2 are correct

[C] Only 2 & 3 are correct

[D] 1, 2 & 3 are correct



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Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3 are correct

At Bhimbaitaka, most painted caves are of Mesolithic age. The importance of these caves is that here lived the men collectively and the tools and weapons made by them for use are still intact. Mostly the paintings are of red and white colour while some were green and yellow colour also. These colours were prepared by the local pigments found in earth. These colours were mixed with water or some other liquid. Most of the paintings have been destroyed by forces of nature. But even then lot of good paintings are still there in good condition which are painted on the roof and walls these caves.

These paintings can be divided into four ages.

1. Mesolithic age
2. Copper stone age
3. Early Historic age
4. Later Historic age

The paintings are mostly of Mesolithic age, in which deer and stag are most painted. The elephant, rhinoceros, bear, wild bear, cow bullock, buck, deer, and monkeys etc. have also been painted. Al so there is Fish, tortoise and crabs. There are some social themes, also, in which dance dresses; ornaments, mother and child, drinking party, hunting scene and folk dance etc. are painted. Later paintings are of processions on horses.

In these paintings, the primitive hunter man depicted with bow and arrow, has not only successfully expressed his emotions but also the mysterious nature and his struggle for existence against the ferocious animals of the jungle

6. The Indus Valley People commonly used the following metals / alloys?

1. Gold
2. Silver
3. Copper
4. Brass
5. Bronze
6. Iron

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5
[B] 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 6
[C] 1, 2, 3 & 5
[D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [A] 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5



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These people were aware of Gold, Silver, Copper, Brass, Bronze and Tin but did not know much about Iron. Copper was the most widely used metal.

7. The evidences related to farming tools/ equipments used by the Indus Valley Civilization people show that they were aware of using__:

1. Plough
2. Rehat
3. Sickles

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1
[B] Only 2 & 3
[C] Only 1 & 3
[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [C] Only 1 & 3

Kindly note that Rehat is Persian wheel. Its not very ancient in comparison to plough and sickles. The only direct evidence farming tools comes in the form of ploughed fields at Kalibangan, belonging to the Early Harappan period, and at the Indus outpost of Shortugai. Apart from the plough, very little is known about the agricultural tools or cultivation techniques used by the Harappans. Gypsum crystals found on a sherd at Kalibangan may have been used as a fertilizer. Harvesting was undertaken with a flint blade or flint-edged sickle. (Weber 2001)

8. With reference to the Indus Valley Civilization, consider the following statements:

1. Sutkagendor was the westernmost Harappan settlement
2. Lothal was a major center of trade and industry
3. Both Sutkagendor and Lothal were coastal / port towns

Which among the above statements is / are correct?

- [A] Only 1 & 2
[B] Only 2 & 3
[C] Only 1
[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

The westernmost site Sukttagendor is located near present borders of Iran and it was an important coastal / port town. Another important port town was Lothal. One more coastal city was Balakot, which is located near Karachi in Pakistan

9. Which among the following features are generally present in Indus Valley Civilization?



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1. Large-scale state owned storage facilities
 2. Military force
 3. Palaces and special burials for rich
 4. Well-attested overseas trade
- Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
[B] Only 1, 2 & 3
[C] Only 2 & 3
[D] Only 4

Answer: [D] Only 4

This question pertains to the doubtful knowledge about the Harappan political organization. Harappan political organization has been endlessly debated. Evidence is extremely limited and open to many different interpretations. The highly organized system of craft production, the uniformity in artifacts, the planned layout of urban settlements, the well-attested overseas trade, and other distinctive aspects of Indus culture indicate the existence of occupational specialization and an overarching system of organization and control. However, many of the characteristic features of hierarchical states, such as palaces, rich burials, large-scale state storage facilities, and a military force for internal policing and external aggression, so visible in other civilizations, are apparently absent. What makes the situation even more puzzling is the sheer size of the Indus polity. In the face of this mystery, some scholars argue that the Indus civilization was not a state at all and seek other explanations for its striking uniformities.

10. Consider the following archaeological sites of Indus valley civilization:
1. Chanhudaro
 2. Rakhigarhi
 3. Sutkagan Dor

Which of the above is/are located at present in India?

- [A] 2 Only
[B] 1 and 2 Only
[C] 1,2 and 3
[D] None

Answer: [A] 2 Only

Rakhigarhi is a village in Hisar District in the state of Haryana in India, situated in the north-west about 150 kilometers from Delhi. Sutkagan Dor is the westernmost known



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archaeological site of the Indus Valley Civilization. It is located about 480 km west of Karachi on the Makran coast, near the Iranian border in Pakistan's Baluchistan Province. Chanhudaro is located 130 kilometers south of Mohenjodaro, in Sindh, Pakistan.

11. The Indus Valley Civilization has not been deciphered yet. Consider the following reasons:

1. No knowledge about their language
2. Small length of inscriptions
3. Absence of bilingual texts

Which among the above is/ are correct reasons?

[A] Only 1

[B] 1 & 2

[C] 1, 2 & 3

[D] 1 & 3

Answer: [C] 1, 2 & 3

All of them are the correct reasons. The first reason is that we don't know what language they used. Then the inscriptions are so small that average inscription has only 4.6 signs. Longest single inscription at Indus Valley is 17 signs long. Then there are no bilingual texts available.

12. Which among the following special features of Indus Valley Civilization are also found in the contemporary Civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia?

1. Use of Cotton
2. Well Built Houses of the Citizens

Choose the correct option:

[A] Only 1

[B] Only 2

[C] Both 1 & 2

[D] Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: [D] Neither 1 nor 2

Marshall compares and contrasts the Indus Valley civilization with those of contemporary Egypt and Mesopotamia: 'Thus, to mention only a few salient points, the use of cotton for textiles was exclusively restricted at this period to India and was not extended to the western world until 2,000 or 3,000 years later. Again, there is nothing that we know of in prehistoric Egypt or Mesopotamia or anywhere else in western Asia to compare with the well-built baths and commodious houses of the citizens of Mohenjodaro. In these countries much money and



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thought were lavished on the building of magnificent temples for the gods and on the palaces and tombs of kings, but the rest of the people seemingly had to content themselves with insignificant dwellings of mud. In the Indus Valley the picture is reversed and the finest structures are those erected for the convenience of the citizens.' These public and private baths, as well as the excellent drainage system we find at Mohenjo-daro, are the first of their kind yet discovered anywhere.

General Knowledge Today



Prelims Indian History -2: Vedic Civilization

[Target 2016: Integrated IAS General Studies](#)

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Model Questions

Please check Prelims MCQs at the end of this module.



Origin of Vedic Culture

Aryans as a Race versus Linguistic Group

The term Aryan *denotes a linguistic group and not a race*. Their language Vedic Sanskrit has definite relationship with major languages of Europe and Asia. Scholars call this group of languages as Indo-European and the people speaking these languages as Indo-Europeans or Indo-Aryans. On this basis, it is postulated that Aryans *spoke common language, shared a common home and dispersed in all directions including India*. However, there are no written / archaeological evidences on Aryan migration and this historical fact has been established *on the basis of comparative philology* only.

Vedic Sanskrit is thus one of the oldest languages, originated outside India and gradually became the primary literary language of the Hinduism. The oldest Sanskrit literature dates back to 1500 BC, while classical Sanskrit language dates back to 4th century BC (Panini's Grammar).

We note here that there are 6000 languages in the world spoken today. They have been classified into various language family groups. The dominant language family of northern part of Indian sub-continent is Indo-Aryan which is a sister branch of the Iranian family. Both these branches are considered to belong to the larger family of families called Indo-European. Sanskrit is the longest established language of this entire family.

The above discussion makes it clear that Aryans were not some sort of people belonging to a superior race. The Nazis grossly misappropriated the term "Aryan" for a race for a sinister objective. Hitler segregated the population of Germany on the basis of whether they were superior Aryans or inferior Jews or Gypsies. His pseudo-scientific belief that the Aryan race of Germanic stock had been endowed with extraordinary mind and beauty led to holocaust finally.

The question is- What was the basis of such belief?

The key reason of this historic distortion was the writings of the European scholars of 19th century who were too much fascinated with the term "Aryan". They lived at a time when European imperialism dominated the world. They were obsessed with the desire to explain to the world that the Europeans were superior people, and this superiority of mind, body and their scientific prowess owed to their Aryan origin. This coupled with some important linguistic research in India during late 18th century gave rise to a misconception about the racial superiority of the Aryans and the intellectuals of both India and Europe were preoccupied with the glory of Aryans. In this way, the holocaust by Hitler is nothing *but a manifestation of the power of poisonous intellectualism of a misguided generation*.

Aryans: Original Home Controversy

The question of origin of Aryans has been not only a fascinating story but also a matter of controversy. The Aryan migration theory says that the groups of nomadic tribal people from regions



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outside Indian sub-continent started migrating towards India around 1700 BC. These people are called Rig-Vedic Aryans because they brought with them the earliest portion of collection of hymns as Rig-Veda. These people mixed with the non-Aryans and a new society was born with mix Aryan and Non-Aryan cultural elements; and eventually Aryan elements increasing occupying a central place. Because of absence of written / archaeological evidences on Aryan migration the scholars have depended on comparative philology mainly to make these postulations.

However, there are three particular questions with this. First – *What was the original home of Aryans?* Second – *If Aryans were outsiders, then who were original inhabitants of India, and what happened to them when Aryans came?* Third – *Is there any conspiracy behind foreign origin of Aryans to divide the Indian society?* The second and third questions have been particularly raised by the revisionists who deny the very non-Indian origin of Aryans.

Original home of Aryans

The various scholars and their suggested original homes are as follows:

- Max Muller – Central Asia
- Swami Dayanand Saraswati – Tibet
- Mayor – Pamir Plateau
- Hurz Feld – Turkistan
- J C Rod – Bactria
- Lokmanya Tilak – Arctic region

Central Asia as Aryan Home

As per this, the original home of the Aryans was in the Eurasian steppes lands north and east of Black Sea and extending towards Caspian Sea. Sometime during the third millennium BC, due to climatic and environmental changes, the groups of people from these areas migrated to variety of zones outside their original homeland. *Max Muller*, a German scholar of comparative philology propounded the Central Asian home theory of Aryans. Apart from philology, scant resources of archaeology and examination of oral traditions also support this theory. These people domesticated horse and had developed wheeled vehicles so make the migration easier. However, these people did not come in a mighty torrent to spread with force of arms. The migration was slow, gradual and mostly peaceful. They spoke a variety of languages and dialects. When they settled into different areas, their language and culture mixed and original vocabulary was augmented and modified. This theory also tried to explain the further expansion of Aryans in India. In around 2000BC, there were two areas in which Aryans settled. First was in Afghanistan from modern Kabul to Peshawar while second was Kandahar. The Rig- Vedic Aryans moved from there about 1400 BC, crossing the various rivers and proceeding towards either the Swat valley or Punjab. This entire region including



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Afghanistan, Swat valley, Punjab and Indo- Gangetic watershed is collectively referred once as *Sapta Sindhava*, the land of the seven rivers.

The Rig-Veda – Avesta Link

It has been established that the between 1700 BC and 1400 BC, two peoples Avestan and Rigvedic co-existed in same area. They represent the two most important arms of the Indo-Iranian tradition as a whole. They had common culture, mythology and rituals before they separated. They worshipped a number of Gods together. Both shared the tradition of composing hymns in praise of their gods. Both have revered the nature gods such as wind, sun, sky etc. Some of the earliest prayers of both of them are similar. Sanskrit is close to the language of *Yashts*, the earliest hymns of *Avesta* {sacred text of Zoroastrians}. Both groups shared a common habit of drinking juice of fertility plant {probably *Ephedra spp*) called *Soma* in Rig-Veda and *Haoma* in Avesta. Similarly, the symbolic importance of fire in the rituals of both groups is also notable. Thus, taking into account the similarities in mythology, language, religious practice, beliefs etc. it can be safely concluded that the traditions of Avesta and Rig-Veda emerged from a single common source.

Tibet Home Theory

In *Satyarth Prakash*, Swami Dayanand Saraswati propounded that the original home of the Aryans was Tibet. Logic given was that sun and fire was worshipped in Tibet due to extreme cold; and the flora and fauna mentioned in Rig-Veda were found in Tibet. This theory was bought by only a few, however, Nazis took it seriously and sent an expedition to Tibet to get some clues.

Arctic Home Theory

Lokmanya Tilak in his book “The Arctic Home in the Vedas” propounded that North Pole was the original home of Aryans during pre-glacial period. He used Vedic hymns, Avestic passages, Vedic chronology and Vedic calendars and compared them with the geological, astronomical, and archaeological evidences to conclude that the primordial cradle of the Aryan race was North Pole, before the changed climatic conditions forced them to move southward into present-day Europe, Iran, and India.

Analyzing the Revisionist Arguments

Though there have been considerable evidences that Aryans were migrants, yet an aggressive campaign of revisionism launched by some writers that Indian Civilization is purely Indian. First argument towards this is that Indus Valley Civilization and Vedic Aryan Culture are one and same; and it was in fact the *Saraswati Culture* as evident from settlements discovered along or in the direction of now dried up Saraswati River. However, this argument countered on the basis that nowhere in the Rig-Vedic texts there is a mention of cities of Indus or Saraswati. In fact, the Indus Valley Culture came into light only in 19th century and it was not even recognized in India until then.

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Second argument is that the Vedic books don't discuss any of the foreign lands of west, neither Iran nor Central Asia nor Afghanistan from where the Aryans are supposed to come. However, this argument is countered that the texts have obliquely given reference to the places, rivers, animals, etc. of that land.

Archaeological Evidences

As mentioned above, there are not many archaeological evidences to clearly prove the migration of Aryans. However, there are three documents which contain references to Aryan names. Interestingly, none of these comes from Iran or Afghanistan or Central Asia but from Mesopotamia.

Firstly, in the documents of the Kassite rulers of Babylon (c. 1750 BC–1170 BC) there is reference of two gods' viz. Suriya (sun god) and Marutta (god of war) and a King called Abiratta (Abhiratha).

Secondly, there was a Mittani Kingdom in the North-West of Babylon in 1500 to 1300BC in which some documents list the names of princes and noblemen. Some of them are Indrota (Indra), Sauksatra, Purusa etc.

Thirdly, the most important evidence comes from the Boghazkoi tablet inscription found in eastern Turkey. These inscriptions record the details of a treaty signed in around 1350BC between the losers Mittani and victors Hitties. Both the sides have listed their Gods. The Gods of Mittani are Indra, Varuna, Nasatya etc. which are clearly Rig-Vedic. In Rig-Veda, these Gods have been assigned the task of overseeing the treaties.

The Extent of Vedic Civilization: Sapta Sindhu, Brahmavarta and Aryavarta

From their original home in Central Asia, the Aryans moved towards South-west in around 2000 BC and settled mainly in two areas in modern Afghanistan. First was the region between modern Kabul and Peshawar while another was Kandahar which was linked Quetta via the Bolan Pass. In around 1400 BC, they further crossed various rivers and proceeded either towards Swat Valley or towards Punjab and Indo-Gangetic plains. This entire region including Afghanistan, Swat Valley, Punjab and Indo-Gangetic watershed has been referred in Rig-Veda once as the Sapta Sindhava or Sapta Sindhu (the land of seven rivers).

The seven rivers of Sapta Sindhu

The scholars have puzzled themselves in defining the seven rivers of Sapta Sindhu. The *Nadistuti sukta* of Rig-Veda mentioned ten rivers viz. Ganga, Yamuna, Saraswati, Sutudri, Parusni, Asikni, Marudvrdha, Vitasta, Arjikiya and Susoma. The Shutudri is old name of Sutlej, Parushni of Ravi, Asikni of Chenab and Vitasta of Jhelum. Apart from these 10 rivers, the Kubha River (Kabul), Suwastu (Swat) Kramu (Kurram) & Gomati (Gomal) Rivers have also got place in Rig-Vedic texts. Thus, any of these might be the seven rivers of Sapta Sindhava region.

Another set of scholars believes that Sindhu and Saraswati were most sacred rivers of that era. They



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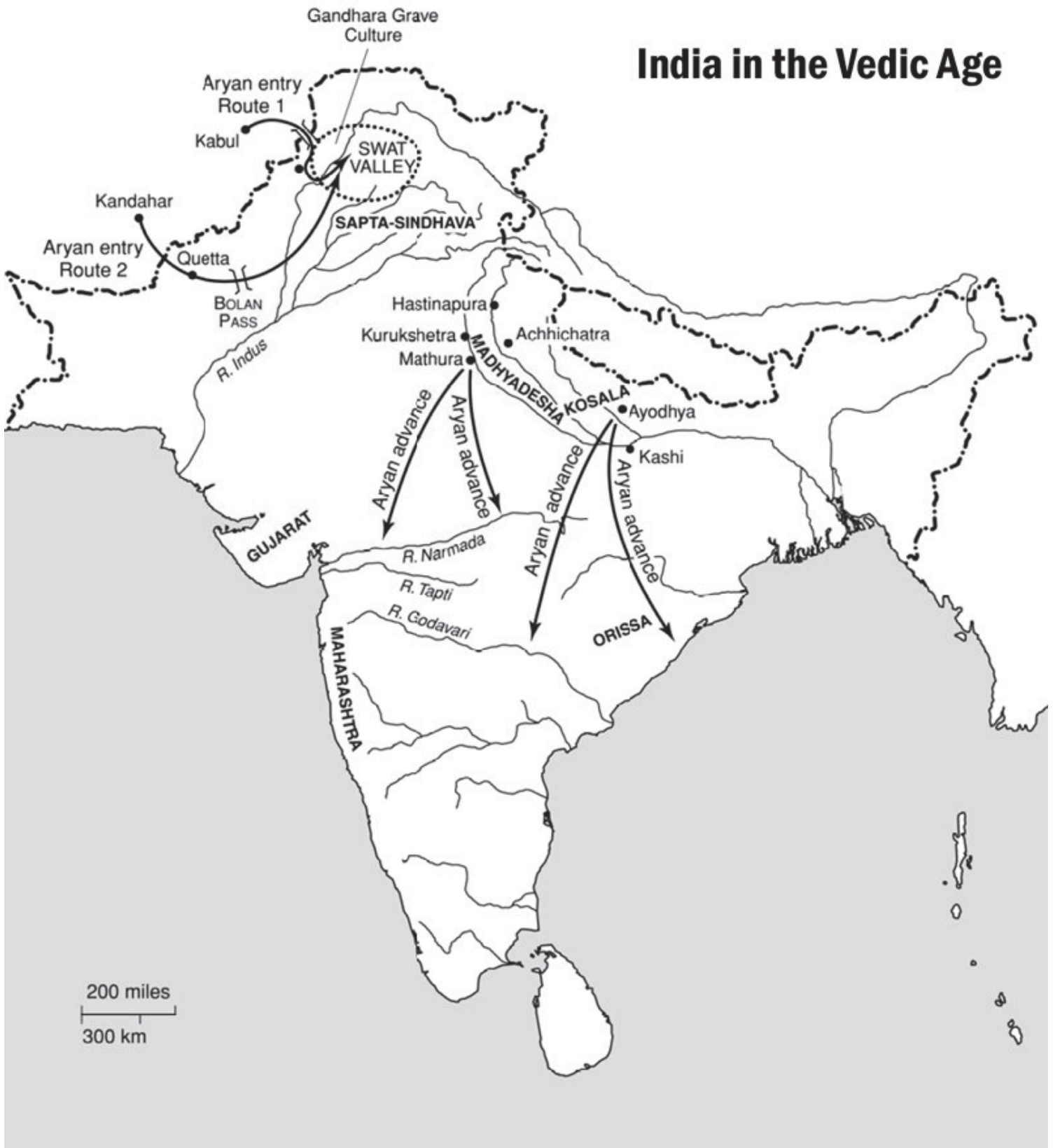
argue that the hymns in praise of Saraswati are some of the oldest composed 8000 years ago. As per this argument, Sapta Sindhu region comprised of river Saraswati, Indus and five tributaries of Indus viz. Sutudri (Sutlej), Parusni (Ravi), Asikni (Chenab), Vitasta (Jhelum) and Vipas (Beas) river. This term is also found in Avesta.

The Sapta Saindhavas country of the Rig Vedic period was bounded by the Himalayas and modern Tibet in the east, Turkistan in the north, Afghanistan, in the west and the Aravallis in the south.

Brahmavarta

The geographical regions mentioned in Rig-veda include *Sapta Sindhuva*, *Panchanada*, *Madhydesa* and *Praki*. These were perhaps the first references to the emergence of regions. The geographical location of these regions suggests that the Indo- Aryans preferred to settle down along the banks of Indus and its tributaries (Panchanada). Further south-east, the land between Saraswati and Drishadvati (Ghagghar) was called Brahmavarta. On the periphery of these plains lie the alluvial basins of the Gomti (Gomal), Krumu (Kurrum) and Kubha (Kabul) in afghanistan. This was the geographical extent of the Vedic Aryan settlements. The further southward migration led them to Madhyadesa region.

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For your examinations, you may note the names of modern rivers and their old names:

Rig-Vedic Name	Modern Name
Sindhu	Indus

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Rig-Vedic Name	Modern Name
Vitase	Jhelum
Askini	Chenab
Purushni	Ravi
Vipas	Beas
Sutudri	Satluj
Gumal / Gomal	Gomati
Krumu	Kurram
Drishdvati	Ghagghar
Suwastu	Swat

Aryavarta

In the later scriptures, the country of Aryans is also designated as Aryavarta. The boundaries of Aryavarta included parts of Modern Afghanistan, Punjab and Sindh of Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal and northern India up to Vindhyan mountains. Rig-Vedic Aryans had not established settlements in the southern India. The Ganga and the mountains of the Vindhya were the barriers not easy to cross in those days.

Geographical entities in Rig-Vedic Texts

A total of 31 rivers have been mentioned in Rig-Vedic hymns, most of which belong to Indus, Ganga and lost Saraswati system. The rivers south to Vindhyas have not been mentioned. Among mountains, they have mentioned Himalayas, Arjika, Mujavant, Silament (Suleman range) etc. They have not mentioned the land south of Yamuna, not even Vindhya or Satpura ranges. The Shatapatha brahmana mentioned eastern and western oceans.

Further, Vedic Aryans were rural and nomadic, so no important cities have been mentioned. The places were known only by name of the tribes which controlled them.

Literature

Outline of Vedic Literature

The glory of Aryans is in their literature. The Vedic texts were composed in Sanskrit and orally transmitted for many centuries before they were finally written down. During this transition from oral to written versions, the language also evolved from what was known as Vedic Sanskrit to

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Classical Sanskrit.

Shruti and Smriti

The Vedic literature is broadly divided into two categories viz. Shruti and Smriti. Shruti (that was heard) literature was initially transmitted orally before it was finally written down. It is considered authoritative, canonical, eternal / divine and unquestionable truth. *Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas and Upanishads* together form the Shruti literature and make the central canon of Hinduism. These also make the four components of Vedic literature.

Smriti is what is remembered, *supplementary and may change over time*. The entire body of Classical Sanskrit literature is Smriti including Vedangas, Shatdarshana, Puranas, Itihasas (epics), Upavedas, Trantras, Agamas and Upangas. They are authoritative to the extent that they conform to the bedrock of Shruti.

However, there is not a distinct divide between Shruti and Smriti. Both can be represented as a continuum.

Shruti Literature

Vedas

The four Vedas viz. Rig-Veda, Yajurveda, Samveda and Atharvaveda come under the Shruti literature and are bedrocks of entire Vedic literature. The *basic material or mantra text of each of the Vedas* is called Samhita.

Samhita is literally a compilation. Some post Vedic texts are also known as Samhitas such as Ashtavakra Gita, Bhrigu Samhita, Brahma Samhita, Deva Samhita, Garga Samhita, Kashyap Samhita, Shiva Samhita and Yogayajnavalkya Samhita.

Brahmanas

Brahmanas are prose texts explaining the meaning of hymns of Vedas, giving their applications and stories of their origin and composers.

Aranyakas

Aranya means forest. Aranyakas were written in forests for the hermits and students of the Vedas. They are actually the concluding parts of Brahamans and their content focuses on philosophy and mysticism rather than *rites, ritual and sacrifices*. *Their stress is on moral values. They form a bridge between Karma of Brahamans and Gyana of Upanishads.*

Upanishads

Upanishad means to sit down near someone. They denote students sitting near their Guru to learn. Thus, Upanishads are treatises of teachings of Gurus to their pupils. They specify philosophical knowledge and spiritual learning. The main motto of the Upanishads is "Knowledge Awards Salvation". Upanishadas are called the end of Vedas (Vedanta) because they denote the last phase of



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Vedic period and also reveal the final aim of Veda.

Smriti Literature

Vedangas

Vedangas are six auxiliary disciplines associated with the study and understanding of the Vedas. They include Shiksha (Phonetics), Kalpa (Ritual Canon), Vyakaran (Grammar), Nirukta (explanation), Chhanda (Vedic meter) and Jyotisha (Astrology)

Shatdarshana

The six āstika (orthodox) schools of thought of Hinduism are called Shatdarshana or six philosophies. These include Samkhya, Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Mimansa and Vedanta. Currently, only Vedanta and Yoga are in tradition.

Puranas

Puranas are compilations of ancient legends and consist of history of the universe from creation to destruction, genealogies of kings, heroes, sages, and demigods, and descriptions of Hindu cosmology, philosophy, and geography. They have served as sources of historical facts of early period but are coloured with exaggerations, and also represent a corrupt form of Hindu Philosophy. Due to this, for historians, they are neither trustworthy proofs for reconstruction of Ancient Indian History nor helpful in fixing the boundaries of the empires. They also don't provide authentic information about the administration of ancient dynasties.

Itihasas (epics)

The Four Itihasas or Epics are Valmiki-Ramayana, Yogavasishtha, Mahabharata and Harivamsa. These embody all that is in the Vedas, but only in a simpler manner. Due to their simplicity like a novel, they are called the *Suhrit-Samhitas* or the *Friendly Treatises*. {Conversely, Vedas are called the Prabhu-Samhitas or the Commanding Treatises with great authority}. Itihasas explain the great universal truths in the form of historical narratives, stories and dialogues. These are very interesting volumes and are liked by all, from the inquisitive child to the intellectual scholar.

Upavedas

Upaveda is literally "applied knowledge". These are supplementary Vedas on technical subjects. These include:

- Āyurveda: Deals in Medicine and associated with the Rigveda
- Dhanurveda: Deals in Archery and associated with the Yajurveda
- Gāndharvaveda: Deals with Music and Dance and associated with the Samaveda.
- Shastrashastra: Deals with military technology and associated with the Atharvaveda

Trantras Agamas

Tantra literature is considered to be first spoken by Lord Shiva to his consort Parvati. The Tantra has three divisions viz. Agama, Yamala and Tantra. Tantra is also a function of diety worshipped and has three parts viz. saiva, vaishnava and shakta. The ancient texts list total 64 Tantras.

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Agamas

Agamas are part of all the main religions of India viz. Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Folk religions. In context with Hinduism, Agama refers to a collection of ideas pertaining to matters like construction of temples, idol creation and conduct of worship of the Deity.

Dharma Sastras

The four dharma sutra collectively make the Dharamashastras of Smriti Literature. These include Dharma sutras {guidelines to live a Dharmic life}, Grhya sutras {guidelines for family life}, Srauta sutras {guidelines for performing rituals} and Sulba sutras {mathematical principles for construction of various altars}.

Important Trivia about Vedic Shruti Literature for UPSC Examinations

Rather than dealing the topics in details, here are some of the notable facts and observations which you must note for your examinations:

On Rig-Veda

- Rig-Veda is oldest literature of the world and is known as “First testament” of mankind.
- The famous *Gayatri Mantra* comes from *third Mandala of Rig-Veda*.
- The first hymn (1.1) of Rig-Veda is dedicated to Vedic God *Agni*.
- One entire Mandala (ninth) is dedicated to the Vedic beverage *Soma*.
- The *Nadistuti sukta* is hymn dedicated to 10 rivers of contemporary India.
- The *Nasadiya Sukta* talks about the origin of the Universe and is part of 10th Mandala. This Sukta states a paradox “*not the non-existent existed, nor did the existent exist then*”. This particular statement has attracted a lots of commentaries in both Indian and western theology.
- There are two branches of Rig-Veda viz. *Shakala Shakha* and *Vatkal or Bhashkala Shakha*.
- Two Brahmanas of Rig-Veda are *Aitreya* and *Kaushitaki*.

On Yajurveda

- *It contains rituals for yajnas and is ascribed to Advaryus who prepared ground for Yajnas.*
- It is *world’s oldest prose literature.*
- Two branches *Shukla* and *Shyama*. *Shyama* is older than *Shukla* and has no separate Brahman. *Shukla* is newer and has three Brahmanas attached to it viz. *Kathaka*, *Taittiriya* and *Shatapatha Brahmana*
- *Dhanurveda* is Upaveda of *Yajurveda*.

On Sam Veda

- *Samaveda* contains the rhythmic compilation of Hymns for Rig-Veda. The 1549 hymns are there to be sung at the *Soma Sacrifice* by a special class of Brahmins called *Udgatris*.
- *Gandharveveda* is Upaveda of *Samveda*.
- *Panchavisha*, *Shadvisha* and *Jaiminiya* Brahmanas are attached to *Samaveda*.

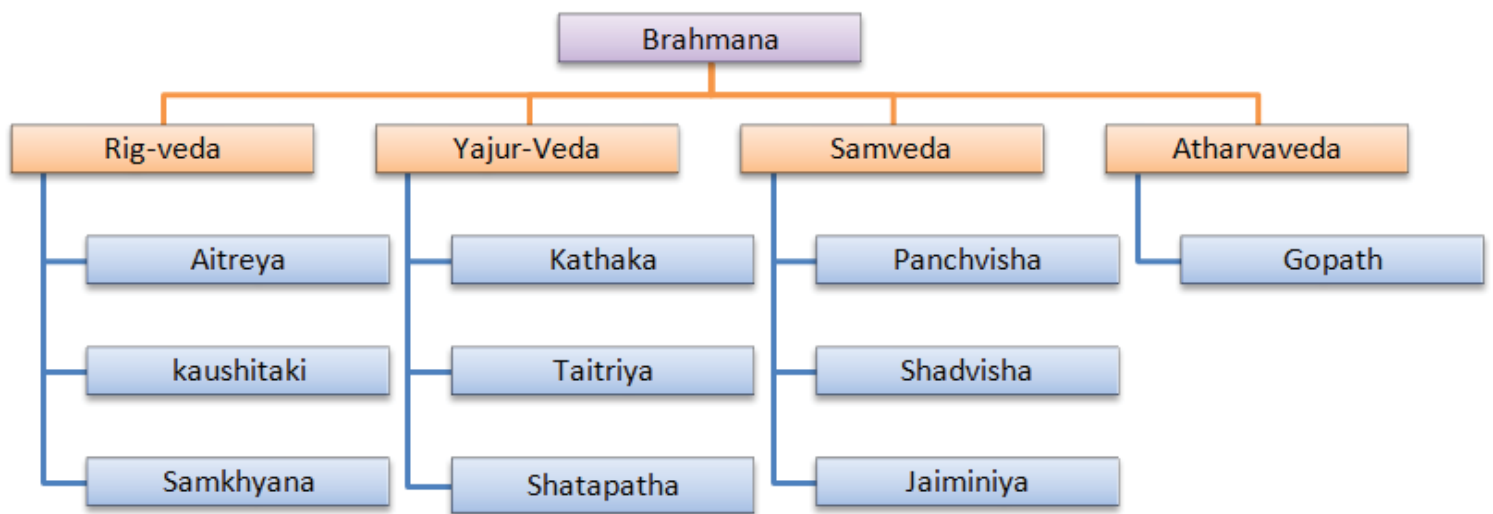
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On Atharvaveda

- Atharvaveda is chronologically the latest Veda. It describes the popular beliefs and superstitions of the humble folk.
- It contains the magic spells, incorporates much of early traditions of healing and magic that are paralleled in other Indo-European literatures.
- It is ascribed to Atharvans and Angiras.
- Gopatha Brahman is linked to Atharvaveda.
- Atharvaveda has no Aranyakas appended to it.

The following graphics shows list of Brahmanas of four Vedas for quick reference.



On Aranyakas

- As we discussed earlier, they were created in forests and are for students and hermits. They make a bridge between the Karma of Brahmana and Gyana of Upanishads.
- There are no Aranyaka appended to Atharvaveda.

On Upanishads

- Upanishad means to sit down near someone and denotes a student sitting near his guru to learn. They specify philosophical knowledge and spiritual learning and their main motto is "Knowledge Awards Salvation".
- Upanishads are also called Vedanta, because they reveal the final aim of Vedas.
- Oldest Upanishads are *Brhadaranyaka* and *Chandogya*. Latest Upanishad is *Muktikā Upanishad* recorded by Dara Shikoh in 1656.
- Dara Shikoh, the unlucky son of Mughal emperor Shah Jahan is known to have translated fifty Upanishads into Persian.
- There are 108 Upanishads, of which 11 are predominant and called Mukhya Upanishads.

Important Trivia on Upanishads

Four Mahavakyas

The four Mahavakyas or great statements are from Upanishads. They are as follows:

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Prajnanam Brahma

This means consciousness is Brahman. It comes from Aitareya Upanishad of Rig-Veda. This Mahavakya implies that the consciousness is subtlest texture of the cosmos and is present and active everywhere.

Ayam Atma Brahma

This means self or Atman is Brahman. It comes from the Mandukya Upanishad of the Atharva Veda.

Tat Tvam Asi

This means “Thou art That”. It comes from the Chandogya Upanishad of the Samveda. It’s too much mystical statement and has been interpreted by different schools differently. In its simplest meaning, it says that self in its pure form is identical with the original reality.

Aham Brahmasmi

This means “I am Brahman”. This statement comes from the Brhadaranyaka Upanishad of the Yajurveda.

Asato Ma Sadgamaya

This Upanishada belongs to the Shatpath Brahman and contains the famous shloka *asato ma sadgamaya tamaso ma jyotirgamaya mrtyorma amrtam gamaya* This shloka means “lead us from the unreal to the real, lead us from darkness to light, lead us from death to immortality”.

Kathopnishad

It was translated by Max Müller in 1879. It was rendered in verse by Edwin Arnold as “The Secret of Death”. The central story is immortality and covers the story of encounter of Nachiketa, son of sage Vajasravasa, with Yama, God of death.

Muktika

This Upanishad deals with the Para Vidya and Apari Vidya. The Para Vidya is knowledge that leads to Self Realization, Apari Vidya deals with everything else or the material knowledge.

Mundaka Upanishad

Mundaka Upanishad is notable as the source of the phrase Satyameva jayate (3.1.6)

Māandūkya

Mandukya is the Shortest Upanishad. It contains twelve verses expounding the mystic syllable Aum, the three psychological states of waking, dreaming and sleeping, and the transcendent fourth state of illumination.

Praśna

Six pupils interested in knowing divinity or Brahman come to sage **Pippalada** and requests him to clarify their spiritual doubts. Therefore, this Upanishad is in Question Answer format.

Important Notes on Smriti Literature

Vedanga

Vedangas are six auxiliary disciplines associated with the study and understanding of the Vedas. They

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are as follows:

Shiksha (Phonetics)

Its aim is the teaching of the correct pronunciation of the Vedic hymns and mantras. The oldest phonetic textbooks are the Pratishakyas (prātiśākhyā), describing pronunciation, intonation of Sanskrit, as well as the Sanskrit rules of sandhi (word combination), specific to individual schools or Shakhas of the Vedas.

Kalpa (Ritual Canon)

It contains the sacrificial practice and systematic sutras. There are three kinds of Sutras part of Kalpa:

- **Śrautasūtras**, which are based on the Shruti, and teach the performance of the great sacrifices, requiring three or five sacrificial fires
- **Smartasūtras**, or rules based on the Smriti or tradition. The Smartasūtras have two classes viz.
 - **Grhyasutras, or domestic rules** They are basically treating the rites of passage, such as marriage, birth, namegiving, etc., connected with simple offerings into the domestic fire.
 - **Dharmasutras or customs and social duties:** The Dharmasūtras are the first four texts of the Dharmasastra tradition and they focus on the idea of dharma, the principal guide by which Hindus strive to live their lives. The Dharmasūtras are written in concise prose, leaving much up to the educated reader to interpret. The most important of these texts are the sutras of Āpastamba, Gautama, Baudhāyana, and Vasīṣṭha.
 - The Dharmasūtras can be called the guidebooks of **dharma** as they contain the rules of conduct and rites as practiced in the Vedic schools. They discuss about the duties of people at different stages of life like studenthood, householdership, retirement and renunciation. These stages are also called āśramas. They also discuss about the rites and duties of kings, judicial matters, and even personal practices like the regulations in diet, offenses and expiations, daily oblations, and funerary practice.

Vyakaran (Grammar)

Vyakaran includes the Aṣṭādhyāyī, of Panini. Most of the work of very early Indian grammarians ranging to 8th century BC is lost. There are 4 parts of Panini's Grammar:

- Śivasūtra: Contains phonology (notations for phonemes specified in 14 lines)
- Aṣṭādhyāyī: Contains morphology (construction rules for complexes)
- Dhātupāṭha: Contains list of roots (classes of verbal roots)
- Gaṇapāṭha: Contains list of classes of primitive nominal stems

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Nirukta (explanation)

It is traditionally attributed to Yāska, an ancient Sanskrit grammarian. It deals with etymology, particularly of obscure words, especially those occurring in the Veda

Chhanda (Vedic meter)

It measures and divides Vedic Mantras by number of padas in a verse, which is called Padas. Number of padas divides each verse, hymn, or mantra and number of syllables divides each pada. There is a distinct taxonomy on this basis. For example a Gayatri Chhanda has 3 padas of 8 syllables containing 24 syllables in each stanza. Similarly, Anuṣṭup has 4 padas of 8 syllables containing 32 syllables in each stanza. Anustup is the typical shloka of classical Sanskrit poetry

Jyotisha (Astrology)

It describes rules for tracking the motions of the sun and the moon and the foundation of Vedic Jyotish.

Shatdarshana

Hindu philosophy is traditionally divided into six āstika (orthodox) schools of thought, or *darsanam*, which accept the Vedas as supreme revealed scriptures. The āstika schools are:

1. **Samkhya**, an atheistic and strongly dualist theoretical exposition of consciousness and matter.
2. **Yoga**, a school emphasizing meditation, contemplation and liberation.
3. **Nyaya** or logic, explores sources of knowledge (Nyāya Sūtras).
4. **Vaisheshika**, an empiricist school of atomism.
5. **Mimāṃsā**, an anti-ascetic and anti-mysticist school of orthopraxy.
6. **Vedanta**, the last segment of knowledge in the Vedas, or the 'Jnan' (knowledge) 'Kanda' (section). Vedanta came to be the dominant current of Hinduism in the post-medieval period.

Of the historical division into six darsanas, only two schools, Vedanta and Yoga, survive.

The basic information about them is as follows:

School	Author	Beginning	Main Book
Nyaya	Gautama	6th Century BC	Nyayasutra
Vaisheshika	Kanaad	6th century BC	Vaisheshik Sutra
Sankya	Kapil	6th century BC	Sankya Sutra
Yoga	Maharishi Patanjali	2nd century BC	Yog Sutra
Poorva Mimansa	Jaimini	4th Century BC	Poorva Mimansa Sutra
Uttar Mimansa or Vedanta	Badrayan or Maharishi Vyas	4th century BC	Uttar Mimansa Sutra



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Nyaya:

Literally means recursion. It is based on texts known as the Nyaya Sutras, which were written by **Aksapada Gautama** from around the 2nd century AD. Nyaya Sutras say that there are four means of attaining valid knowledge: perception, inference, comparison, and verbal testimony.

Vaisheshika

It was proposed by **Maharishi Kanaad**. It postulates that all objects in the physical universe are reducible to a finite number of atoms. The school deals in detail with “Padarth” or Matter.

Samkya

Samkya or Samkhya means Enumeration. The founder of the Sankya school of Philosophy was **Maharishi Kapil**. The school denies the “existence of God” and postulated that there are two realities Purusha and Prakriti. Purusha is the consciousness and Prakriti is the phenomenal realm of matter.

Yoga

Founder of this school of Philosophy was Patanjali. Yuj means “control” and Yoga also mean to “add”. Raja Yoga, Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Hatha Yoga are its main branches. The Yogasutras of Patanjali which mainly postulate the Raj Yoga , date back to Mauryan Period while Hathayoga was introduced by Yogi Swatmarama. The major difference between Raj Yoga and Hathayoga is that Raja Yoga aims at controlling all thought-waves or mental modifications, while a Hatha Yogi starts his Sadhana, or spiritual practice, with Asanas (postures) and Pranayama. So Raj Yoga starts from Mind and Hathyoga starts from Body.

Mimansa

Mimansa means investigation or enquiry. The primary enquiry is into the nature of dharma based on close theology of the Vedas. it has two divisions, Poorva Mimansa and Uttar Mimansa. Uttar Mimansa is treated as Vedanta. The poorva Mimansa was postulated by Jamini. The ideology of Poorva Mimansa was to counteract the challenge by Buddhism and vedanta which marginalized the Vedic sacrifices. This school got momentum in Gupta period and reached its climax in 7-8th century. Sabara and Kumaril Bhatta were two main interpretators. It was one of the major forces to decline Buddhism in India , but later itself was eclipsed by Vedanta.

Vedanta:

Vedanta means Veda end or the purpose or goal of the Vedas. It was given by Badrayana or maharishi Vyasa who is one of the 7 chiranjivis and wrote “Mahabharta”.

Difference between Nyaya and Vaisheshika

Vaisesika is allied to the nyaya system of philosophy. Both systems accept the liberation of the individual self as the end goal; both view ignorance as the root cause of all pain and misery; and both believe that liberation is attained only through right knowledge of reality. There are, however, two

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major differences between Nyaya and Vaisesika.

- **First**, nyaya philosophy accepts four independent sources of knowledge — perception, inference, comparison, and testimony — but vaisesika accepts only two — perception and inference.
- **Second**, nyaya maintains that all of reality is comprehended by sixteen categories (padarthas), whereas vaisesika recognizes only seven categories of reality. These are: dravya (substance), guna (quality), karma (action), samanya (generality), visesa (uniqueness), samavaya (inherence), and abhava (nonexistence). The term padartha means “the object denoted by a word,” and according to vaisesika philosophy all objects denoted by words can be broadly divided into two main classes

— that which exists, and that which does not exist. Six of the seven padarthas are in the first class, that which exists. In the second class, that which does not exist, there is only one padartha, abhava, which stands for all negative facts such as the nonexistence of things.

Vedanta

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Advaita

Its proponent was Adi Sahnakara and **his Guru Gaudapada**. The essence of this Vedanta is that “*Brahman is the only reality, and the world, as it appears, is illusory.*”

Vishishtadvaita

Its proponent was Rāmānuja. The basic theory is that “jīvātman is a part of Brahman, and hence is similar, but not identical. Brahman, matter and the individual souls are distinct but mutually inseparable entities”. Vishishtadvaita advocates Bhakti to attain God.

Dvaita

The proponent of the Dvaita was Madhwāchārya. This theory is also known as Tatvavādā – The Philosophy of Reality. It identifies God in the Brahman (Universe) and its incarnations such as Vishnu and Krishna. It says that all individual souls (jīvātman) and matter as eternal are mutually separate entities.

Dvaitādvaita

The theory of Dvaitādvaita was given by Nimbarka. It is based upon the early school of Bhedābheda of Bhaskara. It says that jīvātman is at once the same as yet different from Brahman. The jiva relation may be regarded as dvaita from one point of view and advaita from another. This school identifies God in Krishna.

Shuddhādvaita

The proponent of Shuddhādvaita was Vallabha. It says that World is Leela of God that is Krishna

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and he is **Sat-Chid-Aananda**. It identifies Bhakti as the only means of liberation. Vallabha was also a famous saint of Pushti Marg. He won the famous debate of Brahmavad over Shankars.

Achintya Bhedābheda

The proponent of Achintya Bhedābheda was Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was a follower of the Dvaita vedanta of Sri Madhwacharya. The doctrine of Achintya Bhedābheda or inconceivable and simultaneous one-ness and difference states that the soul or energy of God is both distinct and non-distinct from God and he can be experienced through a process of long devotion. It identified God in Krishna. This Philosophy is followed by ISKCON.

Purnādvaita or Integral Advaita

The proponent of Purnādvaita was Shri Arubindo. He propounded this doctrine in his “The Life Divine”. synthesized all the exant schools of Vedanta and gave a comprehensive resolution integrating cues from the Western metaphysics and modern science. Sri Arubindo is known to be one, who restored the umbilical cord of the Vedantic exegesis with the Vedas.

Modern Vedānta

The proponent of Modern Vedānta was Swami Vivekananda. His phislosophy says that the conditions of abject poverty should be removed; only then will people be able to turn their minds toward God.

School Name	Propounders
Advaita	Adi Sahnakar and his Guru Gaudapada
Vishishtadvaita	Rāmānuja
Dvaita	Madhwāchārya
Dvaitādvaita	Nimbarka
Shuddhādvaita	Vallabha
Achintya Bhedābheda	Chaitanya Mahaprabhu
Purnādvaita or Integral Advaita	Shri Arubindo
Modern Vedānta	Swami Vivekananda

Vedic Religion, Polity and Society

Rig Vedic Gods

Before we discuss the important deities of the Vedic people, it is important to understand that



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Aryans were solely theists and their contemplation about life and the world was from the spiritual standpoint. The Vedic Aryans believed in the *concept of one in many evident from the quote “Ekam Sat Vipra Bahudha Vadanti”*, which means that which exists is ONE sages call it by various names.

Worship of Nature

Rig-Vedic Aryans worshipped the forces of nature, but at the same time believed in the basic unity of nature. They worshipped many gods not in fear of nature but to gain nature's favour. All the natural phenomena such as the sky, thunder, rain, air were believed to be guided by their presiding deities, while natural devastations were taken to be an expression of their wrath. The hymns of the Rig-Veda were mainly sung for the glorification of the gods in order to appease them. God was regarded as the ruler, ordainer of the period of life, protector of men and giver of happiness.

There were *no places of worship like temples* or objects of worship like Idols. Natural phenomena were conceived as the expression of some spiritual different appearances of various gods. For the different appearances of the sky different deities were imagined, such as Varuna, Indra, Mitra, Dyus. Most of these natural events were personified and it was the birth of first mythology in the world.

Dyus-Pitr, Mithra, Varuna

The Aryans looked up to the bright sky and worshipped it under the name of *Dyu* or *Dyaus*. *This term is equivalent to the Greek Zeus and the first syllable of the Jupiter*. It is also similar to *Tiu* of the Saxons and the *Zio* of the Germans.

These common names under which the sky-god was worshipped by the different cultures of ancient times prove that the sky was worshipped under these names by the primitive Aryans in their original home.

So, earliest divine power in Vedic literature is Dyaus. Dyaus was referred as Dyaus Pitr, which later became Ju-piter. Pitr means Prithvi and Dyaus was coupled with prithivi and the two Dyaus-Prithivi are the universal parents.

Rig-Vedic Aryans called the sky of day as *Mithra* corresponding to the Zend *Mithra*; and they called the sky of night Varuna, corresponding to the Greek *Ouranos*.

Varuna, apart from being the god of the sky, is also the god of law of nature *Rta*. Varuna is also lord of the Patal Loka (nether world). He is one of the most prominent gods in the Rig-Veda, and lord of the heavens and the earth.

Indra and Marut

While the Hindu Aryans of the Punjab continued to worship the ancient sky-god under the ancient names of Dyu, Mitra, and Varuna, they paid special homage to the sky that rains, which they called Indra. Rise of rivers and the luxuriance of crops depend on the rain-giving sky; and in course of time, Indra became the most prominent deity in the Vedic society.

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Indra was conceived as a warlike deity, battling with the clouds, called **Vritra**, to obtain copious torrents of rain for man, and fighting with the demons of darkness, called **Panis**, to restore to the world the light of the morning. The Maruts or storm-gods were supposed to help Indra in his contest with the reluctant clouds, for in India the first showers of the rainy season are often attended with storms and thunder.

Thus, Indra was the most important divinity and was lord of war. 250 hymns have been devoted to only Indra in Rig Veda, which is highest for any of the Gods. His other names are:

- Car-warrior (Rathestha)
- A winner (Jitendra)
- Soma Drinker (Somapa).

Indra is mentioned as son of Dyaus. He killed a demon Vritra, so he is known as Vritrahan. He destroyed the forts of Dasyus, so also known as Purandhar. He held the thunderbolt (Vajra) with which he destroyed the enemies. His wife is Indrani or Sachi (energy).

Aditi, Sun, Savithri

Next to the sky, the sun was the most prominent object of the worship of the ancient Hindus. Aditi was the limitless light of sky, and her sons, the Adityas were the suns of the different months of the year. Surya was coterminous with Greek **Helios**, the Latin **Sol**, and the **Teuton Tyr**.

Savitri is another name of the same deity Sun, and the sacred hymn, the Gayathri Mantra, which is still repeated every morning by pious Hindus all over world; is a verse dedicated to Savithri. Please note that Vishnu, which in later Hindu mythology has become a name of the Supreme Preserver of all beings, was a name of the sun in the Vedic age. The rising sun, the sun at Zenith, and the setting sun were considered the three steps of Vishnu striding across limitless space.

Agni

Fire or Agni was an object of worship. No sacrifice to the gods could be performed without libations or offerings to the fire, and Agni **was therefore considered to be the priest among the gods**. But Agni is not only the terrestrial fire in the Rig Veda; he is also the fire of the lightning and the sun, and his abode was in heaven. The early sage Bhrigus discovered him there, and Atharvavan and Angiras, the first sacrificers, installed him in this world, as the protector of men.

Thus, Agni is the God of fire and acceptor of sacrifices. He was considered an intermediary between Gods and men. 200 hymns have been devoted to only Agni in Rig Veda while Agni is mentioned in 218 hymns.

Vayu and Rudra

Vayu or the wind is sometimes invoked in the Rig Veda. The Maruts or storm-gods are often invoked, as we have seen before, and are considered the helpers of Indra in obtaining rain for the

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benefit of man. Rudra, the loud-sounding father of the Maruts, is the Thunder, and in later Hindu mythology, this name has been appropriately chosen for the Supreme Destroyer of all living beings.

Soma & Brihaspati

Agni, or fire, received special homage because he was necessary for all sacrifice. The libation of soma juice was similarly regarded sacred, and Soma was worshipped as a deity. Similarly, the prayer, which accompanied the libations or offerings, was also regarded as a deity, and was called Brahamanaspati. In later Hindu mythology, Brahman is selected as the name of the Supreme Creator of all living beings.

Soma was prepared by extracting juice from the stalks of a certain plant, and the Soma God was god of the plants. 123 hymns are dedicated to Soma and most of them are from Soma Mandala.

Agni Soma Cult

Apart from lightning the Holy Fire, the Soma-drinking was another mark of the Arya cult, which may therefore be called 'the Agni-Soma cult-' Soma is a product of the Himalayan regions, so that when the cult moved down to the plains, Kirata (huntress) girls from the Himalayan hills supplied it to Brahmanas. The use of Soma, like the worship of Agni indicates the Himalayan region as the place where the Agni-Soma cult first originated.

Soma & Haoma

The fermented juice of the plant called Soma appears to have been the only intoxicating drink used in Vedic times. So much were the ancient Aryans addicted to this drink, that Soma was soon worshipped as a deity both in India and in Iran (under the name Haoma in the latter country), and we find one entire Mandala, or Book, of the Rig-Veda, dedicated to this deity.

Visvedevas

They are various Vedic gods taken together as a whole headed by Indra. 70 hymns are dedicated to Visvedevas in Rig-Veda.

Ashwins or Ashwinikumars

Light and Darkness naturally suggested to the early Aryans the idea of twin gods. The sky (Vivasvat) is the father, and the Dawn (Saranyu) is the mother of the twin Ashwins and the legend goes on to say that Saranyu ran away from Vivasvat before she gave birth to the twins. *There is a similar legend in Greek mythology, where and Erinnys (corresponding to Saranyu) ran away from her lover, and gave birth to Areion and Despoina. The original idea is that the Dawn and Gloaming disappears, and gives birth to Light and to Darkness.*

Please note that later, Aswins lost their original character and simply became the physician gods, responsible for healing of the sick and the wounded, tending mortals with kindness. There are other twins Yama and Yami, who are kids of same parents – the Dawn and Sky. They also acquired

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different characters in Rig Veda.

Yama & Yami

Yama is considered to have been the first mortal who died and espied the way to the celestial abodes, and in virtue of precedence, he became the ruler of the departed. He is the guardian of the world of Dead. His twin sister is Yami and both Yama and Yami are Children of Surya. Yamini means Night and Yami is also known as Yamuna.

Usha

Usha has been described as far – extending, many – tinted, brilliant **Dawn**, whose abode is unknown. She harnesses her chariots from afar and comes in radiance and glory. She is the young, the white-robed daughter of the sky, and the queen of all earthly treasures. She is like the careful mistress of the house who rouses everyone from his slumbers and sends him to his work. Yet she is radiant as a bride decorated by her mother for the auspicious ceremony, and displaying her charms to the view.

Such are the fond epithets and beautiful similes with which the Hindu Aryans greeted the fresh and lovely mornings of a tropical sky.

Other Rig Vedic Gods

- Pusan: The guardian of the Jungle Paths and Roads.
- Aditi – Goddess of Eternity
- Gandhrava – Divine Musicians
- Rbhus – three semi divine deities of Rig-Veda.
- Rudra – Archer of Gods
- Aranyani – Goddess of Forests
- Usha – Goddess of Dawn
- Prithvi – Goddess Earth

Apsaras

Apsaras are dancers of the celestial courts, however, Rig Veda mentions Apsara as the wife of Gandharva. Rig Veda allows for the existence of more than one Apsara. The maiden Apsara is Urvashi who became the wife of king Pururavas, first king of the Somavamsha. Narrative of Urvashi and Pururavas is found in the Rigveda (X.95.1-18) and the Shatapatha Brahmana (XI.5.1)

Comparison of the Greek Dieties and Ancient Hindu Dieties

There was an essential difference between the Hindu gods of the Vedic age and the Greek gods of the Homeric age. The first thing we should note that the Sanskrit language is nearer and closer than the Greek to the original Aryan tongue, yet Hindu conceptions go nearer to the original Nature-worship of the primitive Aryans. The Gods of Homeric Greeks have attained a marked individuality and the characters are so individualistic that “nature” almost escapes. But the Hindu Gods are still the powers



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of Nature and show manifestations of Nature. For example, we can identify Indra with Rains easily but can not identify Zeus with Sky. *Therefore, we can say that Hindu conceptions are more true to their original sources.*

Rig-Vedic Polity

During Rig-Vedic era, the basic unit of power lied within a patriarchal family (*Kula*). The head of the family was a *Kulapa*. A group of such families called *grama*, which was controlled by a village headman *Gramini*. The groups of the villages belonged to a clan (*Vis*) and many clans made a community called *Jana*.

Concept of King

The Chief of this tribe *Jana* was *Rajana*. *Rajana* was not a king in real sense, but a *protector of the tribe and the cattle wealth*. In fact there was no real state territory or structure or even a real King.

Since *Rajan* was the leader of the people and not ruler of any territory, he is called *Janasya gopa* or *Gopati Janasya* also. A *Rajana* fought wars on behalf of his *Jana*. These wars were for control of cattle wealth and **not** possession of territory. Thus, the *concept of land territory was absent in early Rig-Vedic period*. This is the reason that while term *Jana* appears many times in *Rig-Veda*, *Janapada* does not appear even for once. The territorial aspect of the state is thought to have appeared in later Vedic age only. Initially, the various regions were known after the names of the tribes which controlled them and later they developed into various *Janapadas*.

Grama and Sangrama

The *Grama* was not essentially a village but a group of families who kept on migrating. So, again, the concept of a settled village was absent in early Vedic era. A *grama* can also be called a militaristic tribal unit. A war or battle between *Gramas* was called *Sangrama*. In a *grama*, the duty to manage pastoral land was of a *Vrajapati*, who also led the battles. Thus, both *Gramini* and *Vrajapati* were either same person or equivalent *grama* level heads.

The Rig-Vedic Tribes

We know about at least 33 tribes belonging to Early and later Vedic era from *Rig-Veda*. The most important source of these tribes is the *Dasrajana* or the battle of ten Kings. According to *Rigveda*, this battle happened between *Sudas* of *Bharata* tribe and the confederacy of ten well-known tribes viz. *Puru*, *Yadu*, *Turvasa*, *Anu*, *Druhyu*, *Alina*, *Paktha*, *Bhalanas*, *Shiva* and *Vishanin*. This bloody battle was fought on the banks of *Purushni* (*Ravi*) and *Bharata* emerged victorious in it.

Taxation

The *Rajan* could not have an elaborate administrative machinery because the nature of the *Rig-Vedic*

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economy. An economy in which the surplus was very small, the Rajan received only **Bali**, i.e. offering to a prince or to a god from the conquered people. However these tributes were neither regular and nor stipulated and hence cannot be called a tax.

Military & Spy functionalities

There was no regular standing army. The military functions were invested in the Vedic assemblies. All the three persons viz. the Vrajapati, Kulapa (head of the family) and the Gramani functioned as military leaders. The Rajan held the Spies called *Spasa* to keep an eye on the conduct of the people.

Ugra and Jivagribha were two officials probably meant for dealing with the criminals. The Madhyamasi seems to have acted as a mediator in disputes. There was no code of law in the early Vedic era.

The Earliest Tribal Assembly – Vidhata

Vidatha appears for 122 times in the Rig-Veda and seems to be the most important assembly in the Rig Vedic period. Vidatha was an assembly meant for secular, religious and military purpose. The Rig-Veda only once indicated the connection of woman with the Sabha whereas Vidatha is frequently associated with woman women actively participated in the deliberations with men. Vidatha was the earliest folk assembly of the Aryans, performing all kinds of functions- economic, military religious and social. The Vidatha also provided common ground to clans and tribes for the worship of their gods.

Sabha & its Sabhavati

The term Sabha denotes both the assembly (in early Rig-Vedic) and the assembly hall (later Rig-Vedic). Women called **Sabhavati** also attended this assembly. It was basically a kin-based assembly and the practice of women attending it was stopped in later-Vedic times. Rig-Veda speaks of the Sabha also as a dicing and gambling assembly, along with a place for dancing, music, witchcraft, and magic. It discussed pastoral affairs and performed judicial and administrative functions and exercised judicial authority.

Samiti

The references to samiti come from the latest books of the Rig-Veda showing that it assumed importance only towards the end of the Rig-Vedic period. Samiti was a folk assembly in which people of the tribe gathered for transacting tribal business. It discussed philosophical issues and was concerned with religious ceremonies and prayers. References suggest that the Rajan was elected and re-elected by the Samiti.

The differentiations between Sabha and Samiti

In the beginning, there was no difference between the Sabha and the Samiti. Both were called daughters of Prajapati. Both were mobile units led by chiefs who kept moving along with the forces. The only difference between Sabha and Samiti seems to be the fact that *Sabha performed judicial*

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functions, which the Samiti did not. Later, the sabha became a small aristocratic body and samiti ceased to exist.

The Gana or the Republic

A Gana was an assembly or troop. The leader of the gana is generally called Ganapati.

The Parisad

The early parisad seems to be a tribal military assembly, partly, matriarchal and partly patriarchal. However, the variety of the references lead to the non-Vedic character of the parisad. In later-Vedic period, it tended to become partly an academy and partly a royal council dominated by the priests, who functioned as teachers and advisers.

Changes in Polity in later Vedic Era

In the later Vedic period, groups of communities became part of a region or a state (*janapada*). The idea of kingship evolved gradually from clan chieftainship. By the end of the Vedic period, king's authority was beginning to derive less from the support of such assemblies than from his own success in the struggle for power. Gradually, the hereditary element crept in with the further consolidation of power by the *rajās*. From this point, the role of courtiers became important. In the later Vedic era, the main office holders included chief priest (*purohit*), commander-in-chief (*senani*), treasurer (*samagrahitri*), collector of taxes (*bhagadugha*) and keeper of the king's household (*kshata*). Slowly, the legitimisation of the king's power started getting confirmed by a lengthy and elaborate rituals of sacrifice (*yajna*) conducted by the priests. This way, the alliance between priest and King became the fundamental feature of the Indian polity. It also later led to social stratification.

Important Officials

For your examinations, you may also note down the important office holders in the Vedic era.

Official	Rig Vedic Title
King	Rajan
Priest	Purohita
Commander	Senani
Officer in Charge of Pastoral Lands	Vrajapati
Police Officers	Jivagribha
Spy	Spasa
Head of the Village	Gramini
Head of the family	Kulapa also called Dampati

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Official	Rig Vedic Title
Mediator in Disputes	Madhyamasi
Tax Collector	Bhagadugha
Treasurer	Sangrahitri
Chief Queen	Mahishi
Charioteer	Suta
Messenger	Palagala
Accountant	Akshvapa

Rig-Vedic Society

The Kula or family was the basic unit of Rig-Vedic society. The Kula was headed by a Kulapa, who was usually the eldest member. Society was essentially patriarchal and birth of son was desired repeatedly. Status of women was equal to men in the early Rig-Vedic society. Both polygamy and polyandry were in vogue.

The Evolution of Varna System

Social strata used to exist in the Harappan civilization also. Similarly, there was a threefold division of society {priests, rulers and producers} in the Iranian society also. However, what happened in Indian sub-continent was unique and extraordinary. In the evolution of Kingship in the later Vedic era, the priests (Brahmans) and rulers (Khsatriyas) consolidated their respective position in the society. The producers split into two groups. The free peasants and traders formed the group Vaishya while the slaves, laborers, artisans degraded to fourth group Shudra. This was based on occupation initially but later got rigid on the basis of birth. Despite of a small population, the people got compartmentalized into these four groups as per *Varnashrama Dharma*.

Marriage and women

Despite of the patriarchal character of the family, the position of women was much better in the Rig Vedic period than in later times. They could attend assemblies and offer sacrifices along with their husbands. Five women have been mentioned as composers of hymns out of which Ghosha, Lopamudra and Apala are famous. Girls were normally married off after puberty (between the age of 16 and 17). Unmarried girls grew up in the home of their parents. Some unmarried woman like Visvavara and Apala offered sacrifices on their own. There are also evidences of widow remarriage in the Rig-Veda.



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Education

In the early Rig-Vedic era, entire instruction was given orally. Art of writing does not seem to have developed yet. In the well-known Gayatri mantra there is a prayer to Savitri for the stimulation of the intellect. There were women teachers. Many of them possessed the highest spiritual knowledge. Maitreyi and Gargi were gifted scholars. Rishis who composed hymns founded their own schools separately to teach their pupils and every person among the vis was entitled to learn Vedic mantras. In the later-Vedic phase, with the development of *Varnashrama*, education began with an investiture ceremony (upanayan). Since Upanayan was confined to three upper Varnas, the sudras were not entitled to education. Sometimes girls were also encouraged. When teacher was satisfied with the student, last sermon called snatakopadesa (kind of convocation) was delivered.

Institution of Gotra

Gotra or cowpen was a mechanism for widening social ties a new relationship was established between hitherto unrelated people. It is possible that animals were herded in common and such a place was known as gotra and from this it acquired the character of an exogamous institution.

Amusements and entertainments

Music, both vocal and instrumental, was well known. Vedic Aryans played on the Vina and flute Vana to the accompaniment of drums and cymbals. Few claim that **Dhrupad** of Indian classical music originated in Vedic Era.

Dancing was common. The chariot race was a favourite sport and source of entertainment. Chariot race was a symbolic source of political authority of the king. The fascination of gambling and the ruin caused by its addiction find mention in the Rig-Veda.

House holding

The Griha sutra prescribes a code of conduct, which gives a fairly good idea of the manners and etiquette of the later-Vedic age. A guest (atithi) was welcomed at all times and special guests, like the guru, the king, and the father-in-law, etc. were given special treatment. Respect for the elders self-restraint, moral purity, abstinence of all kinds and faithfulness were some of the virtues. Cleanliness was a passion. Daily bath, washing of the feet and hands every now and then, and purifying the atmosphere with Vedic mantras were a part of ritual when ritualism acquired special significance in the later-Vedic age. It became one of the many sources of the development of hierarchy and the supremacy for the Brahmanas.

Eating Habits

The main cereal produced by the early Rig-Vedic people was Yava or barley. Wheat (Godhuma) appears in later Vedic texts only. Yava was also a generic term for various kinds of cereals. ilk, Milk products and cattle meat belonged to their food habits. Alcoholic / Non-alcoholic drinks were known and common. Soma and Sura are two popular liquors. Sura may be a kind of beer or wine.



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Dress code

Two pieces of cloth were normally worn- the upper garment was called **uttariya** and the lower one was known as **antariya**. The dress for the male and the female did not differ much.

Health and hygiene

Everyone aspired for and everyone was blessed to live for a hundred years. **Epilepsy was common** and it affected the children as well. Superstitions and magical charms were employed to cure the diseases. Miraculous cures are ascribed to the twin-gods, the Ashvins, who are the great healers of diseases and experts in the surgical art. They were divine physicians who restored eyesight and cured the blind, sick and maimed.

Rig Vedic Economy

Rig Vedic economy was primarily pastoral They domesticated Pashu (which included cattle, horse and even human beings), as opposed to Mriga, i.e. wild animals. Cattle was synonymous with wealth and a wealthy person was called **Gomat**.

Cattle was so important that the terms of battle were derived from Gau itself, such as *Gavisti*, *Gosu*, *Gavyat*, *Gavyu*. *Godhuli* was a measure of time. Gopa and Gopati were epithets given to the king. Duhitri was the term used for daughter because she used to milk the cow. One of the four categories of gods was known as Gojata, i.e. cowborn.

When the Vedic people encountered buffalo, they called it *Gauri and Gavala* or cow-haired.

The cattle obtained in raids were divided among the families. Cattle formed an important item of donation and it may also have formed a part of bali, the tribute given to the raja by the clan or Vis members. The cattle in general and cow in particular was the **main medium of exchange during the Rig Vedic period**.

The economy was based upon agriculture. The people were well acquainted with the sowing, harvesting, threshing and various agro seasons. The people were pastoral, Cow was revered but the cows, and bulls were sacrificed too. The gifts to the priests were in terms of number of **Cows and women slaves** but **NOT in measurements of lands**.

Crafts and Metallurgy

All kinds of crafts were practiced. There were potters, Chariot makers, carpenters, and weaver and leather workers. The metal work was known as follows:

- Copper was known as “Ayas”
- Gold was known as Hiranya
- Iron was also known as was known as Shyama or Krishna Ayas.

Religion

There were no places of worship like temples. There are no indications in the Rig-Veda of any

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“temples reared by mortal hands” and consecrated as places of worship. On the contrary, every householder, every patriarch of his family, lighted the sacrificial fire in his own home and poured libations of the Soma juice and prayed to the gods for happiness to his family, for abundant crops and wealth and cattle, for immunity from sickness, and for victory over the black aborigines. Natural phenomena were conceived as the expression of some spiritual different appearances of various gods.

Changes in life in Later Vedic Age

The key changes in later Vedic era included evolution of territorial sovereignty; development of Varnashrama dharma, degradation of Sabha and Samitis, degradation of women, sedentary life, private possession of land, rigidity of the society etc.

General Changes

The Sabhas and Samitis continued to hold the ground; however the women were not allowed to sit in Sabha. Brahmins and Nobles took the place.

The King became important and territorial authority became important. The term Rastra which indicated a territorial country got prominent in the later Vedic Age.

Ashvamedha Yagya was considered to authorize the unquestioned authority over an area where the Royal Horse could run. The levy of taxes started and became prominent and the officer responsible for this function was *sangrihitri*. The standing army was not possessed by the king even in Later Vedic period and *gramas* mustered in times of war.

Changes in Economy

The life became sedentary and the domestication of animals and cultivation increased. Cattle were still the currency and principle movable property. The idea of private possession of lands started taking shape. Ironsmiths, weavers, jewelers, dyers, potters, are the new classes of artisans. Trade was also boosted.

The Gold piece of specific weight Satamana was used as a currency rate. Use of Gold as currency is mentioned in Satapatha Brahman. Nishka was another popular currency. The other metallic coins were Suvarna and Krishnala. Barter system still existed. Money lending as a trade was prevalent. Money lenders were called Kusidin.

The Four Varnas

The society was now divided into 4 varnas viz. Brahmans, Kahstriyas, Vaish and Shudras. Each of them was assigned its duty. The vaishyas were common people who were responsible for producing the agricultural commodities and rearing of the cattle. The engaged in trade and were called *vaniks*. Nagara was used for the first time, which meant a city and beginning of town life.

Types of Marriages in later Vedic Ages

There were several kinds of marriages in later Vedic era listed in below table:

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Marriage Type	Description
Brahma Vivah	Marriage of a girl with the boy of same Varna with Vedic rites and rituals
Daiva Vivah	When father donated his daughter to a priest as a part of Dakshina.
Arsa Vivah	A token bride-price of a Cow and a Bull was given
Prajapati Vivah	Marriage without dowry
Gandharva Vivah	It was a kind of love marriage or swyamavara type
Asura Vivah	Marriage by Purchase
Paisach Vivah	Seduction of a girl while sleeping or mentally unstable due to a drink.
Rakshasha Vivah	Marriage by abduction

Anuloma and Pratiloma Vivah

The marriage of a man of higher Varna with a girl from lower Varna was called “Anuloma Vivah”. It was allowed by the sacred texts. The marriage of a girl of higher Varna with a man of a lower Varna was called “Pratiloma Vivah” and it was NOT allowed in the texts. However, as it goes, the intermarriage between Varnas led to new castes. Vashishtha mentions below examples:

- The offspring of a Sudra and a Brahman woman becomes a Chandala.
- That of a Sudra and Kshatriya woman, a Vaina.
- That of a Sudra and Vaisya woman, an Antyavasayi.
- The son begotten by a Vaisya on a Brahman woman becomes a Ramaka.
- The son begotten by a Vaisya on a Kshatriya woman, a Paulkasa.
- The son begotten by a Kshatriya on a Brahman woman becomes a Suta.
- Children begotten by Brahmans, Kshatriyas, and Vaisyas on women of the next lower, second lower, and third lower castes become respectively Ambashthas, Ugras, and Nishadas.
- The son of a Brahman and a Sudra woman is a Parasava.

Four Purushartha

Purushartha refers to a goal, end or aim of human existence. The Four Purushartha of Hinduism are as follows:

- **Dharma:** Dharma is given the foremost rank in the scriptures. Today, it corresponds to religious, social and/or moral righteousness
- **Artha:** material and/or financial means of living
- **Kama :** pleasure including sensual pleasures

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- **Moksha:** Liberation; or renunciation as well as detachment

The Hindu Philosophy says that Dharma is the gateway to Moksha.

Ashrama System

Four stages of the lifespan of 100 years were not established in the early Vedic era. They were well established in the later Vedic era and 4 Ashrams were:

- **Brahamcharya Ashram:** The first 25 years were set for student life
- **Grihastha Ashram:** The age from 25 to 50 years was kept for having a family and discharging the worldly duties such as giving birth to children and raising them
- **Vanaprastha Ashram:** Age from 50-75 years was fixed for partial retirement and living life in forests.
- **Sanyas Ashram:** The last age of 75-100 years was fixed for complete retirement from the world.

The fourth ashram has not been mentioned in early Vedic texts. The Sanyas ashram is mentioned in Jabala Upanishad.

Sacrifices & Rituals

- **Rajsuya:** This sacrifice conferred supreme power to King.
- **Asvamedha:** Authorized the King an unquestioned control over an area.
- **Vajapeya:** It was a chariot race in which the Royal Chariot was to win race against the kinsmen. This elevated the Raja to a Samrat.
- **Garbhधारana:** The conception ceremony.
- **Pumsayam:** Ritual to procure a male child.
- **Sementonayam:** Ritual to ensure safety of the child in womb.
- **Jatakarma:** Birth ceremony performed prior to cutting the umbilical chord of the newborn infant
- **Culakarma:** performed in 3rd year of the baby's life
- **Upnayana:** performed in the eighth year to confer dvija status.

Important Terms in Vedic Era

Vedic Term	Meaning
Aghanya	Not to be killed
Agnadheya	ceremony which preceded the public rituals in Vedic Era.
Akshavapa	accounts officer
Amaju	Lifelong unmarried girl



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Vedic Term	Meaning
Bhagadugh	carpenter
Bhishaka	Doctor or Vaidya
Charmana	Blacksmith
Datra	Sickle
Duhitri	Milker of cow and also a daughter
Gaura	Buffalo
Gavishti	a fight for cows.
Gocarman	a measure of distance
Gotra	A kinship unit
Hiranyakara	Goldsmith
Jansaya Gopa	Tribal Chief
Kinsmen of the King	Sajata
Kulala	Potter
Purapati	responsible for defense.
Rathakara	Chariot maker
Samgavan	A measure of time
Sarabha	Elephant
Satdaya	Compensation for manslaughter
Sira	Plough
Sita	Furrows
Spas	Spies
Takshan / Teshtri	carpenter

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Vedic Term	Meaning
Varatra	leather strap of the Plough
Vrihi	Rice

Other Important Notes

Comparison of the Harappa and Vedic Civilizations

The key differences between Harappa and Vedic Civilization are enumerated as follows:

1. The sources of information of the Harappan civilization are mainly archaeological, while the Vedic culture is mostly known from the literary sources.
2. Harappans are said to have been the original inhabitants of India while the Aryans are believed to have come to India from central Asia.
3. The Harappan civilization was urban in nature, Vedic culture was rural and pastoral. At best the Rig Vedic Aryans lived in fortified places protected by mud walls; and these cannot be regarded as towns in the Harappan sense.
4. In the Indus civilization trade, internal and external, crafts as well as industries were the main sources of economy, Vedic Economy was initially postoral and later became based upon agriculture and cattle rearing.
5. The agricultural operations, including the ploughing of fields, were better known to the later-Vedic people.
6. Indus people did not know the use of iron. It was purely a copper-bronze culture, while the Vedic culture in its later phase is replete with references to iron.
7. The horse, which played a decisive role in the Aryan system of warfare, was not known to the Indus people. A few bones of horse and terracotta figure of a horse-like animal have been unearthed from surkotada.
8. Indus people were basically peace loving. Their arms (swords, daggers, arrow-heads, spears) were primitive in nature. Aryans were warlike people and were conversant with all kinds of traditional arms and armour and had devised a full-fledged science of war.
9. Aryans worshiped Varuna, Indra, aditi and a large number of other deities which stood for the principal phenomena of nature. They performed sacrifices and offered milk, ghee, etc. to their The Harappans worshipped Pashupati, mother goddess, animals, snake and nature. The fire-altars were discovered from only one Harappan site at Kalibangan.
10. The Harappans practiced earth burials whereas the Aryans practiced cremation.
11. Harappan pottery called black or red pottery was wheel made and very distinctive in nature. The distinctive Aryan pottery is known as PGW (painted grey ware).



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12. The Harappans were short statured, black in complexion, Aryans were tall, well-built and handsome.
13. The Harappans ate all birds and animals including cow and calf. They ate wheat, barley and bread. The Aryans preferred Barley, milk and its products, specially ghee or butter and enjoyed Soma drink.
14. Cotton was the basic fabric of the Harappans while the Aryans put on woollen garments
15. Vedic Sanskrit is the mother of all non-Dravidian languages, Indus script still remains undeciphered.
16. It was quite clear that Indus people were literate whereas the Vedic people were illiterate (In terms of writing) because there is not a single word for writing in any of the Vedic texts.

Concept of Rita and Dharma

Dharma is so called, because it holds; Dharma holds the people. Etymologically, Dharma is derived from the root Dhr—to hold—and its meaning is ‘that which holds’ this world. Rita is predecessor to Dharma and is the Original Rig Vedic concept which refers to the principle of natural order which regulates and coordinates the operation of the universe and everything within it. Rita is described as that which is ultimately responsible for the proper functioning of the natural, moral and sacrificial orders. In Rig Veda, Rita appears as many as 390 times. Rita has been characterized as “the one concept which pervades the whole of Rig-Vedic thought.

In the early Rig Vedic era, Rita was abstract; slowly the universal principle started mingling with the anthropomorphic tendencies of the Vedic period. In due course of time, it became associated with the actions of individual deities. The Rita became associated with Varuna, the omniscient, all pervading sky God. Adityas became the Chariot drivers of Rita. Varuna became the friend & keeper of Rita. Varuna became the universal Power, which maintained Rita and was celebrated as having “separated and established heaven and earth, spreading them out as the upper and lower firmaments, himself enthroned above them as the universal king, ordering the immutable moral law, exercising his rule by the sovereignty of Rita”. (James 1969)

Eventually Dharma overshadowed Rita in the later Vedic Era. While Rita encompassed the ethical principles with a notion of cosmic retribution, Dharma was said to be a path to be followed as per the ordinances of Rita. Failing to follow this path meant appearance of various forms of calamity and suffering. Committing to the path of Rita was “Dharma” so we can say that Dharma was originally conceptualized as a subordinate component Rita Dharma became a very useful instrument in framing religious, moral and social regulations, that interest in it and discussion of its applications to social and moral order eclipsed all discussions of metaphysical and theological ideas.

There was also an important change in later Vedic and Epic Era. The notion of Dharma shifted

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emphasis away from nature as executor of Rita and now it became more or less an individual duty to uphold the Dharma through one's actions. This was called Karma. Karma is what one does to uphold the Dharma and thus, the emphasis from the natural order vanished and it became essentially related to the pains and pleasures one experiences in life, and this tried to explain the gross inequality and injustice in the world. So, Karma was somewhat opposite to Rita as well as Dharma. Karma became the central piece of Hindu philosophy in later Vedic era.

The Concept of Sapta Rishi

Saptarshi or the seven sages are mentioned at many places in Vedic Literature. The term "Saptarishis" is NOT mentioned in Vedic Richas but they are enumerated in different **later Vedic texts**, Upnishads and Brahmanas, They are considered to be the **patriarchs of Vedic Religion**.

Ursa Major constellation is coterminous with Sapta Rishi. Ursa Minor is coterminous with Laghu Sapta Rishi. There is one more star slightly visible within the Saptarishi and it is called Arundhati.

- The first list of the seven sages was given by Jaiminiya Brahman. The rishis are Vasistha, Bharadvaja, Jamadagni, Gautama, Atri, Visvamitra, and Agastya
- The second list is given in Brihadaranyaka Upnishad which mentions the names as Gautama and Bharadvāja, Viśvāmitra and Jamadagni, Vasiṣṭha and Kaśyapa, and Atri.
- Gopath Brahmana enlists the 7 sages as follows: Vasiṣṭha, Viśvāmitra, Jamadagni, Gautama, Bharadvāja, Gungu, Agastya, and Kaśyapa.

The role played by the Saptarishis in the birth of Kartikeya, has been vividly described in Kumarsambhava of Kalidasa. Rishi Agastya was one of the legendary sage, about whom a lot of traditions prevalent. His greatest feat was the reconciliation of Indra and the Maruts after Indra had been annoyed at his proposing to give the Maruts an offering to the exclusion of Indra. This feat is the subject of three hymns of the Rigveda. Agastya married Lopamudra, and appears in a strange dialogue with Lopamudra in Rigveda. In the Rigveda, this appears to show him as an ascetic who finally yields to temptation.

The story of Agastya and Lopamudra

Lopamudra is also known as Kaushitaki and Varaprada, there is one hymn in the Rigveda is attributed to her. Lopamudra was created by sage Agastya with the most graceful parts of animals such as eyes of the deer etc. She spread the fame of the **Lalita sahasranama** (the thousand names of the Divine Mother). *The meaning of word Lopamudra is "loss of beauty" which refers to the loss caused to the animals in her creation. Agastya created her, secretly introduced her to the palace of Vidarbha King, and later when she grew up asked the king to return her as his wife.*

Metals known to Aryans

The exact metal denoted by this word when used by itself, as always in the Rigveda, is uncertain. The most probable accepted candidate for the use of word Ayas were either Copper or Bronze. In

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Rigveda, Agni has been referred to as Ayodamstra which means “one that with teeth of Ayas”, the teeth refer to flames of Agni. The Vajansayi samhita notes that *Gold was Hiranya, Iron was Syama (also Syama Ayas), Lead was sisa, Tin was Trapu, Lohita Ayas was Copper, because of its red color.*

Some Notable Trivia

- Kathopnishad deals with the dialogue between Nachiketa and Yama
- “Satyamev Jayate” India’s motto comes from “Mundaka Upanishad”
- Aitareya Brahman establishes Superiority of Brahmins.
- Shudra word comes in 10th Mandala of Rig-Veda, so this term also belongs to later vedic age.
- In the later Vedic period, divine royal theory started. The king in the center was called Raja, Samrat in East, Swarat in West, Virat in North and Bhoj in South.
- Coins were used in Later Vedic Age
- Most mentioned River is Indus, Most revered river is Saraswati.
- The marriage of a widow to brother or relative of the deceased was known as “Niyoga”.
- *Rishi Agastya* is known for Aryanization of South India.
- Jabala Upanishad mentions the 4 Ashrams for the first time.
- Swastika is said to be not only pre-Vedic but also Pre-Harappan and it existed from Baluchistan, Indus Valley and even Turkmenistan. It is NOT an exclusive Aryan Symbol.
- *Vaishya* as a Varna has NO mention in Rig-Veda
- *Yavyavati* is another name for Ravi in Rig-Veda.
- Agni was a God which was worshipped by Aryans as well as Ancient Iranians.
- A hymn in Rig Veda is devoted to Lopamudra. She was wife of Rishi Agastya and credited with spreading the fame of the *Lalita sahastranama*. Her other names are Kaushitaki and Varaprada.
- Gargi was daughter of Rishi Vachaknu and is mentioned in the Sixth and the Eighth Brahmana of *Brhadaranyaka Upanishad*
- Atranjikheda is the place where largest deposits of the Iron weapons have been found.
- The literal meaning of Aryamnah Pantha word is “Aryaman’s Way” and is an expression which occurs in the Brahmanas and denotes the “Milky way”
- In early Vedic era, there was no distinct theory of Kingship and King (Rajan) was generally a tribal chieftain. This chieftain was the holder of the established order and moral rule which was called *Dhratavatra*.

Prelims Model Questions

1. According to ancient Indian tradition, a Veda can be divided into two parts viz. Mantra Samhita and Brahmanas. What is / are difference(s) between the two?



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1. While Mantras are mostly in verse, Brahmanas are mostly in prose
2. Brahmanas contain formulas for rituals, rules and regulations for rites and sacrifices

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1
- [B] Only 2
- [C] Both 1 & 2
- [D] Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: [C] Both 1 & 2

Many scholars, modern and ancient, have tried to define the Brahmanas by stating their characteristics. The reality however is that there is no sharp difference in the characteristics of the Mantra and the Brahmana portions of the Vedas. The only thing that we may state safely is this – Mantras are those portions of the Vedas that are designated as such traditionally. And the rest is Brahmana.

Unlike the mantras, which are mostly in verse, the Brahmanas are predominantly prose. The Brahmanas contain formulas for rituals, rules and regulations for rites and sacrifices and also outline other religious duties. The formulas and rules for conducting extremely complex rituals are explained to the minutest detail. And every ritual is performed for a specific purpose for which a specific effect/benefit is expected. It was felt that there was nothing that could not be achieved by sacrifices – the sun could be stopped from rising and Indra, the chief of gods, could be deposed from his throne. The duties of men professing different occupations, the eternity of the Veda, popular customs, cosmogony, historical details, praise of ancient heroes are some other subjects dealt with in the Brahmanas.

2. With reference to the Rig-Vedic, which among the following statements is / are correct?
 1. Burial as a form of funeral ceremony is more ancient than cremation among ancient Hindus
 2. The concept of Hell and its tortures are mentioned in some verses of Rig Veda

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 is correct
- [B] Only 2 is correct
- [C] Both 1 & 2 are correct
- [D] Neither 1 nor 2 is correct

Answer: [A] Only 1 is correct

Burial was probably the first form of funeral ceremony among ancient Hindus ; but this was soon followed by cremation, and the ashes were then buried in the earth. It is remarkable that there is no mention of a hell and its

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tortures in the Rig Veda.

3. With reference to the position of women in Rig-Vedic India, which among the following observations is / are correct?

1. A girl generally selected her own husband
2. Unmarried girls obtained a share in paternal property
3. Widows could remarry after death of their husbands

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1
[B] Only 1 & 2
[C] Only 2 & 3
[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

There were no unhealthy restrictions upon Hindu women in those days, no rules to keep them secluded or debarred from their legitimate place in society. A girl generally selected her own husband, but her parents' wishes were for the most part respected. We have frequent allusions to careful and industrious wives who superintended the arrangements of the house, and, like the dawn, roused everyone in the morning and sent him to his work. Girls who remained unmarried obtained a share in the paternal property. Widows could re-marry after the death of their husbands. (RC Datt)

4. Consider the following statements about Rig Vedic period:

1. The societies were patriarchal in nature during the period
2. Agriculture was the dominant occupation of people during the period
3. Gold and copper were the widely used metals during the period

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- [A] 2 Only
[B] 1 and 3 Only
[C] 2 and 3 Only
[D] 1, 2 and 3

Answer: [B] 1 and 3 Only

Second statement is wrong because pastoralism was the dominant occupation of people during the period. Agriculture was negligible and was mainly developed towards the end of this period.

5. With reference to vedic literature, "Tat Tvam Asi" is one of the most interpreted mahavakya



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(great saying). Which among the following is source of this mahavakya?

- [A] Aitareya Brahman
- [B] Kalpasutra
- [C] Brahadaranyaka
- [D] Chandogya Upanishad

Answer: [D] Chandogya Upanishad

Tat Tvam Asi comes from Chandogya Upanishad.

6. During the early Vedic period, which of the following priests served as presiding priest during ritual sacrifices?

- [A] Hotr
- [B] adhvaryu
- [C] Udgatr
- [D] Brahmin

Answer: [A] Hotr

hotr was the presiding priest, with perhaps only the adhvaryu as his assistant in the earliest time.

7. The Rig-Veda is a source of ____:

1. Gayatri Mantra
2. Nadistuti sukta
3. Purusha sukta

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1
- [B] Only 1 & 2
- [C] Only 2
- [D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

The Famous Gayatri mantra is in Rig Veda Mandala 3. Purusha sukta (ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय) is hymn 10.90 of the Rigveda, dedicated to the Purusha, the “Cosmic Being”. The seer of this verse is Rishi Narayana and this sukta can evoke God-experience in the seeker. Nadistuti sukta (ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय) is hymn 10.75 of the Rigveda.

8. What is / are the differences between the White Yajurveda and the Black Yajurveda?

1. While the White yajurveda comprises has a clear distinction between Samhita and Brahamana, the Black Yajurveda comprises both mixed up
2. While the White Yajurveda is more prevalent in northern India, Black Yajurveda is more



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prevalent in South India

3. While the White Yajurveda is otherwise called Vajasaneyi Samhita, Black Yajurveda is otherwise called Taittiriya Samhita

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1

[B] Only 1 & 2

[C] Only 2 & 3

[D] Only 1 & 3

Answer: [B] Only 1 & 2

Each Veda can be divided into two parts - Mantras and Brahmanas. A collection of Mantras is typically called a Samhita. Currently, and often in ancient Hindu tradition as well, it is often the Samhita portion alone which is referred to as the Veda. For instance, the word 'Rigveda' would typically mean the Rigveda Samhita.

The Brahmanas have their own names and are more like theological treatises of the Vedas. The end portions of many Brahmanas have an esoteric content, called the 'Aranyakas'. Embedded in these Aranyakas, or at their very end, are deeply spiritual treatises called the 'Upanishads'. For several centuries now, Upanishads are the mainstay of Hindu spiritual traditions, and are held in the highest esteem.

In the case of the Rigveda, Samaveda and the Atharvaveda, there is a clear-cut separation of the Mantra collection from the Brahmana portions. In contrast, the Yajurveda is of two types: Shukla (or white) Yajurveda and Krishna (or black) Yajurveda. In the former, the Mantra and Brahmana collections occur separate from each other. In the latter, the Mantra and the Brahmana portions are intermixed. Thus, the Taittiriya 'Samhita' belonging to the Krishna Yajurveda has Mantras interspersed with Brahmana portions. Even the Taittiriya 'Brahmana' has both Mantras and Brahmana passages mixed with each other.

Shukla yajur veda (more prevalent amongst Brahmanas in the North parts of India) and Krishna yajur veda (more prevalent amongst Brahmanas of the South.) Krishna Yajur Veda the Samhita and Brahmana are not separate entities.

9. Which one of the following statements is correct about Sabha and Samiti in Rigvedic times ?
1. While Sabha was a selected body, Samiti was assembly of larger group of people
 2. While Sabha performed most judicial as well as political functions, Samiti did not do these



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functions

Select the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1

[B] Only 2

[C] Both 1 & 2

[D] Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: [A] Only 1

Two assemblies called 'sabha' and 'samiti' formed an essential feature of the government. The term 'sabha' is often mentioned in the Rigveda, and denotes both "the people in conclave" and the "hall" which was the venue of their meeting. Since, however, the 'sabha' was used for the game of dice, it is clear that even nonpolitical business could be transacted at the hall or by the people who constituted the 'sabha'. That it was a gathering of the elect i.e., of Brahmanas and the rich patrons, when it was concerned for administrative purposes, is clear from the term 'Sabheya', "worthy of the assembly", as applied to a Brahmana.

The 'samiti' in the sense of an "Assembly" of the Vedic tribe is mentioned in the Rigveda. According to Ludwig, the 'samiti' was a more comprehensive conference including not only all the common people (visah) but also Brahmanas and rich patrons (maghavan).

Although it is difficult to distinguish between a 'sabha' and a 'samiti', it appears that the 'samiti' was an august assembly of a larger group of the people for the discharge of tribal (i.e. political) business and was presided over by the king, while the 'sabha', a more select body, was less popular and political in character than the 'samiti'.

Although the functions and powers of 'sabha' and 'samiti' cannot be exactly defined, numerous passages referring to them clearly indicate that both these Assemblies exercised considerable authority and must have acted as healthy checks on the power of the king.

Source: Administrative System in India: Vedic Age to 1947 By U. B. Singh

10. Which among the following Upanishads has been called the "Secret of Death"?

[A] Kathopnishad

[B] Mundakopnishad

[C] Mandukya

[D] Mundaka

Answer: [A] Kathopnishad

Kathopnishad was translated by Max Müller in 1879. It was rendered in verse by Edwin Arnold as "The Secret of Death". The central story is immortality and covers the story of encounter of Nachiketa, son of sage



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Vajasravasa, with Yama, God of death.

11. Which among the following is / are considered to be Shruti Literature?

1. Vedas
2. Brahmanas
3. Aranyakas
4. Upanishads

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
[B] Only 1, 3 & 4
[C] Only 1, 2 & 3
[D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

The Vedic literature is broadly divided into two categories viz. Shruti and Smriti. Shruti is “that which has been heard” and is canonical, consisting of revelation and unquestionable truth, and is considered eternal. Shruti describes the sacred texts comprising the central canon of Hinduism viz. Vedas, Brahmanas, Aranyakas, & Upanishads. Smriti literally means “that which is remembered, supplementary and may change over time”. It is authoritative only to the extent that it conforms to the bedrock of Shruti and it is entire body of the post Vedic Classical Sanskrit literature. It comprises Vedanga, Shad darsana, Puranas, Itihasa, Upveda, Tantras, Agamas, Upangas.

General Knowledge Today



Prelims Indian History -3: From Mauryas to Guptas

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Prelims MCQ Topics

Kindly refers to related previous years questions asked by UPSC in Prelims and our own Model Questions at the end of this module.

Buddhism

The reasons for development of new religions were as follows:

- The economy increasingly changed from pastoral to agro-based and importance of trade increased. Vaishyas which had third position in the Varna system provided support to both the new faiths viz. Jainism and Buddhism.
- The degraded position of shudras and women; rigidity in caste and varna system etc. irked the people.
- The ritual killing of animals for sacrifices was not favoured in new agro based economy.
- Vedic religion was overloaded by complex rituals, exaggeration, Brahmanic supremacy, superstitions etc. Both the new religions challenged the authority of Brahmins.
- Sanskrit was the language of Vedic religion but it started losing charm. Most people spoke Prakrit.

Gautam Buddha

- The Buddhavamsa mentioned total 29 Buddhas of which 27 preceded Gautam Buddha and Maitreya is future Buddha to come. The current Kalpa has five Buddhas viz. Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana, Kassapa, Gautama and Maitreya.

Buddha's Life

- Gautam Buddha was born as Siddhartha. His father Shuddodhana was a leader of Shakya clan which was a republic with capital at Kapilvastu. His mother Mahamaya was princess of another such principality called Devadaha. His mother died soon after his birth and he was raised by *Prajapati Gautami*.
- He was born in Lumbini in modern-day Nepal, around the year 563 BC and raised in Kapilavastu. The main evidence that Buddha was born in Lumbini, Nepal is the Ashoka Pillar which is still at Lumbini.
- Buddha's Birth is celebrated as **Vesaka** in some countries while in India, it is celebrated as Buddha Purnima, which falls in month of Vaishaka / April or May.
- He was married to Yashodhara at the age of 16 who gave birth to his son Rahula. He left house at age of 29 years after encountering with human sufferings and due to the truth that human life is momentary and one has to suffer a lot. The objective of leaving home was to overcome the sufferings due to old age, illness and death. This leaving home is called the



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Great Departure or Mahaabhinashkramana.

- While wandering as ascetic he subjected himself to austerity. But austerity did not bring him desired results. He studied under two hermits *Allara* and *Udaka* to achieve knowledge, but that knowledge also did not satisfy him. He did several experiments for five years. Meanwhile, he concluded that neither the path of austerity nor the extreme luxury is correct way. Finally, he started moving away from ascetics and imbibed himself into meditation.
- At the age of 35 years, while meditating under a Pipal tree on the bank of river Niranjana at Gaya, he came across the desired truth. He now became Shakyamuni Buddha or the Buddha of Shakya Clan.
- His first followers were two merchants Tapussa and Bhallika. With other followers he gave his first sermon dealing with *Four Noble Truths* and the *Noble Eightfold Path at Deer Park in Sarnath near Varanasi*. This first sermon was called Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta. The four noble truths and Noble Eightfold Path became the core pillars of Buddhist teaching.
- Buddha and his teaching (Dhamma) along with the first union of his five disciples (Sanhga) formed the three gems (Triratna) of Buddhism.
- For rest of his life, Buddha travelled to many places and spread the Dhamma. *He spent most of his monastic life in Sravasti*. His parinirvāṇa happened at Kuśinagara at the age of 80 years.

Symbols associated with Buddha's Life

- Buddha's birth : Lotus and Bull
- The Great Departure (Mahabhinishkramana) : Horse
- Enlightenment : Bodhee tree {Peepal}
- First sermon (Dhammachakraparivartana) : Wheel
- Death (Parinirvana) : Stupa

Buddha's Teachings

Four Noble Truths

1. *Dukkha* : World is full of sorrow and everything from birth to death brings sorrows
2. *Dukkha Samudaya* (Cause of sorrow): Desire is the cause of sorrow
3. *Dukkha Nirodha* (Prevention of sorrow): Triumph over desires leads to prevention of sorrow.
4. *Dukkha Nirodha Gamini Patipada Magga* or The path of Prevention of Sorrow: Man can avoid Dukkha by avoiding extremes of life and following middle path or *Madhyam Patipada*. The life of moderation and self control along with pursuance of 8 fold path is essential to prevent the Dukkha.

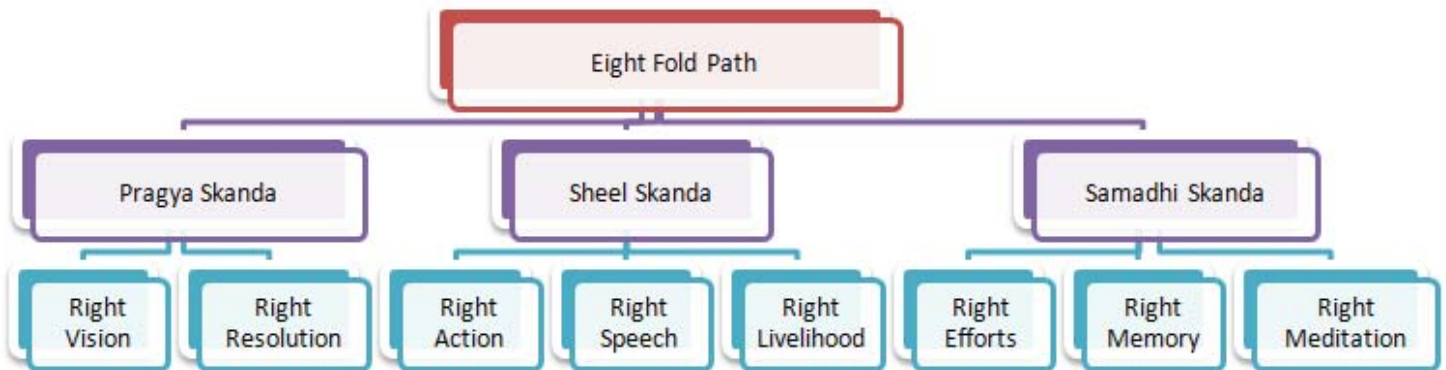
Eight Fold Path or Astangika marg

- The eight fold path was recommended to eliminate the human misery. It comprises of three



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basic divisions of wisdom (*Pragya Skanda*), ethical conduct (*Sheel Skanda*) and meditation (*Samadhi Skanda*).



Two Most Important Questions focused by Buddha

- Gautama Buddha is known to have concentrated on two most important questions about existence. These were (1) How can we minimize suffering-both our own and that of others? and (2) How can we attain inner peace?

Buddha's analogy to a Great Physician

In the Buddhist tradition, the Buddha is often compared to a great physician, and his teachings are compared to medicine. The teachings on the four noble truths in particular are related to a medical diagnosis, as follows:

- *Dukkha*: identifying the illness and the nature of the illness (the diagnosis)
- *Dukkha Samudaya*: identifying the causes of the illness (the etiology)
- *Dukkha Nirodha*: identifying a cure for the illness (the prognosis)
- *Magga*: recommending a treatment for the illness that can bring about a cure (the prescription)

Buddhist Literature

Tripitaka

- Tripitaka is traditional term used for various Buddhist scriptures. It is known as Pali Canon in English. The three pitakas are ***Sutta Pitaka***, ***Vinaya Pitaka*** and ***Abhidhamma Pitaka***.
- ***Sutta Pitaka*** has over 10 thousand Suttas {Sutras or teachings} related to Buddha and his close companions. It has five sections viz. *Digha Nikaya* (long discourses), *Majjhima Nikaya* (medium discourses), *Samyutta Nikaya* (connected discourses), *Anguttara Nikaya* (numerical discourses), *Khuddaka Nikaya* (minor collection).
- ***Vinay Pitaka*** deals with monastic rules and regulations. This has three books viz. *Suttavibhanga*, *Khandhaka* and *Parivara*. *Suttavibhanga* is a commentary on monastic discipline called *Patimokkha*. The rules are divided into two parts viz. *Mahavibhanga* (for fully ordained monks) and *Bikkhuni Vibanga* (for female monks). *Khandhaka* has two books which



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deal with Buddha, his disciples and the first and second Buddhist Councils. *Parivara* covers the summary and analysis of the first two books.

- **Abhidhamma Pitaka** deals with philosophy and doctrine of Buddhism.

Jatakas

- Jatakas are very much close to folklore literature and they contain the tales of previous births of Buddha in poetry form. There are 547 such tales called *Jatakamala* in Sanskrit, *ġietak* in Khmer and *Sadok* in Chinese.

Milinda Panha

- *Milinda Panha* or Questions of Milinda contains the dialogue of Indo-Greek king Meander and Buddhist monk Nagasena. It has been written in second to first century BC and initially written in Sanskrit. There is only one copy in Sri Lanka in Pali of this work.

Dipavamsa

- Dipavamsa (Chronicle of Island) is the *oldest historical record of Sri Lanka*. It is believed to have been compiled around 3rd or 4th century BC somewhere in Anuradhapura in Sri Lanka during the reign of King Dhatusena of Sri Lanka, the first Mauryan King of Sri Lanka.
- Dipavamsa is one of the most important works in Pali Literature. It details the tooth relic and Bodhi Tree's arrival in Sri Lanka. It also deals with the arrival of Buddha's teaching and preachers in Sri Lanka. It mentions that Buddha visited Kelaniya and Dighavapi in Sri Lanka.

Mahavamsa

- **Mahavamsa** {Great Chronicle} is a Pali epic poem and deals with royal dynasties of not only Sri Lanka but the whole Indian subcontinent and is known as world's longest unbroken historical accounts. The consecration of Asoka and details of Selucus and Alexander have been detailed in it.

Mahavastu

- Mahavastu {Great Event} is a work in prose and verse and is written in Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit. It details the miracles & earlier lives of Buddha.

Buddha Charita

- *Buddha Charita* is an epic style Sanskrit work by **Ashvaghosa** and was compiled in second century BC.

Mahāvibhāsa Śāstra

- Its a Sanskrit compendium by Vasumitra, dealing with Buddhism, Vaisheshika and Samkyā philosophies.

Lalitavistara

- Lalitavistara is a Sanskrit text that deals with the biography of Buddha.

Divyavadana



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- Divyavadana {divine tales} has anthology in the form of Sanskrit Stories dealing with Maurya and Sunga history. One story in it titled *Asokavadana* deals with the legends of Asoka.

Udanavarga

- Udanavarga is an early Buddhist sanskrit text. It has verses attributed to Buddha and his disciples.

Udana

- Udana is a Pali text with the Sutta Pitaka. It also contains the story of “Blind men and Elephant”.

Bodhi Vamsa

- Bodhi Vamsa is a mix Sanskrit Pali text which describes the arrival of branch of Bodhi tree in Sri Lanka and many other things which mentioned in Mahavamsa.

Buddhist Scholars

The most important turning point in the expansion of Buddhism in India was the emergence and conversion of Asoka the Great (304–232 BC). He embraced Buddhism after 8 years of his coronation, he became a Buddhist and made it his state religion in 260 BC. He convened the third Buddhist council, which was held in Pataliputra in the presidency of *Moggaliputta Tissa*. He launched a vigorous campaign to propagate Buddhism which could be called Asoka’s Dhamma.

Salient Notes on Some Buddhist Scholars are as follows:

Aśvaghosa

- Aśvaghosa is the Greatest Indian Poet Prior to Kalidasa. He is known as first Sanskrit Dramatist of the World. His epics rivalled the contemporary Ramayana. He wrote Buddhist texts in Classical Sanskrit.
- He was the court writer and religious advisor of Kushana king Kanishka. His main works are *Buddhacharita*, *Mahalankara* (Book of Glory) and *Saundaranandakavya* (details the life of Nanda).

Nagarjuna

- Nagarjuna founded the Madhyamika school of Mahayan Buddhism. He was contemporary of Satavahana King Gautamiputra. He was born in a Brahmin family in Nagarjunkonda in modern Andhra Pradesh.
- Due to his birth in Brahmin family and later conversion in Buddhism, it can be justified that his early work was in Sanskrit and not in Pali or Hybrid Sanskrit.
- Most important work is *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, which means *Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way*. His theory is also known as Shunyavad “emptiness”.

Asanga & Vasubandhu

- Both were half brothers and proponents of *Yogachara* and *Abhidhamma* They were from



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modern Peshawar area in Pakistan. Most important work of Vasubandhu was *Abhidharmamoksha*.

Buddhaghosa

- *Buddhaghosa* lived the 5th century AD and is known to be one of the greatest Pali scholar. His name means “Voice of Buddha”. Considered to be most important commentator of the Theravada.
- He is said to have gone to Sri Lanka from India’s Magadha and settled in Anuradhapura. The most important work is *Visuddhimagga*

Dignāga or Dinnaga

- He is considered to be the founder of Buddhist logic.

Candrakīrti or Chandrakirti

- He was a disciple of Nagarjuna and a scholar at the Nalanda University. *Prasannapadā* is his main work which means happy words or clear words

Dharmakirti

- Dharmakirti lived in 7th century AD and was primary theorist of Buddhist Sankya. He was a teacher at the Nalanda University and a poet. He has written Seven Treatises on Valid Cognition. He has been called “Kant of India’.

Buddhist Councils

Six Buddhist councils have been convened. Here is a short description:

First Buddhist Council: 400 BC

- Held soon after the mahaparinirvana of the Buddha, around 400 BC under the patronage of king Ajatshatru with the monk Mahakasyapa presiding, at Rajgriha, **in the Sattapani Cave**.
- The idea was to preserve Buddha’s teachings (Sutta) and rules for disciples (Vinaya). Ananda, one of the great disciples of Buddha recited Suttas and Upali, another disciple recited Vinaya. *Abhidhamma Pitaka* was also included.

Second Buddhist Council : 383 BC

- It was held in 383 BC. This idea of this council was to settle a dispute on Vinaya Pitaka, the code of discipline. The dispute was on 10 Points such as storing salt in horn, eating after midday, eating once and going to villages for alms, eating sour milk after one’s meal etc. It was not settled and Buddhism sects appeared for the first time. The subgroups were *Sthaviravada*, *Mahasanghika* and *Sarvastivada*. It was held at Vaishali under the patronage of King Kalasoka and the presidency of Sabakami.
- Sthaviravada followed the teachings of the elders and Mahasanghika became extinct later. Sthaviravada later continued till 3rd Buddhist council.



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Third Buddhist Council: 250 BC

- Third Buddhist council was held in 250 BC at Pataliputra under the patronage of King Asoka and under the presidency of Moggaliputta Tissa.
- The teachings of Buddha which were under two baskets were now classified in 3 baskets as Abhidhamma Pitaka was established in this council, and they were known as "Tripitaka". It also tried to settle all the disputes of Vinaya Pitaka.

Fourth Buddhist Council: 72AD

- The Fourth Buddhist Council was held at Kundalvana, Kashmir in 72 AD under the patronage of Kushan king Kanishka and the president of this council was Vasumitra, with Asvaghosa as his deputy. This council distinctly divided the Buddhism into 2 sects Mahayan & Hinayan.
- Another Fourth Buddhist Council was held at Tambapanni (one name of Sri Lanka) at Aloka Lena under the patronage of **Vattagamani-Abaya**. However, most scholars agree that this was not eligible to be called a Council as it was not under a king but a local chieftain. This council is also related to the cruel policy of Vattagamani-Abaya towards Jains, as it is said that a Jain premises was destroyed and a Mahayan temple was built.

Fifth Buddhist Council: 1871

- Fifth Buddhist Council took place in 1871 under the patronage of **King Mindon** in Mandalay, Burma. It was presided by Jagarabhivamsa, Narindabhidhaja, and Sumangalasami. The idea was to recite all the teachings of the Buddha and examine them systematically if any of them was dropped or altered.

Sixth Buddhist Council : 1954

- The Sixth Buddhist Council was held in 1954 in Burma at **Kaba Aye**, in Yangon under the patronage of Burmese Government led by Prime Minister U Nu. Construction of Maha Passana Guha, which is very much similar to India's Sattapanni Cave where the first Buddhist Council had been held, was authorized by the government.
- It was aimed to preserve the genuine Dhamma and Vinaya Pitaka. It held under the presidency of Mahasi Sayadaw and Bhadanta Vicittasarabhivamsa. 500 Buddhist scholars from 8 countries participated in this council.

Mahayana and Hinayana

A Yana is a vehicle. A Hinayana is a lesser vehicle while a Mahayana is a Great vehicle.

Hinayana

- The other names of Hinayana are: *Deficient Vehicle*, *Abandoned Vehicle* or *Defective Vehicle*.
- It believes in the original teaching of Buddha or Doctrine of Elders.
- Does not believe in Idol worship and tries to attain individual salvation through self discipline



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and meditation. Ultimate aim of Hinayana is thus nirvana.

- Stharvivada or Theravada is a Hinayana sect.
- Asoka Patronized Hinayana.
- Pali, the language of masses was used by the Hinayana scholars.

Mahayana

- Mahayana or “great vehicle” believes in the heavenliness of Buddha and Idol worship of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas embodying Buddha Nature.
- It spread from India to various countries including China and South East Asian nations.
- Zen, Pure Land, Tiantai, and Nichiren, Shingon and Tibetan Buddhism are traditions of Mahayana.
- Mahayana believed in universal liberation from suffering for all beings (hence the “Great Vehicle”). Ultimate aim of Mahayana is “spiritual upliftment”.
- It allows salvation to be alternatively obtained through the grace of the Amitābha Buddha by having faith and devoting oneself to mindfulness of the Buddha.
- It believes in Mantras. Language of Mahayana was predominantly Sanskrit.

Similarity between Hinayana versus Mahayana

Both adopt one and the same Vinaya, and they have in common the prohibitions of the five offenses, and also the practice of the Four Noble Truths.

Bodhisattva

A Bodhisattva means one who has essence of enlightenment. Anyone who has a spontaneous wish to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all is a Bodhisattva. It's a very popular subject in Buddhist art. A bodhisattva is bound to enlightenment and refers to all who are destined to become Buddhas in this life or another life. There are celestial bodhisattvas which are manifestations of Gautam Buddha.

Important 8 Bodhisattvas are as follows:

Avalokiteśvara

Avalokiteśvara encompasses all Buddhas. In China he is known as Guānshīyīn Púsà, in Tibetan as Chenrezig, in Thai as Avalokitesuarn. He is said to incarnate in Dalai Lama. He is depicted as holding a lotus flower. He is depicted as female also. A cave wall painting of Avalokiteśvara is devoted in Ajanta Caves as Padmapani.

Manjusri

He is known as Wénshū in Chinese, Jampelyang in Tibetan and is a manifestation of great wisdom and meditation. Mañjuśrī is depicted as a male bodhisattva wielding a flaming sword in his right hand.

Samantabhadra

Samantabhadra means Universal Worthy and he is associated with meditation. Known as Fugen



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Bosatsu in Japanese and very popular in Japan among the Tendai and Shingon sects. His manifestation is Action and he is key figure in Flower Garland Sutra.

Ksitigarbha

Ksitigarbha is usually depicted as a Buddhist monk in the Orient / East Asia. Ksitigarbha means Earth Womb. he is regarded as Bodhisattva of Earth or Hell beings or Mortals. He is regarded as guardian of children and patron deity of deceased children and aborted fetuses in Japanese culture. he carries a staff.

Ksitigarbha, Samantabhadra, Manjusri, and Avalokitesvara are the principal Bodhisattvas of East Asian Mahayana Buddhism.

Maitreya

Maitreya will be successor of Gautama Buddha. He is also known as *Ajita Bodhisattva*. He holds a “water phial” in his left hand. Earliest mention of Metteyya is in the Digha Nikaya 26 of the Pali Canon. It is said that he will arrive when oceans will decrease in size (that is why keeps a Kumbha or phial in his hand) and will rule the Ketumati Pure Land (Varanasi).

We note here that popular **Budai or laughing Buddha** is claimed to be an incarnation of Maitreya. Budai was a Chinese Zen monk who lived during the Later Liang Dynasty (907–923 CE) in China. In Japanese, he is called Hotei and is one of the 7 Lucky Gods of Japan.

Vajrapani

Vajrapani is depicted as one of the 3 protective deities around Buddha, other are Manjusri and Avlokiteshwara. Vajrapani manifests Buddha’s power, Manjusri manifests Buddha’s wisdom and Avlokiteshwara manifests Buddha’s compassion. In Japan a dharma protector called Nio is also Vajrapani.

Sadāparibhūta

Sadāparibhūta is a Bodhisattva which manifests “never disparaging” spirit.

Akasagarbha

Akasagarbha is boundless as space. He is known as twin brother of Ksitigarbha. He is manifestation of wisdom.

Places Associated with Life of Buddha

Astamahasthanas

Astamahasthanas are eight great holy places associated with the life of Buddha These include four pilgrimage sites related to the life of Gautama Buddha viz. Lumbini, Bodhgaya, Sarnath and Kushinagara and four other sites viz. Sravasti, Sankasya, Rajgir and Vaishali.

Lumbini

Lumbini is currently located in Kapilavastu district of Nepal. It is birth place of Buddha. At the time



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of birth of Buddha, Lumbini was a part of *Shakya Janapada*, which was a republic.

Bodhgaya

It is located in Bihar on the bank of river Neranjana {this river was known as Uruwela at that time}.

It is known for place of enlightenment of Buddha.

Sarnath

Sarnath {also known as Mrigadava, Migadaya, Rishipattana, Isipatana} is the deer park where Gautama Buddha delivered his first sermon or *Dhammachakraparivartan Sutra*. At the time of Buddha, it was a part of Kashi Janapada.

Kushinagar

Kushinara or Kushinagara is located in Kushinagar district of Uttar Pradesh. It is the site of Buddha's death and mahaparinirvana. At the time of Buddha's death, it was a capital of Malla janapada.

Sravasti

Sravasti was located in Uttar Pradesh around area of Balrampur in modern Uttar Pradesh. It is closely associated with the life of Buddha because Buddha had spent 24 Chaturmasas {implies 24 years because one year as only one Chaturmasa between Ashadha to Kartika}. Thus, we can say that most of monastic life of Buddha was spent in Shravasti. In Buddha's times, *Shravasti was capital of Kosala Kingdom*. Shravasti is also birthplace of Jaina Tirthankar Sambhavanath, and thus is important for Jains also.

Sankasya

It's current location is Farrukhabad district of Uttar Pradesh. It has some faiths of Buddhism that Buddha after his death descended from heaven here.

Rajgir

Rajgir was the early capital of Magadh Janapada, which was ruled by Bimbisara during Buddha's time. After the great departure (Mahabhinishkramana), Buddha had first gone to Rajgir. He started begging alms over there and living life of an ascetic. King Bimbisara had offered Buddha his throne which he turned down.

Vaishali

At the time of Buddha, Vaishali was in Vajji Janapada. After leaving Kapilavastu for renunciation, he came to Vaishali first and had his spiritual training from Allara and Udaka.

Other places of importance in Buddhism

Amaravati

Amaravati in Andhrapradesh's Guntur district is also known as Dhanyakataka or Dharanikota and was the site of a great Buddhist Stupa built in pre-Mauryan times, ruled by Satavahana kings.

Nagarjunkonda

Nagarjunkonda is near Nagarjun Sagar in Andhra Pradesh. Once, it was home to more than 30 Buddhist Viharas (Buddhist universities and monasteries), attracting students from as far as China,



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Gandhara, Bengal and Sri Lanka. Nagarjunkonda was one the largest and most important Buddhist centers in South India from the second century BC until the third century AD. It was named after Nagarjuna, a renowned Buddhist scholar and philosopher, who had migrated here from Amaravati to propagate and spread the Buddha's message of universal peace and brotherhood. Remains were discovered in 1926 by archaeologist AR Saraswati in 1926.

Ajanta Caves

Ajanta Caves are 31 rock cut caves from 2nd to 8th century AD, located in Aurangabad. The first caves called Chaityas were created during Satavahana Dynasty. Cave No. 1 has the painting of Padmapani and Vajrapani. Painted narratives of the Jataka tales are depicted on the walls.

Angkor Wat

Angkor Wat is located in Cambodia. The temple complex was built by Suryavarman II and it was first devoted to Vishnu and later to Buddhist.

Bodh Gaya

Bodh Gaya was known as Bodhimanda, Uruvela, Sambodhi, Vajrasana and Mahabodhi till 18th century when Bodh Gaya name became popular. It has the Mahabodhi temple and Bodhi tree. It became Unesco world heritage site in 2002.

Bodhi Tree

It's a Pipal Tree (*Ficus Religiosa*) and known as Bo in Sri Lanka. Located in Bodh Gaya. Under this tree Gautama attained enlightenment. The current tree is a descendent of the original tree. There are other Bodhi trees as well viz. *Anandabodhi* tree in Sravasti and the **Bodhi tree (Bo)** or also known as Jaya Sri Maha Bodhi planted in 288 BC in Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka and both of them have been propagated from the original tree. It is also known as oldest living Human Planted tree in the world with a known planting date.

Borobudur

Borobudur is located in Indonesia and comprises six square platforms topped by three circular platforms, and is decorated with 2,672 relief panels and 504 Buddha statues. It's a world Heritage site. There are 3 Buddhist temples which are known as Borobudur Temple Compounds.

Bamyan Caves

They are located in Afghanistan and have statues represented the classic blended style of Gandhara art of 6th century, They were the largest examples of standing Buddha carvings in the world, before they were blown by dynamite by Taliban in 2001.

Ellora Caves

Ellora Caves represent Buddhist, Jain and Hindu Rock cut temples built by Rastrakuta Kings. Earliest Buddhist cave is Cave 6; most caves of Buddhism are Viharas. Cave number 10 is a Chaitya hall also known as Chandrashala or Vishwkarma Cave and also known as carpenter's cave At heart of this



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cave is a 15 ft statue of Buddha seated in a preaching pose.

Pushpagiri University

Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri and Udayagiri are the part of the Puspagiri University which flourished till 11th century in Odisha. They lie atop the Langudi hills in Jajpur and Cuttak of Orissa.

Vikramshila, Odantapuri and Somapapuri

Vikramshila, Odantapuri & Somapapuri were the Buddhist Viharas founded by Palas.

Other Concepts Related to Buddhism

Trikaya Doctrine

Trikaya Doctrine in Buddhism was developed by Yogkarins. It says that Buddha has three kāyas or bodies, the *nirmānakāya* or created body which manifests in time and space; the *saṃbhogakāya* or body of mutual enjoyment which is a body of bliss or clear light manifestation; and the *Dharmakāya* or Truth body which embodies the very principle of enlightenment and knows no limits or boundaries. The later development of Mahayan Buddhism adopted this theory.

The theory was formulated in answer to a paradox which confronted Mahayana Buddhism. Whereas the true ideal of early Buddhism was the arahant, this was replaced in the Mahayana by the bodhisattva. Yet if this was the true ideal, why did Siddhartha Gautama not become a bodhisattva, rather man a Buddha who selfishly passed away at parinirvana? This objection was addressed in the Yogacarins' concept of the Triakaya. They said that Gautama was not in fact an ordinary man, but the manifestation of a great spiritual being having three bodies.

Comparison of Buddhist Philosophy and Samkhya Philosophy

There are some basic points of agreement towards which both Samkhya-Yoga and Buddhism were drawn. Their approach is positive and pragmatic. This positivistic attitude is reflected in their rejection of sacrificial ritualism, priests, God, etc. Buddha's antipathy towards sacrifice and violence is well known. But Samkhya being in the fold of orthodox systems also renounces the ritualistic way unable to solve the problem of suffering. Samkhya Philosophy says that sacrificial rituals are like the ordinary perceptible means; hence ultimately ineffective in bringing that abiding and final release from suffering. Samkhya goes to the extent describing one form of bondage, "Bondage by sacrificial gifts."

Both are Humanistic and reject any divine grace for attaining moksa or enlightenment

Both Samkhya and Buddhism are humanistic. The goal is achievable by everyone by his own effort; one need not look for any divine grace for attaining moksa. Every liberated man attains to the self-effulgent nature of the isolated Purusa (Kevalin) or Buddhahood by following the prescribed method. A man must depend entirely on himself, as the canonical text says: 'you yourselves must make the effort'; the Buddhas do but point the way'.



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Idea of spirit / soul

Both Samkhya and the early Buddhism rejected the concept of soul. They emphasis on individual rather on cosmic; similarity in the theories of evolution; similarity in the view of the world as a constantly becoming and changing phenomena; acceptance of the concept of Gunas; acceptance of the Satkarya vada that the effect resides in its cause; similarity in enumeration of the basic elements or components of nature; similarity in the notions of liberation kaivalya or nirvana; rejection of both the Vedic authority and the validity of rituals; rejection of extreme practices and self torture etc. Though Samkhya abandons the idea of the existence of the absolute, but it retains the idea of spirit (Purusha) and of material world (Prakrti); the Buddhism, on the other hand abandoned both these two conceptions, and retained only the fleeting series of mental states (stream of consciousness) as a quasi reality, In either case there is effort to disown the human psycho-physical apparatus and its functioning.

Chaityas and Viharas

Viharas were for the purpose of living, Chaityas were assemblies for the purpose of discussions. Further, Chaityas were with Stupas, Viharas did not have stupas.

Both early Chaityas and Viharas were made by woods and later stone-cut Chaityas and Viharas were made. Chaitya was a rectangular prayer hall with a stupa placed in the centre, the purpose was prayer. The Chaitya was divided into three parts, and had an apsidal ending, that is, a semicircular rear end, The central part of the hall (also called the nave) was separated from the two aisles by two rows of pillars, The chaityas also had polished interior walls, semicircular roofs and horse-shoe shaped windows called the Chaitya windows. Viharas were the residences of the monks.

Jainism

Jainism originated centuries before Buddhism but was revived only by Mahavira. This religion is one of the oldest and *there are no evidences of its origin.*

About Mahavira

Mahavira, also known as Vardhamana, Vira, Viraprabhu, Sanmati, Ativira, *Gnatputra (in Tamil Texts)* and *Nigantha Nātaputta (in Pali canon)*, was 24th Tirthankar of Jainism. He was born in 599 BC as son of King Siddartha and Queen Trishala. His birth day falls in month of Chaitra (March or April). His birthplace *Kundagrama* is located in Muzaffarpur district of Bihar. His father King Siddarth was head of *Gyatrika Kshtriyas* and his mother mother Trishla was a *Licchavi* princess and sister of ruler Chetak. Chetaka's daughter later married powerful King of Magadha, Bimbisara. Mahavira's Gotra was *Kashyapa*. Family of Mahavira was called in Sanskrit *Jnatri* and in Prakrit *Naata*. The male members of the family were called *Jnatriputras* or *Naataputtas*.

At the age of 30, Mahavira renounced the royal life, gave up worldly possessions and spent 12 years



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as ascetic, mostly in meditation. Once he attained Kevalya Gyana (supreme knowledge), he devoted rest of his life preaching the eternal truth and spiritual freedom to people across India. He attained Nirvana at Pavapuri (current Nalanda district) at the age of 72 years.

As per Shwetambara traditions, he was married to Yasoda, who had given birth to his daughter Anojja or Priyadarsana. Priyadarsana later married to Jamali, who was also a disciple of Mahavira. As per Digambara tradition, *Mahavira was never married.*

Jain Philosophy

Jainism, like Buddhism is non-theistic. It does not acknowledge existence of a supreme divine creator. This is different from Vedic religion which is monotheistic and believes in existence of a divine creator of this universe.

Nine Tattvas (Nine truths)

According to Jainism, there are nine truths or realities (Nav-tattva) viz. Soul (*Jiva*), matter (*Ajiva*), merit (*Punya*), demerit or sin (*Papa*), influx of karma (*Asrava*), Stoppage of Karmic matter (*Samvara*), Bondage (*Bandha*), shredding of karmic matter (*nirjara*) and Liberation (*Moksha*).

Soul (Jiva)

Apart from non-belief in a supreme divine creator, another remarking feature of Jain philosophy is that it believes in *independent existence of soul and matter*. The soul or Jiva is the conscious substance which is different in different humans and animals. The number of Jivas is infinite. Soul is engaged in worldly affairs good or bad karma and takes successive births as per the stock of its karma. Thus, it is the Jiva which enjoys the fruits of karma and thus Jiva is also called *Bhokta*.

Non-soul (Ajiva)

Ajiva is the opposite of jiva comprising of dharma, adharma, akash, pudgala and kala substances, of these, the first three (medium of motion, medium of rest, space or medium of accommodation are formless (*amurta*) and indivisible wholes. The forth substance matter is defined as what is possessed of the qualities of touch, taste, colour and smell. Time is atomic in dimension and the kala atoms pervade the whole cosmic space.

Punya and Papa

Punya is the consequence of good deeds. There are nine ways to it. Papa is consequence of bad deeds. Papa is major factor that results in bondage of Jiva. Injury or harm to other living beings is one of the most heinous papa in Jainism.

Asrava (Influx of Karma)

Asrava denotes the inflow of karmic matter by the soul. Just as water flows into a boat through a hole, so the karmic matter flows through asrava into the soul. The nature of activity is shubha (meritorious) or ashubha (demeritorious). The principle "*like causes produce like results*" is accepted as a determining feature of the Jain doctrine of karma.



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Samvara (stoppage of karmic matter)

Samvara means stopping, controlling or ceasing of inflow of karmic matter into the soul. Smavara is achieved through self control, restrained movement, virtues, contemplation and monastic conduct.

Bandha (bondage)

Bandha is the union of jiva with pudgala (matter) or soul with non-soul particles. The matter is determined by five causes, namely wrong belief, attachment, carelessness, passions and activity.

Nirjara (shedding the karmic matter)

Nirjara means shedding off, drying up or destruction. Nirjara is to destroy and burn up accumulated karma.

Moksha (liberation)

Moksha is the supreme stage of spiritual attainment when all causes of bondage having been uprooted, the soul is freed from karmic matter. It is a stage of peace, perfect faith, perfect knowledge, and a stage of having achieved siddhi. Moksha is attained through *right faith, right knowledge and right conduct (Tri-ratna)*.

For the perfection of right conduct, five kind of vows (Mahavratas) recommended viz. Non-violence (*ahimsa*), truthfulness (*satya*), non-stealing (*asteya*), chastity (*brahmacharya*) and no greed (*aparigraha*).

Summary

Every living being has a soul. Every soul is potentially divine, with innate qualities of infinite knowledge, perception, power, and bliss. However, these qualities are masked by its karmas. Therefore, Jains think of every living being as themselves, harming no one and be kind to all living beings. This is the basis of non-violence in Jainism. Every soul is born as a celestial, human, sub-human or hellish being according to its own karmas. Every soul is the architect of its own life, here or hereafter. When a soul is freed from karmas, it becomes free and attains divine consciousness, experiencing infinite knowledge, perception, power, and bliss.

Non-violence in Jainism

Ahimsa is such a cardinal principle of Jainism that it is called beginning and the end of Jain Religion. Ahimsa means not to kill or hurt any living being by body, mind or speech. This vrata or vow is possible for only those who dedicate their whole life on the basis of Mahavratas and who have renounced their household life.

Non-possession

Possession of worldly things perpetrates in violence. Desire to get more is the root cause of violence and bondage of soul with karma. Thus, non-possession is the second cardinal principle of Jainism.

Anekantavad

Philosophically an important contribution of Jainism is the doctrine of Anekantavad (non-absolutism). As per this, reality can be examined from many standpoints. The same thing can be



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describe from at least seven standpoints and all can be equally true. This particular school promotes tolerance of contrary opinions among the theologians and philosophers.

Six Dravyas of Jain Cosmology

As per Jain theory, the world is not created, maintained, or destroyed by a supreme, divine deity but functions according to the **universal law** of cyclic existence. It is made of six dravyas as follows:

- *Jiva and Ajiva*: All living and Non-living substances.
- *Pudagala*: This means matter
- *Dharma-Tattva*: This means Principle of Motion
- *Adharma tattva*: This means principle of Rest
- *Akasa*: This means space
- *Kala*: This means time.

Samsāra, as per Jain faith is worldly life characterized by continuous rebirths and reincarnations in various realms of existence. The mundane existence is full of suffering and misery and hence is worth renunciation. *Moksa* is the only liberation from *Samsāra*.

Universal Truth or Kevalya Gyana

Jain doctrine is established upon undying, universal truths. Kevalya Gyana is absolute knowledge and is the highest form of knowledge that a soul can attain. A person who has attained Kevala Gyana is called a *Kevalin*. To get a status of a Jina, attaining Kevalagyana is required first.

Jain Sects

Jain Samgha could not maintain its unity after 200 years of Mahavira's Parinirvana. It split into Digambara sect and Shwetambara Sect during the Mauryan Era. The Digambara sect observed the tenets of religion strictly and the monks remained naked. Shwetambara sect were liberal and they wore white clothes.

Besides monastic nudity, the other beliefs of the Digambaras that are different from the Shvetambaras are as follows:

- The perfect saint (kevalin) does not need food to stay alive
- Mahavira never married;
- No woman can reach moksha without being reborn as a man
- All tirthankaras, when rendered as images, must be portrayed as naked, without ornaments, and with downcast eyes

Moreover, the Digambara do not recognize the Shwetambara canon of religious texts but maintain that the early literature was gradually forgotten and lost completely by the second century ad.

Jain Sangeeti

The conferences of Jainism are called Jain Sangeeti. The first Jain Sangeeti was convened in 300 BC



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and this conference was headed by Sthoolbhadra. The second Jain Sangeeti was called in 512 AD and was held in Vallabhi Gujarat. The chairman was Devardhi Kshammaramana.

Jain Symbol

Jain Emblem or Jain Symbol was adopted in 1975, at the auspicious occasion of 2500th Nirvana anniversary of Lord Mahavira. This emblem is used in almost all of the Jain magazines, wedding invitation cards, Jain festival cards, and every magazine with links to events related to Jain society. Use of this emblem helps to create a culture showing dedication and trust for the religion and the values that are represented by the emblem. The pic shows the features of the Jain emblem.

Navakar Mantra

Navakar Mantra is the fundamental prayer in Jainism and can be recited at any time of the day. Praying by reciting this mantra, the devotee bows with respect to liberated souls still in human form (Arihantas), fully liberated souls (Siddhas), spiritual leaders (Acharyas), teachers (Upadyayas) and all the monks. By saluting them, Jains receive inspiration from them to follow their path to achieve true bliss and total freedom from the karmas binding their souls. In this main prayer, Jains do not ask for any favours or material benefits. This mantra serves as a simple gesture of deep respect towards beings who are more spiritually advanced. The mantra also reminds followers of the ultimate goal, nirvana or moksha

Jain Literature

Jain Literature is called Jain Agamas. They are canonical texts of Jainism based on Mahavira's teachings. There are in all 45 texts.

Royal Patrons of Jainism

- Asoka's Grandson Samprati
- King Kharvela of Orissa: set up jain rock cut cave.
- Gangs, Kadambas, Chalukyas, Rastrakutas had patronized Jainism.
- King Amoghavarsha of Rastrakuta dynasty became a Jain Monk.
- The Chalukyan period rock cut caves at badami and aihole have the figures of Jain Tirthankaras.
- Samatabhadra in Kanchi preached this religion.
- The Dilwara Jain temples at Mount Abu were built by Chalukya Dynasty kings between 11 to 13th

Other Notable Trivias

- The Jain religion professes peace and non-violence and this was the major reason that mercantile community was attracted towards this religion.
- Chandragupta Maurya had abdicated his throne towards the end of his life and became an ascetic under the Jain saint Bhadrabahu. He migrated to Karnataka and spent his ending days



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at sallekhana at Shravanabelagola. Bhadrabahu Cave is the place where he is said to have died by fasting. Bhadrabahu had propagated Jainism in South India.

- The metaphysical thoughts of Jainism are linked to Samkhya Philosophy.
- There are five Jain caves at Ellora, which belong to the ninth and tenth centuries and they all belong to the Digambara sect. Cave 32 at Ellora is called Indra Sabha and it is a Jain Cave. Tiger cave at Udayagiri, and Sittannavasala Cave at Padukottai are Jain caves only.
- Death through gradual starvation at the end of one's natural life is called 'Santhara'. Among Jains it is a means to attain salvation and not suicide. The Jains profess a vast difference between suicide and Santhara. Suicide is committed in a fit of anger or depression while the decision to observe Santhara is taken with a calm mind.
- Neminath or Arishtnemi was a Jain Tirthankar who was considered to be a kinsman of Lord Krishna.
- 11 close disciples of Mahavira are called *Ganadhara*. The Jain Samgha was made up of 11 Ganadharas.
- Virasena, Mahaviracharya, Hemachandra and Mahendra Suri were well known Jain Mathematicians.
- 4 Sankalpas viz. Satya, Ahimsa, Asteya and Aparigraha were adopted and preached by Parshvanth.

Maurya Empire

Sixteen Mahajanapadas

In the 8th century BC, India could be broadly understood in terms of five large regions viz. Madhyadesa (the middle country), Pratihya (western lands), Prachya (Eastern region), Uttarpatha (the land in the north of Vindhya and Dakshinpatha (the land south of Vindhya)).

Around sixth century BC, the territories of sixteen Mahajanapadas got clearly marked. These included Kasi, Kosala, Anga, Magadha, Vajji or Vriji, Malla, Chedi or Cheti, Vamsa or Vatsa, Kuru, Panchala, Machcha or Matsya, Surasena, Assaka or Ashmaka, Avanti, Gandhara & Kamboja. The names of at least 9 among them are given in the Vedic Literature. Panini in the 4th century BC mentions as many as 22 different Janpadas, but also mentions 3 most important viz. Magadha, Kosala and Vatsa.



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Evolution of Mahajanapadas

The society in Vedic period was rural, where smallest political unit was a Vis. However, some later Vedic texts detail about the Janpadas such as *Kuru, Panchala, Matysa, Kunti, Kikata, Jayminia, Kashi, Magadha, Anga, Kamboja* etc. The rise of Janpadas is mainly attributed to the establishment of settled agriculture communities. The development of an agriculture based economy led to increase in crops and cattle wealth coupled with use of iron in technology. The society was now totally divided into 4 Varna. Based upon occupation, new labour class and landed classes emerged. The landed class was



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known as *Gahapatis*. The trade flourished and the towns, which were either located on trade routes such as Mathura or located, near the banks of rivers such as Magadha developed. This transition also saw an emergence of taxing, standing army, territorial powers etc.

The sixteen Mahajanapadas are as follows:

Kasi

Its Capital was Banaras. Kasi was located on the confluence of Ganga and Gomti rivers and somewhere around today's Varanasi.

Kosala

Its capital was Shravasti. It was located in the Eastern Uttar Pradesh. It covers today's districts Faizabad, Gonda, Bahraich etc. and was bordered by River Gomti on the west, River Sadaniva in the east, Nepal hills in the north and River Syandika in the South.

Anga

Its capital was Champa. It covered the modern districts of Munger and Bhagalpur in Bihar. It was later annexed to Magadha by Bimbisara. Magadha was on its west and Rajmahal hills on the west.

Magadha

The initial capital of Magadha was Girivraja or Rajgriha. It covered the modern districts of Patna, Gaya, Shahabad of Bihar. It was bordered by River Son on North and Ganga on South.

Vajji or Vriji

Its capital was Vaishali. It was located on the north of River Ganga in Bihar. The seat of 8 smaller clans / kingdoms called "*Athakula*" out of which Lichhavis, Janatriks, Videhas were very important. It was separated from Kosala from river Gandak.

Malla

Its capital was Kushinagar, Pawa. It covered the modern districts of Deoria, Basti, Gorakhpur in Eastern Uttar Pradesh.

Chedi or Cheti

It was located in the Bundelkhand division of Madhya Pradesh regions to the south of river Yamuna and along river Betwa or Vetravati. Its capital was Suktimati or Sotthivati located somewhere near Banda in Uttar Pradesh.

Vatsa

Its capital was Kausambi. It covered the modern districts of Allahabad and Mirzapur in Uttar Pradesh.

Kuru

Its capital was Indraprastha / Hastinapur / Isukara. It covered the modern Haryana & Delhi-Meerut-Ghaziabad region. Its eastern border was River Yamuna.

Panchala

Its capitals were Ahichhtra (Western Panchal) and Kampilya (eastern Panchala). It covered modern day Rohilkhand division & Upper Gangetic Plains of today's Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand.



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Matsya

Its capital was Viratnagar. It was located in the Alwar, Bharatpur, Jaipur districts of Rajasthan.

Surasena

Its capital was Mathura. It was located on the junction of Uttarpatha and Dakshinpatha around Mathura of Today.

Assaka

Its capital was Potali, Potana or Podana. Located on the banks of the Godavari River. Its capital was Potali, Potana or Podana, which now lies in the Nandura Tehsil, Buldana district in the Indian state of Maharashtra and it was the only Mahajanapada situated to the south of the Vindhya Range, and was in Dakshinapatha

Avanti

Its capital was Ujjain & Mahismati. Located on present day Malwa region. It was divided into two parts by the Vindhyas, the northern part had its capital at Ujjayini and the southern part had its centre at Mahishmati.

Gandhara

Its capital was Taxila. Covered the regions between Kabul and Rawalipindi in North Western Provinces, Peshawar, the Potohar plateau and on the Kabul River.

Kamboja

Its capital Rajpur. It was located around Hndukush mountains of Kashmir.

Brief Political History of Magadha

Of all the Mahajanapadas, Magadha eventually emerged as most powerful mainly because of its peculiar geographical location. It was bordered by Ganga River in North, Son River in West, Vindhya ranges in south and Champa in East. The natural barriers protected Magadha from three sides and it was not easy to invade such a territory. Here is a brief account of the political history of Magadha since Rig-Vedic period accounts.

Earliest known king of Magadha was Brihadrath whose name appears in Rig-Veda as well as Puranas. His son Jarasandha was killed by Bhima in Mahabharata war.

The Brihadrath dynasty was followed by Pradyotas. By that time, the practice of killing one's father to usurp the throne had crept in. The Pradyotas were notorious for patricide and irked people overthrew them in a civil revolt. Next in the line was Haranyaka dynasty, whose great King Bimbisara is remembered as most powerful King of Magadha before Mauryas Bimbisara was a contemporary of Buddha as well as Mahavira.

Bimbisara used matrimonial alliances and sending envoys to expand his power. Since patricide was in vogue those days, Bimbisara also became a victim of it. His son Ajatshatru starved him to death.

Ajatshatru was also a valorous king who expanded his empire by fighting war with Kashi, Licchavis and others. During his reign, Mahavira, Buddha and also *Makkhali Gosala* or *Gosala Maskariputta*, the



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founder of Ajivikas path attained Nirvana.

Ajatshatru was a devout Buddhist as well as Jain. He enshrined the relics of Buddha in a stupa and also renovated many monasteries. Under his sponsorship, the first Buddhist Council was organized at Sattapani caves in Rajgir. By that time, Rajgir served as capital of Magadha. Ajatshatru built a fort at Pataliputra and his son Udayin developed Pataliputra as a city.

Ajatshatru was also a victim of patricide by his son Udayin. Same fate was shared by almost all kings of Haranyaka dynasty. Again there was a civil revolt and public placed Shishunaga on throne of Magadha. Shishunaga was amatya (minister) of last Haranyaka king Nagadasaka.

Kalasoka, the son of Shishunaga made Pataliputra as new capital of Magadha. He may be of dark complexion as the contemporary Sri Lankan texts mention his name as *Kakavarna* (of color like a crow). Kalsoka sponsored second Buddhist council in 383 BC under monk Sabakami. His ten sons ruled simultaneously before Magadha slipped into hands of Nandas.

The founder of Nanda dynasty was Mahapadmananda. Since he had one of the largest standing armies in the history of world {2 Lakh infantry, 8000 war chariots, 6000 elephants!}, he is also called *Ugrasena*. His army was so large that he could arrange it in a lotus shape {Padmavyuh} and he was so wealthy that his wealth could be counted in Padma (One quadrillion). He subdued all the contemporary powers and consolidated power of Magadha.

Mahapadmananda, who is thought to be from humble origin {son of a barber} was the first non-kshatriya ruler in the history of India. Nandas were also the first empire builders of India.

The Nandas ruled for around 100 years. During the reign of last Nanda ruler Dhananada, Alexander invaded from west. Alexander was able to cross Beas but before he could cross Ganga, he heard that Dhananda's 2 Lakh strong army is waiting for his men for a bloody massacre. He lost the confidence and moved back. While moving back, he died on the way probably due to Malaria.

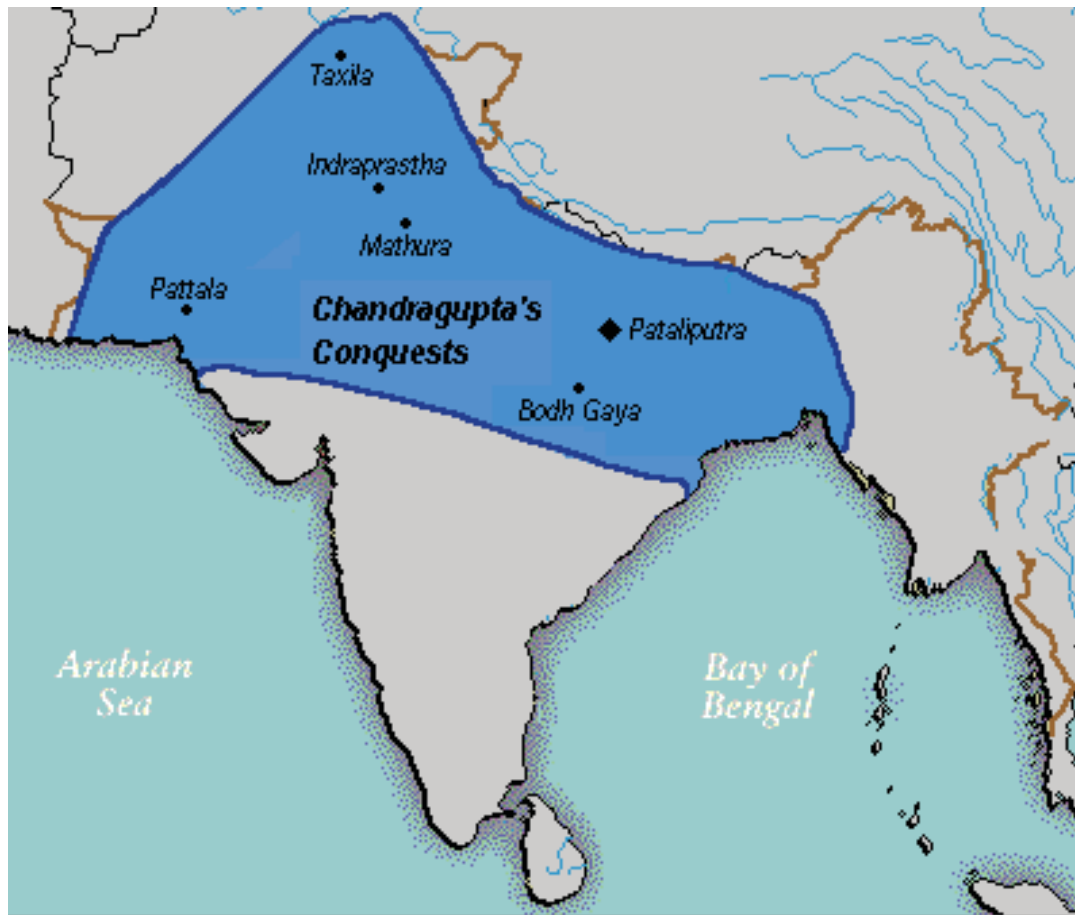
However, this invasion along with several other such invasions from west had put the North-West on boil. In Magadha, the popularity of Dhananda had went down because of his lavishness and greed that led to extortion and corruption. The situation was such that any brave heart could seize the opportunity to topple the Nandas. This opportunity was cashed by Kautilya, who was once thrown out of Nanda's court. To seek revenge, he groomed Chandragupta Maurya, the brave young man, who is thought to be the son of Dhananda's shudra concubine Mura.

Chandragupta first gave a death blow to Greeks in north-west and then attacked and dethroned the Nandas. Nandas life was spared and they were asked to run with as much treasure as much their chariot could carry.

The most important implication of rise of Chandragupta Maurya was that India was, for the first time perhaps, united politically. The below map shows the extent of Maurya empire at that time.



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Meanwhile, Alexander was succeeded by his one of his generals Seleucus, who launched a campaign to get back the Greek territories lost to Mauryas. He was able to cross Indus, but could not succeed to defeat Chandragupta. An alliance was made in which Seleucus returned some of the won areas to Chandragupta. Chandragupta gifted some 500 war elephants to Seleucus and also some kind of matrimonial alliance was made in which son / daughter of one was married to the daughter / son of other. Seleucus also sent Megasthenes to court of Chandragupta.

In the old age, Chandragupta abdicated the throne in favour of his son Bindusara and became a disciple of Jain Monk Bhadrabahu. He spent his last days at Sharavanbelgola and supposed to have died practicing *Santhara* there.

Chandragupta's successor Bindusara (also known as Amitraghata- destroyer of enemies) carried on the legacy of Mauryas and cemented good alliances with Greek King Antiochus-I. He ruled for some 25 years and was succeeded by Ashoka after a bloody battle of succession among his sons.

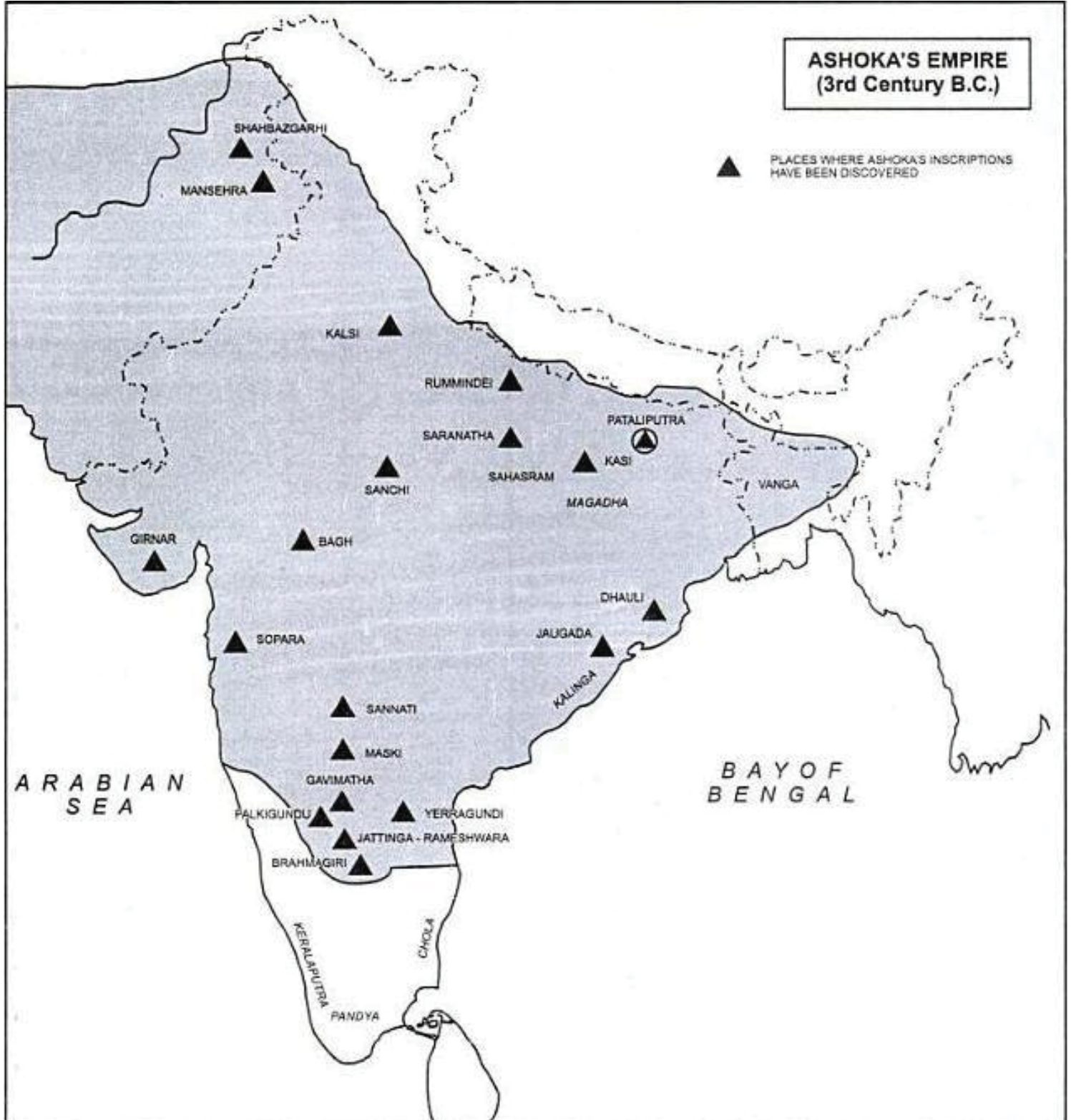
Before becoming ruler of Magadha, Asoka had shown his valour in Taxila and Avanti where he was sent by his father mainly to subdue the revolts. He served as Governor of Taxila and Ujjain before terminating as many as 99 other contenders to the throne of his father. He was such a cruel person that some texts call him Chandashoka.

During the time of Ashoka, the boundaries of Maurya empire extended to maximum by that time. He invaded and annexed Kalinga mainly because Kalinga controlled land and sea routes to South India.



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However, this battle changed his mind and introduced a new element in the politics of India in the form of cultural coherence based on the moral values of Buddhism and a norm of benignity, civility and humanity in matters of governance.



However, such a policy was bound to have its side effects on polity after Ashoka's death. Asoka died in 232 BC after ruling for four decades. His sons could not survive the waves of changes. His six successors including Jaluka, Samprati and Dasaratha could rule for only 52 years.



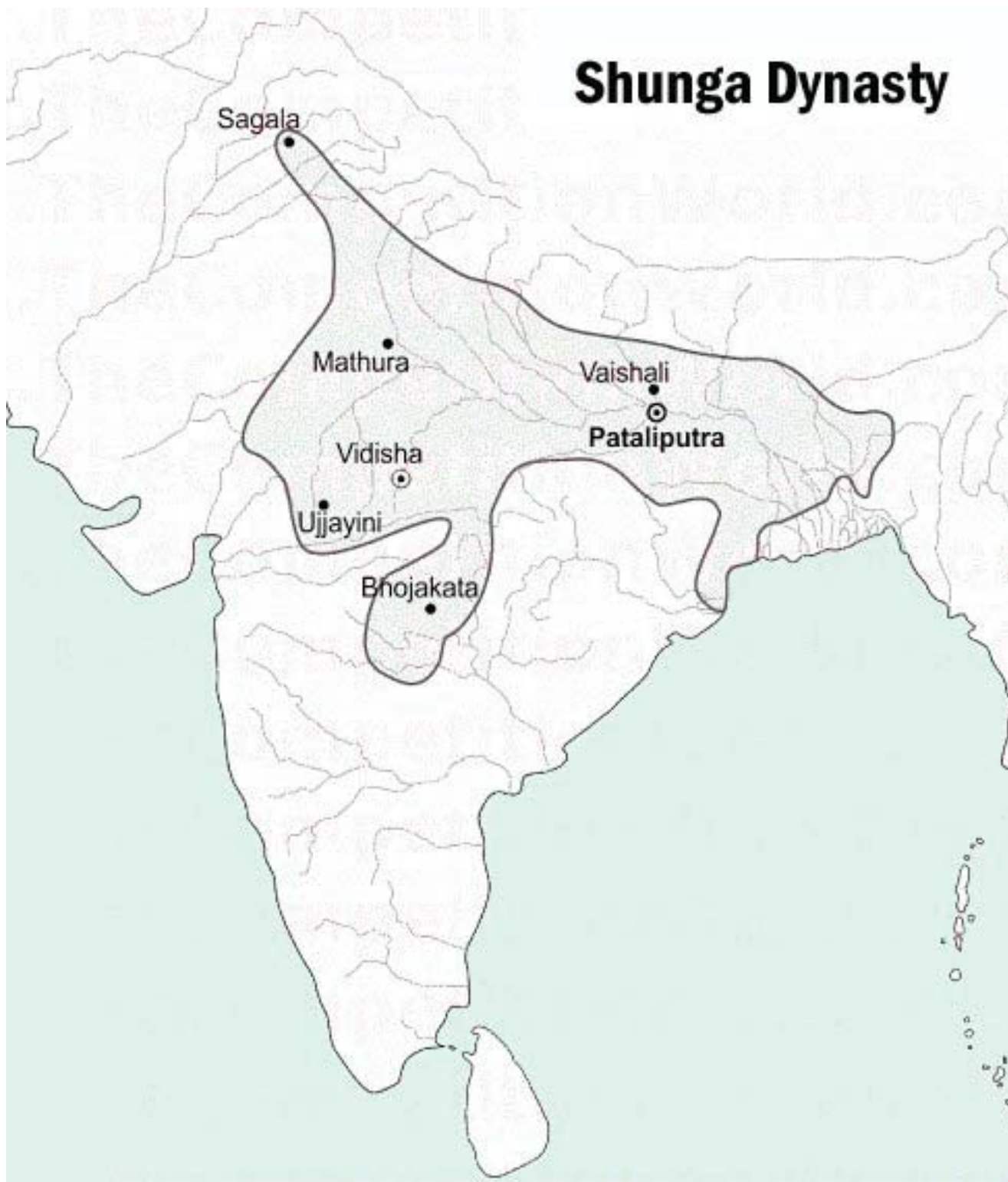
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The life of last Maurya ruler Brihadrath was troubled. By this time, there were repeated attacks of Yavanas / Greeks from western side. His brave commander Pushyamitra Shunga was able to repel two attacks of Greeks but was not happy with the attitude of his master. He killed Brihadrath in 185-184 BC and thus closed the chapter of Mauryas from Indian history, thus founding Sunga dynasty.

Pushyamitra and his son Agnimitra ruled from Pataliputra. *The later Shungas made Vidisha as their capital.* However, by the time of Shungas, many independent rulers had appeared in west as well as south. The most remarkable was rise of Satavahanas in south and Indo-Greeks, Kushanas, and many others in west and Kharvela in Kalinga (east). Thus, the boundaries of Magadh by the time of Shunga had narrowed down to some parts of Central India only as shown in below graphics:



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The last Shunga ruler Devabhuti was killed by his own amatya (minister) Vasudeva Kanva around 73BC. Thus, Magadha slipped into hands of Kanvas, who were Brahmins by caste. Only few rulers of this Kanva dynasty are known on the basis of numismatics. This dynasty was finally overthrown by Satavahanas in 30BC and thus once mighty Magadha was broken into many small parts ruled by different dynasties at different periods.



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Important Observations / Facts on Maurya and Shunga Rule

Here are some of the important observations summarized for your examinations.

Tisya

Tisya was the name of one of the brothers of Ashoka. The Sri Lankan texts portrait Ashoka as a cruel prince, who terminated all of his 99 brothers except his uterine brother Tisya for throne.

Ashoka's Names

Ashoka has been mentioned by different names in different texts and edicts. In most of the edicts, he is mentioned as Devanampiya and Piyadassi. In Babhru Inscription, he is mentioned as *Piyadassi laja Magadhe* (Piyadassi, King of Magadha). The Maski edict mentions his name as Ashoka while Puranas name him Asokavardhana. Girnar Inscription of Rudradaman mentions him as Ashoka Maurya.

Notes on Edicts and Inscriptions

Apart from defining the boundaries of Maurya Empire, the inscriptions of Ashoka provide many details about contemporary life, administration and religion. British archaeologist and historian James Prinsep decoded these edicts. Some important facts for your examination have been summarized here

Geographical dispersion

The edicts and inscriptions of Ashoka are dispersed in modern India, Pakistan and Nepal.

Languages and Scripts

They are in four languages depending on their location viz. Prakrit (Magadhi / Ardhamagadhi), Sanskrit, Greek and Aramaic. The Prakrit and Sanskrit inscriptions have been written in Brahmi script. The inscriptions in Pakistan region were written in Kharoshthi script. Rest were written in Greek or Aramaic scripts. However, the Kandahar Rock Inscription is bilingual.

Subject Matters

Most inscriptions discuss about Ashoka's conversion to Buddhism, his efforts to spread Buddhism, his moral and religious precepts, and his social and animal welfare efforts. You can check the contents of these edicts-wise [here](#). The various subjects were as follows:

- Prohibition of animal slaughter, festive gathering and killing of animals.
- Care for man, animals, Brahmins and Monks. "Every human is my child..." Tolerance for all people. King's desire to know about conditions of people. Welfare measures.
- Discuss about the Chola, Pandyas, Satyaputra and Keralputras (Cheras) as Kingdoms of Ashoka in South India.
- Sending of Rajukas (rural officers), Pradesikas (district officers) and Yuktas (subordinate officers) to all areas of Kingdom every five year to spread message of Ashoka's Dhamma policy.
- Supremacy of Dhammaghosha on Bherighosa and appointment of Dhammamahamattas for spread of Dhamma.



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- Asoka's first Dhammayatra to Bodhgaya and Bodhi tree.
- Victory over Kalinga and how it changed his heart.
- Hint about Asoka's contemporaries' viz. Antiochus, Ptolemy, Antigonus, Magas, Alexander, Cholas, Pandyas, Kamboj, Nabhaks, Bhoja, Andhra
- Giving away the Barabara cave to Ajivika sect.

Apart from the above, the following things must be noted with their respective pillar names:

- The Rummindei Pillar Inscription discusses about Asoka's visit to Lumbini & exemption of Lumbini from tax. This is the first direct archeological evidence of Buddha's birth in Lumbini.
- Nigalisagar Pillar Inscription was originally located at Kapilvastu. It mentions that Asoka increased the height of stupa of Buddha Konakamana to its double size.

Notes on Conquest of Kalinga

Several inscriptions have discussed about Asoka's conquest on Kalinga (modern Odisha). Asoka had invaded Kalinga in 9th year of his reign.

Reason for Invasion

Maurya Empire was probably in friendly terms with the southern kings such as Cholas and Pandyas.

Kalinga was strategically located because:

- It was located in the heart of his territory
- It controlled routes to South India.

Once Kalinga was won, there was no much need to win over further territories. The Kalinga war was a horrifying event. It mentions that hundred and fifty thousand people were displaced, hundred thousand people were killed and many hundred thousand perished. The vivid description of Kalinga war is given in 13th Rock Edict. After the war of Kalinga Asoka realized the gravity of war and the event had a profound impact on his mind. He vowed to never wage such war and also directed his sons and grandsons.

The 13th Rock edict mentions Asoka's remorse after the war and his changed attitude from Digvijay to Dhammavijay. Asoka adopted Buddhism in 9th year of his reign after winning Kalinga. Nigrodha, a boy monk, inspired him. Later, he met **Moggaliputta Tissa, who ultimately become his mentor.**

Later his brother Tissa, queen Karuvaki also adopted Buddhism.

Asoka's Dhamma

In the Bhabru edict Asoka says that he has full faith in Buddha, Sangha and Dhamma. But he never forced his ideal on people. The **Pillar Edict II says:**

Dhamma sadhu, kiyam cu dhamme ti? Apasinave, bahu kayane, daya, dane, sace, socaye.

The meaning is: Dhamma is good, but what constitutes Dhamma? (It includes) little evil, much good, kindness, generosity, truthfulness and purity. In his **Pillar Edict VII**, he says that all sects desire both self control and purity of mind. In the **Major Rock Edict XII**, he directed and determined



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request for tolerance among different religious sects. He says that he honors all sects and both laymen and monks. We can say that Asoka's Dhamma is a moral code of ethics. Asoka propagated his Dhamma with zeal and earnestness of a missionary. He mentions in Minor Rock Edict I that as a result of his efforts for 1 year (or more) "Human beings who were unmixed were caused to be mixed with Gods throughout Jambudweepa. This was because of his well planned measures such as celestial Chariots (*Vimana*), luminous balls of Fire (used for showing light in nights) and elephants. Asoka abandoned the pleasure tours (*vihara yatras*) and hunting.

Note: Asoka sponsored the third Buddhist Council in 250 BC. This council was held at Pataliputra. It was presided by Moggaliputta Tissa. Abhidhamma Pitaka was established in this council.

Reasons for Decline of Maurya Empire

Asoka died in 232 BC after a reign of 40 years. The Maurya Empire declined in few decades of his death. There were several reasons for this. *Firstly*, immediately after the death of Asoka, the Maurya territories were partitioned into two parts viz. east and west. This partition disturbed the unity of the empire. *Secondly*, most of the successors of Asoka were weak and could not handle the *highly centralized administration* which only a robust political leader could manage. *Thirdly*, the pious policy of Asoka might have its own implications. However, this reason is debated because Asoka had left only policy of annexation but still maintained a huge army. *Fourthly*, it is argued that a Brahminical revolution ended Maurya empire. This argument has little weight.

The Insignificance of Coins

About the Mauryan Empire, we know from the literary sources, Epigraphic Sources and Foreign Accounts but the *Numismatic Sources are least significant because the coins were punch marked and not bear many details*. The coins became a major source of historic information only much later after Mauryas.

The Maski Edict revealed name of Asoka

Maski is a site near Tungabhadra river in Karnataka's Raichur District. In 1915, a minor rock edict of Emperor Ashoka (Maski Edict) was discovered by C. Beadon. This edict had the name of King Asoka. Prior to this edict, all edicts had the name of Devanampiyetiya and after the discovery of this edict, the real name of Asoka was concluded and it was also concluded that all the edicts found in the Indian Sub Continent were of Asoka.

The lake constructed by Mauryas

Junagarh Rock Inscription of Rudradaman-I mentions that Girnar Lake was constructed by the Mauryas and he repaired some parts of this lake. It was a dam built by Mauryas to check floods.

Political, Social and Economical Life during Mauryas

The Mauryan imperial polity held sway over nearly three quarters of India's landmass for a period



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little less than two centuries. As with any other great empire, the genesis of Maurya Empire was in the economic and military strength of its heartland and the ability of its leaders to assert their military power beyond their frontiers. This ability was asserted by first three emperors of the dynasty. There were three major governance factors behind the Maurya hegemony First, there was a highly centralized administrative machinery with a steel frame of bureaucratic institutions and machinery comparable to modern Indian administration. Secondly, the administrative diktats were able to infuse a sense of security and belonging to the masses though it demanded strict obedience to the emperor. Third was a contradictory element which made its way after the conquest of Kalinga in the form of moral exhortation inscribed on stone in several parts of the empire. These messages instituted an ideal norm of benign and humane governance as a benchmark of political maturity. This third element did not last long beyond life of Asoka and is called the *Mauryan Paradox*. Here is a summary of the administration and life of the Maurya world.

The King

King was the supreme source of all powers and was center of all authorities, judiciary and administration. In the highly centralized administration, King used to select ministers, high officials and established a well-planned system of supervision and inspection.

The Mantriparishada

King was assisted by his council of Ministers (*Mantriparishada*), which was headed by a *mantriparishadadhyakshya*. The *mantriparishadadhyakshya* was also head of the ubiquitous civil servants called *Adhyakshas* or *Amatyas* kept in touch with all sections of the society and made a highly skilled secretariat divided into several departments. Some of these departments and their *Adhyakshas* are listed below:

- Akahalapadhyaksha (Accountant General)
- Sannidhata (Royal Treasury)
- Koshthagara (Treasury Superintendent)
- Akaraadhyaksha (Mines Superintendent)
- Suvarnaadhyaksha (Gold Superintendent)
- Panyaadhaksha (Commerce Superintendent)
- Kupyadhyaksha (Forest Officer)
- Lavanadhyaksha (Salt)
- Ayudhgaraadhyaksha (Armoury)
- Tulamanapantavaadhyaksha or Pautavadhyaksh (Weights and Measurements)
- Sutraadhyaksha (Textiles – spinning and weaving)
- Sitaadhyaksha (Agriculture)

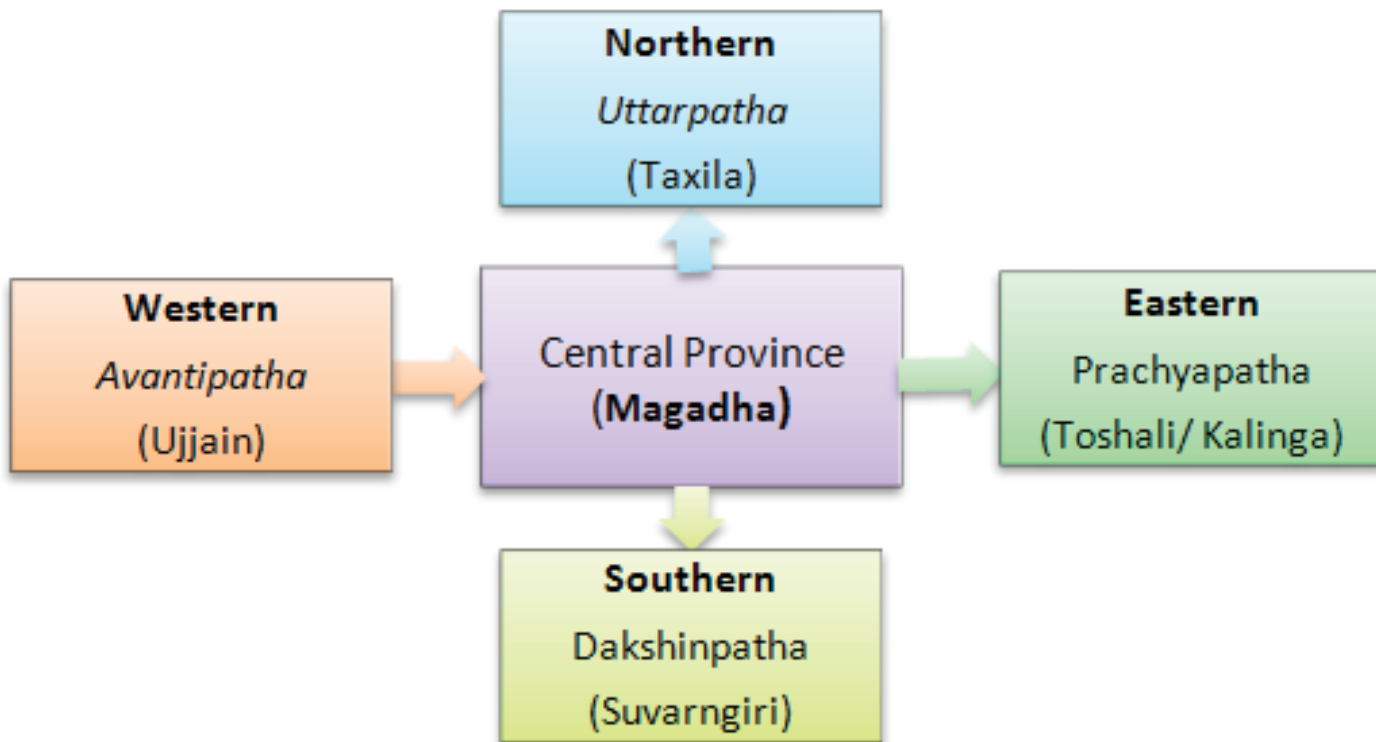


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- Suradhyaksha (Excise)
- Navadhyaksha (Shipping and maritime)
- Mudradhyaksha (Government documents)
- Pattanadhyaksha (Ports)
- Lakshanaadhyaksha (Mint)
- Samstha (Trade Routes)

Provincial Administration:

It is thought that the Maurya empire was divided into 5 provinces.



1. The Northern Province Uttarpatha was having its capital at Taxila and some mandals were Shakal, Kandhar and Saurashtra.
2. The Southern province Dakshinpatha's capital was Suvarngiri.
3. Western province Avantipatha's capital was Ujjain
4. The eastern Prachyapatha was having its capital at Toshali near Kalinga.
5. Magadha was the Central province & Capital of the entire kingdom.

The provinces were administered by either a prince or a member of the royal family which was the viceroy of the king.

District Administration

Each district was administered by three officers' viz. *Pradeshika*, *Rajuka*, & *Yukta*. *Pradesika* was senior and *Rajuka* was subordinate. *Yukta* was subordinate to both of them. It was duty of the *Pradesika* to tour the kingdom every five year and collect details of the administration.



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Village Administration

Village was the smallest unit of polity and it was called *Grama*. The head of the *grama* was a *Gramika*. The *Gramika* was not a paid employee of the government but was elected by the village people. The 10 villages were collectively headed by a *Gopa* and 100 villages were collectively headed by a *Sthanaka*. Gramika in Open Panchayats solved most disputes.

Gudhapurusha or Spies

There was a well knitted espionage system of Gudhapurushas in the Mauryan administration. The spies were of two kind viz. *Sansthana* (stationary) and *Sanchari* (wandering). These spies were ears and eyes of the King, who kept the king informed about all the details of the bureaucracy. The agents included householders, merchants, disciples, ascetics, pensioners and Poisonous girls called “*Vishkanyas*”. The ambassadors who were appointed in the foreign countries were also sort of spies.

The Army

The overall in charge of the Mauryan army was Commander in chief, who was immediately junior to the King. The Mauryan army included 6 Lakh infantry, 30,000 cavalry, 9000 war elephants, 1000 chariots and other things such as transport equipments. There was a War Council, which was further divided into 6 sub-councils each with 5 members which formulated policy for infantry, cavalry, elephant forces, chariots, navy and commiserate. *Navy, Transport in forces and commiserate were Mauryan innovations.*

Transport

There was a separate department of road. The width of the cattle tracks, pedestrians, chariots and other traffic were different. There were trunk roads which were managed by the department of Roads. Trees were planted on both sides of the roads. Inns were constructed at places on the road. Nurseries and drinking water facilities such as wells, canals were provided

The Agriculture

Sitadhyaksha was the chief of the Agriculture department. There was full-fledged irrigation department as well. There was a network of canals which provided the water for irrigation as per the measurements of the land i.e. requirements.

Pushyagupta, who was a provincial governor of Chandragupta Maurya, constructed “Sudarshan Lake” at Girnar in Gujarat. Rice of different varieties was grown, *Kondrava* was a kind of coarse grain. Wheat, Pulses, Saffron, Mustard, Linseed, Sesamum etc. were grown.

Caste System and Slaves

There was a well-developed “caste” system as per the accounts of Megasthenes. Megasthenes writes that there were seven castes viz. philosophers (he indicated Brahmins), farmers, soldiers, herdsmen, craftsmen, magistrates and soldiers. So based upon the account we can figure out that still the caste system was based upon “occupation” rather than birth. The marriage and polygamy both were present.



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Polygamy was confined to Royal classes. Normal people could marry to other women if there was no “son”.

The women had their property in the form of *Stridhana*, which included bridal gift. Women enjoyed high status. The women were appointed as assistances and bodyguards of King. Offenses against women were punishable. There was no slavery in the sense that people used to work as *dasa*, out of their own compulsions. No Arya including a Shudra could be made *dasa* forcibly. The 14th book of Arthashastra titled Secret Means (*Aupanisadika*) deals with a number of rites and practices.

The Mauryan Art

Mauryas contributed to arts significantly. The palace of Chandragupta Maurya at the Pataliputra was mostly made up of wood. The traces of this palace have been found at Kumhrar near Patna. It's an 80-pillar hall, which speaks of Mauryan Palace art. A large number of Stupas were built in Mauryan Era, many of them by Asoka. The Buddhist tradition writes that Asoka built 84000 Stupas The rock cut caves of Mauryan era are at Barabar hills, located near Gaya and they are oldest surviving Rock Cut caves. The Nagarjuna Hills rock cut caves are of Asoka and his successors. The barabar caves have been cut of granite and are large halls which provided place for worshippers. The Asokan Pillars are Monolithic and mostly used Hard sandstone procured from Chunar near Varanasi. They were finely chiselled and highly polished.

There are two distinct categories of Maurya art viz. Royal art and popular art. The Yaksha image from parkam and Yakshini Image from Besnagar are examples of popular art. While, the pillars are example of Royal art.

Census

There was a proper system of census, which registered all the details of the deaths and births. *Nagarika* was the census officer who was responsible to keep a ready reference data of the farmers, cattle, traders, cowherds etc. This was to ensure that proper tax is levied.

Public health

There were proper hospitals and *Bheshajas* (Doctors) appointed along with a team of midwives, nurses etc. Treatment was free universally. Food adulteration was a punishable offense which invited a death sentence.

Crimes and Judiciary

Suppression of crimes, maintenance of peace and protection of the subjects were the chief duties of the King. The antisocial elements were called “*Kantakas*”. There were two kinds of courts “civils” and criminals. The civils courts were *Dharmastheya* and the Criminal Courts were “*Kantakashodhna*”. The idea of *Kantakashodhna* was to weed out the antisocial elements. The king was the source of Supreme Justice. Death Sentences were common and Asoka's edicts detail that he gave additional time to the



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persons under the Capital punishment to offer donations and repent so that they get a better life in next birth.

Economy: Revenue & Taxes

There was an advanced concept of “responsibility accounting” which envisaged a preparation of budget and activity planning, reporting on the revenue and expenditure, responsibility for both the revenues and expenditures. The “full treasury” was guarantee to the prosperity of state says Arthashastra. Treasury received revenues from farms, mines, forests, pasture lands etc. Tributes were received when a prince was born. Chief source for revenue was “land tax”. It was 1/6 to 1/4 of the total produce and it was collected by the revenue officers. The more productive lands and irrigated lands invited more tax. All craftsmen (except royal) and traders paid taxes.

Taxes were of two kinds viz. *Bali & Bhaga*. The Bali was religious tribute. Bhaga was the part of the produce. Asoka edict says that Lumbini was exempted from *Bali* and *Bhaga* was reduced to 1/8 parts of the reduce. *Bhaga, which was 1/6th of the produce, was called shadbhaga (6th part) or Rajbhaga (state part).* Maintenance of the Royal palaces, members, ministers and public welfare were the main avenues to use the revenue.

Foreign Trade

Foreign Trade by means of the land and sea was prevalent, and it was regulated by **passports kinds of documents**. Indigo, cotton and silk was most traded property. Antiochus I with his joint rule with Selucus issued coins of Indian standard rather than the Attic Standard. This shows that the Mauryan Economy was world’s largest economy and the currency of Mauryas was accepted worldwide and was main currency of that time. The trade routes were called *Vanikpatha*.

Political History from Shungas to Hunas

The decline of Maurya Empire resulted in the loss of a pan-Indian authority exercised from Magadha. Gradually, a number of competing powers emerged in different parts of India. The imperial monarchy was thus replaced by regional monarchs and the centralized steel frame of Maurya Empire was lost in oblivion.

Many of the regional monarchs were of foreign / Central Asian origins and in the process of establishing their power; they had to subscribe to the *prevailing religion* and social customs of India. Some of them subscribed to the Brahmanic notion of caste and Varna system but for most of them including the mighty Kushans, *Buddhism provided a relatively easier route to become adjusted to the Indian social system.* {This answers why Kushanas embraced Buddhism}. Here is a brief political account of what happened from the reign Pushyamitra Sunga onwards till the rise of imperial Guptas.



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Gangetic Heartland under Shungas, Kanvas and Mahameghavahanas

After the last Maurya ruler Brihadrath was killed by his commander Pushyamitra Sunga, Magadh passed into the hands of Sunga dynasty. Both Pushyamitra and his son Agnimitra ruled from Pataliputra but then later Sungas moved the capital of Magadh to Vidisha The life of Sungas was not easy because of troubled neighbourhoods and frequent raids. They fought war with almost every contemporary including Kalinga, Satavahana, Indo-Greeks, Panchals as well as Mathura. For example, Pushyamitra had to repel not only two Greek attacks from western side by Demetrius and Meander; but also conquest of Kalinga's Kharvela from South-east side.

His son and successor Agnimitra {hero of *Malvikagnimitram* of Kalidasa} also had similar life. He ruled for only eight years and was mostly indulged in such fights including the fight to control Vidarbha. The last rulers of Shunga dynasty were Bhagabhadra and Devabhuti, about whom we have few details. Devabhuti was killed by his own amatya (minister) Vasudeva Kanva around 73 BC and Magadha passed to Kanvas who were Brahmins by origin.

By the end of Sunga Empire in 73 BC, their territory had narrowed down to some parts of Central India only between Ujjain, Mathura, Saket, Sanchi, and Kapilvastu.

Magadha under Kanvas

When Magadha was under Kanvas, it had further lost its territories in west to ever strong Greeks and in east to different rulers such as Kosala Kingdom {set up by Muladeva after killing one Sunga remnant called Sumitra}. Kanvas were finally dethroned by Satavahanas and Magadha was annexed into Satavahana Empire.

Mahameghavanas of Kalinga

One of the great regional powers that emerged by seizing the opportunity of declining Mauryas in the Gangetic heartland were Mahameghavanas of Kalinga in modern Odisha. The third ruler of this dynasty Kharvela (ruled 209-170BC) emerged mightier and revived the old glory of Kalinga. He had left a Hathigumpha inscription in the Udayagiri cave near Bhubneswar wherein he has given a biographical sketch of his life year by year. He rebuilt the capital of Kalinga (Kalinganagara), destroyed the capitals of Hindu tribes (Musikas, Rastrakas and Bhijakas), extended a canal built by Mauryas, advanced his territorial possessions till Barabar hills by defeating king of Rajgir, built a Mahavijayaprasad (great palace of victory) on banks of river Pranchi, subdued the Brihaspatimitra of Magadha and built a magnificent temple at Bhubneshwar.

Thus Kharvela, who seems to be either a Jain / or a freethinker king was able to raid into the hitherto Maurya / Shunga / Kanva / others territories to consolidate his power. He also fought with Satavahana and spread his Kingdom from Ganga to Kaveri. However, after his death, his kingdom declined soon and was finally annexed into Satavahana Empire.



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North West Indian Subcontinent: Indo-Greeks, Pahalavas, Shakas and Kushanas

During the last two centuries before Christ, most of India's north-west region was attacked and occupied by the invaders from Bactria (this referred to region between River Oxus and Hindukush Mountains in Afghanistan). Bactria at that time was one of the parts of Persian conquests of Alexander the great and a part of Seleucid Kingdom. One such notable king of the Hellenistic Seleucid Empire was **Antiochus-II**, who was in good relations Asoka and had received Ashoka's Buddhist proselytism. {Apart from Antiochus-II, Asoka has mentioned names of four other Yavana kings viz. Ptolemy, Antigonos, Magas and Alexander in one of his edicts}.

Indo-Greeks

These kings used to appoint governors for local administration. In third century BC, **Bactria** and another such province **Parthia** revolted against the Seleucid Kings and their governors declared themselves Kings in their own might. These Graeco-Bactrian invaders clashed with Mauryas to grab few territories but were not successful during the heyday of mighty Maurya Empire. But as the decline of Mauryas set in, they became bolder. For example, one Yavana monarch called **Demetrius-I** used to rule from Sakala (Sialkot) but had occupied a large part of the Indus delta, Saurashtra and Kutch. Even the Sungas were powerless against them.

Thus, the result of a weakened Magadha was that at least thirty Yavana rulers belonging to various lineages established their tiny and often overlapping territories in areas of modern Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kashmir, Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan Gujarat etc. In Indian texts, all of these Greco-Bactrian kings were called Yavana. However, the British scholars classified those who invaded India and established territories in Indian sub-content as Indo-Greek rulers.

In India, the upper elite i.e. Brahmins hated the Yavanas. But Buddhism gave them some easier way to reach out to the masses. This was a key reason that many of them embraced Buddhism. Worth note here is the Yavana king Menander-II, who reigned between 90-85 BC and is called asmighty Yavana King of Sakala(Sialkot). The Buddhist text *Milindapanho* records the dialogue between Meander II and **Nagasena**. He subscribed to Buddhism and is greatly revered by the Buddhist texts. His coins have been engraved with "Dhammachakka" of Buddhism.

However, Yavanas also had no cool life. Both the Bactrian Greek and Indo-Greek rule ^{fac}ed invasions of the **Parthians** and **Scythians**.

Indo-Parthians

At the time when Bactrians revolted against the Seleucid Kings, the governors of another such region Parthia also revolted in similar way. Parthia was around the south-east reaches of the Caspian Sea. From there, the newly independent Parthian kings went on raiding spree up to Punjab in India. The Parthians who set up their territory in Indian subcontinent were called Indo-Parthians. One



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such Indo-Parthian ruler was *Gondophares-I* who was able to grab some small territories in modern Pakistan and Afghanistan. In Indians texts, **Parthians are called *Pahalavas***.

Shakas

But the Parthians themselves faced onslaught of a Central Asian group called Scythians. Scythians were a horse riding nomadic pastoralists with their original home near Aral Sea. In the second century BC, there was a great migration of various nomadic tribes such as Hiung-chi, Wu-san Yueh-chi tribes from Chinese region towards west and then towards south east. Before this migration, these tribes, particularly the Yueh-chi were living in the Xinjiang and Gansu region of China. They were defeated and then driven off towards west towards Aral Sea. The construction of Great wall of China was also aimed at keeping these nomadic groups away from the China's territory.

The Yueh-Chi people now squeezed persecuted and killed the Scythians in their own home and pushed them towards Iran. But there, the Parthians drove them off to further east and thus in first century BC, Scythians started inflowing Gandhara region to set up some small territories in that area.

The earliest Shaka ruler was Maues or **Moga**, who subdued Indo-Greeks and established a territory in Gandhara region between 80-65 BC. He ruled from capital Sirkap Sirkap is located near Taxila in Punjab province of Pakistan and was actually established by Demetrius-I but was destroyed and rebuilt many times. Today, it lies as an archaeological site only. Moga issued a large number of copper coins with images of Shiva as well as Buddha. The famous Taxila copper plate (aka Moga inscription) testifies his authority and his allegiance to Buddhism.

However, Moga was unable to expand beyond Jhelum river. His successors Azes-I and Azes-II put an end to the Indo-Greeks and annexed their territories. Few years later, they penetrated deeper into India including areas around Yamuna Valley (Mathura), Upper Deccan, Saurashtra, Malwa etc.

In due course, they established two authorities in India viz. Northern Shakas of Taxila and Mathura; and Western Shakas of Malwa and Kathiawar. Some scholars divided them into five different branches, popularly called as Satraps.

Shaka Satraps

The Satrap system was directly influenced by the **Achaemenid and Seleucid administrations**. Satraps were basically governors of these kings who used to handle the local administration of their provinces. At times, satraps used to rebel against their kings as it was a case with Bactrians and Parthians. In India, the both Parthians and Shakas loved to be called as Satrapas. There were several different branches of Shaka Satrapas including Kapisa Satraps, Taxila Satraps, Mathura Satraps, Ujjaini Satraps and Satraps of upper Deccan. Their key rulers under these were as follows: {Don't remember}



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- Kapisa Satrapas: Liaka Kusulaka and Patika Kusulaka
- Mathura Satraps: Hagana and Hagamasa, Rajuvula (his name comes from Mora inscription found near Mathura)
- Satraps of Western India: Bhumaka and Nahapana
- Ujjain Satrapas: Chastana {He fought and repelled the Satavahanas}

We note here that Chastana's grandson Rudradaman-I had not only indianized himself by name and methods but also considered himself a greatest Shaka rulers (Mahasatrapa). His court was decorated by a Greek writer Yavanesvara. Yavanesvara had translated the Yavanajataka from Greek to Sanskrit. It had influenced astrology in India.

In 150AD he described his exploits in the Junagarh Rock Inscriptions that he defeated Satavahana king Vashishtiputra Satakarni and chosen himself as protector of all castes. Satakarni and Rudradaman-I had family relations and that was the reason that despite defeat he spared life of Satakarni not once but twice.

Junagarh Rock Inscription also credits Rudradaman-I with supporting the cultural arts and Sanskrit literature and repairing the dam built by the Mauryans. This refers to the repair of Lake Sudarshana, which was constructed by Mauryas probably to contain the floods.

The successors of Rudradaman-I ruled their territories till 4th centuries and by that time their lands slipped to either Satavahanas or Arab chieftains.

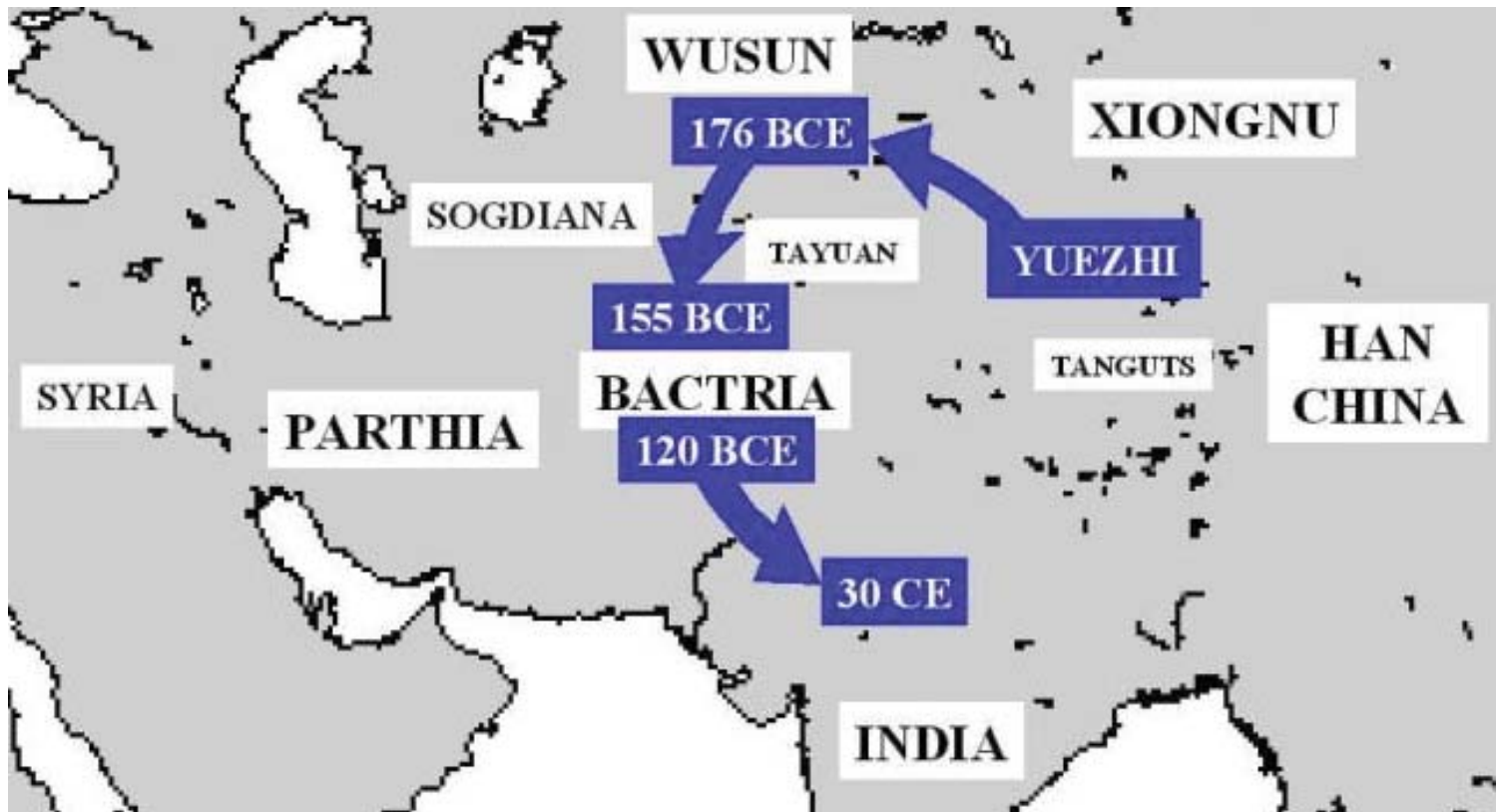
Kushanas

In the above description, we have studied that the Yueh-Chi and other tribes had suffocated the Scythians in their home near Aral Sea in 2nd century BC when they were driven out of China by King Xiongnu. They attacked and pushed the Scythians towards India and influx of Shakas finally established various Shaka satraps in India.

But these tribes from China were notorious in tribal / nomadic warfare. The Shakas had avoided them once but then there were several waves of these people moving in a circular path from China towards first west and then south and east towards India as shown in below map:



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In the nomadic warfare, the Yueh-chis were defeated by the Hiung-nu tribe and pushed them towards Bactria. Here, they gradually evolved from nomadism to sedentary people and established different groups. One of these groups was called Kuei-shuang or Kushans.

Thus, Kushanas were originally from the Yueh-Chi tribes and were also known as Tocharians. In the beginning of Christian era, they subdued all the other groups and assumed control of Afghanistan and eastern Iran under their leader Kujula Kadphises (ruled 30-80AD). Kujula had cleared the region from not only Greeks but also Shakas and every other rival power. He adopted the title of Dharmathida showing allegiance to Buddhism and Hinduism both.

His son, Wima Kadphises, entered north India in the middle of the first century AD and brought all of Punjab, Kashmir and the plain of the Ganges up to Kashi!

Wima is known for having introduced the Gold coins for the first time in India. He issued huge number of Gold coins which indicates the economic power of Kushanas. He also maintained a silk route for trade between India and China, Alexandria, and Roman Empire.

The most powerful ruler of Kushana was Kanishka-I, the able son of Wima.

Under him, Kushana Empire reached its climax and it extended from Uzbekistan, Tajikistan to Mathura, Kashmir and Kashi. As per the Tibetan Sources, Kanishka is considered to have conflicted with the Pataliputra and Saket and *had taken Aśvaghosa, the Buddhist Monk to Purushpura* Kanishka conflicted with Han Dynasty rulers of China and defeated its General in second attempt. He is also known to have subjugated the rulers of Khotan, Yarkand etc. and is considered to have established a



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great kingdom only after the Mauryas in India.



Under him, the *trans-Asian Kushana Empire became one of the great conduits for India's international trade.*

Kanishka was succeeded by Vashishka. The last great Kushana ruler was Vasudeva-I who ruled till 225AD. By that time, the western region of Kushana Empire started breaking away under Indo-Sasanians (called Kushanshah) who in turn were displaced by Hunas.

Kushana Empire was nevertheless greatest empire expanding from Aral sea to Kashi and Kushans were great kings who kept northern India united for nearly two centuries.

Important Facts for Prelims on Kushans

- Kanishka-I's grandson was named Kanishka-II. He assumed the title of Kaisar.
- Kanishka's main capital was Purushpura (Peshawar) and he had three regional capitals at Taxila, Begram (in Afghanistan) and Mathura. His territory spread from Aral Sea to Kashi.



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- Kanishka was a great patron of Buddhism and convened the **4th Buddhist council** in the Kundalvana of Kashmir in 78 AD. Vasumitra headed this council and it marked the collection of Buddhist texts and engraving of the commentaries on **Copper sheets**.
- Some scholars are of the view that the *Abhidhama Mahavishasa* was prepared in the fourth Buddhist council. Some of the scholars in the Court of Kanishka were Parsva, Vasumitra, Asvaghosa, Nagarjuna, Charaka and Mathara.
- Charaka has been **called the Court Physician of Kanishka**, though it is disputed. Sushruta who wrote Sushruta Samhita has also been connected to Kanishka.
- During Kanishka's time, Buddhism got divided between the Hinayana and Mahayana.
- The Gandhara, Mathura and Amravati Schools of art developed independently during Kushana reign and flourished.
- The central Asian Tribes introduced the Cap, Boot and helmet in India.
- Kushanas (Yueh Chi Tribe) is considered to have conducted the Horse trade by sea with the Koying kingdom of modern Malaysia.
- The Kushanas issued largest number of copper coins. Wima Kadphises released a large number of Gold Coins.
- Sindoor (Vermillion) and Bamboo was introduced in India by Chinese traders.
- India was known as Shen-tu in the early Chinese texts.
- Sun God has been depicted on the coins of Kanishka-1 and Vasishka
- Kujala Kadphises and Kanishka-I adopted and patronized the Buddhism, but Vima Kadphises adopted Shaivism and was a Shiva Devotee.
- The 4 important schools of Jainism viz. Kottaka, Varana, Aryayudikiya and Vesavadiya have been mentioned in the Epigraphic Records of the Kushana Period.

The Satavahanas of the Deccan

For around four centuries (circa. 200 BC to 220 AD), Satavahana dynasty ruled in the regions comprising north-western Maharashtra and Andhra (between Godavari and Krishna rivers). This region had been a part of Maurya Empire. The Satavahana dynasty arose during the last phase of Maurya era. In Puaranas and coins, the Satavahanas have been mentioned as Satakarnis, Andhras, Andhrabhritiyas also. Various coins of Lead, Silver and Copper have given information about them but their origin is shrouded in mystery.

The Satavahanas are thought to be Brahmins. Most users used names of their mother with their own names. Their coins have bilingual legends (Prakrit and some Dravida language). They were patrons of Buddhism and under them Nagarjunkonda and Amravati flourished as famous Buddhist centres.

The dynasty was first founded by one **Simuka** after destroying the Sunga power with the help of



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Rathikas and Bhojakas. Simuka was beheaded and killed by his bother Kanha who extended the empire to further south and made it a great power in Deccan. Kanha was succeeded by Sri Satkarni, who in turn was succeeded by Satkarni-II. These were some of the greatest rulers of Satavahana dynasty. The expansion of the Satavahanas was checked just after Satkarni II.

In the first century AD, the Satavahana rulers were challenged by Shakas, particularly by Nahpana who was able to grab western Deccan from them. Gradually, Satavahanas lost their power and territories and are thought to having ruled under suzerainty of Kanvas.

However, the Satavahana power was once again revived by Gautamiputra Satkarni (Reign 78-102 AD), who is described as the Destroyer of the Shaka, Pahalava and Yavana Power. The total and sharp recovery of Satavahana made them rulers of entire Deccan and south up to Kanchi.

After Gautamiputra Satakarni, the Satavahana empire was further strengthened by his son Pulumayi. However, in the evening of his life, Shakas once again revived under Chastana. This weakened their power. For the last time, Sri Yajna Satakarni tried to revive the Satavahanas again in around 200AD. However, his great grandson Puluyami-IV happened to be the last main Satavahana ruler. After that, the empire went into hands of feudatories and got disintegrated.

Notes on Satavahanas for Prelims

- First King of Satavahana dynasty was Simuka. Last one was Pulumayi-IV.
- The 17th King of Satavahana dynasty was Hala who compiled the Gatha Saptashati on love theme.
- Satavahanas are considered the flag bearers of Aryanism to Deccan. They were the first native Indians who had issued the coins with portraits of their kings. All the coins of Satavahanas used Prakrit dialect and also on backside the southern language (Telugu or Kannada). Prakrat seems to be the official language of Satavahanas.
- The Satavahanas worshipped the Hindu Deities such as Rama, Krishna, Vasudeva etc. but they also patronized the Buddhism. The Nagarjunkonda and Amaravati in Maharashtra became the important centers of Buddhism during the reign of Satavahanas and their successors.
- Saatavahana also built many Chaitya and Viharas. Most of them were rock cut from the solid rock in North Western Deccan and Maharashtra. The Karle Chaitya of 1st century BC is one of the most important Chaitya. The Viharas of the 1 century AD at Nasik bear the inscription of the Gautami Putra Satkarni and Nahapana. The Amaravati Stupa was built in the reign of Satavahanas.
- Satavahanas administration was simple and inspired by the Mauryas. The King was the protector of the religion and had divine attributes. He possessed the qualities of ancient Gods.



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The Kingdom was divided into the Janapadas and subdivided into Aharas. The ruler of each Ahara was an Amatya. Ahara was divided into Grama which was under the headmen called Gamika. Two feudatories viz. *Mahasenapati* and *Mahataravalara* were created in the Satavahana Dynasty.

- King was called Rajan or Raja and he had the right to mint the coins. A Senapati was appointed as the provincial governor. The most important features of the state formation under Satavahanas were:
 - It was a result of a continuous process.
 - It was influenced by Mauryan Administration
 - It was influenced by North India
- Gautamiputra Satkarni is claimed to have re-established the four fold Varna System. .
- Satavahanas ruled in Modern Andhra Pradesh, but most of the inscriptions of Satavahanas have been found in Maharashtra.
- Nanaghat Inscription of Naganika (wife of Satkarni-I) has been found near Pune (District). The Two cave inscriptions found at Nasik are of Gautamiputra Satkarni. At Nasik, Inscription of Pulumayi II has been found. The Karle cave inscription is of Vashishtiputra Pulumayi II.
- The basis of Satavahana prosperity was in agriculture and trade. The Satavahana kings were some of the greatest donors of land and land revenue to communities of Buddhist monks, the *brahmans*, and to all who wished to engage fruitfully in agricultural pursuits. The earliest land grant of India was issued by Satavahanas.

Gupta Empire

The one century gap between the extinction of Kushana & Satavahanas (around 220-230 AD), till the rise of the Imperial Gupta Dynasty a century later, is known to be one of the darkest in the whole of history of India. After the disintegration of the Mauryas, the Kushanas kept the North united and Satavahanas kept the Deccan united. Further south there were three Cheras, Pandyas and Cholas. In north, the Malvas, Yaudheyas, Kunidas etc. contributed to the extinction of Kushanas and in Deccan, the Vakatas and Ikshwaku contributed to the death of Satavahana dynasty. This dark period of one century was followed by a dawn of classical age which is also known as the **Golden Age of Indian History**. The classical age refers to the period between 320 AD to 550 AD when India was united again under the Gupta Dynasty. This period marks the crystallization of Hindu Culture and known for developments in all walks of life including the science, technology, engineering, art, dialectic, literature, logic, mathematics, astronomy, religion and philosophy. **The founder of this dynasty was Sri Gupta**. But there were other early Guptas mentioned in many inscriptions such as **Shiva**



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Gupta in Nasik Inscription and Puru Gupta in Karle Inscription.

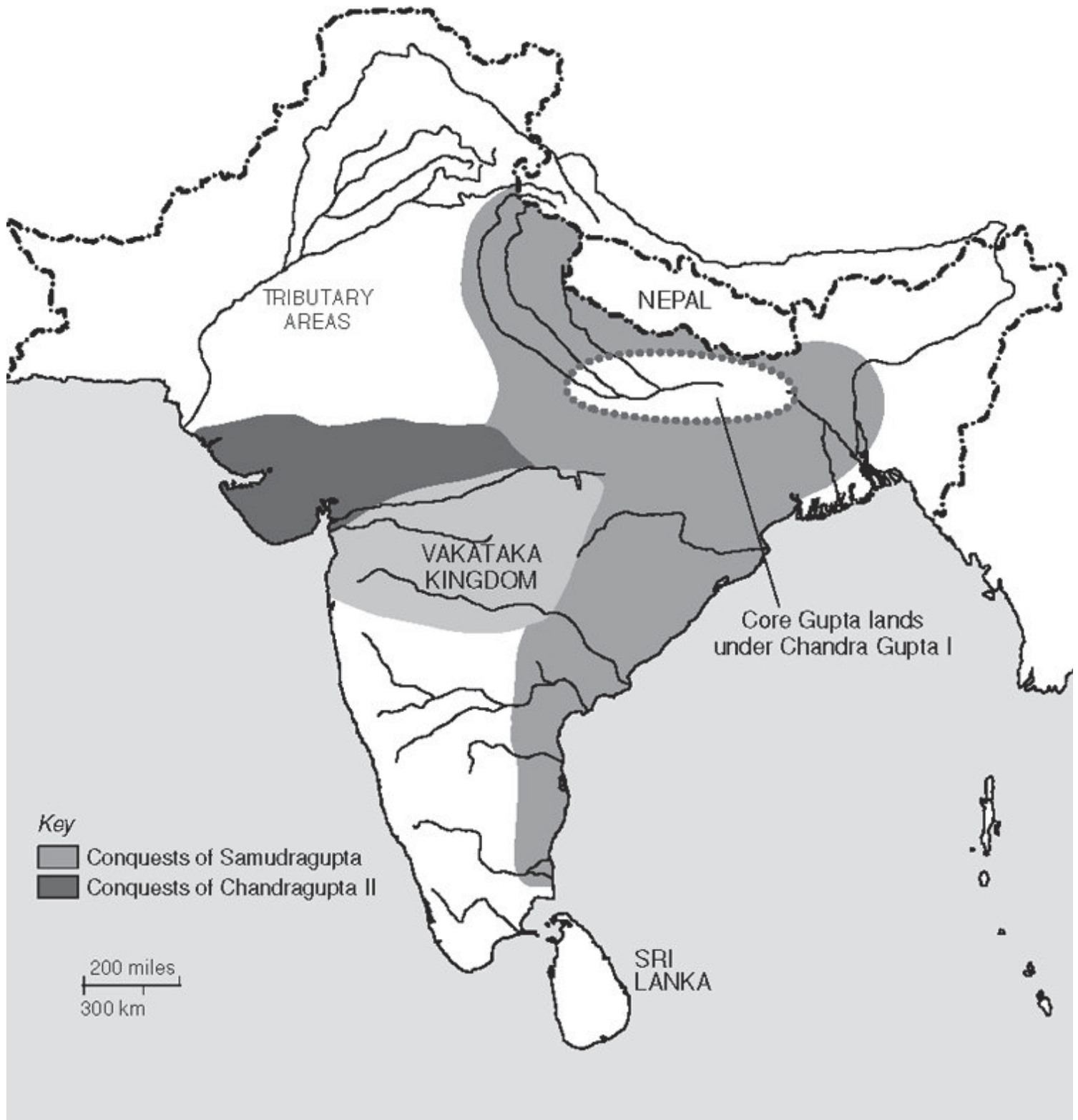
Political History of Guptas

The earlier origins of the family of the Guptas are not traceable and they were originally the controllers of a minor principality in the western Ganga plains. Founder of this dynasty **Sri Gupta** (ruled circa 200 AD) appears to be a feudatory of Kushanas. Knowledge about Sri Gupta is scant. One reliable source about Sri Gupta was account of Chinese traveller I-tsing who had come to India in 672 AD. He mentioned Sri Gupta as *Che-li-ko-to* and wrote that 500 years before his arrival this king had built a temple. This information he wrote in 690AD so the scholars think that he might have ruled around 200AD. Nonetheless, we can't hope that something written after 500 years could be accurate. But some other sources indicate that he was indeed the founder of the Gupta dynasty. Gupta family's fortunes rose when its third king **Chandragupta-I**, extended his realms into Magadha itself in 320 AD. He was real founder of the Gupta Empire and was most powerful monarch of that time. He was married to Licchavi princess Kumara Devi and this helped him to get influence and extend the dominion.

Fourth Gupta King Samudragupta (335-380AD) was born of this dominion. He was greatest ruler of this dynasty and is equated by western Scholars as Indian Napoleon due to his extensive military conquests. His conquests and empire extended from Brahmaputra to Chambal and from Himalayas to Narmada. This implies that all the populous and fertile region of Indo-Gangetic plains came under his rule.



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He established diplomatic relations with the Kushana Kings of Gandhara and Kabul and also the Buddhist king of Ceylon. In 330 AD, **Meghavarna, the Buddhist King of Ceylon** had sent two monks, one of whose was his brother to visit a monastery built by Asoka. But they got scant hospitality and returned with complaints. Later, Meghavarna sent a mission laden with gems and



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gifts to Samudragupta with a request to build a monastery on the Indian Soil. The flattered Samudragupta gave permission.

This monastery was built near the Bodhi Tree at Bodh Gaya. The purpose was recorded in a copper plate and it described the monastery with a height of 3 stories and containing 6 halls.

Fifth Gupta King Chandragupta-II (Chandragupta Vikramaditya) {reign 380 – c. 415 AD} was son of Samudragupta. Before his ascending to throne, his elder brother Ramagupta ascended to throne. However, he was not able to assert his bravery and eventually lost the throne. The drama *Devichandraguptam* of Vishakhadatta mentioned that Ramagupta was badly defeated by a Saka chieftain. To secure the people, Ramagupta agreed to surrender his queen to Sakas. However, his younger sibling Chandragupta objected this and then in disguise of queen, he entered enemy's camp and killed that Saka chieftain. This drama portrays Ramagupta as a coward and impotent person. Chandragupta-II killed Ramagupta and married his wife.

The area under Chandragupta-II also indirectly included Vakataka Kingdom. His daughter Prabhavati was married to a Vakataka prince who had died prematurely and thus administration was overseen by Prabhavati.

Sixth Gupta King Kumaragupta-I (415-455 AD) efficiently ruled for four decades and celebrated an Ashvamedha Yajna as his assertion to paramount supremacy. However, by the end of his reign, severe Huna invasions started in India.

The last powerful imperial Gupta King was seventh in line Skandgupta (reign 455-467AD). He was able to subdue the Huna invasions and bring back the glory of his father. He was able to withstand for two decades against Huna invasion but in the evening of his life, hordes of white Hunas came upon his territories. The scholars guess that Skandgupta had no male heir and was succeeded by his half brother Purgupta, who in turn was succeeded by many others in the line. However, there was an accelerated feudalization of the state and the empire decayed rapidly. The last of the Guptas we find working as feudatories of the Hunas.

Huna Kings

The Hunas had poured down from the steppes of Central Asia through the North-western passes and devastated the smiling cities of India. These central Asian hordes were in four cardinal directions they were known as follows:

- Northern Huna – Black Huna
- Southern Huna – Red Huna
- Eastern Huna – Celestial Hunas
- Western Hunas – White Hunas.



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Hunas were the nomad Mongol tribes and they were first mentioned in Mahabharata among various Malechha people. We note here that the practice of *polyandry was common in Hunas* (several husbands one wife).

Kumaragupta, Skandagupta were able to withstand the Huna invasions for few decades. However, with the help of a scion of the Gupta family, earliest White Huna King Toramana was able to establish himself in the Malwa region in 510 AD. Further, the feudal structure of the administration was a facilitating factor for Huna's conquest.

Toramana was succeeded by Mihirkula, his son; who is known as the Huna Tyrant. He was a staunch anti-Buddhist who destroyed the temples and monasteries and massacred the monks. However, in 528 AD he was defeated by a confederacy of Narsimhgupta Baladityaraja and Yashodharman of Malwa. After this defeat, Mihirkula's life was spared and was allowed to take refuge in Kashmir where he died shortly afterwards. Thus, *King Yashodharman of Malwa was the one who checked the expansion of Hunas in India.*

Other Contemporary Dynasties of Guptas

The 6th century India was a fragmented polity. The Indian feudalism was on its climax and in the absence of a uniting central authority; different parts of India were under different sovereign dynasties which usually fought with each other. Some of these dynasties were as follows:

Maukharis

Maukharis or Mokharis or Mukharas ruled in parts of UP and Bihar and were feudatories of Guptas earlier.

Maghas

Magha dynasty ruled around Kaushambi and they were contemporary of Guptas.

Vakataka Dynasty

Vakataka dynasty was the most important follow up dynasty of the Satavahanas and they ruled in modern Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. They were contemporary of Guptas. This dynasty was founded by one Vindhyashakti but the real foundations of Vakataka were laid by Pravarasena. Another important ruler of this dynasty was **Rudrasena-I** who is mentioned in the Allahabad Pillar Inscription.

Gupta Empire: Important Notes for Prelims

Gupta Administration

With the imperial Guptas in power, once again there was a Brahmanic notion in the Kingship whereby King's right was divinely ordained and it was sanctified by the ceremonies that priests performed on their behalf. As put by the *Markendeya Purana*, the primary duty of a King was to follow *Rajdharma*, which put the duty to protect his subjects foremost.



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However, during Gupta era, there were certain changes made in the very style of exercise of the monarchical authority in the country. For at least one thousand years, the Indian monarchs whether imperial or regional, had aimed to concentrate all the power in their hands. This absolute power usually manifested in subjugation of the provinces and regions through their bureaucracies. Both Nandas and Mauryas, as we have discussed earlier, were the greatest centralists. However, the model of Guptas was different and this difference lied in decentralized administration.

Decentralisation and devolution of power – The Samanta System

The Guptas had intentionally devolved power on a variety of the people and authorities. Rather than bolstering the bureaucratic steel-frame, they developed political hierarchies. The most vital information about this tendency of the Guptas comes from the Allahabad Pillar Inscription, which discussed deeds of Samudragupta. It notes that *Samudragupta did not want to kill or destroy his enemies for his own gratification, but rather, after defeating them, he kept their domains within the empire and would allow them to rule. They were to be protected by the empire.*

This indicates that Samudragupta was basically developing a kind of contract between tributary kings {which were called *Samantas*} and himself as an overlord.

A *Samanta* literally meant a neighbour. In Gupta period, a Samanta was a neighbouring subsidiary ruler who was a friendly tributary of the Gupta overlords. The decentralization was also effected via various land grants, carrying varied immunities and concessions, to persons and institutions. This is one reason that we don't find an over elaborate bureaucracy in Gupta period as was a case with Maurya period.

This arrangement worked extremely well till Skandgupta, and it helped to keep peace among the various ruling families. However, afterwards, it did not work for weaker Guptas. But nevertheless, this system got much deeper with the evolution of Indian Feudalism and remained in force until the end of British Rule in the country.

Guptas: Imperial Government

The Imperial Guptas did not have an over elaborate bureaucracy due to effective decentralisation of administrative authority by land grants and the friendly Samanta contracts with subdued neighbours. At their imperial kingdom at Pataliputra, the King was advised by a Council of Ministers (*Mantriparishada*) led by a Pradhan Mantri. Pradhan Mantri headed the civil administration and there was a good number of other ministers and officials, who carried out the duties related to military and other matters. The Key officers of the Gupta machinery include the below:

Official	Functions
<i>Mahabaladhikrita</i>	Commander in Chief



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Official	Functions
<i>Mahadandnayaka</i>	Chief Justice
<i>Mahapratihar</i>	Maintenance of Royal Palaces
<i>Mahasandhivigrahika or Sandhivigrahaka</i>	War and Peace
<i>Dandpashika</i>	Head of Police department
<i>Bhadagaradhikreta</i>	Royal Treasury
<i>Vinaysthitisansthapaka</i>	Education Department
<i>Sarvadyaksha</i>	Inspector of all central departments
<i>Mahashwapati</i>	Cavalary
<i>Mahamahipalapati</i>	Elephants
<i>Vinayapura</i>	One who represented guests to King's court
<i>Yuktapurusha</i>	Accounts of war booty
<i>Khadyapakika</i>	Royal Kitchen
<i>Ranbandagarika</i>	Arms and ammunitions stores
<i>Mahanarpati</i>	Infantry

We note here that in the central government, the major emphasis was on defense and security, which reflected the major concern of the state power and security of the people. Further, the imperial Guptas did not interfere in the administrations of those regions which accepted their suzerainty. However, there was a five tiered administration system in the regions which were under the direct control of the Gupta Kings.

- The first tier was the King and his council as discussed above.
- The second layer of administration dealt with the administration of the provinces {provinces were called *Bhukti* or *Desa*}. The provincial councils were headed by the *Kumaraamatyas*
- The third layer of government was a district level. Each *Bhukti* or *Desa* was divided into various districts called *Pradesha*. The terms ***Adhithana or Pattana*** was also used for this third tier. *A Vishya was headed by Ayuktas or Vishyapatis.*
- The fourth layer of administration was at group or villages (*Vithi*) or town level. For each



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village there was a *village assembly* consisting of village elders, guided by a village headman. This *Gram sabha* was smallest administration unit. The head of the village was called *Gramapati* or *Gramadhyaksha*. **Kutumbis** and **Mahattaras** are other words used for similar village level officers.

- In the towns there were city corporations, headed by a chairman, the *nagarashreshthin*, which consisted of many representatives of *guild merchants* including *Sarthavaha* who represented the trading communities, *Prathamakulika* who represented the crafting communities (artisans) and *Prathamakayastha*, who represented Government official community. *Pustapala* were junior (district level) record officers.

It's worth note here that all substantive decisions, affecting each town or village, were taken at the local level, reflecting the decentralising policies of the state. The *Kumaraamatyas* and the *ayuktakas* functioned as serving intermediaries between the centre and the periphery. This model of organisation was also replicated by some of the Samantas.

Implications of Decentralization

In the long run, the Gupta policy of devolution of power helped to create layers of responsibility in the governance. It also allowed self-governing communities to progress within the framework of their jurisdiction. The Gupta rule exerted a cohesive and beneficial effect upon the social classes of India. It was a highly pluralist world that was being created, a world in which groups of people came together to define their common interests or activities; they formed associations, solicited patronage and proceeded with creating prosperity for themselves. The Gupta state was there to guide and help, not to coerce.

Guptas Land Policy and Seeds of Indian Feudalism

The idea of Samanta system of Gupta era becomes much clearer when we examine their land policy. In contrast with the Mauryas who acquired as much land as much possible, the Guptas actively gave as much land as much possible in the form of land grants. Land grants were prevalent in post-Vedic period in its infancies. However, it became widespread under Satavahanas in Deccan, Shakas in western India, and Pallavas in south India. However, Guptas went one step ahead and made land grants a substantive part of discharge of their responsibilities.

The Guptas made three types of grants.

- First was the religious grants to *brahmans*, individually or collectively, known as *brahmadeya* grants
- Second was the grants to institutions such as temples and monasteries known as *devagrahara* or *devadana*
- Third were secular grants to crown officers, craft guilds or also military commanders in rare



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occasions.

The objective of giving land grants, in case of Brahmadeya might be religious. However, the more pressing reason for the same appears to be the contraction of the monetary economy mainly because of contraction of international trade.

This system of the land grants got further accelerated in Post-Gupta period and created ideal conditions for development of Indian feudalism.

Gupta Taxation

There were several types of taxes in Gupta era as follows:

- **Bali:** Bali which was voluntary in Maurya era and was given to the King became **compulsory in Gupta Era.**
- **Bhaga:** King's share in all produce of the cultivators. It was $1/6^{\text{th}}$ part of produce.
- **Bhoga:** Bhoga refers to the tax in kind of gifts, flowers, woods, fruits etc.
- **Hiranya:** This was the tax paid in cash (Gold) {Hiranya means Gold}
- **Halivakara:** Halivakra was a kind of tax slab, those who owned a plough used to pay tax.
- **Kara:** It might have been some irregular tax charged from villagers.
- **Shulka:** It was custom or toll tax very much similar to Chungi / Octroi in modern times.
- **Udinanga:** It might be a social security kind of tax.
- **Klipta:** It was related to sale and purchase of lands.

Caste System in Gupta Era

One of the most notable features of Indian society till date has been caste system. So was it during Gupta era also. There were three notable features of caste system in Gupta era as follows:

- *Firstly*, upper castes although managed their respective position in the caste hierarchy, yet there was an indication mobility and fluidity, which allowed other castes (than Brahmins) to make some progress.
- *Secondly*, condition of Shudras improved mainly because the link between occupation and birth got loose for some time. As the shudras entered into farming, they upgraded themselves into sharecroppers.
- *Thirdly*, the condition of lowest strata of society, untouchables reached to nadir. They were forced to live away from population and engaged in most demeaning occupations.

With the increased political decentralization and liberal land grants, the hitherto tribal groups which lived isolated lives were brought into the caste system. In other words, Gupta era accelerated the detribalization of India. Further, the remnants of existing foreign groups such as Shakas, Yavanas, Kushanas etc. were also acculturated in the caste system. However, caste endogamy was not much



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rigid now as compared to earlier times. The society approved and acknowledged the *anuloma* and *pratiloma* marriages despite various restrictions on them in religious scriptures.

Further, there are indications of the weakening of the links between caste and its occupation. There are records of Brahmins and Kshatriyas adopting occupations of lower castes and Vaishyas and shudras of upper castes. Further, the Gupta period is marked by a remarkable improvement in the conditions of Shudras. They increasingly adopted the farming and turned into sharecroppers and peasants, craftsmen, joined the army and also were able to get education. This forward movement of shudras, though in limited extent, was a significant marker of social mobility.

But, this was counterbalanced by growth of a new outcaste group called Untouchables. The untouchables including *chandals* lived away from the other groups and were assigned the most demeaning and polluting occupations. They were at the lowest stratus of Indian society. Fa-Hien had rightly admitted that a Chandals or untouchables had to sound a clapper in the streets so that the upper caste people could be warned of his presence. The upper caste person would need to take a ritual bath in the event of close proximity with an untouchable.

Religion in Gupta Era

Buddhism was generally prevalent in Northern India including Kashmir, Afghanistan and Swat Valley two centuries prior to Christian era and 2 centuries after it. Jainism was prevailing but did not attain much popularity. Hinduism never ceased to exist and retained the large share of both the popular as well as Royal Favor. It is evident from the coins of Kadphises II {the Kushana emperor who adopted Hinduism} with such a great deal that he repeatedly put images of Shiva on his coins and described himself as a devotee of Shiva.

The development of the Mahayana School of Buddhism from the time of Kanishka was in itself a testimony to the reviving power of Brahminical Hinduism. This newer Buddhism was very much common to the Hinduism. The revival of the Sanskrit was first made possible by the western Satraps as evident from the Girnar inscription of Rudradaman, the Saka King who registered his achievements in elaborate Sanskrit. The Gupta Emperors made the Sanskrit fostered by the Satraps in the 4th and 5th century AD.

In Gupta empire both Buddhism and Hinduism received support and the Gupta Kings were perfectly tolerant about the three religions prevalent at that time, but they were beyond doubt zealous Hindus who were guided by the Brahmin advisors and skilled in the Sanskrit language.

The Jainism remained confined to the merchant communities of western India. Christianity had also arrived in India but it was confined to the Malabar Region.

Changes in Hinduism

However, Hinduism also underwent some important changes during these times. The sacrifice was



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replaced by worship (pooja) and mediation of the Brahmins was somewhat replaced by Devotion and Bhakti. The *Shakti cult emerged in the Gupta era*, which was based upon the fact that the male can be activated only through union with females. Therefore, this was the beginning of worship of wives / consorts of Indian Gods such as Lakshmi, Parvati, Durga, Kali and other goddesses. The worship of Mother Goddess, which was prevalent in the Harappan India, finally got incorporated in the Hinduism by Guptas times.

By the end of 5th century, Tantrism had also become prominent.

Rise of Occult Practices

The emergence of Tantrism and worship of female deities also led to occult practices, which kept sexual union in the center. The sexual rites started becoming prominent and now they started taking shape of religious sexuality, which reached its zenith in India by the end of the 6th and 7th century, as evident from numerous temple arts centered on the religious sexuality in that era.

Rise of six schools

The six schools of Hindu Philosophy viz. *Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Sankya, Yoga, Mimansa and Vedanta* started taking definitive shape because of the philosophical debates between the Hindu and Buddhists on the question of presence of God, attaining salvation, karma, fate, Birth and Death and rebirth.

Gupta Economy

The salient features of Gupta economy included a flourishing trade (which was badly affected in later periods due to Huna invasions), abundant custom revenue from ports in west and east, flourishing robust guild system, flourishing manufacturing industries and a high standard of living.

Trade

Gupta had a still a flourishing Roman Trade but in the later part, trade was badly affected by Huna invasions. The Trade contacts developed during the Kushana Period continued and Chandragupta II's conquest in western India further added to this trade. The people were prosperous and they were free to grow and flourish. The important port towns were **Brigukachchaha, Kalyana & Sind**, which were bulk trade centres with Romans. Ujjain had become a major commercial center and it was linked to southern and northern India. Nasik, Paithan, Pataliputra, Benares were other major trade centers.

Silk, Leather goods, Fur, Iron Products, Ivory, pearl, Spices and Indigo were major export items. The Port of Tamralipti was a good source of Trade with East Asia. Most of the commodities were taxed One Fifth of the value as a toll in international Trade.

Agriculture

Agriculture was the main occupation in Gupta Empire and there was no governmental interference. The land was fertile and means of irrigation were simple.



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Occupations

Gupta period had many cloth centers and silk industry witnessed a significant development during this period. The Mandisor Inscriptions gives account that Gupta people were helped to a great extent for the growth of Silk Industry. Gold, silver and Copper was used in making ornaments and issuing coins. The Gold coins show the pomp, power and prosperity of the empire.

The Coins of Samudragupta and Kumaragupta issued after the Ashvamedha depict the horse tied to a Yupastambha. The coins of Chandragupta bear Garuda preying a snake.

Guild System

In ancient history, the glimpses of guild systems are seen in **Jatakas Tales**. Guilds refer to organizations of artisans, and traders, which have high place in the society. In Gupta Era, the activities of Guilds were increased and these activities are recorded in various literature, inscription, clay seals etc. There is a mention of **Guild of architects in Raghuvamsa**. The **Indore Copper plate** inscription mentions about a **guild of oilmen**. The **Mandsor Inscription** mentions the guild of silk weavers. The guild system declined after the Gupta Period.

Gupta Architecture

Gupta Period is called Golden or Classical age of India partially due to the unprecedented activities and development in the arts, architecture, sculpture, painting and literature. The rock cut architecture reached at its zenith in Gupta era and a new beginning of free standing temple architecture began.

Key examples

The key examples of Gupta architecture among temples are Dasavatara temple of Deogarh, Bhitargaon temple, Vishnu Temple of Tigawa Jabalpur, Shiva Temple of Bhumara, Parvati Temple of Nachria Kathura, Mukund Darra Temple of Kota, Lakshaman Temple of Raipur, Shiva Temple of Koh and Bhitari Temple at Ghazipur. Among stupas, the Dhamekh stupa is the most prominent masterpiece of Gupta architecture.

Gupta Temple Architecture

Most prominent architectural marvels of Gupta period are temples. Most of the temples built in the Gupta era were carved with representation of Gods (mainly avatara of Vishnu and Lingams) and Goddesses. The Shikhara was **not** much prominent in the early Gupta temples but was prominent in later Gupta era. There was a single entrance or mandapa or Porch.

Gupta style temple was modelled on the architectural norms of the Mathura school. Sanchi temple at Tigwa has a flat roof. Dasavatar Temple at Deogarh , Bhitargaon temple and Mahadev Temple at Nachna Kuthar have a square tower of Shikhara. Manyar Math at Rajgriha is a circular temple of Gupta Era. Main style of temple architecture in Gupta period is Nagara style.



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Dasavatara temple, Deogarh Uttar Pradesh

The most important temple of Gupta era is Dasavatar Temple of Deogarh, Uttar Pradesh. The temple was discovered by **Captain Charles Strahan** and was named so by Alexander Cunningham.

Comment on architecture of Dasavatara Temple

A transition to a new style had begun towards the end of the Gupta period in around 500 A.D. and it can be seen in the Dasavatara temple at Deogarh, which is first North Indian temple with a sikhara, though its shikhara is curtailed and part of it has disappeared. It is said that originally, its shikhara was of about 40 feet. Its stones were secured together by dowels and its four porches afforded relatively more space for the worshippers to congregate. The sikhara in this temple is in three tiers rising on the top of square cells, and embellished with an elegantly carved doorway on one side and three big panels placed outside the three walls. The sanctum of this temple stood on a raised plinth occupying the central square of the open terrace. The doorway leading to the sanctum was the chief centre of the attraction, serving as an elegant outer frame to set off the image installed in the cells.

The temple depicts the ten avatars of Vishnu. This temple has also been linked to the “Saratobhadra temple” mentioned in the Vishnudharmottara Purana by several scholars.



Dasavatara Temple, Deogarh, Uttar Pradesh

Bhitargaon Temple

Bhitargaon Temple is located in Kanpur District of Uttar Pradesh. It is the oldest remaining Hindu temple, and was built in the Gupta Era in 6th century. The special feature of this temple is that it is made entirely in bricks. It is conceived from top to bottom in terms of terracotta and bricks. It is beautified with several courses of well-preserved friezes and moulded bricks with designs exceedingly varied and beautiful. The temple has a pyramidal roof and its walls were decorated on the outside with terracotta panels, depicting scenes from Hindu mythology. Architecturally, the temple is important as it possesses the earliest true arch in India.



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Bhitarqoon Temple

Dhamekha Stupa

The Dhamekha stupa is located at Sarnath, 13 km away from Varanasi. It marks the deer park or Rishipattana where Buddha gave his first sermon. It was constructed by Asoka. It is cylindrical in shape and about 34 m high and 28.3 m in diameter. The lower portion of the Stupa is covered completely with beautifully carved stones. The borders of Dhamekh Stupa have delicately carved geometrical and floral designs and figures of humans and birds. The base of the Stupa is made of stone with the upper areas of brickwork which probably once had a carved stone fencing. It is believed that Lord Buddha delivered his first sermon at the Dhamekh Stupa. Dhamekh Stupa bears special significance at Sarnath as it signifies the “seat of the holy Buddha”, as he proclaimed his faith.

Gupta Era Literature

Sanskrit literature reached its climax in the Gupta period. This era is known for *equal writing of prose and poetry*. Sanskrit became the *Lingua franca* of India. Final editing of the Ramayana and Mahabharata took place in Gupta Period. Puranas, Smritis and Dharmashashtra literature was developed in the Gupta period. *Yajnavalkyasmriti*, which is almost regarded as the official law book of Guptas, was composed in this era. Naradasmriti was also written during the Gupta period. All the successive redactions in the **Manu's Dharamashastras** were carried out in Gupta Period.

Kalidasa

The true beauty and grandeur of the literature in Gupta Era can be seen in the kavyas. The greatest among all the names is Kalidasa who lived in 4th century AD and was contemporary of Chandragupta-II. His earliest production was Ritusamhara, though his earliest drama was *Malvikāgnimitram*. Meghaduta is pioneer *Dutakavya* in Sanskrit literature.

Mālavikāgnimitram

Its a Sanskrit play depicting love story of Sunga king Agnimitra and Malvika, a maid servant. This play also gives reference to the Rajsuya Yajna carried out by Pushyamitra Sunga.

Abhijñānaśākuntalam



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A Sanskrit play which depicts the story of Dushyanta, king of Hastinapur, and Shakuntala, daughter of the sage Vishwamitra and the apsara Menaka.

Vikramōrvaśīyam

It's a Sanskrit drama depicting the love story of Puruvas, a Vedic King and Urvashi. Puruvas is chosen to reflect the qualities of Chandragupta Vikramaditya. Puruvas is a mythological entity representing Sun and Vikramaditya means the "Glory of Sun".

Raghuvamśa

Raghuvamśa is a Sanskrit epic poem narrating genealogy of Lord Rama's Raghu Vamsa beginning with King Dileep up to Agnivarna.

Kumārasambhava

Kumārasambhava is an epic poem depicting birth of Kartikeya, son of Shiva and Parvati.

Ritusamhara

Ritusamhara is a mini epic poem on six seasons (Ritu). It mentions the feelings, emotions and experiences of lovers in six seasons. Ritusamhara is considered to be the earliest work of Kalidasa.

Meghaduta

Meghaduta means a messenger of Clouds. It's a poem woven around a Yaksha, who is subject of Lord Kubera. His wife is waiting for him at Mount Kalidasa. Kubera at some place in central India exiled the Yaksha and he wishes to send his message to his wife. For that, he convinces a cloud to take his message and pass it on to his wife. The poem narrates about the beautiful sights and visual perceptions he would come across while going northwards to take this message to his wife.

Other Facts about Kalidasa

The Prakrit Poem Setubandha is believed to have been written/ revised by Kalidasa for King Pravarsena.

Kalidasa's style was imitated by Ceylon King Kumaradasa who has written Janakiharana. Kalidasa wrote Malvikagnimitram which accounts the celebration of Vasantotsava (Spring festival).

Bhāravi

Bhāravi is best known for Kiratarjuniya, written around 550 CE. Kirat is Shiva who speaks to Arjuna in the form of a mountain dwelling hunter. This epic style Kavya is considered to be among the greatest works in Sanskrit which is known for complexity of the Sanskrit.

Bhatti

Bhatti or Batsabhatti is best known for Bhaṭṭikāvya which is also known as Rāvaṇavadha and was written in the 7th century CE.

Magha

Śīsupāla-vadha was written by Magha in 7th century AD and is one of the Sanskrit Mahavakyas. It was inspired by the works of Kalidasa, Bharavi and Dandin, all of them, as the author says but surpasses Bharavi in his style and wordplay.



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Sudraka

Mrichhakatika means a “little clay cart”. It is a Sanskrit play written by Shudraka in the 2nd century AD. Arthur W. Ryder translated it in 1905 as The Little Clay Cart. It’s a play full with romance, sex, court politics and comedy. It depicts the story of a poor man Charudatta with nagarvadhu Vasantsena. The play seems to be a reworked version of Daridracharudatta, another play. Śudraka seems to be an Abhira King Indranigupta who used Shudraka as his pen name.

There is a description of a civil court in Mrichhakatika, whose headquarters were at Nalanda.

Vishakhadatta

We know about only two plays of Vishakhadatta viz. Mudrārākṣasa and the Devichandraguptam. Out of them Mudrārākṣasa is the only surviving play. Devichandraguptam is survived in fragments only. Mudrarakshasha means “Ring of the Demon”. It narrates the ascent of Chandragupta Maurya to throne. Rakshasha is the last Minister of Nandas who is lured in Chandragupta’s side, by Chanakya.

Dandin

Dandin had written Kavyadarshana and Dasakumarcharita. He lived in Kanchi and is best known for Dasakumarcharita “The Tale of the Ten Princes” which depicts the adventures of 10 princes. Dasakumarcharita was first translated in 1927 as Hindoo Tales and The Adventures of the Ten Princes

Bhatrhari

Bhartṛhari was a fifth century Sanskrit author who wrote *Vakyapadiya*, a treatise on Sanskrit Grammar and *Nitishatak*, which has 100 verses on philosophy. Bhatrhari seems to be a King but many scholars say that he was not a king but a courtier serving the king.

Ishwar Krishna

His main work is Sankyakarika. It was a commentary on Samkhya Philosophy.

Vyasa

Vyasa has written *Vyasabhasya*, it was a commentary on Yoga philosophy

Vatsyayana

Vatsyayana was the author of *Nyaya Sutra Bhashya*, which was the first commentary on Gautama’s Nyaya Sutras. Kamasutra is a treatise on Human Sexual behaviour and makes the part of the Kamashashtra. The first transmission of the Kama Shashtra is attributed to Nandi, the bull of Shiva, as per the traditions. The Nandi bull is Shiva’s doorkeeper and he overheard the lovemaking of the Gods and recorded his utterances, for benefit of humankind. However, Kama sutra seems to be the first treatise on the principles / advices in sexuality.

Science and Technology

The Gupta era is known for tremendous development in the development of astronomy, astrology,



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mathematics and metallurgy.

Aryabhata

Aryabhata was the legendary mathematician of the Gupta Era. He wrote *Aryabhattiya* at the age of 23 years and later, *Arya-Siddhanta*. He worked on the approximation for pi to 3.1416. In trigonometry, he concluded for a triangle, the result of a perpendicular with the half-side is the area. He also worked on the motions of the solar system and calculated the length of the solar year to 365.8586805 days. Aryabhata lived in Kusumpur in Pataliputra.

Varahamihira

Varahamihira lived in Ujjain and was one of the nine jewels (Navaratnas) of the court of Chandragupta II. He wrote *Panchasiddhantaka*, the five treatises on astronomy (NOT astrology). It summarises five earlier astronomical treatises, namely the *Surya Siddhanta*, *Romaka Siddhanta*, *Paulisa Siddhanta*, *Vasishtha Siddhanta* and *Paitamaha Siddhantas*.

Other Notes for UPSC Prelims

Various Calendars of ancient India

Many a times, UPSC asks a question on different calendars of ancient India. Here is basic information about the same:

Buddhist Era

This era based on Buddha's birth and date. The dates of Buddha's birth and date are uncertain but as per current theravada and Sri Lankan traditions, the Buddha Era begins from 544BC. Thus, current year 2016 is equal to $2016+544=2560$.

Jain Era {Vira Nirvana Samvat}

Vira Nirvana Samvat began on 15 October 527 BC and commemorates the nirvana of Mahavira. The Jain year begins on Diwali day every year. The year 2016 corresponds to Vira Nirvana Era 2543

Vikram Samvat

This is the most well-known era used currently in traditional India. It has many versions which should be noted down:

- In the north India, it begins with chaitra, and each month begins with the full moon (purnima).
- In Gujarat, the year begins with Kartika and month begins with the new moon (amāvāsyā)
- In some parts of Gujarat, the year begins with Amavasya of Ashadha.

The name of king associated with the Vikram Samvat is controversial. Most popular beliefs credit Chandragupta Vikramaditya of Ujjain (neither Chandragupta Maurya nor Chandragupta-II of Gupta dynasty) who started it in 56 AD.

Vallabhi Era

Vallabhi Era commemorates the event when Chandragupta-I of Gupta dynasty ascended to the



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throne in 319-320 AD. The Valabhi kings were feudatories of the Guptas and they might have used it as era of their overlords. Dr. Fleet has treated with this at length and has established that beginning of this era is Saka era 242, which means $242 + 78 = 320$ AD. The first year of the Gupta Era may be taken as February 26, 320 AD to March 13, 321 AD, of which the first date is coronation of Chandragupta.

Saka Era

Śaka or Śālivāhana was probably started by Kushana King Kanishka in 78AD but this has been disputed. This era has been adopted by the Government of India. Its elapsed year is tropical solar and it begins on the day following the vernal equinox. The first month is Chaitra, with 30 days in a normal year and 31 in a leap year. The next 5 months have 31 days and the rest have 30 days.

Important Inscriptions of Ancient India (From Shunga to Gupta)

Here are some important notes on different inscriptions of ancient India giving us relevant information about Shungas, Satavahanas, Shakas, Kushana, Guptas and Hunas.

Junagarh Rock inscription

The Junagarh Rock inscription of Rudradaman is considered as an early example of chaste Sanskrit, written in mid second century AD. It mentions that one of Chandragupta Maurya's governors, Pushyagupta, was responsible for building a dam on Sudarshana Lake near Girnar in Kathiawar. From another inscription of Skandgupta we came to know that this very dam was repaired during his reign, almost 800 years after it was built

Mahrauli Inscription / Garuda Pillar

The Mahrauli Iron Pillar was originally placed on a hill near the Beas and was brought to Delhi by a King of Delhi. This pillar credits Chandragupta with conquest of the Vanga Countries by his battling alone against the confederacy of the enemies united against him. It also credits him for conquest of Vakatkas in a fight that ran across seven mouths of Sindhu. This pillar was established by Chandragupta-II of Gupta dynasty as *Vishnupada* in the honor of Lord Vishnu.

Allahabad Pillar Inscription (Prayag Prasasti)

This was issued by Samudragupta and was composed by Harisena. It is written in very simple and refined Sanskrit in *Champu kavya style*. It lists achievements of Samudragupta.

This Inscription is a eulogy of Samudragupta and mentions about the conquests of Samudragupta and boundaries of the Gupta Empire. As per this inscription, Samudragupta defeated 9 kings in North, 12 Kings in South, reduced all the **Atavika states** to vassalage. It also mentions that more than five states in the frontier states surrendered and accepted his suzerainty. He had close contact with the kingdom of Ceylon and South East Asian colonies. The eulogy of Harisena describes him as hero of 100 battles. He performed Ashvamedha Yajna, this has been testified by a seal of Samudragupta bearing a Horse. **This was probably first Ashvamedha after Pushyamitra**



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Shunga. He is depicted in his coins playing Veena. He allowed the king of Ceylon to build a monastery at Bodhgaya.

Another term used by Harisena for him is **Kaviraja**, which testified him as a patron of poetic arts and a poet himself. Samudragupta also assumed the title of **Vikramanka**.

Nasik Inscription

The achievements of Gutamiputra Satkarni were mentioned in Nasik Inscription that were composed by his mother Gautami Balasri. The Nasik Prasasti describes Gautamiputra as the ruler of the Aparanta, Anupa, Saurashtra, Kukura, Akara and Avanti and defeated the Saka King Nahapana and restored the prestige of his dynasty by reconquering a large part of the former dominions of the Satavahanas.

Nanaghat Inscription

The Nasik and Nanaghat inscriptions are the major sources that gives detailed information about the Satavahana empire. The Nasik inscription was made by Gautami Balasari and Nanaghat inscription was issued by **Naganika**.

Mandsaur Inscription

It was by Kumaragupta and was written by Vattasbhatta.

Observations of Fa-Hien's visit during Vikramaditya reign

Pataliputra was considerably neglected by the warrior kings like Samudragupta and Vikramaditya, but it continued to be a magnificent and populous city though out the reign of Chandragupta II. Later Patliputra was reduced to reigns in the wake of the Hun invasions in the 6th century. However, Pataliputra was rebuilt and revived by **Shershah Suri** as today's Patna.

The accounts of Fa Hien give a contemporary account of the administration of Chandragupta Vikramaditya. Fa Hien (337 – ca. 422 AD) was so much absorbed in his quest for Buddhist books, legends, and miracles that he could not mention the name of the mighty monarch in whose rule he lived for 6 years. The picture he depicted cannot solve all the queries of the historians of today yet, they give a vivid picture of the state of the country.

At Pataliputra, he saw and was impressed by Asoka's palace so it is sure that Asoka's palace was in existence even in the Gupta Era. He also describes about 1 stupa and 2 monasteries nearby, also ascribed to Asoka. He mentioned about 600-700 monks living there and learning their lectures from teachers from all quarters. He mentions that towns of Magadha were largest in the area of Gangetic Plains and he calls it central India. He mentions that there were a lot of charitable institutions, rest houses, and there was an excellent Free Hospital in the Capital which was endowed by benevolent citizens. The poor and helpless patients suffering from all kinds of illnesses were taken care of and doctors attended them and they were given food and medicine as per their wants.



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This depiction proves the earliest foundation of Charity and this charity was first of its kind in the world which spoke of characters of the citizens of the Gupta Era. India's is great as far as Charity was concerned and as we are told, earliest charitable hospital in Europe or anywhere else in the world was opened in 10th century.

Fa Hien further explains that the population of the western part (Malwa) lived happily and did not worry. He mentions that they don't have to register their household and not to have attend any magistrate. People did not lock their houses. The passports and those who were willing to stay may stay and those willing to go may go did not bind them. Fa Hien further mentions that no one kills the living things, or drinks wine or eats Onion or garlic. They don't keep pigs and fowls, there is no dealing of cattle, and there are no butchers. Only Chandals did all these.

Fa Hien mentions about the *Chandala*, who dwelt apart and they were required to keep a piece of wood as a warning of their approach so that other folk might not get polluted. Chandals were the only offenders of Dharma, as per Fa Hien. About administration, Fa Hien mentions that the authorities interfered as little as possible with the subject and they were left free to prosper and grow rich in their own way.

Fa Hien studied Sanskrit for 3 years at Pataliputra and two years at the **Port of Tamralipti** without let or hindrance. The Roads were clear and safe for the passengers. The accounts of Fa Hien give a clear indication that India was probably never governed better than the era of Chandragupta Vikramaditya. The prosperity of the Indians and tranquility of the empire have been testified by the account of Fa-Hien and his unobstructed itinerary all around gives the details about the Golden Era of India.

Nine Gems (Navratnas) of Chandragupta Vikramaditya

Chandragupta-II was known for his deep interest in art and culture and nine gems or Navratna adorned his court. The various fields of these 9 gems prove that Chandragupta gave patronage to arts and literature. Brief description about the nine Ratnas is as follows

Amarsimha

Amarsimha was a Sanskrit lexicographer and a poet and his **Amarkosha** is a vocabulary of Sanskrit roots, homonyms and synonyms. It is also called Trikanda as it has 3 parts viz. Kanda 1, Kanda 2 and Kanda 3. It has 10 thousand words in it.

Dhanvantri

Dhanvantri was a great Physician.

Harisena

Harisena is known to have composed the Prayag Prasastior **Allahabad Pillar Inscription**. The title of this inscription of Kavya, but it has both prose and verse. The whole poem is in one sentence



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including first 8 stanzas of poetry and a long sentence and a concluding stanza. Harisena in his old age was in the court of Chandragupta and describes him as Noble, and asks him “You Protect all this earth”.

Kalidasa

Kalidasa is the immortal poet and playwright of India and a peerless genius whose works became famous worldwide in modern world. Translation of Kalidasa’s works in numerous Indian and Foreign Languages have spread his fame all over the world and now he ranks among the top poets of all times. Here we should note that Rabindranath Tagore, not only propagated the works of Kalidasa but also expounded their meanings and philosophy that made him an immortal poet dramatists.

Kahapanaka

Kahapanaka was an astrologer. Not many details about him are found.

Sanku

Sanku was in the field of Architecture.

Varahamihira

Varahamihira (died 587) lived in Ujjain and he wrote three important books: **Panchasiddhantika, Brihat Samhita, and Brihat Jataka**. The Panchasiddhantika is a summary of five early astronomical systems including the Surya Siddhanta. Another system described by him, the Paitamaha Siddhanta, appears to have many similarities with the ancient Vedanga Jyotisha of Lagadha. Brihat Samhita is a compilation of an assortment of topics that provides interesting details of the beliefs of those times. Brihat Jataka is a book on astrology which appears to be considerably influenced by Greek astrology.

Vararuchi

Vararuchi is the name of another gem of Chandragupta Vikramaditya who was a grammarian and Sanskrit scholar. **Some historians have identified him with Katyayana**. Vararuchi is said to be the author of *Prakrit Prakasha*, which is first Grammar of Prakrit Language.

Vetalbhatta

Vetalbhatta was a magician.

Previous Years Questions from UPSC Prelims

1. Many of the Greeks, Kushanas and Shakas embraced Buddhism rather than Hinduism because
 - (a) Buddhism was in the ascendant at that time
 - (b) they had renounced the policy of war and violence
 - (c) caste-ridden Hinduism did not attract them
 - (d) Buddhism provided easier access to Indian society

Answer: Correct answer in above question is D.



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2. The Allahabad Pillar inscription is associated with which one of the following?

- (a) Mahapadma Nanda
- (b) Chandragupta Marmya
- (c) Ashoka
- (d) Samudragupta

Answer: Correct answer is D

3. Anekantavada is a core theory and philosophy of which one of the following?

- (a) Buddhism
- (b) Jainism
- (c) Sikhism
- (d) Vaishnavism

Answer: Correct Answer is B

- 4. With reference to the history of ancient India, which of the following was/were common to both Buddhism and Jainism?
- 5. Avoidance of extremities of penance and enjoyment
- 6. Indifference to the authority of the Vedas
- 7. Denial of efficacy of rituals

Select the correct answer using the codes given below:

- (a) 1 only
- (b) 2 and 3 only
- (c) 1 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Answer: Correct answer is D

5. Which one of the following describes best the concept of Nirvana in Buddhism?

- (a) The extinction of the flame of desire
- (b) The complete annihilation of self
- (c) A state of bliss and rest
- (d) A mental stage beyond all comprehension

Answer: Correct answer is C

6. Assertion (A): The emphasis of Jainism on non-violence (ahimsa) prevented agriculturalists from embracing Jainism.

Reason (R): Cultivation involved killing of insects and pests.

Answer: Both are true and R is correct explanation to A.

7. Who among the following was not a contemporary of the other three?

- (a) Bimbisara



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- (b) Gautama Buddha
- (c) Milinda
- (d) Prasenjit

Answer: Correct answer is C

8. Lord Buddha's image is sometimes shown with the hand gesture called 'Bhumisparsha Mudra'. It symbolizes

- (a) Buddha's calling of the Earth to watch over Mara and to prevent Mara from disturbing his meditation
- (b) Buddha's calling of the Earth to witness his purity and chastity despite the temptations of Mara
- (c) Buddha's reminder to his followers that they all arise from the Earth and finally dissolve into the Earth, and thus this life is transitory
- (d) Both the statements (a) and (b) are correct in this context

Answer: Correct answer is B

Among Buddhist symbols, Gautama Buddha used the Bhumisparsha gesture to summon the earth goddess, Sthavara, as witness to his attainment of Buddhahood. This gesture signifies the state of enlightenment after meditating under the bodhi tree for four weeks and withstanding all the temptations put before him by Mara, the god of evil. Please note the language of the statements a and b given in this question. Statement a says that Buddha calls Sthavara to prevent Mara from disturbing his meditation. This is incorrect.

9. Which of the following Kingdoms were associated with the life of the Buddha?

- 10. Avanti
- 11. Gandhara
- 12. Kosala
- 13. Magadha

Select the correct answer using the code given below.

- (a) 1, 2 and 3
- (c) 3 and 4 only
- (b) 2 and 4
- (d) 1, 3 and 4

Answer: Correct answer is C

Avanti was not directly related to the life of Buddha, so this needs to be opted out. We have read that Pasenadi (Prasenajit), king of Kosala, was the Buddha's contemporary and is frequently mentioned in Pali texts. Kosala and Magadha were linked through matrimonial ties. Buddha wandered through the towns and villages in the kingdoms of Kosala and Magadha teaching his philosophy. Gandhara is not



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directly associated with the life of Buddha. It was expansion of Maurya empire that Gandhara received much Buddhist influence, notably during the reign of Asoka.

10. Which one of the following ports handled the north Indian trade during the Gupta period?

- (a) Tamralipti
- (b) Broach
- (c) Kalyan
- (d) Cambay

Correct answer is Tamralipti

Model Questions for Prelims

1. With reference to the Maurya empire, which among the following statements is / are correct?

- 1. In Maurya period ring wells come into prevalence for the first time
- 2. The rulers of Maurya dynasty were characterized by their metronymics
- 3. The government of Mauryas was highly centralised in character

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 2 & 3
- [C] Only 1 & 3
- [D] Only 3

Answer: [D] Only 3

Ring wells come into prevalence for the first time in Gupta period, so first statement is not correct. Metronymics means a name derived from the name of a mother or female ancestor. The Satavahana rulers had the names of their mothers with their names such as Gautamiputra Satkarni, he adopted 'Gautami' on the name of her mother 'Gautami'. Thus second statement is also not correct. Third statement is correct.

2. Which among the following ancient Indian Play portrays the rise of Chandragupta Maurya and the machinations of Kautilya?

- [A] Mricchakatika
- [B] Mudrarakshasha
- [C] Urubhanga
- [D] Abhijnanshakuntalam

Answer: [B] Mudrarakshasha

Mudrarakshasha is the only surviving Sanskrit drama written by the playwright Vishakhadatta, who is believed to have lived in the sixth century. The play chronicles the rise



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of Chandragupta Maurya, founder of the Maurya dynasty, and the machinations of Kautilya.

3. Consider the following statements:

1. The Maurya Era is known for triumph of monarchy and collapse of republics / oligarchies in India
2. Kautilya was most ardent advocate of royal absolutism during Maurya era

Which among the above is / are correct statements?

- [A] Only 1
- [B] Only 2
- [C] Both 1 & 2
- [D] Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: [A] Only 1

The first statement is correct because the many of the republics and oligarchies that were prevalent in the pre-Mauryan India had collapsed with the rise of Mauryas. The second statement is not correct. Though Kautilya supported monarchy but he never stood for royal absolutism.

He writes that the King should take advice of his ministry (Mantriparishada) in running the administration.

4. The first documented evidence of untouchability in ancient India comes from which among the following periods?

- [A] Maurya Period
- [B] Shunga Period
- [C] Gupta Era
- [D] Times after reign of Harsha

Answer: [C] Gupta Era

The term asprya or untouchable was first mentioned in Katyayana dharmasastra which belonged to the Gupta period.

5. The Gupta era is known for origin of ___:

1. Shakti cult in Hindus
2. Mahayana in Buddhism
3. Vedanta school

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1
- [B] Only 1 & 3
- [C] 1, 2 & 3



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[D] None

Answer: [A] Only 1

Mahayana Buddhism, also known as the Great Vehicle, is the form of Buddhism prominent in North Asia, including China, Mongolia, Tibet, Korea, and Japan. It started in the first century C.E. and Vedanta school is of much earlier time period.

6. In what way, the administration of the Guptas was different with the Mauryas?

1. The Kings in Gupta era became more and more interested in local administration in comparison to Mauryas
2. The Gupta era saw an increasing trend of paying salaries in cash in comparison to Mauryas

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1

[B] Only 2

[C] Both 1 & 2

[D] Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: [D] Neither 1 nor 2

Following is an excerpt from Romila Thapar's magnum opus. © 1966 Romila Thapar

The Gupta kings took exalted imperial titles – 'the Great King of Kings, the Supreme Lord', etc., yet in the case of the later rulers these titles were exaggerated, since their claimants could hardly compare with the emperors of earlier centuries, their political sway being limited. In the Ganges valley, which was under the direct control of the Guptas, the administrative hierarchy was superficially akin to that of the Mauryas. The king was the centre of the administration, helped by the crown prince. The other princes were appointed as viceroys of provinces. Ministers of various kinds and advisers assisted the king. The province (desha or bhukti) was divided into a number of districts (pradesha or vishaya), each district having its own administrative offices. But local administration was for all practical purposes independent of the centre. Decisions whether of policy or in relation to individual situations were generally taken locally, unless they had a specific bearing on the policy or orders of the central authority. The officers in charge of the districts (ayukta) and a yet higher provincial official (with the title of kumaramatya) were the link between local administration and the centre. This was the significant difference between the Mauryan administration and that of the Guptas: whereas Ashoka insisted that he must know of the doings of even the smaller officials in the districts, the Guptas were satisfied with leaving it to the kumaramatyas and the ayuktas.

The Gupta system of government did share some similarities with the Mauryan setup but was



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on the whole a different style of government. Like the Mauryan system the Gupta kings were the center of the administration. The empire was divided into several provinces each of which had viceroys who were appointed from amongst the members of the royal family. The provinces were further sub-divided into a series of districts. Each district had its own administrative centre. The local administration of the district was free to make decisions on governing the area, essentially free from central control, except in matters which may have dealt with central policies. The highest officer in a district was known as the *kumaramatyā* and he was the link between centre and the district. Unlike their Mauryan predecessors, the Gupta kings were not concerned with every nuance of local administration leaving such matters to the *kumaramatyā*.

Villages were organized under rural bodies which consisted of the headman and village elders. In the cities there was a council which had several officers like the President of the City corporation, the chief representative of the guild of merchants, a representative of the artisans and the chief scribe. The Gupta system of urban and rural administration was based on encouraging as much local participation unlike the Mauryan system where royally appointed councils were the norm.

A significant change that had taken place was the increasing trend of paying salaries in land grants rather than in cash. Land grants usually gave the beneficiary hereditary rights over the land, although technically the king retained the right to repossess the land if he was unhappy with the conduct of the beneficiary. Brahmins were usually granted tax free lands which was another concession to an already privileged class. Land grants undermined the authority of the king as more and more land was taken away from his direct control. Also since the beneficiaries of land grants were usually Brahmins or government officials the king was not really able to exercise the repossession option fearing political backlash. The government revenue essentially came from land as commercial activity was no longer as big a contributor as it once was. Land revenue came from a variety of sources, like direct tax on the land as well as a tax on the produce of the land.

The Guptas also had a fairly good judicial system. At the bottom, were various councils which were authorized to resolve disputes that arose. Examples of these were the village assembly or the trade guild. Hence justice was usually available in the place a person lived or worked. The king presided over the highest court of appeal and he was assisted by various judges, ministers and priests etc, their presence dependent on the nature of the case. The judgment were usually made based on legal texts, social customs or specific edicts from the king.

Another significant feature of this period was that salaries were sometimes paid not in cash



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but in grants of land, as is evident both from the frequency of land-grant inscriptions (in stone and metal) found from this period onwards and also from the specific reference to this practise by Hsuan Tsang in his account of India. Cash salaries were paid for military service alone. Land grants were of two varieties. One was the agrahara grant which was restricted to brahmans and was tax free

7. Each term of which of the following sets denotes a kind of tax / cess during Gupta Era?

- [A] Bhaga, Bhoga, Vasti
- [B] Bali, Udranga, Hiranya
- [C] Khila, Udranga, Vasti
- [D] Bali, Bhaga, Khila

Answer: [B] Bali, Udranga, Hiranya

Various forms of taxes / cess in Gupta era are as follows:

- Bhaga 1 /6th share of produce ‘
- Bhoga Flowers, fruits, milk etc; given to king
- Kara Additional cess
- Bali Religious Tax
- Uparikara Additional cess
- Udranga Tax from permanent peasants
- Hiranya Tax in cash
- Vata Bhuta Tax for wind and water gods

The meaning of some other terms are as follows:

- Khetra Cultivable land
- Khila Barren land
- Aprahata Jungle
- Vasti Basti- Habitable land
- Gapatha Saraha Pastures

8. Consider the following:

1. Persian Deities
2. Greek Deities
3. Indian Deities

Which among the above were engraved in the Kushana coins?

- [A] Only 1
- [B] 1 & 2
- [C] 2 & 3



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[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

All are correct

General Knowledge Today



Prelims Indian History-4 : Early Medieval North and South India

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Model Questions

Kindly Check the Prelims Model Questions at the end of this module.

Dynasties of Northern India from 600 AD to 1200 AD

Harsha's Kingdom

The decline of imperial Guptas led to the demise of imperial idea in India. Since most of the great empires were built in north India under great empire builders such as *Mahapadmananda, Chandragupta Maurya, Asoka, Kanishka and Samudragupta*, it was North India which felt the impacts of demise of imperial idea. From Sixth century onwards, the entire North Indian landscape was dominated by large and small regional kingdoms. Almost every individual King dreamt of a pan-India control and many of them adopted pompous titles out of sheer ego. However, it was only *Harshavardhana* in seventh century who came near to realising such control. Nevertheless, the consolidation done under Harsha also lasted only for his life time.

The reign of Harsha lasted from 606 to 648AD. Most knowledge about Harsha's reign comes from the accounts left by his two admirers. One was his friend, courtier and biographer *Banabhatta* {he wrote *Harshachartia*} while another was Chinese traveller *Huen Tsang*. From these two sources and also from Harsha's own literary works, we can discern that Harsha simultaneously played role of a conqueror, administrator and a man of intellect.

Harsha as a Conqueror

The forefathers of Harsha were minor feudatories {probably of Guptas} in the Thaneshwar (now in Haryana) belonging to a Pushyabhuti lineage. Harsha's father *Prabhakarvardhana* raised himself against the Hunas settled in north (current Punjab region) and Gurjars in South-west and assumed the title of *Maharajadhiraj / Paramabhattaraka*.

The family of Harsha is linked to Pushyabhuti of Thaneshwar. In the later part of the 6th century, the Raja of Thaneshwar, **Prabhakarvardhana** raised himself against the neighbors including the Hunas settled in the North Western Punjab and also the clans of the Gurjars. He assumed the title of *Maharajadhiraj* and *Parama Bhattaraka*.

Prabhakarvardhana had two sons viz. elder *Rajyavardhana* and younger *Harshavardhana*. In 604 AD, these two siblings were sent with large army to attack Hunas in North-western frontiers. While elder advanced to the hills, younger lingered in the forests with cavalry. While in forests, Harsha heard news of near death illness of his father and returned back. It was assumed the *Rajyavardhana* might have been killed in North-West; Harsha was coroneted as new King. However, soon afterwards, the elder brother returned to assume the throne.



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Their sister Rajyashri was married to a Mokhari prince Grahavarman. When Rajyavardhana was engaged in North West, one remnant of Guptas called Devagupta of Malwa attacked the Mokharis and killed his brother-in-law. To seek revenge, Rajyavardhana attacked Malwa and became victorious. However, Devagupta's friend Gaur King Sasanka laid a trap and killed Rajyavardhana by deceit. Since his son was too young, the younger brother Harsha was crowned as King.

His sister was in prison and was planning to burn herself. However, Harsha traced her and brought her back. Sasanka escaped that time but later his Gaur Kingdom was annexed in Harsha's empire. Since son of his sister was also an infant, he annexed Kanauji (capital of Mokharis of Malwa) also to his empire.

Harsha dreamt of bringing India under "one umbrella" and to fulfil this dream, he overran the entire north India. In a five years time, he conquered most of North and Central India including Gujarat in west and Bengal in East. The below graphics shows his empire:





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However, his victorious career was eclipsed by great Vatapi Chalukyan king Pukeshin-II. Harsha had declared himself as *Uttarapathpathi* {lord of the northern routes} while Pulkesin-II was no less than *Dakshinapathpathi*. For a paramount like Harsha, it was painful to see such a mighty King as his southern neighbour. So, to overthrow Pulkesin-II, Harsha advanced his troops from all sides to South in 620 AD. But the passes on Narmada River were so efficiently guarded that the armies of Harsha were defeated on all fronts. The result of this defeat was that Harsha accepted Narmada River as his southern frontier.

The last major attack of Harsha was on Ganjam on Bay of Bengal coast in 642-643AD. However, after this conquest, Harsha entered into a state of self-actualization and then later part of his life was typically an imitation of Asoka.

Harsha as an administrator

Harsha's territories were among the largest in entire sub-continent that time spreading from Ganga in north to Narmada in south; Vallabhi in Gujarat to Kamarupa in Assam.

His administration was based on the Gupta model of decentralization. Principal source of revenue was rent in crown lands. The land grants were in vogue, economy was not at par with Gupta's classical age, routes were not safe as documented by Huen Tsang, there were severe punishments including mutilation of body parts and capital punishments.

Harsha as man of intellect

Harsha himself was a great patron of art and culture apart from being an accomplished author and calligraphist. He has written three plays (dramas) viz. *Nagananda*, *Ratnavali* and *Priyadarsika*. In *Nagananda*, he depicted the story of Jimutvahana's self sacrifice to save the Nagas. In *Ratnavali*, he has narrated story of a princess Ratnavali and king Udayana. Ratnavali is considered the first textual reference of Holi celebration.

Harsha's Religion

Harsha was a man of intellect and was well versed in Sammitiya School of Buddhism. After Ganjam conquest, he favoured the teachings of Buddhism. He was inclined towards Hinayana in the starting but then favoured Mahayana later. Like Asoka, he banned the slaughter of any living thing and made use of animal flesh as punishable offense. He established benevolent institutions including monasteries in various parts of his empire.

Despite his inclination towards Buddhism, Harsha was a great patron of all prevailing sects viz. Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. Every year, he called for an assembly at Prayag which began with worship of Surya, Shiva and Buddha. He used to donate full heartedly in this assembly including the cloths and ornaments he wore!

Reign of Harsha: Notes for UPSC Prelims



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Observations of Huen-Tsang

The key objective of Chinese Traveller Huen-Tsang to visit India was to correct the incomplete & misinterpreted information provided by the earlier Chinese monks, particularly Fa Hien.

In his work Si-Yu-Ki (Journey to the West), he first states that the name of India in China should be “Yindu“. This term is still used in China for India. He gives detail of Geography, Climate, Measurement system, concept of time, glimpses in urban life, architecture, caste system, educational requirements for Brahmins, teaching of Buddha, economic practices, social and cultural norms, eating habits of Indians etc.

He had met Harshavardhana in Kannauj and has recorded his dialogue with the King which established a diplomatic relation between Harsha and Tang king of China. Most of the Buddhist pilgrimage sites and the Nalanda University were parts of Harsha’s empire during his visit. One notable thing from his writings is degraded position of the Chandals and the robbery incidence. He was attacked by robbers on the way, something which we don’t find in the narrations of Fa-Hien, who travelled in the Gupta Period. It might indicate a breakdown of administrative machinery in hinterlands of Harsha’s empire.

About Banabhatta

Banabhatta was a friend, courtier and biographer of Harsha. The four most notable works of Banabhatta include *Kadambari*, *Harshacharitam*, *Chhandakasthaka* and *Parvatiparinaya*. *Kadambari* is one of the most celebrated prose romances in Sanskrit. This work was not completed by Banabhatta but later finished by his son Bhushanbhatta. Due to this, there are two parts of *Kadambari* viz. *Purvabhaga* and *Uttarbhaga*. *Harshacharitam* is biography of his hero Harsha. This work is considered to be first attempt of authentic biography in Indian literature.

Bhandi

Bhandi was a leading noble of Kannauj and on advice of the political leaders of Kannauj; he offered the crown of Kannauj to Harsha after death of Grahavarmana. Bhandi was later described as one of the chief officers of Harsha. When Harsha chased Shashanka for release of his sister, through Bhandi only Harsha could know that his sister has been released and Shashanka has escaped.

Simhanada

Simhanada was the General of the Harsha’s army and his Prime Minister. When Harsha was preparing to conquest the South, Simhanada warned him about the dreadful consequences. This was for the first time that Harsha did not pay attention to his seasoned councillor and paid the price for the same when Pulkesin II defeated him.

India at the Time of Arab Invasions

As we have discussed earlier, most landscape of India at the time of death of Harsha was controlled by numerous regional kings and local chieftains. Whatever consolidation was done by Harsha, it



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lasted only for his lifetime. The fracturing of northern India was aggravated by the Arab invasion of Sindh, which was first foreign intrusion since Huna hordes invaded in Gupta period. Here is a brief overview of various local powers that ruled various parts of north India in those times.

Sindh [Raja Dahir]

Conquest of India, though considered exceptionally difficult, was one of the early aims of Muslim rulers of Middle East. Before the Arab invasions, Sindh was vied by both Hindus and Buddhists for power and influence. Until 622 AD, Sindh was under a Buddhist Rai dynasty. A Brahmin minister of Rai called *Chach* usurped the throne and became king. He ruled from capital Brahmanabad, which is now an insignificant town near Hyderabad {capital of Sindh province of Pakistan} in Pakistan. By the time his reign ended in 666 AD, he had alienated territories of Jats, Buddhists and other in neighborhood. The civil unrest worsened during rule of Chach's son Dahir. It was Raja Dahir who faced Arab invasion in 712 AD. He was attacked, defeated and killed by Mohammad Bin Qasim, a general of Umayyad Caliphate. For Umayyads, this was first foreign land brought under their territory which was inhabited by the non-Muslims. This was time of fanatic Muslim rulers in Arab whose sole aim was to strengthen Islam and punish those who do not accept Islam. Arab conquest of Sindh is mentioned in *the oldest Chronicle of Sindh called "Chach Nama"*.

Kashmir [Karkotas]

During times of Harsha, Kashmir was ruled by a Karkota dynasty. The most important ruler of this dynasty was Lalitaditya Muktapida (reign 724-760 AD), who was able to create a vast empire ranging from Kashmir and most parts of northern India and Pakistan. He built the Martand Complex of temples in Anantnag district of Kashmir.

Afghanistan [Hindushahi]

After the decline of Kushanas, Afghanistan area came under the Kabulshahi Kings who were overthrown by a Brahmin chieftain called Lalliya. Lalliya founded the Hindushahi dynasty in Kabul. The capital of Hindushahi was Hund near modern Peshawar in Pakistan. Lalliya, Kamala Toramana, Bhimadeva, Jaipala, Anandapala, Trilochanpala, Bhimapala were the kings of this dynasty.

These kings faced most frequent attacks from Central Asia. In 977 AD, Turkic ruler of Ghazni Subuktgeen {founder of Ghaznavid Empire} had captured Kandahar to prompt Jayapala to launch a strike against him. Overconfident Jayapala's one lakh strong army was defeated and he was compelled to pay heavy tributes. He defaulted in the payments and was again attacked and defeated. In 1001, Subuktgeen's son Mahmud Ghaznavi came in Power. Once more Jayapala attacked the Ghaznavid but again defeated. Thus, repeated defeats against the Ghaznavid humiliated him and unable to tolerate these humiliations he burnt himself on funeral pyre.

Another Shahi king Anandpala stood against Mahmud Ghaznavi and is said to have entered into a peace treaty with the later, so that he could die in peace. Some historians compare Anandapala to



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ancient King Porus.

Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana [Gurjar Pratiharas]

From 6 to 11th century, most parts of northern India in parts of modern Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana region remained under Gurjar Pratiharas. These kings had established Marwar in Rajasthan and built the temple city of Osian near Jodhpur. The prominent Gurjar Pratihara Kings were Nagabhata-I, Nagabhata-II and Mihirbhoja. These kings saved western frontiers of India for a long time from Arab invasions on account of their prowess. However, they also kept fighting with the Palas and Rastrakutas among others. The Gurjar Pratiharas were overthrown in 10th century by Palas. After their demise their feudatories such as Guhilots and Chauhans declared themselves independent and established Mewar and Ajmer respectively. Ajmer was established by Ajayraj Chauhan. His successor Vigraharaj captured Dhillika (Delhi) from Tomars. The last mighty king of Chauhans was Prithvi Raj Chauhan-III who was defeated and executed by Mohammad Ghori in 1192.

Bundelkhand [Chandelas and Kalachuris]

Bundelkhand was part of ancient Chedi Mahajanapada and it was also known as Jejakabhukti. In early medieval period, it was under Chandelas and Kalachuris. Chandellas built the famous Khajuraho temples. Similarly, in 11th century, local chieftains of Kalachuri dynasty also rose to prominence and lingered around till 16th century until their territories were annexed to either Delhi sultanate or Mughals.

Malwa [Parmaras]

Malwa was under Parmara rajputs from 9th century to 1305 AD when their territory was annexed by Alauddin Khilji. They ruled from Dhar. One of the important Kings of this dynasty was **Raja Bhoj of Dhar**, a polymath and man of intellect. He was defeated by a tripartite confederacy of Chalukyas, Rastrakutas and Kachhchawahas. After his death Parmaras were reduced to a local powers, until they were wiped out by Akbar in 1569.

Gujarat / Saurashtra [Solankis]

The Saurashtra and neighbouring region of Gujarat was under Solankis from 10th to first half of 13th century. They ruled from Anhilwara and were patrons of Somnath temple. The important sovereign ruler of this dynasty was Mularaja under whose reign Gujarati language and script developed. He was defeated by Raja Bhoj of Dhar and was reduced to a vassal. The other successors gradually lost control and by 1297 AD, Gujarat came under Delhi Sultanate.

Bihar, Bengal and Odisha [Palas and Senas]

In the early medieval India, the Palas emerged as important empire builders in eastern India. They were pious Buddhists and constructed monasteries and universities for that religion. The founder of this dynasty Gopala was also the first Buddhist king of Bengal. His son Dharamapala (770-810 AD)



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became the most dominant power in the Northern and Eastern India. He altogether fought with Gurjar Pratiharas, Rastrakutas and Chalukyas. After an initial career full of defeats, including a humiliating defeat in the hands of Nagabhata-II, he was able to win the entire Bihar and Bengal. The Kings of Kannauj, Madra, Kamboja, parts of Rajputana were his Vassals.

The last notable Pala king was Mahipala. The successors of Mahipala could not hold their empire and were swept away in Mohammedan torrents. However, around the time of Mahipala's death in 1043 AD, a Vassal of Palas named Hemanta Sen founded the Sena dynasty which dominated the Rarh region of Bengal for some time. His son Ballala Sena (1160-1178) introduced the social reforms in Bengal known as Kulinism.

Notable Points about Palas and Senas

- Pala founder Gopala built Odantapuri in Bihar for Buddhist monks.
- Dharmapala established the Vikramshila University in Bhagalpur region of modern Bihar. This university was destroyed by Bakhtiyar Khilji in 1200 AD.
- Dharmapala also built Buddhist Viharas at Somapura (now a UNESCO world heritage site in Bangladesh) and Odantapuri. We note here that *Nalanda, Vikramshila, Somapuri, Paharpur and Odantapuri are called Five Mahaviharas.*
- **Atiśa Dipankara** was a Buddhist Scholar during the Pala dynasty and was a scholar at the Vikramshila University. He established the Sarma lineages of the Buddhism with Konchog Gyalpo and Marpa Lotsawa.

Dynasties of South India – from Earliest times to Medieval Age

Chola Empire

As per the traditions, the Chola Country or **Cholamandalam** was along the Coromandel Coast in the fertile valley of Cauvery river. Its most ancient capital was Uraiyur in Tamil Nadu. This was one of the longest lasting dynasties of South India {circa 300 BC to 13th century}. This 1500 years period has been divided into four parts viz. early Cholas, dark Period, medieval Cholas and later Cholas.

Brief Political History of Imperial Cholas

Not much authentic information about Early Cholas is available except that they had ruled between circa 200 BC and 200 AD. Ashoka inscriptions note Cholas as southern neighbour of Maurya Empire. The only notable early Chola king is Karikala Chola, who ruled around 170AD. He fought and won the Battle of Venni and established himself as a firm power in South. He is also known to have built the Kallanai Dam, which is one of earliest anicuts in world.

From third century AD to 9th century, the Chola history is obscure. During these centuries, Chola hegemony was lost and their country was under Kalabhras. Kalabhras were non-Tamil speaking



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rulers who patronized Buddhism and Jainism. They were probably remnants of Satavahanas whose demise led them to create a niche somewhere in south India. They were finally driven out by Pallavas. Thus, in most part of this period, the Chola territories remained under Kalabhras, Pandyas and Chalukyas. Chola, Pandyas and Chalukyas kept fighting with each other for dominance.

In 848 AD, a Pallava feudatory Vijayalaya Chola re-established the Chola rule by capturing Thanjavur from Pandyas. He renovated the capital and built the Someshwara temple at Padukottai. His son Aditya Chola-I won over Pallavas and further strengthened the empire. The Chola empire was further extended by his son Parantaka Chola who reigned for almost half century between 907 to 955 AD. In the beginning of his career, he attacked and captured Madurai from Pandyas and assumed title Madurakonda. He also defeated a combined army of Pallavas and Ceylon and thus assumed another title Maduraiyum Elamum Konda Parakesarivarman (The conqueror of Madura and Ceylon).

The successors of Parantaka Chola were insignificant. Between 955 AD and 985 AD, the Chola country was ruled by five different princes. Finally, Chola empire was again on path of expansion when Rajaraja Chola-I ascended the throne in 985 AD. By the time he died in 1014 AD, his territories included whole of modern Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, parts of Andhra Pradesh, parts of Odisha, whole of Kerala and Sri Lanka. He built the **Rajrajeshwaram temple** (also known as Brihadeeswarar Temple or **Peruvudaiyar Kovil**) at Thanjavur. This temple dedicated to Shiva is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. He also endowed a Burmese Buddhist Temple called Chudamani Vihara at Nagapattam Port. This temple survived till 19th century before it was destroyed and replaced by Jesuit priests with a Church in 1867.

The powerful standing army and great navy of Rajaraja Chola-I achieved even greater success under next ruler Rajendra Chola-I who ruled from 1014 AD to 1044 AD. He captured Ceylon, defeated Western Chalukyan king Jayasimha-II in battle of Maski, defeated Pala King Mahipala, defeated Kalinga, Gangas etc and assumed the title Gangakonda. His naval forces subdued the Srivijaya Kingdom (Modern Sumatra) and many other south east Asian kingdoms and colonies. He maintained good diplomatic and trade relations with contemporary Song dynasty of China.

To commemorate his victory over Palas he built the Gangaikonda Cholapuram as his new capital. This capital served all the later Cholas until it was ransacked by the Pandyas. Today, a temple stands there as architectural marvel of the Cholas and is a UNESCO world heritage site. At the time of death of Rajendra Chola-I, the Chola Empire was the widest in the world and naval prestige was highest.

The benevolent imperialism of the Cholas was maintained by his successor Rajadhiraja Chola till 1059 when he was killed in the Battle of Koppam with western Chalukya King Someshwara-I over control of Vengi. His brother Rajendra Chola-II crowned himself as next Chola monarch in the



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battlefield itself and reactivated the Chola army to fight with Chalukyas. He was able to defeat Someshwara-I.

In 1063, Rajendra Chola-II was succeeded by *Virarajendra Chola*, who subdued the Chalukyas and made them his tributaries. After this, the Chola Empire started declining. His successor Athiranjendra Chola could reign only for few months and was killed in a civil unrest. This ended the imperial Chola dynasty. The next line of later Cholas was basically a fresh blood arising out of Chola-Chalukya marital alliances.

Chola Administration

Cholas have left an elaborate set of information on their administration.

The King and his Officers

The Chola administration was highly organised and efficient with King at the apex. King discharged his duties with the help of an immediate group of ministers and other high officers called *Udankuttam*. They represented all the major departments of administration and advised the King on disposal of his business.

The Cholas had an elaborate and complex bureaucracy comprising officials of various grades. The officers, who tended to form a separate class in the society, were organized in two ranks viz. upper *perundanam* and lower *sirudanam*. The higher officers were known with title of *adigarigal*, while officers of all ranks were usually referred to by the general titles of *Karumigal* and *panimakkal*. They were usually remunerated by assignments of land (*jivitas*) suited to their position. Titles of honour and shares in booty taken in war formed other rewards of public service.

Provincial Administration

The empire was divided into principalities (under vassal chiefs) and *mandalams* (provinces under viceroys who were mostly royal princes) with further division of the provinces into *alanadus* (divisions), *nadus* (districts) and *Kurrams* (villages).

Town and Village Administration

There was autonomous administration for town and townships, known as *ankurrams*. Town autonomy was quite similar to village autonomy and both were administered by assemblies.

Revenue Administrations

A well organised department of land revenue, known as the *Puravu varitinaikalam*, was in existence. All cultivable land was held in one of the three broad classes of tenure which may be distinguished as peasant proprietorship (*vellanvagai*), service tenure, and tenure resulting from charitable gifts. The first type was the ordinary ryotwari village of modern times, having direct relations with the government and paying a land tax liable to revision from time to time.

All land was carefully surveyed and classified into tax-paying and non-taxable lands. In every village and town, the residential part of the village (or *nattam*), temples, tanks, channels, passing through



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the village, the outcastes hamlet (paracheri), artisans' quarters (Kummanachcheri) and the burning ground (Sudugadu) were exempt from all taxes. In its turn, taxable land was classified into different grades according to its natural fertility and the crops raised on it. Besides land revenue there were tolls in transit, taxes on profession and houses, dues levied on ceremonial occasions like marriage, and judicial fines.

Military Administration

The soliders of the Cholas generally consisted of two types-the *Kaikkolar* who were royal troops receiving regular pay from the treasury; and the *nattuppadai* who were the militia men employed only for local defence. The *Kaikkolar* comprised infantry, cavalry, elephant corps and navy. The Cholas paid special attention to their navy. Within the *Kaikkolar*, the *Velaikkarars* were the most dependable troops in the royal service ready to defend the king and his cause with their lives. Attention was given to the training of the army and cantonments called *kadagams*.

Chola Self Government

The most important feature of the Chola administration lies in the running of autonomous institutions. There was a great deal of local self-government in the villages in the Chola Empire. Each village had its own general assembly which administered control over all the affairs of the village and was free from the control of the Central Government. It enjoyed all powers regarding the village administration. There were two types of institutions working at village level.

Ur

Ur was the general assembly of the village. The Ur consisted of all the taxpaying residents of an ordinary village. The *Alunganattar* was the executive committee and the ruling group of the Ur. The Ur was open to all the adult men but was dominated by the older member of the village. The members of the executive committee of 'Ur' were called '*Shashak Gana*' or '*Ganam*'. Exact number of the committee members or the procedure adopted for their election is not known.

Mahasabha

This was a gathering of the adult men in the Brahmana villages which were called *agraharas*. These were villages settled by the Brahmanas in which most of the land was rent free. Sabha managed most of its affairs by an executive committee called *variya* to which educated persons owning property were elected. Reporters appointed by the sabha were called *Variyar*. Generally, *Variyar* was assigned some or other special task. Sabha could settle new lands, and executive ownership rights over them. It could also raise loans for the village and levy taxes.

Villages were divided among sheries, roads and blocks. Each shery constituted a community. Shery was assigned many tasks for the welfare of the village Each shery had its representation in the managing committee of the village.



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Chola hegemony over seas: Analysis

In the early medieval period, the maritime commerce of India was adversely affected by two significant developments. One was the replacement of the Abbasid Empire of Baghdad by Fatimids of Egypt. This severed the trade links between ports of Persian Gulf and ports of western India, which were controlled by Rastrakuta. However, under Fatimids, the trade with Red Sea ports provided greater incentive to the merchants of the far south of India. Thus, the Kerala coasts progressed at the cost of Karnataka coasts. The expansionist policy of Chola King Rajaraja-I over Ceylon, Maldives and Chera territories was part of the ongoing efforts to ensure that the merchants were not disadvantaged.

Another challenge came from the commercial opening of the China under the Song dynasty. In those times, China was ahead of other parts of world in terms of manufacturing items {as it stands today} and needed huge imports of raw material from India. The trade of Indian merchants depended on will of the rulers of Sri Vijaya (Sumatra Islands, current Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore) because they controlled the Malacca strait which was an important international shipping lane in those times also. The strait shortened the time gap between China and southern parts of India.

The Sri Vijaya rulers wanted to increase their share in profits from Chola-China trade. They decided that all the ships coming from India would need to terminate their journey in the strait and their middlemen would trans-ship the goods for respective destination. This idea miffed the merchant organizations in Chola state and thus King Rajaraja-I decided to use his substantial naval force to punish *Sri Vijaya*. Thus, it's quite apparent that there was no imperial motive behind attack on Sri Vijaya. The campaign was solely for safeguarding the shipping lane for Chola's merchant fleet to China by royal protection.

Pallavas

Pallavas {literally means a branch} were a prominent power in India for more than four centuries between the 6th and 9th centuries.

Origin of Pallavas

There are no records about Pallavas in the vernacular legends. They were forgotten until a copper plate grant was found in 1840. There are several theories of origin around Pallavas. As per one theory, Pallavas were earlier feudatories of Satavahanas. Another theory says that they were offsprings of Chola and Naga rulers of Ilam (Sri Lanka).

Another theory links them to Pahalavas (Indo-Parthians). This theory suggests that the Indo-Parthians were further shifted southwards from northern India and they settled in Tondaimandalam and evolved as Pallavas. They adopted the local religion Saivism and became Dravidians. This theory is supported on the basis of below arguments:



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- Pahalavas were prominent in second century AD in northern parts of India and they had struggled with other outfits for survival.
- Many sculptures in Mahabalipuram have remarkable affinity with Persian features. This includes the lion symbol and tall cylindrical headdresses wore by Iranians in those times. Further, the pillars resemble with Perseopolis and the roofs of Pancharathas and tower of Kainashnath temple in Kanchipuram shows affinity with the shrines of babylon.

Political History of Pallavas

Initial territories of Pallavas seem not to be very extensive and they look similar to Kalabhras. The first known king of this dynasty was *Sivaskanda Varman* who ruled in second century AD. He raised himself against many subordinate chiefs and performed an Ashwamedha. More information is available about *Simhavarman* who ruled around 570 AD. He defeated the Tamil countries and kings of Ceylon and tried to extend his dominion. His son Simhavishnu was first Pallava Monarch to have a reign beyond Kanchipuram.

Bharavi

Simhavishnu was patron of **Bharavi**, the great poet who wrote the famous *Kiratrjuniya*, the dialogue between Arjuna and Shiva and in which Shiva blessed Arjuna with the *Pasupata Shastra*.

The next Pallava monarch Mahendravarman-I was a great patron of art and architecture and built the Pancharathas of Mahabalipuram. He also wrote *Mattavilasa Prahasana* or 'The Farce of Drunken Sport', a celebrated ancient Indian satirical play. Further, the rock cut temples at Mahabalipuram (Seven Pagodas) were also excavated by the Pallavas most probably under Mahendravarman I. His son Narsimhvarman-I defeated and killed his Chalukyan counterpart Pulkesin II in 642 AD. After this victory, he assumed the title "Vatapikonda" after sacking the capital Vatapi (Badami) of Chalukyas.

Nayanmar saints like Appar and Tirugnanasambandar lived during reign of Narsimhvarman-I. Huen Tsang visited the Pallava kingdom during the reign of Narsimhvarman-I.

Among the successors the important ones were Nripatunga who defeated a Pandya King Shrimara.

Chalukyas of Badami

First half of the sixth century marks the rise Chalukyas of Badami or Vatapi as a very strong power in Deccan. The Chalukyas seem to be a race of Rajputs from North who imposed their rule upon the Dravidian inhabitants of the Deccan tableland. The Royal Emblem of Chalukyas of Badami was



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“Varaha”.

The earliest reference in this dynasty is of one Jayasimha / Vallabha, however the first sovereign king was Pulkeshin-I, who made himself master of a town called Vatapi (Bijapur district, Karnataka) in around 543 AD by overthrowing Kadambas. The *Badami Cliff inscription* tells that Pulakesin-I performed all of the five yajnas which make a king paramount viz *Hiranyagarbha, Agnistoma, Vajapeya, Bahusuvarna and Paundarika*.

The successors of Pulkeshin-I extended the empire by subjugating the Kadambas from Revatidweepa (modern Goa). The most celebrated king of this dynasty was Pulkeshin-II (grandson of Pulkeshin-I). He defeated almost every contemporary including Kadambas, Alupas, Mauryans of Konkan, Pallava King Mahendravarman-I and Harsha. The defeat of Harsha on banks of river Narmada made him undisputed Dakshinapatheshwara. However, enmity between Pallavas and Chalukyas finally cost Pulkeshin-II his life when he was defeated and killed by Pallava King Narsimhavarman in 642 AD. His successors tried to revive the Kingdom but largely failed because of continuous growth in the power of Rastrakuta and Pandyas. They were finally destroyed by Dantidurga of Rastrakuta empire.

Literature of Chalukyas of Badami

The most important source of history of the Badami Chalukyas Dynasty is the Aihole inscription of Pulkeshin-II written by his court poet Ravikirti in Sanskrit language and Kannada script.

Famous writers in Sanskrit from the Western Chalukya period are Vijnaneshwara who achieved fame by writing *Mitakshara*, a book on Hindu law, and King Somesvara-III, a noted scholar, who compiled an encyclopaedia of all arts and sciences called *Manasollasa*. The *Karnateshwara Katha*, which was quoted later by Jayakirti, is believed to be a eulogy of Pulakesin-II.

Rastrakuta Empire

This dynasty was established by one *Dantidurga* who overthrew main branch of Chalukyas from Badami in 735 AD. He made Gulbarga his capital but was soon deposed by his uncle Krishna who completed the establishment of Rastrakuta supremacy over the dominions of Chalukyas. *Krishna carried out the most extensive and most opulent example of rock cut architecture in India in the form of Kailas Temple at Ellora*. Among his successors, the notable King was Amoghvarsha whose reign extended for 64 years. He was one of the greatest ruler among Rastrakuta and patronized the Digambara sect of Jainism.

Chalukyas of Kalyani and Chalukyas of Vengi

The main branch of Chalukyas (Badami Chalukyas) was destroyed by the Rastrakutas. They revived



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after two centuries in around 972-72AD to be known as Chalukyas of Kalyani under one Tailapa who was a feudatory of Rastrakutas. Another branch of Chalukyas of Vengi emerged for a short period in modern Telangana region.

The Chalukyas of Kalyani are also known as **Western Chalukyas**. This dynasty made a great contribution in the modern Kannada literature as well as Sanskrit literature.

Hoyasala Empire

A family or clan named Hoyasala had attained considerable power in the present day Karnataka during the 12th and 13th century. This empire ruled almost all the present day Karnataka between the 11th to mid of the 14th century. Their capital was Belur which was later shifted to Halebidu. This period was a very important era for the development of the art, architecture and religion in the Southern countries. The Hoyasala Empire contributed in the growth of both the Kannada and Sanskrit literature.

The early Hoysala rulers were feudatories of Chalukyas of Kalyani. Their empire was consolidated by Vishnuvardhana or Bittiga in early part of 12th century. He established his capital at Dorasamudra (modern Halebidu in Karnataka). The last great ruler of this dynasty was Veera Ballala-III who reigned from 1291 to 1343 AD. When Alauddin Khilji invaded Deccan, he was able to subdue all regional powers except Hoyasala. Veera Ballala III campaigned against the Khiljis from new capital Tiruvannamalai and founded another capital at the banks of River Tungabhadra at Hosapattana where his able commanders Harihara and Bukkaraya (popularly known as Hakka and Bukka) founded the Vijayanagar Empire in 1336. Veera Ballala III was killed in one of the battles against the Delhi Sultan in 1343.

Yadavas of Devagiri

The Yadavas of Devagiri were earlier feudatories of Western Chalukyas. Their capital was Devagiri (Modern Daulatabad) in Maharashtra and they controlled a territory in Modern Maharashtra, North Karnataka and Southern Madhya Pradesh. Devagiri was founded by Bhillama who built a mighty fort there. This fort was ransacked by Alauddin Khilji in 1294 and later plundered by Malik Kafur again 1307, 1310 and 1318. Bhillama was killed in a battle with a Hoyasala Chief in 1191 AD. The last king of this dynasty was Raja Ramachandra, who was also the last Hindu sovereign of Deccan. He was defeated by Alauddin Khilji and ransomed his life for a large treasure tribute. His son Harpala revolted against Muslims but was defeated, flayed alive and decapitated by Mailk Kafur. Such was the tragic end of Yadavas of Devgiri.

The Pandya Kingdom

Pandya was also an ancient Kingdom mentioned in Mahabharata, Puranas and also in Asoka's



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inscriptions. As the legend goes, one King of this dynasty *Sarangdhwaj* had participated in Mahabharata war. Fish was family crest of the ancient Pandyas. The most ancient capital of Pandyas was *Korkai* in Tamil Nadu. It is home of three brothers who founded Chola, Pandya and Chera Kingdoms. *Korkai* was also a centre of pearl trade. Ancient Pandya country was well known to Greeks and Romans for its pearl trade.

The later capital of Pandyas was *Madura*. *Madura*, located on river *Vaigai*, is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities around the world. It was visited by *Megasthenes* in 3rd Century BC.

Marcopolo in Pandya Kingdom

Marcopolo had landed in Pandya Empire (at *Kayal*) in 13th century and impressed by the wealth and magnificence of the King, Prince as well as people, tagged it **the richest kingdom in existence**.

However, not much authentic information is available regarding Pandya country before 10th century. In the times of *Parantaka Chola* in 10th century, *Madura* was under *Maravarman Rajasimha-II*. *Parantaka* overran his kingdom and captured *Madura* and assumed the pompous title of *Maduraikonda*. *Rajsimha-II* fled to *Ceylon* and later returned to *Kerala* to live under a *Chera King* in low profile. Similarly, *Rajaraja Chola-I* in 1000 AD reduced the Pandyas to tributary vassals. In 13th century, one of these Vassals **Jatavarman Kulasekaran-I** turned rebel to Cholas. But the Chola subdued him and made him surrender on humiliating terms. To seek revenge, his brother *Maravarman Sundara Pandyan* invaded Cholas in 1216. He was able to plunder *Thanjavur*, *Uraiyur* and drive the Cholas in exile. However, he returned Chola territories on interference from *Hoyasala King Veera Ballala-III*. However, Cholas were now reduced to vassals of Pandyas. His successor *Jatavarman Sundara Pandyan* (1251-61) was also a mighty conqueror who plundered *Sri Lanka* and took away huge booty. He also conflicted with the *Kakatiya Kings* of *Warangal*.

Early in the 14th century, a dispute arose about the succession of the Pandya throne and one of the claimants appealed to the Sultan of *Delhi*, *Alauddin Khilji* for help. This probably resulted in an invasion by the Sultan's forces in 1310 under **Malik Kafur**. *Malik Kafur* sacked, looted *Madura* and marched up to *Rameshwaram*, where he erected a mosque. After that invasion, the Pandya kings ruled sporadically at undefined territories. *Malik Kafur* was followed by two other expeditions from the *Delhi Sultanate* in 1314 AD led by *Khusrav Khan* and in 1323 AD by *Ulugh Khan*. Later *Muhammad Bin Tughlaq* created a southern province and placed **Sayyid Jalal-ud-Din Ahsan** as its governor. In 1333 AD *Sayyid* declared his independence and created **Madurai Sultanate**. **Madurai Sultanate** was replaced by the **Nayaka Governors**, who kept on ruling until arrival of British.



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The Chera Kingdom

The Ashokan inscriptions have mentioned Choda (Chola), Pada, (Pandya), Ketala Puto (Keralaputra) and Satiya Puto (Satyaputra) in the south of Maurya Empire. The Keralaputra are considered to be Chera dynasty while nothing is known about Satyaputras. The Chera Kings adopted “bow and arrow” as their family insignia. Their area of dominance included North Travancore, Cochin and southern Malabar region. Early capital of Cheras was Vanchi Muthur and later Cheras were Mahodayapuram /Kulashekarapuram.

Kakatiya Dynasty

The Kakatiyas were vassals of Western Chalukyas until 1163 when one Prataparudra-I declared himself sovereign and established the Kakatiya dynasty. The capital of these dynasty rulers was Warangal and they dominated till 1323 when they were eventually annexed in Delhi Sultanate. Between 1262 to 1289, the Kakatiyas were led by *Rudrammadevi*, one of the most celebrated Indian queens of medieval era. Marco Polo had visited India during her rule and has praised her rule.

Observations / Shortnotes On Early Medieval Period

Indian Feudalism

From the post-Maurya period, and especially from Gupta times, India’s political and administrative developments tended to feudalise the state apparatus.

What is feudalism?

In Europeans sense, feudalism describes a set of reciprocal legal and military obligations among the warrior nobility, revolving around the three key concepts of lords, vassals, and fiefs. However, in context with ancient India, the system gradually **developed from the beginning of the land grants.**

The practice of making land grants to the Brahmanas was a custom, sanctified by the injunctions laid down in the Dharmashastras, Epics and Puranas. The **Anusasana Parva** of the Mahabharata devotes a whole chapter to the praise of making gifts of land (*Bhumidanaprasamsa*).

The Land Grants & Administrative Rights

The early Pali texts of the pre-Maurya period refer to the villages granted to the Brahmanas by the rulers of Kosala and Magadha. A term used for such grants was “**Brahamdeyya**”.

Earliest Land Grants

The earliest land grants belonging to the first century BC were given to the Buddhist priests and Brahmanas and other religious establishments. However, in the post-Guptas period even administrative officials were granted land. The landed beneficiaries were given both powers of taxation and coercion, leading to the disintegration of the central authority. The secular recipients of the grants and the autonomous holders of land are generally termed as fief holders and free holders.



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The major outcome was decentralization.

However, the Earliest epigraphic record of a land grants in India is a Saatavahana inscription of the first century BC, which refers to the grant of a village as a gift in the *Ashvamedha Sacrifice*. However, it is not clear, whether the administrative or revenue rights of these lands were also given to those priests or not. It has been guessed that the administrative rights were perhaps given up for the first time in the grants made to Buddhist monks by the Satavahana ruler – Gautamiputra Satakarni in the second century AD. Such a land grant included the rights that :

- The royal troops could not enter such land granted
- The government officials and district police was not supposed to disturb such lands.

Changes in Land Grants

From the period of later Mauryas, the land grants included the transfer of all sources of revenue, and the surrender of police and administrative functions. The grants of the second century AD mention that the *transfer of the king's control only over salt*, which implies that he retained certain other sources of revenue. But in some other grants, it was recorded that the donor (King) **gave up his control over almost all sources of revenue** including pastures, **mines including hidden treasures and deposits**.

Then, the donor not only abandoned his revenues but also the right to govern the inhabitants of the villages that were granted. This practice became more prevalent in the Gupta period. There are many instances of grants of apparently settled villages made to the Brahmanas during the Gupta era. In such grants, the residents, including the cultivators and artisans, were expressly asked by their respective rulers not only to pay the customary taxes to the donees, but also to obey their commands. All this **provides clear evidence of the surrender of the administrative power of the state**.

One of the important aspect of the Kings sovereignty was that he used to retain the rights of the punishing the culprits. In the Post-Gupta times, the king made over to the Brahmanas not only this right, but also his right to punish all offences against family, property, person, etc.

Implications of Land Grants

We see that, by giving such privileges, the state was bound to disintegrate. Out of the seven organs of the state power mentioned in literary and epigraphic sources, taxation system and coercive power based on the army are rightly regarded as two vital elements. If they are abandoned, the state power disintegrates. This was the system created by the grants made to the Brahmins. The land was granted for as long as the existence of the sun and the moon, which implies the permanent break-up of the integrity of the state.

The above discussion makes it clear that in the Post-Gupta period, the Brahmanas carried **freedom from taxes**, Administrative freedom and also the freedom from punishments



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(**Abhayantarasiddhi**). The widespread practice of making land grants in the Gupta period paved the way for the rise of Brahmin feudatories, who performed administrative functions not under the authority of the royal officers but almost independently. What was implicit in earlier grants became explicit in grants from about 1000AD; and well recognised in the administrative systems of the Turks.

The implications were many but the major implication was the creation of powerful intermediaries wielding considerable economic and political power. As the number of the land-owning Brahmins went up, some of them gradually shed their priestly functions and turned their chief attention to the management of land. Thus, their case secular functions became more important than religious functions. The comprehensive competence based on centralised control, which was the hallmark of the Maurya state gave way to **decentralisation in the post-Maurya and Gupta periods**. The functions of the collection of taxes, levy of forced labour, regulation of mines, agriculture, etc., together with those of the maintenance of law and order, and defence which were hitherto performed by the state officials, were now systematically abandoned, first to the priestly class and later to the warrior class.

Thus, the main implications of the Indian Feudalism in early medieval period are as follows:

- **Political decentralization:** The seed of decentralization that was sown in the form of Land grants turned into a vividly branched political organization made up semi-autonomous rulers, Samantas, Mahasamantas and others such as Rajpurushas.
- **Emergence of new landed intermediaries:** The emergence of landed intermediaries- a dominant landholding social group absent in the early historical period- is linked to the practice of land grants which began with the Saatavahana.
- **Changes in agrarian relations:** Free vaishya peasants dominated the agrarian structure in early historical India and labour services provided by the Shudra. But, from the sixth century AD onwards the peasants stuck to the land granted to the beneficiaries because they were asked not to leave the village granted to the beneficiaries or migrate to tax-free village. This resulted in the immobility of the population and isolation from the rest of the world. Its implication was very profound such as development of localized customs, languages and rituals.

Other Changes in Society during Early Medieval India

The social changes in the early medieval India were mainly the product of certain economic developments, such as land grants and large scale transfers of land revenues and land to both secular and religious elements, decline of trade and commerce, loss of mobility of artisans, peasants and traders, unequal distribution of land and power etc.



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Proliferation of castes

Increasing pride of birth, characteristic of feudal society, and the accompanying self-sufficient village economy, which prevented both **spatial and occupational mobility**, gave rise to thousands of castes in India.

The changes in economy were also a result of emergence of certain new castes and decline of certain old ones. For example, the constant transfer of land and land revenues made by princes to priests, temples and officials led to the rise and growth of the scribe or the Kayastha caste which undermined the monopoly of Brahmans as writers and scribes.

Similarly, the decline of trade and commerce led to the decline in the position of the Vaishyas. The process of proliferation and multiplication of castes was yet another marked feature of the social life of the period.

Many new communities, which are known to us by the generic term Rajputs, were also recognized as Kshatriyas during the period. The foreign elements, which could not be put in any three higher classes, were naturally designated as the Shudras.

The guilds of artisans gradually hardened into castes due to lack of mobility in post-Gupta times. The maximum affected people were the Shudra and the mixed castes.

Position of Brahmins

The Brahmins stood at the top of the social hierarchy during and post Gupta period. They had regained their power and were responsible for reinterpreting the regulatory canons of life as laid down by the earlier texts.

However, Brahmins had numerous subsections now divided on the basis of many criteria such as knowledge of Vedas etc.

Getting birth in a Brahmin family was a privilege. Brahmins had freedom from death-sentence, exemption from taxes, precedence on the road, lesser punishment for certain offences in comparison with other castes. Many writers have documented the exemption of the Brahmans from capital punishment. The most severe punishment for a Brahmin was banishment. When a Brahmin killed a man, the former had only to fast, pray and give alms. On the other hand, if somebody killed a Brahmin, he was ought to be greatest sinner and performed the worst crime. No punishment or remorse could wipe off the Brahmin-hatya, the greatest crime of those periods!

Position of Vaishya

Vaishyas in the early medieval India were almost degraded to the Shudra community. In fact, Alberuni also did not find any difference between the Vaishyas and Shudra. One difference was that the Shudra had freedom to sell all kinds of goods, but the Vaishya were forbidden to carry on transactions in some specified articles like salt, wine, meat, curds, swords, arrows, water, idols etc.



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Position of Shudras

Shudras were the most numerous sections in the community and their number increased from age to age. Some of the Shudras were regarded as mixed castes, born of anulom and pratiloma marriages. There were eight Shudra castes called "*Ashtashudras*" viz. Vyadha, Bhada, Kola, Koncha, Haddi, Doma, Jala, Bagatita, Vyalagrahi and Chandala. However, there was another Shudra caste also whose position was lower even these eight castes. These people were called the **Antyajjas**. These Antyajjas were beyond and below the four orders and four Varnas of the Indian society.

Antyajjas

In the days of the composition of the early smritis, untouchables were called Antyajjas. The Vedvyasamriti counts twelve names and includes all those who eat cow's flesh as Antyajjas.

Alberuni described eight groups of people, who were members of crafts and professions, but did not belong to the four-fold caste system, namely washerman, shoemaker, juggler, basket and shield-maker, sailor, angler, hunter of wild animals and birds, and weaver. These correspond to *Rajaka, Charmakara, Nata or Sailushika, Buruda, Navika, Kaivarta, Bhillia and Kuvindaka*, who have been regarded as Chandals and Antyajjas in all early Smriti texts and as Shudras by Manu. Thus, they belonged to the lowest caste.

Position of Marriage & Women

The knowledge about the traditions prevalent in the institution of marriage in that era comes from two works viz. *Smritichandrika* and *Smritiyarthasara*. The former says that the inter-caste marriage is forbidden in Kaliyuga. Savarna marriages are necessary for the performance of religious rites, while Asavarna marriages are of an inferior type as being dictated by desire.

The later says that the marriage of Brahmins with Shudra women forbidden not the same in other castes. The polygamy was prevalent in the royal class and has been well documented in *Vaijayanti*.

The women's position is far degraded from that in early eras. The husband and other male relations, to begin with must so arrange things that the wife never becomes independent. The wife must also be guarded not only against physical but also against mental unchastity for the sake of her offspring. wife's right to maintenance in case of her supersession, they provide for her residence in her husband's house as well as her maintenance even in the event of her committing adultery. When the wife is guilty of slight adultery, she must be maintained, though deprived of conjugal rights, till her performance of a penance.

Literature and science

During early medieval period, there was a considerable development in the literature. However, the



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quality of the content in them was not of a high order. It was basically of general imitative and reproductive character. The list is very big; however, here we note some of the most significant artworks.

- **Naishadhiyacharitam** of **Shriharsha** is the most outstanding epic of this period, written under the patronage of Gahadawala king Jayachandra of Kannauj.
- **Rajatarangini** of Kalhana is unique as the only known attempt at true history in the whole of surviving Sanskrit literature. A few short poems were also written during this period.
- The *Gita-Govindam* of Jayadeva is known as the most musical song ever written in Sanskrit.
- The **Aryasaptashati** of Govardhanacharya is an erotic poem following the tradition of Gathasaptashati of Hala
- **Lalitavigraharaja-Nataka** was a drama by Somadeva, the Harikeli-Nataka by Visaladeva, the Prasanna-Raghava by Jayadeva.
- In Lexicology, the *Abidhana Chintamani*, Deshi-Namamala, Anekarthasamgraha and Nighantushesha of Hemachandra are of worth note.
- Bhoja had written the **Rajamriganka** on astronomy.
- The famous mathematician Bhaskaracharya flourished in the south in the twelfth century. His Siddhanta-Shiromani comprises four parts; Lilavati, Vijaganita, Grahaganita and Gola. The last deals with astronomy.
- A very significant idea in the Siddhanta-Shiromansi is that of perpetual motion, which was transmitted by Islam about AD 1200 to Europe where in course of time it led to the development of the concept of power technology.
- The **Rasarnava** is a work on Tantra, which deals with metallic preparations and alchemy. The **Dakarnava** is a Buddhist tantric work composed in Apabhramsha. The **Sadhanamala**, a Buddhist tantric work belongs to the twelfth century.
- The field of erotic literature saw some development. *Ratirahasya* by Kokkaka, *Haramekhala* by Mahuka, *Rativilasa* by Jayamangal etc. are some important works on Kamashastra.
- In the field of music we have *Matanga*, *Dhatupatha* as codified by Bhimasena, *Kuttanimatam* of Damodargupta etc.
- Bhatta utpala wrote a work on Vastuvidya.
- On cosmetics we have *Gandhashatra* by Padmashri in his work on erotics. The *Vishnudharmottara* gives much attention to painting was the *chitrasutra* mentioned by Damodargupta. The *Aparajita-Prichcha* is a work on architecture which appears to have been written in Gujarata in AD 1200. The *Sangita-Ratnakara* of Sharangadeva was written in the



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13th century in the south. The Laghvarhannitishastra of Hemachandra is a work on political science. Another work on the duties and obligations of princes was the Rajaniti-Kamadhenu of Gopala.

Development of local cultures

The foundation of various kingdoms and fiefdoms whose people were generally confined to them only led the development of localized culture, making India a diverse geographical area.

The Hunas and other foreign elements were absorbed into the Indian society and cleared the ground for the rise of larger defined units such as Rajputana. Similarly, Bengal, which was earlier divided into two parts viz. Gauda and Vanga, later the whole region was named after Vanga.

The inhabitants of the different nations differed in customs, clothing and language. For example, the Kavalayamala (8th century) notes the existence of 18 major nationalities and describes the anthropological character of 16 peoples.

Development of Vernacular Languages

Though the Sanskrit continued to be used by the ruling class at the higher administrative levels, this language later became complex, verbose and ornate. The Apabhramsha started to differentiate into proto-Hindi, Proto-Bengali, Proto-Rajasthani, proto-Gujarati, Proto-Marathi, Proto-Assamese, Proto-Ordyia, Proto-Maithili languages.

From the 6th century onwards, the linguistic variation became very fast because of lack of inter-regional communication and mobility. In the tribal areas, the Brahmanas imposed various forms of Sanskrit on the existing Aryan and Pre-Aryan dialects. The consequential interaction gave rise to regional languages. The migrating Brahmanas also enriched the regional languages. This resulted in the development of regional scripts and regional grammar.

Development of Regional Art & Culture

In the field of art and architecture, this period ushered in a new age marked by regional styles in sculpture and construction of temples, which became particularly prominent in south India from the eighth century onwards.

The post-gupta iconography prominently displays a divine hierarchy, which reflects the pyramidal rank in society.

The Vishnu, Shiva and Durga became the supreme deities, lording over many other divinities of unequal sizes. The Mahayajnas and danas (donations) were gradually replaced by a system known as Puja. Puja was interlinked to the doctrine of Bhakti, which became a distinct feature of medieval religion. Both puja and Bhakti became integral ingredients of tantricism, which arose due to the acculturation of the tribal people through large-scale religious land-grants.



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Sangam Literature

The scientific analysis of the Sangam literature says that this work was composed in 120-150 years and most of the literature was composed from 100 AD to 250 AD. This is entirely different from what has been mentioned in the Iraiyanar Akapporul and Sangam legend. There are 2289 poems available under Sangam Literature now; many of them are very short having only 3-5 verses. 102 of them are anonymous. The number of poets estimated is 473.

Earliest Extant Tamil Work: Tolkāppiyam

Tolkāppiyam is a work of Tamil **Grammar**, which is said to be the **earliest extant work of Tamil Literature**. There are three books in Tolkāppiyam viz **Ezhuttadikaram, Solladikaram and Poruladikaram**, and each of them are composed of nine chapters. This work has divided the Tamil Language into two types viz **Sentamil** (Classical Tamil) and **Kotuntamil** (Spoken Tamil). Sentamil is used in almost all literary works of the Tamil Language.

Earliest Tamil Work: Agattiyam

However, the first work on Tamil Grammar, which is not extant and is lost irretrievably, is **Agattiyam**. Rishi Agastya wrote it. Tolakappiar who wrote the above-mentioned Tolkāppiyam is said to be a disciple of Rishi Agastya. As per the Tamil traditions, Rishi Agastya invented the Tamil Language and brought its syntax from the lord Shiva.

Themes of Sangam Literature

On the basis of interpretation and context, the Sangam literature can be described into two types viz **Agam** (inner) and **Puram** (outer). The topics of **Agam** are related to personal and human aspects such as love and sexual things. The topics of **Puram** are related to human experiences and emotions such as Heroism, Valor, Ethics and Philanthropy. The poems have also been classified on nature themes which are known as **Thinai**. The themes are as follows:

- **Kurinji** (Mountainous Theme).
- **Mullai** (Forests Theme)
- **Marutham** (Agricultural Land Theme)
- **Neithal** (Coastal Theme)
- **Paalai** (Desert Theme)

The literature was lost and forgotten. The Tamil Scholars S V Damodaram Pillai and U V Swamitha Iyer brought it into light. They printed and published different works such as Tholkappiyam, Nachinarkiniyar urai, Tholkappiyam Senavariyar urai, Manimekalai, Cilappatikaram, Pattupattu, and Purananuru in different parts of the 19th century, all with commentaries.

Classification of Sangam Literature

Broadly, we can divide the Sangam literature in 2 parts viz **Patinenmēlkanakku** and



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Patinenkīlkanakku. Out of them, the **Patinenmēlkanakku** refers to the oldest surviving Tamil Poetry of the Sangam Age, dating back to 200 BC to 100 BC while the Patinenkīlkanakku refers to the collection of 18 poetic works, which belongs to Post Sangam period, and date back to 100 AD to 500 AD. This classification has been further summarized as follows:

Sangam Literature			
Oldest Extant work on Grammar Tolkāppiyam		Oldest conceptual work on Grammar Agattiyam	
Published Works			
Patinenmēlkanakku (Sangam Period)		Patinenkīlkanakku (Post Sangam Period)	
Total 18 Works		Total 18 Works	
Ettuttokai (The Eight Anthologies)	Pattuppāttu (The Ten Idylls)	Nalatiyar	Thinaimalai Nurru Aimpathu
Ainkurunūru	Tirumurukārruppatai	Nanmanikkatigai	Tirukkural
Akananūru	Kuriñcippāttu	Inna Narpathu	Thirikatukam
Puranānūru	Malaipatukatām	Iniyavai Narpathu	Acharakkovai
Kalittokai	Maturaikkāñci	Kar Narpathu	Pazhamozhi Nanuru
Kuruntokai	Mullaippāttu	Kalavazhi Narpathu	Siruppanchamulam
Narrinai	Netunalvātai	Ainthinai Aimpathu	Muthumozhikkanchi
Paripātal	Pattinappālai	Thinaimozhi Aimpathu	Elathi
Patirruppattu	Perumpānārruppatai	Ainthinai Ezhupathu	Kainnilai
	Porunarārruppatai		
	Cirupānārruppatai		

Patinenmēlkanakku

This is the collection of the Sangam Period works. Ettutokai is a large volume of the poems which is consisting of more than 2000 poems. These works, which are called “The Eight Anthologies”, are on deferent themes such as Narrinai on love, Kuruntokai on love, Aiankurunuru on erotic love etc. So most works of Ettukottai are of Agam style. Most works of Pattuppāttu are of Puram context and they have works on seasons and picturesque nature of Tamil Country. They are based upon the



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themes of the nature.

Patinenkīlkanakku

Patinenkīlkanakku is the post Sangam work that is of Agam as well as Puram context. Some important points of some of these works is as follows:

- **Naaladiyar** was composed by Jain monks and the theme is the transient nature of life and youth. It was work of **Nalatiyar**.
- **Nanmanikkatiga** is the collection of 100 songs of Vilambi Naganaar and deals conditions / emotions of 4 types of people who cannot sleep in the night and they are thief, lovelorn, after money, and worrying about losing money.
- **Inna Narpathu** describes the things which should be avoided by the people. It deals with the things that bring unhappiness such as beautiful but disloyal wife, wealth of a miser, life under a tyrant and a beautiful flower without fragrance.
- **Iniyavai Narpathu** deals with the things which should not be avoided by a person and seek even in adverse situations such as learning even by begging, advice of learned persons, healthy children, and not coveting other's spouse.
- **Kalavazhi Narpathu** deals with war and politics.
- **Ainthinai Aimpathu** deals with human emotions, love, separation, lovers' quarrels.
- **Thinaimozhi Aimpathu** also deals with the Agam subjects such as love, separation, lover fights etc.
- Same is with Ainthinai Ezhupathu.
- Same is with **Thinaimalai Nurru Aimpathu** .
- **Thirukkural** is the first work in all of the Dravidian literature which deals with the ethics. It was authored by Thiruvalluvar. **It is also known as Kuraland** is a collection of 1330 couplets.
- **Thirikatukam** deals with herbal medicines.
- **Acharakkovai** deals with the personal behavior and correct methods to follow.
- **Pazhamozhi Nanuru** deals with the character of the person.
- **Siruppanchamulam** deals with the nature and combines the benevolent humans with benevolent neighbors.
- **Muthumozhikkanch** deals with the right behavior and chastity.
- **Elathi** deals with human qualities and also narrates some herbal medicines.
- **Kainnilai** deals with the agam concepts.

Impact of Sanskrit on Tamil Literature



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The Tamil language and literature did not flourish in isolation and was influenced by Sanskrit. The Aryans had penetrated the whole of the Tamil Land by 6th century AD and Post Sangam literature contains some traces of Aryan Culture. Influence of Sanskrit is more on the **five epics** of Tamil Literature, which were written between 1st century AD to 9th century AD. Out of them **Silappatikaram**, which was written by **Ilango Adigal**, brother of Senguvattan, a Chera King and who was a Jain monk is a highly regarded epic. The other four epics are

- *Manimegalai* which is a Buddhist Religious Work
- *Civaka Chintamani* which is a Jain Religious work
- *Valaypathi* which is also a Jain work of 9th Century
- *Kundalkesi* which is a Buddhist work of 5th century by Nagasena.

Model Questions for Prelims

1. With reference to the religion in early medieval India, which among the following observations is / are correct?

1. Bhakti became a distinct feature of religion
2. Tantrism permeated Jainism, Buddhism, Shaivism as well as Vaishnavism
3. Theory of incarnation became very prominent
4. Earlier practice of Yajnas gave way to practice of Puja (worship)

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1, 2 & 4
- [B] Only 2 & 3
- [C] Only 1, 2 & 3
- [D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Apart from the regional formations other aspects of culture also acquired feudal character. In the field of art and architecture this period ushered in a new age marked by regional styles in sculpture and construction of temples, which became particularly prominent in south India from the eighth century onwards. All over the country the post-gupta iconography prominently displays a divine hierarchy which reflects the pyramidal rank in society. Vishnu, Shiva and Durga appear as supreme deities, lording over many other divinities of unequal sizes and placed in lower positions as retainers and attendants. The supreme mother goddess is clearly established as an independent divinity in iconography from this time and is represented in a dominating posture in relation to several minor deities. The pantheons do not so much reflect syncretism as forcible absorption of tribal and lower order deities. The reality of unequal ranks appears in the shivite, jain and tantric monastic organizations in



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which as many as five pyramidal ranks are enumerated. The ceremonies recommended for the conservation of the Acharya, the highest in rank, are practically the same as those for the coronation of the prince.

In this period the Mahayajnas and danas gave way to a system known as puja. With the puja was interlinked the doctrine of bhakti or complete self-surrender of the individual to his god, which became a distinct feature of medieval religion, especially a distinct feature of medieval religion, especially in south india from the seventh century. Bhakti reflected the complete dependence of the tenants or semi-serfs on the landowners in early medieval times. Both puja and bhakti became integral ingredients of tantricism, which arose outside mid-india in the aboriginal , peripheral areas on account of the acculturation of the tribal people through large-scale religious land-grants. Brahmanical land rights in the new territories could be maintained by adopting tribal rituals and deities, especially the mother goddess, which eventually produced the tantras. In the fifth- seventh centuries many Brahmanas received lands in Nepal, Assam, Bengal, Orissa, central india, and the Deccan where tantric texts, shrines and practices appeared about this time. In Tamil Nadu Brahmanas settled in large number from the 8th century, and the Agamas were compiled from the 9th century. Tantricism permeated Jainism, Buddhism, shaivism and Vaishnavism, and from the seventh century continued to hold ground throughout the medieval period. The theory of incarnation, though beginning from the earlier period, became very prominent during this period. The local gods and goddesses were identified as incarnation of Vishnu, Shiva and Durga.

Undoubtedly, the establishment of the Turkish rule introduced certain significant changes in the social, economic and political organization of the country. But most features such as feudal state organization, reversion to closed economy, proliferation of castes, regional identity in art, script and language, puja, bhakti and tantra which developed in medieval times and continued later, can be traced back to the sixth and seventh centuries. It would then appear that in these two centuries ancient India was coming to an end and medieval india was taking shape. The period is thus known as early medieval India.

2. During the early medieval India, founders of which among the following dynasty was elected by the people?
- [A] Pratiharas
 - [B] Palas
 - [C] Gangas
 - [D] Solankis



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Answer: [B] Palas

The history of Bengal from the death of Harsha up to the ascendancy of the Palas is shrouded in obscurity. At this time, west Bengal was known as Gauda and East Bengal as Vanga. Bengal was subjected to internal disorder what is called Matsya Nyaya (the rule of strong devouring the weak), leading up to a revolution by which a local chief Gopala (AD 750-770) was elected (Grahita) by the people. This is however, to be taken not in a strictly democratic or constitutional sense which was not possible in these days. Perhaps the election was nothing but his acceptance as a ruler by the people.

3. The feudatories in early medieval India enjoyed which among the following rights:

1. Collection of Land revenue
2. Awarding fines and Punishments
3. Right to conclude treaties with other kings
4. Right to treasure troves in their lands

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] 1, 2 & 3
- [B] 1 & 2
- [C] 1, 2, 3 & 4
- [D] 1, 2 & 4

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 4

4. Among the various castes in early medieval India, the “Antyaja” were those people who ___:

1. were outside the purview of the four fold caste system
2. considered lowest and degraded outcasts
3. allowed only work related to service of other castes

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 2 & 3
- [C] Only 1 & 3
- [D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [A] Only 1 & 2

5. Which among the following is / are traits of early medieval India?

1. Development of diverse regional culture of India
2. Formation of diverse regional languages of India
3. Reinvention of Vedic Gods in Hinduism
4. Development of regional style in sculpture and construction of temples



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Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1, 2 & 3

[B] Only 1, 2 & 4

[C] Only 1, 3 & 4

[D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [B] Only 1, 2 & 4

Third statement is incorrect because there was no reinvention of vedic gods in medieval India. Infact, gods were worshiped as avatars of the Absolute Spirit during medieval India.

6. With reference to the nature of Indian economy / society in early medieval India, which among the following statements is / are correct?

1. Practice of agriculture got confined to only Vaishyas and Shudras

2. The Vaisyas gradually lost their economic status due to decline of trade and commerce

3. The Brahmins adopted the occupation of agriculture only in times of distress

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 1 & 3

[C] Only 2

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [C] Only 2

Agriculture was viewed more or less as a regular vocation of the Brahmin, and not as an occupation to be adopted only in distress. In fact Agriculture was included as a Samanya Dharma of all varnas.

7. Consider the following statements with reference to Tantricism in medieval India:

1. The key reason for the development of Tantricism was the absence of contact between tribal people and Brahmanas

2. The role of woman in tantric practices is central

3. Shudras were not allowed to practice Tantricism

Which among the above is / are correct?

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] Only 2

Answer: [D] Only 2

The major reason for the development of Tantricism was the Brahmanization and



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Sanskritization of hitherto forested and tribal areas. So first statement is incorrect.

In Tantricism, women and Shudras both were allowed to be initiated. Thus, third statement is incorrect.

Third statement is correct. In tribal societies women always have been given a higher status; and sexual rituals played an important role which according to tribal society promotes the fertility of the earth. In fact the role of woman in tantric practices is central due to her ability to reproduce; hence, she symbolizes the notion of fertility.

8. During the medieval India, the Rajputs were repeatedly defeated by the Turks. What was / were the reasons of such defeats?
1. The Rajputs could not gauge the significance of the earlier Arab raids
 2. Central Asian horses did wonders in pitched battles
 3. The armies of Indian rulers were feudal levies and largely static
 4. Turkish / Afghan raiders were best in Guerrilla warfare in comparison to Indians

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 1, 2 & 3

[C] 1, 2, 3 & 4

[D] Only 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [B] Only 1, 2 & 3

The fourth statement in this question is incorrect. Guerrilla warfare may have been one means for Indians of harassing the Afghan armies, particularly when they were on the march, but this does not appear to have been used very effectively.

9. Which among the following was / were the fallouts / results of the Feudalism in medieval India?
1. Creation of smaller nuclei of Power
 2. Creation of secure and sacrosanct political pockets
 3. Improvement in the position of Shudras to some extent

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

In the post-Gupta period, it is assumed that the position of 'Shudras' in the society had come



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up to the status of peasants from their earlier position of servants and domestic slaves. Huen-Tsang, in his accounts characterises 'Shudras' as agriculturists.

10. Consider the following observations:

1. In the medieval times, both Jainism and Buddhism had become incapable of offering any serious challenge to brahmanism
2. Both Jainism and Buddhism were affected by Tantrism to almost equal extent

Which among the above observations is / are correct?

[A] Only 1

[B] Only 2

[C] Both 1 & 2

[D] Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: [A] Only 1

Second statement is incorrect because the Jains, however, like the Buddhists, did adopt tantric practices, but it did not affect the Jain moral norms such as, chanting and meditating on mantras.

General Knowledge Today



Prelims Indian History-5 : Medieval Indian History

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Model Questions

Kindly Check Prelims MCQs in the end of this module.

Political History of Delhi Sultanate

The course of Indian History was invariably changed with the rise of Islam and increased Islamic invasions on India. As early as 711 AD, Muhammad-bin-Qasim had captured Sind and Multan; however, his career ended suddenly because his masters recalled him and put him to death. By 10th century, a strong Ghaznavid Empire was founded by Subuktgeen in parts of modern Iran, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, southern Kyrgyzstan, southwest Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Afghanistan and India. His son Mahmud Ghaznavi carried out as many as seventeen raids on India between 1000 and 1026 AD.

Subuktgeen and his son Mahmud and repeatedly defeated the Hindushahi King Jayapala. Jayapala burnt himself to death due to repeated humiliation. His son Anandpala made an alliance {Rajput Confederacy} with six Rajput rulers of *Ujjain, Gwalior, Kalinjar, Kannauj, Delhi and Ajmer* This combined army engaged in a battle with Ghaznavids in 1008 near Peshawar. However, Rajput army was defeated following a stampede; and Mahmud became undisputed ruler of Punjab, Multan and Sindh.

Between 1008 and 1026, Mahmud repeatedly attacked Nagarkot, Thaneshwar, Kannauj, Meerut, Mathura, Somnath, Ajmer, Kalinjer, Gwalior and other places. The Somnath temple was destroyed and its Lingam was personally hammered by Mahmud. The pieces of the Lingam were carted back to Ghazni to be used in pavements of a Jama Masjid.

After his last attack on Somnath, he returned via Thar Desert due to fear of organized army of Raja Bhoj, though Jats had confronted him. During the last invasion, he got Malaria and died in 1030 AD.

The key objective of Mahmud behind invasions on India was to loot the wealth from its rich Rajas and temples. Every time, he returned with enormous wealth. He could be defeated by the Rajputs but the Rajputs suffered from political myopia. They often fought with each other and followed epic era rules and *customs of war* such as not attacking the fleeing enemy, not attacking the enemy with no arms etc. The invaders took advantages of this lack of political foresight and the result was that within a century, all the Hindu dynasties of the country were swept away by the torrent of the Muslims.

Mohammad Ghori

In the later part of 12th century, Mohammad Ghori led a series of campaigns in India. In his first battle, he defeated a Muslim rule in Multan in 1175. In 1178, he was badly defeated in the Battle of Gujarat {also known as Battle of Kayadara} near Mount Abu by Solanki queen Naikidevi. This was



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last attack of Ghori from Gujarat side. In 1191, he was defeated in the *First Battle of Tarain* by Prithviraj Chauhan; however, his life was saved by a Turkic retainer. He reverted back in 1192 in second battle of Tarain. In this battle, Prithviraj lost and tried to flee but was captured and was executed either in India or in Ghazni.

Ruthless slaughter of civilians followed this battle at Ajmer, Hansi and Delhi. Qutub-ud-din, the slave and general of Mohammad Ghori sacked Ayodhya and campaigned even to Bengal. Before his death, Mohammad appointed Qutub-ud-din as Naib-us-Sultanate (Viceroy) of his empire in India and bestowed him the title of Aibak (The axis of faith).

Mohammad Ghori was assassinated in 1206 by Khokhars in Punjab. He had no sons, so after his death, his Turkic slaves distributed the empire among themselves. In India, Qutub-ud-din became the first of the 34 Muslim Kings who ruled between 1206 to 1526. These 34 Kings belonged to five dynasties and are collectively called "Delhi Sultanate".

- Mamluk {Slave} Dynasty (1206-1290): Turkish Origin
- Khilji dynasty (1290–1320) : Turkish Origin
- Tughlaq dynasty (1320–1413): Turkish Origin
- Sayyid dynasty (1414–51) : Disputed / Arabian Origin
- Lodi dynasty (1451–1526) : Afghan Origin

The continuance of the three Turkish origin dynasties was disturbed by the **invasion of Timur** in 1398, which put an end to the Tughlaqs and the Delhi Sultanate was broken up in pieces. It was taken over by the Sayyid Dynasty which were actually nobles and claimed Arabian descent from the dynasty of Hazarat Muhammad. Lodi dynasty was last before Mughals took over Delhi.

Mamluk dynasty (1206–90)

First ruler of Mamluk dynasty was Qutub-ud-din Aibak (1206-1211). He reigned only for four years and died in 1210 due to falling from horse while playing Chaugan. He was called *Lakha Baksh* Sultan due to his generosity. He laid the foundation of Qutub Minar, named after Sufi saint *Qutb-ud-din Bakhtiyar Kaki* and also built Quvvat-ul-Islam mosque.

Second ruler of Mamluk dynasty was *Iluttmish (1211-1236)*, a son-in-law of Qutub-ud-din. He belonged to Ilabari tribe so some people called Slave dynasty as Ilabari dynasty also. He did some experiments in Indian Administration. During his reign, the Ilabari elite called *Chahalgani* or *Chalisa* remained dominant in administration. Some of the notable points about his reign are as follows:

- During Iluttmish reign, Mongols attacked under Chengiz Khan. His eyes were set on west, so he returned quickly from Punjab towards Sindh and Multan.
- He built Hauz Shamshi in Delhi, completed the Qutub Minar works and also built India's first Islamic Mausoleum Sultan Garhi in Delhi to bury his son *Nasiru'd-Din Mahmud*.



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- He organized iqta system of land revenue on salary basis. This system underwent changes in later times, which we would discuss later.
- He introduced two coins viz. Silver Tanka and Copper Jital. The Silver Tanka was weighing 175 grams. Later Balban issued Gold Tankas of same weight.
- Prior to these, the invaders had issued coins engraved with Sanskrit characters. For example, *Mohammad Ghori issued coins with seated Lakshmi in imitation to the Gahadwal*. Iltutmish became the first ruler to issue Arabic coins in India.
- He was also the first Sultan to receive the investiture of “Sovereign Sultan of Delhi” from the Caliph of Baghdad. This investiture legitimized his rule.

The third ruler of Maluk dynasty was Raziya Sultan, the military trained daughter of Iltutmish. By that time, the *Chalagani* had become very dominant and she could hold for only three and half years. She lost her life to Jats of modern Haryana.

The fourth ruler was Balban (1266-1287) who took the advantage of feebleness of successors of Iltutmish and become top noble of the Chahalgani. However, once he became Sultan, he mercilessly executed the other nobles thus putting an end to the Chahalgani dominance. He also subdued the Mewatis by clearing forests and executing lakhs of Mewatis. He also subdued the dacoits of Doab. He ruled for 21 years as per the practical requirements of 13th century India. Some other notes are as follows:

- He introduced practice of Zaminbosi {to kiss the earth} and Paibosi {kiss the feet of Sultan} as per the Iranian theory of divine rights which believed that King / Sultan is God’s representative on Earth.

The successor of Balban was his grandson *Kaikubad*, a young boy of 17 years, who debauched himself soon. He was killed by Jalal-ud-din Firuz Khilji aka Malik Firuz. Thus slave dynasty was put to an end and Delhi slipped in hands of Khilji dynasty.

The Khilji Dynasty (1290-1320)

The founder of this dynasty was Jalauddin Khilji aka. Malik Firuz, a general of the Slaves. Kaikubad had appointed him at Baran but when he knew about the debauchery of Kaikubad, he marched to Delhi and got the sultan and also his three years old son killed. He sat on throne of Delhi at the age of 70 years. During his time, Mongol invaders *Halaku* and *Ulugh Khan* invaded but the old sultan avoided war with them. He made peace with Ulugh Khan by giving him his daughter.

Jalauddin was assassinated by his nephew Alauddin Khilji (1296-1316) who became the second Sultan of Khilji dynasty. He was illiterate but a great commander who became the first Muslim invader to cross Vindhya, Satpuras and Narmada River to conquer Deccan.

Alauddin faced most frequent Mongol attacks (under Duwa Khan, Saldi, Kutlugh Khwaja, Targhi



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khan etc.). He was able to deter the Mongols. He built Siri fort his capital to save himself from Mongols. Due to the repeated invasions, horde of nomadic Mongols started staying near Delhi and accepted Islam. They were called New Muslims. The sultan sensed a conspiracy in New Muslims and ordered to eliminate all of them in one day. This led to massacre of 40,000 Mongol mans in one day. The women and children were thrown into slavery.

Alauddin also sent a strong army to Kandhar, Ghazni and Kabul to teach lesson to Mongols. After this, no Mongol happened during his life time.

The conquered the Ranthambore in 1301 with the help of a Rajput traitor Ranmal and seized Chittor in 1303. Seize of Chittor was followed by self-immolation by its queen Padmini and other ladies of the fort. Chittor was renamed as Khijrabad after Alauddin's son Khijra Khan.

He sent Malik Kafur to win over Deccan. Malik Kafur was able to march up to Rameshwaram and build a mosque there.

Alauddin died in 1316 and was succeeded by his son Mubarak Shah. Like his father, he also had a beautiful Pariah from Gujarat called Khusru Khan, a Hindu castrato and covert. Mubarak Shah and entire Khilji dynasty was eliminated by Khusru Khan, who sat on the throne as Sultan Nasiruddin. He in turn was killed by Ghiyas ud-Din Tughluq, thus Delhi slipped into hands of Tughlaq dynasty.

Tughlaq dynasty (1320–1413)

The first ruler of Tughlaq dynasty was Ghiyas ud-Din Tughluq (1321-1325) aka Ghazi Malik. He was succeeded by Mohammad Bin Tughlaq in 1325. He was a man of ideas and famous for his foolish adventures. His expeditions to Khurasan and China failed and reduced him to penury. To raise the revenues, he increased taxes in doab region which in turn reduced farmers to beggars. His idea to shift capital to Daultabad to keep control over wealthy Deccan backfired.

When his wisdom strikes back, he abolished all the oppressive taxes and sets up a Department of Agriculture (Diwan-i-Kohi) and established a Famine Code to relive victims of famine.

To improve monetary conditions, he took the idea of paper money issued in China and allowed Copper and Brass coins at par with Silver Tanka. However, this experiment also backfired because of *great coin piracy by artisans* The result was the public become rich and government became poor. Ultimately, he repealed the edict of these token coins and gave order to bring copper coins to treasury and exchange them with silver / gold. Due to these experiments of Sultan, the discontent grew among people and revolts started appearing in sultanate.

In 1351 Mohammad bin Tughlaq died and was succeeded by his cousin Firoz Shah Tughlaq, who ruled as third Tughlaq Sultan from 1351 to 1388 AD. Firozshah Tughlaq was half Muslim {his mother was a Hindu}. To prove himself equal to pure Muslims, he ruled strictly as per Shariat. He abolished all taxes {such as Octroi} which were not as per Shariat; and imposed Jaziya on Hindus. He



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pulled down the temples, burnt a Brahmin alive for resisting to embrace Islam, and imposed water tax on agricultural land irrigated from state canals.

His reign is also known for plenty of public works. He established cities such as Firuzshah Kotla (Delhi), Hisar, Jaunpur (West Bengal), Fatahabad, Firozabad etc.

He moved one of the Asokan pillars from its original place and erected it in Delhi.

To support Hissar, he *constructed a Double System of Canals from Yamuna to Sutlej*(called *rajwahas* in the Indo-Persian historical texts). This canal was later repaired during times of Akbar. Firuzshah did close to 845 public works during his regime.

Firuzshah was gentle towards peasantry. He had destroyed all records of farmer debts ceremoniously to give clean chit to farmers. This was one of the major reasons that he saw no major revolt in 32 years of reign.

Death of Firuzshah brought an end to Turkish Sultans of Delhi. His successors were killed one by one and none could sustain the throne.

In 1398, Timur attacked India and returned with thousands of slaves and 90 elephants laden with treasure. Delhi lost its ascendancy and charm for many decades thereafter.

Sayyid dynasty (1414–51)

After a series of successions, the Tughlaq dynasty ended. In 1414, Khizr Khan founded Sayyid dynasty by taking over Delhi as a deputy of Timur in India. Four kings of this dynasty remained in perpetual struggle to retain control. The last ruler of this dynasty Alauddin Alam Shah voluntarily abdicated the throne in favour of Bahlol Lodi.

The Timur invasion, followed by confusion in Delhi over control and absence of a strong ruler resulted in loss of hegemony of Delhi Sultanate over other parts of India during entire 15th century. India was disintegrated into small states and petty rulers, some of which were not larger than 20 or 30 miles. This was time of rise of Rajput chieftains in Rajputana, Bahmani Kingdom, Vijaynagar Kingdom in Karnataka etc.

Lodi Dynasty (1451–1526)

Lodi Afghans tried to gain the old power and pomp of Delhi but could not succeed. The first ruler of this dynasty was Bahlol Lodi (1451-1489). He was leader of the Lodi Afghan tribes holding the fiefdom at Sirhind. He was invited by last Sayyid ruler Alauddin Alam Shah to take the throne and control the fighting nobles. After this, Alauddin Alam Shah retired to Badun to die in peace. Bahlol Lodhi was succeeded in 1489 by his son Sikandar Lodi who was again a half Muslim like Firuzshah Tughlaq. He launched campaigns to regain the old supremacy of Delhi and subdued the Rajas of Bihar, Bengal, Dholpur, Chanderi, Gwalior, Awadh, Tirhut, Bundelkhand etc. In 1503, he established city of Agra and transferred his capital there.



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His religious policy was akin to Firuzshah Tughalq, partly due to his compulsion to prove that he was equal to pure Muslims. He pulled down Jwalamukhi temple at Nagarkot, burnt Hindus alive to terrorise them to adopt Islam, and imposed Jaziya on infidels.

Sikandar died in 1517 and was succeeded by his son Ibrahim Lodi, who was the last Sultan of the Delhi Sultanate. Ibrahim (1517-1526) did not know how to win friends. He was so much obsessed with royal prerogative that he forced his nobles to stand motionless with folded hands in his court. When discontent grew, he tried to subdue it by killing some of the nobles. One of his uncles Daulat Khan Lodi fled to Kabul and invited Babur to invade India. In Mewar, a new power under Rana Sanga was on its zenith. Under these circumstances Babur attacked India and closed the chapter of Delhi Sultanate.

Delhi Sultanate: Important Observation and Notes for Prelims

Contribution of Iltutmish to Administration

Iltutmish was one of the most outstanding rulers of Medieval India. In true terms, history of the Muslim sovereignty in India begins with him. He gave the sultanate a capital, a legitimate sovereign state (he got an investiture from Caliphate, and that was a proof of sovereignty in that time), monarchical form of government and a governing class or nobility called Chahalgani or Turkan-i-Chalgani or Chalisa (a group of forty) which was the ruling elite of the period. The majority of the nobles in Iltutmish's nobility were Turks followed by Tajiks who were Iranians from the transoxiana and Khurasan regions. He divided his empire into numerous big and small iqta, as assignment of land in lieu of salary, which he distributed to his Turkish officers. Iltutmish also used this institution *as an instrument for liquidating the feudal order of the Indian society and linking up the far-flung parts of the empire to one centre.*

Iqta System

The conquest of Mohammad Ghori and establishment of the Sultanate brought major changes in the land revenue system in India. The Governments in those times made all attempts to increase the revenue by collecting taxes as per those in Islamic nations. The new taxes were imposed upon people and government's share in produce increased. However, till that time, the original form of Hindu system of Land tenure as per ancient Manu's laws survived with some modifications done by some of the greedy sultans and their officials.

The agricultural and land revenue system of the early Turkish Sultans rested on two foundations viz. the **Iqta** (assignment of land revenue) and **Kharaj** (Land Revenue).

The Iqta system provided an agrarian system to the country while the members of the ruling class attained income without any permanent attachment to any territory. The Iqta system was provided institutional status by Iltutmish and later this system became the mainstay of the sultanate



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administration under slave dynasty.

Iqta System

Under Iqta System, the land of the empire was divided into several large and small tracts called Iqta and assigned these Iqtas to his soldiers, officers and nobles. In the beginning, an Iqta was based upon salary. Later, under Firoz Shah Tughlaq it became hereditary.

Literally, Iqta means land or land revenue assigned to an individual *on certain conditions*. The holders of these Iqtas were the trustful agents of the Sultan. There were two kinds of Iqtas viz. **Large Iqtas** and **Small Iqtas**. The holders of large Iqta were the provincial governors, who had some administrative responsibilities also. On the other hand, the holders of the small Iqtas were the small troops holders who had no administrative responsibilities.

The small Iqta holders held and appropriated all the income obtained from the cultivators but as a *quid pro quid*, they were bound to present themselves with horses and arms whenever called upon by the Central Government. These small Iqta holders were called *Khuts* and *Muqaddams*. Amir Khusarau, for the first time, referred to Khuts as Zamindars.

The Khuts and Muqaddams became fond of luxurious living over the period of time, later, Alauddin Khilji suddenly abolished the system of small Iqtas with a stroke of pen and brought them under the central Government (thus called Khalsa land). This was regarded as one of the most important agrarian reforms of Alauddin Khilji.

Land Revenue Reforms of Alauddin Khilji

Under Alauddin Khilji, India saw one of the most harsh land revenue system in India. His land and revenue reforms are notable for two measures viz. abolition of small Iqtas and Land Measurement (Paimaish)

Abolition of small Iqtas

With a stroke of pen, Alauddin abolished almost all small Iqtas and brought these lands under Khalsa or Crown lands. Almost entire land of Doab was brought under Khalsa In the Khalsa lands, the revenue was collected directly by the state. The Sultan deprived the Khuts, Maqaddams and Chaudhuris of their privileges. They were forced to pay arrears of land revenue in a newly established department of arrears called *Mustkharaj*. This Mustkharaj reduced these Khuts and Muqaddams to beggars literally.

Land Measurement and Tax rates

Alauddin Khilji made several sweeping reforms in the field of revenue system. He was the first Sultan who paid attention to measurement (paimaish) of the cultivable land, which he called *zabita*, and estimated yield per Biswa was fixed as unit of revenue collection (currently, Biswa is 20th part of Bigha).

The ancient Hindu terminology of taxes viz. Bhaga, Bhoga and Kara were still in operation in those



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times but their meaning and demand had changed. Bhaga now meant Land revenue, Bhoga meant cess and Kar meant other taxes. These three were basis of assignment of land to nobles under Khilji. As far as state demand is concerned, Alauddin made the harshest possible hike in tax demand till that time. He fixed state demand to be *half of the produce per Biswa yield*. This scale of agrarian tax at 50% was the highest under Khilji among all other sultans and kings so far in India. Not only this, he also imposed house tax (Ghari) and pasture tax (Charai or Chari) on the agrarian population. But these harsh measures were not sustainable. As soon as Alauddin died, the system lost into oblivion. Later, Mohammad Tughlaq somehow tried to return to the Khilji's system and he tried to implement such a pilot project in a local area in Doab, but this pilot project failed like many of his other adventures.

Amir Khusru

Amir Khusrow was a Sufi mystic and a spiritual disciple of Nizamuddin Auliya. He lived for 72 years, out of which 60 years he lived in the courts of as many as ten different rulers of the Delhi Sultanate. He was a poet as well as prolific musician. His primary language to write poems was Persian but he composed almost half a million verses in Persian, Turkish, Arabic, Braj Bhasha, Hindavi as well as the Khadi Boli. His *Khaliq-e-bari*, which is known as oldest printed dictionary of the world deals with Hindi and Persian words. He is regarded as the "father of qawwali". He is also credited with enriching Indian classical music by introducing Persian and Arabic elements in it, and was the originator of the **khayal** and **tarana** styles of music. Khayal later reached to its zenith during the times of Mohammad Shah Rangile and today is integral part of Hindustani classical music. His association with various sultans enabled him to travel and stay in various parts of India and this gave him exposure to various local traditions. This helped him to assimilate diverse musical influences. He was patronized by three Khilji rulers successively.

Revenue and Military Reforms of Alauddin Khilji

Alauddin Khilji made several sweeping reforms in the field of revenue system. Some of his important fiscal and revenue measures were as follows:

- His first revenue regulation (zabita) related to the measurement of cultivable land as the principle for determining and revenue. Biswa (1/20th of a bigha) was declared to be the standard unit of measurement.
- The state demand was fixed as half of the produce per Biswa and assessment was done on the basis of paimash (measurement).
- Bhaga (land-revenue), Bhoga (cesses) and Kar (taxes) became the basis for the assignment of land to the nobles.
- The sultan deprived the village chiefs and Hindu revenue collectors, such as Khuts,



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Maqaddams, and Chaudhuris of their privileges. They were forced to pay land revenue and other peasants were taxed.

- Besides the land revenue, house tax (Ghari) and pasture tax (chari) were also imposed on the agrarian population.
- Most of the small iqtas were abolished and such lands were brought under Khalisa (crown lands). Doab was also brought under Khalisa.
- In the Khalisa lands the revenue was collected directly by the state.
- To support his market control system, revenue was mostly collected in kind and peasants were made to sell the surplus produce at their fields only so that they could not hoard the food grains.
- To ensure full realization of dues or arrears from the collectors, Alauddin Khilji established a new department called the Diwan-i-Mustakharaja.
- The booty captured during war was called *Ghanima*, of which the state was to receive 1/5th share called the Khums; and the rest 4/5th was to be divided among the soldiers. Alauddin reversed this and the state was now entitled to 4/5th Khums, 1/5th being distributed among the soldiers.

Military reforms

Alauddin Khilji had the largest well equipped standing army. According to Firishta, there were 475,000 cavalymen in his army. The historian, Ziauddin Barani, informs us that the annual salary of a trained armed soldier with one horse was 243 tankas and with two horses 321 tankas. The soldiers were paid in cash. He was the first among the Delhi sultans to introduce dagh (branding of horses) and Chehra (maintain the descriptive roll of each soldier) so as to avoid fraud in the system. To keep the army satisfied with their salary, he started a strict price control mechanism which came to be known as the market reform system.

Market control or economic regulations of Alauddin

The market control system and the economic regulations issued to that effect, were the most revolutionary and remarkable reforms made by the Alauddin.

Objectives of Market Reforms

As per Barni, the basic objective of these reforms was to maintain a large and efficient army for keeping the Mongols in check. Such a large army could not be maintained and kept content out of the normal revenues of the state, unless the prices of commodities were reduced. Thus, economic regulations were primarily a military measure.

However, this view of Barni is debated because several commodities, for which the prices had been fixed, were of little or no use to the soldiers. Besides, merely for the military needs such extensive



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economic reforms were not needed. This view of Barni can be supplemented with that of Amir Khusru. He says that sultan introduced these reforms for the general welfare of the people and these were intended to ensure the supply of important commodities for the benefit of common people as also collect food grains for the royal treasury at prescribed rates to combat famines.

Major Reforms

The economic regulations issued by the sultan for controlling the markets were as under:

- Zawabit or detailed regulations were made to control the prices of various commodities, from food grains to horses, cattle and slaves, which were fixed by the state. No change was permitted in the price of the commodities without the state's permission.
- He tried to control prices along with its availability and distribution. The Karwanis or Banjaras carriers formed a guild where they became guarantors for each other.
- The cultivators were not allowed to hoard. Only 10 mound {1 mound=40 kg} of grain they could store. Rest they had to sell into market.
- Four separate markets were established for various commodities central grain market, market for manufactured goods, market for general merchandise and market for horses, cattle and slaves. Each market was put under the charge of aShuhna or controller of market and all merchants were to be registered with the state. The sultan received daily reports for the markets from the three independent sources – Shuhna, barids (intelligence officers) and munshis (secret spies).
- Very strict punishment was prescribed for cheating and under-weighing. Shehna-i-mandi was appointed to keep a strict vigil.
- To reduce the prices of the costly or imported commodities, the state used to subsidize their costs. But such subsidized items were sold on a permit issued by the permit officer (Parwana Rais), appointed by the state.
- There was also provision for rationing during famine, drought or scarcity of food grains.
- Sarai-i-adl was the market for clothes, which was setup near the royal palace at Badayun gate.
- Horse trade was monopoly of the Afghans and Multanis. The middlemen and dalas sold them in the market. Alauddin did away with the intermediaries and asked the merchants to sell the horses directly to the Diwan-i-arz.

Impacts of Economic Regulations

The economic regulations of Alauddin were the greatest administrative achievement of the Sultanate period. The prices remained steady and there was no change in them even after lack of rain or other causes. It was a unique and remarkable achievement. The success of these economic measures was largely due to the genius and personal attention of the sultan. These measures failed to survive his



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death because they operated against economic laws.

Firuzshah Tughlaq: Reverse of Alauddin Khilji

The greatest success of the reign of Firuz was the promotion of agriculture through the construction of canals by the state, bringing fresh lands under cultivation along the banks of those canals, introduction of superior crops and lying out of more than 1200 state-managed fruit gardens. He built twin canals to bring water from Ganga and Yamuna to Hissar. This canal was later repaired by Akbar and extended up to Delhi by Shah Jahan. The British repaired it again in the 19th century and this canal became the feeder to the western Yamuna canal. Firoz also built a number of dams for irrigation.

However, Firuz's progressive measures for agriculture proved counter-productive to some extent mainly because *he made Iqtas hereditary basis of civil and military officers and even to ordinary troopers*. Not only this, he did not streamline the state machinery in matters of revenue assessment and gave the *collection work to the bidders, contractors and middlemen*. He made the civil and military posts hereditary. 80% of the soldiers were paid by the grants of village.

The implication of making Iqtas hereditary was that they went into hands of the pensioners who had lost all military qualities.

State Organization in Delhi Sultanate

In theory the Muslim state was theocracy, i.e. *the head of state was also the religious head and derived his position and authority from god*. Thus the caliph was the supreme head of the whole Muslim world. Although the sultans of Delhi professed formal allegiance to the Caliphate, the sultanate was always an independent state for all practical purposes. Further, the political need and the ignorance of the sultans about the Shariat had resulted in a *division of the functions of the head of state*. The religious side was looked after by the ulema and the administrative side was managed, organized and supervised by the sultan.

The ideal of Kingship

The ideal of kingship in the Delhi sultanate was derived from the Islamic world whereby the rulers claimed divine origin for themselves. The ruler was the representative god and was endowed with *Farr*, thus he was to be obeyed and respected due to divine origin of kingship. During the reign of Iltutmish, the position of the sultan was not considered much higher than that of an exalted noble. He treated the great Turkish nobles as his equals and professed his shyness to sit on the throne. However, *Balban was fully aware of its dangerous implications*. He had, therefore, to place the monarchy at a higher level than the nobility. He proclaimed himself as the *vice-regent and the shadow of god on earth*. He believed that the king's heart is the mirror of divine attributes.



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The same idea was followed by Alauddin Khilji also. He also dreamt himself to be another prophet but his advisors brought him back to reality. Nevertheless, he assumed the title of *Sikander-i-sani* (the second Alexander) and kept away Ulema from his decision making periphery.

However, this trend was softened by Ghiyasuddin Tughluq, who was soft on Ulema and extremely social with nobles. The same was reversed by Firuz Shah, who strictly worked in guidance of Ulema and weakened the monarchy.

Under Lodis, kingship assumed the racial basis. They believed in superiority of their races and this lowered the dignity of the Sultans.

The sultan was a despot and bound by no law. He was not subject to any ministerial or other checks. The people had no rights but only obligations. Only two pressure groups existed with varying impacts in various times viz. nobility and Ulema.

Central / Provincial Government

Sultan was on apex of the central government who worked with imperial Diwans. The four Diwans viz. Diwani-I-Wizarat, Diwan-I-Arz, Diwan-I-Insha, Diwan-I-Risalat served as four pillars of central government.

The Delhi sultanate was divided into smaller units called Wilayat or Iqlim or Iqtas. The number of Iqtas changed, for instance, under Alauddin Khilji, there were 12 Iqtas.

Each Iqta was under a Wali, Muqti or Naib and was divided into Shiqs (districts) under a Shiqdar. Each Shiq was further divided into Pargana under an Alim and then further into a village under Khuts and Muqaddams.

Military, Police and Justice

The military organization of Delhi sultanate was based on Turkish model. The survival of the government was based on military, it got maximum importance.

Iltutmish, a Turkish ruler had thought of organizing the army of sultanate as King's army, which is centrally recruited and centrally paid. What he organized was called "Iqta army". However, usually army ranks would be disbanded as soon as a campaign was over. Balban increased the number of soldiers in army. It was Alauddin Khilji, who took more interest in army than any other Sultan. He was the first sultan to set up a permanent standing army of Delhi Sultanate. He did not disband the soldiers after a campaign was over and he recruited directly and paid them in cash from public treasury. The same policy was followed by Ghiyasuddin Tughlaq but Firuz Shah adopted granting hereditary assignments of land to the soldiers. This particular decision ruined the army's position. During Lodi regime, too much emphasis was on tribal traditions and army of the Sultanate was turned into a tribal militia.

As far as Police organization is concerned, the head of the police was a Kotwal, who were responsible



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for maintenance of law and order in towns. The judicial department was headed by *Qazi-ul-Quzzat*. Sultan was the supreme or highest court of justice and he sat in a court called *Mazalim*.

Society of Delhi Sultanate

The Delhi sultanate society was broadly divided into four major groups viz. nobles (Aristocrats), Priests, Towns people and Peasants.

Nobles included Sultan and his relatives, courtiers and holders of *Iqta*, Hindu and Muslim chieftains, merchants, bankers etc. Almost all the wealth and power was concentrated in this group. They lived in luxury and style.

Second group of priests included Brahmins and Ulemas. Brahmins as well as Ulemas were given tax free land grants so they were also rich and powerful. During most of Sultanate era {except under *Alauddin Khilji*}, the influence of Ulema was so much that it often influenced the policies of the Sultan.

The town people included urban wealthy merchants, traders and artisans. Since nobles and merchants lived in towns, they gradually became centres of administration and military. The places where Sufi saints lived became pilgrim centres. In urban centres, there was a trend of colonies of artisans, for example, weavers living in weavers' colony while Goldsmiths living in their colony. International trade was flourishing. State patronized the royal *Karkhanas* for producing goods.

The lowest stratum of the society of Delhi Sultanate was peasants. They lived in villages, paid taxes to state as land revenue. A change in dynasty generally did not brought any change in their lives. There was a rigid caste system. Intercaste marriage and dining got totally prohibited. Hindus and Muslims influenced each others' customs and traditions. Those who converted to Islam continued their old traditions and thus a composite culture of India was born.

Trade

During Sultanate era, the trade was flourishing. Communities such as *Banias*, *Marwaris* and *Multanis* had their own special vocation of merchandise trade. The *Banjaras* acted as *Couriers* and they traded in caravans. The growth of trade also encouraged use of money in place of barter. The introduction of *Tanka* and *Jital* by *Iltutmish* was most used currency in early periods of sultanate.

Religion

By early Sultanate era, Hinduism was India's main religion. However, it had degenerated to a great extent due to superstitions, rituals, sacrifices; and due to Brahmanic dominance. Islam was opposite to the Hinduism of the day as it talked of equality, brotherhood and monotheism. Its simple doctrine challenged the social pattern of society and most important result of this was emergence of *Bhakti* movement and *Sufi Movement*. Both of these emphasized that God was supreme, all men were equal and *Bhakti* or devotion to God was the way to achieve salvation.



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Political History of Mughal Empire

Mughal dynasty was founded by Babur who was invited by Aalam Khan Lodi, a discontented uncle of Ibrahim Lodi, to Invade India. He was a descendent of Timur through his father and Changez Khan through his mother, thus had blood of Mongols and Turks in his veins.

Babur (1526-1530)

The first attack of Babur in India was on Bajaur in 1519 in which he used Gun Powder for the first time in a war in India. Gun powder was invented in China and was introduced from there to many parts of the world. The Ottomans had built one of the greatest empires mainly by harnessing the power of the gunpowder weapons. In India, use of Gun powder was already in vogue to blow the walls of forts etc. but it was used in Canons for the first time by Babur in Bajaur.

The forces of Babur and Ibrahim Lodi met in first battle of Panipat in November 1525. Ibrahim Lodi was killed in battlefield on 21 April 1526, which marked the commencement of Mughal rule in India. After winning Delhi, he moved to Agra but his forces wanted to move back. His moral suasion held them back. He fought the battle of Khanwa in 1527 and won it solely because of use of Mughal artillery. Ruthless massacre of Rajputs followed this battle. In 1529, Babur defeated Muhammad Lodi, the last Lodi claimant of Delhi throne in battle of Ghaghra.

Babur died in 1530 of an unknown disease. His autobiography *Baburnama or Tuzk-e Babri* has vividly discussed the contemporary life in India, his use of gun powder and canons in Indian battles, his anger with Rana Sanga and other details. It was written in Chagatai Turkic, Babur's mother tongue.

Humayun (1530-1540 and 1555-1556)

Babur was succeeded by Humayun (1530-1540 and 1555-1556), a man of polished and charming manners. But his easy going nature brought him difficulties. As soon as Babur died, Gujarat's Bahadur Shah raised the banner of revolt and campaigned to win Chittor and Delhi. During seize of Chittor, Rani Karnavati had sent a Rakhi to Humayun for help but Humayun lost the opportunity to win Rajput friendship. Karnavati burnt herself in Jauhar and Chittor fell. But as soon as this happened, the forces of Humayun cut the supply of the soldiers of Bahadur Shah. The soldiers started starving. In dead of a night, Bahadur Shah fled the battlefield and his army dispersed in all sides. Thus, both Chittor and Gujarat fell into the hands of Humayun like ripe mango. Bahadur shah was chased but was neither arrested nor killed.

Meanwhile, his other adversary Shershah Suri was able to drive him off India and crown himself as the emperor. After this, Humayun wandered for about 15 years. He was able to recover back only when Shershah died in an accident and was succeeded by his son Sikandar Suri. However, he could not enjoy the empire and died soon at young age of 48 in 1556.



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Akbar (1556-1605)

At the time of death of Humayun, Akbar, along with his tutor and guardian Bairam Khan, was at Kalanaur in Punjab. There itself, he was coroneted in a simple ceremony by Bairam Khan, who became his regent. Meanwhile, in the turmoil of Humayun's death, Hemu, the Hindu general of Muhammad Adil Shah captured Delhi and Agra and ascended to throne as Vikramaditya.

He was challenged and defeated by Akbar in Second battle of Panipat in 1556 and was killed while unconscious in battlefield.

Akbar proved to be a capable administrator and a cultured and refined leader with political foresight. His goodwill towards all and tolerant religious policy won him most faithful race of Rajputs in crucial time. His abolition of Jajiya, his new religion Din-i-Ilahi, his land revenue policy, administrative policy etc. were such that his half century rule proved to be one of the brightest chapters in Indian History.

Jahangir 1605-1627

Jahangir aka Salim was an indolent, self indulgent and indifferent personality. When he ascended the throne, he was a man of 37 years and had become "mature". He should be noted for:

- Regulations such as forbidding sale of wine and even tobacco.
- Restoration of Mohammeden Faith. Used Hijra Chronology on coins, something his father had abandoned. But he was equally tolerant towards the Christians and Hindus.

He was active in redressing the grievance of the people and had a **Justice chain** and bell attached to the gate of his palace in Agra, so that all who wished to appeal to him could ring him up. However, it is not clear, who was eligible to ring the emperor up.

Jahangir is known for his pompous display of the Justice. He enacted 12 regulations that show his liberalism and judiciousness. He is known for prohibition of some extortion type of cesses such as Tamga and controlling the merchants by an enactment which forbade them not to open bales without permission from the government.

Shah Jahan 1627-1658

Shahjahan aka Khurram became the most "celebrated" among the Mughal emperors but not popular among the Hindus. He was a perfect orthodox Muslim who was more intolerant than his father. With Arjumand Bano Beghum, Khurram married at the age of 15 years and gave her the title Mumtaj Mahal. Mumtaj Mahal was a mother of his 14 children and died on the death of their 14th child. The exquisite monument Taj Mahal is a witness to her husband's devotion.

Throughout his tenure, Shah Jahan kept struggling with revolts. The first big revolt was in Bundelkhand in 1636 under Jujhar Singh. The revolt was suppressed and Jujhar Singh was eliminated. Another was under the Lodi remnant Khan Jahan Lodi. This revolt was also suppressed.



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During Shahjahan's times, the Portuguese had established a factory at Hugli in Bengal. Portuguese had a very constrictive religious policy. It was learnt that the Portuguese often lifted the orphaned children and converted them to Christianity. This was something objectionable under the rule of a Mughal, who was a devout Muslim. During the reign of Jahangir the Portuguese lifted two slave girls that belong to Mumtaz Mahal and they were not released even after it was known to the Portuguese. In 1631, Qasim Khan was appointed as Governor of Bengal and was given authority to teach a lesson to the Portuguese.

The Portuguese were attacked, massacred and Hugli was in siege for 3 months. The Portuguese surrendered only after a huge loss of ten thousand lives. Four thousand were made prisoners, who were given an option to either convert to Islam or face lifelong imprisonment. Thus, Shah Jahan gave the Portuguese a death blow in Bengal. Later life of Shah Jahan was marred by the war of succession. He was imprisoned by Aurangzeb and later died in obscurity.

Aurangzeb 1658-1707

Aurangzeb was a bigot who created a lot of troubles for himself and lost both energy and resources in dealing with the rebellions of *Jats, Satnamis, Bundelas, Sikhs and finally the formidable Marathas*.

He stopped engraving Kalma on coins. Forbade the Parsis to celebrate their festival Navaroz. Released an order to ban the music everywhere and arrest those who listen to the music. His drink was plain water and he used to sleep on ground, something that made him a *Zinda Fakir*.

Aurangzeb had claimed the throne as the Champion of the Orthodox Islam against the heretical practices of his brother Dara. When he was told that in Banaras, the Brahmins have got habitual of teaching their "wicked science" to the Muslims, he ordered to demolish all the temples. The orders were carried out and the temple of Vishnu at Banaras and a splendid shrine at Mathura were broken to make room for a mosque. The idols were brought to Agra and buried under the steps of the Mosque.

His Rajput policy was also filled with the religious fanaticism, when he asked Raja Jaswant Singh to send his sons to Delhi so that they can be taught under his "supervision", leading their conversion. All the Rajputs except Raja of Amber were in a state of rebellion.

He ended the Mughal pomp of *Jharokha Darshan, use of almanacs, the Mughal custom of weighing the emperor in gems -distributing the wealth to the poors, on coronation anniversaries*. He reintroduced Jazia. In summary he did all that was never done by his great grandfather, grandfather and father. This was enough to shake the foundation of the Mughal Empire which was based upon religious tolerance. Aurangzeb was the last important Mughal ruler and after him the Mughal empire rapidly decayed and was finally put to an end by the British.

This King reigned for half a century and died in 1707 leaving behind a war of succession.



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Bahadur Shah I (1707-1712)

Aurangzeb was succeeded by his son Muazzam, who ascended the throne as Bahadur Shah I in 1707. His reign was just 5 years till 1712, and during this time he tried to get rid of the strict edicts of his father. He was not able to eliminate Jazia but supported music, now people could hear the songs again. He tried to establish peace with the Sikhs and Marathas. He died in 1712, when he was overseeing the repair works at Shalimar Gardens at Lahore. He was followed by his son Jahandar Shah.

Jahandar Shah 1712-1713

After his father Bahadur Shah I died, he ascended the throne after eliminating his brother Azim-us-Shan. He had married to a dancing girl who became the queen consort. His nephew Farrukhsiyar attacked him and defeated him. He was arrested and Jailed by Farrukhsiyar, who later executed him.

Farrukhsiyar 1713-1719

Farrukhsiyar was a despicable poltroon who suffered similar fate six years later in 1719. He sat the throne with the help of two Vazirs of the Mughals Syed Hassan Ali Khan Barha and Syed Hussain Ali Khan Barha known as Sayyid Brothers.

In 1717, the British East India Company purchased duty free trade rights in all of Bengal for peanuts worth Rupees 3000 per year from this so called emperor. He lolled the throne as a puppet in the hands of the Sayyid Brothers, and when there was an enmity with these two King makers, they deposed him, imprisoned him, starved him, blinded him and finally finished him. The Sayyid brothers placed his cousin **Rafi ud-Darajat** on the throne in 1719.

Rafi ud-Darajat 1719

Rafi ud-Darajat, the 11th Mughal emperor was proclaimed by the Sayyid Brothers in 1719, and he could survive only for four months and died of some mysterious disease. He was succeeded by Muhammad Shah Rangile or Rangila.

Muhammad Shah Rangile 1719-1748

Mohammad Shah Rangila was able to keep the throne for around 29 years partially because the first thing he did was to eliminate the Sayyid Brothers. During his time Nadir Shah attacked and looted Delhi and took the Peacock Throne. The invasion of Nadir Shah fastened the disintegration of the Mughal Empire. During his time, the states of Hyderabad, Bengal, Awadh were established as independent Kingdoms. In due course of time, Mughal empire was confined to only Red Fort of Delhi. The last Mughal remnant Bahadurshah Zafar was not lucky enough to die in the land which his forefathers had ruled for centuries.

Notes and Observations on Mughal Empire



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Mughal Land Revenue System

There was no Mughal land revenue system before Akbar. His father Humayun and grandfather Babur did not introduce any changes because they were the first conquerors of their dynasty and remained pre-occupied with subduing rebellions, consolidating empires and maintaining order.

A proper land revenue system was founded by Akbar. However, the system of Akbar was itself based on what Shershah Suri implemented during his short tenure. Thus, the land revenue system of Akbar was neither an innovation nor an invention. His indebtedness to the earlier rulers is immense but this has not diminished his fame as far as land revenue system is concerned. He followed the policy of Shershah with greater precision and correctness and then extended it to various *subah* or provinces of his empire. But this correction or precision did not come overnight. Initially was tortuous enough to turn peasants into beggars, and forcing them to sell their wives and children. But it was revised several times.

The first question is – what were the corrections and precisions Akbar did in the existing system created by Shershah? The corrections done by Akbar in land revenue system can be mainly divided into three heads as follows:

- Standardization of measurement of land
- Ascertaining the produce per Bigha of Land
- Fixation of state's share in that produce

Standardization of measurement of the land

In Akbar's administration, we find so many territorial divisions and sub-divisions for the first time in medieval history. For political as well as fiscal purposes Akbar had divided his empire into 15 *Subahs* (originally there were 12 *Subahs*, but by the time Akbar died, the number stood at 15), 187 *Sarkars* and 3367 *Mahals*. He ordered a standardization of measurement unit and the so called *Ilahi Gaj* was made the definite unit of land measurement. This *Ilahi Gaj* was equivalent to some 41 fingers (29-32 inches), and was shorter than the *Sikandari Gaj* (approx 39 inches) used by Shershah. The *Gaj* as measurement of land finds its origin during *Sikandar Lodi's* times.

Standardization of land measurement was adopted to brush aside all kinds of vagueness in defining extent of land and to reduce extortion / corruption by officials.

For land measurement (*Paimaish*), a rope called *Tenab* was used in those days. Since, this rope was subject to variation in its length due to seasonal dryness or humidity, Akbar made reforms in *Tenab* also. Instead of an ordinary rope, Akbar ordered the *Tenab* to be made of pieces of Bamboo joined together with iron rings. This made sure that the length of *Tenab* varies little during different seasons of a year.

A further change done by Akbar was to fix definite measurement to *Bigha* of land. A *Bigha* was made



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of 3600 Ilahi Gaj, which is roughly half of modern acre. Several Bighas made a *Mahal*. Several *Mahals* were grouped into *Dasturs*.

Ascertainment of produce per Bigha

After the standardization of land measurement, Akbar turned towards ascertainment of the amount of produce per Bigha and the state's share in it. Shershah Suri had already divided land into four different categories. Akbar followed the system and to make a comparative estimate of the produce of lands and fixed different revenues for each of them. These four types were as follows:

Polaj

Polaj was the ideal and best type of land throughout the empire. This land was cultivated always and was never allowed to lie fallow.

Parati or Parauti

This was the land kept out of cultivation temporarily in order to recoup its lost fertility.

Chachar

Chachar was a kind of land allowed to lie fallow for three or four years and then resumed under cultivation.

Banjar

Banjar was the worst kind of land that was left out of cultivation for five years or upwards.

Fixation of state's share in produce

The best lands viz. Polaj and Parauti were subdivided into three categories viz. good, middle and bad. Average produce of these three categories, called *Mahsul* was taken as a normal produce per Bigha. One third of this *Mahsul* (average produce) was fixed as state's share. The Parauti land also was liable to pay the Polaj rate (one third of *Mahsul*) when cultivated. Chachar land was allowed to pay a concessional rate until it was cultivated again to be liable to pay the Polaj rate. Banjar lands were also not totally neglected.

Further, the peasants were given option to pay either in cash or kind, whichever was convenient to them.

It's worth note here that during British Era, the land was divided on the basis of natural or artificial qualities of soil in clay, loam, irrigated, unirrigated and so on. However, the basis of land classification by Akbar was on the continuity or discontinuity of cultivation. Akbar's vazirs had not taken account the soil qualities for ascertaining the produce.

Fixing Rate of Assessment

Once the land was measured and state's share in produce was fixed per Bigha of land, Akbar next proceeded to fix the rate of assessment. This was the *most contentious part* and in fact several changes were done in the system till 1585. Firstly, Akbar adopted Shershah's Rai system in which cultivated



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area was measured, and a central schedule was created fixing the dues of peasants crop wise on the basis of the productivity of the land. The state's share was fixed one-third of the produce under the schedule (*Dastur-i-amal*) to be paid in cash. The peasant's tax was based on annual system of collecting prices and settlements of revenues for the previous years. But there were several problems with this arrangement. Firstly, the prices of crops could not reasonably be applied to the whole empire. Prices were lower in rural areas which were far away from the urban centres. Secondly, the cultivators found it difficult to pay in cash at the official rate. Thirdly, this system was affected by corruption of the revenue collectors, particularly the **Karoris** appointed in 1573-74. Fourthly, fixing prices every year and doing settlements of revenues of previous years was a cumbersome practice. Akbar ordered that the settlement should be concluded for past 10 years. An aggregate of the rate of revenues from 1570 to 1579 was made and a decennial average was fixed as demand of the revenue. This brought certainty to collections and alleviated the problem of peasants to great extent. This was the so called **Dahsala system** or **Zabti System**, that was implemented by Raja Todarmal. This remained a standard system of revenue assessment during the greater part of the Mughal empire. During Shahjahan's era, it was introduced in the Deccan by Murshid Quli Khan.

The assessment of Akbar's land revenue system must be done on two accounts viz. annual system and Dahsala system.

Annual System

The annual system was another name of uncertainty in assessment and appointment of Karoris was disastrous for the peasants. The Karoris turned rapacious and system of paying previous years taxes in current years led the peasants to sell their wives and children. Badauni writes that by the time Karoris were made accountable to Raja Todarmal, lots of damage to life of people had been already done. The uncertainty and confusion regarding taxation rendered cultivation without any incentives.

Dahsala System

Under the Dahsala system, the peasants were relieved from the uncertainty of the taxes they would be paying. Since amount due from the peasant to government treasury was fixed, the farmers had hope to enjoy some greater profits if they improve or extend their cultivation.

Apart from this, we can also examine Akbar's land revenue system vis-a-vis ancient system. In ancient India, the share of the government was 1/6th, however, by the time of Akbar, this share had gone up to 1/3rd. This was an excessive demand because even in Akbar's times, the other Hindu sovereigns were taking 1/6th of the produce. Various historians justify this 1/3rd share arguing that Akbar reduced or abolished as many as 29 taxes including Jehat (Manufacturing tax).

Other Systems of Mughal Era

During the reign of Akbar and his successors three more systems of revenue assessment were prevalent viz. Batai or Gallabakshi System, Kankut System and Nasaq System.



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Batai or Galla-bakhshi

Batai or Galla-bakhshi was a very old system which continued during the Mughal period. This was a simple method of crop-sharing in which the produce was arranged into heaps and divided into three shares, one of which was taken by the state. Under this system the peasant had the choice to pay in cash or kind.

Kankut System

Kankut system was also an old prevalent method in which, instead of actually dividing the grain (kan), an estimate (kut) was made on the basis of an actual inspection on the spot and one-third of the estimated produce was fixed as the state demand. *So, it was a rough estimate of produce on the basis of actual inspection and past experience.*

Nasaq System

Nasaq System was widely prevalent in the Mughal Empire, particularly in Bengal. In this system a rough calculation was made on the basis of the past revenue receipts of the peasants. It required no actual measurement, but the area was ascertained from the records.

Mansabdari System

Mansabdari System was a system introduced by Akbar for military administration and territorial commands (grant and revenue) to sustain parts of army. His experiences led him to conclude that rather than relying in the Irani and Turkish nobles, he should also include the Indian Muslims (Sheikhzadas), Afghans and Rajputs in the Mughal army.

The Mansabdari system was borrowed from the system followed in Mongolia. The Mughal officers whether Hindus or Muslims were granted territorial commands in return for the military service. They had to bring in some fixed number of **men-at-arms, horses and elephants** to the field and were rated as per the numbers which was known as *Zats*. So they were called Mansabdars of 10, 20, 100, and 1000 and so on.

- Mansingh was the first Mansabdar of 7000 zats and Bhagwan Das with 5000 zats enjoyed the privileged position in the Mansabdari system of Akbar.

But again this system was not perfect. *The greed of the Mansabdars ate all the grant or revenue and no money was left for the soldiers. There was a general corruption that the Mansabdars dressed their kith and kins, servants, dhobis and Malis as soldiers and registered them and send them back to do what they were doing earlier. The weavers and carpenters were hired to obtain a Mansab and become a **Crori**, and later not a trace of the horse brought by them would be found.*

Mughal Bureaucracy

The following were important features of Mughal Bureaucracy.

Office of Diwan

The office of the Diwan was the office of today's minister. It got strengthened in Akbar's reign. The



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Chief Diwan was called Diwan-i-kul and was responsible for revenue and finance. He oversaw the imperial treasury and accounts. The Diwan had to submit a daily report to the emperor.

Mir Bakshi

The office of Mir Bakshi was in existence since Sultanate Era. He was to give appointments and salary letters to the Mansabs. The branding of the horses named Dagh was under his supervision. He was assisted by other subordinate Bakshis.

Mir Saman

Mir Saman was the in charge of Royal workshops (Karkhanas).

Sadr-us Sudur

Sadr-us Sudur was to protect the laws of the Shariat. Qazi-ul-quvvat was the chief judiciary.

Subedar

The governor of a province (Suba) was a **subedar** who was directly appointed by the emperor. The usual tenure of Subedar was 3 years.

Introduction of Persian in official works

There was one more feature of Raja Todarmal's system that virtually unified the country. It was enactment that all the government accounts should be kept in Persian, rather than Hindi. The study of Persian became necessary and it helped Hindus to learn the Persian language and the Muslims to go hand-in-hand with the "talented" Hindus.

Religious Policy

Akbar could not see the validity in the custom that the Hindus should pay more taxes than the Muslims. He also had an insatiable quest in the matters of religion and faith. He was deeply moved by the mystical doctrines of the Persian Sufis which was revealed to him by Faizi and his younger brother Abul Fazal.

Abul Fazal encouraged Akbar for debates on doctrinal and philosophical enquiries. Akbar displayed a curiosity in these discussions. The debate took place in the Ibadat Khana or Hall of Worship. The Ibadat Khana is now recognized to be the Diwan-i-Khas, which was founded in 1574 at the City of Fatehpur Sikri. It was opened for Sunni Muslims initially and was opened to all religions viz. Sufis, Shias, Christians, Zoroastrians, Hindus and Jains.

In the Ibadat Khana, initially there were disgusting arguments, some of which included a question over character of Hazarat Muhammad. These discussions, rather than clearing Akbar's doubts only increased the insatiable religious quest of the emperor.

These heated arguments, Akbar found that were only to defend the creeds of their own doctrines. In the emperor's eyes, there was a truth in all the faiths but none of the creed had the master key of the Supreme Being. In 1579, **Mahzar Nama** was declared by which Akbar pounced upon the dominance of the intolerant orthodox and allowed free development of a genuine religious spirit.



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Mazhar Nama , which was actually an idea of the father of Abul Fazal and Faizi , set that the authority of the King was higher than that of a Muftahid (doctor of the faith) and if there is a variance, the emperor's decision should be binding on the Muslims of India. With this edict, Akbar's judgment was set above every legal and religious authority, so it was the promulgation of the **doctrine of Imperial infallibility**.

In 1581 the discussions at the Ibadat Khana were discontinued.

But quest of Akbar culminated in the **Tauhid-i-ialhi** (the divine monotheism) or **Din-i-illahi**, the word Din was applied decades later. In 1582, this religious doctrine which combined mysticism, philosophy and nature worship was propounded by Akbar which **recognized no prophets**. Akbar declared himself the spiritual guide of his subjects. His religion Tauhid-i-illahi favored peace and tolerance. Tauhid-i-illahi prohibits lust, sensuality, slander and pride, considering them sins. Piety, prudence, abstinence and kindness are the core virtues of this religion. The soul is encouraged to purify itself through yearning of God. It respects celibacy and forbade slaughter of animals.

Elements of Din-i-illahi

Din-i-illahi was an eclectic doctrine that contained elements from very diverse fields. It overthrew almost every ceremonial rule whether Islam or Muslim, but took the good ideas from the Brahmins as well as from the missionaries and adopted "Sun" as a symbol of the worship of the creator. He started a new Illahi era. The new religion proposed:

- Forbade cow eating
- Indifference among all Indians
- Instituted worship of Sun as creator
- Incorporated the sacred fire adored by the Parsis
- Encouraged the Havana (hom sacrifice) of the Hindus.

A small band of the courtiers of Akbar including Faizi, Abul Fazal, Birbal and a few others immediately professed the new cult. But the rest remained indifferent if not hostile. This hotchpotch of philosophy, mysticism and nature worship of Akbar's divine faith practically died with him, but left footprints which partially contributed in creation of a nation, that was never a united nation before.

Fatehpur Sikri

Akbar was a devout visitor to the holy places and tombs of Muslim saints. One of his prime objects was to secure an heir to the throne. Up to the 14th year of reign, none of his children could survive and he was told to visit a holy man dwelling at Sikri village near Agra. This holy man Salim Chisti, who was one of the descendents of Khwaja Moinuddin Chisti of Ajmer promised & blessed Akbar a son. Akbar placed his wife Hura Kunwari or Jodha under the care of this saint. The Sikri, due to



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frequent visits of the emperor became a cradle of development activities and numerous palaces were erected.

Salim Chisti set up a new noble Mosque in Sikri and the emperor's people built their palaces near this place. The Sikri village became the town of Fatehpur Sikri. It was blessing of this holy saint Salim Chisti, that Akbar's first son was safely ushered in this world. Akbar named this child as Salim, with due respect to the holy man. This offspring of the Great Mughal and a Rajput Princess later became Emperor Jahangir. The result of this auspicious event in Fatehpur Sikri was that Akbar showered all the taste and art of the age upon the adornment of this blessed town.

Thus, Fatehpur Sikri became the first planned city of the Mughals. It is also the place demonstrating the first heritage of the Mughal architecture, an amalgamation of the Persian, Hindu and Islamic architecture. It was virtually the capital of Akbar from 1571 to 1585. However, later it was abandoned mostly because of the problem of drinking water supply. Today, this beautiful city, though a great tourist destination, is a deserted. It was abandoned and ever since has remained the desolate and abandoned city. A few years back, some Jain & Hindu idols were found which were dated 1010 AD near the Birbal ka Tila site which have rise to a hot debate that this beautiful city was actually a great Hindu site, that was vandalized by the great Mughal. Whatever may be the truth, but palaces, tombs, mosques, baths, lake and everything at Fatehpur Sikri is a great Indian Heritage through which we recognize the grandeur and pomp of Akbar, greatest of Indian emperors.

Navratnas of Akbar

Akbar was an ardent admirer of art and learning. His court was full of many scholars and talented artists. The Nine most learned men in his court were known as Navratnas.

Abul Fazal

Abul Fazl was the chronicler of Akbarnama in three volumes over seven years, the third volume is known as the Ain-i-Akbari.

Faizi

Faizi was Abul Fazl's brother, the poet laureat of Akbar. The name of father of Abul Fazal and Faizi was Mubarak Nagori, a scholar in the philosophy and literature of Greece as well as in Islamic theology.

Miyan Tansen

Miyan Tansen was born as Tanna Mishra, in 1520. He was a disciple of Swami Haridas and later became disciple of Hazrat Muhammad Ghaus (Gwalior). He was a court musician with the prince of Mewar and later was recruited by Akbar as his court musician.

Raja Birbal

Raja Birbal, a poor Hindu Brahmin Maheshdas was appointed to the court of Akbar for his intelligence, and became the court jester. The name Raja Birbal was given by the Emperor. Birbal's



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duties in Akbar's court were mostly military and administrative. He was also a poet and his collections under the pen name "Brahma" are preserved in Bharatpur Museum. Raja Birbal died in battle, in an attempt to subdue unrest amongst Afghani tribes in Northwest India.

Raja Todar Mal

Raja Todar Mal, a Hindu Khatri was Akbar's finance minister, who from 1560 onwards overhauled the revenue system in the kingdom.

Raja Man Singh

Raja Man Singh, the prince of Amber was a trusted general in Akbar's army and was the grandson of Akbar's father-in-law Bharmal. Raja Man Singh was the foremost (7000 Mansabdari) and ablest among Akbar's military commanders and assisted Akbar in many fronts including holding off advancing Hakim (Akbar's half-brother) in Lahore. He was also the Mughal viceroy of Afghanistan, led campaigns in Bihar, Orissa, Deccan and was also the viceroy of Bengal.

Abdul Rahim Khan-I-Khana

Abdul Rahim Khan-I-Khana, son of Akbar's trusted general and tutor. Best known for his Hindi couplets

Fakir Aziao-Din

Fakir Aziao-Din was a sufi mystic, and an advisor.

Mirza Aziz Koka

Mirza Aziz Koka aka. Khan-i-Azam or Kotaltash was one of the leading nobles and also foster brother of Akbar. He also served as Subedar of Gujarat.

About Mullah Do Piazza

We note here that most sources also mention the name of Mullah Do Piazza, an intelligence advisor to Akbar, as one of his nine gems. However, Mullah Do Piazza seems to be a fictional character.

Bhakti and Sufi Movements

Bhakti Movement

Bhakti movement *was a spontaneous movement* and there are two views on its origin. First view is that it *originated in Tamil Nadu* during the seventh century and then spread through Karnataka, Maharashtra and spread in almost all parts of Northern / Eastern India by 15th century. In Tamil Nadu, the movement was started by Vaishnava saints {Alvars} and Shaiva saints {Nayanars}. The Alvars sang praises of Vishnu as they moved from place to place. They established shrines such as Srirangam and spread the ideas of Vaishnavism. The compilation of their poems called Divya Prabandham developed into a powerful literature of Vaishnavas. The Alvars emphasized on Bhakti and gave reference to Bhagvata Puranas often, they were called the pioneers of Bhakti Movement. The same is applicable to the Saiva Nayanar poets. They travelled from places to places and sang songs in praise of Lord Shiva. The compilation of their songs called *Tirumurai*, developed into the



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scripture on Shaivism. Both the Vishnu and Shiva bhakti saints influenced north India and this Bhakti Movement spread from South to North.

The other view is that Bhakti Movement in South and North India developed in parallel. While the movement in South was centered on devotion to respective deity (Shiva or Vishnu); in North India, it came as a response to the arrival of Islam and subsequent Islamic rule. This view can be supported by argument that at the time of advent of Islam, Hinduism had degraded due to superstitions, Brahmanic dominance and complex rituals. Islam came with simple doctrine of brotherhood, equality and oneness of God. Its simple doctrine challenged the social pattern of society and most important result of this was emergence of Bhakti movement and Sufi Movement. Both of these emphasized that God was supreme, all men were equal and Bhakti or devotion to God was the way to achieve salvation.

However, Bhakti was not new to India. Bhakti was propounded in Upanishads and epics. However, the Jnana and Karma were on forefront of Hinduism back then. With the advent of Bhakti, Jnana and Karma went into background and devotion to God to achieve salvation became a pillar of religious practices of the people.

Key Principles

The cardinal principle of Bhakti Cult was influencing devotion to a personal God, whose grace was the only means of attaining salvation or Mukti. It stressed the *idea of a personal God* and pointed out the absurdity of the caste system in the presence of God and the futility of external rites and ceremonies. It allowed both men and women to achieve salvation by Bhakti. The chief principles of the Bhakti Cult were the following:

Oneness of God and Indispensable Role of Guru

God is one, He alone should be worshipped. By following the path of true devotion (Bhakti) one can find salvation or (nijat, mukti). A true guru is indispensable for realizing God or attaining salvation.

Nirguna and Saguna God

The Bhakti saints emphasized on two ways of imaging the nature of the God viz. *Nirguna* and *Saguna*. Nirguna is the concept of a formless God, which has no attributes or quality. Saguna has form, attributes and quality. Both of these can be traced to the famous Vedic Hymn “*Ekam sat vipra bahudha vadanti*” – Truth is one; sages call it many names. It is the same God, but is viewed from two perspectives. One is Nirguni, which is knowledge focussed and other is Saguni which is love-focused. Thus, the Nirguna poetry is Gyanshrayi (has roots in knowledge) while Saguna poetry is Premashrayi (has roots in love).

Those belonging to Saguna School worshiped the anthropomorphic manifestations of the divine being, particularly Rama and Krishna. Both Rama and Krishna were regarded as incarnation of God on earth. This school remained committed to the scriptural authority of the Vedas and emphasised the need



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of a human guru as religious mediator between God and man. The conformist saints like Ramananda and Chaitanya, espoused the doctrine of incarnation and worshipped the saguna Ram and Krishna respectively.

Those who followed Nirguna school conceived as Ishvara, the personal and purely spiritual aspect of godhead, beyond all names and forms (nama-rupa), and is to be apprehended only by inner (mystical) experience. This was radical non-conformist group, headed by Kabir, Nanak and Dadu. Kabir was the most radical of them. They created a religious school which rejected the scriptural authority and every form of idol worship and institutionalised rites and rituals. They fought against social discrimination and strove for Hindu-Muslim reconciliation.

Focus on Equality

All men are equal and there is no question of superiority or inferiority among men. There is brotherhood of mankind. The image worship and caste distinctions and class hatred were the worst enemies of man. They strongly denounced useless ceremonies and rituals and rites must be given up. They are unnecessary and do not help persons to attain salvation. Only the good actions of man can help him to attain salvation. Hence, much emphasis was laid on right actions in place of rituals. It is not necessary to leave this world and go to jungles to reach God. There should be religious toleration. There is only one God only the paths to reach there are different. Both men and women can get salvation by Bhakti and good deeds.

Major Impacts of Bhakti Movement

Surge in vernacular Literature

Bhakti Movement resulted in a surge in Hindu literature in regional / vernacular languages mainly in the form of devotional poems and music.

Development of Philosophies

The Bhakti Movement led to development of different philosophies within the Vedanta school, ranging from dvaita to advaita.

Devotional transformation of society and Inclusiveness

It led to devotional transformation of medieval Hindu society and pushed the early means to achieve salvation {Vedic rituals and ascetic lifestyles} to background and brought individualistic relationship with personally defined God on forefront. Thus, Salvation which was hitherto considered achievable only for Brahmins, Kshatriya and Vaishya castes, was not available to everyone. Thus, this movement provided inclusive path to spiritual salvation to women and members of Shudra and untouchable community. *In many ways, the impact was similar to that of Protestant Reformation of Christianity in Europe.* It was able to evoke shared religiosity, direct emotional attachment to divine and pursuit of spiritual satisfaction without overhead of institutional super structures.

New forms of Worship



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Bhakti Movement led to emergence of new forms of spiritual leadership and social cohesion such as community singing, chanting together of deity names, festivals, pilgrimages, rituals etc. many of which are in vogue even today. It also led to new forms of voluntary social giving such as Seva {service}, Dana (Charity) and Community Kitchens {Bhandra / Langar etc.}. Some of the temples and Gurudwaras adopted social functions such as helping poor, providing education by establishing charity schools, charity hospitals, relief in the aftermath of natural disasters etc.

Bhakti Movement and India's Freedom Struggle

In a recent speech, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had made a statement that “*Bhakti Movement acted as the foundation for the country's freedom struggle as the movement brought out of people an inherent quality to stand up and fight against evil forces.*” This statement can be lifted by UPSC to frame a nice question for Mains. You can discuss the statement in the light of the below facts:

- Gandhiji's favorite Bhajan “Vaishnava Jana To” which inspired his ideals of non-violence and social cause was written by Narsi Mehta, who was a Bhakti poet of 15th century
- Sardar Patel, in the Bardoli Satyagraha had associated the landless Mali and Dubla communities with him in the freedom struggle by the imaginative use of their religious activities expressed through their bhakti movement, bhajan mandlis and symbols of their gods.
- Various reform movements in British India were directly influenced by Bhakti movement ideals.

In summary, Bhakti movement was essentially the phenomenal revolt of the marginalized segment at decentralizing the hierarchy imposed by the Brahminic domination. It rebelled against the caste ridden system of the south and fought against Vedic fanatics in north.

Notes on Bhakti Saints and Poets

Alvar Saints

The twelve Alvars were Tamil poet-saints, who lived between 6th and 9th centuries AD and espoused ‘emotional devotion’ or bhakti to Visnu-Krishna in their songs. The devotional songs of the Alvars were created during the Early medieval period of Tamil history and they helped can be called the pioneers of the Bhakti Movement in India.

The collection of their hymns is known as **Divya Prabandha**. All the saints were male except one named Andal.



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Nayanar Saints

The 63 Nayanars saints were the *Shiva* devotional poets, who lived between 5th and 10th centuries. One saint “Appar” is said to have converted Pallava King Mahendravarman to Saivism. The compilation of their poetry / literature Tirumurai is also called “Tamil Veda”. These 63 Nayanar saints, along with the 12 Alvars are known as South India’s *75 Apostles of Bhakti movement*.

Ramanuja

Ramanuja was from the South and he taught in the language of the common people. His disciple was Ramananda who took his Guru’s message to the northern parts of India.

Ramananda

Ramananda was first Bhakti saint and founder of Bhakti Movement of northern India. He preached in Hindi, the language of the masses. He was a disciple of Ramanuja and a conformist saint.

Ramananda was born at Allahabad and educated at Varanasi. He preached at both these places. His 12 disciples included Anantananda, Sursurananda, Sukhanand, Naraharidāsa, Bhavanand, Bhagat Pipa, Kabir, Sen, Dhanna, Ravidas and *two women disciples* viz. Sursuri and Padyawati. Among them, Kabir was most radical and adopted non-conformist stand later on.

Kabir

He was a disciple of Ramananda. He is seen as one who balanced the life of a householder, a mystic and a tradesman. *Bijak, Sakhi Granth, Kabir Granthawali* and *Anurag Sagar* are compositions of Kabir.

The hallmark of Kabir’s works consists of his two line couplets (Doha), which reflect his deep philosophical thinking.

We note here that Kabir was born in 1398 and had died in circa 1448 {not confirmed}. India was attacked by Timur in 1398 and after that Sayyids and Lodis ruled Delhi. He had died many years before arrival of Mughal.

Nanak

Guru Nanak Dev (October 20, 1469 – September 7, 1539) was the founder of Sikhism, and the first of the ten Sikh Gurus. Because of his close connection with Hazrat Sheikh Farid-ud-din Ganj Shakar, the Punjabi Sufi saint, Nanak Dev is also considered by many Muslims to be a Sufi, or adherent of Sufic tenets. He was born in Nankana Sahib in Punjab and died in Kartarpur.

Nanak, like Kabir, was also a radical saint who had strong faith Nirguna Brahma.

Chaitanya Maha Prabhu

Shri Krishna Chaitanya or Gauranga was born in Nabadwip in West Bengal. His original name was Vishvambhara Mishra. His mode of worshipping Krishna with ecstatic song and dance had a profound effect on Vaishnavism in Bengal.

At 22, he made a pilgrimage to Gaya to perform his father’s Shraddh. There he underwent a profound religious experience that transformed his outlook and personality. He returned to Nabadwip entirely indifferent to all worldly concerns.



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A group of devotees soon gathered around Chaitanya and joined him in the congregational worship called Kirtan, which involves choral singing of the name and deeds of God, often accompanied by dance movements and culminating in states of trance. For Chaitanya, the legends of Krishna and his beloved, Radha, symbolized the highest expression of mutual love between God and the human soul. Bhakti (devotion) superseded all other forms of religious practice and was conceived as complete self-surrender to the divine will.

Although Chaitanya himself wrote no works on theology or religious practices, his selection of and charges to core disciples gave birth to a major Vaishnava sect in his own lifetime, called familiarly the Chaitanya Sampradaya or Gaudiya Sampradaya. Chaitanya's own frequent and prolonged experiences of religious rapture took their toll on his health; he himself diagnosed some of his seizures as epileptic.

Thus, the Gaudiya Sampradaya is an intensely emotional form of Hinduism which flourished from the sixteenth century, mainly in Bengal and eastern Orissa. It started from Nabadwip and spread. A theology for the movement was worked out by a group of Chaitanya's disciples who came to be known as the six gosvamins (religious teachers; literally lords of cows). At Chaitanya's request, this group of scholars remained in Vrindavan, near Mathura, the scene of the Krishna-Radha legends.

The six gosvamins turned out a voluminous religious and devotional literature in Sanskrit, defining the tenets of the movement and its ritual practices. Their reestablishment of the pilgrimage sites of Vrindavan and Mathura was an achievement of importance for all Vaishnavas (devotees of Lord Vishnu). Although Chaitanya appears to have been worshipped as an incarnation of Krishna even during his lifetime, the theory of his dual incarnation, as Krishna and Radha in one body, was systematically developed only by the later Bengali religious writers.

The present leaders of the sect, called gosvamins, are (with some exceptions) the lineal descendants of Chaitanya's early disciples and companions. The ascetics are known as vairagins (the dispassionate).

Among this group was the late A. C. Bhaktivedanta, known as Swami Prabhupada, who believed that Chaitanya's faith would benefit people throughout the world. He is the founder of the international Society for Krishna Consciousness or ISKCON, commonly called the "Hare Krishnas", which has attempted to establish the beliefs and practices of the Chaitanya Movement around the world.

Vallabhacharya

Another offshoot of the Bhakti Movement was the Krishna cult of Vallabhacharya. He belonged to a Telugu Brahmin family and was born in 1479 Banaras, when the family was on pilgrimage to the place. He was looked upon as prodigy. After finishing his education he went on his travels. At the court of Krishna Deva Raya of Vijayanagar, he scored a triumph over the Saivas in public debate.



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After visiting Mathura, Brindavan and other places he finally settled in Banaras. He composed many works including Bhagvata Tika, Subodhami. He taught the doctrine of *Suddha Advaita* which denied any distinction between God and individual soul and regarded Bhakti as the means for the soul to escape its bandage due to delusion. In spite of Vallabha's stress on self-control and renunciation, his doctrine came to be known as "*Pushti Marga*" for his successors laid stress on the physical side of Krishna's sports so that the creed came to be called as the "*Epicureanism of the East*".

He laid emphasis on the worship of Krishna as an incarnation of the Almighty God. He preached that there was no difference between the Atma and Parmatma (God). "It is by means of Bhakti alone that one can get salvation and merge with him."

Astachhap

Eight Disciples of Vallabhacharya are called the Ashta-chhap, meaning, eight reprints (of the Master). Surdas is considered to be the foremost among them. In the 16th century devotional renaissance in India, poems were sung when recited, and the great mystic poets of those times were often great musicians. Therefore, the poetry composed by the eight Ashta Chhap poets is meant to be sung to music. Its essence is rhythmic invocation, and its real meaning is best expressed when performed as part of devotional service.

Mirabai

She was the great worshipper of Krishna, who preached in the common language of the people. Her songs are very popular all over India. It is Bhakti or devotion to Lord Krishna that can alone ensure salvation from the endless circle of births and deaths.

Raidas

Raidas or Ravidas was another Nirguna Bhakta disciple of Ramananda. He belonged to a family of leather workers.

Sufism

Sufism or *tasawwuf*, as it is called in Arabic, is generally understood by scholars and Sufis to be the inner, mystical, or psycho-spiritual dimension of Islam. Today, however, many Muslims and non-Muslims believe that Sufism is outside the sphere of Islam.

The Origin

The origins of Sufism can be traced to the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad, whose teachings attracted a group of scholars who came to be called "*Ahle Suffe*", the People of Suffe, from their practice of sitting at the platform of the mosque of the Prophet in Medina. There they engaged themselves in discussions concerning the reality of 'Being', and in search of the inner path and devoted themselves to spiritual purification and meditation. These individuals were the founders of Sufism.



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Fundamental principles

Sufis represented the inner side of the Islamic creed, which stresses on self-realisation, beautification of the soul through piety, righteousness and universal love for all. The Sufis consider that there is a particular Divine Attribute that dominates the being of every prophet and saint, such that they can be said to be the incarnation of that attribute. The aim of Sufism is the cultivation of Perfect Beings who are mirrors reflecting the Divine Names and Attributes.

Sufism and Communal Harmony

In India, Sufism helped in maintaining communal harmony and social stability by advocating religious tolerance and by borrowing spiritual techniques and practices from other religions. Sufism has adapted extensively from the Vedanta school of the Hindu philosophy.

In Sufism, a perfect being is also called a **Wali** (saint), a word that literally means 'sincere friend'. The superstructure of Sufism is built upon the concept of teacher, **pir** or **murshid**.

The cardinal doctrines of the Sufism included

1. Complete surrender to the will of God
2. Annihilation of the self
3. Becoming a perfect person

These three cardinal principles altogether make the **Doctrine of Fana** which means *annihilation of human attributes through Union with God*.

Sufism had succeeded in inculcating the sentiments of fraternity, equality and equity, coupled with sense of service to humanity, in the followers, irrespective of race, community, caste, creed and colour.

Sama

The musical and ecstatic aspect of Sufism is called Sama. This is a particular kind of devotional dance akin to Kirtana and was introduced by Jalaluddin Rumi. The Sufi, while being spiritually enraptured, gives the attention of his or her heart to the Beloved. With particular movements and often special and rhythmical music, he engages in the selfless remembrance of God.

Sufis identify two types of Sama poetry:

- First praising God (this is called Hamd), Prophet (this is called Naat) and the Sufi saints (this is called)
- The second focussing on spiritual emotion or mystical love, ecstatic states and on separation and union.

The Sama poetry is mostly sung in the form of Qawwali. Music of Sama is set within metric framework, accompanied by Dholak, Tabla, Sarangi, Harmonium and Sitar.



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Prelims Model Questions

1. With reference to the Delhi Sultanate, which among the following observations is / are correct?

1. Delhi Sultanate was a theocracy based on tenets of Islam
2. Delhi Sultanate functioned according to wisdom and political pragmatism of the rulers
3. The spirit of religious toleration prevailed within the common people

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
[B] Only 2 & 3
[C] Only 1 & 3
[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [B] Only 2 & 3

1. Delhi Sultanate was a theocracy based on tenets of Islam

This is a wrong statement. It is true that the influence of Islamic thinking and tradition definitely had a bearing on the rulers of the Delhi Sultanate, but it was the need of balancing different dominant groups within the ruling elite and the local challenges which primarily governed the decision making process. The state in Delhi Sultanate was not a theocracy because shara as defined by the clergy was hardly the core concern of the sultans. Though, the Sultanate was formally Islamic in character, yet it was based not on social equality, but on hierarchy. In practice, there was little distinction between the lives of the ordinary people, Hindu or Muslim'.

2. Delhi Sultanate functioned according to wisdom and political pragmatism of the rulers
This is a correct statement. In the absence of any written law or constitution the state in the Delhi Sultanate functioned according to wisdom and political pragmatism of the rulers.

3. The spirit of religious toleration prevailed within the common people

Growth of Sufism and Bhakti movements during the rule of the Delhi Sultanate indicates the spirit of toleration (among people) prevailing within the state.

Edit Question

2. Who among the following were preaching in India before Delhi Sultanate fell and Mughals rose to power?

1. Dadu Dayal
2. Kabir
3. Ramananda
4. Guru Nanak

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:



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- [A] 1, 2 & 3
- [B] 2 & 3
- [C] 2, 3 & 4
- [D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [C] 2, 3 & 4

Delhi sultanate came to an end in India in 1526 with the defeat of Ibrahim Lodi. Dadu Dayal was born in 1544.

[Edit Question](#)

3. Consider the following observations with respect to early Delhi Sultanate period in India:
1. During the Delhi Sultanate, Islam propagated in India through the sword only
 2. Hindus occupied an important role in foreign as well as domestic trade
 3. The Hindu villages remained small autonomous republics even during the early Delhi Sultanate period

Which among the above observations is / are correct?

- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 1 & 3
- [C] Only 2 & 3
- [D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [C] Only 2 & 3

[Edit Question](#)

4. For the first time, a Famine-code was formulated in the Delhi Sultanate during the reign of ___?

- [A] Slaves
- [B] Tughlaqs
- [C] Khaljis
- [D] Lodhis

Answer: [B] Tughlaqs

Muhammad Bin Tughlaq had for the first time formulated 'famine-code' to provide relief to famine-affected people.

[Edit Question](#)

5. Which among the following was / were the main factors that went into the making of the administrative policy and organization of the Delhi Sultanate?
1. Model of the government of the Caliph and Persian Government
 2. The already existing machinery of the government



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3. Practices and customs of the race to which Sultan belonged to

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

All are correct statements

[Edit Question](#)

6. During the reign of Alauddin Khilji, the social gatherings , including parties; marriages between the families of the nobles, etc. could not take place without the Sultan's permission. What was the major objective of such restriction?

[A] To force the nobles to follow Sharia Law

[B] A preventive measure for rebellions

[C] Control the downgrading economy of the sultanate

[D] Check lavish expenses

Answer: [B] A preventive measure for rebellions

Three successive rebellions- those of Akat Khan of Malik Umar and Mangu Khan, and of Haji or Sidi Maula- within a brief period convinced the Sultan to take strong measures for the prevention of such disturbances in the future. He took radical preventive measures. The first blow was aimed at accumulation of wealth by nobles and officials. All religious endowments and grants of lands (waqf and inam) by the state were revoked. Secondly, an elaborate system of espionage was organized. Thirdly, the sale and use of liquor and intoxicants was completely prohibited in delhi. Fourth restrictions and strong checks were put on social gatherings , including parties; marriages between the families of the nobles, etc. could not take place without the Sultan's permission. He placed numerous curbs on their social mobility and interrelationships.

[Edit Question](#)

7. The correct meaning of the Doctrine of Fana of the Sufi mystiques is ___:

[A] Inflaming the fire of love to achieve ecstasy

[B] Communication with God

[C] Transcendental meditation to achieve God

[D] Annihilation of human attributes through Union with God

Answer: [D] Annihilation of human attributes through Union with God



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[Edit Question](#)

8. Which among the following is / are cardinal doctrines of the Sufism?

1. Complete surrender to the will of God
2. Annihilation of the self
3. Becoming a perfect person
4. Rationalist Philosophy

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2, 3 & 4

[C] Only 1, 2 & 3

[D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [C] Only 1, 2 & 3

Fourth Choice in the above question is to be opted out. Rationalist Philosophy was a feature of the society against which Sufis reacted by isolated themselves from society

[Edit Question](#)

9. With reference to the “Chisti Order”, which among the following statements is / are correct?

1. Chishti Order originated in a place which is currently located in modern Afghanistan
2. Chishti Order was founded by Moinuddin Chishti
3. Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki was a saint of Chisti order

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] 1, 2 & 3 are correct

[B] Only 1 & 2 are correct

[C] Only 2 & 3 are correct

[D] Only 1 & 3 are correct

Answer: [D] Only 1 & 3 are correct

The Chishti Order is a Sufi order which arose from Chisht, a small town near Herat, in western Afghanistan. It was founded by Abu Ishaq Shami in about 930 CE (Christian Era). Before returning to western Asia he trained and deputed the son of local emir, Abu Ahmad Abdal, under whose leadership the Chishtiyya flourished as a regional mystical order. Moinuddin Chishti is credited with laying its foundations in India. Other famous saints of the Chishti Order are Qutbuddin Bakhtiar Kaki, Fariduddin Ganjshakar, Nizamuddin Auliya and Alauddin Ali Ahmed Sabir Kalyari.

[Edit Question](#)

10. Various tenets of Din-i Ilahi were borrowed from__:



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1. Sufism / Islamic Mysticism
2. Hinduism
3. Jainism
4. Zoroastrianism
5. Roman Catholicism

Select the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 1, 2 & 3
- [C] Only 1, 2, 3 & 4
- [D] 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

Answer: [D] 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5

The Din-i Ilahi was essentially an ethical system, prohibiting such sins as lust, sensuality, slander, and pride and enjoining the virtues of piety, prudence, abstinence, and kindness. The soul was encouraged to purify itself through its yearning for God (a tenet of Sufism, Islamic mysticism), celibacy was condoned (as in Roman Catholicism), and the slaughter of animals was forbidden (as in Jainism). There were no sacred scriptures or a priestly hierarchy in the Din-i Ilahi. In its ritual, it borrowed heavily from Zoroastrianism, making light (sun and fire) an object of divine worship and reciting, as in Hinduism, the 1,000 Sanskrit names of the sun.

[Edit Question](#)

11. Consider the following Bhakti saints from medieval period:
1. Surdas
 2. Kabir
 3. Tulsidas
 4. Raidas

Which of the above was/were monotheist Bhakti saints?

- [A] 1 and 4 Only
- [B] 2 and 3 Only
- [C] 1 and 3 Only
- [D] 2 and 4 Only

Answer: [D] 2 and 4 Only

Tulsidas and Surdas were Vaishnava Bhakti saints. Monotheist Bhakti was nirgun Bhakti whereas Vaishnava Bhakti was sagun Bhakti in nature. Other monotheist saint include Guru



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Nanak

[Edit Question](#)

12. Pushti marg:

1. was founded by Shankaracharya
2. gave a great base to Krishna Bhakti

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

[A] 1 Only

[B] 2 Only

[C] Both 1 and 2

[D] Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: [B] 2 Only

First statement is wrong because Pushti marg was founded by Vallabhacharya

[Edit Question](#)

13. During the medieval India, the trade and commerce was improved by Shershah Suri by ____:

1. Renovating the grand trunk road
2. Building up sarais for the travellers and merchants to stay at
3. Making the provincial governors and other officials responsible for the protection of merchants going through their territory

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

[Edit Question](#)

14. Which among the following worked as determinants of castes in early medieval society of India?

1. Varna
2. Occupation
3. Place of residence

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 1



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[C] Only 1 & 3

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General Knowledge Today



Prelims Indian History-6 : East India Company Rule Till 1858

[Target 2016: Integrated IAS General Studies](#)

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Model Questions

Kindly Check Prelims Model Questions at the end of this module.

The first East India Company was the British East India Company. The term East India Company refers to the following entities. {Kindly note the order of establishment}

- British East India Company, founded in 1600
- Dutch East India Company, founded in 1602
- Danish East India Company, founded in 1616
- Portuguese East India Company, founded in 1628
- French East India Company, founded in 1664
- Swedish East India Company, founded in 1731

The voyages at that time involved higher investments, huge risks of piracy and shipwreck and there was a large fluctuation in not only the supply (of spices) but also demand (due to competition). Therefore, in Europe, even a single voyage was preceded by formation of a company, which was liquidated when the voyage was over and the shareholders shared the profits or losses as the case was. For the first time, British East India Company was formed by bundling all the forces into monopoly enterprises. The Netherlands government took a step ahead of their British Counterparts and gave all the powers to the company which were required to rule a colony just like a sovereign country.

Portuguese Empire

From 1505 to 1961, some territories of India remained under Portuguese State of India {Estado da India} or Portuguese India {Índia Portuguesa}. The Indian empire of Portuguese was mainly confined in isolated colonies on both East and West Coast of India and was part of Portuguese possessions in Asia, East Africa and Pacific.

India's Trade at the time of Arrival of Portuguese

From 7th century onwards, India's merchandize trade with European countries was dominated by Arabs, who took goods from India and supplied it to the merchants of Venice and Genoa in Italy, who in turn supplied it to European markets. Naturally, the sea routes were also dominated by the Arabs who did not allow any other to encroach these routes.

However, this arrangement was disturbed when Spanish and Portuguese discovered alternative sea routes to India and South East Asia. Gradually, the seaborne trade of Arabs in the Indian Ocean and Red Sea was paralysed.

Foundation of Estado da India

Foundation of this state began with discovery of an alternate route from Portugal to India by Vasco



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da Gama via Cape of Good Hope. The first fleet of *Vasco da Gama* arrived on 20 May 1498 at Koppad near Calicut. He was received with traditional Indian hospitality by Zamorin {this term was used by Hindu *Eradi rulers* Kozhikode in Medieval India}. However, whatever gifts were brought by Vasco for the Zamorin was not up to his expectation and due to this Vasco had to return without any concrete outcome of his visit. The rival Arabs told the Zamorin that Vasco is not a royal ambassador but only a small time pirate. Thus, this particular journey of Vasco was an utter failure. Nevertheless, it opened up a new route, which was safe from the rival Arabs.

First Portuguese Colony at Calicut

Two years after Vasco's discovery, another Armada came in 1500 under *Pedro Álvares Cabral*. He had discovered of Brazil on the way. He was able to make some fruitful treaties with the rulers of Kozhikode and Cannanore and established first Portuguese factory at Calicut.

However, he had to fight with the Arabs in the efforts of creating a niche for Portuguese. During these fights, he captured some of the vessels of the Arabs and killed their crew. Arabs retaliated by burning down the factory and killing several Portuguese. This is called Battle of Calicut. In 1501, Cabral had to go back to Portugal, defeated and humiliated.

In 1502, Vasco returned to India and this time, he was able to get some favor from local rulers. His demand to get the Arabs expelled from the area was not fulfilled and so he started some serious naval fights in the region.

Consolidation of Empire

In 1503, Francisco de Almeida was sent as Governor and Viceroy of Estado da India. He was able to erect some fortresses at Cochin, Cannanore, Kilwa and Anjadiva. He had to engage in a fierce fight with a Muslim confederacy of Muslims of Egypt, Turkey and Gujarat. He was able to defeat them but died soon in 1510. He was replaced by Alfonso de Albuquerque.

Afonso de Albuquerque invaded Goa in 1510 and fought the Battle of Goa (1510) with the forces of Sultan of Bijapur Adil Shah. In this battle, he was able to take possession of some of territories of Goa and made them the Portuguese colonies. He started first Portuguese mint and issued coins in Gold, Silver and Bronze with badge of Portuguese Kings. In 1511, he was also able to win Malacca {Malaysia} by defeating the Arab merchants.

Albuquerque is known as real founder of Portuguese colonial empire and a Portuguese Cultural Ambassador also. In view of the paucity of manpower in Portugal, Albuquerque had encouraged the lower classes of the Portuguese settlers to marry Indian women. From that time onwards, the Portuguese started settling in Goa and marrying the local ladies. Albuquerque was the first to abolish the practice of Sati, which was vogue in that time, in his territories.

The next important Portuguese Governor was *Nuno da Cunha*, who brought Mombasa, Mozambique



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etc. under Portuguese circle. During his term, Vasco had come to India for a smaller duration under pompous title of Viceroy of India but he died in 1524 in Cochin.

By 1529, Nuno was able to capture Daman and Diu from Gujarat's ruler Bahadur Shah and compelled the Indian ruler to sign a Treaty of Bassein. Via this treaty, Bahadur Shah gave Bassein {Vasai and Nalla Sopara area of Mumbai's Thane district} to Portuguese. When Gujarat was captured by forces of Mughal emperor Akbar, Bahadurshah tried to win support of Portuguese by giving them Mumbai and surrounding areas. Bahadurshah was later killed by his Portuguese friends on a ship and his body was thrown in Arabian sea. By 1534, Portuguese had acquired Mumbai, Vasai, Virar, Daman and Diu, Surat and entire Goa. In 1579, they had established the town of Hooghly-Chuchura.

Decline of the Empire

Portuguese were first Europeans to settle and colonize in India. They came to India mainly to trade spices but gradually made colonies here. In their expansion, artillery gave them great advantage in sea warfare. Even on land the Portuguese proved the better fighters. However, they were wiped out from most of the territories by 19th century. At its climax, the Portuguese empire was spread in many isolated colonies in entire peninsular India. The age of the heroes for the Portuguese India had passed away with the end of Afonso De Albuquerque who had the same spirit as Dupleix or Lord Clive. But his policy was not continued and the Portuguese empire on Indian soil was abandoned in favor of the other Europeans. In 1612, they lost Surat to British. In 1631, Mughals recaptured Hugli from them. In 1661, Portuguese government gave Bombay in dowry to Prince Charles-II of England. By 19th century, Portuguese were confined to only Goa, Daman and Diu. They retained it till 1961, when the armies of Independent India forced them out.

Role of Religious Policy in decline of Portuguese

Portuguese were notorious for cruel treatment of their native subjects. Their spirit of crusading led to a fanatic desire to convert all their subjects to Christianity, even at point of sword. After 1540, the Portuguese colonies were flocked by numerous Jesuits and priests who displayed an intolerant bigotry and introduced all the horrors of the inquisition. This policy was one of the main reasons that they could not survive for long.

Dutch India Empire

Dutch were the first to break through the Portuguese monopoly in the east. Netherland had got independence from Spanish Empire in 1581. Due to war of independence, the ports in Spain for Dutch were closed. This forced them to find out a route to India and east to enable direct trade. In 1565, they had opened up trade with Russia and tried to explore the land routes towards China and India, however, not much success came their way.

Huyghen van Linschoten



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The Dutch pioneer in the matter of the discovery of commercial possibilities in India and the east was Huyghen van Linschoten. He was a merchant who travelled extensively within the Portuguese territories and served as secretary of the Portuguese Viceroy in India from 1583 to 1589. During this period, he was able to copy top secret Portuguese nautical maps.

When he returned Holland, he published a book dealing with these maps and sea-routes to the East. This book created a great sensation in Western Europe and was translated into many languages. This particular book had given impetus to not only the foundation of Dutch East India Company but also similar companies of British and French also.

Jan Huyghen van Linschoten is credited for enabling the British East India Company as well as the Dutch East India Company to break the 16th century monopoly of the Portuguese in trade with the East Indies.

Initial Efforts and Establishment of Dutch East India Company

In 1596, the Dutch concluded a treaty with the ruler of Bantam in Java to open up their trade in spices. The Dutch East India Company (*Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* or VOC in Dutch) was established in 1602. This was *First Multinational Corporation of the World, first company to issue stock and first company which was given power to engage itself in colonial activities including waging a war and execute the convicts, mint the coins and establish the colonies*.

This company was created by combining together several Indian companies formed within Holland into one huge association. It was granted an exclusive right to trade with India and the East Indies for 21 years and vested with ample powers of attack and conquest by the state It was a national undertaking and constituted a national force. In next few decades, they were able to establish factories in India, Ceylon, Sumatra, Persian Gulf and Red Sea.

Expansion in India

The first permanent trading post of Dutch East India Company was in Indonesia. In India, they established the first factory in Masulipattanam in 1605, followed by Pulicat in 1610, Surat in 1616, Bimilipatam in 1641 and Chinsura in 1653. In Bengal they established a factory in Pipli, but it was abandoned for Balasore later. In 1619, they founded city of Batavia, in Java, as the seat of the supreme government of the Dutch possessions in the East Indies, which had previously been at Amboyna in the Malaccas. At about the same time they discovered the coast of Australia (1606-1644); while in North America they founded the city of New Amsterdam in 1613-1626, which is known as New York now.

The main objective of the Dutch remained aggressive in eliminating the Portuguese and British merchandise powers from India and South East Asia, and they were successful in abandoning the Portuguese as most dominant power in the European Trade. When they established a factory in Pulicat, in



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1610, it became their main center of activities. It was later known as **Fort Geldria**.

Amboyna Tragedy and Establishment of Dutch Supremacy in Indonesia

In February, the Dutch had conquered the Portuguese fortress of Victoria at Amboyna, located in modern Maluku, Indonesia). However, they still faced a competition from British. The bitterness between trading companies of Netherland and England turned into the bitterness between two monarchs also. To control any unwanted event, they two governments had signed a treaty of defense in London to enshrine cooperation between the two companies. This treaty fixed the market of spices between the two in fixed proportions.

However, this was not a sustainable solution. In 1623, the Dutch caught a British soldier spying on them. Enraged Dutch arrested, tortured and killed dozens of British Company's servants. This was a big defeat to British as they had to retire from *Eastern Archipelago* and focus only on India. The Dutch became a supreme power in Indonesia and remained for long. For British, India was only hope as they have been forced out from Indonesia.

By 17th century, Dutch were able to expel Portuguese also from most parts of India and Ceylon. In 1641, they occupied Malacca. In 1652, they were able to capture the Cape of Good Hope.

Decline

The climax of the Dutch East India Company was in 1669, when it was the richest private company of the world with 150 merchant ships, 40 warships and 50 thousand employees and an army of 10 thousand soldiers. In India, the most important event was the **Battle of Colachel** in 1741, which was fought between the Dutch East India Company and State of Travancore army. This was a major defeat of a European power in India and marked beginning of the end of the Dutch Influence. Following the corruption and bankruptcy, the Dutch East India Company was formally dissolved in 1800. The Dutch influence from India had finished long ago but they were **dominant in Indonesia**. The government of the Netherlands established the Dutch East Indies as a nationalized colony later which was more or less the within the boundaries of the modern Indonesia.

Reasons for Downfall

While the Portuguese suffered because of the bad successors of Albuquerque and their severity and intolerance; Dutch failed mainly due to the rising English and French powers and their own corruption. The Government of Netherlands also interfered a lot. Further, they had ashort-sighted commercial policy centred around monopoly of the trade in spices. The Dutch were given a death blow by Robert Clive when in 1759 he attacked them both by land and water at Chinsura {Battle of Chinsura} on the Hugli River, near Kolkata.

French East India Company

Among the Dutch, Danish, Portuguese and French, the French East India Company was the last to



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be formed. **Jean-Baptiste Colbert** founded the **French East India Company in 1664**. The initial attempts of the company to found a successful colony on Madagascar got failed. In 1667, under Francis Caron, the company established first factory at Surat and second factory was established at Masulipattanam a year later.

In 1674, the François Martin of French East India Company established a trading center at Pondicherry, which eventually became the chief French settlement in India. The Dutch captured Pondicherry in 1693 but returned it to France later. The French acquired Mahe in the 1720s, Yanam in 1731, and Karaikal in 1738. They also established a factory at Chandranagar in Bengal. A new factory in 1688 was established at Chinsura but want of support from France brought the Company's affairs in India to low ebb and the French East India Company felt obliged to cede its right of monopoly to some enterprising merchants of Saint-Malo.

In February, 1701, Pondicherry was made the capital of the French settlements in India, and François Martin was appointed president of the superior council and director general of French affairs in India. Martin died December 30, 1706 and this followed a series of the successors. Till 1720, the factories at Surat, Masulipattanam and Bantam had to be abandoned because of the adverse conditions back at home.

In 1741, Joseph François Dupleix began to cherish the ambition of a French Empire in India but could not sell the idea to his superiors. The series of skirmishes began in India when the conflict of the British and French started. In 1744 Robert Clive arrived in India. This devil British Officer ruined the hopes of Dupleix to create a French Colonial India.

British East India Company

British East India Company was the First among various East India Companies formed and it was granted an English Royal Charter, under the name '*Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading into the East Indies*' by Queen Elizabeth-I on 31 December 1600.

It was a joint stock company and initially had 125 shareholders with capital of 68,373 Pounds Sterling. The capital was raised to 429,000 Pounds Sterling when voyages were undertaken on the **first joint-stock account**.

The first governor of the company was Thomas Smith and commander of first voyage to India was James Lancaster {he commanded the ship called Red Dragon}.

The East India Company was also known as John Company in its initial days. It was established at a time when Portuguese had already monopolized the commercial activities in East Indies. Further, the Portuguese had also shifted the cradle of commerce from Mediterranean to Atlantic.

Initial Efforts to Establish Niche in India

In 1603, Queen Elizabeth-I had died. Around the same time, in India also Mughal Emperor Akbar



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had demised (1605) and his place was taken by Jahangir. The new monarch James-I sent William Hawkins to the Court of Jahangir as official diplomatic representative of King to India. Hawkins arrived at Surat in 1608 in a ship named "Hector". But this ship was captured by Portuguese. Portuguese told him that all ports belong to the King of Portugal and none ought to come here without his license. However, somehow Hawkins was let go. He reached Agra in April 1609. He was received with all Indian hospitality and warmth by Emperor Jahangir.

Hawkins was able to garner close relations with Jahangir, who fondly called him English Khan. He was able to persuade the emperor to grant a commission for an English Factory at Surat but that permission was withdrawn under pressure of Portuguese Viceroy. Hawkins tried to reverse the decision, but the Portuguese influence over the King was impregnable. He returned in disgust in 1611 and died soon.

In 1611, Captain Middleton was able to get permission to start a factory in Surat from the local Mughal governors. But he needed to fight a battle with the Portuguese. Under him, the British defeated Portuguese in 1611 in the *Battle of Bombay*. However, royal permission was still needed to make the factory sustainable. In 1615, **Sir Tomas Roe** came to India and lived as resident of Agra in Court of Jahangir till 1619. In these years, he tried to swipe out the Mughal influence from court of Jahangir. Although a treaty between India and England was not possible {because England was too small an economy in comparison to India at that time}, he was able to get a royal order "*Firman*" to local authorities sanctioning English Trade at Surat at reasonable terms. With this *Firman*, the English Factory got a legal authority and permanent basis. A branch factory at Masulipattanam was established after few days.

Expansion of Commercial Activities

British faced severe competition with Dutch in both India and South East Asia. The Amboyna tragedy in 1623 had thrown them out of Indonesia and eastern archipelago. However, with that event, their entire focus was shifted towards India. They established a new factory at Armagaon in 1625-26 as branch of Masulipattanam. In 1632, they obtained rights to trade in Golconda from Sultan of Golconda. In 1633, they established a factory near Hariharpur, near Balasore in Odisha.

Establishment of Presidency of Madras

In 1639, they purchased the land in Madraspatanam from Raja of Chandragiri to establish Fort Saint George there. They established the fort there and inhabited area around it to be called St. George Town. This was their first territorial possession in India. Fort St. George was kept as subordinate to their Bantam establishment. In 1653, it was elevated to rank of a Presidency and thus First Presidency of British East India Company was established at Madras. In 1650, they had established a factory at Hooghly, followed by Kasimbazar in 1655. These establishments in Bengal were made



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subordinate to Presidency of Fort St. George.

Establishment of Presidency of Bombay

Bombay, which was given to British by Portuguese in 1661 as a part of Dowry of Catharine Braganza to Prince Charles II of England; was transferred to East India Company in 1665 for annual payment of 10 Pounds to Government. Meanwhile in 1664, **George Oxenden**, Company's officer at Surat, had repelled an attack of Shivaji's Maratha raiders on Surat factory. Since Marathas were enemies of Mughals, the happy Mughals allowed the company to do custom free trade from Surat for one year. In 1667, they moved the headquarters of British India Company from Surat to Bombay. In 1669, Oxenden died and was succeeded by Gerald Aungier as Governor of Bombay. Gerald Aungier turned the small town island of Bombay into a promising hub for commerce. He set up first mint in Bombay and imported first printing press to set up there. It later became seat of Presidency of Bombay.

Establishment of Presidency of Bengal

The company got royal Firman to carry out trade in Bengal in 1667. They managed the trade of Bengal till 1681 from Madras but then it was not a good arrangement. By 1685, efforts began to make Bengal an independent presidency. But then in 1686, the factory at Kasim Bazar was confiscated by *Nawab Shaista Khan*. The company officers were forced to quit Hooghly and Kasimbazar. After four more years, they got renewed royal Firman from Mughals to trade in Bengal. But this time, the company Officer **Job Charnock** established company's fortified factory at Sutnati instead of Hooghly. This **Sutnati** later became the city of Calcutta.

Carnatic Wars and Establishment of British Supremacy

In the 18th century, three Carnatic Wars were fought between various Indian rulers and British and French East India Company on either side. These wars resulted in establishment of political supremacy of British East India Company. The French company was reduced in the areas around Pondicherry only. Commercial and maritime rivalry between France and England was the primary reason behind these wars. The entire south India was divided into minor Rajas, Nawabs and petty chieftains who fought with each other for supremacy. British and French took opposite sides to support these rivals and increase their own dominance.

First Carnatic War (1744-48)

In 1740, Europe was entangled into the War of Austrian Succession. The belligerents on one side were Prussia, Spain, France; Sweden etc. while on other side were Habsburg monarchy, England, Dutch Republic and Russia. Since France and Russia were on opposite side, a contest was inevitable between French and British East India Company forces in India also.

The war began with British Fleet arrived on Coromandel Coast and they started capturing the French Ships. The French Governor Dupleix requested the Nawab of Arcot Anwaruddin Khan for



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interference but Nawab did not respond. French asked backup forces from Mauritius. When these forces came, they attacked British, captured Madras and imprisoned the British Company servants including Robert Clive. To recapture Madras from French, Nawab of Arcot sent troops to Fort St George but the forces of Nawab were defeated by French, which were very less in number but excellent in warfare.

During the negotiations about fate of Madras, Clive along with some other slipped out of prison and they moved to Fort St. David (the British post at Cuddalore). Further forces of British arrived and saved Cuddalore from French.

The negotiations about the fate of Madras started but these negotiations took. In 1748, the **Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle** ended the war in Europe and this also restored the peace between France and England. With this treaty, Madras was restored to the English for some territories (Louisburg) in North America.

Implications of First Carnatic War

In this war, the defeat of forces of Nawab of Arcot gave confidence to French about their military supremacy because only 500 French soldiers were able to repel a 10,000 strong army of Nawab. This was used by Dupleix to extend French influence.

Second Carnatic War (1749-54)

After the First Carnatic War ended, a proxy war between British and French continued in India. A victory over Indian Nawab in first war boosted the confidence of Dupleix, who now thought to expand influence in South India. In 1748 he saw an opportunity when Nizam of Hyderabad *Asaf Jah I* died and a war for succession broke out. There was a trouble in Arcot also. Dupleix pledged French support for Nizam's grandson Muzaffar Zang for Hyderabad and Chanda Sahib for Arcot. Thus, a tripartite understanding between French, Muzaffar Zang and Chanda Sahib developed. On the other hand, British pledged support to Nasir Zang for Hyderabad and Muhammad Ali for Arcot.

Initially, a group led by French killed Nawab Anwaruddin of Arcot and his son Mohammad Ali fled to Trichinopoly. The French led army attacked Nasir Zang also and killed him. Thus, it appeared that both British protégés were defeated and Dupleix dream was about to come true.

However, soon, French protégé Muzaffar Zang was killed. French quickly put his nominee Salabat Zang on throne and maintained French Influence on Hyderabad for several years For military support, the Nizam of Hyderabad gave them four rich districts of the Coromandel Coast known as the Northern Sircar.

The British had realized that there was a serious threat to their existence. However, only hope was that their protégé Mohammad Ali still had a hold over Trichinopoly.

At this juncture, Robert Clive, who was a Clerk at that time in the Company suggest to attack on



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Arcot. This plan was approved, Arcot was occupied Chanda Sahib was captured and executed. Mohammad Ali was made Nawab of Arcot / Carnatic. With this, Dupleix's hopes dashed to the ground.

This Siege of Arcot (1751) was a heroic feat, more important than the Battle of Plassey. The **Siege of Arcot** had made Clive a national hero in England. The Prime Minister Pitt, the elder described him as the "heaven-born general."

Implications of Second Carnatic War

In this war, both France and England were at peace in Europe. Thus, this was an unofficial war between the two companies. After the war, both the countries denounced the policies of their companies in India. Dupleix was recalled to France and was replaced by Godehu. Godehu, signed a treaty of Pondicherry in 1755 and by this both countries agreed to not to interfere in quarrels of Indian princes.

This treaty gave British a stronghold in Carnatic. The French were able to keep stronghold in Hyderabad for some time but their prestige had gone down heavily.

Third Carnatic War 1757-63

The conflict between the France and England got renewed in 1756 in Europe, in the form of Seven Years War, which is coterminous with the Third Carnatic War. The Third Carnatic war was a local version of the **Seven Years war** in Europe. The Third Carnatic War put an end to the French ambitions to create a colonial empire in India. The British Forces were able to capture the French Settlements at Chandranagar in 1757. The French forces in south were led by *Comte De Lally*. The British forces under Sir Eyre Coote, defeated the French in the Battle of Wandiwash in 1760 and besieged Pondicherry.

After Wandiwash, the French capital of Pondicherry fell to the British in 1761. When the Seven Years war ended with the war concluded with the signing of the 1763 **Treaty of Paris**.

As per parts of this treaty, the Chandranagar and Pondicherry was returned to France. The French were now allowed to have trading posts in India but forbade French traders from administering them. The Government of France also agreed to support British client governments. This was the last nail in the coffin of the French ambitions of an Indian Empire. British were now the dominant power in India.

Causes for Failure of France and Success of British

Following are some of the main causes which were responsible for the failure of the French and the success of the British in India :

Commercial Superiority and Better Financial Position

The trade carried on by the English Company was far greater than the French Company. Between 1736 to 1756, the trade of British Company was four times than that of French company. The



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financial position of French further deteriorated with the third Carnatic war and by the close of this war, it was not able to pay even its troops.

Private Character of the English Company

British Company was a private enterprise and this created a spirit of self reliance. French Company was more or less a department of the Government. It completely depended on Government. The corruption was in vogue in French Government and the same reflected in company also.

Naval Supremacy of the East India Company

The British had naval supremacy and due to that they were able to send help whenever required. This naval supremacy helped them to cut link between French possessions in India and France.

Better English Naval Base

Bombay was British Naval base. French Naval Base was in Isle of France. Due to this French failed to take any speedy action during the Carnatic wars.

English Company was backed by English Government

The British East India Company though private in character, was backed by the British Government. Some directors of the East India Company were Members of Parliament who could exercise influence in Government.

Better men Service of English

The British Company was headed by Clive who was a soldier as well as a statesman. Though Dupleix was also a statesman but he was not a soldier. There was a better cooperation and coordination in British East India Company.

Superior Settlements of British

British had their settlements in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. The most important French settlement was in Pondicherry. Thus, British were at advantageous position. Further, French's entry point in mainland India was Deccan. In comparison to Deccan, the Bengal was much more prosperous.

Recall of Dupleix

Recall of Dupleix by French Government was a blunder. The vacuum created was not filled by the persons who succeeded him.

Mistakes of Lally

Count de Lally come to India as the French Governor General and Commander in Chief during the Third Carnatic war. He lacked the foresight and statesmanship of Dupleix. His departure from Hyderabad ended the French influence there. Nizam Salabat Zing allied himself with the English and gave Northern Circars to the English.

French subordinated their Commercial Interest to Territorial Ambitions

The French Company subordinated their Commercial interests to their territorial ambitions. This worsened the financial position of the company.



Lord Clive (1757–1760) and Conquest of Bengal

Robert Clive (born 1725) was appointed as Clerk in the service of the East India Company in 1743. The Seize of Arcot (1761) during Second Carnatic War gave a major boost to his career and he became deputy governor of Fort St. David at Cuddalore in 1755. From 1758 to 1760 and then 1765 to 1767, he remained *Governor of the Presidency of Fort William*.

During his tenure, British East India Company won battle of Plassey, Battle of Chinsura and Battle of Buxar. These battles paved the way for British conquest of Northern India. Clive also imposed Dual system of administration in Bengal which ruined its economy.

Battle of Plassey, 1757

The last Nawab of Bengal Siraj ud-Daulah was a friend of French and was wary of the growing intervention of the British in the affairs of the province. Irrked Nawab marched upon Calcutta with a large army and seized the site of Fort Williams. 146 British who surrendered were stuffed in a room of 18 square feet and 123 out of them were suffocated to death. This incident is called **Black Hole of Calcutta** (1756). After this event, British made a secret treaty with Mir Zafar, promising to place him on the throne of Bengal if he helps British. On 23 June 1757, a battle was fought between British and Siraj-ud-Daula's forces supported by French *as a part of Seven years war* (in Europe).

The forces of Nawab were defeated and Nawab fled the scene but was pursued, captured and executed on 2 July 1757. Role of some of the traitors such as Jagat Seth (a Marwari banker), Amir Chand, Rai Durlabh, Ghaseti Beghum (aunt of Nawab) helped in defeat of the Nawab.

After this battle, Mir Jafar was placed as a titular Nawab of Bengal in 1757. The British extracted enormous sums from Mir Jafar as the price of his elevation. But he could not bear the extortionist policies of the British for long. When he realized that British expectations were limitless he tried to wriggle out of their grip. For this he took the help of the Dutch.

Battle of Chinsura, 1759

Mir Jafar opened secret negotiations with the representatives of the Dutch East India Company to bring troops against the British. The Dutch, seeing an opportunity to enhance the influence sent a force at Chinsura, but they were defeated by the British army. The battle was fought both in sea and land. The Victories British overthrew the titular Nawab Mir Jafar and his placed his son in law Mir Kasim as Nawab of Bengal. Mir Kasim soon began to show a will of his own, and to cherish dreams of independence. He eventually shifted his capital from Murshidabad to Munger in Bihar where he raised an independent army.

The major issue of Mir Kasim with British was of trade. During Farrukhsiyar reign in 1717, British East India Company had purchased duty-free trading rights in all of Bengal for a mere three thousand rupees a year. Mir Kasim opposed that the imperial **Dastak** was discriminatory. The British



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could trade without paying taxes but the other local merchants with dastaks were required to pay up to 40% of their revenue as tax.

In a response to this, Mir Kasim abolished all taxes on the local traders as well. This upset the British and hostility was renewed. In 1763, there was a skirmish between British and forces of Company. Mir Kasim was defeated and he fled to take refuge with **Nawab of Awadh** Shuja-ud-Daula.

When Mir Kasim took shelter from Shuja-ud-Daula, British asked him to deliver him to them. The Nawab refused to do so. On October 23, 1764, there was a decisive battle at Buxar.

Battle of Buxar October 22, 1764

On October 22-23, 1764, the decisive Battle of Buxar was fought between British on one side and combined forces of Mir Kasim, Mughal emperor Shah Aalam II and Shuja-ud-Daula at other side. However, the three separate allies could not cooperate with each other and were defeated. This war battle was won in absence of Clive who was in England at that time. The British forces were commanded by Major Hector Munro. After this battle, Shah Aalam II submitted to the British. Nawab Shuja-ud-Daula fled from the scene and took refuge to Rohilla. Mir Kasim also fled and died a few years later in extreme obscurity.

In 1765, Clive returned styled **Lord Clive** as Governor General of Bengal for the second time. By this time, the British had shown their military supremacy in India for, the Battle of Buxar was tough contested bout, than the Battle of Plassey, which was won by deceit.

The important outcome of the Battle of Buxar was the **Treaty of Allahabad** which was signed between Lord Clive and Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II, who had submitted to the British in the battle. As per this treaty:

- Mughal Emperor granted **Fiscal Rights (Diwani)** or right to administer the territory and collect taxes to the East India Company at **Bengal, Bihar and Orissa**. Thus, the British became the masters of fate of the people of Bihar, Bengal and Orissa and now they would collect the revenue.
- In lieu of this Right, the Company gave an annual tribute of 26 Lakh Rupees to the Mughals
- The districts of Kora and Allahabad were returned to Mughal Emperor.
- Awadh was returned to Shuja-ud-Daulah but Allahabad and Kora was taken from him.
- The Nawab of Awadh paid 53 Lakhs rupees of war indemnity to the British.
- Thus, Clive, in person settled the fate of almost half of the Northern India.
- The fiscal administration of Bengal, Behar, and Orissa and the territorial jurisdiction of the Northern Circars is called the **Dual System of Government**.

Dual System of Government

Under this system, the company carried out the Diwani (Fiscal) jurisdiction so Company was *Diwan*.



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Nawabs carried out the Nizamat (territorial) jurisdiction so they were *Nizam*. This system of separate Diwan and Nizam is called Dual Administration. However, the real authority was East India Company in the Nizamat also. The biggest fallout of this system was that the Indian Merchants were reduced to beggars. On the one side, British kept enjoying the duty free trade; the Indian merchants were to pay around 40% of the revenue.

The peasants were now under the British revenue collection. The British left no stone unturned to extract each penny. There was zero activity in the name of development so Peasants started turning beggars. The new confusing administrative machinery, which was not properly set up, created chaos. The Officials of the British East India Company such as Lord Clive became extremely rich due to the clandestine private trade.

This was the beginning of the Economic loot from India, which made England the wealthiest country in the world in the 19th and 20th century. The consequence of this steady drain upon the production of the country soon began to be felt.

The Corruption in East India Company and its fall outs

After winning the Battle of Plassey, the 35 year young man Clive returned to England in 1760 with a fortune of 3 Lakh Pounds and a rent of 27 thousand Pounds per year. Further, the treasure of Nawab Sirajuddaula was looted in such a way that 20% was appropriated to the Zamindars and the corrupt company officials. In 1770, there was a catastrophic famine in Bengal. This famine was so ruinous that every 1 out of 3 people in Bengal (Plus Bihar & Orissa) died and the population of 30 million was reduced to 10 million.

The immediate reason of this famine was that the rains were no good and the company, which was now Diwan of the region, increased the land tax by 10% in April 1770. One partial reason was that Opium cultivation was something the corrupt British wanted from the peasants of India, which could maximize their trade profits. The Indians and the British were collectively responsible for this disaster.

Death of Clive

Clive left India in 1767, but the Evening of his life was not peaceful. There were numerous voices in Britain about his through corruption in India and his “conduct” was cross examined in the British Parliament. He was vindicated, but despite that, he stabbed himself to death with a pen Knife on 22 November 1774. The suicide was partially attributed to his Opium addiction.

First Anglo-Mysore War

From 1734 to 1766, Mysore was under Krishnaraja Wodeyar II. His commander in chiefs dominated his reign and among them; Hyder Ali came to prominence from 1760 onwards. When Krishnaraja died, Hyder Ali became the de facto ruler of Mysore in 1763, though Nanjaraja was placed on the



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throne of Mysore as nominal head.

The Mysore had territorial threats from both the Marathas and Nizam of Hyderabad. In 1758, Hyder Ali was able to successfully drive out Marathas from Bangalore where they had laid a siege. But the Marathas were dominant and kept raiding Mysore territories at their will.

But before Hyder could become a ruler of Mysore, he had to overcome a conspiracy by Queen Mother of Mysore and one Khanderao. He cleverly overcame this conspiracy and captured and imprisoned Khanderao and took over Shrirangapatnam. After that he tried to overrun the territories of Marathas but got defeated.

In 1761, in the Battle of Panipat, the Marathas got defeated and due to this they drew their forces from Mysore. Hyder Ali was able to increase his influence after this battle. The British were conscious of rising power of Hyder Ali but they had no immediate reasons to become enemy of Hyder.

The immediate reason of the rivalry was the access to the Northern Circars, which was a series of coastal territories held by French. The Hyderabad Nizam was a French Protégé, who rejected the demand of Robert Clive for access to this area. But, Robert Clive took his application to Mughal Emperor Shah Alam II who in 1765 issued a decree granting the rights of that territory to Clive.

Now after getting a Firman from the Boss, British began occupying the Northern Circars, the Nizam objected. But the Nizam was too poor to fight a battle with the British. He sent letters to the Madras Presidency for a settlement.

- As per terms of this settlement, he gave the company 4 of the 5 Circars for a payment of Rs. 7 Lakh in Nizams endeavors.
- The British also provided Nizam, two battalions of the troops. Now Nizam was getting ready to get Mysore from Hyder Ali. The Marathas also joined the Nizam in this alliance against Hyder Ali.

The war started when Marathas attacked Mysore in 1766. But Hyder Ali made peace with Marathas paying them 35 Lakh Rupees. Half amount was paid immediately and for rest Kolar was kept with Marathas for security.

Now after Marathas returned, Nizam attacked Mysore with the assistance of British. But even before the war could be concluded, the Nizam changed the side and came towards Hyder Ali. The English forces could not retaliate and retreated to Trichinopoly under col. Smith. Later Col. Wood joined the British army and amid confusion, Hyder Ali retreated from the battle. Now the British threatened to attack Hyderabad. This brought the Nizam to thier knees and sign a treaty in 1768. As per the terms of this treaty:

- Nizam agreed to abide by the treaty signed with British in context with the Northern Circars.



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- Hyder Ali was regarded as usurper and refused to acknowledge him as ruler of Mysore
- Nizam agreed to help the British to punish Hyder Ali.

The important aspect of this treaty was that Nizam agreed to give the British Diwani Rights of Mysore when Hyder Ali was ousted and Mysore is won by him. Hyder Ali was left with no allies, but he was brave due to his solid Financial Position, partially. An English Force was sent to punish Hyder Ali, but it got defeated by this brave commander. The result was the Treaty of Madras. This Treaty of Madras was signed in April 1769 and it maintained the status quo.

As per the Treaty of Madras:

- Both the Parties returned the areas won by each other.
- The District of Arcot was given to Nawab of Arcot
- British & Hyder Ali Promised that they would support each other if there is any foreign invasion.

Hyder Ali believed that as per the terms of this treaty, British would come to help in if there is a conflict with the Marathas. So, he started demanding tributes from the smaller states on the border of Maratha and Mysore. The Marathas responded this in 1770 with a force of over 30 thousand. Hyder Ali requested the British to help, but British did not turn up. The result was that all the territories of Hyder were confiscated by the Marathas.

Hyder again begged the British for the help, but the British placed some conditions which were not acceptable to him. The result was that Hyder requested for peace with Marathas. In return for the peace, he paid 36 Lakh Rupees to Marathas and 14 Lakh Rupee as annual Tribute. After this event, Hyder Ali remained an enemy of the British throughout his life.

Later, he came to know that his nominal ruler Nanjaraja was having a secret communication with the Marathas. So he executed him and placed Chamraraja as nominal head. However, soon after that the Marathas came under mutual dissention and this gave Hyder an opportunity to claim back all he had lost.

Warren Hastings (1772 – 1774)

From 1772, Warren Hastings served as Governor General of Fort Williams and the regulating act was passed after his arrival. Important events under his rule include Trial of Nandkumar and Raja Chait Singh of Banaras; codification of Hindu and Muslim laws; First and second Anglo-Maratha wars, Second Anglo-Mysore war, Abolition of Dual System and quinquennial settlement of land revenue, foundation of Madarasa Aaliya (1781) and Asiatic Society (1784). He implemented several reforms in all walks of administration. The Regulating Act 1773 and Pitts India Act, 1784 were important acts passed during his tenure.



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Regulating Act 1773

This act was passed to address the problem of management of company in India; address the problems created by dual system of governance, control the company which had now evolved into a semi-sovereign political entity. This act was first step of British government to regulate the affairs of the East India Company.

The regulating act made the presidencies of Bombay and Madras as subordinate to the Presidency of Calcutta. Governor of Bengal was designated the *Governor of the Presidency of Fort William* and he was to serve as *Governor General of all British Territories in India*. The **Governor of the Presidency of Fort William** had to be assisted by an executive council which had 4 members. This act also established India's first Supreme Court at Fort William, Calcutta with one Chief Justice and three other judges. Sir Elijah Impey was the first Chief Justice. The Supreme Court was the supreme judiciary over all British subjects including the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. The establishment of Supreme court led to spat between Governor General and the Court. To overcome this issue, an amendment to regulating act was made in 1881 in which actions of the public servants in the company in their official capacity *were exempted from the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court* The Supreme Court was also made to consider and respect the religious and social customs of the Indians. Appeals could be taken from the provincial courts to the Governor-General-in-Council and that was the final court of appeal. The rules and regulations made by the Governor General-in-Council were not to be registered with the Supreme Court.

Abolition of Dual System

Warren Hastings ended the **Dual System** put forth by Clive and introduced the Ijaredari system in its place based on annual assessment of land revenue. He also appointed English revenue officers. He shifted the **Treasury from Murshidabad to Calcutta**, thus making it safe in a fortified place.

Relations with Emperor Shah Alam-II

By that time, Marathas had consolidated their position in northern Indian under Mahadji Scindia and Jaswant Rao Holkar. Marathas had overrun Rajputana and defeated the Jats, expelled the Rohillas from Doab and Captured Delhi in 1771. In the same year, they also placed emperor Shah Alam to his throne in Delhi. In reward to their services, Mughal emperor Shah Alam rewarded them with Allahabad and Kara {which was given to Shah Alam by Clive in 1765 as per Treaty of Allahabad}. At this point, Warren Hastings stopped the payment of tribute to Shah Alam-II and maintained that he did not get Diwani by a piece of paper by their {British} own might. Later Hastings sold Allahabad and Kara to the Nawab of Oudh for Rs. 50 lakhs. These events would later culminate in Anglo Maratha wars.

Relations with Oudh



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Lord Clive wanted to create Oudh / Awadh as a buffer state between territories of British and Marathas. Hastings concluded a treaty with Oudh and compelled it to raise expenses of Company's troops.

The Rohilla War (1774)

At that time, the small kingdom of Rohilkhand was under Afghans or the Rohillas. After the death of Aurangzeb, Rohil Khand wanted to become an independent kingdom but the Nawab of Oudh had brought it under his protection. Hafiz Rahmat Khan, the ruler of Rohil Khand, consolidated his power and made his Kingdom powerful and prosperous. However, Marathas had an eye for Rohil Khand. Suspecting their designs, the Rohillas asked for the help from the Nawab of Oudh. British also wanted that Rohil Khand should come under the control of their friend, the Nawab of Oudh.

The Nawab agreed to help the Rohillas if the Marathas attacked them. For this help, they would pay Rs. 40 lakh to him. The Marathas attacked Rohil Khand in 1773 but had to return back without indulging into war on account of sudden death of Madhav Rao Peshwa. However, Nawab of Oudh demanded Rs. 40 lakh which was agreed them but Hafiz Rahman Khan refused to pay. After that, the Nawab requested the British for help to attack Rohil Khand and promised that besides bearing the expenses of the army, he would also pay Rs. 40 lakhs to them.

This proposal was accepted by Hastings. He sent British troops and defeated Rohillas. Hafiz Rahmat Khan and some 20,000 Rohillas were banished from the country. With this, Rohil Khand was annexed of Oudh.

This particular event led the conduct of Warren Hastings under sever censure in England *Lord Macaulay charged Hastings for looking on callously when the Rohilla's villages were burnt, their children butchered and their women violated.* It was called an "unBritish" operation.

The Trial of Nand Kumar 1775

Nand Kumar was an influential Bengali Zamindar, who was inimical to Hastings. Some of the members of the council were also hostile to the Governor General and they conspired to lodge a case against Hastings with the help of Nandkumar. In 1775 Nand Kumar accused Hastings in council of accepting Rs. 3.5 lakhs from the widow Mir Jafar. This charge was welcomes by the Council but Hastings himself objected to council's charges against him. However, majority was against him. In disgust he dissolved the council. However, the council asked him to deposit the money in company's treasury.

After this, Hastings brought a counter-charge against Nand Kumar in the Supreme Court. He was arrested on the charge of forgery. The absence of any evidence could not prove the charge of bribery against Hastings. However, charges of forgery were proved against Nand Kumar and he was hanged by majority decision of the Supreme Court.



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The critics of Warren Hastings called the trial and execution of Nandkumar as a **Judicial Murder**. It was also called a "*scandalous travesty of decency*". The punishment was excessive and even unjust because no Indian law prescribed death for forgery.

Case of Raja Chet Singh of Banaras

Raja Chet Singh of Banaras was originally a feudatory of Oudh. In 1775, Shuja-ud-daula transferred Banaras to Company and thus Raja Chet Singh became a vassal of the company. As a vassal, he was required to pay Rs. 22.5 Lakhs annually to the Company. However, Hastings demanded additional 5 Lakhs as war levy. This demand was made in 1778 and then repeated in 1779 and 1780. In 1780 bribed Hastings with Rs. 2 Lakh to avert further demands. But then also, Hastings harshly demanded extra subsidy and imposed a fine of Rs. 50 Lakh. When Raja was unable to do these, Hastings marched against him and made him a prisoner. However, the Indian soldiers of Raja rebelled and killed some British soldiers. Nevertheless, Raja was deposed and his nephew was made the Raja of Banaras and annual tribute was increased from 22.5 Lakh to 40 Lakh rupees.

This treatment of Chet Singh is criticized on several grounds. *Firstly*, it was a violation of treaty of 1775. *Secondly*, the Raja was met with too harsh treatment. Raja was humble throughout and only Warren Hastings was responsible for rising. In summary, it was unwarranted action on Hastings part.

Hastings Wars against the Marathas {First Anglo Maratha War}

The Third battle of Panipat had given the Marathas powerful blow but soon they recovered. However, post this battle, Marathas ceased to exist as a single power and various Maratha chiefs such as Scindia of Gwalior, Holkar of Indore, Gaekwad of Baroda and Raja of Nagpur rose to prominence. Immediately after the Third Battle of Panipat, Balaji Bajirao, the third Peshwa of Marathas had died. He was succeeded by his son Madhavrao-I. This 16 years youth was to be assisted by his Uncle **Raghunath Rao** (Raghoba) in the administrative affairs.

In 1762, they set out for a raid in Karnataka. But before that raid was carried out, there was a conflict between **Madhavrao-I** and his uncle **Raghunath Rao**. Raghunath Rao abandoned the troop midway and raided the villages nearby. The discord increased and there was a war or sort between the two relatives.

Madhavrao-I died shortly afterwards of Tuberculosis. His brother Narayanrao became the next Peshwa, who was murdered by Raghunathrao in 1773. Thus, Raghunathrao became the Peshwa, though he was not legitimate heir.

Late Narayanrao's widow, Gangabai, gave birth to a posthumous son, who was legal heir to the **throne**. The newborn infant was named Sawai Madhavrao. Twelve Maratha chiefs, led by Nana Phadnavis, one of the ministers of the late Narayanrao **conspired** to make the infant as the new



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Peshwa and rule under him as regents. Since Nana Phadnavis was assisted by 11 more ministers and this conspiracy is called "**Barabhai Conspiracy**" or the Conspiracy of the Twelve. But Raghunath Rao approached British to purchase their support by signing **Treaty of Surat** in March 1775.

As per this treaty, Raghunath Rao ceded the territories of Salsette and Bassein to the British, so that the British restore him to Poona. But this treaty created confusion. The Regulating Act was in place; the Governor General in Council at Calcutta did not approve this treaty and held it invalid. They sent one representative Colonel Upton to Pune to annul this treaty and make a new treaty with the Governor General in Council at Calcutta. Raghunath Rao made another treaty but that treaty was not accepted by **Nana Phadnavis** and he granted a port to French. The British retaliated this with sending troops to Poona. This triggered the *First Anglo Maratha War*.

The Maratha force was joined by **Mahadji Shinde**, who was most brave Maratha after Shivaji. The combined Maratha forces fought with the forces of the British and Raghunath Rao at Wadgaon. In this battle the British were badly defeated. The British Forces surrendered at Wadgaon in 1779 and a **Treaty of Wadgaon** was signed. As per this treaty, the British relinquished all the territories acquired by the East India Company in Western India since 1773 and promised to pay Rs. 41000 as indemnity to Mahadji Scindia. Raghunathrao was captured and imprisoned.

But again, this **Treaty of Wadgaon** was held invalid by Warren Hastings, who quoted that the *Presidency of Bombay* had no legal power to sign such treaty. The Calcutta Presidency sent another force. This force harassed Mahadji at Sipri and thus Mahadji was compelled to sign a new treaty, which had some less favourable articles to Marathas. The new treaty called Treaty of Salbai (May 17, 1782) provided the following:

- British acknowledged Madhavrao Narayan as Peshwa of the Maratha Empire
- British Recognized the Territorial claims of Madhav Rao Scindia in west of Yamuna River.
- Raghunath Rao was freed and a pension was fixed for him.
- British East India Company got the control of the Salsette.

British promised to support Marathas in case they attack **Hyder Ali of Mysore** and retake the territories of Carnatic. In summary, the **Treaty of Salbai** *maintained the status quo*. Gujarat was restored to the Marathas; and only Salsette, with Elephanta and two other small islands in Bombay harbor was retained by the English.

Importance of Treaty of Salbai

Although the treaty did not give a large territory to British, yet they become a major part of the Indian Peninsula. The Thana Fort and fertile island of Salsette became a part of British territories. British also got a free hand in the management of affairs of the Marathas. Further, the Marathas empire was saved by Mahadji Scindia and Nana Phadnavis for at least 20 years by pushing back the



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wave of British aggression. Another important outcome of this treaty was Warren Hastings succeeded in making an alliance with Marathas against Hyder Ali.

Relations with Mysore and Nizam

In 1766 the Nizam, Marathas and British made a combined front against Hyder Ali, the ruler of Mysore. A prolonged *Second Anglo Mysore* war continued for four years without victory on either side. By the time this war could reach a conclusion, Hyder Ali died. His son Tipu signed the Treaty of Mangalore for *mutual restitution of all conquests*.

Foundation of Madarasa Aaliya 1781 and Asiatic Society 1784

In 1781, Warren Hastings founded the Madarasa Aliya or Calcutta Madarasa. Warren Hastings supported the establishment of Asiatic society, ^(which later became Asiatic Society) in 1784 by Sir William Jones under the chairmanship of Sir Robert Chambers. Both of them exist till date flourishing. Madarasa Aaliya was run for quite some time by Warren Hastings only through his own pocket, but a year later he was paid by the Bengal Government. In 2007, this Madarasa Aaliya became the Aliah University by Aliah University Act 2007.

Return of Warren Hastings and Impeachment

In 1785 Warren Hastings returned to England. On his return to England he was impeached by the House of Commons for alleged acts of oppression and corruption. Some of them were:

- He was accused for oppression in the Rohilla war.
- The oppression and deposing Chait Singh of Banaras and accepting bribes.
- General corruption in the company

Warren Hastings was solemnly tried by the House of Commons, and the proceedings prolonged for seven years (1788-1795).

The Impeachment of Warren Hastings is one of the most celebrated state trials in English history. It ended with exoneration of all charges on Warren Hastings. But these 7 years of defending himself made him near bankrupt.

Pitts India Act 1784

Though the Regulating Act of 1773 had made the two presidencies of Bombay and Madras subordinate to the Presidency of Fort William, yet there was an absence of power in the Governor General in Council of Fort Williams to control them and even override his council. Warren Hastings, practically worked as a 5th member of the Council. There was also not a clear demarcation between the Governor General in Council and Supreme Court jurisdictions.

The Regulating Act was a failure. *In the first Anglo-Mysore war and First Anglo Maratha war its failure was seen in the confusion of treaties and these flaws were taken up by William Pitt, the young* He introduced the Pitts Bill in 1784 with an objective to provide better regulation and management of the company as well as British Possessions in India. It also had an objective to establish a court of



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Judicature in India, which could provide speedy trial and justice. But the bill was not passed.

Prior to Pitts India Act, Jame Fox had introduced an **Edmund Burke's bill** to reform East India Company. But this bill failed in the house of Lords.

In the subsequent election, William Pitt obtained a majority and got the bill passed in August 1784, which was known to be Pitt's India Act 1784. This act provided for the appointment of a Board of Control, and provided for a joint government of British India by the Company and the Crown with the government holding the ultimate authority.

The act was deemed a failure. This was because; very soon it became apparent that the boundaries between government control and the company's powers were nebulous and highly subjective The British Government felt obliged to respond to humanitarian calls for better treatment of local peoples in British-occupied territories. The Board of control was alleged for nepotism. The act was a naive one, it divided the responsibility between the Board of Control, Court of Directors and the Governor General in Council but again , no boundaries could be fixed as they matter was subjective and not objective.

Lord Cornwallis (1787-1793)

Lord Cornwallis twice held the high post of governor general. His first tenure lasted from 1786 to 1793. For second time, he came to India in 1805, but died before he could do any wonders again.

Lord Cornwallis was the First English Nobleman to come to India to undertake the office of the Governor General and also the first of Parliamentary Governor Generals of India. He was also the First Governor General to die in India {during his second term}.

Before arrival of Lord Cornwallis, John Macpherson had served as acting Governor General for a short period of around 20 months.

Lord Cornwallis introduced a new revenue system under the Permanent Settlement of Bengal in 1793 with a view to stabilize land revenue and create a loyal contented class of Zamindars. This abolished periodic auction of Zamindari rights and established permanent Zamindari rights to collect land revenue from the tenants and payment of a fixed amount to the Government treasury every year. During his tenure, doors of covenanted services were closed for Indians. He got the power of commutation of punishment. He defeated Tipu in third Anglo-Mysore war and signed Treaty of Srirangpatanam.

Permanent Settlement of the land revenue of Bengal

Lord Cornwallis introduced the Permanent Settlement in Bengal, Banaras, Bihar, Carnatic (North Karnataka) and Orissa. As per this system, the Zamindars who formerly collected revenues were recognized as Land Lords and the ownership of the Land was made hereditary. This means that now



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onwards there would be no auctioning. The son of Zamindar would be a Zamindar. The idea was that Zamindars would have a “permanent interest” in the welfare of the Peasants. But the result was that cultivators were reduced to tenants, deprived of all kinds of rights on the land. The Zamindar could kick a cultivator any time, without giving any reason. In the same system in 1799, the Zamindars were given rights to confiscate the land and kick out the tenant cultivators.

So the system was as follows:

- Zamindar was the real owner of the Land and “representative” of the Government.
- Peasants were now “tenants” of the Zamindars
- Peasants could be kicked out any time by the Zamindar
- The Zamindar was like a servant to the Government. He used to keep 11% of the revenue with him for “serving as agent of the Government” and 89% he had to pay to the Government.
- Thus the revenue started coming to the British on 10/11 ratio.
- The Permanent Settlement fixed the revenue of the land on a 10 year basis.

The economic drain from India was set at a faster pace by Lord Cornwallis by putting in place the Zamindari or Permanent settlement system. The system remained in place but later a new Mahalwari system was placed during the times of Sir Thomas Munroe in certain areas of India.

Reforms in the East India Company

To “curb” the corruption in the company, Cornwallis was given sufficient powers and authorities. He put in place the rules and regulations for the servants of the company. As per the new rules

- Only qualified people would enter into the service of the company.
- No recommendation from England would be given weightage for appointments in the company’s service.
- The private trade of all the company servants was abolished.
- Company servants were now to sign a bond which included that they won’t accept any gifts from Indians and will not indulge in private trade.
- Top posts were only for Europeans, Indians were given posts which were lowest such as peons.
- The revenue collectors were deprived of the Judicial powers.

Judiciary Reforms

The next important change Cornwallis did was to set up courts in the states, districts and provinces. The Supreme Court of Calcutta was the final court of appeal. The system of Civil Judiciary was as follows:

- Lowest Court was the Amin Court or Munsif Court. The Munsifs could decide the case



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where the value was less than Rs. 50.

- The higher court was the District court or “Diwani Adalat”. The Judge was called “Session Judge”. This session Judge was essentially an Englishman, who used to deliver justice to “only Indians” and not the Europeans. He was assisted by assessors.
- The higher than Diwani Adalat was the Provincial Court of Appeal. Four provincial Courts of appeal were set up at Dhaka, Calcutta, Murshidabad and Patna. These courts heard appeals from the districts except the English.
- After provincial court, the Highest Court of Appeal was set up which was called “Sadar Diwani Adalat”. The headquarters of Sadar Diwani Adalat was at Calcutta and it was the Highest Court of Appeal. Its judge was supported by aHead Qazi, two Muftis and Two Pandits.
- The appeals from the “Sadar Diwani Adalat” were submitted to the King in England. The King of England only entertained those cases whose value was more than 5000 rupees.

The above system was in the Civil Judiciary. In Criminal Judiciary, Cornwallis introduced the following structure:

- At **Taluka / Tahsil** level there was a **Darogh-i-Adalat**. Its Judge was “**Darogha**” who was “**An Indian**”. This was the lowest level.
- The appeals from a Darogha could be taken to “**District Criminal Courts**”. The judge of this court was a Session Judge, an English.
- To hear the criminal appeals from District courts, 4 Circuit Courts at Murshidabad, Dhaka, Calcutta and Patna were established.
- The **Highest court of Criminal appeal was in “Sadar Diwani Adalat” at Calcutta** which used to sit once in a week. It was supervised by Governor General in council.

Other Judicial Reforms included the following:

- Court fees were abolished by Cornwallis.
- Lawyers were to prescribe their fees.
- Ordinary people could sue the Government servants (Indians) if they committed mistakes.
- Inhuman punishments such as cutting limbs, cutting nose and ears were abolished.

Cornwallis Era and Too much Litigation

The Cornwallis era is known for a very steep increase in litigation in India. The administrative reforms of Cornwallis were based upon the permanent settlement of revenue. Here we see that there was a separation of the revenue administration and the judicature. Further, the Europeans were employed at higher offices, which were given the job of complex system of regulations. The excellent plan came with simultaneous reforms in the judiciary which included the setting up courts in the



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states, districts and provinces, Abortion of court fee, rules for lawyers to prescribe the fee etc. The actual motive of recourse to the courts for zamindars proved to be a weak motive and due to all these reasons, the permanent settlement worked very badly in the beginning. Courts were choked by the litigations. The litigation kept flooding the courts, until the Zamindars were given coercive powers in 1795 and 1799.

Police Reforms of Cornwallis

So far Police was under the Zamindars. It was taken away from Zamindars and handed over to the **Superintendent of the Police at District level** The Police was Europeanized. They were now paid salary and given unlimited powers to arrest the suspected persons.

So now **Thanas** were there in India to maintain “peace and order”. Zamindars had still a great influence on these Thanas, but legally there were detached from the Police functionary.

In 1789 Lord Cornwallis made a proclamation that “*anyone who is found associated with Slavery would be prosecuted in the Supreme Court*”. This step he had taken to curb the menace of slavery prevalent in India since Sultanate Era but the immediate reason was that the Children were collected by the Indians and sold to “French”.

Mysore Maratha War 1785-1787

When Lord Cornwallis was busy in making administrative reforms in the English dominions, the Indian Great Marathas and Tipu Sultan were engaged in bloody quarrels.

After second Anglo Mysore war, Tipu Sultan was the sovereign King of Mysore. The Marathas established a military alliance with the Nizam of Hyderabad to recover the territories that were lost to Mysore. Tipu Sultan resolved to teach them a lesson and attacked. Marathas tried to include Lord Cornwallis in the war which commenced with marches, counter marches and skirmished from 1785 onwards. Cornwallis stick to the policy of neutrality and did not participated in the war game. Finally, exhausted, Marathas and Tipu Sultan signed the Treaty of Gajednragarh in 1787 and maintained peace.

Third Anglo Mysore war 1790-92

Tipu Sultan was hostile towards the British since the beginning. **Mangalore Treaty of 1784**, which was signed on the end of the Second Anglo Maratha war had an article regarding transfer of the Prisoners. Tipu did not honor this and kept the British prisoners with him. This was one of the reasons of the hostility. In the same treaty, the British had promised to not to enter into agreements with the Marathas and Nizam, but Cornwallis informally convinced them to not support if there was a war.

The immediate reason of the war which commenced in 1789 was that the local **Dharamaraja of Travancore** made some fortifications into the territories which were claimed by Tipu. In Cochin he



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purchased two forts from the Dutch, but Cochin was paying tribute to Tipu. Travancore was an ally of the British. So when Tipu attacked Travancore, the British attacked Tipu.

The Diplomacy of Cornwallis kept Tipu aloof from the Marathas, Coorg and Nizams. Lord Cornwallis led the British army in person, with pomp and a magnificence of supply which recalled the campaigns of Aurangzeb. The result was Tipu's defeat.

The peace was restored by the **Treaty of Shrirangpatnam** which was signed in 1792. The terms of the Treaty were dictated by the British. As per this treaty:

- Half of the territories of Tipu were snatched away from Tipu and divided into Marathas, British and Nizam
- Tipu had to pay Rs. 3.30 Crore as war indemnity.
- The Raja of Coorg got independence from Tipu.
- Two sons of Tipu were delivered as Hostages.

This war eventually crippled the great Sultan, who once thought of making India free of the British. He fulfilled the conditions of the treaty but ever afterwards he burnt in the fire of revenge upon his British victors.

Retirement of Lord Cornwallis

Lord Cornwallis retired in 1793, and was succeeded by Sir John Shore.

Sir John Shore (1793- 1798)

The Tenure of Sir John Shore's rule as Governor General from 1793 to 1798 was politically uneventful in India. He followed the policy of Non-intervention in the quarrels of Indians, particularly in 1795 in battle of Kharda because at that time Marathas were united and it was dangerous to face united Marathas. The most notable event that happened in his tenure was passing of Charter Act of 1793. John Shore was succeeded by Lord Wellesley in 1798.

Charter Act 1793

The Charter Act 1793 or the *East India Company Act 1793* was passed by British Parliament to renew the charter of East India Company. This act authorized the company to carry on trade with India for next 20 years.

Key Provisions

More Powers to Governor General

In this act, the Governor General was empowered to disregard the majority in the Council in special circumstances. Thus more powers were entrusted in him. The Governor General and respective governors of the other presidencies could now override the respective councils, and the *commander in chief* was not now the member of Governor General's council, unless he was specially appointed to be a member by the Court of Directors.



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Provisions Regarding Company

The company was allowed to increase its dividend to 10%. A provision in the Charter act of 1793 was made that the company, after paying the necessary expenses, interest, dividend, salaries, etc from the Indian Revenues will pay *5 Lakh British pounds* annually out of the surplus revenue to the British Government. However, the act also had a provision, that Crown could order the application of the whole of the revenue for the purpose of defense if the circumstances posed such demands. Expenses, interest, dividend, salaries, etc were to be borne by the Indian Exchequer. If a high official departed from India without permission, it was to be treated as resignation.

Separation of revenue and judiciary functions

This act reorganized the courts and redefined their jurisdictions. The revenue administration was divorced from the judiciary functions and this led to disappearing of the **Maal Adalats**.

Lord Wellesley (1798 – 1805)

Lord Wellesley remained Governor General of Fort Williams from 1798 to 1805. During his tenure, the Fourth and last Anglo-Mysore war was fought and Tipu was killed in this war. The Second Anglo Maratha war also happened in which Bhonsle, Scindia and Holkar were defeated. Wellesley followed the policy of “subsidiary alliance”, which was accepted by the rulers of Mysore, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Bundi, Macheri, Bharatpur, Oudh, Tanjore, Berar, Peshwa and Nizam of Hyderabad. The Censorship of Press Act, 1799 was also brought under his tenure and Fort William College was established in 1800 to train civil servants.

Fourth Anglo Mysore War

In 1798, the troops of Napoleon had sailed to Egypt and had defeated its rulers. One of subsequent step of Napoleon would be to capture the British Possessions in India. The key to such step was Kingdom of Mysore, whose ruler Tipu had sought France as ally. In a letter to Tipu, Napoleon said that he would send his innumerable forces to India to drive out the British. However, this plan was never executed because French were defeated in the Battle of Nile (1798) by British.

Meanwhile, Lord Wellesley had decided to crush Tipu. His forces marched into Mysore and seized Shrirangapatnam. One of the commanders of Tipu, Mir Sadiq was bought by the British, he deceived Tipu and the result was that Tipu, amid the English advantageous position, was shot and killed. Tipu had used the iron cased rockets in the Third and Fourth Mysore wars. It led the British to develop their own versions of the Rockets. The **Woodyar dynasty** was restored on the throne of the Mysore and Mysore came indirectly under the British. Thus, with the end of Fourth Mysore war, Mysore became a princely state with suzerainty of the East India Company.

Second Anglo Maratha War

For twenty years after the First Anglo-Maratha war had ended in 1782, there was no battle between



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Maratha and British. Meanwhile Tipu, the most ardent enemy of British had been eliminated.

The Marathas were still powerful but rather than a united single force, the Marathas were a confederation of several states. The most prominent among them were Scindia, Holkar, Gaikwad and Bhonsle.

These veterans contested for power and their rivalry made the British come alive. The result was that the Maratha veterans fought with each other in the **Battle of Poona** in 1802 when Yashwant Rao Holkar attacked the forces of Scindia and Peshwa Bajirao-II. The combined armies of Scindia and Peshwa were defeated by the Holkar. Peshwa flee from Pune and approached to British for help.

British signed the Treaty of Bassein in 1802. As per this treaty, the British promised to place a force of around 6000 troops to be permanently stationed with Peshwa in Poona. In return the British got the territorial districts that would yield the revenue of *26 Lakh rupees*. Baji Rao II was also required to

:

- Not to enter into any treaty without consulting British
- Not to declare war without consulting the British
- Not to claim over Surat and Baroda.

Thus, Peshwa entered into a subsidiary alliance system with the British. Marathas took it as surrender to National Honor. The war was fought between the broken Maratha Confederacy and British between 1803 and 1805 as *Second Anglo Maratha war*.

During this war, the Marathas were engaged at several places by British without letting them unite. In 1803, Baji Rao-II entered Poona with British forces. In the same year, Aurangabad and Gwalior were taken under British control. Bhosle lost Cuttack, Balasore and west of Wardha river. Scindia lost Jaipur, Jodhpur, Gohad, Ahamad Nagar, Bharuch, Ajanta etc. Both of Scindia and Bhosle accepted the **Treaty of Bassein** and gave their sovereignty to British.

Holkar approached Delhi and tried to capture it but he was defeated in Deeg, Bharatpur. At last he also signed a treaty and lost the places north of Chambal and Bundelkhand. With this war, the Maratha had been reduced to nothing.

Subsidiary Alliance System

The Subsidiary Alliance System was a Treaty between the company and the Indian native rulers. In return for a payment or subsidy, the company would place garrison troops in that ruler's territory to fight against their enemies. Subsidiary alliance system was originally the idea of Dupleix, who used to rent his army to Indian rulers. Similarly, Clive had also made similar kind of arrangement with Oudh. Lord Wellesley made is an important part of his imperialistic designs. He made the Nawab and Nizams subsidiary allies by signing almost 100 such treaties.

Key principles of a subsidiary alliance were as follows:



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- The Indian ruler would accept British Forces in his territory and also pay their cost of maintenance.
- The ruler will accept a British Resident in his state.
- The ruler would not enter into any further alliance or war with any other power without permission from the British.
- The ruler would not employ any European other than British.
- In case there is any conflict, the resolution as decided by British would be accepted to him.
- The ruler would acknowledge East India Company as paramount power in India.

In return for the above conditions, the East India Company would pledge to protect the state from external dangers and internal disorders. If the Indian ruler fails to make required payments, a part of his territory would be taken away as penalty.

First ruler to sign this treaty with Wellesley was Nizam of Hyderabad (September 1798 and 1800) He was followed by Ruler of Mysore (1799), Raja of Tanjore (October 1799), Nawab of Oudh (November 1801), Peshwa (December 1801), Bhonsle Raja of Berar (December 1803), Sindhia (February 1804) and others including Jodhpur, Jaipur, Macheri, Bundi and Bharatpur etc.

Censorship Act 1799

In 1780, **James Augustus Hickey** published first newspaper in India titled “Bengal Gazette” or “Calcutta General Advertiser”. This was too outspoken and its press was seized soon. Then there was a general proliferation of the newspapers including The Calcutta Gazette (1784), The Bengal Journal (1785), The Oriental Magazine of Calcutta (1785), The Calcutta Chronicle (1786), The Madras Courier (1788) and The Bombay Herald (1789).

In 1799, Lord Wellesley brought the **Censorship of Press Act** to stop the French from publishing anything which could harm British in any way. This *ac*brought all the newspapers under the *Government scrutiny before their publication*. This act was later extended in 1807 and covered all kinds of Press Publications newspapers, magazine, books and Pamphlets. The rules were relaxed when Lord Hastings came into power.

Fort William College 1800

The initial attempt to train the Civil Servants locally was done by **Lord Wellesley**. Within the campus of the Fort William, he founded Fort Williams College on 10 July 1800 The idea was to teach the British rookies understand the Oriental Culture, tradition, law and administration to better coordinate in the “governance”.

Successors of Lord Wellesley 1805-1807

The adventures of Lord Wellesley were good, but they were costly. The continuous wars with Mysore and Marathas, his policy of launching educational projects in India caused the financial strain



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which made the Court of Directors impatient. He was recalled in July 1805 and once again **Lord Cornwallis** was sent to India. He was advised by his peers to bring peace in the British dominions which were under the threats with the wounded lions such as Holkars and Scindias. He came in the rainy season and the bad weather of India claimed his life. He was succeeded by Sir **George Barlow**, an intimate adviser of John Shore and Lord Wellesley. His term was till 1807 when there was a **mutiny at Vellore** in 1806.

Sir George Barlow (Officiating) (1805-1807)

Sir George Barlow was the officiating Governor General between 1805 and 1807. During his tenure, Vellore Munity occurred in 1806.

Mutiny of Vellore 1806

Mutiny at Vellore happened when British tried to disturb the religious sentiments of Indians. At Vellore, some foolish orders were passed by Sir John Cradock and Lord Howdon, the commander in Chief in Madras to regulate the dress of the Sepoys. As per the new rules, Hindus were prohibited from wearing religious marks on their foreheads and Muslims were required to shave their beards and trim their moustaches.

The Indian Sepoys thought that they were going to be “Christianized”. The result was that on the midnight of 10 July 1806, the crowd got collected, sepoys mixed with them led by one of Tipu’s son, massacred the Europeans and hoisted the Flag of the **Mysore Sultanate** there. The mutiny was subdued by dawn, but it sent ripples of fear among the British overlords, as first sign of losing an empire.

Lord Minto (1807-1813)

In 1807, **Lord Minto** was sent to India as Governor General of Fort Williams. Prior to this, he was more active in Java, Sumatra and Malacca. In his time the British Government of India opened relations with the set of the foreign powers. He sent embassies to Punjab (Maharaja Ranjit Singh) and Shah of Persia. He signed Treaty of Amritsar with Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Charter Act of 1813 was also signed during his tenure.

Minto-Metcalf Treaty

After the demise of Mughals, Sikhs had become dominant in Punjab region in the form of land owners of large tracts of lands called Misals. The holders of these Misals were Misaldars. These Misaldars were not a consolidated power but were of varying powers. They used to fight with each other. Maharaja Ranjit Singh consolidated the 12 Misals into a Khalsa state. He grew is power by capturing Lahore in 1799, capturing Amritsar, and taking over Kashmir.

The British wanted to keep good relations with Ranjit Singh mainly because of dangers from northern sides from Napoleon or Russia. To establish diplomatic relations, Minto sent Charles



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Theophilus Metcalfe as a British envoy to Lahore in court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. He signed a treaty of “*Mutual Friendship*”, also known as Minto-Metcalfe Treaty with Maharaja Ranjit Singh on 30 May 1809. Thus, a diplomatic relation with Punjab was established. Minto also sent an envoy to Shah of Persia for similar treaty.

Charter Act of 1813

Charter Act 1813 or East India Company Act 1813 was passed by the British Parliament to renew the charter of British East India Company and continue the rule of the same in India.

Background

The earlier charter act of 1793 had given the East India Company a monopoly to trade with East for a period of 20 years. However, the rise of Napoleon Bonaparte had brought hard days to the businessmen of England. Napoleon Bonaparte had put in place the *Berlin decree of 1806 & Milan Decree of 1807*, which forbade the import of British goods into European countries allied with or dependent upon France, and thus installed the so called Continental System in Europe.

Due to these hardships, the British Traders demanded entry to the ports of Asia and dissolve the monopoly of the East India Company. Apart from these hardships, the theory of Free trade policy of Adam Smith had also become quite popular in those days. The supporters of this policy started giving arguments on how ending the monopoly of East India Company in trade with India could bring help the growth of British commerce and industry.

However, East India Company opposed these arguments giving logic that its political authority and commercial privileges cannot be separated. The controversy was later resolved by allowing all the British merchants to trade with India under a strict license system.

Key Provisions

End of Monopoly of East India Company

Charter act of 1813 **ended the monopoly** of the East India Company in India, however the company's monopoly in trade with china and trade in tea with India was kept intact. Thus, trade with India for all commodities except Tea was thrown open to all British subjects. This lasted till 1833 when the next charter abolished the trade of the company.

Permission to Christian Missionaries

The act also granted permission to the persons who wished to go to India for promoting moral and religious improvements. (Christian Missionaries)

Other Provisions

- This act regulated the company's territorial revenues and commercial profits. It was asked to keep its territorial and commercial accounts separate.
- The company debt was to be reduced and dividend was fixed @10.5% per annum.
- There was also a provision that Company should invest Rs. 1 Lakh every year on the



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education of Indians.

- This act also empowered the local governments to impose taxes on the persons subject to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

Nothing substantial was changed in terms of governance in India except that the Charter Act 1813 for the first time explicitly defined the constitutional position of the British territories in India. The Act also empowered the Local Governments in India to impose taxes on persons and to punish those who did not pay them.

Lord Minto retired in 1813. He was succeeded by Lord Hastings also known as Lord Moira.

Lord Hastings (1812-1823)

Lord Hastings or *Lord Moira* {Earl of Moira} served as Governor General of India from 1813 to 1823, a long ten years term. His tenure is known for policy of intervention and war. Two important wars viz. *Gurkha War* and *Third Anglo Maratha war* occurred during his tenure. He simplified the judicial proceedings and abolished the Censorship Act.

Gurkha war 1814-16

Gurkhas were ruling in Nepal. From 1767 onwards, they extended their power over the hills and valleys of Nepal. They were ruling on Feudal basis and soon became powerful. They marched into the Kumaun and Gangetic Plains and raided in the British Territories.

The British had recently acquired the lands of Nawab of Oudh and Gorakhpur, Sikkim were on the front. The dispute was because of no fixed boundary. The war ended in a defeat of Gurkhas. The British army marched from Patna to Kathmandu and finally dictated the terms of **Treaty of Segauli**, which defined the *English relations with Nepal*.

Gurkhas lost Sikkim, the territories of Kumaon and Garhwal, and most of the lands of the Terai; the British East India Company promised to pay 200,000 rupees annually to compensate for the loss of income from the Terai region. This remained the definition of India-Nepal relations for a long time.

Third Anglo Maratha War 1817-19

The Third Anglo Maratha war consisted of skirmishes such as **Pindari war**, **Battle of Sitalbaldi**, **Battle of Mahidpur** and **Battle of Khadki**.

Pindari War

The Pindaris were many castes and classes who worked like mercenaries under the Maratha Chiefs. When the Maratha chiefs became weak, they started raiding the territories of the British. The companies accused Marathas of giving shelter to Pindaris.

Pindaris, opposed to the Marathas, who were bound by traditions of confederate government, were merely freebooters or plundering bands. They were a mix of Hindus, Muslims, Afghans, Jats and Marathas, better called as a “debris of the Mughal Empire” broken and not incorporated into any of



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the regimes. The Pinadris were crushed in 1817. But in the same year three great Maratha powers at *Poona, Nagpur, and Indore* rose separately against the British.

Battle of Khadki

Peshwa Baji Rao was chafed with terms & circumstances imposed by the **Treaty of Bassein** in 1802. In June 1817, a new Treaty of Poona was signed which freed the Gaekwar from his control and ceded fresh districts to the British for the pay of the subsidiary force.

The Marathas attacked the British at **Khadki near Poona**, and same plot was enacted at **Nagpur at Sitabaldi**. The Maratha armies of **Indore (Holkar) rose in Mihidpur** in the following month. The result was a general defeat of the Marathas. The outcome of this war was as follows:

- Dominions of the Peshwa Baji Rao were annexed to the Bombay presidency.
- The Peshwa surrendered, and was permitted to reside at Bithur, near Cawnpore (Now Kanpur), on a pension of 8 Lakh Rupees per year. His adopted son Nana Sahib later led the Mutiny of 1857.
- The Peshwa's place was filled as traditional head of the Maratha confederacy and a descendant of Shivaji was brought forth from obscurity, placed upon the throne of Satara.
- An infant was recognized as heir of Holkar, another child was proclaimed Raja of Nagpur under the Guardianship of British.
- The Rajas of Rajputana accepted the position of feudatories of the paramount British Power in India. They remained the Princely states till India got independence.

This was the last big battle won by the British. India was now theirs. The Map which was drawn by Lord Hastings remained same till Lord Dalhousie came in 1848 and imposed the infamous "*Doctrine of Lapse*". The next few years were of general peace but there was a development on the foreign front.

Third Anglo Maratha War 1817-19 was the last big battle won by the British. India was now theirs. The Map which was drawn by Lord Hastings remained same till Lord Dalhousie came in 1848 and imposed the infamous "*Doctrine of Lapse*". The next few years were of general peace but there was a development on the foreign front.

Abolition of Censorship by Lord Hastings

One of the important events during the tenure of Lord Hastings was abolition of Censorship. This was basically because of his dislike towards "unnecessary" imposition of restrictions on Press. But as a precaution, he issued some guidelines prohibiting company's policies in the newspapers. The result was that many fresh newspapers came up. India's first Vernacular newspapers *Samachar Darpan* was started in 1818. However, some scholars note that "*Bengal Gazetti*" was published even prior to this Vernacular magazine by *Ganga Kishore Bhattacharya*. A few years later, Raja Rammohan Roy started national press in India. He published "*Sambad Kaumudi*" in 1821. This was one of the pre-reformist



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publications that had actively campaigned for Abolition of Sati. However, this liberal policy of Lord Hastings could not continue further. The successors of Lord Hastings took harsh actions against the press people.

Retirement of Lord Hastings and succession

The tenure of Lord Hastings ended in 1823 and he was succeeded by John Adams, the senior member of the Governor General's council, who served as acting Governor General. In the same year 1823, Lord Amherst came to India as next Governor General. His tenure was from August 1823 to February 1828.

Lord Amherst (1823-1828)

Lord Amherst served as Governor-General of India between 1823 and 1828. He had served as British commander in America from 1758 to 1763. He went as envoy to China in 1816. By this time, the Maratha war had concluded and India was generally peaceful. He faced the foes which were beyond the sea. In 1824, there was Conflict between **British India** and **Burma** called the **First Anglo Burmese War**. Other event of note during his tenure was Barrackpore mutiny.

First Anglo Burmese War 1824-26

Burma was a big independent country on Eastern sides of British India. The Burmese rulers had an expansionist policy and tried to annex Siam in 1765-69. Siam approached China for support and due to that Burmese rulers were unable to expand that side. So, they focussed on western side. At that time, the Eastern boundaries of Bengal was Arakan. The Burmese forces entered Arakan and captured areas around modern Manipur in 1813 and Assam in 1817-19. The British tried to avoid clash and sent some peaceful proposals but when nothing fruitful achieved, Lord Amherst declared a war on Burma. Burma was attacked from land as well as sea. The war prolonged but resulted in decisive victory of British. In 1826, the war ended with Treaty of Yandaboo. As per this treaty:

- Assam, Manipur, Arakan, Taninthai were ceded to British.
- The Burmese had to cease interference in Chachar Kingdom and Jaintia Hills.
- Burmese agreed to pay an indemnity of One million Pounds sterling to British.
- Burmese agreed to allow diplomatic representatives from British.
- Burmese also agreed to sign a commercial treaty in due course of time.

With the above treaty, Assam was annexed to British territories. Late **Cachar Kingdom** was annexed in 1832 and in 1833 Upper Assam came under British Protection By 1838-39, whole of today's Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland and Mizoram was annexed by the British. The immediate impact on British annexation of Assam was that its Tea manufacturing flourished.

Barrackpore mutiny of 1824

The Barrackpore mutiny of 1824 was also due to interference of Indian social taboos by British.



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Some of the battalions of native infantries of Bengal Army were ordered to March to Chittagong and to board ships to reach Rangoon during first Anglo-Burmese war. However, travelling by sea was a social taboo for Hindus, who called it *Kaala Pani*. Further, they had not bullocks even to carry their belongings to Chittagong. The complaints of Indian sepoy were not paid attention. Due to this, the soldiers forbade to go on March unless their pay is increased and provided means to carry their luggage.

The British refused to concede to these demands in Barrackpore cantonment and sepoy revolted. Under their leader Binda, they drove away the British officers. The British tried to calm the Sepoy to surrender on condition that their reasonable demands would be considered later. However, when they rejected, the British troops launched a full scale assault on Indian Sepoy and killed around 200 Indian Sepoy. The leader Binda was captured and executed and his body was hung on a Peepal tree.

This sent a terrorizing message to Indian troops to not to rebel against their British masters.

Binda was a hero but now not many people know about his martyrdom. There is a temple in Barrackpur on that site, where his body was hung, known as **Binda Baba Temple**. The deity of this temple is Lord Hanuman.

Succession of Lord Amherst

Lord Amherst departed from India in 1828 and his place was taken by acting Governor General William Butterworth Bayley for some time in 1828. He was succeeded by **Lord William Bentinck** whose term was from 1828 to 1835.

Lord William Bentinck (1828-35)

Lord William Bentinck served as Governor General of India between 1828 to 1835. His tenure is known for the social reforms such as Abolition of Sati in 1829, Suppression of Thugi, and Suppression of Infanticide etc. English was introduced as a medium of higher education on the advice of his council member, Thomas Babington Macaulay. A pact with Maharaja Ranjit Singh was made. Charter act 1833 was passed by which East India Company ceased to be a trading company. Some corrective measures in civil services were taken. This seven years period was an epoch for administrative reforms in India. It started a process by which the Indian population, which is furious of sudden changes, was made to obey the British rulers and administration slowly **Partially this period can be said as of "benevolent administrators"**. There is an inscription on his statue at Calcutta which was penned by **Lord Macaulay**. He writes:

He abolished cruel rites; he effaced humiliating distinctions; he gave liberty to the expression of public opinion; his constant study was to elevate the intellectual and moral character of the nations committed to his charge.

Condition of Finances of the Company

The Finances of the East India Company were tottering due to the prolonged Anglo-Burmese War.



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There was a general dissatisfaction among the masses who had heard the story of the Mutiny of Barrackpur. The first step Lord William Bentinck took was to restore the equilibrium in the East India Company's finances. He took the following steps:

- He reduced the permanent expenditures of the company amounting to 15 Lakh Sterling every year.
- He incorporated the revenue from the lands which had escaped the earlier assessments.
- He imposed duty on Opium cultivated in Malwa.
- He widened the door, though which the natives could enter the services of the company.

Abolition of Sati in 1829

The Practice of Sati was first banned in Goa in 1515 by the Portuguese, but it was not that much prevalent there. This evil practice was banned by the Dutch and French also in Chinsura and Pondicherry respectively. The British permitted it initially but the practice of Sati was first formally banned in city of Calcutta in 1798, but it continued in the surrounding areas.

The Bengal Presidency started collecting facts and figures on the practice of Sati in 1813. The data showed that in 1817 only, 700 widows were burnt alive in Bengal alone. From 1812 onwards, it was Raja Rammohan Roy, who started his own campaign against the Sati practice.

His own sister-in-law had been forced to commit Sati Raja Rammohan Roy used to visit the Calcutta cremation grounds to persuade widows not to so die. He also formed the watch groups. In *Sambad Kaumudi* he wrote articles and showed that it was not written in any Veda or epics to commit this crime. It was on 4 December 1829, when the practice was formally banned in all the lands under Bengal Presidency by **Lord William Bentinck**.

By this regulation, the people who abetted sati were declared guilty of "culpable homicide."

The ban was challenged in the courts. The matter went to the **Privy Council in London**. The Privy Council upheld the ban in 1832. After that other territories also started following banning, but it remained legal in princely states, particularly in the Rajputana where it was very common. Under the British control, Jaipur banned the practice in 1846.

Suppression of Thugs by William Bentinck

The name of Lord William Bentinck is still cherished in India for suppression of the Thugs. Thugs were the hereditary assassins whose profession was to deceive people and strangle them to death with their *Pugree* or handkerchief. They used to travel in Gangs, disguised as merchants or pilgrims. They were bound together by an oath on the rites of their deity goddess Kali.

Thugs

The word "Thug" is derived from "Sthag" of Sanskrit, which means "sly". Rather than ordinary thieves, they were the bands of the people who were first recorded by Barni,



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when he mentions that *Firoz Shah Tughlaq captured the Thugs. But none of them was killed and Sultan put them in boats and sent them to Lakhnauti where they were set free, so that they don't trouble the "Delhites"*.

In suppression of Thugs, along with William Bentinck, one more name is cherished. This able officer was William **Henry Sleeman**. Initially he was a soldier and later became the administrator.

In 1835, the '**Thuggee and Dacoity Dept**' was created by William Bentinck and William Henry Sleeman was made its superintendent. He was later promoted as its Commissioner in 1839.

The rigorous operations under Sleeman led to capture of 1400 Thugs who were hanged by the government or transported for life. A special prison was established at Jabalpur for Thugs. The reason of this success was the awareness creation by the Government. The department started disseminating information about the Thuggee and at every Police Station or Thana, the information about the new techniques by the Thugs would be sent. The travelers were warned.

Since, Thugs could be recognized only by evidence, the department started **King's Evidence Programme**. In this programme the Thugs, who turned evidences of the and provided into about the Gang members & peers would be provided protection and incentives. This was used by the government to break the code of silence, which kept the members of the gang silent.

Judicial Reforms of William Bentinck

At the time of Lord Cornwallis, the provinces of **Bihar, Bengal & Orissa** were divided into 4 divisions. In each of these divisions a Circuit court was established. Besides there were 4 Provincial Courts of appeal at Calcutta, Murshidabad, Dhaka and Patna. Judiciary required reforms because of the following reasons:

- The new territories acquired in last 3 decades expanded the territorial jurisdiction of the Sadar Diwani Adalat at Calcutta, but it was now too far away from them.
- The Provincial Courts of appeal were thought to be worthless and a burden on the administration.
- The people who were in prison had to be kept for months before a Circuit Court met at district headquarters and disposed the cases. So, the under trials suffered badly under the Police oppression.
- The entire system was considered too expensive.
- The language of the courts was Persian and it was not easy for the litigants to fight in this language.

Following reforms were introduced by Lord William Bentinck:

- The first reform done was to **abolish the Provincial Courts of Appeal and Circuit Courts altogether**. This was done by a regulation passed in 1829.



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- In place of the Provincial courts of appeal and Circuit, the **Commissioners of Revenue and Circuit** were appointed to do this job.
- For this purpose, the Bengal Presidency was divided into 20 divisions and each division was placed under a separate commissioner.
- For revenue cases these commissioners worked directly under the Board of Revenue and for Criminal cases they worked under Sadar Nizamat Adalat.
- Separate Diwani and Sadar Nizamat Adalat were opened at Allahabad.
- In 1831, another regulation was passed by which the *“Respectable Indians”* were to be appointed in the Zilla or City Courts. They were called **Munsifs**. Munsifs were to be appointed on a salary and they could decide the cases worth less than **Three Hundred Rupees**.
- Then, in a separate regulation, it was decided the Governor General in Council would appoint respectable Indians to the post of **Sadar Amins**. The Sadar Amins would hear appeals from the Zilla and city courts.
- Sadar Amin was now the highest Judicial Indian authority However, neither Munsifs nor Sadar Amins could trial the Europeans.
- In 1832, a sort of Jury was introduced in Bengal, which was **like Indian Jury (Panchayat)** that could **help** the European Judges.

Results:

- The abolition of the **Provincial Courts of Appeal and Circuit** reduced the expenditure of the company Government.
- The appointment of the Commissioners introduced individual responsibility.
- **Police was now less oppressive as the Commissioners** would dispose the cases.
- The Jury system in Bengal (Panchayat) made possible the use of local knowledge and opinion.
- To some extent, Indians were now to enter into the administration. It was not tangible at that time, but at least it was a ray of hope for the Indians.

Other Political Events during William Bentinck

Direct Control of Mysore

After the Fourth Anglo Mysore war, a young Raja of Mysore of Wodeyar dynasty was placed on the throne of Mysore. For a few years, the relations between British and Mysore remained cordial. But in Late 1820s, there was a civil insurrection in Mysore. This was either due to the financial oppressions of the British Resident or due to misgovernment and oppressive taxation of the maharaja. These developments led to the British to take direct control over the Mysore in 1831. This arrangement continued till 1881, when Mysore was restored to native government, and the lawful



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heir enthroned.

Coorg War 1834

In 1834, British East India Company and the Raja of Coorg in 1834 entered into a conflict which was a short but bloody war. The Raja was defeated was permitted to retire to Benares. Coorg was annexed to British Empire. The annexation of the Coorg was the only annexation effected by Lord William Bentinck.

Succession of William Bentinck by Lord Metcalfe

In 1835 Sir Charles Metcalfe succeeded Lord William Bentinck, being senior member of council. His short term of office is memorable for the measure which his predecessor had initiated, but which he carried into execution. This was giving entire liberty to the press. It was the Public opinion in India, but there were people at home as well as India who opposed this policy. Lord Metcalfe is called Liberator of India Press but soon he became a victim of party politics in England and was asked to get back to pavilion. He was succeeded by Lord Auckland in 1836.

Charter Act of 1833

Charter Act 1833 or the *Saint Helena Act 1833* or *Government of India Act 1833* was passed by the British Parliament to renew the charter of East India Company which was last renewed in 1813. Via this act, the charter was renewed for 20 years but the East India Company was deprived of its commercial privileges which it enjoyed so far.

Key Provisions

End of East India Company as a Commercial Body

The British Government had done a careful assessment of the functioning of the company in India. The charter was renewed for another 20 years, but it ended the activities of the company as a commercial body and it was made a purely administrative body. With this, British were allowed to settle freely in India.

India as a British Colony

The charter act of 1813 legalized the British colonization of India and the territorial possessions of the company were allowed to remain under its government, but were held "*in trust for his majesty, his heirs and successors*" for the service of Government of India.

Governor General of India

This act made the Governor General of Bengal the **Governor General of British India** and all financial and administrative powers were centralized in the hands of Governor General-in-Council. Thus, with Charter Act of 1833, Lord William Bentinck became the "First Governor General of British India".

Fourth Member in Governor-General in Council

The number of the members of the Governor General's council was again fixed to 4, which had been



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reduced by the Pitt's India act 1784. However, certain limits were imposed on the functioning of the 4th member. For example, the 4th member was not entitled to act as a member of the council except for legislative purposes. For the first, this fourth members of the council was Lord Macaulay.

Split in Bengal Presidency

The Charter Act of 1833 provided for splitting the Presidency of Bengal, into two presidencies viz. Presidency of Fort William and Presidency of Agra. However, this provision was later suspended and never came into effect.

Enhanced Power of Governor General of India

Charter Act of 1833 distinctly spelt out the powers of the Governor-General-in-Council. He could repeal, amend or alter any laws or regulations including all persons (*whether British or native or foreigners*), all places and things in every part of British territory in India, for all servants of the company, and articles of war. However, the Court of Directors acting under the Board of control could veto any laws made by the Governor-General-in-Council.

Codifying the Laws

The charter act of 1833 is considered to be an attempt to codify all the Indian Laws. The British parliament as a supreme body, retained the right to legislate for the British territories in India and repeal the acts. Further, this act provided that all laws made in India were to be laid before the British parliament and were to be known as Acts. In a step towards codifying the laws, the Governor-General-in-Council was directed under the Charter act of 1833, to set up **Indian Law**

Commission.

India's First Law Commission

India's first law commission was set up under Charter act of 1833 and Lord Macaulay was made its Chairman. The other members of this commission were English barrister Cameron, Macleod of Madras service, William Anderson of Bombay Service and Sir William McNaughton of the Calcutta Service. Sir William McNaughton did not accept the appointment.

The objectives of the law commission was to inquire into the Jurisdiction, powers and rules of the courts of justice police establishments, existing forms of judicial procedure, nature and operation of all kinds of laws. It was directed that the law Commission shall submit its report to the Governor General-in-council and this report was to be placed in the British parliament.

Indians in the Government service

The section 87 of the Charter Act of 1833, declared that "no native of the British territories in India, nor any natural born subject of "His majesty" therein, shall by any reason only by his religion, place of birth, descent, colour or any of them be disabled from holding any place, office or employment under the company". Thus, the Charter act of 1833 was the first act which made provision to freely admit the natives of India to share an administration in the country. The act laid



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down that Court of Directors should nominate annually 4 times as many candidates as there were vacancies, from whom one should be selected by competitive examination. The charter act of 1833 also provided the Haileybury college of London should make quota to admit the future civil servants. However, this system of an open competition was not effectively operated in near future.

Mitigation of Slavery

This act also directed the Governor General-in-Council to adopt measures to mitigate the state of slavery, persisting in India since sultanate Era. The Governor General-in-Council was also directed to pay attention to laws of marriage, rights and authorities of the heads of the families, while drafting any laws.

More Bishops:

The number of British residents was increasing in India. The charter act of 1833 laid down regulation of establishment of Christian establishments in India and the number of Bishops was made 3.

Significance of Charter Act 1833: Analysis

For many reasons, the Charter Act 1833 was a watershed moment for the constitutional and political history of India. Firstly, the elevation of Governor General of Bengal as Governor General of India was a major step towards consolidation and centralization of the administration of India. Secondly, end of East India Company as a commercial body effectively made it the trustee of the crown in the field of administration. Thirdly, this act for the first time made provision to freely admit Indians into administration in the country. Indians could enter into the civil service but the process was still very difficult. Fourthly, this act for the first time separated the legislative functions of the Governor General in Council from the executive functions. Also, the law commission under Lord Macaulay codified the laws.

Lord Auckland (1836 – 1842)

Between 1836 to 1842, Lord Auckland served as Governor General of India. During his tenure, the first Anglo-Afghan war gave a severe blow to British Prestige in India. He was termed almost unsuccessful Governor-General of India and is known for his follies in Afghan wars.

Political Events during Lord Auckland

The Durrani Empire which was founded by Ahmad Shah Abdali ended in 1823 and Dost Mohammad Khan became the Emir of Afghanistan usurping the throne and occupying Kabul & Ghazani. But by that time Peshawar had gone into the hands of Sikhs.

Sikhs under the forces of Maharaja Ranjit Singh occupied and Dost Mohammad's forces, under the command of his son Mohammad Akbar Khan in 1836 defeated the Sikhs at Jamrud, yet could not retake Peshawar.



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Dost Mohammed contacted Lord Auckland, the Governor General of British India and this was the first indication of British Intervention in Afghanistan. Dost Mohammad Khan surrounded by the Sikhs and Persians had tried to win friendship from the British to win back Peshawar from Sikhs. However, British were aware and fearful of the Russian intervention in Persia. There was a fear among the British that Russia could attack India through Persia and Afghanistan. There was a series of 4 Russo-Persian wars in 1722-23, 1796, 1804, 1826-28 and all of them Russia was victorious. Persia had surrendered the territories around the Caspian Sea to Russia and Russia had a dominant position.

The Great Game

Afghanistan which was between the Russia and British India was a cradle of the Great Game, the strategic rivalry and conflict between the British Empire and the Russian Empire for supremacy in Central Asia. The fear of Russian attack, dominant position of Russia made the British try to increase their interference in Afghanistan.

However, Dost Muhammad Khan wanted to take Peshawar Back from Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a friend of British.

Treaty of Lahore

This Anglo-Sikh Friendship was basically based upon the fact that “Enemy’s enemy is Friend”. There was fear on French attack by a coalition led by Napoleon and Zamanshah. In this treaty both the parties (British and Sikhs) basically agreed to not shelter to each other’s enemy and not interfere with each other’s affairs. This friendship had lasted till death of Ranjit Singh in 1839.

The dilemma of Lord Auckland was that he could not afford the friendship of Dost Mohammad Khan at the cost of Ranjit Singh. So he had two options. One was to defer all the plans for Afghanistan. Other was to attack Afghanistan and force Dost Mohammad Khan out and impose a puppet government in Afghanistan which could hold Russians and Persians Back.

Lord Auckland chose the second option.

The First Anglo Afghan War: 1838-1842

The Great Game involved Britain’s repeated attempts to impose a puppet government in Kabul. The British wanted Dost Mohammad to break all contact with the Iranians and Russians. This puppet was Shuja Shah. In 1838 Shuja Shah gained the support of the British and Maharaja Ranjit Singh for wresting power from Dost Mohammad Khan. This was the **Tripartite Treaty** which was signed in June 1838.

Tripartite Treaty 1838

A tripartite treaty was signed between Ranjit Singh, Shah Shuja and Lord Auckland in June 1838. This tripartite treaty was basically to help each other in the time of need. The terms of this treaty were as follows:



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- Shah Shuja will be reinstated on the Throne
- Sikh armies will provide army to Shah Shuja
- Shah Shuja will determine the Foreign Policy with the advice of the British.
- Ranjit Singh's claim on the right bank of Indus was recognized by Shah Shuja.
- Shah Shuja gave up claims on Sind.
- British would remain in the background.

The above hotchpotch of Shah Shuja, British and Maharaja Ranjit Singh triggered First Anglo Afghan War. The outcome of the war was as follows:

- After some resistance Dost Mohammed Khan surrendered to the British and Shuja was restored to the throne by the British on August 7, 1839.
- Dost Mohammad Khan was deported as a prisoner to Calcutta.

But Shah Shuja was a traitor. The Afghans took Shah Shuja as a betrayer and could not accept Shah Shuja as their ruler. So, Shuja ud-Daula, leading the Afghan army, sent Shah Shuja to hell on April 5, 1842.

The killing of Shah Shuja also burst the balloon of the British Success, which seemed to be an extraordinary initially. The Afghans rose in rebellion and the victims of their wrath were the British Political Agents who were cut into pieces.

Many British soldiers were killed in adverse cold.

Thus, the final outcome of this war was that a humiliating treaty was signed by the British and the British were forced to recognize Dost Mohammad as Emir of Afghanistan. Thus, the **First Anglo Afghan War** was a stupefied project of Lord Auckland which resulted in the death of thousands of British (Indian) soldiers and waste of Crores of Rupees.

The names of the English Commanders murdered during this period were Alexander Burns, Charles Burns, Sir William Macnaughten & General Elphinstone.

The Afghan Policy of Lord Auckland was criticized and he was replaced by **Lord Ellenborough** in 1842. **Lord Ellenborough** was a lover of military pomp and to seek an avenge, he ruined Kabul and evacuated Afghanistan. Mohammad Akbar, son of Dost Mohammad secured local control.

Death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh: 1839

During the First Anglo Afghan war, the pillar of the Sikh Empire Maharaja Ranjit Singh died in 1839, after a rule of around 45 years. He left 7 sons with 7 different queens and immediately after his death the Sikhs started disintegrating. This led death of his successors one by one.

The Last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar 1837

On 28 September 1837, the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar who used to write Ghazals and Shayari with his pen name "Zafar" sat on the throne of the Mughal Empire which was now



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limited to Red Fort of Delhi. He was son of Akbar-II.

Lord Ellenborough (1842-1844)

The stupefied Afghan projects of Lord Auckland forced the superiors sitting in England to recall him back to pavilion. He was succeeded by Lord Ellenborough in 1842. Lord Ellenborough remained Governor General of India for 2 and half years till 1844.

This pompous military general type of Governor, who was sent to “restore peace in Asia” ; had actually devastated Kabul on arrival and later conquered Sind for Britain. So **Lord Ellenborough is best known for Conquest of Sind.**

Annexation of Sind 1843

Since 18th century, Sind was being ruled by some Baluchi chiefs collectively known as **Amirs of Sind**. The East India Company, because of the strategic positions of the Ports of Sind had tried its hand as early as 1775 to open a factory out there. But they abandoned it in 1792.

In 1809, during the times of Lord Minto, an embassy was sent to these Amirs which resulted in the “Treaty of Eternal friendship” of 1809. Once becoming the friends of English, the Amirs stopped allowing French to the Ports of Sind. The British were able to renew this treaty in 1820 and now the foolish Amirs excluded the Americans also from Sind.

The story of winning Sind starts from a dispatch of **Charles James Napier** to Sind. Charles James Napier, a 60 year old British lion was appointed as Major General in the command of the army of the Bombay Presidency. By this time, Lord Auckland had been recalled and Lord Ellenborough, who loved military pomp, had his tastes gratified by sending him to “cure” the Muslim insurrections in this region. The loosely governed Sind, which was repeatedly targeted by the Sikhs in past, fell in the **Battle of Miani & Battle of Dobo**, wherein in which 3000 British troops defeated 12,000 Baluchis in 1843 under Charles Napier.

The Amirs of Sind, their kith and kin were taken prisoners, and then these broken-hearted and miserable men were sent to Burma in exile. Whole of Sind was annexed to British Empire in 1843.

Napier’s sent a one word telegram which was a pun after this battle. **The message in the telegram was a Latin word “peccavi”** means “**I have sinned**”. The meaning of this wordplay was “I have Sind”.

Succession of Lord Ellenborough and arrival of Sir Henry Hardinge 1844

In 1844 Lord Ellenborough was recalled by the court of directors. Actually, the Court of Directors differed from him on points of administration, and distrusted his erratic genius. He was succeeded by William Bird in 1844, who remained for a temporary time.

Finally in 1844 only a veteran soldier, **Sir Henry Hardinge**, who had entered the army in 1799, was sent to India as next Governor General of India. This brave soldier had served England in the



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Peninsular War and the Waterloo campaign, and was knighted in 1815. It was felt in England that after overcoming all kinds of power in the region, the fall of a Great Sikh nation was near.

Successors of Maharaja Ranjit Singh

Maharaja Ranjit Singh died in 1839 and after that Sikhs started disintegrating. Lahore was torn by dissensions between rival princes, generals, ministers, and queens. These foolish successors ousted the skillful European generals, inducted by late Maharaja, from their commands in the Sikh army. The supreme military power of the time got vested in the Panchayats.

Maharaja was **succeeded by his Son Kharak Singh**, who was deposed within months of remaining in power. He was later poisoned to death and was replaced by his son **Nihal Singh**, who was also sent to hell by his close relatives, under mysterious circumstances.

Now the Panchayats had to play their roles. The Hindu Dogras and Sikh Sindhanwalias tried to place their own representatives on the throne. Thus one **Raja Sher Singh** came to power. But within months, he was murdered by his own cousin and the Dogras placed **Jind Kaur**, one of the widows of late Maharaja on the throne. But Jind Kaur ruled as a regent for his son **Maharaja Duleep Singh**, a young lad of 8-9 years, placed on the Throne of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Sikh Empire was very near to its end.

First Anglo Sikh War 1845-46

Meanwhile, the Sind was annexed and British were teaming with energy. They established a cantt. at Ferozpur. Amid accusations and mutual demands, the British Army invaded Punjab. The war was fought and victory was in the British side. The outcome of this war was a peace pact called **Treaty of Lahore** signed on March 9, 1846 between Lord Hardinge and 7 year old Maharaja Duleep Singh plus 7 members of the Lahore Durbar: –

- Sikhs lost Jammu, Kashmir, Hazara and some territories in Jalandhar Doab.
- Thus all claims south of Sutlej River were lost by Maharaja Duleep Singh.
- 1.5 Crore was paid to the British as war indemnity.
- The armies of the Punjab were now to be not more than 20000 horses.
- King agreed that he would not appoint any European in service without the consent of the British.

The following people were recognized as masters of Punjab:

- Maharaja Duleep Singh as King
- Rani Jind Kaur as Regent
- Lal Singh as Wazir.

A British resident was also kept at Lahore (Major Henry Lawrence).



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Lord Dalhousie (1848–1856)

Lord Dalhousie served as Governor General of India from 1848 to 1856. During this period, Second Anglo-Sikh War (1849) was fought in which the Sikhs were defeated again and Dalhousie was successful in annexing the whole of Punjab to the British administration. He annexed many states by doctrine of lapse. During his tenure, first railway line between Bombay and Thane was opened in 1853 and in the same year Calcutta and Agra were connected by telegraph. His other reforms include setting up of P.W.D. and passing of the Widow Remarriage Act (1856).

Second Anglo Sikh War

The first major conflict during the early period of Lord Dalhousie was the Second Anglo Sikh war in 1848-49, which ended with annexation of Punjab and end of Sikh Kingdom. After the **Treaty of Lahore**, Sir Henry Lawrence was appointed at the **Lahore Darbar** to control the policies. He left England due to some disease, and in his place a lawyer named Sir Frederick Currie was appointed at the Lahore Durbar.

Sir Frederick Currie, was a legalist and a puritan, who asked the somewhat independent Governor of Multan, **Diwan Mulraj** to pay arrears of the taxes. When the British officers were sent at the Mulraj's fortress, he revolted, attacked and wounded them. These wounded officers were saved by some people but the angry mob killed them the next day. The small army of Mul Raj was defeated, but again there was a rebellion. The war prolonged for months and Sikhs were defeated. The whole of Punjab was annexed on 29 March 1849.

Rani Jind Kaur was imprisoned and the 11 year old Maharaja Duleep Singh was sent to London to retire on pension. This was a major success under Lord Dalhousie, who not only subdued the rebellions in the region, but also annexed a large territory to the British India.

Second Anglo-Burmese War 1852-53

After the First Anglo-Burmese war, the **Treaty of Yandaboo** was signed between Burma and East India Company on February 24, 1826. For next 20 years the relations were normal, but the Burma Kings were chaffed of the English merchants who started flocking in the country and got settled over there.

In 1851, these merchants complained their overlords sitting in Calcutta about the oppression of the Burmese officials at Rangoon. The issue was taken seriously by the East India Company and the Lord Dalhousie asked Burma for compensation. No reply was sent from the other end. The idea was to make it a reason for an imposed war on Burma.

Apart from tha, there were minor bilateral issues regarding the Treaty of Yandaboo. However, exactly under which circumstances, this war was fought was not made public. The war started in April 5, 1852 and as soon as the war started the port of Martaban was taken on the same day. On



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12th April Rangoon was annexed and in June Pegu was taken. In January 1853, a proclamation of annexation was read out and thus this war ended without any treaty signed. The outcome of this war was that Pegu was annexed to the British Empire and it was *renamed Lower Burma*. British dominion now was from Chittagong to Singapore in the East.

Doctrine of Lapse

Dalhousie implemented the *Doctrine of Lapse* whereby in the absence of a natural heir, the sovereignty of Indian states was to lapse to the British and such rulers were not permitted to adopt a son to inherit their kingdoms.

Dalhousie himself was not the author of this doctrine. In 1844, the Directors of the Company had declared that the permission to adopt on the failure of natural heirs “should be the exception not the rule” and should never be granted but as a special mark of favour or approbation”.

As per this doctrine, on the failure of natural heirs, the sovereignty passed on the paramount power. Although it was not a policy of Dalhousie’s predecessors, but he found it convenient way of extending Company’s territories.

We note here that Dalhousie practically applied this doctrine on dependent states only. The dependent states were one of the three categories of states as follows.

- Those rulers who did not pay any tribute to the British Government and never accepted the paramountcy of the British power in India were under ***independent States***
- Those States and Rajas who had accepted the paramountcy of the British Government and paid a regular tribute. They were called ***Protected allies***.
- Those Rajas and Chieftains who had been placed or installed on the throne by the British Government and had been given letter of authority for their re-installation as Rajas; were called dependent States.

The second category mentioned above needed to take necessary permission from the company for adopting son to succeed to throne. The permission was dependent on personal whim and wish of British. It was third category which was not allowed to adopt a son at all.

Application of the Doctrine

Annexation of Satara

The Raja of Satara died in 1848 without leaving any natural heir. However, he had adopted a son before his death. But this adoption was declared invalid on the pretext that he had not taken the sanction for the same. The Court of Directors declared that a dependent principality like that of Satara could not pass on to an adopted son without the consent of the paramount power. Satara was thus annexed to the British Empire. This annexation was unjust because British had entered into a treaty on the basis of equality.



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Annexation of Nagpur

Raja of Nagpur had died in 1853 and before his death he had directed his Rani to adopt a son. Rani adopted Yashwant Rao as per Hindu customs and law. But this annexation was not recognized by Dalhousie and Nagpur was annexed.

Annexation of Jhansi

After the death of Rao Ram Chandra in 1835 his adopted son had not been recognised by the British who placed Raghunath Rao on the throne of Jhansi. Raghunath Rao was succeeded by Gangadhar Rao who died in 1853. Before his death he had adopted Anand Rao as his son. Dalhousie refused to recognise him and annexed the State of Jhansi. Laxmi Bai of Jhansi played a very prominent role in the mutiny of 1857 in order to take her revenge.

Annexation of Sambhalpur

In the case of Sambhalpur the deceased Raja had not adopted any son. In 1849 before his death he had expressed the view that his people might obtain the protection of the British after his death. Consequently Dalhousie annexed the State of Sambhalpur.

Annexation of Jaitpur

The State of Jaitpur {in Bundelkhand} was also annexed to the British dominion because its ruler died in 1849 without leaving an issue.

Annexation of Bhagat

It was a petty hill State in Punjab and was annexed for want of natural heir to the throne after the death of its ruler in 1850.

Annexation of Udaipur

The State was annexed to the British dominion in 1852 when its ruler died leaving no heir to the throne.

Criticism of the Doctrine of Lapse

The distinction between independent allies, dependent and subordinate states was only an artificial one. Any State could be annexed by merely stating that it was a dependent State. There was not court of appeal to challenge the decision of the Court of Directors of the Company. Lord Dalhousie applied the doctrine to serve the imperial designs. His highhandedness becomes quite evident from the fact that some of his decisions were set aside by the Court of Directors. They did not allow the annexation of State of Kasouli. The States of Bhagat and Udaipur were also restored to their former Rajas by Lord Canning.

Annexation of Oudh 1856

The Punjab and Pegu were the conquests of war. The states of Satara, Jhansi, Nagpur, and Sambhalpur had fallen in by the "Doctrine of Lapse". The Kingdom of Oudh was the only great Indian state whose ruler Nawab **Wajid Ali Shah** was dispossessed on the ground of "intolerable misgovernment". The British alleged that the Nawab who had made a treaty with Lord Wellesley to



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establish such a system of administration as would be conducive to the “*prosperity of the subjects*” were entirely and continuously neglected and the whole of **Awadh** had fallen into the constantly increasing confusion, violent disorders, tumults, brigandage and widespread oppression of the people. Awadh was annexed finally in **February 1856 via a proclamation** and before the end of this month, the tenure of Lord Dalhousie ended and he was replaced with the Governor Generalship of Lord Canning.

Indian Railway Begins Journey 1853

On *April 16, 1853* a train with 14 railway carriages and 400 guests left Bombay’s Bori Bunder for Thane, with a 21-gun salute. The three locomotives were **Sindh, Sultan, and Sahib**. This 75 minutes journey was the first Journey of Indian Railway that embarked an era of development thereafter.

Telegraph begins in India 1854

The 800-mile telegraph line from Calcutta to Agra was opened in March, 1854, and two years later 4000 miles were in operation, including lines to Bombay and Madras. The telegraph played an important role during those times and is credited to have saved India in mutiny of 1857. Telegraph communication between India and England was opened in 1865 by the Persian Gulf line.

Other notes about Lord Dalhousie

- During the times of Lord Dalhousie, a separate Lieutenant Governor was appointed for the Presidency of Bengal so that it could immediately relieve the Governor General of India from the pressure of local administration. In April 1854, **Fredrick J Halliday** was appointed the First Lieutenant Governor General of Bengal under the **provisions of Charter act of 1853**
- The cool hill town of Shimla was made the summer capital of the British Empire.
- The Artillery headquarters of the army was moved from Calcutta to Meerut. The army headquarter was shifted to Shimla.
- It was during Lord Dalhousie’s time that Gurkha regiments came into force.
- The Postal system was improved and all important towns were linked by the Telegraph lines.
- The important reform during this period was **Wood’s Dispatch of 1854**.

Wood’s Dispatch of 1854

Charles Wood, a British Liberal politician and Member of Parliament sent the “Wood’s despatch” to the Governor General **Lord Dalhousie** recommending some important changes in education system. As per this despatch:

- An education department was to be set in every province.
- Universities on the model of the London University be established in big cities such as Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.



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- At least one government school be opened in every district.
- Affiliated private schools should be given grant in aid.
- The Indian natives should be given training in their mother tongue also.
- Wood's Despatch is called *Magnacarta of English Education* in India.

In accordance with Wood's despatch, **Education Departments** were established in every province and universities were opened at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1857 on the model of the London University.

Later more universities were opened in Punjab in 1882 and at Allahabad 1887.

Charter Act of 1853

Charter Act of 1853 was the last charter act passed for East India Company. It was passed on expiry of charter act of 1833. The charter was renewed but no substantial changes were made. However, this was for the first time, that this charter act, unlike other charter acts, did not fix any limit for the continuance of the administration of the company in India The act provided that the Indian territories will remain under the Governance of the company, until the parliament otherwise directed.

Reduction in Number of Directors

In England, Charter Act of 1853 reduced the number of Directors of the Company from 24 to 18. Out of these 18, six were to be appointed by the crown.

Separate Governor for Presidency of Bengal

The Charter act of 1853 provided for appointment of a separate Governor for the Presidency of Bengal, distinct from the Governor General. However, the court of Directors and the Board of Control were authorized to appoint a lieutenant governor, till the appointment of a Governor was made. Please note that the Lieutenant governor was appointed in 1854, but no Governor was appointed for Bengal till 1912.

Power to constitute a new Presidency

This act also empowered the Court of Directors either to constitute a new Presidency (In lines of Presidency of Madras or Bombay) or appoint a Lieutenant Governor. No new presidency was constituted but in 1859, a new Lieutenant governor was appointed for Punjab.

Expansion of Governor General's Office

Charter Act of 1853 marks the expansion of the Council of the Governor General for legislative purposes. The fourth member was placed at an equal status with other members. The council of legislative purposes which had 6 members now was expanded to 12 members.

These 12 members were :

1. The Governor General =1
2. The commander in Chief =1



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3. Members of the Governor General's Council=4
4. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (Calcutta)=1
5. A regular judge of the Supreme court Calcutta=1
6. Representative members drawn from the company's servants with 10 years minimum tenure and appointed by the local governments of Bengal, Madras, Bombay and North Western provinces=4

Total =12

Genesis of Indian Civil Services

The previous charter act of 1833 had laid down that the Court of Directors should nominate annually 4 times as many candidates as there were vacancies, from whom one should be selected by competitive examination. The charter act of 1833 also provided that Haileybury college of London should make quota to admit the future civil servants However, this system of an open competition was never effectively operated. A committee under the chairmanship of Lord Macaulay had prepared the regulations in this context. The report said that:

- Haileybury should cease to be maintained as higher education college for the ICS
- There should be a broad general education rather than specialized education for the ICS recruits
- The recruitment should be based upon an open competitive examination to bring out the best candidates and not through mere superficial knowledge
- The appointments should be subject to a period of probation.
- Charter Act of 1853 deprived the Court of Directors of its right of Patronage to Indian appointments and now it was to be exercised under the regulations. This was the Birth of Civil Services which was thrown in 1854 for open competition.

New provinces

By that time, the administrative situation got hard due to annexation of new territories to the company's possession in India. The Charter Act of 1853 empowered the Governor General of India-in Council to take over by proclamation under his immediate authority and management of the territories for the time being. He was authorized to issue necessary orders and directions for its administrations or provide for its administration. This resulted in creation of Assam, the central provinces, and Burma.

Significance of Charter Act 1853

The Charter Act 1853 indicated clearly that the rule of the Company was not going to last a long time. The power and influence of the company were curtailed. British Crown could nominate six Directors. Further, marks the beginning of Parliamentary system in India because of the key feature that Legislative Council was clearly distinguished from the Executive Council. The Governor



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General was relieved of the administrative duties of Bengal. He was to devote his whole time to work for the Government of India.

Mutiny of 1857

In 1856, Lord Canning took office as last Governor General of India under the East India Company. The Mutiny of 1857 ended East India Company's rule in India and brought Indian directly under the British monarch.

Reasons of Mutiny

The key reasons for mutiny were as follows:

Pathetic Socioeconomic Condition

Not a shilling was spent from the British treasury on the defense of the India. The sever famines which devoured millions of people remained issues, that were never addressed. The tenure of Dalhousie was pathetic as far as concerns of the Indian natives are concerned. The feelings of the unrest that was growing among the Indians finally got manifested in the form of revolt of 1857.

The Indian public which does not like sudden changes was applied with the new laws and customs which were anathema to the Indian society. Some of them were allowing the widows to remarry, abolishing practice of Sati ^(which was considered revered at that time), establishing the land revenue systems which never existed before. **Widows Remarriage Act was introduced by Lord Dalhousie** but it was **approved by Lord Canning in 1856**. The Hindus saw it as a sequel to the Abolition of Sati (**Regulation XVII**) and took it as a threat to Hinduism.

Problems of Land Revenue

The Ryotwari and Mahalwari system demanded the revenue which was exorbitant and methods of collecting the revenue were cruel. In 1852, the **Enam commission** was established which recommended the takeover of the Jagirs on which the revenue was not paid. The result was that twenty thousand Jagirs had been confiscated.

Destruction of Economy

The Economic drain also destroyed the Indian Industry, disintegrating the traditional fabric of the country. The Industrial revolution of England made the machines devourers of Indian Raw material and destroyed the Foreign Trade of the country. India was reduced to a mere exporter of the raw materials.

Low position in Administration

Indians were debarred from the important and high posts in their own country. The notorious signboards 'Dogs and Indians not allowed' were common in the British places of activities in India.

Doctrine of Lapse

The annexation of Satara, Nagpur, Jhansi, Sambhalpur, Karauli, Udaipur, Baghat etc. by the notorious **Doctrine of Lapse** caused the general hateful sentiments among the Indian public. In



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Nagpur, there was an open auction of the Royal belongings.

III-treatment with Bahadur Shah Zafar

The name of Bahadur Shah Zafar was removed from the coins during the times of Lord Ellenborough. He was ordered by Lord Dalhousie to vacate the Red Fort and shift to the Mahrauli area outside Delhi. By this time the people of India had become nostalgic about the Mughal rule and wanted to see Bahadur Shah Emperor of India. Lord Canning announced that after Bahadur Shah, the Mughal successors would not be called emperor and their status would be reduced to Prince.

Annexation of Oudh

The annexation of the so far loyal state of Oudh created general panic and disaffection contrary to the British belief that it was done for removing the “misrule and administration irregularities”.

Police and Judiciary

The Judiciary was biased. The British officers were hated and considered aliens in the land of Hindus and Muslims. The people were loathful of the oppressive loot of the officers, including British appointed Indian Daroghas.

Christian Missionaries

The increased activities of the Christian missionaries were seen with suspicion and mistrust. They tried their best to convert as many people they could and indulged in the false propaganda against the faiths and religions of Hindus and Muslims. The Padris were appointed in the army to “teach” the sepoys about Christianity.

Education

The education policy was not taken positively in Indian public. They thought that the new schools opened by the British and where the “English” is taught will convert their sons to “Christians”.

Discrimination with Sepoys

The Indian sepoys were victims of discrimination. They were paid low wages and faced constant verbal and physical abuses from their bosses. The annexation of Oudh in 1856 created discontent in the Bengal army. The Indian sepoys were chaffed of the new customs which forbade them putting caste marks on their foreheads, keeping beards and wearing turbans.

Santhal rebellion 1855-56

The Santhal rebellion predates 1857. It was a rebellion of Santhal people led by 4 Murmu Brothers named Sindhu, Kanhu, Chand and Bhairav, in modern Jharkhand (then Bengal Presidency) against the oppressive Zamindari system. They initially launched Guerilla warfare in the Jungles of Jharkhand. The British trapped these outstanding archers and killed them in a battle. The Santhal villages were plundered and the rebellion was brutally subdued.

The cause of Nana Sahib 1854-55

Nana Sahib was the adopted son of Last Peshwa Baji Rao II who had been retired to Bithoor, after the Third Anglo Maratha War. Baji Rao was receiving the pension of Rupees Eight Lakh per annum



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from the British. When he died, Nana Sahib was to get this pension as heir-presumptive to the throne. But the company stopped the pension on the ground that he was not a natural born heir. Nana Sahib sent his friend and envoy Azimullah Khan to England in 1853 to plead his cause but the British were not convinced. The result was that he conspired against the British and led the revolt at Kanpur.

Azimullah Khan – The envoy to England

So far, Azimullah Khan, who was prime minister to Nana Sahib was an English lover. But at England, he could not plead the cause of Nana Sahib and while returning from England, he got an opportunity to visit Constantinople, in the Ottoman Empire. He visited the sites of the Crimean war and was able to look at the exhausted British soldiers returning. He also tried to get in touch with the Turkish and Russian spies.

Tantya Tope – The rescuer of Laxmibai

His name was Ramachandra Pandurang Tope and he was friend of Nana Sahib. After the Kanpur was preoccupied by the British, he went to Gwalior, where he rescued Laxmibai. But the forces of British defeated him and executed him at Shivpuri.

Major Events of the mutiny

Introduction of Pattern 1853 Enfield Musket

On the New Year day of 1857, a new Enfield (P 1853) rifle was issued in India to the 60th Queen's Royal Rifles in Meerut.

The cartridges of this rifle had a paper cover that had to be bitten off before loading in the rifle. It was accepted by some British officials that the papers and the grease inside is composed of the beef and pig fat.

This was taken as destroying their religion. On 22 January 1857, at the Dum Dum arsenal near Calcutta the natives expressed concern regarding the use of the greased cartridge required by the new rifle and a consequent threat to Hindu and Muslim religions.

The military drills of the time needed the sepoys to bite off the cartridge, pour the gunpowder from within to down the barrel, then ram the cartridge, which included the bullet, then remove the ram-rod, then bring the rifle to the ready and set the sights and fire. The "user guide" said:

"Whenever the grease around the bullet appears to be melted away, or otherwise removed from the cartridge, the sides of the bullet should be wetted in the mouth before putting it into the barrel; the saliva will serve the purpose of grease for the time being".

From January to May, the wave of dissatisfaction touched various British Cantonments. The most awful sentiments were in the cantonments of Meerut, Barrackpur and Ambala.

Use of Chapattis

All of a sudden, the English officials could see passing of the Chapattis, usually by the village chaukidars and watchmen throughout the north India. The first report was issued in February 1857



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by Magistrate of Gurgaon that these Chapattis may be a portent of a general disturbance coming up and signify the joining of the people. The magistrate was true in his interpretation, but it was realized later only.

March 1857: Refusal to accept greased cartridge

By 9 March 1857, the Sepoys of the 19th Bengal Native Infantry at Behrampur refused to accept the greased cartridges. A court martial was done and the regiment was disarmed. On 23 March General Greg Anson, Commander in Chief, India, issued an order suspending the use and firing of the greased cartridges throughout India until a special report is received from Meerut.

29 March 1857 – Mutiny at Barrackpur – Mangal Pandey

At Barrackpur, Mangal Pandey of the 34th Bengal Native Infantry went on a rampage wounding the British Officers. The mutiny was basically a “One Man Show”. Mangal Pandey was hanged on 8 April 1857, thus becoming one of the first martyrs of mother India’s liberation war that extended 90 years afterwards. One more officer Issurl Pandey was hanged on 11 April for not helping the British during the rampage. One Paltu Khan was promoted for his active duty towards stopping Mangal Pandey creates more havoc.

Mutiny at Meerut – 10 May 1857

85 Sepoys of the 20th and 11th Bengal Infantry regiments and 3rd Indian Light Cavalry mutinied. They broke out in open rebellion, shouted “Delhi Chalo”, proceeded to Delhi, overthrew the British Rule, massacred any European that came their way, Proclaimed Bahadur Shah Zafar as Emperor of India. Col. Ripley was killed at Delhi. The public welcomed the soldiers and supported the revolt. The son of Bahadur Shah Zafar, Mirza Zahiruddin was declared commander in chief, despite no military experience.

Later **the command at Delhi was taken by Bakht Khan**, the nominal commander chief of the rebels at Delhi who later died in the battle in 1859.

The Mutiny Spreads – May 1857

On 12 May 1857, a company of the 81st infantry captured the fort of Govindgarh near Amritsar. The mutiny spread to Lahore where Mian Mir fought the mutineers and saved the Lahore from falling to the Mutineers.

On 14 May 1857, Lord Canning issued orders for the 43rd Queen Regiment and 1st Madras Fusiliers to embark immediately to Calcutta.

Lord Canning **telegraphed** Lord Elphinstone, the Governor of Bombay to send British Forces immediately. He also sent transport to bring the British forces back from Pegu in Burma. On 16 May 1857, 50 Europeans rounded up in Delhi were massacred by the crowd. On 16 May, Lord Canning sent a letter to Lord Elgin at Singapore to send troops at Calcutta. The rebellion spread to Lucknow, Allahabad, Kanpur, Bareilly, Banaras, and Jhansi very soon.



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The siege of Cawnpore

Siege of Cawnpore is also known as “Bibighar Massacre or “Satichaura Ghat massacre”.

Before this event the British had approached Nana Sahib and ‘convinced’ him to support in case there is a mutiny at Kanpur. By June 1857, the number of the rebellions got 3000. The place was mistaken as safe by the British, European families began to drift into the entrenchment as the news of rebellion in the nearby areas reached them. The entrenchment was fortified. Nana Sahib entered as a friend of the British inside and declared that he was with the rebels. he proceeded with the soldiers to capture Cawnpore. He made the British officers surrender on a promise of safe passage to Allahabad. Cawnpore was in siege till 15 July 1857 and 200 Europeans including women and children were massacred.

On 16 July the British Forces arrived and Cawnpore was recaptured. Nana Sahib disappeared and then fled to Nepal in 1859.

Mutiny at Lucknow: Begum Hazrat Mahal

Begum Hazrat Mahal was the first wife of recently deposed Nawab Wajid Ali Shah. She led the rebels at Lucknow and was able to siege Lucknow. Her son Birjis Qadra was declared King of Awadh. But when the British were able to destroy the rebels, she fled to Nepal, where she took asylum and died in obscurity in 1879.

Mutiny at Gwalior: Tantya Tope

With the aid of the rebels at Gwalior he was able to compel General Windham hard at Cawnpore on the 27th and 28th of November 1857. But later was defeated by Sir Colin Campbell on the 6th of December. Together with the Rani of Jhansi he was besieged by Sir Hugh Rose in the Jhansi fort, but escaped and collected a force of 20,000 men which Sir Hugh defeated without relaxing the siege. After this he sought refuge in the jungles of Bundelkhand, and later captured and executed in 1859.

Mutiny at Jhansi – Rani Laxmi Bai

Jhansi was relatively calm in 1857, but British troops arrived under Hugh Rose and laid siege to Jhansi on 23 March 1858 and asked Laxmi Bai to surrender. She did not surrender and the fight began which continued for 2 weeks. Later her army was joined by Tantya Tope’s troops, but the British were able to capture Jhansi by 31 March. Laxmi Bai escaped over the wall at night and fled from her city, surrounded by her guards. Along with her young adopted son Anand Rao, she decamped to Kalpi. Both Nana and Laxmibai moved on to Gwalior and occupied the fort of Gwalior. But on 17 June, 1858, she died in the battle. The British captured Gwalior three days later. Her father, Moropant Tambey, was captured and hanged a few days after the fall of Jhansi. Anand Rao, was given a pension by the British Raj.

Mutiny in Arrah – Kunwar Singh

A band of rebels was led by Kunwar Singh at Arrah in Bihar. Despite his old age (near 80) he had a good fight and harried British forces for nearly one year and remained invincible till the end. But he



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was defeated by William Taylor and Eyre and died in the battle.

Recapturing

Bahadur Shah was arrested. British general Hudson shot dead his two sons and he was exported to Rangoon where he died 1862. The imam of Bauli kalandar led the revolt in Panipat. He was captured and hanged. General Hewitt commanded the Forces at Meerut. Delhi was recaptured by Sir John Nicholson. Colin Campbell recaptured Kanpur. General Havelock defeated Nana Sahib.

Role of Princely states

The princely states did not participate in the mutiny and as per Lord Canning, the princely rulers proved to be a barrier to stop this hurricane.

Those who helped British

Holkar of Indore remained with the British. Man Singh at Gwalior deceived Tantya Tope and Laxmibai. Nizam of Hyderabad, Gulab Singh of Kashmir, Sikh rulers of Patiala, Nabha and Jind also remained loyal to British. The Sikhs detest towards the Mughals was the main reason behind their remaining against the mutineers.

Dinkar Rao of Gwalior and Salar Jang of Hyderabad were “praised” by the British for their loyalty to the Government. Zamindars, Land Lords, Money lenders, Big Traders remained loyal to the East India Company. The elite “educated” class of Indians remained indifferent. Railways, Telegraph and Postal services, which were initiated by Lord Dalhousie saved India for British from the hands of Indians.

Leaders of Revolt

- Delhi : Bahadur Shah Zafar and **Bakht Khan**
- Jhansi : Rani Laxmi Bai
- Bihar : Kunwar Singh
- Mathura : Devi Singh
- Meerut : Kadam Singh
- Faizabad : Muhammad Ullah
- Kanpur: Nana sahib, Tantya Tope and Azimullah Khan
- Allahabad : Liaqat Ali
- Gwalior : Tantya Tope
- Haryana : Rao Tularam
- Sambhalpur : Surender Sai
- Bareli: Khan Bahadur Khan
- Satara: Rango Bapuji Gupte
- Hyderabad : Sonaji pant
- Karnataka: Maulavi Sayyed Allauddin, Bhimrao Mundargi And Chhota Singh



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- Kolhapur : Annaji Phandnavis and Tatyah Mohite
- Madras: Ghulam Gaus and Sultan Baksh
- Chengalpattu: Annagirian Krishna
- Coimbatore: Mulbagal Swami

Who said what about this mutiny?

- **Charles Raikes:** Merely a mutiny of the soldiers, which took the shape of revolt of the people in certain areas.
- **Sir J.W. Kaye :** A battle of Blacks against the Whites
- **T R Holmes:** A conflict between civilization and barbarism
- **V D Savarkar:** India's planned war of Independence.
- **Karl Marx:** Struggle of soldiers, peasants and democratic combine against the foreign and feudal bondage.
- **Rees:** a war of Fanatic religionists against the Christians
- **R C Mazumadar:** "Neither first, nor national nor war of independence."
- **Hutchinson:** It began as a mutiny and became a popular rebellion.
- **J L Nehru:** a feudal outburst headed by feudal chiefs and their followers aided by widespread anti-foreign sentiments.
- **S N Sen:** began with a fight for religion, ended with a war for independence.

After the Mutiny of 1857, Peace was restored in a period of more than one year and the most important outcome was that the Government of India passed from the Company to the Crown.

Model Questions for Prelims

1. Why did the English East India Company succeed so spectacularly in India when others, European and Indian, did not?
 1. Britain was better than all rivals on the front of Control of the seas
 2. East India Company had gained control of India's richest province after battle of Plassey
 3. East India Company was devoid of corruption

Choose the correct option:

[A] Only 1

[B] 1 & 2

[C] 1, 2 & 3

[D] 2 & 3

Answer: [B] 1 & 2

Much of the answer lies in Europe. An island nation for whom overseas trade was vital, Britain was committed to securing its Indian interests at all costs. Control of the seas, in an



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era in which export trade brought the greatest profit, gave Britain an edge over all rivals. For India, the eighteenth century thus offers a dramatic contrast with the Mughal agrarian order of the seventeenth, when overseas commerce was of secondary importance. Furthermore, although the industrial revolution was not yet underway, the British economy had already become suffused with a dynamic commercial ethos sustained by secure private property rights. In India the British could hold out to indigenous mercantile classes, first in the presidency capitals and then in the countryside, as local rulers did not, the attractive prospect of freedom from arbitrary exaction. Part of the reason for Britain's success too lies, quite simply, in the fact that after 1757, by its conquest of Bengal, the East India Company had gained control of India's richest province. This gave it the resources to dominate the other players in the continuing contests among India's regional states. With a larger revenue base, the Company could field a larger army than its Indian rivals, and organize a more efficient state structure. As a result, even though the British state in Bengal was forged, in large part, from the same elements of 'military fiscalism' as other states throughout the subcontinent, it could over time subdue them all one by one. (Cambridge History of India)

Edit Question

2. Consider the following East India Companies:

1. British East India Company
2. Dutch East India Company
3. Danish East India Company
4. Portuguese East India Company
5. French East India Company
6. Swedish East India Company

Which of the following is the correct order for their establishments (starting from first to last)?

- [A] 1,2,3,4,5,6
- [B] 1,3,2,6,4,5
- [C] 1,2,4,3,6,5
- [D] 6,1,2,3,4,5

Answer: [A] 1,2,3,4,5,6

British East India Company, founded in 1600

Dutch East India Company, founded in 1602

Danish East India Company, founded in 1616

Portuguese East India Company, founded in 1628



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French East India Company, founded in 1664

Swedish East India Company, founded in 1731

[Edit Question](#)

3. With reference to the “Board of Control” in the East India Company, consider the following statements:

1. It was formed by Pitts India Act of 1784
2. It controlled the commercial matters of the company
3. It was abolished by the Government of India Act 1858

Which among the above statements is/ are correct?

- [A] Only 1 is correct
[B] Only 1 & 2 are correct
[C] 2 & 3 are correct
[D] 1, 2 & 3 are correct

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3 are correct

Board of Control was formed as a measure for increasing the control of the British crown on the administration of the east India company in India by Pitt’s India act of 1784. It consisted of six unpaid privy councillors, one of whom was the president with a casting vote. The Board had no patronage and did not interfere in commercial matters, but it had power to superintend, direct and control all acts relating to the civil or military government or the revenues the east India company’s officers in India were subject to the approval of the Board which also could send its own orders without the consent of the directors. After the mutiny when the government of India was transferred to the British crown by the government of India act, 1858, the Board of control as such was abolished.

[Edit Question](#)

4. The first coins under authority of the East India Company were struck in the mint at ___:

- [A] Hooghly
[B] Murshidabad
[C] Calcutta
[D] Madras

Answer: [B] Murshidabad

[Edit Question](#)

5. Which among the following is / are correct statements with respect to the French East India Company?

1. It was a private concern



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2. It was chartered by King Louis XIV
3. It was abolished immediately after French Revolution

Select the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] Only 2

Answer: [D] Only 2

The first statement is not correct because the French East India Company was government backed concern while the English East India Company was a private concern. The second statement is correct. Third statement is not correct because French East India Company was abolished in 1769, two decades earlier than the French Revolution.

[Edit Question](#)

6. Who among the following was emperor at Delhi when British launched a factory at Hooghly in Bengal?

[A] Jahandar Shah

[B] Mohammad Shah

[C] Farrukhsiyar

[D] Shah Aalam I

Answer: [C] Farrukhsiyar

There is an interesting story behind this question. Farrukhsiyar had sit on the throne of Delhi by defeating and killing his uncle Jahandar Shah. He is known to have tortured Banda Bahadur to death. Farrukhsiyar was the last Mughal sovereign who married a Hindu Princess, the daughter of Raja Ajit Singh of Jodhpur and Marwar. When the nuptials were preparing, Farrukhsiyar got ill and was confined to bed. At that there was a mission at Delhi in which Mr. Hamilton was a surgeon. Mr. Hamilton treated the emperor and thus he was able to marry the Hindu princess. After the marriage was completed, Farrukhsiyar invited Mr. Hamilton and asked him what he would like in reward, in a typical oriental style of Indian emperors. But Mr. Hamilton did not asked anything for his own but for his employers i.e. east India company, he demanded some land for a factory at Hooghly. The demand was fulfilled and thus began the journey of East India company in east of India.

[Edit Question](#)

7. In many ways, the Permanent Settlement of Lord Cornwallis was helpful for the East India Company. Which among the following was / were such merits?



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1. The collection of revenue became certain and regular for the company
2. It had flexibility of Sale or the Sunset Law
3. It enhanced the company revenue substantially

Select the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1
- [B] Only 1 & 2
- [C] Only 1 & 3
- [D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [A] Only 1

Merits and Demerits of Permanent Settlement of Lord Cornwallis

Merits

1. It secured British dominion in India.
2. Collection of Revenue became certain and regular.
3. It facilitated the method of collection of land revenue.
4. Expenses of frequent assessment of land revenue were saved.
5. It gave inducement to the agricultural improvement.
6. Increase of trade industry and commerce.
7. In accordance with the Canons of Taxation.
8. There was a possibility of Increase in the Government income. (But this did not happen)
9. It freed Company Officers to devote their time to other works.
10. It gave popularity and economic stability to the British Government.
11. Value of land increased.

Demerits

1. It over looked the interests of the poor peasants.
2. It placed the cultivators on the mercy of the Zamindars.
3. The rigidity of the Sale or the Sunset law unpopularised it.
4. The Government could not enhance the amount of Land Revenue.
5. The Zamindars made no improvements in the land.
6. It created absentee land lords.
7. It was uneconomic and defective.

Edit Question

8. Which among the following is / are correct statements regarding Tipu Sultan?
 1. He was only Indian ruler in those days who was self sufficient in arms



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2. He not only fought with British but also with the Marathas
3. He allied with the French East India Company
4. He paid special attention to economic development of his state

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 1, 3 & 4
- [C] Only 1, 2, 3 & 4
- [D] Only 3

Answer: [C] Only 1, 2, 3 & 4

In this question, only second statement is incorrect. According to some historians, Tipu was the first Indian sovereign to seek to apply western methods to his administration and he took great interest in economic development, which is proved by the fact that he promoted cultivation of cash crops, abolished custom of giving jagirs in lieu of salary, promoted trade and commerce and established some factories. These factories manufactured scissors, knives, guns, muskets, powder, paper, watches, cutlery, etc.

Tipu is also known as Indian rulers of his times who was self sufficient in arms. He also sent his embassy to many countries, like Burma, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Egypt, France, etc. He celebrated the French revolution, planted liberty tree at his capital and became member of Jacobin Club, a famous radical group.

[Edit Question](#)

9. With reference to the relative position of French and the Britishers on the eve of Carnatic wars, consider the following observations:
1. The position of the English East India Company was superior to that of the French East India Company
 2. The Naval Power of French was superior to the British

Which among the above is / are correct statements?

- [A] Only 1
- [B] Only 2
- [C] Both 1 & 2
- [D] Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: [A] Only 1

The second statement is not correct because the sea power of the English was superior to that of the French. The merchant fleets of the English were bigger and made regular voyages.

[Edit Question](#)



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10. Via the treaty of Alinagar 1757, Nawab Sirj-ud-daula granted permission to the British to ___:
1. Fortify Calcutta
 2. Mint their own coins
 3. Duty Free trade in Bengal

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] 1 & 2
[B] Only 2
[C] 1, 2 & 3
[D] Only 2 & 3

Answer: [C] 1, 2 & 3

The Treaty of Alinagar was signed on February 9, 1757 between Robert Clive of the British East India Company and the Nawab of Bengal, Mirza Muhammad Siraj Ud Daula. Based on the terms of the accord, the Nawab would recognize all the 1717 provisions of Mughal Emperor Farrukh Siyar's firman. Moreover, all British goods that passed through Bengal would be exempt from duties. In other tenets of the agreement, the British would not be hindered from fortifying Calcutta, as well as mint coins in Calcutta. The signing of the treaty was one of the events leading up to the famous Battle of Plassey.

[Edit Question](#)

11. Which among the following was / were the Judicial reforms by Lord William Bentinck?
1. Abolition of Provincial Courts of Appeal
 2. Setting up of separate Sadr Diwani Adalat and Sadr Adalat at Allahabad
 3. Abolition of Jury system
 4. Adoption of vernacular languages as Court Language

Select the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1, 2 & 3
[B] Only 1, 2 & 4
[C] Only 2, 3 & 4
[D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [B] Only 1, 2 & 4

Judicial Reforms of Lord William Bentinck

1. Abolition of Provincial Courts of Appeal (1829).
2. Power of Magistrates increased.
3. Summary disposal of rent cases.
4. Appointment of Munsifs and Sadr Amins .



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5. Setting up of separate Sadr Diwani Adalat and Sadr Adalat at Allahabad (1832).
6. **Introduction of Jury system.**
7. Adoption of vernacular as Court Language.
8. Beginning of the Codification of Laws.

Edit Question

12. Which of the following was / were the Judicial Reforms by Lord Cornwallis?
1. Abolishing the judicial functions of the Zamindars.
 2. Bringing of the judicial proceedings in writing
 3. Administration justice according to Quran for Muslims and Shastras for Hindus
- Select the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
[B] Only 2 & 3
[C] Only 1 & 3
[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

Judicial Reforms of Lord Cornwallis

- Abolishing the judicial functions of the Zamindars.
- Establishment of the Civil and Criminal Courts in districts.
- Establishment of Sadr-Dewani Adalat and Sadr-Nizamat.
- Bringing of the judicial proceedings in writing.
- Appointment of Indian Judges in Criminal Courts.
- Administration justice according to Quran for Muslims and Shastras for Hindus .

Edit Question

13. With reference to the system of judiciary during the times of Lord Cornwallis, consider the following statements:
1. The judiciary in India was a three tier system
 2. Highest court of appeal was Sadar Diwani Adalat
 3. The decision of Sadar Diwani Adalat was final and could not be challenged
- Which among the above statements is / are correct?

- [A] Only 1 & 2
[B] Only 2 & 3
[C] Only 2
[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [C] Only 2



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It was a four tiered judiciary

- Lowest Court was the Amin Court or Munsif Court. The Munsifs could decide the case where the value was less than Rs. 50.
- The higher court was the District court or “Diwani Adalat”. The Judge was called “Session Judge”. This session Judge was essentially an Englishman, who used to deliver justice to “only Indians” and not the Europeans. He was assisted by assessors.
- The higher than Diwani Adalat was the Provincial Court of Appeal. Four provincial Courts of appeal were set up at Dhaka, Calcutta, Murshidabad and Patna. These courts heard appeals from the districts except the English.
- After provincial court, the Highest Court of Appeal was set up which was called “Sadar Diwani Adalat”. The headquarters of Sadar Diwani Adalat was at Calcutta and it was the Highest Court of Appeal. Its judge was supported by a Head Qazi, two Muftis and Two Pandits.
- The appeals from the “Sadar Diwani Adalat” were submitted to the King in England. The King of England only entertained those cases whose value was more than 5000 rupees. The above system was in the Civil Judiciary.
- In Criminal Judiciary, Cornwallis introduced the following structure:
- At Taluka / Tahsil level there was a Darogh-i-Adalat. Its Judge was “Darogha” who was “An Indian”. This was the lowest level.
- The appeals from a Darogha could be taken to “District Criminal Courts”. The judge of this court was a Session Judge, an English.
- To hear the criminal appeals from District courts, 4 Circuit Courts at Murshidabad, Dhaka, Calcutta and Patna were established.
- The Highest court of Criminal appeal was in “Sadar Diwani Adalat” at Calcutta which used to sit once in a week. It was supervised by Governor General in council.

Edit Question

14. Which among the following acts gave the power to the Governor General to override his council?
- [A] Pitts India Act 1784
 - [B] Amending Act of 1786
 - [C] Charter Act of 1793
 - [D] Charter Act of 1813

Answer: [B] Amending Act of 1786

Act of Act of 1786 was a supplementary Bill, brought by Pitt and was passed in 1786. Lord



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Cornwallis was appointed as the first GovernorGeneral, and he then became the effective ruler of British India under the authority of the Board of Control and the Court of Directors. Lord Cornwallis was given powers to override his council in extraordinary situations.

[Edit Question](#)

15. Charter act of 1813:

1. ended the monopoly of East India Company to trade in tea
2. made the Governor General of Bengal the Governor General of British India
3. had a provision for Company to invest Rs. 1 Lakh every year on the education of Indians.

Select the correct option from codes given below:

[A] 3 Only

[B] 1 & 2 Only

[C] 1, 2 and 3

[D] None

Answer: [A] 3 Only

First statement is incorrect because Charter act of 1833 ended the monopoly of EIC to trade in Tea. Also, the second statement is incorrect because it was Charter act of 1833 which made the Governor general of bengal as Governor general of British India. Kindly note the points of charter act 1813:

- The Charter act of 1813 ended the monopoly of the East India Company in India, however the company's monopoly in trade with china and trade in tea was remained intact.
- The charter act of 1813, for the first time explicitly defined the constitutional position of the British territories in India.
- This act also made provisions to grant permission to the persons who wished to go to India for promoting moral and religious improvements. (Christian Missionaries).
- This act regulated the company's territorial revenues and commercial profits. The company debt was to be reduced and dividend was fixed @10.5% per annum.
- There was also a provision that Company should invest Rs. 1 Lakh every year on the education of Indians.
- This act also empowered the local governments to impose taxes on the persons subject to the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court.

[Edit Question](#)

General Knowledge Today



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[Target 2016: Integrated IAS General Studies](#)

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Model Questions

Prelims MCQ Topics

Please pay special attention to contents of Queen Victoria's proclamation, Tea Mania, Kuka Movement, Vernacular Press Act, Ilbert Bill, Various Indian Councils Acts {they have been discussed in historical underpinning in much detail}, Recommendations of Anthony McDonnell Commission, Reasons and impacts of Punjab Land Alienation Act 1900 and Surat Split from this document. Check Prelims Model Questions in the end of the document.

Lord Canning

Lord Canning served as Governor General of India from 1856 to 1862. During his tenure, the Government of India Act, 1858 was passed which created the office of Viceroy to be held by the same person who was Governor General of India. Thus, Lord Canning also served as first Viceroy of India. The important events during his tenure include – the Mutiny of 1857, which he was able to suppress successfully, Passing of Indian Councils Act, 1861 which introduced portfolio system in India, withdrawal of “Doctrine of Lapse” in which was one of the main reasons of mutiny of 1858, introduction of Code of Criminal Procedure, enactment of Indian High Courts Act, Indian Penal Code (1858), Bengal Rent Act (1859), introduction of Income tax on experimental basis etc.

Queen Victoria's Proclamation (1858)

On November 1, 1858, **Lord Canning** sent forth the royal proclamation in a grand Darbar at Allahabad via which Queen Victoria intimated that she had assumed the direct government of India. This proclamation also set forth the principles on the basis of which India was to be governed in future and the British policy towards people of British-Indian territories and princes. The key points from this are as follows:

- All treaties and engagements of East India Company with princely states would be maintained and honoured.
- There will be no further extension of the territories of the erstwhile East India Company. No encroachment on British territories in India would be allowed and no encroachment will be done by British on territories of others.
- The rights, dignity and honour of native princes would be respected as our own.
- Expressed the desire that British subjects enjoy prosperity, social advancement that can be only secured by internal peace and good government.
- Bound to natives of Indian territories by same obligations which bind us to other subjects.
- Admission to services / offices of the government without discrimination on race or creed.



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- Amnesty to all except those who had directly taken part in the murder of British subject

The above proclamation was called “Magnacarta of people of India” and was declared in eloquent style to be in consonance with principle of justice and religious toleration as guiding policy of queen’s rule.

End of East India’s Army

The last solemn assembly of East India Company was held on September 1, 1858. With the queen’s proclamation, armies of East India Company ceased to exist and forces in India were incorporated as integral part of the British army. The Indian sepoys were enlisted in the regular service of British army.

Government of India Act, 1858

On August 2, 1858, the GOI Act, 1858 {formally *Act for the Good Government of India*} got royal assent and came into force from November 1, 1858. This act provided liquidation of the East India Company and transferred the powers of government to British Crown. Key points of this act were as follows:

- The powers of East India Company’s Board of Control and Court of Directors would be now exercised by Secretary of State for India. This new office was created to exercise the complete authority and control over Indian administration.
- The Secretary of State for India was also a member of British Parliament and was responsible to British Parliament.
- The Secretary of State for India was to be assisted by a Council of 15 members. More than 50% members of this council ought to have lived in India for at least 10 years.
- The British members of parliament could ask questions from Secretary of State for India on matters related to Indian administration.
- The Governor General to work as representative of the British Government and was responsible for administration of the country. A new office of Viceroy was created to work as a diplomat to parley with the Princely states. Both the offices were to be held by same person. Viceroy was made responsible to Secretary of State for India.

The Government of India Act, 1858 thus resulted in highly centralized structure of governance in India. Further, it was a formal change and did not bring any substantial changes in the lives of Indian people.

Indian Councils Act, 1861

In 1861, the parliament passed Indian Councils Act. With this act, the overburdened executive council of the Governor General provided a fifth {financial} member; and for the purpose of making laws, addition of 6-12 members was made. Some new powers were assigned to Governor General for



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ease of administration. This act also empowered the Governor General to delegate special task to individual members of the Executive council, thus began the Portfolio system in India. It also gave legislative powers to governments of Bombay and Madras, thus leading to decentralization to some extent.

Indian Civil Services Act 1861

Indian Civil Services Act, 1861 provided that any person, whether Indian or European could be appointed to any of the offices (specified in the schedule of this act), provided that he had resided for minimum of seven years in India. The person had to pass an exam in vernacular language of the district, in which he was employed. However, the same act maintained that some of the *principal civil offices* in India were reserved to the *covenanted civil service* (only British were eligible for these). By that time, Indians were demanding entry into the Covenanted Civil services but this demand was not fulfilled.

Indian High Courts Act 1861

This act was passed to fuse the *Supreme Courts, Sadar Diwani Adalats and Sadar Fauzdari Adalats* and also enable queen to issue letters patent to establish *high courts of Calcutta, Madras and Bombay*. The jurisdiction of the Supreme Courts, Sadar Diwani Adalats and Fauzdari Adalats was subsumed by High Courts.

The act provided that each high Court will be composed of one chief justice and maximum 15 judges. The chief justice and at least 3 regular judges had to be barristers and one third of these judges should be from covenanted civil service. As per the letters patent issued by queen for establishment of high courts:

- The High Court of Judicature of Fort Williams was established on July 1 1862 with Sir Barnes Peacock as its first Chief Justice. This was later known as Calcutta High Court and was the first high court of India. In 1863, Justice Shambhoo Nath Pandit became first Indian to become a judge in this court.
- On 14 August 1862, Bombay high Court was established.
- The letters patent for Madras high Court was issued on 26th June 1862.

Further, a high court of judicature for the north-western provinces came into existence at Agra under a letters patent of March 17, 1866. Its seat was shifted from Agra to Allahabad in 1869 and its designation was altered to the high court of judicature at Allahabad by a supplementary letters patent issued on March 11, 1919. In 2016, Allahabad High Court celebrated its 150th year.

Indian Penal Code 1862

The initial sketch of the Indian Penal Code was drawn by Lord Macaulay in 1830s, but it was finally drafted in 1860 and came into force in 1862. Prior to that, the final draft of Codes of Civil and



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Criminal Procedure was ready in 1861. Before 1860, the basis of justice was “The English Criminal Law” which was administered in the Presidency-Towns of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras.

Indian Penal code was inherited by Pakistan after separation and was later named Pakistan Penal Code. The same was adopted by Bangladesh also. It was also adopted in almost all the British colonies of Asia such as Burma, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.

Introduction of Income Tax and other Financial Reforms

Via the Indian Council Act, 1861 a fifth member was added to the Governor General Executive Council as a finance member. James Wilson was the 1st finance member. He proposed three types of taxes but his successor Laing proposed only one tax called Income Tax. With this, income tax was imposed @5% on the income of Rs. 500 or more in a year. The government also reduced substantially the military and civil expenditure. The salt levy was increased to boost the revenue.

Army Reforms

The army of the East India Company was incorporated as integral part of the British army and the Indian sepoys were enlisted in the regular service of British army. However, learning lessons from the mutiny, it was decided that the ratio of Indian soldiers to European soldiers would be never more than two times. Artillery was put exclusively in the hands of the European army.

Agricultural / Land Reforms – Bengal Rent Act, 1859

Bengal Rent Act, 1859 was the first tenancy legislation after 1793 permanent settlement by Lord Cornwallis. Lord Canning had introduced this law to reform relations of the landlords and their tenants. The basic objective of this law was to strengthen the position of peasants vis-a-vis landlords by defining the powers of the Ryots and limiting the Landlord’s powers of arbitrary rent enhancement and eviction. As per this act, the Farmers who had been holding lands for 20 years on the same rent were deemed to be entitled of this right since 1793 It was further decided that unless an inquiry of a court was made, their rent could not be enhanced. It also provided ryots right to sublet their lands.

Agriculture / Land Reforms – The Tea Mania

By 1860, India’s tea produced in Assam had started getting attention in Europe. Between 1850 and 1860, a wasteland settlement policy was adopted by the British Government to facilitate large tracts of land for tea cultivation in Assam. Lord Canning further liberalized this policy via his so called fee-simple-rules under which land was sold to prospective planters at low cost {Rs. 2.8 to 5 per acre} without any clearance conditions required. This led to a fanatic expansion of tea plantations in Assam and also generated a highly speculated boom called “Tea Mania”. This Tea Mania was characterized by sale and resale of tea gardens and deceptions in which lands with recently planted



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tea plants were sold as productive tea estates! Nevertheless, the Assam tea got fame during times of Lord Canning.

Indigo Revolt

During 1859-60 the disputes between European indigo planters and the Bengal peasantry led to the Indigo revolt. The European planters wanted to force the tenants to cultivate more and more indigo due to heavy demand of the blue dye in Europe. This led to revolt. A Commission was appointed to enquire into the matter. It was decided that tenant should not be liable to criminal prosecution for refusal to fulfil a civil contract to grow indigo.

Other Events

Under Lord Canning, three universities were set up at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras on the model of London University. East India Railway was opened between Calcutta and Allahabad in 1861.

Mild Policy of Lord Canning: "Clemency Canning"

The policy of Lord Canning was not marked by any vengeance towards Indians post 1857 mutiny. His liberal and tolerant policy also inculcated some faith in Indians at a time when national movement was about to begin. He also showered favours upon the Indian princes who helped British during mutiny. The Doctrine of Lapse was abolished and made it clear that British Government will interfere only in case of misgovernance and would withdraw when situation turns normal. Due to his mild and tolerant policy, he was called *Clemency Canning*. Lord Canning left India in March, 1862, and died within a month in England. His successor was Lord Elgin.

Lord Elgin 1862-1863

Lord Elgin became viceroy and governor-general of India in 1862 but in the very next year, he died in Dharamashala {Himachal Pradesh} of a heart attack while crossing a mountain bridge, there he lies buried.

Lord Elgin is known to have abandoned the pomp of the earlier Governor Generals, he *travelled by train*. The Wahabis, a group of turbulent and fanatical Mohammedans in the northwest were suppressed during his time.

He was succeeded by **Sir John Lawrence**, who had done wonders in Punjab earlier during and after the first as well as second Anglo Sikh War.

Lord John Lawrence 1864-1869

Lord John Lawrence served as Governor General and Viceroy of India from 1864 to 1869. The important aspects of his tenure include Great famines of Odisha, Rajputana and Bundelkhand, Famine Commissions, Opening of telegraphic lines between Europe and India, enactment of Punjab Tenancy Act, War with Bhutan, the *policy of "masterly inactivity"* etc.



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Previous Records in Punjab

Lord John Lawrence was not a new face in India. He had brilliantly organized the supply of the British army in Punjab during the First Anglo Sikh war of 1845-1846 and was made the commissioner of the Jalandhar. In the second Anglo Sikh War, he was appointed as the member of the **Punjab Board of Administration** under his elder brother Sir Henry Montgomery Lawrence. Some reforms such as abolition of internal duties, establishment of a common currency and postal system, and development of Punjabi infrastructure made him popular and he was 'by some' people called "the Saviour of the Punjab". He was partially able to prevent the Sikhs enter into mutiny due to his popular image and a general Sikh detest towards the Mughals.

While appointed at Punjab, Lawrence had made an agreement with the Afghan leader Dost Muhammad Khan, but during his tenure as Viceroy, he adopted a **cautious policy** and avoided the conflicts with the Afghans and Persians.

Policy Towards Afghanistan: The Policy of masterly inactivity

Lord Lawrence was cautious in dealing with the Afghanistan and Persia. On the death of Dost Mohammed, on June 9, 1863, Sher Ali, the third son and acknowledged heir of the Dost, was recognized as Amir of Afghanistan by Lawrence, and his son, Mohammed Ali, as heir apparent. But then there was a long civil war in Afghanistan in which two older sons of the Dost, Afzal and Azum, obtained possession of most of Afghanistan, and were partially recognized as de facto rulers by Lawrence, who at the same time refused to withdraw his recognition from Sher Ali. The latter soon won his way back to power, and in 1869 was able to notify Lawrence that he was once more in complete control. Lawrence's policy had been "*that we will leave the Afghans to settle their own quarrels, and that we are willing to be on terms of amity and goodwill with the nation and with their rulers de facto*," This is known as policy of masterly inactivity.

Kindly note here that the policies of Lord Elgin (1862-63), Lord Lawrence (1864-69), Lord Mayo (1869-72) and Lord Northbrook (1872-76) are collectively called the period of Policy of masterly inactivity. The main object of the British policy during this period was let things go quietly on to give the land rest. It was opposite to the "Forward Policy" of Lord Lytton.

Bhutan War 1864-65

The British had established relations with Bhutan in 1826. The British wanted to occupy hilly routes because the Bhutanis were raiding Bengal and Assam through these routes. To start the negotiations, Lord Elgin had sent Ashley, but the Bhutanese forced him to sign a humiliating treaty whereby the British were to surrender Duars to the Bhutan. When this was known to British Government, it immediately repudiated the treaty and sent an army against Bhutan. The British army received some



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setback in the beginning but later this **Bhutan war** or **Duar War** ended in the defeat of the Bhutanese army. The peace was brought by **Treaty of Sinchula** signed on 11 November 1865. Bhutan ceded territories in the Assam Duars and Bengal Duars, as well as around 80,000 kilometers of Dewangiri (Deothang) to British in return for an annual subsidy of 50,000 rupees.

Orissa Famine 1866

The Orissa famine of 1866 followed a severe drought and destruction of the Rice Crop. The government imported rice but it reached only when millions of people starved to death. This exposed the inability of the government to deal with the famine situation in Orissa, resulted in a fearful loss of life. The famine was followed by devastating floods. The famine and floods claimed life of around 40-50 Lakh people in 2 years, mainly due to outbreak of cholera and malaria. A similar kind of famine affected Bundelkhand and Rajputana also. The government established the **Famine Commission under Henry Kempbell**. Emphasis was laid down for infrastructure development so that the relief reaches in time.

Other events during Lord Lawrence's time

Submarine telegraphy system started in 1865 between India and Europe via Persian Gulf. The Punjab and Oudh Tenancy acts were passed in 1868. Sir John Lawrence retired in January, 1869. Lord Mayo succeeded Lord Lawrence in 1869.

Lord Mayo 1869-72

Lord Mayo or Lord Naas served as 4th Viceroy of India from 12 January 1869 to 8 February 1872. He started the process of decentralization of finance. In foreign affairs, he followed the policy of non-intervention. He opened up Mayo College in Ajmer for educating children of the aristocratic families. India's census began during his tenure. He was the first Governor General to be murdered in office by a Pathan Sher Ali in Port Blair.

Afghanistan Affairs

Lord Mayo followed the policy of Masterly inactivity initiated by his predecessor. He welcomed Sher Ali, Amin of Kabul at Ambala and held a Durbar in his honour.

Mayo College

Mayo College was established at Ajmer in 1875 for the education of young Rajput princes. Colonel Sir Oliver St John became its first Principal.

India's First Census

In 1871, India's first census was carried out on Mayo's orders. He organized the Statistical Survey of India, which, under the direction of William Wilson Hunter, "produced a printed account of each district, town, and village, carefully compiled upon local inquiry, and disclosing the whole economic and social facts in the life of the people." This was the most exhaustive work done since the **Ain-i-**



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Akbari.

The other important works done under Lord Mayo were as follows:

- Setting up of Department of Revenue, Agriculture and Commerce
- Introduction of the most improved rifle, the Snider, and of rifled guns for the artillery.
- Improvement in the sanitary conditions for the troops.

Lord Mayo is known for infrastructure development in the country by which an immense extension of roads, railroads, and canals was carried out. He refused to make loans for any public works except those that would be productive. He carried out the policy of state control of public works in the promotion of the various enterprises of railroad and canal construction.

Indian Evidence Act 1872

Lord Mayo took interest in the Prison reforms, especially the convict settlements at Andaman Islands. The most important legal reform during his time was the passage of the **Indian Evidence Act in 1872**. Prior to this act, the rules of evidences were based upon the traditional legal systems of different social groups and communities. They were different for different persons depending on his or her caste, religious faith and social position. The act removed this anomaly and differentiation, and introduced a standard set of law applicable to all Indians.

Assassination of Lord Mayo

The splendid vigor of Lord Mayo defied the climate and distances in the country. He anxiously studied the wants of the farthest provinces of the empire, but his life was cut short by an assassin Sher Khan, a convict at Andaman Islands, while he was inspecting the conditions in the convict settlement of the Andaman Islands in 1872. He was followed by an acting viceroy and Governor General John Strachey. John Strachey was followed by another acting Viceroy Lord Napier in the same year 1872.

Lord Northbrook 1872-1876

Between 1872 and 1876, India's Viceroy was Lord Northbrook. The important events during his reign were deposition of Gaikwad of Baroda in 1875, visit of Prince of Wales, Famine in Bihar and Kuka Movement in Punjab.

Deposition of Gaekwad of Baroda 1875

Till 1870, Baroda was under the popular Raja Khanderao Gaekwad. After his death, he was supposed to be succeeded by Malharrao, his brother as he had no male heirs. But this man was a foolish and lavish spender and a gross tyrant. So, the paramount British came in action and by the orders of Lord Salisbury, he was deposed in 1875 and was exiled to Madras. Later he died in obscurity in 1882. This was one illustration of the use of paramount power in instances to punish acts of excessive or criminal misconduct committed by a chief or his ministers.



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Kuka Movement 1872

The Namdhari or Kuka movement was founded by either Balak Singh or Bhagat Jawar {Jawahar} on the basis of saying only God's name {nam} and forsaking all religious rituals in saying God's name. While reciting the name of God, they often developed emotions, screamed and shouted, took turbans in their hands and hair streaming in the air hence called 'Kukas' or the shouters. This kind of behaviour was found in Muslim Dervishes also.

This movement got politicized under Baba Ram Singh. He and his followers became passionate protectors of cattle and resented the Muslims {who killed cows} and British {who allowed the cows to be killed}. A group of his followers killed four Muslim butchers in Amritsar in 1870. Due to this, four Kukas were hanged and two others were exiled.

In 1872, there was a bigger uprising in which Kukas while returning from the Maghi festival attacked a Muslim community and killed some of them. The government took stringent action. Of the 68 Kukas caught, 50 were blown with guns same day without any legal formality, and 17 on next day. Baba Ram Singh was charged with abetting the crime and was taken to Rangoon where he died in 1885.

This movement received only limited support from mainstream Sikhs who were loyal to British.

Prince of Wales Visit to India 1876

The Prince of Wales, eldest son of Queen Victoria visited India in 1876 with a large suite. He arrived in Bombay and then travelled to Madras, Ceylon and finally Calcutta. The intent of this visit was to inspire the local princes' loyalty to the British Empress and affirm their central role in the maintenance of the empire. Wherever he went, he was showered with valuable gifts by the "loyal" Indian feudatories. He collected so much in 6 months that one of the ships was filled with the jewels, paintings, antique weapons, live animals, embroideries brocades and all kinds of contemporary art works. He returned and the gifts went on an exhibition in England for 6 months. In return the Prince of Wales gave Indian Princes a copy of Rig-veda translated by Max Muller.

Orissa Famine of 1872

India was attacked by two great famines during the times of Lord Northbrook. One was the Bihar famine of 1873-74. Surprisingly, in this famine the British Government resorted to an extensive relief effort, organized by the Bengal government, so there was no casualty in this famine. But soon after, the 1876-78 saw another Great Famine in Southern India during **Lord Lytton's times**. This famine affected Madras and Bombay, Mysore and Hyderabad. 10 million people perished and no number was recorded for the princely states.

Indian Meteorological Department 1875

IMD was established at Kolkata on 15 January 1875. After that it was shifted to Shimla, then Pune and Finally New Delhi.



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Abolition of Income tax

The income tax imposed since times of Lord Canning had become quite unpopular and was abolished by Lord Northbrook.

Lord Lytton 1876-1880

Lord Lytton, who remained the Viceroy of India from 1876-1880 used to write poems with the Pen name of **Owen Meredith**. During his tenure, a Royal Titles Act conferring on the queen Victoria the title of the Empress of India was passed and a magnificent Delhi Darbar was organized in 1877 in which queen Victoria was adorned with title Qaiser-i-Hind. Aligarh College was founded in 1877 and the Vernacular Press act, Arms act were passed in 1878. The age for eligibility in civil services was brought down from 21 to 18 years. The second Anglo-Afghan war also fought during his tenure which proved to be very expensive.

Royal Titles Act 1876

The Royal Titles Act of 1876 was one of Prime Minister Disraeli's famous imperialistic measures. The act was passed with the understanding that the British imperial title should be used only in India. Thus, the Queen began to use it in her signature in 1878 and in 1893 it appeared on the British coins. The title empress of India was officially translated as *Kaisar-i-Hind*, was decorated on her in 1877 Delhi Durbar.

Delhi Darbar 1877

A few months after his swearing in as India's Viceroy, a Grand Darbar was organized at Delhi on January 1, 1877, in which Queen Victoria was proclaimed empress of India. Queen Victoria was proclaimed with title "**Kaisar-i-Hind**" at this Darbar.

When the princes of Indian princely states were flocking to participate in this gorgeous scene of *Delhi Darbar*, the shadow of famine was darkening over southern India.

Great Famine of 1876

The monsoons of 1876 had failed to bring their due supply of rain, and the season of 1877 was little better. This long-continued drought stretched from the Deccan to Cape Comorin, and subsequently invaded northern India, causing a famine more wide-spread than any previously known in Indian history.

The Poet Viceroy Lord Lytton was so uncompromising in implanting the British trading policies that was called directly responsible for the death of 10 million people in the Famine of 1876 -77 by some historians. The government is known to have spent 11 million sterling, but actually the lack of supply and efforts from the government caused the loss of life from starvation and a train of diseases that followed, taking the toll to a lamentable number.



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Vernacular Press Act 1878

The latter half of the 19th century saw a remarkable growth in the Vernacular Press of the country and newspapers played a role of catalyst in the new socio-political consciousness. Earlier, the newspapers were being published in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, Allahabad only but later the newspapers started getting published from smaller places also. Since, most of the newspapers published from smaller places, they all were in vernacular languages. In 1878, when this act was passed, there were 20 English Newspapers while 200. These vernacular newspapers made the people aware of the political affairs and now the people slowly started asking questions for their rights. So, in the best interest of the Government, **Lord Lytton passed the Vernacular Press Act in 1878.**

By this act, the magistrates of the districts were empowered, without the prior permission of the Government, to call upon a printer and publisher of any kind to enter into a Bond, undertaking not to publish anything which might "rouse" feelings of disaffection against the government.

- The magistrate was also authorized to deposit a security, which could be confiscated if the printer violated the Bond.
- If a printer repeated the violation, his press could be seized.

Thus the Vernacular Press Act of 1878 gagged the press and result was some proceedings against some vernacular press people. There was now a popular protest against this act. The act was later repealed by Lord Ripon, who followed Lord Lytton.

Second Anglo Afghan War 1878-80

In the winter of 1878, the affairs of Afghanistan again forced themselves into notice. The First Anglo Afghan war had ended in 1842, in a humiliation for the British and this failure kept haunting them for many years. The successive governments in Britain remain calm, but when **Lord Disraeli became PM**, he sent **Lord Lytton** to India to increase the influence in Afghanistan. On this side, under Akbar Khan, the son of Dost Mohammed, Afghanistan once again became independent and Dost Mohammad Khan came back to power in 1843. Akbar Khan died in 1845.

Treaty of Peshawar

In 1855 Treaty of Peshawar between Dost Mohammad and British reopened the diplomatic relations. After a series of incidents, Russia established a fixed boundary between Afghanistan and its territories in 1873. But within a period of 5 years the rivalry turned back. This was because of an uninvited diplomatic mission sent by the Russians to Kabul. The ruler Sher Ali Khan, son of Dost Mohammad Khan wanted to stop them, but failed. The British too wanted to send a mission, but Sher Ali refused. A diplomatic mission was ordered by Lord Lytton, the viceroy of British India, and the Mission was turned back. This triggered the Second Anglo Afghan War.



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Treaty of Gandamak

In the second Anglo Afghan war, much of Afghanistan was occupied by British. Sher Ali was defeated and he fled towards Turkistan. Sher Ali's Son, Mohammad Yaqub Khan signed a treaty of Gandamak in May, 1879 to prevent British Invasion in rest of the country. However, he paid the price by relinquishing the Control of Afghan Foreign Relations to British. British Control was thus extended to much of the country. He also agreed to receive a British Resident at Kabul.

The treaty of Gandamak was signed in May, 1879, but in the same year in September, the British Resident Major Cavagnari was murdered. This again triggered the war and Kabul was occupied. Yakub Khan surrendered and he was sent to Dehradun as a Prisoner.

Attempt to Murder and Resignation of Lord Lytton

At this crisis of affairs, there was a general election in England, which resulted in the defeat of the Conservative Ministry of Lord Disraeli. Lord Lytton also resigned simultaneously. Prior to that in 1879 an attempt was made to assassinate him, but he happily escaped uninjured. After his resignation, **Lord Ripon** was sent to India.

Other Notes

Mohammadan Anglo-Oriental College) was founded by Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, the leader of Muslim renaissance in Indian subcontinent, in 1875 at Aligarh during the tenure of Lord Lytton. It later became Aligarh Muslim University.

- **Lucile** was a verse novel written by Lord Lytton, published in 1860.
- The Indian Arms Act of 1878 was legislated during Lord Lytton's time. By this act, no Indians could keep unlicensed arms. However, the English people could hold arms without license.
- Lord Lytton also was responsible for the economic distress caused by abolishing the Tax on the foreign cotton coming to India, to safeguard the British Traders.
- The maximum age to enter in to the Civil Services Examination was reduced from 21 years to 19 years.

Lord Ripon 1880-84

Lord Ripon remained India's Viceroy from 1880-84. This liberal politician is known for many reforms in the internal administration of India. The most important events during this time were as follows:

- The Vernacular Press Act **was repealed** in 1882
- A **Resolution in 1882** set off the institution of local self-government in India.
- **Hunter Commission** came in 1882 for the purpose of education reforms.
- The age for entry in the Civil Services was once again raised to 21 years.
- The **First factory Act** was enacted in 1881



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- Introduction of **Ilbert Bill** in severely compromised state.
- The years 1882 and 1883 are memorable for these great measures. One important one was the repeal of the Vernacular Press Act, which was passed by his predecessor Lord Lytton in 1878.

Thus, he set free the native journals from the last restraints on the free discussion of public questions. In 1882, he granted freedom to the Press. He was the founder of local self government in modern India and was fondly called “Ripon, the Good”.

The Afghan Affairs

Immediately after the Second Anglo Afghan War, Abdur Rahaman, the male heir of the Dost Muhammad stock was made the Amir of Afghanistan. The British Viceroy Lord Ripon withdrew the policy of disintegrating the Afghanistan and accepted it as a Buffer state (between British and Russian/ Persian territories), which later culminated in Durand Line. However they retained the rights to handle the foreign relations of Afghanistan. In 1885, a military skirmish occurred and the Russian encroached the Merv Oasis and an Afghan territory south of the Oxus River around an oasis at Panjdeh. (It is now in Turkmenistan). Later, possible war was averted with diplomacy of Lord Dufferin, who managed to secure a settlement. As per this settlement Russia kept the Merv Oasis, but relinquished further territories taken in their advance, and promised to respect Afghan territorial integrity in the future.

Local Self Government (Resolution of 1882)

Lord Ripon is known to have granted the Indians first taste of freedom by introducing the Local Self Government in 1882. His scheme of local self government developed the Municipal institutions which had been growing up in the country ever since India was occupied by the British Crown. He led a series of enactments in which larger powers of the Local self government were given to the rural and urban bodies and the elective people received some wider rights.

Lord Ripon is known as Father of Local Self Government in India. This was not enacted by any act; it was a resolution that was passed in 1882.

First Factory Act 1881

A committee was appointed in 1875 to inquire into the conditions of factory work in the country. This committee had favored some kind of legal restrictions in the form of factory laws.

During Lord Ripon’s time, the first Factories Act was adopted in 1881. Following this act, a Factory Commission was appointed in 1885. There was another Factories Act in 1891, and a Royal Commission on Labor was appointed in 1892. The result of these enactments was the limitation on the factory working hours. This was an answer of the Government to the pathetic conditions of the workers in the factory, wherein, only when a laborer exhausted, new laborer was to take his / her place.



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Hunter Education Commission 1882-83

In 1882, Lord Ripon organized the Hunter Commission under William Wilson Hunter. William Wilson Hunter was the statistician, a compiler and a member of the Indian Civil Service, who later also became Vice President of Royal Asiatic Society.

He was appointed as a Magistrate in the Bengal Presidency in 1862, and from there only he started compiling the local traditions and records.

He published “The Annals of Rural Bengal” and “A Comparative Dictionary of the Non-Aryan Languages of India” but his **best known work is “The Imperial Gazetteer of India”** on which he started working in 1869.

This work was delegated to him by Lord Mayo. The work appeared in 9 volumes in 1881. In 1882 as a member of the Governor General in Council he was appointed he chairman of the Commission on Education. In 1886, he was also elected as Vice Chancellor of the Calcutta University. The Hunter Commission brought out the neglect to the primary and secondary education in the country. The commission recommended that the responsibility for the Primary Education must be given to the Local Boards and Municipal Boards. The important recommendations were as follows:

- The government should take special care to extend the primary education.
- There should be literary and vocational training in secondary education.
- The commission brought out inadequate facilities available for the female education in the country.

The recommendations were partially implemented and there was a slow growth in the number of the secondary schools in the country.

Ilbert Bill 1884

Ilbert Bill is named after Courtenay Peregrine Ilbert, who was appointed as legal adviser to the Council of India. The bill was introduced in 1883 by Viceroy Ripon, who actually desired to abolish the racial prejudice from the Indian Penal Code. Ripon had proposed an amendment for existing laws in the country and to allow Indian judges and magistrates the jurisdiction to try British offenders in criminal cases at the District level. It was never allowed before.

So naturally, the Europeans living in India looked it as a Humiliation and the introduction of the bill led to intense opposition in Britain as well as India (by the British residents). So it was withdrawn but was reintroduced and enacted in 1884 in a severely compromised state.

The amended bill had the provisions that the Europeans would be conferred on European and Indian District Magistrates and Sessions Judges alike. However, a defendant would in all cases have the right to claim trial by a jury of which at least half the members must be European. Thus, this enactment held that Europeans criminals would be heard only by the Indian Judges “helped by the European



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Judges”.

The passage of this bill opened the eyes of the Indians and deepened antagonism between the British and Indians. The result was wider nationalism and establishment of Indian National Congress in the next year. **The amended Ilbert Bill** was passed on 25 January 1884, **as the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Act 1884**. It came into force on May 1, 1884.

Lord Dufferin (1884-1888)

Lord Dufferin served as Governor General of India and Viceroy from 1884 to 1888. During his tenure, the Third Burmese war led to annexation of whole of Burma and Burmese ruler was exiled to India. In 1885, AO Hume laid the foundation of Indian National Congress. In 1885, the Panjdeh Incident happened in which the Russian forces seized Afghan territory south of Amu Darya around site of Panjdeh {now located in Turkmenistan}. This created a diplomatic crisis between Russia and Great Britain.

Panjdeh Incident

This incident occurred in 1885 as consequence of constant expansion policy of Russia towards Afghanistan. Russians occupied Merv Oasis in 1884 and further claimed Panjdeh. Both British and Russians started making military preparation as an all out war could happen next. However, the war was averted by diplomatic efforts of Lord Dufferin who managed to secure a settlement in which Russia kept the Merv Oasis and Panjdeh, but relinquished an important pass {Zulfikar Pass} further west and promised to respect Afghan territorial integrity in the future.

Further, a joint commission of the British and the Russians was appointed to demarcate the Northern boundary of Afghanistan. The line demarcation was fixed in 1887.

The Third Burmese War, 1886

The lower Burma had been annexed by Lord Dalhousie but upper Burma was still independent and King Thebau was ruling it. He had entered into a commercial treaty with the French and had personally welcomed and honoured the French envoy. This raised British concerns of increased French influence in Burma. Further, the King imposed heavy fine on the Bombay Burma Trading Company and ordered arrest of officials of this company. Lord Dufferin requested the King that before taking any action, a thorough inquiry should be made. However, King rejected the request. Irrked Dufferin sent an ultimatum to suspend the proceeding against Bombay Burma Trading Company till the arrival of the envoy and also grant the British to trade with China through Burmese territory. Further, he also asked the King to not to keep relations with foreign countries except without advice of Government of India.

When these demands were rejected, British invaded upper Burma and within two weeks King surrendered. He was taken prisoner and was sent to Madras. On January 1, 1886, the territories of



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Burma were annexed in British India and on September 25, 1886, Lower Burma was annexed as province of British India under Sir Charles Bernard as the first chief commissioner.

The British interference and annexation of Upper Burma has been severely criticised by many writers and is called “unjust” and a result of imperialism. Thebaw was an independent ruler and was free to establish diplomatic relations with any country.

This annexation aroused the Burmese people who started seeking independence by protracted guerrilla warfare. The series of expensive campaigns against these Guerrilla warriors was led and they were suppressed brutally. This annexation was not even welcome in India because of the increased expenses which were now to be at the cost of Indian Subjects. So, Indians prayed to make the Burma a crown colony like Ceylon rather than a province of India.

Birth of Congress 1885

In May 1885, Allan Octavian Hume secured the Viceroy’s approval to create an “Indian National Union”, which would be affiliated with the government and act as a platform to voice Indian public opinion. On 28 December 1885, the Indian National Congress was founded at Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College in Bombay, with 72 delegates in attendance. The first session was presided by Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee. In this session, Congress adopted a resolution expressing the dissatisfaction on the current system of Governance and demanded reforms in the Councils. After this resolution, Lord Dufferin had established a committee for the reforms in the councils and this resulted in the Indian Councils Act 1892. This act introduced the principle of representation in India.

Resignation of Lord Dufferin

Lord Dufferin resigned in 1888 and was succeeded by Lord Lansdowne as Governor-General and Viceroy of India.

Lord Lansdowne (1888-93)

Lord Lansdowne served as Governor General and Viceroy of India from 1888 to 1893. During his tenure, Indo-Afghan border {Durand Line} was demarcated. The Indian Council Act, 1892 was enacted and a system of indirect elections started in India.

Securing India against possible Invasions

Most of his time and energy of Lansdowne was dedicated in solving the border problem. At that time, Russia, France as well as England were following the imperialistic policies to increase number of their colonies. Landowne first occupied Sikkim and some border areas in Chittagong. Some states located at the Eastern front of Burma were also brought under British protection. These were done to avoid any possibility of attack from north / north east or eastern side.

To secure north-west, the Durand Line agreement was signed whereby Afghanistan would receive a



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mission led by Sir Mortima Durand. British also used this time to improve railroad communication between the frontier and the military base in India. They established strong fortifications of great cantonments. For defense of the Khaibar, Rawalpindi was selected as the base for the defense, thus strong posts at Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Attock defended the Indus.

Indian Councils Act 1892

Indian Councils Act 1892 was the beginning of the parliamentary System in India. This act provided for additional member in central and provincial legislative councils. The members were allowed to ask questions on domestic matters with prior permission of the Governor General. A system of indirect elections was introduced to elect the members of the councils. The universities, district board, municipalities, Zamindars and chambers of commerce were empowered to recommend members to provincial councils. This act became the first step towards the beginning of the representative government in India but such representation was via only indirect elections and there was nothing for a common Indian.

Opium Commission 1893

In 1893 a royal commission was issued to inquire into the results of using opium in India, and the possibility of prohibiting it. This commission examined many witnesses and finally reported in 1895 favouring use of Opium. It said that result of Opium use in India is much less harmful than it was supposed. *Opium rarely sends any criminal to the Jails, as Alcohol sends criminals to English Jails as a cause of crime and death in England. It is used by the holy saints of India.* **Opium is not associated to any disease** and it is widely used as a remedy in Malaria and Fever.

The result was that the Government happily accepted the recommendation of this commission and shelved the idea of imposing a ban on Opium.

A similar parliamentary commission was asked to inquire into the impact of Bhang, Ganja and other “*desi*” drugs and the commissions found that if Bhang and Ganja are prohibited, the consumption of alcohol will increase in India, and that would cause more problems for their subjects in India. At that time, Opium was cultivated by only licensed cultivators and they were required to sell all of the produce to the Government, which used to “export” it. About 90 % of this Opium was sent to China and Government earned two third of the profit. Opium was rarely smoked in India but the people of Burma were used to living in Opium Smoker’s paradise. But the commission’s reports were criticized by some parliamentarians of England like Henry Joseph Wilson, who did not approve the “studies” of the commissioners.

Re-imposition of Income Tax

By this time, the financial reforms and tax reductions by Lord Ripon’s administration had started creating problems for the revenue. The Burma War cost Rs. 40 Lakh, the military campaigns in North West cost Rs. 20 Lakh and the increased army needed an expenditure of Rs. 15 Lakh per



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annum. Further, the falling prices of silver due to over production led to a difficult financial positing for the government. To tackle the situation, income tax was imposed again in 1886 and the salt duty was enhanced in 1888. A 5% custom duty was imposed in 1894 on imports of cotton goods.

Lord Elgin (1894-1898)

Lord Elgin served as the Governor General and Viceroy from 1894 to 1898. During his regime, the boundaries of China and Siam was demarcated, Anglo-Russian convention was signed (1895), Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria was celebrated (1897), A Famine Commission (Lyal Commission) was appointed in 1897), a plague broke out in Bombay (1896) and the Plague Commissioner Rand was assassinated in Pune by the Chapekar brothers (1897).

Bubonic Plague of Bombay Presidency 1896-97

The last five years of the 19th century were disastrous for India, which brought an array of misfortune and distress. In October, 1896, the Bubonic plague was detected in India. It was endemic in some localities like Mesopotamia and some Central Asian places but from there it spread to China causing 50 thousand deaths and then in Hong Kong causing 10 thousand deaths. The plague spread rapidly in Bombay Presidency and people started fleeing from Mumbai, Pune and other places. In 1897, the death started dancing in Pune and the government decided to take drastic steps against the killer disease.

Waldemar Haf ine

The Plague was studied at the Pasteur Institute in Paris and the studies were done by a Russian Bacteriologist **Waldemar Haf ine**. Waldemar Haf ine had also developed an anti-cholera vaccine which he tried out successfully in India. He was the first microbiologist who developed and used vaccines against cholera and bubonic plague. He tested the vaccines on himself and was acclaimed as “a saviour of humanity”.

Murder of WC Rand and Arrest of Tilak

On the basis of Special Plague Committee’s recommendations, 893 officers and men, both British and native, were placed under the command of Mr. WC Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst. The soldiers approached door to door for measures against plague {such as killing rats etc.}.

However, most people were ignorant and illiterate and they considered the plague as wrath of God. They took the corrective measures of the government as oppression. This led to riots at various location due to opposition to government policy of sanitary measures. At that time, Bal Gangadhar Tilak wrote inflammatory articles in the Kesari newspaper. Amid chaos, WC Rand was murdered by two Pune youngsters {Chapekar brothers}.

This led to a series of arrest and trials. Tilak was sentenced to 18 months rigorous imprisonment. In this trial, Tilak declared in court: “Swaraj ha maza janmasidha adhikar aahe, ani to mi milavinach” that is



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“Swaraj is my birthright and I shall have it. This statement made Tilak a national hero.

Meanwhile, Plague had spread to other parts of India and killed around 10 Lakh people in several parts of the country.

Press Regulation

The government faced heat from the proliferation of Press. To curb the press, it amended Section 124A and Section 153A in IPC which made it a criminal offense for anyone to contempt the Government of India or to create hatred among different classes {English and Indians} in India. There was a nationwide protest against this regulation.

Lord Curzon (1899-1904)

Lord Curzon served as Governor General and Viceroy of India from 6 January 1899 to 18 November 1905. Important events during his tenure include Famine of 1899-1900 {Chappania Akal}, Appointment of Famine Commission {under Sir Anthony McDonnell}, Commission on Irrigation {under Colin Scott Moncrieff}, Police Commission {under Andrew Frazer}, Education Commission {aka Raleigh Commission}, enactment of Indian Universities Act, 1904, Land Resolution of 1902, Punjab Land Alienation Act 1900, Establishment of Imperial Departments of Agriculture and Commerce, Industry; Indian Coinage and Paper Currency Act, 1899; establishment of a training college for army officers at Quetta; Calcutta Corporation Act, 1899; Ancient Monuments Protection Act, 1904; Military expedition to Tibet, Occupation of Chumby Valley and the most hated Partition of Bengal. His policy resulted in deep discontent and the upsurge of a revolutionary movement in the country, due to which he can be called *most unpopular Viceroy of India*. His tenure is called Curzonshahi {akin to Nadirshahi}.

Famine of 1899-1900 {Chappania Akal}

In 1899-1900, the areas of Agra, Oudh, Bengal, Central provinces, Central Provinces, Rajputana, Gujarat etc. came under the grip of a severe famine which claimed thousands of lives. The years 1899-1900 corresponded to Vikram Samvat 1956, and thus were called *Chappania Akal* in local parlance. The next year 1901 brought more than normal rainfalls, and due to this famine followed epidemic such as Malaria and Cholera. The worst affected people were the tribes of Central provinces, Rajputana and Bombay presidency and that is why this tragedy got incorporated in the folk songs of these areas.

Though it was not as acute as the Orissa famine of 1866 or as fatal as the terrible Bengal famine of 1770, yet the *progress of the media, invention and spread of Photography and the means of communication made it the most popular famine of India*.

The Curzon government organized famine relief for subjects of British provinces. However, the native princes of Rajputana and Gujarat



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The famine relief in the British Provinces was organized by the Government of Lord Curzon and around 25% of the affected people were relieved as per the official figures, but the native princes of Rajputana and Gujarat failed miserably to curb the death toll.

The British initiatives were also grossly inadequate because no intervention was done to control the grain prices. There was no humanitarian consideration in the relief measures. India owed a huge debt to its colonial masters and so Curzon remained economic in whatever efforts he took.

Famine Commission {under Sir Anthony McDonnell}

MacDonnell Commission was appointed by Lord Curzon in 1901 and it submitted its report in the same year. *Instead of focussing on the market mechanism or official assistance*, this commission came up with measures such *non-official assistance*, prevention of demoralization of people; construction of more railways so that food can reach to affected areas more quickly; *establishment of agricultural banks* and *cooperative credit societies* for distribution of advances and loans to the peasants; setting up famine commissioner in famine affected provinces, and setting up of irrigation commission etc. However, these needed time. There was nothing which was timely and adequate to prevent deaths.

Irrigation Commission 1901

Post famine, there was more emphasis on internal administration reforms. Towards this direction, the construction of irrigation works in accordance with the broad plans was outlined by an Irrigation Commission under *Sir Colin Scott-Moncrieff*. Most important part of this strategy was a network of canals in Punjab comprising a main canal of 2714 kilometers and other link canals. The work was authorized in 1905 and it took two decades to get completed.

Police Commission {Sir Andrew Frazer}

Lord Curzon set up a Police Commission under Sir Andrew Frazer in 1902-03. On the basis of recommendation of this commission, a basic structure of Indian domestic intelligence developed and remained almost same till 1947. He attached Department of Criminal Intelligence (DCI) to the Government of India while set up the *Criminal Investigation Departments (CIDs)* in the provinces of British India. In 1903, the *Thugi and Dakaiti Department* was abolished.

Was Introduction of CIDs in British provinces because of growing nationalism?

Some claim that CIDs were introduced in British provinces because Lord Curzon could sense growing nationalism in India. It seems to be incorrect because till 1905 Congress was a sundry organization and its leaders were British loyalists. It was only after 1905, when Congress became of mammoth size and focussed on some anti-establishment endeavours. Congress was not even mentioned in his deliberations of the Police Commission in 1902-03.



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Punjab Land Alienation Act 1900

Under the British law, the land became a private property that could be sold or mortgage as its owners wished {this is called alienability}. This facility along with monetization of agriculture, modern communication, irrigation projects etc. created rapid rise in the land values of Punjab in late 19th century. The peasants could pledge the land and British law protected such pledges. This led to a rapid and accelerating transfer of lands from peasants to proprietors / moneylenders; and the land started moving from agricultural class to hands of urban / commercial / non-agricultural class of the society. This further created a new class of dispossessed tenants living on their land as tenants to the urban absentee landlords {whom they had mortgaged the land}.

Thus, there was a need to interfere in this laissez-faire business of land in Punjab. In 1900, then Curzon Government enacted the *Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1900* which placed a 15 year limitation on all land purchases and mortgages. This act provided that the no non-peasant could buy lands from the peasants; and no one could attach the land for non-payment of debts.

The result of this law was that money of the non-peasant class got stuck in land which was now neither saleable not eligible for mortgage. Due to this, the moneylenders stopped lending money.

But due to this, peasantry got in further problem because now they were unable to access credit. The government established some agricultural banks and in due course passed *Cooperative Credit Societies Act, 1904*. However, most of the public remained unaware of these measures and thus discontent grew among not only moneylenders, shopkeepers, professionals and the trader class but also the peasantry. Congress took it as an opportunity to criticize the government. It passed a resolution in 1899 Lucknow session against these measures. They called it an intrusion to private property. By this, the congress was able to business class of Punjab in its fold.

Partition of Bengal 1905

The Bengal had become too large unit to be administered as a single unit. To solve the problem, the Government partitioned Bengal on October 16, 1905 into two parts viz. *Eastern Bengal and Assam* and *Rest of Bengal (Western Part)*. But Curzon was not aware of its fallouts. It was different than dividing an American county for better administration. Partition {Vang-Bhang} was taken as an emotive issue and Congress, which by now had learnt the art of protests and agitation, cashed it immediately to convert it into a mass movement. The decision stirred the Bengali patriotism. Further, it was thought that Government wanted to deprive Calcutta of its position. Chittagong was a harbor much smaller but at almost same locational advantage as Calcutta. So now, Chittagong would prosper at the cost of Calcutta, because the trade of the eastern part would pass on to Chittagong. Congress escalated the issue as government conspiracy to divide Bengal from Bengali and break India into pieces. Further, it was also seen as an intrigue to divide Hindus and Muslims.



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The *Boycott* and *Swadeshi* movement were result of this emotive issue. Vande Mataram became the symbol of this agitation. Rabindranath Tagore declared that the date of partition will be observed as day of unity and people would tie threads to each other's wrists. On 16 October 1905, Bengalis kept fast, took bath in Ganga!

Partition was later annulled in 1911.

Raleigh Commission

The Indian Universities and the colleges were slowly becoming cradle of propaganda against the Government. To bring the universities under control, Lord Curzon appointed **Raleigh Commission** under Sir Thomas Raleigh. The Raleigh Commission had only one Indian member, **Syed Hussain Belgrami**. When Hindus protested about this, Justice **Guru Das Banerjee** was called from the High Court of Calcutta and made a member. This commission submitted its report in 1902 and this followed introduction of a Bill called **Raleigh Bill**. The **Raleigh Bill** when became an act, it was called **Indian Universities Act 1904**.

Indian Universities Act 1904

This Act reorganised the constitution of the Syndicates; provided for the official inspection of the colleges and placed the final decision concerning the affiliation and disaffiliation of colleges in the hands of the Government of India. This act was severely criticised by scholars like Gopal Krishna Gokhle.

The first provision of this act was that the governing bodies of the universities were to be reconstituted and the *size of the Senates was reduced*. Now the number in the senate could be *minimum 50 and maximum 100*. Each of them would hold the office for 6 years.

For the Universities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, the elected fellows were to be 50 and for rest of the universities, the number was fixed 15. This act allowed the Government to appoint a majority of the fellows in a university.

The Governor General was now empowered to decide a University's territorial limits and also affiliation between the universities and colleges. The Indian Universities Act made the universities and colleges completely under the Government control. However, for better education and research a grant of Rs. 5 Lakh per year for 5 years was also accepted. This was the beginning of university grants in India which later became a permanent feature in the structure of India education.

Ancient Monuments Preservation Act 1904

One of the most remarkable acts passed during the times of Lord Curzon was the Ancient Monuments Preservation Act of 1904. This act made any injury to the protected monuments an offence punishable under the law. This act also established the Archaeological Department which was to collect the historical documents and importance, conduct excavations and bring the ancient



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historical information into light.

Imperial Cadet Corps 1904

In November 1904, the form of Commission for Imperial Cadet Corps was signed and approved by Secretary of State for India and thus Imperial Cadet Corps came into being for the first time under the direct surveillance of Lord Curzon. Major D H Cameron was made its commandant and Maharaja Pratap Singh of Idar was made its Honorary commandant. The selected youths between 17-20 years were to be admitted as Imperial Cadets and their education was to be at one of the Chief's college at Rajkot, Indore, Lahore or Ajmer. The selected cadets had to join the corps at Dehradun.

Other Important Notes about Lord Curzon

During Curzon regime, the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP) was established which covered roughly the areas of upper course of River Indus. The Agriculture Research Institute in Pusa (Bihar – Bengal Presidency) was established. In 1901, Imperial Cadet Corps was launched. British Pound made legal tender in India @15 Rupees.

Lord Minto (1905-1910)

Lord Minto served as Governor General and Viceroy of India from 1905 to 1910. He witnessed the outburst of Indian National Movement. Major events that happened during his regime included enactment of Newspapers (Incitement to offences) Act, 1908, Explosive Substances Act, Deportation of Lala Lajpat Rai and Ajit Singh to Mandalay Jail (1907), Surat Split (1907), Trial of Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1908), Foundation of the Indian Muslim League (1906), Indian Council Act of 1909 (Moreley-Minto Reforms), establishment of Indian Home Rule Society in England by Shyamji Verma, Murder of Col. William Wyllie by Madan Lal Dhingra (1909), Assassination of Jackson, the Magistrate of Nasik and Ahmadabad Bomb case (1909).

Calcutta session 1906, Swaraj Resolution and Surat Split 1907

By 1906, Congress had two groups of moderates and extremists. The extremists wanted to extent boycott of foreign goods to pan-India level, and disobey the laws. The key extremist leaders were Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal {Lal-Bal-Pal}. The moderates did not like these ideas. They thought of boycott in special circumstances only.

The extremists were more popular but moderates were politically more intelligent. In the Calcutta session 1906 {presided by Dadabhai Naoroji}, Congress passed four resolutions under pressure from extremists. These included:

- Resolution on Partition of Bengal
- Resolution of Self Government (Swaraj)
- Resolution on Swadeshi



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- Resolution on Boycott.

However, the moderates toned down the meaning of Swaraj or self government as “obtaining the self governing British colonies”. Extremist were not satisfied with this manipulation. The 1907 session was to be held originally at Nagpur, which was area of influence of Tilak. Since there was a chance that local extremists would raise issue in favour of extremists, the venue was changed to Surat. This session was held on bank of Tapti River in Surat in 1907 and was presided by Rash Behari Ghosh. Amid atmosphere of anger and resentment, the session was suspended and Congress was split among two factions. The next session of moderates was held in 1908 in Madras and at that time extremists were facing lathis and arrests under various laws passed to curb extremists.

Suppression of Extremists

By 1907-08, the government passed a series of laws in hurry to curb extremist and anti-government activities. These included Prevention of Seditious Meetings act (1907), Explosive Substance Act (1908), Newspaper (Incitement to Offences) Act (1908) etc. The last act provided to confiscate the press if it published anything against the Government and incited the public outrage. With increased government action, extremists were suppressed and they were not able to organize a strong party. The Key leaders either left politics or went underground. For example, Arubindo Ghosh left to Pondicherry; Bipin Chandra Pal left politics; Lala Lajpat Rai went to England. The idea of extremist nationalism was put down and it later rose as militant nationalism.

India House

In the wave of nationalism, numerous militant organizations started working within and outside the country. In London, India house was established by Shyamji Krishna Verma to promote the nationalist views among the Indians of Britain. It published a newspaper *The Indian Sociologist* which used its subtitle – *An Organ of Freedom, and Political, Social, and Religious Reform*.

The important revolutionaries associated with India house included VD Savarkar, Madan Lal Dheengra, V.N. Chatterjee, Lala Har Dayal, V. V. S. Aiyar, M.P.T. Acharya and P.M. Bapat etc. All of them were founders of militant nationalism in either India or outside. Their newspaper was later banned for sedition.

Murder of Curzon Wylie by Madan Lal Dhingra 1909

To give a clear and loud message to British to free India, Madan Lal Dhingra shot dead a British Sir Curzon Wylie in London in July 1909. After the murder, Dhingra wanted to kill self but was arrested; trialled and hanged on 17 August 1909. This was one of the earliest killings by Indian revolutionaries. The sacrifice of Dhingra not only inspired the Indians but also the Irish, who were struggling at that time for autonomy.

Anushilan Samiti 1902-1908



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The Anushilan Samiti was established by Pramathanath Mitra, a barrister from Calcutta. The people associated with this samiti were Sri Aurobindo, Deshabandhu Chittaranjan Das, Surendranath Tagore, Jatindranath Banerjee (Bagha Jatin) Bhupendra Natha Datta, Barindra Ghosh etc.

Out of them Bhupendra Nath Datta was brother of Swami Vivekananda. Barindra Ghosh was sent to Paris to learn the science of Bomb Making and here he came in touch were Madam Kama. Madam Kama was already associated with the India House and the Paris India Society.

Alipore Bomb Case 1908

In April 1908, Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki threw a bomb to kill D.H. Kingford, the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Muzaffarpur. The magistrate survived the attack but two British ladies were killed. Prafulla Chaki committed suicide after he was cornered by the Police. Khudi Ram Bose was arrested. His trial continued for two years and was finally hanged. The Indian cop Nandalal Bannerjee, who had arrested Khudi Ram Bose, was later shot dead by Narendranath Bhattacharya.

Alipore Conspiracy Trial 1908-1909

Alipore Bomb case led to raids on members of the Anushilan Samiti. Arubindo Ghosh was arrested and lodged in Alipore Jail. He was defended by Chittaranjan Das; one of the prominent barristers if that time. Other members Barindra Ghosh and Ullaskar Dutt were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment and they were released in 1920.

The above series of bombing, shooting and trials had started the era of revolutionary terrorism in the country. The focus of these revolutionaries was to kill and send to hell to those British and Indian Officers who were oppressive. For fund raising, they resorted to Dacoity, which was called Swadeshi Dacoity.

Nasik Conspiracy Case 1909

In 1904, VD Savarkar had launched an Abhinav Bharat Society. In 1909, Anant Lakshaman Karkare, a member of this organization shot dead AMT Jackson, the district magistrate of Nasik. Jackson was a popular person and indologist. 27 members of Abhinav Bharat Society were convicted and punished. Ganesh Savarkar, brother of VD Savarkar, was sent to Andaman for *Kala Pani*.

Indian Councils Act 1909 (Morley Minto reforms) & Communal Representation

The Indian Councils Act expanded the legislative councils at the both the levels viz. central as well as provincial but it also introduced separate and discriminatory electorate. This was for the first time that, electorate for returning to the representatives to the councils was decided on the basis of class & community. The congress denounced it in Lahore session in 1909.

Lord Hardinge (1910-1916)

From 1910 to 1916, Lord Hardinge served as India's Viceroy. He had entered the diplomatic service



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in 1880 and had served in Tehran as first secretary and Ambassador to Russia. But his administrative experiences were next to nothing. This young viceroy was sympathetic towards the Indians and wished to win their goodwill. The important event during his tenure were Delhi Durbar of 1911, annulment of the partition of Bengal (1911), Transfer of capital from Calcutta to Delhi (1911), Delhi Conspiracy Case (1912), Departure of Mahatma Gandhi to South Africa, Outbreak of the First World War (1914), Formation of the Home Rule League by Tilak, Foundation of Benaras Hindu University, Foundation of Ghadar Party, Komagatamaru incident, Foundation of Indian Independence League at Berlin (1914) etc.

Delhi Durbar of 1911

In 1910, there was a succession in England where **King George V** ascended the throne. In 1911, he paid a visit to India and a Darbar was held to commemorate the coronation of King George V and Queen Mary. This Darbar brought back the pomp and show of the Mughals once again in Delhi. The King and the Queen attired in the coronation robes with thousands of diamonds and precious gems appeared in the *Jharokha* of the red fort to give Darshan to 5 Lakh Indian people who gathered to greet the sovereign couple.

The Congress passed a resolution condemning the pomp and show of this Darbar at the cost of the poor Indians. King declared that Capital of India will be transferred from Calcutta to Delhi. In the same Darbar it was also declared the Partition of Bengal is cancelled.

Delhi Conspiracy case 1912

Delhi Conspiracy Case or Delhi-Lahore Conspiracy Case or Hardinge Bomb Case happened in 1912 when some members of Yugantar threw bomb in Chandni Chwok of Delhi to kill Lord Harding. The Viceroy survived with minor wounds but his mahawat {keeper of elephant} was killed. It was thought that this conspiracy was hatched by Ras Behari Bose, who then went underground and fled to Japan. In the trial, Basant Kumar Biswas, Amir Chand and Avadh Behari were convicted and executed.

B.H.U. Act 1915

In 1915, under Lord Hardinge, BHU act was passed by which Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya established the Banaras Hindu University.

Foundation of Ghadar Party 1913

It was after 1910, when the activities of India House had declined and the cradle of activities shifted from Europe to America. One of its members, Lal Hardayal settled in San Francisco and indulged in Industrial Unionism. In 1913, he set up Pacific Coast Hindustan Association with Sohan Singh Bhakna as its president, which was called Ghadar Party. The members of this party were the immigrant Sikhs of US and Canada.



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Begin of World War I June 1914

On 28 June 1914, World war-I started and India naturally became a belligerent in the war. The British Government sought support of the Indians and most sections of the Indian society were with the empire. The moderates supported the war because, who knows their demands of self Government may be fulfilled after the war.

Return of Gandhi from South Africa

On 8 January 1915, Mahatma Gandhi returned to India. In May 1915, he laid the foundation of Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmadabad. Till 1917, Gandhi had no official leadership or role or agenda and British could easily tolerate his presence.

Prelims Model Questions

1. Which among the following events took place during the tenure of Lord Curzon?

1. Partition of Bengal
2. Enactment of Punjab Land Alienation Act
3. Appointment of a Famine Commission
4. Establishment of Imperial Cadet Corps

Select the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
[B] Only 1, 2 & 3
[C] Only 1, 3 & 4
[D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Some important things done by Lord Curzon:

1. Appointed Famine Commission which submitted its report in 1901
2. Extension of Railways and Irrigation
3. Reduction of Sales tax to Half.
4. All other agencies except the government forbidden to mint coins
5. British Pound made legal tender in India @15 Rupees.
6. Limit of Taxable land increased from 500 to 1000 rupees a month
7. CID department established in every province Salary of constables were increased.
8. Official element in the management of universities was increased.
9. Ancient Monument preservation act was passed
10. Imperial Cadet Corps was founded in 1901
11. Partition of Bengal.

Further, Lord Curzon had introduced the Punjab Land Alienation Act in 1900. In this act, it



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was laid down that non-peasant could NOT buy lands from the peasants and neither could be attached their lands in case of nonpayment of debts and nor keep the land in mortgage. The result was the moneylenders stopped lending money and Lord Curzon had to open banks and these societies.

[Edit Question](#)

2. Consider the following viceroys of India:

1. Lord Elgin
2. Lord Mayo
3. Lord Lytton
4. Lord Northbrook

The tenure of which of the above was collectively called as Policy of Masterly Inactivity?

- [A] Only 1, 2 & 3
 [B] Only 2, 3 & 4
 [C] Only 1, 2 & 4
 [D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [C] Only 1, 2 & 4

Policy of Masterly Inactivity (1862-76)

The reigns of Lord Elgin-1 862-63, Lord Lawrence (1864-69), Lord Mayo (1869- 72) and Lord Northbrook (1872-76) is called the period of Policy of masterly inactivity in history. The main object of the policy during this period was let things go quietly on to give the land rest. It was a policy as opposed to Forward Policy followed by Lord Lytton.

[Edit Question](#)

3. With reference to the office of “Secretary of State for India”, consider the following statements:

1. This office was created by merging Board of Control and Board of Trade of East India Company
2. Lord Stanley was first Secretary of State for India

Which among the above statements is / are correct?

- [A] Only 1
 [B] Only 2
 [C] Both 1 & 2
 [D] Neither 1 nor 2

Answer: [B] Only 2

First statement is not correct because the powers of the Court of Director and the Board of



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Control were transferred to the Secretary of State for India, assisted by a council of 15 members. Both of these were thus abolished. The first Secretary of state was Lord Stanley, who prior to 2 August 1858, served as President of the Board of Control. The Secretary of State was now the political head of the India.

[Edit Question](#)

4. Which among the following was the most significant outcome of the Punjab Land Alienation Act in 1900?
- [A] Condition of the peasants improved significantly
 - [B] The land revenue from peasants improved significantly
 - [C] Various cooperative societies of peasants came up
 - [D] The large land holdings got split into small land holdings

Answer: [C] Various cooperative societies of peasants came up

Lord Curzon had introduced the Punjab Land Alienation Act in 1900. In this act, it was laid down that non-peasant could buy lands from the peasants and neither could be attached their lands in case of non-payment of debts and nor keep the land in mortgage for more than 20 years. The result was the moneylenders stopped lending money and Lord Curzon had to open banks and these societies. Thus, various Cooperative societies of the agriculturists and Agricultural Banks were established during the time of Lord Curzon

[Edit Question](#)

5. The Vernacular press act:
1. was passed during the times of Lord Lytton
 2. empowered the magistrate to deposit a security, which could be confiscated if the printer violated the Bond
 3. was repealed during times of Lord Ripon

Which among the above is / are correct statements?

- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 2 & 3
- [C] Only 1 & 3
- [D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

All given statements are correct

[Edit Question](#)

6. Identify the famous viceroy of India with the help of given information:
1. He introduced Ilbert Bill



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2. He passed resolution on local self-government
3. He appointed Hunter commission for educational reforms

Select the correct option from codes given below:

- [A] Lord Mayo
- [B] Lord Lytton
- [C] Lord Dufferin
- [D] Lord Ripon

Answer: [D] Lord Ripon

Correct answer is Lord Ripon

Kindly, note the work during the reign of Lord Ripon

The Vernacular Press Act was repealed in 1882

A Resolution in 1882 set off the institution of local self- government in India

Hunter Commission came in 1882 for the purpose of education reforms

The age for entry in the Civil Services was once again raised to 21 years

The First factory Act was enacted in 1881

Introduction of Ilbert Bill in severely compromised state.

[Edit Question](#)

7. Consider the following committees / commissions during British India:

1. Sargent Plan
2. MacDonnel Commission
3. Fraser Commission
4. Hartog Committee

Which among the above was / were related to Education?

- [A] 1 & 2
- [B] 1, 2 & 3
- [C] 2, 3 & 4
- [D] 1 & 4

Answer: [D] 1 & 4

The below tables lists some commission.

Charles Wood Despatch	1854	Lord Dalhousie	Education
Hunter Commission	1882	Lord Ripon	Education
Raleigh Commission	1902	Lord Curzon	Education



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Charles Wood Despatch	1854	Lord Dalhousie	Education
Sadler Commission	1917	Lord Chelmsford	Education
Hartog Commission	1929	Lord Irwin	Education
Sargent Plan	1944	Lord Wavell	Education
Campbell Commission	1866	Sir John Lawrence	Famine
Strachy Commission	1880	Lord Lytton ,	Famine
Lyall Commission	1886	Lord d Elgin-II	Famine
MacDonnel Commission	1900	Lord Curzon	Famine
Mansfield Commission	1886	Lord Dufferin	Currency
Fowler Commission	1898	Lord Elgin-II	Currency
Babington Smith Commission	1919	Lord Chelmsford	Currency
Hilton young Commission	1939	Lord Linlithgow	Currency
Chatfield Commission	1939	Lord Linlithgow	Army
Hunter Commission	1919	Lord Chelmsford	Punjab Disturbances
Fraser Commission	1902	Lord Curzon	Agriculture
Butler Commission	1927	Lord Irwin	Indian States
Whitley Commission	1929	Lord Irwin	Labour
Sapru Commission	1935	Lord Linlithgow	Unemployment
Floud Commission	1940	Lord Linlithgow	Tenancy in Bengal

Edit Question

8. Consider the following statements:

1. In the First session of the Congress , it adopted a resolution expressing the dissatisfaction on the current system of Governance and demanded reforms in the Councils
2. Indian Councils act 1892 was enacted partially due to efforts of Indian National Congress
3. For the first time, Indian Councils Act had authorized the universities, District Boards,



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Municipalities, Zamindars and Chambers of Commerce to send members to Provincial councils.

Which among the above statements is/ are correct?

- [A] Only 1 is correct
- [B] Only 1 & 2 are correct
- [C] Only 2 & 3 are correct
- [D] All are correct

Answer: [D] All are correct

All statements are correct in this question. Further note that after this resolution, Lord Dufferin had established a committee for the reforms in the councils and it was this act which introduced the principle of representation. This act authorized the universities, District Boards, Municipalities, Zamindars and Chambers of Commerce to send members to Provincial councils. The Indian Councils act 1892 increased the number of the additional members in case of the council of the governor general to maximum of 16. In case of Bombay and Madras 8-20 and In case of the Bengal 20 and In case of North Western province and Oudh 15.

[Edit Question](#)

9. With reference to the Government of India Act 1858, which among the following statements is / are correct?
1. A system of legislative devolution began in India with this act
 2. The secretary of state was given responsibility to present a statements of Revenues and Expenditures in British India
 3. The secretary of state was given the power to appoint Viceroy and Governor-General of presidencies

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 2
- [C] Only 2 & 3
- [D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [B] Only 2

The first statement is incorrect. A system of legislative devolution began in India with Indian Councils Act 1861 which was enacted 3 years later.

The second statement is correct. With this act, the Secretary of State for India was given the responsibility to lay the statements of Revenues and Expenditures (might be a prototype of



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Budget) in the British Parliament. The secretary of state had to present report on Revenue, Railways, Law and Construction before the House of Commons, the lower house of British Parliament. Without the permission of Parliament, except in emergency case, Indian revenue could not be utilized in military expedition/mission outside the Indian Territory. The British Parliament could ask questions from the secretary of state in governance and revenue. The parliament was empowered to criticize him and remove him.

The third statement is incorrect. The power to appoint Viceroy and Governor-General and governors of Presidencies (Bombay, Madras) was given to the British crown. The power to appoint Lieutenant Governor was given to Viceroy after getting approval from the British Government.

[Edit Question](#)

10. Maximum number of Famines attacked India during___?

[A] 1750-1800

[B] 1800-1850

[C] 1850-1900

[D] 1900-1950

Answer: [C] 1850-1900

This period is known for at least 2 dozen severe famines in India. Some important were: 1866-67 United Provinces, 1872-73; Punjab, Rajputana, 1874-Bihar, 1876 Deccan, Chhappania Akal 1899-1900.

[Edit Question](#)

General Knowledge Today



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Model Questions

Please check Prelims Model Questions at the end of this module.

This document presents you a concise summary of major events that happened during tenures of various viceroys after Lord Hardinge left his office in 1916 till India's independence and covers major events of Freedom Struggle. These events have included important facts which have been italicized and underlined.

Lord Chelmsford (1916-1921)

Lord Chelmsford served as Governor General and Viceroy of India from 1916 to 1921. Important events during his tenure included Lucknow Pact (1916), Khilafat Movement, Emergence of Gandhi as national leader, passing of Rowlatt Act and Jallianwalla Bagh Tragedy (1919), Non-Cooperation Movement, Third Afghan War and Treaty of Rawalpindi, August Declaration (1917), Montague-Chelmsford Reforms (1919).

Lucknow Session and Lucknow Pact 1916

Lucknow Session 1916 was presided by Ambica Charan Majumdar. In this session, *moderates and extremists came together for the first time since Surat split 1907* mainly due to efforts of Annie Besant. The Viceroy had asked Indians to suggest reforms in administration in the post-WW-I scenario. Till that time, Muslim League was not a significant political entity. In this session, both congress and Muslim league signed a pact in which few things were added without considering their consequences. These included a proposal to give one-third representation to Muslims in central government; separate electorates for communities; system of weightage for minority representation etc. At that time, the pact was called a symbol of Hindu-Muslim unity and Jinnah was hailed {by Sarojini Nayudu} as *Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity* but later it resulted in dangerous form of communal politics.

Montagu Declaration 1917

On 20 August 1917, Edwin Samuel Montagu {Secretary of State for India} made a statement {called Montague Declaration} in the House of Commons in British Parliament in which he outlined the goal of British Policy for Indian administration. The title of this statement was: *“Increasing association of Indians in every branch of administration, and the gradual development of self governing Institutions with a view to the progressive realization of **responsible governments** in India as an Integral part of the British Empire”*.

The statement was lofty in its ideals, but it was criticized as something *“unworthy of England to offer and India to accept”* by Annie Besant and a *“sunless dawn”* by Tilak. Though some moderates supported it, but they were not satisfied because they saw a big gap between making declaration and actually conceding their demand of self government. At this juncture, there was another schism in congress



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and the extremists formed another front *All India Liberal Federation*, which soon disappeared from the scene.

Indian Constitutional Reforms Report {Montague-Chelmsford Report}

The secretary of state visited India in November 1917 to ascertain views from all sections of political opinion for future constitutional reforms. He deliberated with Gandhi, Jinnah and others and then based on these deliberations; a report Indian Constitutional Reforms was prepared in July 1918. This report became the basis of Government of India Act 1919. The key principles of this report were as follows:

- India is a part of British Empire
- A beginning of responsible government should be done in the provinces.
- Enlargement of the provincial Legislative Councils and more freedom to them from outside control.
- The devolution of powers from the centre should be extended and legalised.

Government of India Act 1919 {Mont-ford Reforms}

This act is called a step towards “end of benevolent despotism” and introduction of responsible government. It covered reforms for a period of 10 years till 1929. The key principles of Montague-Chelmsford report were put in *its separate preamble*.

Under this act, the subjects of making law were demarcated for Central and provincial governments. The provincial subjects were divided into two categories viz. reserved and transferred. It also provided for inclusion of three Indians in 6 member council of Governor General; set up a bicameral legislature at centre with two houses viz. Legislative Assembly and Council of the State. {Check detailed article in last section of this module}.

This act also provided for establishment of a Public Service Commission in India for the first time. For inquiry into the working of the system placed by this act, a provision was made to set a commission at the end of 10 years of this act. The Simon Commission in 1927 was sent as per this provision.

Rowalt Committee 1918 and Rowlatt Act, 1919

To inquire into the *political terrorism* in the country, particularly in Punjab and Bengal, Lord Chelmsford appointed a sedition committee in 1918 under Justice Rowlatt. It was also asked to identify the links of Indian terrorists with German government and Bolsheviks of Russia. The committee could not establish the Bolsheviks, but substantiated the links with the Germans. On the basis of recommendations of this committee, a new law titled “*Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919*” famously called “Rowlatt Act” was passed. This law *authorized the government to imprison any person suspected of terrorism for a period of maximum 2 years without trial* It provided a special cell of 3



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high court judges for speedy trial of terrorism offenses, but there was no court of appeal above that panel. Further, it also provided to accept some evidences which were hitherto unacceptable in Indian Evidence Act.

Carrot and Stick Policy

The above description makes it clear that Chelmsford government passed two acts, one benevolent {GOI Act 1919} and another draconian law, which gave unlimited powers to police and could be mis-used to ruin life of anyone. This was basically a Carrot and Stick policy of the British Government.

Satyagraha Movements

The political organizations such as Satyagraha Sabha, Home Rule League, Muslim League and others started agitating against the Rowlatt act. Gandhi organized a mass protest and all India strike in April, 1919. There was mob violence in few places in Bombay, Ahmadabad and some other towns. However, the movement lost momentum after the Jallianwalla Bagh tragedy.

Jallianwalla Bagh tragedy, 1919

At that time, Punjab and Bengal were most affected by the revolutionary terrorism. There was martial law in Amritsar and Lahore. Amritsar was under Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer.

On April 13, 1919 {Baisakhi Day} in Amritsar, more than 5,000 people had gathered at Jallianwalla Bagh, unaware that such meetings are banned. British General thought as a conspiracy. Though people were peaceful and unarmed, the General ordered fire upon the crowd. This fire killed at least 400 people, many of whom had jumped into a well to save themselves from bullets.

The incident shook the nation and Gandhi withdrew the Satyagrah movement calling it a “Himalayan Blunder”. Rabindranath Tagore renounced his knighthood. *Gandhi also returned the Kaiser-i-Hind title given to him for his contribution in Boer wars in South Africa.*

Disorders Inquiry Committee {Hunter Committee}

To investigate the Jallianwalla Bagh Incident, the British Government set up a seven members committee under Lord William Hunter. Its four British members were as follows:

- Lord William Hunter (Chairman)
- WF Rice
- Justice GC Rankin, Judge of the High Court, Calcutta;
- Major General Sir George Barrow, Commandant of the Peshawar Division, a non-official Englishman

The remaining three members were Indians viz. Sir Chimanlal Setalvad; Pandit Jagat Narayan and Sardar Sultan Ahmed Khan.

The Congress also set up a parallel nonofficial enquiry committee. Dyer was removed from the job



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and sent to London, but he was never charged of any offence.

The Hunter Committee condemned most of the decisions taken by General Dyer, but it agreed with imposition of the martial law in Punjab and also criticized the method of Satyagraha adopted by Gandhi and held Gandhi partially responsible for “deteriorated” law and order situation.

Khilafat Movement

Khilafat Movement was organized by Indian Muslims to protest against the shabby treatment meted out to Turkey by the Allies. The Sultan of Turkey had been defeated by the allies in WW-I and as a result, his territory was greatly reduced. This was against the promises made by British to Indian Muslims.

Non-Cooperation Movement, 1920-22

On 1 August 1920, **non-cooperation** movement (NCM) was launched by Mahatma Gandhi for *peaceful and non-violent protest* against Jallianwalla Bagh Massacre. The programme of NCM included boycott of British Goods, adoption of Swadeshi, picketing of liquor shops, boycott of government offices, councils, law courts, educational institutions and constructive programmes such as Khadi and Charkha. Gandhi also mixed the Khilafat Movement with Non-cooperation Movement to strengthen Hindu-Muslim unity. Thus, the overall objectives of the movement were as follows:

- to make call for restoring the status of the ruler of Turkey
- to avenge the Jallianwalla Bagh Massacre and other violence in Punjab
- to secure Swaraj (independence) for India.

Gandhi promised Swaraj in one year if his Non Cooperation programme was fully implemented.

As a result of NCM, Congress became the party of the masses. It had now unprecedented support of peasants, workers and intellectuals. *The Charkha and Khadi became symbols of Indian Nationalism.* The movement also resulted in *general awakening of masses of their political rights and privileges.*

However, none of the political objectives of this movement were achieved and it failed miserably. Gandhi's idea of Swaraj in one year proved to be a bubble. The movement was abruptly withdrawn after the Chauri-Chaura incident in 1922. After this movement, Gandhi was arrested, trialed and awarded six years simple prison. There was yet another schism in congress. Moti Lal Nehru, CR Das, NC Kelkar, GS Gharpade and S Srinivas founded the Swaraj party out of frustration with the Gandhi's decision to withdraw NCM. They shifted their aim to *“Swaraj” within the British Raj* and decided to contest elections.

Lord Reading (1921-1925)

Lord Chelmsford was succeeded by Lord Reading in 1921 as Governor-General and Viceroy of India. He was born in a humble *Jew family* but had risen to the ranks of Chief Justice of England with his talent and hard work. His tenure was a testing time for British. The Non-cooperation Movement



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had reached climax and was abruptly withdrawn in 1922. There were frequent strikes all over the country. This period saw a sudden rise in communal growth and fringe elements in both Hindu and Muslim Community. Other events included: Prince of Wales visited India (1921), Repeal of Rowlatt Act (1919), Criminal Law Amendment Act, Moplah Rebellion (1921), Simultaneous Examinations of Civil Services in London and Delhi (1923), Start of Vishwa Bharati University (1922), Foundation of Communist Party of India (1921), Formation of Swaraj Party (1923), Kakori Train robbery (1925) etc.

Moplah Rebellion, 1921

In Kerala, the Moplah rebelled against the government orders of declaring Congress and Khilafat meetings illegal. It soon turned into a communal revolt between *Kudiyaan* {tenant Moplahs} and *Jenmis* {Hindu Landlords}. The movement was suppressed with great difficulty and the government needed to raise a special battalion called Malabar Special Police.

Swaraj Party (1923), Pro-changers and No-changers

The Swaraj Party was originally launched as **Congress-Khilafat Swaraj Party** by congress leaders Moti Lal Nehru, CR Das, NC Kelkar, GS Gharpade, S Srinivas, who had linked up with Khilafat leaders such as *Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy* and some other leaders such as *Subhash Chandra Bose & Vithalbhai Patel* out of frustration with the Gandhi's decision to withdraw NCM. They shifted their aim to "*Swaraj*" within the *British Raj* and decided to contest elections, enter into the legislatures and bring "change". These elections had to be conducted as per the provisions of the Government of India Act 1919. These leaders were called Pro-changers. On the other hand, most of Congress leaders left the business of agitation for a while; and started uplifting the poor people by teaching them how to use Charkha, denouncing untouchability, making nonviolence and Gandhian methods popular. These were called No-changers. C Rajagopalachari was prominent *No-changer*.

The Swaraj party was able to win some seats in assembly but could not bring many changes. However, it was due to their efforts that the Government agreed to appoint a committee under Sir Alexander Muddiman (Muddiman Committee), along with 4 Indian members, to go into the provisions of the Government of India Act 1919 and pinpoint the defects. The members of this committee included Sir Sivaswami Aiyar; Dr. R P Paranjape; Sir Tejbahadur Sapru and Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Return of Swaraj Party to Congress

In 1924, Gandhi was released from Jail due to health problems. He favored the No changers, but wanted conciliation between pro and no-changers. On his efforts, the Swaraj Party and Congress signed a joint statement which declared that Swaraj members would work in the council, on behalf of and as members of Congress. This decision was endorsed in December 1924 Belgaum Session; *the*



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only session of Indian National Congress presided by Gandhi.

Rise of Communal Politics

The abrupt withdrawal of NCM also resulted in divorce of Congress and Khilafat leaders. Fringe communal elements had grown in both Hindu and Muslim sides. Hindu-Muslim riots started more frequently than earlier. There was growth of *tabligh* and *Tanzims* in Muslims, while Arya Samajis started *Shuddi Sangathans*. In 1926, murder of Swami Shraddhanad in Delhi was one such incident which proved that communalism is now a permanent feature of Indian politics. In the 1923 Kakinada Session, the president *Maulana Mohammad Ali* quit congress citing communal reasons.

Suddhi Movement

The Suddhi movement was initiated by Dayananda with the intentions to unify India and in it; Non-Hindus and untouchables were converted to Hinduism. So, the movement led to some political implications, and indirectly led to growth of communalism.

In 1923, Hindu Mahasabha was revived by Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya for protection and promotion of the Hindu Civilization. In 1925, Keshav Bahram Hedgewar founded the Rastriya Swayamsevak Sangh in Nagpur. Dr. Hedgewar had been a part of the Anushilan Samiti and Yugantar and was a nationalist by heart. He became a member of Indian National Congress initially but left it soon and established RSS. The idea was to train the Hindu youths so that they united the Hindu Community and make India an Independent undivided country. He was much influenced by V D Savarkar and adopted his ideals.

Peshawar Conspiracy, 1923

Peshawar Conspiracy case is related to the Muslims taking interest in the Communist revolution of Russia. Many Muslims from Peshawar went to Moscow and started getting training related to Military and Communist regimes. When they returned to create disturbances, the Government caught them on the way and trialled them. Many of them were sentenced to long imprisonment.

Kakori Train Conspiracy, 1925

Kakori Train Conspiracy was a work of members of Hindustan Republican Association (HRA). They wanted to carry out a political dacoity to secure money from Government. The loot was done successfully but the plot was soon unearthed. Some 30 people were arrested and trial led to execution of Swaran Singh (uncle of Bhagat Singh), Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqullah Khan, Rajendra Lahiri and Roshan Singh.

Rest all were put in jails for long time, virtually bringing an end to HRA.

Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case 1924

Some newly turned communists named M N Roy, Muzaffar Ahamed, S A Dange, Shaukat Usmani,



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Nalini Gupta, Singaravelu Chettiar, Ghulam Hussain were caught by the Government and were trailed for conspiring against the Government. The case was much hyped in newspapers and introduced communism to Indian public. MN Roy was charged *in absentia*, so he was not arrested. Ghulam Hussain turned a British informer and was pardoned. Rest all people were arrested and sent to jail for 4 years.

Lord Irwin (1926-1931)

On April 3, 1926 Lord Irwin was appointed 30th Viceroy and Governor-General of India. This was the most tumultuous period for the politics of India. During this period the important events were: Visit of Simon Commission (1928), Nehru Report (1928), Jinnah's 14 Points, Murder of Saunders in 1929, Bomb thrown in Assembly Hall in Delhi by Bhagat Singh, Foundation of HSRA, Death of Lala Lajpat Rai, execution of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev (1931), Chittagong armoury Raid (1930), Civil Disobedience Movement, Dandi March (1930), First Round Table Conference in London and Gandhi Irwin Pact, Demand for Poorna Swarajya in Lahore session.

Simon Commission 1927

As per the provisions of the GOI Act 1919, Simon Commission visited India in 1927 to investigate the progress of the governance scheme and suggest new steps for reform. Such a commission was to be announced in 1929 {after 10 years of GOI Act} but the conservative government in England advanced its date in view of the tumultuous political condition of India. This commission had no Indian members, and all seven members were from three political parties of Britain. This gave a very good opportunity to Congress to have an agenda.

They protested that Simon commission was there to deprive them of their right to participate in the determination of the constitution of their own country. In Madras session, the congress passed a resolution which advocated boycott of Simon Commission at every stage and in every form.

At the same time, the Muslim league was divided on the commission. While Mohammad Ali Jinnah supported boycott of commission, Mohammad Shafi supported the government. Thus, all parties except Shafi group of Muslim League and Justice Part of Madras were against Simon Commission.

Recommendations

- The Simon commission recommended that the Dyarchy in provinces should be abolished and provinces should be given full autonomy including law The ministers should be made responsible to legislature. Governor should be given right of selecting the ministers from majority party in legislature.
- Regarding centre, the Simon commission recommended that it was not possible to establish a federation in the country in near future So, pending federation, a Consultative Council of Greater India should be established which should include representatives of both the British



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provinces as well as Princely states.

- Sindh should be separated from Bombay. Burma should be separated from India because it is not a natural party in Indian sub-continent.
- Indian army should be indianized but British forces must be retained until India is not equipped fully.
- The commission also recommended for a local legislature for North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan. Both NWFP and Baluchistan should acquire the right to get represented at the centre.

When it arrived at Bombay on 3rd February, 1929, the Simon Commission was greeted with strikes all over India. Wherever it went, it was welcomed with black flags and shouting *Simon Go Back*. The Government used coercive methods to break down the boycott unsuccessfully. At Lahore, Lala Lajpat Rai organized a massive protest and was fatally wounded in lathicharge.

The Indians alleged that the implicit objective of Simon Commission was to delay the process of transfer of power and widen the community feelings by provisions that could be opposite to the interests of two communities. It did not propose universal franchise and did not propose financial devolution.

Moti Lal Nehru Report 1928

The Simon commission visited India twice {1928 & 1929} and submitted its report in 1930. Indians had no interest in its find outs. The secretary of state for India Lord Birkenhead threw a challenge to these congressmen to prepare a draft of constitution of India. The political leaders accepted the challenge and called an All Party Conference in February and May 1928. All the political parties appointed a committee under Motilal Nehru to prepare the draft constitution. It was called Nehru Committee Report, submitted on August 28, 1928 in the Lucknow conference of all parties. The key points of this report were:

- India would be given Dominion status within the British Commonwealth.
- India will be a federation, which shall have a bicameral legislature at the centre and Ministry would be responsible to the legislature.
- Governor General of India would be the constitutional head of India and will have the same powers as that of British Crown.
- There will be **no separate electorate**.
- The draft report also defined the **citizenship and fundamental rights**.

Nehru Committee Report recommended reservation of seats for Muslims only in provinces where they were in a minority. It proposed to abolish separate electorates, discard reservation of seats for Muslim majorities in the Punjab and Bengal and reject the principle of weightage for Muslim minorities.



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Thus, in effect, it was reversal of the Lucknow Pact. It asked for a similar reservation for Hindus in NWFP. These points were unacceptable for the Muslim league. Due to this, Jinnah moved certain amendments in the report in the all party meeting in 1928 at Calcutta. But those amendments were not accepted by Congress. As a result, Jinnah and others refused to participate in further such conferences.

Consequently, Nehru Report was accepted by a majority vote. The congress gave an ultimatum to the British Government to accept the recommendation of the report by December 31, 1929, and also threatened for another mass movement in case the report is not accepted. The report was not accepted by the Government.

Jinnah's 14 Points

Jinnah and others called a Muslim All Parties conference in Delhi. In that conference, Jinnah formulated the 14 points to safeguard the interests of the Muslims and made it crystal clear that no constitution, by whomsoever proposed or devised, would be acceptable to the Muslims, unless it conformed with those demands. These 14 points were: (1) Federal constitution with residuary powers vested in states. (2) uniform measure of autonomy to all provinces (3) definite and adequate representation of minorities in every province (4) Central legislature Muslim representation shall not be less than one third (5) continuance of separate electorates (6) any redistribution of seats should not affect Muslim majority in Punjab, Bengal, NWFP. (7) full religious liberty to all communities (8) No bill or resolution can be passed in any legislature or any other elected body **if three fourth of the members** of any community in that particular body oppose it being injurious to that of the community. (9) Sind should be separated from the Bombay Presidency. (10) Reforms in NEFP and Baluchistan (11) Equal share of Muslim in state and local self governing bodies (12) Adequate safeguards in constitution for protection of Muslim culture, education, language, religion, personal laws, and Muslim charitable institutions. They should get their due share in grant-in-aid. (13) No cabinet, either central or provincial, should be formed without there being at least one third of the Muslim Ministers. (14) No change shall be made in the constitution by the Central legislature except with the concurrence of the states constituting the Indian Federation.

Poorna Swarajya Resolution

The Nehru report had created a kind of divide within congress also. While some leaders wanted dominion status of India, some wanted complete freedom. Finally it was decided that if the British parliament accepts the report by 31 December 1929, Congress would adopt the report as it is. If the report is not accepted by the British parliament, Congress would insist in Complete Independence and would organize a mass movement. This deadline passed and no reply came from government.

In the Lahore session of 1929 {presided by Jawaharlal Nehru}, the congress passed a Poorna Swarajya



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Resolution *{drafted by Jawaharlal Nehru}* for complete independence. As per this resolution, the Central and Provincial legislatures, and future elections would be boycotted; and a programme of Civil Disobedience would be launched.

On midnight of December 31, 1929 and January 1, 1930, Nehru unfurled the Flag of India's independence in Lahore at bank of river Ravi. January 26, 1930 was decided to be observed as Purna *Swarajya Day*. On that day, a "Declaration of Independence" pledge *drafted by Mahatma Gandhi*, which echoed the American Declaration of Independence, was taken. Mahatma Gandhi was authorized by the Congress Working Committee to determine the time, place and issue on which the Civil Disobedience was to be launched. He took the decision to break the salt law first, on which the British had imposed a duty, affecting the poorest of the poor.

CDM: Dandi March and Salt Satyagrah

Salt Satyagraha began with the Dandi March on March 12, 1930 as a part of Civil Disobedience Movement. Gandhi led the Dandi march from Sabarmati Ashram to the sea coast near the village of Dandi. In this journey of 24 days and covering a distance of 390 kilometres, thousands of people joined him. He reached Dandi on April 6, 1930, and broke the salt law. This was formal inauguration of CDM and millions of Indians jumped in the tumult. A programme was outlined, which included the following:

- Violation of the laws such as Salt Law
- Non payment of Land Revenue, Taxes and Rent
- Boycott of courts of law, legislatures, elections, Government functionaries, Schools and Colleges.
- Peaceful picketing of shops that sold foreign goods.
- Mass strikes and processions.
- Picketing of shops that sold liquor.
- Boycott of Civil Services, Military and Police services.

The Government came into action by putting the law breakers in jails and suppressing them by police firings, lathicharge and other means. Sixty thousand people were arrested in less than one year. Properties of tax defaulters were confiscated. Gandhi and all important leaders were arrested and placed behind the bars.

First Round Table Conference 1930

Meanwhile, the First Round Table Conference took place in London. It was chaired by PM Ramsay MacDonald. It did not yield any result because the Congress did not participate in it as most of their leaders were either in jails or decided to boycott it.

Gandhi Irwin Pact, 1931



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After the failure of the First Round Table Conference, some pro-British members of Indian Liberal Party such as Tej Bahadur Sapru, C. Y. Chintamani and Srinivasa Sastri appealed Gandhi to talk with the Viceroy. The talks between Gandhi and Irwin were arranged. Many congress leaders were released to make a favourable environment. On 5 March 1931, a Gandhi-Irwin pact came out of these talks which proposed that (1) Gandhi would discontinue the Civil Disobedience Movement (2) Congress agreed to participate in Second Round Table Conference (3) The ordinance promulgated in wake of CDM would be withdrawn (4) Those detained in connection with CDM would be released (5) People living in areas near sea coast would be allowed to collect duty free salt (6) Government allowed the people peaceful picketing of liquor shops.

Karachi Session of Congress 1931

In the Karachi Session 1931 {presided by Sardar Patel}, the congress formally endorsed the Gandhi Irwin Pact and he was also nominated to represent congress in Second Round Table Conference. In the same session a Karachi Resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Policy was also adopted. This resolution was originally drafted by Nehru and as per some historians, MN Roy had played a definite role in its drafting. This resolution for the first time gave meaning of Swaraj for common people. It included (1) Basic civil rights of freedom of speech, Freedom of Press, Freedom of assembly, Freedom of association (2) Equality before law (3) Elections on the basis of Universal Adult Franchise (4) Free and compulsory primary education (4) Substantial reduction in rent and taxes (5) Better conditions for workers including a living wage, limited hours of work (6) Protection of women and peasants (7) Government ownership or control of key industries, mines, and transport (8) Protection of Minorities.

Lahore Conspiracy Case 1928-31 and Execution of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru

To avenge the killing of Lal Lajpat Rai, three members of HSRA Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, Jai Gopal and Sukh Dev conspired to kill the police chief, Scott. But they shot on the DSP – J. P. Saunders, who was killed on the spot. Bhagat Singh and others immediately fled from Lahore and to avoid recognition, he cut his beard and hair. Further, to protest against the Defense of India Act, 1915 (which the government decided to implement), the HSRA conspired to explode a bomb in Central Legislative Assembly. On 8 April 1929, Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw a bomb onto the corridors of the assembly and shouted “Inquilab Zindabad!”. After that they showered the leaflets stating that it takes a loud voice to make the deaf hear. The bomb was not intended to kill or injure any one. It was just to make noise. It was later proved by the forensics also that the bomb was not powerful to kill anybody. Bhagat Singh and Dutt surrendered themselves and were transported for life on June 12, 1929.

Meanwhile police unearthed a Bomb Factory in Lahore and arrested other members of HSRA. Of the



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arrested members, seven become informants and helped to solve mystery of JP Saunders' Murder. Bhagat Singh was captured after throwing Bomb in Lahore Assembly but he was also trialled in Lahore Conspiracy Case. Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev were charged for murder. They were hanged on 23 March 1931 in Lahore Jail.

The execution of these three martyrs shook the entire nation. Public was angry. When Gandhi was going to attend the Karachi session, all over the route, he was greeted with the Black flags in anger. However, the Karachi resolution admired the bravery of three martyrs.

Chittagong Armory Raid 1930

On April 18, 1930, there was an attempt to raid the armoury of the Police and Auxiliary forces from the Chittagong armoury in Bengal. The idea was to capture the two main armouries in Chittagong and then demolish the Telegraph and telephone office. It was to be followed by the assassination of Europeans. Some 65 people executed this conspiracy in the name of Indian Republican Army. After everything was done, all the revolutionaries gathered outside the police armoury where leader Surya Sen took a military salute, hoisted the National Flag and proclaimed Provisional Revolutionary Government. After that they fled to the hills. Hot pursuit by police followed. Many of the members were captured and trialled and deported for life. The leader Surya Sen was arrested in 1933 on a tip off. He was hanged in 1934 and was probably last of the militant nationalists to be executed.

Lord Willingdon (1931-1936)

Lord Willingdon served as 22nd Viceroy and Governor General of India from 18 April 1931 to 18 April 1936. Important events of this period include Second and Third Round Table Conferences, relaunching of Civil Disobedience Movement, Communal Award by Ramsay MacDonald (1932), Poona Pact (1932), Government of India Act 1935, and Separation of Burma from India.

Second Round Table conference 1931

The Second Round Table started on September 7, 1931 in England. Gandhi represented Indian National Congress and Sarojini Nayudu represented Indian women. This conference saw an overwhelming number of Indian delegates including included loyalists, communalists, careerists, big landlords, representatives of the princes and others. In this conference, Gandhi iterated the need of partnership between Britain and India as between two equal nations. The main points put forward by Gandhi included:

- A responsible government must be established immediately and in full, both at the centre and in the provinces.
- Congress alone represented political India
- The untouchables were Hindus and should not be treated as a "minority",
- There should be no separate electorates or special safeguards for Muslims or other minorities.



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However, government said that Congress did not represent the interests of all India. The communal issue was also not solved as points raised by Gandhi were rejected by other communities of India. The conference deadlocked and all minorities except Sikhs such as Muslims, Dalits, Christians, Anglo-Indians, Europeans demanded separate electorates. The talks failed and ended on December 11, 1931.

Civil Disobedience Movement – Second Phase 1931-1934

Meanwhile, the political turmoil worsened in India and there was a general disturbance in Bengal, United Provinces and Punjab. The Viceroy had issued a number of ordinances virtually imposing “Civil Martial Law”.

Once Gandhi returned from London, Congress decided to resume the Civil Disobedience Movement. However, within a week Gandhi was arrested. In next four months some 80 thousand people were haled. Protests started all over India. The main activities in protests included picketing the liquor shops, burning of foreign cloths and processions.

The government dealt with the movement with rough hand. The congress and other political parties were declared illegal. Offices and funds of the parties were seized. All Ashrams of Gandhi were occupied by Police. In a few months, the movement was crushed. It was suspended in May 1933 and was withdrawn in May 1934.

During this phase of CDM, there was an uprising in Alwar Rajasthan, where Mevs rose against the local raja {thus called Mev Uprising} against his revenue enhancement measures. The Raja was sent to Europe and his administration came under central government for many years. Some other areas also saw similar uprisings.

Communal Award and Poona Pact, 1932

When CDM was in full swing, the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald announced the Communal Award {aka MacDonald Award} on August 16, 1932 proposing minority representation in the legislatures. As per this award: (1) seats of provincial legislatures were to be doubled (2) separate electorates for communities was to be retained (3) Muslims were to be granted a weightage wherever they were in minority (4) 3% seats were to be reserved in all provinces except NWFP (5) depressed class, dalits and untouchables were to be declared as minority (6) allocation was to be made to labour, landlords, traders and industrialists.

In effect, the communal award accorded separate electorates for Muslims, Europeans, Sikhs (in Punjab), Indian Christians, Anglo Indians, Depressed Classes, and even Marathas. (Some seats in Bombay were given to Marathas).

The implicit objective of the Communal Award was to strike down nationalism and create parochial loyalties towards communities and different spheres of interests.



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For Gandhi, the most painful aspect of Communal Accord was provision of separate electorate for depressed classes, because this would divide the Hindus and untouchables were integral part of Hindu community. The separate electorates for untouchables were mainly because of active efforts of Dr. B R Ambedkar who had put such demands in the round table conferences. *Note that Dr. Ambedkar attended all the three Round Table Conferences*}.

Gandhi {from Yarrowada Jail} wrote a letter to the Prime Minister that if this award, so far it is related to depressed classes, is not changed; he would sit on a fast unto death in the jail itself. On 20 September 1932, Gandhi sat on fast unto death. The Hindu leaders approached Dr. Ambedkar to negotiate on the matter.

On 25 September, 1932, there was a pact between Gandhi and Ambedkar, which was called Poona Pact. Via this pact, Ambedkar agreed on Joint Electorates while Gandhi agreed for reservation of seats {double in number than existing in provincial legislatures} for depressed classes in provincial classes and adequate representation of Dalits in civil services.

In summary, by communal award, the British were successful in diverting attention from Civil Disobedience Movement and created a dissension among the Hindus. Larger issues faded into the background for some time and what a common man got was confusion on Poona pact.

Third Round Table Conference, November 1932

In November 1932, a third round table was again held in London. Congress was not invited so not attended. In Britain, Labour party also did not attend. Only some 46 people attended this conference. In this, college student *Chaudhary Rahmat Ali proposed the name of Pakistan*, the new “holy land” specially carved out from India for the Muslims.

At the end of this conference, a White Paper was released on the basis of which the Government of India Act, 1935 was drafted. However, Congress insisted that only satisfactory alternative was a constitution drawn up by the Constituent Assembly which should be elected as far as possible on the basis of Adult Suffrage.

Bihar Earthquake 1934

The last major event during the times of Lord Willingdon was the catastrophic 8.4 scale Earthquake in Bihar. This earthquake completely destroyed the Munger and Muzaffarpur area. Its epicenter was in Nepal and almost whole of the Bihar state got affected. Life of some 40,000 people was lost.

Lord Linlithgow (1936-1944)

Lord Linlithgow was Viceroy of India from 1936 to 1944 and this eight years period was longest reign as Viceroy of India. During this period, parts of Government of India Act 1935 came into force in 1937. Other events included – Resignation of Congress Ministries to protest the involvement of Indians in world war-II; Start of World War-II (1939), resignation of Subhash Chandra Bose and



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foundation of “Forward Block”; Escape of SC Bose from India, Jinnah’s two nations theory; Atlanta Charter; August Offer (1940); Foundation of Indian National Army; Cripps Mission (1942); Launch of Quit India Movement; Demand of divide and quit; Bengal Famine of 1943).

Government of India Act 1935

With 321 section and 10 schedules {*but without a preamble unlike GOI Act 1919*}, this was the longest act passed by British for governance in India. The act was later split into two parts viz. GOI Act, 1935 and Government of Burma Act, 1935.

This act ended the system of Dyarchy introduced by GOI Act 1919 and provided for establishment of a **federation of India** to be made up of provinces of British India and some or all of the Princely states. Since it also did not provide the *dominion status* {as recommended by Simon Commission}; and also preserved the separate electorates for Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Europeans, Anglo Indians, Indian Christians etc., it proved to be further an instrument of disintegrating India. There was no provision of any fundamental right. It perpetuated the sovereignty of the British parliament over India.

Reactions to GOI Act

It was over obstructing and Nehru called it “*all breaks, no engine*”. Similarly Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya said: “*the act is somewhat democratic in its appearance but completely hallow from inside*”. Jinnah commented it as “*thoroughly rotten, fundamentally bad and totally unacceptable*”. Jinnah’s point of view was that it would substantially increase Hindu majority at the center. However Jinnah was ready to accept the provincial scheme, as it seemed that it would ensure Muslim control of the four Muslim majority provinces. Only two parties supported the act viz. *National Liberal Federation* and *Hindu Mahasabha*.

Provincial Elections 1937

The federation of India did not materialize because required number of Princely states did not join it. However, some parts of the act related to British provinces had come into force and as per these provisions; elections were carried out in 1937 for British provinces. Out of 256 million population {1931 Census}, only 11.5% people were eligible to vote.

Congress and other parties launched their election campaign. The Congress kept demand for constituent assembly at top of its election manifesto. Muslim league also participated under Jinnah, who had become its President in 1936.

The elections were swept by Congress. It either won with absolute majority {in five provinces} or emerged as largest party. It could not gain majority in Bengal, Punjab and Sind. In Bengal and Punjab, Muslim league formed the provincial governments by coalitions while in Sind, non-congress, non-Muslim league government was formed.

The Congress governments remained in offices for close to two years. In these two years, they passed



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some laws in provinces and tried to lift its image from a political party to a party of governance. In some states, Congress had refused to make coalition government with Muslim League. They accused congress of oppressing the Muslims. The middle and lower class Muslims were told that if they remain in united country, they would be unable to compete with Hindus who would not allow them to get into the higher jobs and prospects.

Further, they also rejected and resented the Wardha Scheme of Education devised / proposed by Gandhi in which there was emphasis on training the youth in Handicrafts and *no place was there for religious education*. Muslim league made it an issue and championed for the cause of Pakistan.

Begin of Second World War 1939

On September 3, 1939, the Second World War broke out and on the same day Lord Linlithgow declared India as belligerent and at war. While *Subhash Chandra Bose advocated a campaign of mass civil disobedience to protest against Viceroy Lord Linlithgow's decision to declare war on India's behalf without consulting the Congress leadership*; it was Congress idea to support the British on condition that India should be declared an independent nation immediately after the war and a responsible government must be placed at the centre.

However, India's entry into the war as a belligerent became a political issue. In September 1939, a Congress Working Committee passed a resolution that issue of war or peace with India must be decided by the Indian People. However, Government did not pay heed to this resolution. The Congress then decided that the Congress ministries in provinces must resign. On the other hand, Muslim league supported British on its war decisions, and due to this, it was pampered by British hereafter.

Jinnah's Two Nations Theory, March 1940

As early as 1938, the Muslim league had created a committee under Nawab of Pirpur to investigate the tyranny and oppression of the congress ministries in provinces ruled by them. This committee came with a one-sided report and charged the congress for interference with the religious rites, suppression of Urdu and propaganda of Hindi, denial of legitimate representation and suppression in economy of the Muslims.

On March 20, 1940, the Muslim League met at Lahore where Fazlul Haq { premier of Bengal province} moved a resolution which said:

the areas in which Muslims are numerically in majority, as in north-western and eastern zones of India, should be grouped to constitute the Independent States in which the Constituent units would be autonomous and sovereign".

This resolution was passed and then Jinnah {in his presidential address} gave the two nation theory by saying: *"India cannot be assumed today to be Unitarian and homogenous nation, but on the contrary, there are two nations in the main- the Hindus and the Muslims".*



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Although Jinnah had still not used the word Pakistan in this address. The two nation theory was rejected by Gandhi who said: “*My whole soul rebels against the idea that Hinduism and Islam represent two antagonistic cultures and doctrines. To assent to such a doctrine for me is denial of God*”.

August Offer 1940

In Ramgarh Session of March 1940, the congress passed a resolution in which it offered Government support in war if a provisional National Government is set up at centre. The Government responded in sort of a proposal by Lord Linlithgow, which is called August Offer. In this offer, the demand to set up a provisional National Government was turned down but it proposed that immediately after the war a Constitution Making Body would be appointed. This was rejected by Congress.

Individual Satyagraha 1940-41

In the state of confusion, there was a call for a mass movement. But this time, Gandhi did not launch a mass movement but insisted on individual Satyagraha to affirm the right to speech. It was possible that a mass movement may turn violent. The individual satyagrahis were carefully chosen from among the most un-radical people. The first individual satyagrahi Acharya Vinoba Bhave gave a speech against the war and was sent to jail. Second Satyagrahi was Jawahar Lal Nehru; third was Brahma Datt, one of the inmates of the Gandhi’s Ashram. Each of them was sent to jail.

However, individual Satyagraha did not attract much enthusiasm. Gandhi suspended the movement in December, 1940. It was again launched in January 1941 with more vigour.

Cripps Proposals 1942

In 1942, the Japanese forces had advanced towards west and occupied Andaman Islands. There was a threat of Japanese invasion on Indian mainland.

Further, there was a pressure from the American President F. Roosevelt and Chinese premier Chiang Kai-Shek to concede the real political power to the people of India. The public sentiment in England was also in favour of reconciliation in India.

However, Congress did not want to support to British against anyone. To buy the political support for war in India, on March 11, 1942, British PM Winston Churchill sent a mission under Stafford Cripps {leader of House of Commons}.

The main proposals of the Cripps mission were as follows:

- Immediately after war, steps would be taken up to set up an elected body charged with the task of making the constitution for India
- Provisions would be made so that the Indian princely states could participate in the framing of the constitution.
- India would be given Dominion status after the War.

In summary, these proposals were aimed to appease the Congress, Muslim League and Princely states, all at once. But all of them rejected it.



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Congress wanted *immediate* dominion status, but the proposals promised it after the war. For congress, "one bird in hand was equal to two in bush", and thus it rejected it. Gandhi called the Cripps Proposals as "Post date cheque drawn on a failing bank".

Further, the proposals gave right to non-accession to princely states, which was not acceptable to Congress. Congress demanded a full control over *defense* "*stating that a slave country cannot have any inspiration.*"

Muslim league wanted a separate Pakistan; it said there was *inadequate representation of Muslims.*

Sikhs rejected because of the view that they would not allow separation of Punjab. Depressed Class opposed the proposals on the ground that there was no provision for safeguarding their interests.

Quit India Movement: August 1942

In July 1942, the Congress Working Committee met at Wardha and passed a resolution that demanded immediate end of British rule in India. This is called "Quit India Resolution". It was ratified in the All India Congress Committee at Bombay on August 7, 1942. Here, a nonviolent mass struggle under the leadership of Gandhi was sanctioned in the Gowalia Tank Maidan {which was hereafter also known as *August Kranti Maidan*}. In a speech on 8th August, Gandhi gave the famous "*do or die*" speech.

After the end of the 8th August meeting, government started arresting the congress leaders and within a week stuffed most leaders including Gandhi in Jails.

The arrests of key leaders led to spontaneous outburst of mass anger and widespread disturbance in Bombay, Ahmadabad, Poona, Delhi etc. Soon after it was launched, it lost its original character and merged itself into revolutionary / terrorist movement. Thus, the movement proved to be a metaphor. It was launched as a non-violent movement but there was widespread violence. It was launched in leadership of Gandhi but Gandhi could not lead it because he along with other key leaders was put behind bars. Further, it was not planned and spread spontaneously. The common people were attracted to this movement mainly because of frustration due to rising inflation and the acute shortage of food stuffs. Labour Unions under Communist influence had apparently decided against participation in the movement, but *labor class participated in it* and there were large-scale strikes in mills at Kanpur, Jamshedpur and Ahmadabad.

The movement was suppressed in three four months by ruthless use of force by the Government. For next two and half years, there was no political movement.

Lord Wavell (1 October 1943 – 21 February 1947)

Lord Linlithgow retired as viceroy in the summer of 1943, and was succeeded by Lord Wavell, who remained 23rd Viceroy of India from 1 October 1943 to 21 February 1947. The most important



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events during his tenure were Great Famine of Bengal (1943), Rajagopalachari Formula (1944), Simla conference (1945); Conclusion of WW-II with surrender of Japan; Cabinet Mission (1946), Direct Action Day (1946), Interim Government under Nehru.

Bengal Famine 1942-43

Bengal Famine of 1942-43 resulted in the death of an estimated 1.5 to 3 million children, women and men during 1942-43. A constellation of natural as well as manmade factors led to this mega-tragedy such as Japanese occupation of Burma, the damage to the aman (kharif) rice crop both due to tidal waves and a disease epidemic caused by the fungus *Helminthosporium oryzae*, panic purchase and hoarding by the rich, failure of governance particularly in relation to the equitable distribution of the available food grains, disruption of communication due to World War-II, and the indifference of the then U.K. government to the plight of the starving people of undivided Bengal.

C. Rajagopalachari formula of 1944

The Congress and Muslim league were adamant on single and two nation theory respectively. To resolve the deadlock, C Rajagopalachari {CR} came up with a formula. This formula proposed that:

- For the time being {till a provisional interim government is formed}, Muslim league would support the congress demand of complete freedom and single dominion.
- Once the war ends, a commission would be appointed to demarcate the districts having a Muslim population in absolute majority and in those areas plebiscite will be conducted on the basis of adult suffrage.
- All parties would be allowed to express their stance on the partition and their views before the plebiscite
- If the plebiscite accepts separation, a mutual agreement would be signed to safeguard essential matters such as defence, communication and commerce and for other essential services.
- In case of separation, the transfer of population would be on voluntary basis.

However, Jinnah rejected CR Formula because separation could not be deferred till after independence

The idea of safeguarding essential services was useless; and thought that a plebiscite in which both Muslims and Hindus voting contradicted the basic principle of Muslims being a distinct nation with an inherent right of self-determination.

Gandhi Jinnah Talks, 1944

Most of Congress leaders were still in Jail but Gandhi was released on 5 May 1944. He proposed to engage in Talks with Jinnah on his two nation theory. And, the CR formula was used as a basis of these talks. Gandhi and Jinnah met in September 1944. In these talks, Gandhi proposed that only the Muslims living in Baluchistan, Sindh, N.W.F.P and parts of the Punjab, Bengal and Assam, who desired to lives in separation from the rest of India, should form the new state. But on this, Jinnah



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insisted that Pakistan should include all the six provinces resolution of the Muslim league in 1940. He did not want a mutilated, moth eaten Pakistan, same like Allama Mashriqi cried for. Jinnah also rejected other suggestions such as treaty of separation to provide for common services etc.

Bhulabhai-Laaqut Ali Talks, 1945

In January 1945, there were talks between the Congress leader Bhulabhai Desai and Muslim leader Liaquat Ali Khan to resolve a deadlock. As per the pact, *both Congress and Muslim league would be given equal {40% each and 20 per cent reservation for the rest} of seats in Interim Government to be created under existing constitution but having all Indians except Viceroy and Commander in chief. A settlement would be worked out after interim government had taken office.*

Desai claimed that these proposals had support of Gandhi, that they were based on informal talks with Liaquat Ali Khan and that if the British Government really wanted a Central Government with political backing they could get it now. He was confident that Jinnah was aware and had approved of what had passed between him and Liaquat Ali Khan. The Viceroy fell in with this proposal and recommended its adoption to the Secretary of State. However, Secretary of State was not confident and doubted that Bhulabhai might be a *stalking horse* indeed!

When Viceroy met Desai, he was vague about Congress's readiness to give the league equal status in interim Government. It was later rejected by Jinnah as well as Congress. Thus, Bhulabhai-Liaquat Ali pact or talks proved to be very costly for the political career of Bhulabhai himself.

Wavell Plan, June 1945

In the summer of 1945, Lord Wavell organised Simla Conference in order to solve the constitutional tangle. Both the Congress and the Muslim League took part in the Simla Conference but the Conference could not succeed on account of the attitude of the Muslim League.

In this conference, Jinnah said that only Muslim league has right to represent Muslims of India and congress or any other non-league entity does not represent Muslims. Congress had no right to nominate any Muslim in executive council. He also demanded that in case of the division of votes and objection by the Muslim members, there should be a provision that vote is cleared only by 2/3rd of majority.

This apart, Wavell had given place to six members in the executive council of 14 and also a power to veto any constitutional proposal which was not in its interest. However, this was unjust because Muslims represented only a quarter of the Indian population.

Nevertheless, this particular decision {of giving Jinnah Veto to block any constitutional process in executive council} of Wavell practically ensured the creation of Pakistan. This is because from Cripps Mission to Wavell plan, the situation had reversed in favour of Muslim League. While Cripps mission had recognized Congress as only platform to discuss with the government; Wavell plan created two platforms. It made Muslim league representative of Muslims in India. Jinnah's status was



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raised to equal of Gandhi and two representatives were created for the first time – one for India and the other for Pakistan.

RIN Mutiny, 1946

On February 18, 1946, a section of non-commissioned officers and sailors known as Ratings, serving in the Royal Indian Navy, mutinied against the British Officers. The violence broke out in Mumbai and over 200 people lost lives in this disturbance. The mutiny made an impression on the British, that it would be better to leave the country. On February 19, the second day of this mutiny, **Cabinet Mission** was sent to India.

Cabinet Mission Plan 1946

Cabinet Mission was composed of three Cabinet Ministers of England viz. Sir Pethick Lawrence, Secretary of State for India; Sir Stafford Cripps, President of the Board of Trade and V. Alexander, the First Lord of the Admiralty.

The mission arrived on March 24, 1946 to devise a machinery to draw up the constitution of Independent India and make arrangements for interim Government. The mission spent some 3 weeks to discuss with the leaders of various political parties, but could not arrive at any agreed solution. So finally it announced its own recommendations on May 16, 1946. The key recommendations were:

- Undivided India, thus turning down the demand of Pakistan of Muslim League.
- Restriction upon communal representation.
- An interim cabinet made of all Indian Members.
- Formation of the constituent assembly on democratic principle of population.
- It recognized Indian Right to cede from the Commonwealth.

The most important proposal was of a Union of India that would be empowered to deal with the defense, foreign affairs and communications. This would be a weak centre and strong province government. All subjects other than the Union Subjects and all the residuary powers would be vested in the provinces. The Princely states would retain all subjects and all residuary powers.

Congress accepted the idea of constituent assembly but rejected the scheme of the government having weak centre and strong provinces. The plan had also divided India's states into 3 groups and this idea was also rejected by Congress.

The Muslim league first approved the plan. But when Congress declared that it could change the scheme through its majority in the Constituent Assembly, they rejected the plan. On July 27, the Muslim League Council met at Bombay where Jinnah reiterated the demand for Pakistan as the *only course left open to the Muslim League*. Jinnah called the Muslims to resort to "Direct Action" to achieve the land of their dream "Pakistan".



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Direct Action Day, August 16, 1946

16 August 1946 was fixed as the Direct Action Day by Muslim League to show the strength of Muslim feelings both to British and Congress. In Calcutta, the communal tension was whipped up by both Hindu and Muslim newspapers. The Muslims announced a strike on that day while Hindus asked them shopkeepers to keep shops open. The result was Great Calcutta Killing in which 6000 Hindus and Muslims butchered each other and 20,000 others were maimed, raped or violated. Riots soon spread to all parts of North India and it turned into a Civil War between Hindus and Muslims. Amidst this situation of Chaos and insanity, Mahatma Gandhi went to calm down the maddened riotists.

Constituent Assembly – December 6, 1946

By the December 1946, the elections to the Constituent assembly had taken place and it met for the first time on 6 December 1946. The members of the constituent assembly were elected by the Provincial assemblies by method of single transferable vote system of proportional representations. Congress won 208 seats and Muslim league won 73 seats. However, Muslim league demanded for a separate Constituent assembly for Muslims in India. So, the British declared that the decisions of the Constituent assembly would not be valid in the Muslim majority areas. Thus the working of the assembly got virtually crippled.

Atlee's Declaration – February 20, 1947

The Prime Minister of Britain Clement Atlee declared on February 20, 1947 in the House of Commons that the British would quit India after transferring power into the responsible hand not later than June 1948. The idea was that the Indians should settle their issues before that. He also announced the appointment of Lord Mountbatten as Viceroy in place of Lord Wavell.

Lord Mountbatten (1947-1948)

Lord Mountbatten served as last Viceroy of India from 12 February 1947 – 15 August 1947; and then first Governor General of Free India from 15 August 1947 – 21 June 1948. During his tenure, India got independence in the form of two dominions of India Pakistan. Two Boundary Commissions were set, Pakistan raided Kashmir and Mahatma Gandhi was shot dead.

Pakistan Day

Upon his arrival, Lord Mountbatten immediately began the procedure to transfer the power. On March 27, 1947 Muslim League observed Pakistan Day which resulted in riots, massacre and atrocities. The Interim government, which was in existence since 2 September 1946 had failed in controlling the riots, and later uselessness of opposition of demand for a separate Pakistan by the Muslim league was realized by the leaders of the Interim Government including Nehru.

Dickie Bird Plan, 1947

Mountbatten prepared "Dickie Bird Plan" for India's independence. The main proposal of this plan



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was to that provinces should become first independent successor states rather than an Indian Union or the two dominions of India & Pakistan.

As per this plan all the provinces viz. Madras, Bombay, United Provinces of Bengal, Punjab & North West Frontier etc. were proposed to be declared Independent. The states later would decide whether to join constituent assembly or not.

This plan was not discussed in details with leaders of India and Mountbatten discussed just informally. He gave the plan a final touch and sent to London. Later when he moved to Shimla, Nehru joined him as a guest. Here the details of the plan were put by Mountbatten before Nehru. Nehru rejected the plan right away and told him that this plan would invite Balkanization of India and would provoke conflict and violence. Consequently, Mountbatten cabled to England that this plan was cancelled.

June 3 Plan: June 3, 1947

By June 1947, Congress had given consent to partition. On June 3, 1947, Prime Minister Atlee announced the Partition Plan or June 3 Plan in the House of Commons. The plan laid down the following provisions.

- The provincial legislative Assemblies of Bengal and Punjab would meet in two parts separately, one representing Muslim majority districts and another representing the Hindu Majority districts to decide by the vote on partition.
- In case of Sind and Baluchistan, the provincial assemblies would take the decision.
- In case of NWFP, the decision had to be taken on the base of referendum.
- A referendum was to be organized in Sylhet region of Assam which was Muslim majority.
- The Paramount of the princely states will not be transferred to either of India or Pakistan. So, they would in theory become sovereign when India is partitioned.

Congress accepted the plan. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan *called the Congress treacherous which has thrown the Khudai Khidmatgars to wolves*. The partition became realty soon. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan rejected the referendum but the voting was done in favour of Pakistan.

Partition Committee and Partition Council

Partition Committee was formed which was chaired by Lord Mountbatten and its members were Vallabh Bhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Liaquat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar. Later this committee was replaced by a Partition Council. In this council, Congress was represented by Sardar Patel and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, with C. Rajgopalachari as alternate member. Muslim league was represented by Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Liaquat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar as alternate member. Please note that even after 15 August 1947, this partition council was in existence, but the composition was changed as 2 members from each dominion. Patel and Dr. Prasad kept representing



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Indian Domain even at that time.

Indian Independence Act 1947

The Indian Independence Act was based upon the Mountbatten plan of 3rd June 1947 and was passed by the British parliament on July 5, 1947. It received royal assent on July 18, 1947. It provided for two dominion states: India and Pakistan. The boundaries between the two dominion states were to be determined by a Boundary Commission {under Sir Cyril Radcliff}. It provided for partition of Punjab & Bengal and separate boundary commissions to demarcate the boundaries between them. The authority of the British Crown over the princely states ceased and they were free to join either India or Pakistan or remain independent. Both the dominions of India and Pakistan were to have Governor Generals to be appointed by the British King. The act also provided for a common Governor General if both of them agreed. The constituent assemblies of both the states were free to make constitutions of their respective countries. For the time being till the constitution was made, both of them would be governed in accordance with the Government of India act 1935. Any modification or omission could be done by the Governor General. British Government would not continue any control on any dominion. The Governor General was invested with adequate powers until March 1948 to issue orders for effective implementation of the provisions of the Indian independence act 1947. Those civil servants who had been appointed before the August 15, 1947, will continue in service with same privileges.

Aftermath

Jinnah left for Karachi on August 7, 1947. Here the Constituent assembly of Pakistan met on August 11, 1947 and elected him the President. Three days later, he was sworn in as Governor General of Pakistan. On the midnight of 14 August and 15 August 1947, India and Pakistan came into existence. The Constituent assembly then appointed Lord Mountbatten as the First Governor General of the Indian Dominion. In the Morning of August 15, 1947, a new cabinet headed by Jawahar Lal Nehru was sworn in. India paid a heavy price, thereafter in the form of thousands of lives that got burnt in the fire of partition.

Prelims Model Questions

1. Identify the famous movement in India's freedom struggle, with the help of given information:
 1. The movement was a declaration of right to self-government not of the dominion variety
 2. The movement was featured by widespread hartals, strikes and other outbreaks, called the "Great August Uprising".
 3. Within a week's time after the launch of movement, Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Aazad and many other leaders were sentenced to jails.



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Select the correct answer from options given below:

- [A] Civil disobedience Movement
- [B] Quit India Movement
- [C] Non Cooperation Movement
- [D] Khilafat Movement

Answer: [B] Quit India Movement

The above features are of Quit India Movement.

In July 1942, the Congress Working Committee met at Wardha. Here a long resolution was passed that demanded that the “British Rule in India must end immediately”.

- This resolution was an outcome of the change in attitude of Congress and Gandhi himself towards British.
- The attitude changed because in the Second World War the Japanese were triumphing and they had already overrun Singapore and Malaya. They were nearly reaching Burma and India. So it was thought that “Presence of British in India was an invitation to Japan to invade”.
- The Wardha Resolution is also known as “Quit India Resolution”. This resolution was ratified in the All India Congress Committee at Bombay on August 7, 1942. Here a nonviolent mass struggle under the leadership of Gandhi was sanctioned in the “August Kranti Maidan”.

2. Which among the following movements during the freedom struggle of India were abruptly withdrawn due to violence?

1. Non-cooperation Movement
2. Civil Disobedience Movement
3. Quit India Movement

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1
- [B] Only 1 & 2
- [C] Only 1 & 3
- [D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [A] Only 1

End of NCM

On February 5, 1922, in the Chauri Chaura, after violent clashes between the local police and the protesters in which three protesters were killed by police firing, the police chowki was set



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on fire by the mob, killing 22 of the police occupants. Gandhi felt that the revolt was veering off-course, and was disappointed that the revolt had lost its non-violent nature. He did not want the movement to degenerate into a contest of violence, with police and angry mobs attacking each other back and forth, victimizing civilians in between. Gandhi appealed to the Indian public for all resistance to end, went on a fast lasting 3 weeks, and called off the mass non-cooperation movement. So, this is a correct option.

End of CDM

There were outbreaks of violence in Calcutta (now Kolkata), Karachi, and Gujarat during CDM Movement. Unlike his suspension of satyagraha after violence broke out during the Non-cooperation movement, this time Gandhi was “unmoved”. Appealing for violence to end, at the same time Gandhi honoured those killed in Chittagong and congratulated their parents “for the finished sacrifices of their sons.... A warrior’s death is never a matter for sorrow”. So this option is not correct.

End of QIM

Gandhi was imprisoned. All the members of the Party’s Working Committee (national leadership) were imprisoned as well. Due to the arrest of major leaders, a young and till then relatively unknown Aruna Asaf Ali presided over the AICC session on 9 August and hoisted the flag; later the Congress party was banned. These actions only created sympathy for the cause among the population. Despite lack of direct leadership, large protests and demonstrations were held all over the country. Workers remained absent en masse and strikes were called. Not all demonstrations were peaceful, at some places bombs exploded, government buildings were set on fire, electricity was cut and transport and communication lines were severed. The British swiftly responded with mass detentions. Over 100,000 arrests were made, mass fines were levied and demonstrators were subjected to public flogging. Hundreds of resisters and innocent people were killed in police and army shootings. Many national leaders went underground and continued their struggle by broadcasting messages over clandestine radio stations, distributing pamphlets and establishing parallel governments. The British sense of crisis was strong enough that a battleship was specifically set aside to take Gandhi and the Congress leaders out of India, possibly to South Africa or Yemen but ultimately did not take that step out of fear of intensifying the revolt. Gandhi’s wife Kasturba Gandhi and his personal secretary Mahadev Desai died in months and Gandhi’s health was failing, despite this Gandhi went on a 21-day fast and maintained his resolve to continuous resistance. Although the British released Gandhi on account of his health in 1944, Gandhi kept up the resistance, demanding the release of the Congress leadership. The QIM was



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violent movement which was ruthlessly suppressed but was NOT withdrawn. So option is not correct.

3. Which among the following was / were envisaged in the Non-cooperation movement?

1. Boycott of elections under the Government of India Act, 1919
2. Boycott of government schools and colleges
3. Violation and breaking the civil laws
4. Boycott of foreign goods
5. Surrender of titles and honorary offices

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 2, 3, 4 & 5
- [B] Only 1, 2, 4 & 5
- [C] Only 1, 4 & 5
- [D] Only 2, 3 & 5

Answer: [B] Only 1, 2, 4 & 5

All of the above were envisaged in the NCM but not the violation and breaking the civil laws, though boycott of the courts was there.

4. The Quit India Movement was supported by:

1. Hindu Mahasabha
2. Communist Party of India
3. Princely states

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 2 & 3
- [C] Only 1 & 3
- [D] None of them

Answer: [D] None of them

The Congress had little success in rallying other political forces under a single flag and program. Smaller parties like the Hindu Mahasabha opposed the call. The Communist Party of India strongly opposed the Quit India movement and supported the war effort because of the need to assist the Soviet Union, despite support for Quit India by many industrial workers. In response the British lifted the ban on the party. The movement had less support in the princely states, as the princes were strongly opposed and funded the opposition. (Wikipedia)

5. The Civil Disobedience Movement was finally withdrawn in ____?



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[A] March 1933

[B] April 1934

[C] August 1934

[D] January 1935

Answer: [B] April 1934

Civil Disobedience Movement was finally withdrawn in April 1934.

6. The Chauri-Chaura incident is one of the most remembered events of the Freedom Struggle of India. What was / were the outcome of this incident?

1. Civil Disobedience movement was called off by Mahatma Gandhi

2. There was a schism in the Congress

3. Swaraj Party took a resolution to boycott elections and not rest before attaining Swaraj

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2

[C] Only 2 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [B] Only 2

1. Civil Disobedience movement was called off by Mahatma Gandhi

This statement is incorrect because the event led Gandhi to call off the Non-cooperation movement from Bardoli in February 1922 and not the Civil Disobedience movement.

2. There was a schism in the Congress

The second statement is correct that there was a schism in the Congress.

3. Swaraj Party took a resolution to boycott elections and not rest before attaining swaraj

Moti lal Nehru, C R Das, N C Kelkar, GS Gharpade and S Srinivas founded the Swaraj party.

The third statement is incorrect, as they chose a middle path, as none of them was capable to lead such a large scale movement. So, they decided swaraj within the British Raj and that 's what led them to contest the elections and win some handsome number of seats.

7. The proposals of the August Offer of Lord Linlithgow included:

1. Establishment of a constitution making body for India

2. Expansion of Viceroy's Executive Council

3. Freedom after war

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3



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[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [A] Only 1 & 2

1. After the war a representative Indian body would be set up to frame a constitution for India.

2. Viceroy's Executive Council would be expanded without delay

3. Third statement is not correct. This offer promised dominion status. The minorities were assured that the government would not transfer power "to any system of government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in Indian national life."

8. Consider the following events during British India:

1. Provision of Separate Electorate

2. Diarchy in the Provinces

3. Provision of a establishment of Constituent assembly

4. Provincial Autonomy

Which among the following is the correct chronological order in which they happened?

[A] 1 2 3 4

[B] 1 2 4 3

[C] 1 3 2 4

[D] 1 3 4 2

Answer: [B] 1 2 4 3

1. Provision of Separate Electorate : Morley Minto Reforms, 1909

2. Diarchy in the Provinces : Montague Chelmsford Reforms, 1919

3. Provision of a establishment of Constituent assembly : August Offer 1940

4. Provincial Autonomy : Act of 1935

9. After the Government of India Act 1935, a Federal Court of India was established , which was later absorbed by Supreme Court of India after independence. The appeal from this Federal Court of India could be taken to ____?

[A] Viceroy of India

[B] Secretary of State for India

[C] King of England

[D] Privy Council

Answer: [D] Privy Council

There was a right of appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London from the Federal Court of India. The Judicial Committee of Privy Council acted as an appellate



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body since 1726 with the establishment of Mayor's Court in India. It first started working via the system of committees and sub-committees. This system was not perfect and created problems. Via the Judicial Committee Act, 1833, the Privy Council was reformed and then it came into formal existence. Privy Council was thus created on 14th Aug. 1833 by the Act of the Parliament. Via this act, the Privy Council was empowered to hear appeals from the courts in British Colonies. Under the Indian High Courts Act, 1861 the high Courts were established at three Provinces. It was the amalgamation of King's Courts and Company's Courts. This Act provided for the right to appeal from High Courts to Privy Council from all of its judgments except in Criminal matters. In addition to this, there was a provision of Special leave to Appeal in certain cases to be so certified by the High Courts.

The Government of India Act, 1935 provided for the establishment of Federal Court in India. The Federal Court was given exclusive original jurisdiction to decide disputes between the Center and constituent Units. The provision was made for filing of appeals from High Courts to the Federal Court and from Federal Court to the Privy Council. The Federal Court also had jurisdiction to grant Special Leave to Appeal and for such appeals a certificate of the High Court was essential. India retained the right of appeal from the Federal Court of India to the Privy Council after the establishment of the Dominion of India. Then, the Federal Court Enlargement of Jurisdiction Act, 1948 was passed. This Act enlarged the appellate jurisdiction of Federal Court and also abolished the old system of filing direct appeals from the High Court to the Privy Council. Finally in 1949, the Abolition of Privy Council Jurisdiction Act was passed by the Indian Government. This Act accordingly abolished the jurisdiction of Privy Council to entertain new appeals and petitions as well as to dispose of any pending appeals and petitions. It also provided for transfer of all cases filed before Privy Council to the Federal Court in India. All powers of the Privy Council regarding appeals from the High Court were conferred to the Federal Court. Thereafter with the commencement of the Constitution of India in 1950, the Supreme Court has been established and is serving as the Apex Court for all purposes in India. It hears appeals from all the High Courts and Subordinate Courts. With this the appellate jurisdiction of the Privy Council finally came to an end.

10. The Indian National Congress was represented in the Partition Council by ____:

1. Jawahar Lal Nehru
2. Sardar Patel
3. Dr. Rajendra Prasad
4. Abul Kalam Azad



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Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] 1 & 2

[B] 2 & 3

[C] 3 & 4

[D] 1 & 4

Answer: [B] 2 & 3

Before the Partition Council, a Partition Committee was formed which was chaired by Lord Mountbatten and its members were Vallabh Bhai Patel, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Liaqat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar. Later this committee was replaced by a Partition Council. In this council, Congress was represented by Sardar Patel and Dr. Rajendra Prasad, with C. Rajgopalachari as alternate member. Muslim league was represented by Mohammed Ali Jinnah, Liaqat Ali Khan and Abdur Rab Nishtar as alternate member. Please note that even after 15

August 1947, this partition council was in existence, but the composition was changed as 2 members from each dominion. Patel and Dr. Prasad kept representing Indian Domain even at that time.

11. On the basis of which of the following grounds, the Cabinet Mission Plan ruled out the partition of India?

1. Creation of Pakistan would not solve the communal minority problem

2. Partition would be injurious to the transportation, postal and communication system

3. There was a 700 miles distance between the two halves of the proposed Pakistan

Select the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

12. The Wavell Plan offered that:

1. A new Executive Council was to be formed at the Centre in which all but the Viceroy and the Commander in Chief will be Indians

2. This executive council was for the time being till a new permanent constitution could be agreed upon and come to force.

3. All portfolios except the Defense would be held by the Indian Members

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:



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[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

The above schemes of were Wavell plan given by Lord Wavell in 1945. To discuss the provisions of the Wavell Plan a conference of 21 Indian Political leaders was invited to the Summer Capital of British Government Shimla. The leaders included Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, who was the President of the Congress at that time. Mohammad Ali Jinnah also reached in the conference. But here, Jinnah made a strange claim. He said that no non-league Muslim should be represented to the Executive Council because only Muslim League has right to represent the Muslims of India. So, it was said that Congress had no right to nominate any Muslim in the Executive council.

13. As per Gandhi-Irwin Pact, the British Government agreed to:

1. Release all political prisoners except those guilty of violence

2. Abolish the salt tax

3. Withdraw all ordinances and prosecutions

4. Accept Indian National Congress as sole representative of Indians

Choose the correct statements from the codes given below:

[A] 1, 2 & 3

[B] 1, 3 & 4

[C] 1 & 3

[D] 1 & 2

Answer: [C] 1 & 3

British Government agreed to:

1. Withdraw all ordinances and end prosecutions

2. Release all political prisoners, except those guilty of violence

3. Permit peaceful picketing of liquor and foreign cloth shops

4. Restore confiscated properties of the satyagrahis

5. Permit free collection or manufacture of salt by persons near the sea-coast

6. Lift the ban over the congress.

General Knowledge Today



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This document has put together important facts about key Peasant Rebellions in British Era and Facts about various personalities on Freedom Movement.

Peasants and Tribal Revolts in British India

In the 19th century and early 20th century, there were hundreds of peasants and tribal movements, revolts or uprisings in India. Most of these revolts were suppressed by ruthless use of power by the British yet; they played a very significant role in the freedom struggle of the country.

Historical Background

Information about peasant revolts in ancient and early medieval era is scant. In ancient India, society was divided into four Varnas and Peasants formed a part of Sudras. Since land tax was major source of revenue for any government, there must have been public revolts in ancient and medieval India. In this context, Kautilya's use of term *Janapada-Kopa* is worth mention. Kautilya says that a King should do all which keeps his subjects contented. An oppression of the subjects may lead to Kopa of which most dangerous form is Janapada-kopa. The term Janapada-Kopa is linked to the oppression and subsequent revolt of the peasantry.

Whatever might be the earlier records, the peasant revolts began from later years of Mughal rule and early conquests of British (17th / 18th century). For more than 200 years, the peasants in almost all areas of India have repeatedly rose against government, landlords and other bureaucrats, money-lenders, police and military. The peasant revolts have continued to occur after the political freedom of India in 1947. Most uprisings in free India have shown *a continuity of the tactics of the British era peasant revolts*.

During the later part of Mughal era, revolts broke out with the Mughal bureaucracy and taxation becoming more oppressive and local rulers making incursions into the tribal territories. One of the earliest prominent revolts against Mughals during Aurangzeb regime were that of *Jats of Ganga-Yamuna Doab in 1660s to 1690s; and the revolt of Satnami religious sect in Narnaul in 1672* In many revolts, the Peasants placed themselves under the local governor or land managers {Zamindar / Jagirdar} who rebelled against the imperial government.

Initial decades of the East India Company rule saw outright plunder of the wealth and ruinous taxation of the peasantry. In some areas, the taxation in British rule was up to twice of that imposed by Mughals. The oppressive tax contributed to the 1770 Bengal Famine which wiped out 1/3rd population. The permanent settlement of Bengal further deteriorated the condition of the peasantry. In the later decades, the land revenue declined to a much small proportion of the crops, but by that time, the surplus was being removed from peasants by other kind of agents such as money-lenders, intermediary tenants, absentee landlords, merchants, lawyers etc.

The permanent land settlement made the land a private property of capitalist kind. The new



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landlords included not only the old Zamindars {who had previously been revenue collectors under the Mughals} but also a variety of village headmen, religious or secular functionaries, moneylenders etc. who purchased the land rights along with right to collect revenue in government auctions when old Zamindars proved unable to bring in the tax. While these persons gained landownership, the worst affected were the lower ranks of the cultivating tenants who lost their hereditary rights, who could be evicted if their landlords found them unnecessary, recalcitrant or unable to pay their rents. Further, there was increased encroachment of the tribal hill territories and oppression of the tribal people by European and Indian planters; government usurpation of the forest areas; unequal terms of trade; usury; slave labour etc.

Types of Revolts

The peasants' revolts of British India can be roughly classified into five types as discussed below. This is a rough classification by *anthropologist Katherine Gough*. There are no strict lines between these types and many rebellions can be categorised into more than one category. A further classification divides them into *Ethnic movements*, *Agrarian movements* and *Political Movements*.

Restorative Rebellions

These revolts aimed to drive out the British and restore earlier rulers and social relations. One early example is of Raja Chet Singh of Banaras. When Warren Hastings demanded money from Chet Singh and when the latter failed to give it, he was arrested. However, his subjects supported him and protested against the colonial rule. Similarly, the Bishenpur revolt of 1789 was led by the local ruler and supported by local people. Between 1799 and 1800 Poligars, who were deprived of their military power adopted Guerrilla warfare to thwart the authority of British rulers.

The Santhal rebellion was another revolt which was not focussed on driving the British out but on restoring their traditional rights.

Religious Movements

These revolts aimed for liberation of region or ethnic groups under new form of government or religious conflicts. Such revolts started as early as Aurangzeb's puritan rule. Early example of such revolts was by Satnami religious sect in Narnaul in 1672. During British era, the revolts belonging to this category include Kuka Revolt; Moplah Rebellion etc.

Social Banditry

This included rebels by individuals living on the edges of rural societies by robbing and plundering. They were often seen by ordinary people as heroes or beacons of popular resistance. The examples of such revolts include Sanyasi Revolt by Sanyasis and Fakirs of Bengal in late 18th century. Another example was dispossessed military chief Narasimha Reddi and his followers in Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh, in 1846-47. The banditry by Lodhas of Midnapore and tribal Kallars of South India.

Terrorist Vengeance



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This included killing for meting out collective justice. Examples include raids of *Lushai Kukis* into Sylhet and Cachar in the first half of the nineteenth century and killing of British by Moplah.

Mass insurrections

These included the spontaneous and abrupt uprisings commonly without any leader or organizational base. Most of them were temporary in nature and came to sudden end. Examples include revolt in Rangpur and Dinajpur of 1783 and the Deccan peasant uprising of 1875.

Important Notes on Different Revolts

Politico-Religious Movements

Jat Uprising, 1669-70

In 1669-70, the Jats of Mathura region rose under the leadership of a local Zaminda **Gokul**. Religion was main factor behind this revolt because Abdul Nabi, local officer of imperial Mughal government, had destroyed the temples of Hindus and disrespected their women.

We note here that Jat uprising occurred at a time Mughal government was by no means weak or imbecile. The Mughal army pursued the Jats and the leader Gokul was captured and executed. However, the rebel did not subdue completely. Taking advantage of the civil war amongst the sons of Shahjahan, the Jats again rose in arms and this rebellion finally culminated in establishment of sovereign Jat Kingdom under Raja Surajmal with Bharatpur its capital.

Satnami Revolt, 1672

The Satnami sect was founded by a saint named **Birbhan** in 1657 in Narnaul in Haryana. The major religious activity of this sect is to chant and meditate the true names {Sat-Nam} of God specially Rama and Krishna.

This sect is thought to be an *offshoot of Ravidasi sect* and *comprised of lower strata of the Hindu society*, particularly, leather workers, sweepers, carpenters, Goldsmiths etc. The followers of this sect kept their heads shaven {thus called *Mundiyas*} and abstained from liquor and meat. Today, there are at least 1.5 million followers of Satnami sect spread in Rajasthan, UP, MP, Bihar, Gujarat and Maharashtra.

Birbhan and Pothi

Birbhan was monotheist and described God by the name of Satnam or Truth. Thought this sect revered Ram, Krishna and Hanuman yet the idol worship was not practiced.

The religious granth of the Satnamis is called **Pothi**, which the followers revered like the Guru Granth Sahib of the Sikhs.

During the rule of Puritan Mughal Aurangzeb, there was resentment among Hindus for revival of Jaziya and general destruction of temples under imperial orders. The revolt triggered when a Mughal



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soldier killed a Satnami. The Satnamis killed the soldier in revenge and in turn Mughal soldiers were sent to teach them a lesson. Some 5,000 Satnamis stood up in arms and routed the Mughal troops in the town, drove away the Mughal administrators and set up their own administration under their leader Birbhan.

The rebellion was crushed when Aurangzeb himself took personal command and sent 10,000 troops with artillery to crush the Satnamis. In the sort of a large battle, some 2000 Satnamis were slain. This was followed by an attempt to pursue and kill every member of the Satnami sect, thus a kind of genocide happened. The remaining Satnamis fled in all directions and for a long time remained disorganized. This is one reason that the small population of Satnamis is found scattered in several parts of the country.

Sanyasi and Fakir Uprising

From 1763 onwards, the Sanyasi Revolt or uprising had engulfed the area of Bengal {including modern Bangladesh}, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. **Anandamath**, written by *India's first modern novelist* Bankim Chandra Chatterjee is the best reminder of the **Sanyasi / Fakir Rebellion**. Vande Mataram, India's National Song has been taken from this novel.

Who were Sanyasis?

Literally, Sanyasi refers to one who has renounced the world for the sake of spiritual life. The Sanyasis of the revolt certainly did not come under this definition because they were very much worldly people. In the British documents, they have been identified as “*gypsies of Hindustan*”, “*trading pilgrims*”, “*disorderly tribe of lawless mendicants*”, “*religious vagrants*” etc.

These Sanyasis were Sadhus of the Dasanami sect, which originated in 9th century. In 16th century, a section of Dasnamis was organized by Madhusudana Saraswati as Naga {the one who go nude in public} tradition sadhus to protect the Hindus from tyranny of Mughal rulers. They were also called Gosain or Goswami in popular parlance.

Who were Fakirs?

The Fakirs connected to this rebellion belonged to Madariya group of the Sufi Silsila. This group finds its origin from Syed Badiuddin Qutb-ul-Madar. The fakir uprising against the British was actually a revolt of the Madariya Fakirs.

Reasons of the Revolt

One hundreds of years, the Fakirs and Sanyasis used to travel to North Bengal to visit various shrines and pilgrim sites. As a tradition, they used to collect a sizeable amount of alms from local Zamindars. Before battle of Plassey, the Zamindars had no problem in making these alms and this collection of this money was an amicable transaction. The British control over Bengal after battles of Plassey and Buxar led to increase in land tax and exploitation of the peasants. Further, the Bengal Famine of 1770



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led to drop in production and many Zamindars could not pay the taxes. As per permanent settlement terms, lands of many of the old Zamindars were confiscated and given to new purchasers. Numerous restrictions were placed on Sanyasis and Fakirs also because British considered them looters and thugs.

The peasants, displaced landlords and these Sadhus / Fakirs came together in a rebellion which started in later part of 18th century and continued for around half century. They raided government treasuries, killed British officers and caused acute chaos and misery. The rebellion continued for around half a century and later got weakened.

In 1771, 150 Fakirs were killed for no good reason. This triggered rebellion which reached its climax in late 1770s. The Fakirs and Sanyasis came together in number close to fifty thousand to defeat the common enemy British.

Leaders and Groups involved

Apart from Sanyasis and Fakirs, the revolt saw active participation of displaced Zamindars, peasants, artisans and disbanded armies of Nawabs. The *Ex-army people provided leadership, peasants provided social base* for the rebellion while the *Sanyasi and Fakirs provided a religious fervour to the struggle*. They were able to capture Company's Dacca centre and kept it under its control for some time. They also launched similar attacks in Patna, Hooghly, Cooch Bihar, Saran etc.

For Fakirs, Majanun Shah was main leader. He travelled from places to places to inspire to continue struggle. He was killed and after his death, his brother Musa Shah took the leadership and continued rebel for some time. Later, Chirag Shah led the Fakirs to launch attack on British establishments. However, later internal dissensions became reason for weakening of the revolt. The revolt was also led by *two women leaders viz. Bhavini Pathak and Devi Chaudhrani*.

Pagal Panthi Revolt 1825-1850

Pagal Panthis were a mixture of the Hinduism, Sufism and Animism, which became prominent in Bengal in initial years of 19th century. The sect was founded by Karam Shah, and his son Tipu Shah led these people to uphold the religion and rights of the peasants in Bengal. He captured Sherpur in 1825, after standing up against oppressive taxes and laws imposed by the Zamindars and the British. The rebels kept disturbed the area for more than 2 decades. Tipu Shah died in 1852, but the resistance movement continued.

Faraizis Revolt 1838-1857

This sect was founded by **Haji Shariatullah in Bengal** Haji Shariatullah advocated the radical changes in religious, political and social changes in Bengal, because the Islam got degraded because of the British Influence. He organized a small armed force to attack the Zamindars and tried to establish



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a parallel government. Even established Khalifas as Commissioners of each village, to raise funds, and settle disputes between villagers. After Haji Shariatullah, his son Dadu Mian led this rebellion and was several times prosecuted by the British but convicted because of no evidences. The movement ended with Dadu Mian's death in 1860.

Wahabi Movement

This movement, centred around Patna was an Islamic revivalist movement, whose stress was to condemn any change into the original Islam and return to its true spirit. The movement was led by Syed Ahmed Bareilvi. The movement was active since 1830s but in the wake of 1857 revolt, it turned into armed resistance, a *Jihad against the British*. Subsequently, the British termed Wahabis as traitors and rebels and carried out extensive military operations against the Wahabis. The movement was fully suppressed after 1870. British also introduced the term "sedition" in the Indian Penal Code 1870 to outlaw speech that attempted to "excite disaffection towards the government established by law in India". Thus, this movement marks the beginning of sedition law in India.

Kuka Movement

There has been a doubtful history about the initial days of Kuka Movement. There are two names associated with the start of this movement i.e. **Baba Balak Singh** and **Bhagat Jawar** ^(or Jawahar) **Mal**. Balak Singh was born in village Sarvala, in District Attock, in 1799. He started preaching very early in his life and the objective of his preachings was to uphold the religious purity of Sikhism. Some sources say that Balak Singh himself was a disciple of Bhagat Jawar Mal. *Bhagat Jawar Mal was also known as Sian Sahib*. The important teaching of Bhagat Jawar mal was that his disciples should live a simple teetotaller life and *all other rituals except the chanting the name of God* should be discarded, this is how the sect was called "Namdhari". While reciting Sikh Mantras or repeating the name, the Namdharis often developed emotions, screamed and shouted, took turbans in their hands and hair streaming in the air hence called 'Kukas' or the shouters. The word Kuka is derived from the Punjabi expression 'kook', meaning a cry. The Namdharis can be easily identified by their white attire and a typical turban.

Baba Ram Singh

Bhagat Jawarmal established his main base at **Hazro** (now in Pakistan). After Bhagat Jawarmal died, Balak Singh carried is legacy. However, it was not the real starting of the Kuka Movement as we know today. The real founder was **Baba Ram Singh**, who was born in 1815 as a son of a poor carpenter, in small village of Bhaini, around 7 kilometers away from Ludhiana. In 1840s, he served as a soldier in Sikh Army of Prince Naunihal Singh. He left the army on the overturn of the Sikh rule. In around 1838, he came in touch with Baba Balak Singh, though he remained in touch with Bhagat Jawar mal also.



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After he left the army, he started preaching against the bad things developed among the Sikhs. We have been told that he wanted his disciples to follow all what **Guru Gobind Singh taught** in a puritan way, without any influence of other religions.

Foundations of Namdharis

Some sources say that in 1857, Baba Ram Singh founded the Namdhari sect on the day of Baisakhi, at village Bheni. He established 22 preaching centres in different parts of the country, each of them was under a deputy called Suba. These Subas, at various places such as Gwalior, Banaras, Lucknow, Kabul and Hyderabad, started spreading the teachings of Baba Ram Singh. Thus, we see that the Namdhari sect had started taking a political shape by 1860s. The major centre of this sect was parts of today's Pakistan's Punjab & Sindh province. The movement started attracting not only Sikhs but also the Hindus. The number of followers went up in Lakhs, many of them being the government services, in business and in trading.

This was followed by such a growth of pomp and splendour of Baba Ram Singh, that he was now considered by many as a successor of Guru Nanak dev, although Baba Ram Singh is said to have condemned it. His admirers have also produced a "*Pothi*" which was probably written during the times of Guru Gobind Singh, in which it was written that one Ram Singh would appear, who would become a spiritual leader of the Sikhs and establish his rule in the country. This was later condemned by Baba Ram Singh, when he was in exile in Rangoon.

Beliefs and Faiths

The Beliefs and Faiths of the Kuka Sect

- The sect believes that *Adi Granthis* the only true holy book of their religion.
- Gobind Singh is the only Guru.
- Any person, irrespective of caste or religion, can be admitted as a Namdhari convert.
- Sodhis, Bedis, Mahants, Brahmins and such like are impostors, as none are Gurus except Gobind Singh. It's worth note that among Sikhs the Sodhis and Bedis had started getting worshipped during those times.
- Devidwaras, Shivdwaras and Mandirs are a means of extortion, to be held in contempt and never visited.
- Idols and idol-worship are insulting to God, and will not be forgiven. The Namdharis were iconoclasts.
- Converts are allowed to read Gobind Singh's Grantha and no other book.
- Pure vegetarianism. It was against killing of cattle and kine.
- No caste system
- *Namdharis are not allowed to drink tap water; water must be drawn from the lake or captured from*



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rain and from well.

- *Only white cloths, no any other color allowed.*

From the above, we can easily make out that the origin of the Kuka Movement had its roots in religious purification of the Sikhism. In their social beliefs, the Kukas were against child-marriage. They condemned infanticide and dowry system. The Namdharis in fact were religiously denied the right to spend more than Rs. 13 on a marriage. The Kukas gave strictly equal status to women and believed inner-caste marriage between caste Hindus and untouchables. The first such inter-caste marriage was performed among the Kukas on January 4, 1863.

The Non-cooperation / Civil Disobedience by Kukas

Baba Ram Singh considered political freedom a part of religion. The organisation of the Namdharis became very strong. The principles of boycott and non-co-operation, which Mahatma Gandhi introduced in our freedom movement, were expounded by Guru Ram Singh for the Namdharis. The Guru's **Non-co-operation Movement** was based on a few things such as boycott of education institutions of British and laws established by them. They were rigid in their clothing and wore only hand-spun white attire. A large number of Kuka followers were in the police as well as army, though they did not reveal their identity. It's worth note that a special Kuka regiment was raised by the Maharaja of Kashmir was disbanded at the intervention of the British.

Political Clout

Baba Ram Singh had spread his spheres of activity in Nepal, Bhutan, Kashmir and several other States. It is also said that he was in touch with the prominent leaders of Mutiny, including Rani of Jhansi. He had also exchanged letters from Russians, whom he expected to march to India and expel the British from here.

The Kuka Movement / Uprising

In 1871, the Kukas met in conference at the village Khote in Ferozepur. In this conference, the Kukas divided into two parties and despite Ram Singh's admonitions, who was present there, they began to quarrel among themselves. Some Kukas got out of control and attacked and murdered many butchers and others suspected of kine slaughter. This was followed by killing of the Butchers in many places. The Kuka followers succeeded in enforcing civil disobedience as well as carrying out extreme actions including murder of butchers against cow slaughter. Many experts have opined that the Kuka attack upon religious places, as they were iconoclasts. This hurt the religious sentiments of followers of other faiths. Further, the religious purity, which was the basis of their foundation, was later lost into oblivion.

Government Action

The Government arrested many Kukas and either hanged them or imprisoned them. There was a serious outbreak in 1872, when some of the Kukas went out of Ram Singh's control and decided to



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attack Malerkotla and occupied it. The government took it seriously and many of the Kuka ring-leaders were blown away from the cannon mounts. Despite of the fact the Ram Singh had informed the government that some wrongdoers used his name, the Government concluded that Ram Singh's real motive and ambition was to reign and acquire dominions, upon a religious pretext. The result was that he was captured and sent into exile in Burma. He died there later.

Aftermath

After Ram Singh, Guru Hari Singh succeeded. Guru Hari Singh who was not allowed to move out of his house in the village Bheni, for 21 years. He died in 1906 and was succeeded by Pratap Singh. During the World War in 1914, the British Government unsuccessfully tried to appease the Kukas by land grants. In 1920, the Kukas started their paper **Satyug**, and in 1922, their daily, 'Kuka' was started. When the non-cooperation movement was started by Gandhiji, the Kukas joined hands freely. Gandhiji himself is said to have learnt many points from the Kukas, and modified his campaign to revolutionise the social and political structure of India.

Moplah Rebellion

The Moplah Rebellion or the Malabar Rebellion was an extended version of the Khilafat Movement in Kerala in 1921. The Government had declared the Congress and Khilafat meetings illegal. So, a reaction in Kerala began against the crackdown of the British in Eranad and Valluvanad taluks of Malabar.

But the Khilafat meeting incited so much communal feelings among the Muslims peasants, known as Moplahs, that it turned out to become an antihindu movement from July 1921 onwards. The violence began and the Moplahs attacked the police stations and took control of them. They also seized the courts, and the government treasuries. It became a communal riot when the kudiyaan or tenant Moplahs attacked their Hindu *jenmis* or landlords and killed many of them. Thus the Hindu Landlords became the victims of the atrocities of the Moplahs.

The leaders of this rebellion were:

1. Variyankunnath Kunjahammed Haji,
2. Seethi Koya Thangal of Kumaranpathor
3. Ali Musliyar.

For two some two months the administration remained in the hands of the rebels. The military as well as Police needed to withdraw from the burning areas. Finally the British forces suppressed the movement with greater difficulty. The situation was under control by the end of the 1921. This rebellion was so fearful that the government raised a special battalion, the Malabar Special Police (MSP).



Chuar Rebellion, 1799

Chuar Rebellion occurred in 1798-99 in Bankura / Midnapore districts of modern West Bengal.

Reasons

The Famine, enhanced taxes, oppressive demands and economic distress due to famines were common reasons of revolts of that period. The term Char or Chuar was used for local tribals in Bengal and it was a derogatory word {meaning pig}. Leader of this revolt was Durjan Singh, a displaced Zamindar who along with his 1500 followers created havoc.

He established his rule over 30 villages and attacked the East India Company establishments. The British was able to suppress the rebellion with utmost cruelty and deceit with the help of local landlords. Around 200 rebels were executed in the process.

Note

Some historians object the use of term “Chuar” for this rebellion because it was derogatory term used by ruling class. Some want this revolt to be named as ‘Freedom Struggle of the Jangal Mahal’.

Indigo Revolt 1856-57

For thousands of years, Indigo plant {*Indigofera* spp.} has been an important source of blue dye. This plant grows in tropics. The Indigo is a natural dye, compatible with most fibres such wool, cotton, silk, linen etc. Prior to Indigo, a plant of mustard family {*Woad, Isatis tinctoria*} was used to dyeing purpose in Europe. However, the dye obtained from this plant was inferior to Indigo.

The qualitative superiority of Indigo led to its huge demand in Europe at a time when the textile industry was booming due to Industrial revolution, and it was called “blue gold”.

The British established commercial cultivation and production of Indigo in India as early as 1777. By 1788, most of the production of Indigo originated in Bengal. The system became highly exploitative when the planters were accorded permission to own the land.

At that time, there were two systems of cultivation of Indigo viz. **Nij system** and **Ryoti System**.

Under the *Nij system*, the European planters produced indigo directly on land which they directly controlled. They either owned the land or took it on hire to cultivate indigo with hired peasants. Under Ryoti system, the planters forced the ryots or peasants to sign an agreement, so that they could get loans / advances {called *Dadon*} from planters to grow Indigo. However, one term of this agreement was that the Ryot would cultivate Indigo on at least 25% of the land. The loan made the people indebted and resulted in a rebellion in 1859-60 in Eastern Parts of Bengal.

Leaders and Revolt

The exploitation of the farmers made them understand that the planters had slowly got them into debt traps. They started losing land holdings due to poor output.

The revolt began as the peasants stopped paying rents. In March 1859, the revolt became more



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organized when thousands of Ryots in Bengal refused to grow indigo. They attacked the Indigo factories with whatever weapons they had. Women joined the revolt and fought with pots, pans etc. The resistance was met with pressure from planters but farmers took pledge that they would not take advance and would not be bullied by the *lathiyals* of planters.

The key leaders of this revolt were Biswas Brothers of Nadia {Digambar Biswas and Bishnu Biswas}, Kader Molla of Pabna, Rafique Mondal of Maida etc.

Major Events

The revolt began from Govindpur village in Nadia district of Bengal where Biswas brothers gave up indigo cultivation. This was followed by a struggle with the Lathiyals and revolt spread in many parts of Bengal. Strikes, legal actions, violence, social boycott of planters etc. were some of the tools used in the revolt. *Peasant organization* to some extent, *Hindu Muslim Unity* *support from Bengal intelligentsia* made the revolt more effective. Finally, Indigo commission was appointed which held the planters guilty, and criticized them for the coercive methods they used with indigo cultivators. The company asked ryots to fulfill their existing contracts but also told them that they could refuse to produce indigo in future. This was a big relief for the peasants and gradually the plantations of Indigo came to an end in Bengal.

Violence in Indigo Revolt

The quantum of violence in Indigo Revolt has been a subject of debate. Some historians consider that the Indigo Revolt was largely non-violent and was carried out on path of satyagrah which was later adopted by Gandhi. However, there was violence in ruthless suppression of the revolt by police, Zamindars and planters. Through their armed Lathiyals, force was used by the planters in the form of kidnapping, illegal confinement, attacks on women and children, looting, demolition of house and destruction of crops.

Legacy of Indigo Revolt

This indigo revolt gave birth to political movement and aroused national sentiment against the alien British rulers among Indian masses. The *Neel Darpan* of Din Bandhu Mitra portrayed the oppressed peasants.

Pabna Revolt

This movement began as the peasants organised an agrarian league in May 1873 to resist the demands of the Zamindars. Pabna (now in Bangladesh) was a jute production and trading centre and was relatively prosperous. Here half of the cultivators had managed to win occupancy rights because of the Bengal Tenancy Act, 1859. But the Zamindari rents had increased multiple times. The Zamindars tried to stop the peasants to get occupancy right and this was a reason of revolt there.

In the above question, the first statement is correct because the peasants were much more organised



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than in other revolts via meetings, appeals and marches. The second statement is also correct as they moved to the court and challenged the zamindars. They also raised funds to pay for legal expenses. To meet the cost of legal battle, the peasants even raised funds.

The third statement is not correct. The movement was nonviolent to some extent but Zamindars were killed at some places and violence did happen.

Tribal Movements

Birsa Movement

Birsa Movement was led by Birsa Munda in areas of modern Bihar and Jharkhand

The Mundas were the frustrated tribal people who resorted to rebel several times in 1789, 1807, 1812, 1819 and 1832 in Bihar & modern Jharkhand. These revolts were because of the undue interference by the administration and the attitude of the landlords.

About Birsa Munda

The name of Birsa Munda (1875-1900) is cherished in India as one of the great freedom fighters. He raised the voice against the transformation of the tribal agrarian system into the feudal state around the Chhotanagpur area. In 1900, at the age of 25, he was captured by British and put into prison. He died most probably because of the torture in prison.

Today, Birsa Munda is a venerated figure in Bihar and Jharkhand. His name decorates the airport of Ranchi and Birsa Institute of Technology, Ranchi. The followers of Birsa Munda are called **Birsait**.

“**Aranyer Adhikar**” which means “Right to the Forest” was anovel of Mahashweta Devi Published in 1977. This novel was based upon the Munda Rebellion and Mahashweta Devi got “Sahitya Akademi Award” for Bengali in 1979 for this work.

Santhal rebellion 1855-56

The Santhal rebellion predates 1857. It was a rebellion of Santhal people led by 4 Murmu Brothers named Sindhu, Kanhu, Chand and Bhairav, in modern Jharkhand (then Bengal Presidency) against the oppressive Zamindari system. The initially launched Guerilla warfare in the Jungles of Jharkhand. The British trapped these outstanding archers and killed them in a battle. The Santhal villages were plundered and the rebellion was brutally subdued.

Ahom's Revolt 1828

Ahom's Revolt took place in Assam region after the First Anglo Burmese War. The rebellion was against the annexation of the territories under British Empire in 1828. The leader of this movement was Gomdhar Konvar. The revolt was suppressed by the British military.

Khonds Uprising 1846, 1855

Khond Uprising took place in Orissa in 1846 and 1855. The Khond people were led by **Chakra Bisoi**.



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Khasi Uprising, 1833

The Khasi uprising took place in 1833 in the regions between the Khasi hills and Jaintia Hills, against a planned British Road in that area. The leader of this uprising was **Tirath Singh**.

Paiks Rebellion 1803-1806

The Paiks Rebellion took place in Orissa between 1803-1806. Paikis was a militia class under the Zamindars, led by Baxi Jagbandhu. They had also joined the Chuar rebellion.

Singhpos Revolt 1830

Singhpos revolt took place in 1830 in Assam and continued till 1839, when it was suppressed by the British.

Kachnagas Revolt 1882

Kachnagas revolt took place in Cachar region of Assam in 1882,. The leader of this revolt was Sambudhan. The revolt was crushed brutally by the British.

Bhil Uprising 1817-19

This uprising took place in Khandesh region of Maharashtra under the leadership of Sewaram due to the agrarian hardships. The trouble again erupted in 1825, 1831 & 1846.

Koli Uprising 1829, 1839

Koli community is an ethnic group mostly found in Maharashtra, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh. The rose against the British rule for dismantling the forests and a new order of administration in 1829 & 1839.

Rampa Rebellion, 1879

Rampa Rebellion of 1879 was a full scale rebellion against the British in the hill tracts of Vishakhapatnam against the oppressions of a Zamindar. The rebel was suppressed and a large number of people were sent to "Kala Pani".

Revolts by Disposed rulers

Revolt under Vasudev Balwant Phadke

A revolt was led by Vasudev Balwant Phadke in 1877-78 in the Vashi & Panvel area of Maharashtra. Phadke is known as father of the armed struggle for India's independence. He created a group called *Ramoshi*, which was the group of Ramoshis, Kolis, Bhils and Dhangars communities in Maharashtra and the actually the "organized political dacoits". He was captured and imprisoned in 1879 and died in 1883.

Uprisings in Karnataka

The "Doctrine of lapse" gave rise to dissent and resistance from princely states across the country. Major centers prior to 1857 were under Kittur Chennamma, Sangolli Rayanna in 1830s. The centres of uprising were Supa, Bagalkot, Shorapur, Nargund and Dandeli. These rebellions – which coincided with the 1857 war of independence – were led by Mundargi Bhimarao, Bhaskar Rao Bhave, the Halagali Bedas, Raja Venkatappa Nayaka and others.



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Rebel by Velu Thampi Dalawa 1806

Dalwa means Prime Minister. Velu Thampi Dalawa was the Prime Minister of the local Raja of Travancore between 1802 and 1809. He rose in rebellion against the proposed reduction in the allowances, under the subsidiary alliance treaty with the Travancore. He raised the army known as Nair Battalion. The Rebellion was quelled with a large army of the British.

Kutch Rebellion 1819

The people in Kutch rose against the British when in 1819, they deposed Rao Bharmal and placed his infant son on the throne. The masses got violent and the British had to opt for conciliation

Other Revolts of West India

- Waghera Revolt : 1820
- **Ramosi Revolt** : 1825-26 under Chittur Singh around Satara Area of Maharashtra
- **Satara Revolt** : Under Dhar Rao in 1840. This was a follow up of the Ramosi revolt because the ruler of Satara Pratap Singh was deposed by the British.
- **Bundela Revolt**: In 1842 Under Madhukar Shah. The revolt was subdued and Madhukar Shah was executed.
- **Gadkari Revolt**: It took place in Kolhapur area.
- **Naikada Revolt**: Naikada Revolt took place under Roop Singh and Joria Bhagat.

Personalities Related to Freedom Struggle

Female Personalities

Ramabai Ranade

- She was wife of MG Ranade. She is best known for **conducting free classes for women in sewing and first aid**, visiting hospitals and prisons and distributing food during disasters such as famine of 1913.

Ramabai Pandita

- She was a great woman social worker and reformer from Maharashtra, who embraced Christianity in 1883 and worked all through her life for the education and uplift of women.
- She was wife of Ananta Padnmanabha Dongre, who himself was an ardent supporter of Women's Education. In 1889, she founded the **Sharda Sadan** for the education of widows and other women. She founded the Mukti Mission to provide shelter to destitute women and a rescue home, Kripa Sadan, for fallen women. She wrote a number of books in Marathi and English.
- She is best known for writing a book titled "The High Caste Hindu Women" in which she depicted the miserable state of child widows.

Abadi Bana Sahiba



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- She was popularly known as Bee Amman. She was the mother of the Ali Brothers of Khilafat Movement. She is known to have worked for the Hindu Muslim unity and actively took part in the Khilafat Movement.

Purnima Banerjee

- Purnima Banerjee is best known for offering the individual Satyagraha in 1941. She was secretary of the Allahabad City Congress Committee. She took part in the Quit India Movement and remained a member of United Provinces Legislature.

Kananlata Baruh

- Kananlata Baruah was one of the most cherished martyors of freedom movement. She had taken part in the Quit India Movement and was a leader of the procession aimed at hoisting the national flag at Gohapon police station. She was shot dead while hoisting the National Flag.

Basanti Devi

- Basanti Devi was the name of wife of C R Das. She took part in the Non Cooperation Movement. She renounced the active politics after death of C R Das. Basanti Devi was the first Indian woman to be arrested during the non-cooperation movement for selling khadi.

Kalyani Bhattacharjee

- Kalyani Bhattacharjee, Kalpana Dutta, Latika Ghosh and Kamaladas Gupta were some of the women revolutionary terrorists. Associated with the revolutionary movement in Bengal in early 1930s.

Kalpana Dutt

- Kalpana Dutt was just 18 years old, when she led the Chittagong Armoury Raid. She was imprisoned for life but her sentence was commuted when Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi interfered. Kalpana Dutt and Preeti Lata wadeddar were associated with chittagong armoury raid in 1930, under the leadership of Surya Sen.

Bina Das

- She was one of the most daring women revolutionaries of Bengal, she was associated with the revolutionary **jugantar party**. On 6 February 1932 , when the governor of Bengal, sir Stanley Jackson, was delivering his convocation address at the university of Calcutta, she fired him with a pistol, but narrowly missed. She was arrested and sentenced to prison for 9 years.

Latika Ghosh

- Latika Ghosh was the Oxford educated niece of Arubindo Ghosh. She organized a group named Mahila Rastriya Sangha in Chiitagong.

Lado Rani Zutshi

- Lado Rani Zutshi was the leading woman revolutioanry of Punjab. She was active 1919



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onwards and a member of Congress. She was appointed as 8th director of the War Council. Her daughter Manmohini Sehgal also took part in freedom struggle.

Parvati Devi

- Parvati Devi was daughter of Lala Lajpat Rai who is know for actively taking part in the Satyagraha Committee.

Ruksmini Lashamapati

- *Ruksmini Lashamapati was the first women activit of Madras arrested in connection with the Salt satyagraha.*

Durgabai Deshmukh

- Durgabai Deshmukh was the war dictator in the city of Madras. She took part in Non Cooperation Movement and is known for training 600 volunteers to work for the Kakinada Session of the Indian National Congress in 1923. In 1930, she was arrested and sent to prison for 9 months. Later she joined the Hindustan Seva Dal and arrested and sentenced again for 3 years. In 1942, she again came into limelight as a lawyer and became the first lawyer who appeated in a Murder Case. Later she became member of the Constituent Assembly.

Mridula Sarabhai

- Mridula Sarabhai was daughter of Sarla and Ambalal Sarabhai. Ambalal sarabhai was a famous businessman of Ahemedabad. She took part in Salt Satyagraha of 1930 and Rajkot Satyagraha of 1938. She was also active during the INA Trials.

Hansa Mehta

- Hansa Mehta was inspired by the leaders of the day, she travelled all over india, meeting women to create awareness among them. She was an eminent educationist and a dedicated social worker, she believed that unless there was improvement in the quality of life of women, social refonn was not possible. She was associated with the All India women's conference since its inception.

Usha Mehta

- Usha Mehta is known for running a secret Congress Radio during freedom struggle. She was a graduate of Bombay University and joined the Quit India Movement in 1942.
- She worked secretly with Babu Bhai Prasad and established a Secret Radio Transmitter. She was repressed by the British to disclose the names of her colleagues but refused to do so. Later she became a lecturer in Bombay.

Smt. Sarla Devi Chowdhry

- Sarla Devi Chowdhry was neice of Rabindranatha Tagore. She was married to Arya Samaji leader, Shri Ram Bhuj Chowdhry. She was one of the earliest women freedom fighters of India, who participated in the 'Swadeshi Movement' as well as in the revolutionary



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movement of the country.

- She was born in 1872 and joined active politics in 1915. In 1915 she organized 'All India Revolutionary Party' and secretly assisted the revolutionaries and continued her secret activities through another group 'Sohard Society'.

Smt. Kamla Devi Chaltopadhyaya

- Kamla Devi Chaltopadhyaya was the first Indian women who contested the elections in 1926 also represented the Indian women delegation to the Women International Conference at Berlin and hoisted the flag there. As a result, she was awarded rigorous imprisonment for 9 months.
- Later, she was released from Jail but again arrested at a number of times during the year 1944. She was decorated with Padma Bhushan in independent India. She also worked towards promotion of handicrafts and handloom. She was president of the all-India women's conference and the Indian cooperative union; chairperson, all-India handicrafts board, and all-India designs centre, etc. she was the recipient of the watumall award (1962) and of the Magsaysay award (1966) for community leadership.

Ms. Charu Shila Devi

- Charu Shila Devi is known to have inspired Khudi Ram Bose and other Bengali revolutionaries by putting a "*Tilak of Blood*" on their foreheads. She was involved in the 'Muzzafarpur Bomb Case' in 1908.
- She took part in Salt Satyagraha of 1930 and Civil Disobedience Movement 1932 and was sent to jail for both the terms. She was once again arrested in connection with murder of Midnapore Magistrate.

Nallie Sen Gupta

- Nali Sen Gupta was an English woman who came to India in 1910 and was married to Jitendramohan Sengupta. She was inspired by her husband and she actively participated in the Khilafat Movement. She was arrested for making inflammatory speeches.
- She was decorated with Padma Vibhushan in independent India. Nellie Sengupta was elected in as President of Indian National Congress in place of Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, when he was arrested before the Calcutta Session of 1931.

Margret Kajins

- Margret Kajins was an Irish woman who worked along with Mrs. Annie Basant and strongly demanded the women franchise. She successfully fought for the woman's rights and as a result of her pursuance ultimately.

Muttu Laxmi Reddy

- Muttu Laxmi Reddy became the first woman legislator of Madras Legislature. In 1923, she was arrested under the 'Emergency Ordinance'.



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Susheela Didi

- Susheela Didi was one of the colleagues of Bhagat Singh. She came in touch with revolutionaries in Calcutta in late 1920s.
- She was involved in a conspiracy in which attack on a train in which the Viceroy of India was travelling, was planned. She was actively supporting Bhagat Singh and his jailmates when Government declared her an offender and placed an award on her.
- Later she gave herself under arrest under a fake name of Indu and nobody could get her real credentials. She became the 'Elderman' of Delhi Nagar Nigam after independence.

Ila Sen

- Ila Sen was a post-graduate of Bengal University, who not only participated in the anti-Simon Commission demonstrations but also took active part in the Salt Satyagraha of 1930 and was jailed for four months.

Mani Ben

- Mani Ben was the daughter of Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel. She was very active in the national struggle and was jailed at least for 42 times and is known to be the only woman (perhaps) in freedom struggle to go to jail for 42 times.

Ms. Urmila Devi

- Urmila Devi was sister of Chitranjandas. She actively participated in Indian Freedom Struggle. She is best known for establishing the "Nari Karma Mandir" to impart training to women freedom fighters.

Guidallo Rani

- Guidallo Rani was the freedom fighter from Nagaland and was known as 'John of Arc' of Nagaland. This Naga woman nationalist leader and successor to the political movement launched by the Naga leader Jadonang (1905-31), tried to drive away the British from Manipur.
- She is best known for organizing a Guerilla war against the British. She was sentenced to life imprisonment and was released only after India's Independence.

Dr. Susheela Nayar

- She was sister of Pyare Lal, one of the associates of Gandhi. She became the personal physician of Gandhi and took part in Quit India Movement.
- She was sent to jail along with Gandhi. After independence she became Union cabinet Minister of Health.

Kadambini Ganguly

- Kadambini Ganguly was the first woman in the British Empire to receive a BA, thus also the First Woman graduate of Calcutta University. She was also one of the first lady doctors of



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India.

- She was the first doctor of Bengal and First woman delegate to address the Indian National Congress. Please note that Chandramukhi Basu was another graduate from Calcutta University around the same time.

Khurshedbehn Naoroji

- Khurshedbehn Naoroji was the grand-daughter of Dadabhai Naoroji. She is known to have participated in salt satyagraha of 1930. She is best known for working with Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in N.W.F.P.

Begum Shah Nawaz

- Begum Shah Nawaz is best known for getting a resolution passed against polygamy at the All India Muslim Women's Conference 1917.
- She was the first woman on the executive committee of the All India Muslim League. She was also a woman delegate to London Round Table Conference.

Aruna Asaf Ali (1909-1983)

- She married Asaf Ali, a prominent lawyer and congress leader of Delhi. During her youth, she came under the influence of the congress socialists and became a radical nationalist. She was arrested during the civil disobedience movement in 1930 and again in the course of the individual Satyagraha in 1941.
- She participated in the Quit India movement (1942-46) from underground. After India's independence she became associated with the left socialist group, which in 1955 merged with the Communist Party of India.
- She was a leading member of the Indo-Soviet cultural society, All India Peace Council and National Federation of Indian women.

Asaf Ali(1888-1953)

- He was a prominent lawyer who is best known for defending Bhagat Singh in the Lahore conspiracy case. He actively participated in the home rule non-cooperation and Khilafat movements.
- A champion of the Hindu-Muslims unity conference in 1932. He became minister of transport and railways in the interim government. From 1947 to 1948 he served as India's ambassador to USA and , from 1948 to 1952, as the governor, of Orissa.

Rajkumari Amrit Kaur (1889-1964)

- She was from the Royal family of Kapurthala state in the Punjab. Educated in England, but on returning to India came under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and became one his close followers and life-long disciples.
- Remained secretary of All-india women's conference in 1930, and from 1931 to 1933, served



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as the president of the women's association. In 1932 she gave evidence before the Lothian committee on Indian franchise and later, as a member of the delegation of women's organization, she testified before the joint select committee of parliament on Indian constitutional reforms.

- Become president of all-india women's conference in 1938. Served as a secretary of Mahatma Gandhi for sixteen years. She was the first woman to be appointed a member of the advisory board of education, but resigned in August 1942.
- Attended the UNSECO conference in London in 1945 and in Paris in 1946 as a member of the Board of trustees of the all-India spinners association. After independence, in 1947, she was appointed as the first minister of health of the government of India.

Meera Behn

- She was born as Madeleine Slade in England and was named Meera Behn by Mahatma Gandhi, whose disciple and associate she was. She was awarded Padma Vibhushan in 1982.

S.Muthulakshmi Reddi

- In 1907 S.Muthulakshmi Reddi became the first female student to join the Madras Medical College for medical graduation. In 1926, she became the first woman legislator when she was nominated as a member of the Madras Legislative Council. She is best known as a legislator who was successful in getting the devadasi system abolished by an act in 1927.
- By this act, the Hindu Religious Endowment Act was amended. She was an active member of the Women's Indian Association since its inception in 1917 and became its president after the death of Mrs. Besant in 1933.

Begum of Bhopal

- In 1916, the Begum of Bhopal is known to have formed the **All India Muslim Women's Conference**. This conference passed some resolutions on reforms and educations.

Abu Begum

- Abu Begum is known to have proposed a resolution against polygamy during British era.

Shanti Ghosh and Suniti Chaudhary

- Shanti Ghosh and Suniti Chaudhary were the two young ladies who walked up to the Magistrate of Tipper in his office and shot him dead, mainly because of his taking advantage of power to harass women.

Mary Carpenter

- Mary Carpenter was an English educational and social reformer, who came to India in 1866 to meet Raja Rammohun Roy, this was her long cherished desire. But in India, she met Keshab Chandra Sen, the leader of Brahmo Samaj, who asked her to form an organization in Britain to improve communication between British and Indian reformers. In 1870 she



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established National Indian Association.

Male Personalities of Freedom Struggle

Henry Vivian Derozio

- Anglo-Indian Henry Vivian Derozio was the leader of Young Bengal Movement.

Individual Satyagrahis

- The first Individual Satyagrahi, Acharya Vinoba Bhave offered Satyagraha by making an antiwar speech. Second Satyagrahi was Jawahar Lal Nehru. Third was Brahma Datt, one of the inmates of the Gandhi's Ashram.

Sir Patrick Spens

- Sir Patrick Spens, who was ex-Chief Justice of India, had headed the Arbitral Tribunal set up for the settlements of unresolved questions between India and Pakistan at the time of partition.
- Arbitral Tribunal was established before partition for the settlement on those questions on which the two sides were not able to agree upon.

Important Muslim Leaders who were against partition of India

- Many important leaders such as Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew, Maulana Hafizur Rahaman, Maulana Abul Kamal Azad were against the partition of India into India and Pakistan.
- While Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan said that it was an act of treachery on the part of Congress, Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew is known for characterizing the partition as “a surrender of nationalism in favor of communalism”.

Dadabhai Naoroji

- Dadabhai Naoroji was an intellectual and Parsi cotton trader who served as a Member of Parliament (MP) in the British House of Commons between 1892 and 1895, and the first Asian to be a British MP. He is known as mentor to both Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Mahatma Gandhi.
- He was paternal uncle of J. R. D. Tata. His work *Poverty and Un-British Rule in India* (1891) brought attention to the draining of India's wealth into Britain. He also taught in Gujarati at University College London. Dadabhai Naoroji was a member of the Indian National Association founded by Sir Surendranath Banerjee. The two groups later merged into the INC, and Naoroji was elected President of the Congress in 1886.

The Drain of Wealth Theory of Dadabhai Naoroji

Dadabhai Naoroji was the first to decipher the complex mechanism of drain of wealth by the way of the following:

- Remittances to England by European employed for the support of their families and



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education of their children.

- Remittances of savings by employees of the company
- Remittances for the purchases of British goods in India.
- Government purchase of stores manufactured in Britain.
- Interest charges on public debt held in for productive loans.
- Drain through council bill.
- Drain via Home Charges:
 - The Home Charges included the following:
 - The expenses of the office of secretary of states
 - Pensions of the British Indian officers and army officials,
 - Cost of waging wars at Home and Abroad
 - Army training, transport and campaigns outside India but charged on Indian revenue.

Womesh Chandra Banerjee

- He was the first President of Congress. Womesh Chandra Banerjee was the *first Indian to contest elections to the British House of Commons*. He was twice elected as president of INC in 1885 and 1891. He was moderate in politics.

Badruddin Tyabji

- Third President of the Indian National Congress.
- He was succeeded by George Yule.
- In 1902, he became the first Indian to hold the post of Chief Justice in Bombay.

George Yule

- George Yule was a Scottish businessman in India who became the fourth President of the Indian National Congress in 1888, the first non-Indian to hold that office.
- He was succeeded by Sir William Wedderburn.
- He was the chief of the well-known Andrew Yule and Co. in Kolkata; was also Sheriff of Kolkata for sometime and President of the Indian Chamber of Commerce.

Sir William Wedderburn

- William Wedderburn was born in 1838 in Edinburg in a well to do family. He entered the Indian Civil Service in Bombay in 1860. In 1874 he became District Judge and Judicial Commissioner in Sind, and later acted as secretary to Bombay Government, Judicial and Political Departments; and from 1885 acted as Judge of the High Court, Bombay.
- He retired when acting Chief Secretary to the Government of Bombay in 1887. During his service in India, his attention was on the abject poverty, famines, and indebtedness of the farmers. He was aware of the ancient village Panchayat system and wished to revive this system.



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- These were some of the few reasons that he came in close with those who were laying foundation of the Indian National Congress. He headed the fourth session of Congress in Bombay in 1889 and was a good friend of Dadabhai Naoroji as well as Mahadev Govind Ranade.
- **In 1893, Sir William Wedderburn entered the British Parliament as a liberal member and sought to voice India's grievances within the house** In the same year, he formed the "**Indian Parliamentary Commitee**" with Dadabhai Naoroji and other Indian sympathisers. He remained chairman of this Indian parliamentary committee till 1900.
- He was also an editor of journal "India". In 1895, Sir William Wedderburn represented India on the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure.
- He joined the Indian Famine Union of 1901 to investigate the famines. In 1904, he again came back to India to attend the 20th session of Indian National Congress, which was presided by Sir Henry Cotton. Along with Allan Octavian Hume he was a founder of the Indian National Congress and served as its president in 1889 and 1910.

Sir Pherozshah Mehta

- Known as Lion of Mumbai, this Parsi businessman became the Municipal commissioners of Bombay Municipality in 1873 and remained its president for 4 times.
- In 1890, he became president of Indian National Congress.
- He started **Bombay Chronicle**, an English-language weekly newspaper.

Panambakkam Anandacharlu

- Panambakkam Anandacharlu became the president of Indian National Congress in 1891 Nagpur session.
- He founded *Triplicane Literary Society* and the *Madras Mahajana Sabha in 1884*. He was a moderate nationalist who remained so till Congress split in 1906.

Surendranath Banerjee

- *Rashtraguru* Surendranath Banerjee had founded Indian National Association, prior to INC and later he became the senior leader of the Congress.
- He had applied and went to compete the Indian Civil Services Examination but was debarred from the exam due to age dispute. Later he was appointed a magistrate in Sylhet, which he refused.
- In 1876, he along with **Anand Mohan Bose** established the National Association.
- In 1879, he founded the newspaper "*The Bengalee*".
- The book "**A Nation in Making**" was his widely acclaimed work.
- He later supported the empire and Morley-Minto Reforms of 1909.



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- He also opposed Mahatma Gandhi's idea and way of civil disobedience. In the evening of his career, he headed the Calcutta Municipal Corporation and finally a minister in the Bengal Government.

Romesh Chunder Dutt

- Romesh Chunder Dutt is one of the best known historians of those times. He was a Civil Servant who had gone to England along with Surendra Nath Banerjee to compete successfully the ICS exam.
- He served as Dewan of Baroda state and also became a member of the Royal Commission on Indian Decentralisation in 1907. In Bengal his contribution to literature and art is still cherished.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale

- Gopal Krishna Gokhale is best known as **founder of Servants of India Society** He associated himself with Congress in 1889 and a protégé of **Mahadev Govind Ranade**.
- He had a split of ideas with Tilak on Age of consent bill of 1891-92. In 1905 he was elected as president of Indian National Congress and in the same year on June 12, 1905, at Pune, he founded Servants of India society.
- The Publication of this society was "**The Hitavada**" which started getting published from 1911 onwards. The paper is still published.

Mahadev Govind Ranade

- Mahadev Govind Ranade was one of the founding members of INC.
- He was one of the earliest Judicial officers of India who first got an appointment in 1871 as fourth judge of the Bombay Small Causes Court in 1871.
- In 1893 he was uplifted to the Bombay High Court. He established **Poona Sarvajanic Sabha in 1870** as a pre-INC organization.
- He was an early opponent of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and a Guru of Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

Fact Box: Mahadev Govind Ranade & Welfare State

Definition of Welfare State was first given by Archbishop William Temple during the Second World War and was first implemented by Bismarck. In modern India, it was Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade who is accepted to be the first thinker who gave the idea of a welfare state. He said that the state now is more and more recognized as the national organ for taking care of the national needs in all matters in which individual and cooperative efforts are not likely to be effective as nation's effort.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak

Bal Gangadhar Tilak joined Congress in 1890. He is **Father of Indian Unrest** who first of all



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demanding complete “Swarajya”. He can also be called father of militant nationalism in India. He opposed the moderate attitude and fought for self government. In 1891, the **Age of Consent Bill** was opposed by Tilak. This bill raised the minimum marriage age of a girl from 10 years to 12 years. The other leaders supported the bill, but Tilak opposed it, taking it as interference to Hinduism.

Madan Mohan Malaviya

- Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya also known as Mahamana was from Allahabad and a moderate nationalist, who served as President of INC for three terms, founded Banaras Hindu University in 1916 and founded Scouting in India. He published the newspaper “The Leader” from Allahabad.

Ashutosh Mukherjee

- The name of Ashutosh Mukherjee is linked to the establishment of Bengal Technical Institute (1906), Calcutta University College of Science (1914) and Calcutta Mathematical Society (1908). We should know that the First Indian Science Congress was held in 1914 at Kolkata and was presided by Ashutosh Mukherjee, and Vice Chancellor of the University of Calcutta from 1906 to 1924. Ashutosh Mukherjee is best known for establishing the Bengal Technical Institute (1906), Calcutta University College of Science (1914) and Calcutta Mathematical Society (1908).
- He was the father of Syama Prasad Mookerjee and people called him out of respect “Tiger of Bengal”.

Pandit Sohan Lal Pathak

- Pandit Sohan Lal Pathak, was a leader of Ghadar party. He was hanged in Mandalay jail on February 10, 1916 for inciting rebellion against the British Government

Jatindranath Mookherjee

- Jatindranath Mookherjee was the leader of Ghadar Party in Bengal and Orissa.

Alfred Webb

- Alfred Webb (1834 – 1908) was an Irish Parliamentary Party politician and MP, who is best known for his role in every major nationalist organization from Butt’s Home Government Association to the United Irish League.
- In India, he became the third non-Indian to preside over the Indian National Congress, at Madras in 1894. Webb was a supporter of “Anti-Caste”, Britain’s first anti-racism journal which started in 1888. Dadabhai Naoroji co-signed a letter with Webb and others to request support for a new association: *The Society for the Furtherance of Human Brotherhood*.

Rahimtulla M. Sayani

- Rahimtulla M. Sayani was “Second Muslim” to become the “President of Indian National Congress” after Badruddin taiyyabji.



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- He was a member of the Bombay Municipal Corporation and was the Sheriff of Bombay in 1885, also elected as President of the Corporation in 1888.

C. Sankaran Nair

- Sankaran Nair was the President of the Indian National Congress in 1897 held at Amraoti, the first and probably only Keralite to be so. In 1902, the Viceroy, Lord Curzon appointed him Secretary to the Raleigh University Commission. He became a member of the Viceroy's Council in 1915 with the charge of the Education portfolio.
- As member, he wrote in 1919 *two famous Minutes of Dissent in the Despatches on Indian Constitutional Reforms*, pointing out the various defects of British rule in India and suggesting reforms. For an Indian to offer such criticism and make such demands was incredible in those days. The British government accepted most of his recommendations.

Dinshaw Edulji Wacha

- Sir Dinshaw Edulji Wacha (1844-1936) was one of the founders of the Indian National Congress, and its President in 1901. He was President of the Indian Merchants' Chamber in 1915.

Lalmohan Ghosh

- Lalmohan Ghosh (1849-1909) was the sixteenth President of the Indian National Congress, elected President of the Madras session (1903). He believed in importance of Western education for the people of India as a force to unite the people into one nation.
- He is best known for his plea for compulsory primary education in India in his Presidential address at the Madras session of the Congress.

Sir Henry Cotton

- Sir Henry Cotton (1845 – 1915) was a member of Indian Civil Service, during which he was sympathetic to Indian nationalism. After returning to England, he served as a Liberal Party Member of Parliament (MP) for Nottingham East from 1906 to January 1910.
- While serving at Chuadanga, he witnessed the great flood of 1871. Cotton supported Indian Home Rule and served as President of Indian National Congress in 1904. He led the opposition to Curzon's invasion of Tibet and partition of Bengal.

Gopal Ganesh Agarkar

- Gopal Ganesh Agarkar (1856-1895) belonged to a Chitpavan Brahmin family of Maharashtra. He was one of the founders of the Deccan education society (24 October 1884) and the Fergusson college, Pune (2 January 1885). He also became the principal of the Fergusson College in 1892 and held that office till his death in 1895.
- He was the editor of the English weekly the Mahratta and the Marathi weekly the Kesari. In 1888 he started his own weekly the Sudhakar, the Marathi columns of which were written by



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him and the English ones by G.K. Gokhale.

Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan (1817-1898)

- Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan is considered to be a Muslim social reformer, who served as a judicial officer under the East India Company. After retirement he was knighted and he worked from Aligarh. In 1875 he established Muhammad an Anglo-oriental college (which was raised, in 1920, as Aligarh Muslim university).
- He had also founded the Muhammeden educational congress, known since 1895, when it was referred to as the Muhammad an Anglo-oriental educational conference.
- The aim of this conference as a non-political organization, was to promote liberal education among the Muslims. However, Sir Sayyid Ahmed Khan was **NOT prepared at that time to let Muslims go for technical education or permit higher education for women**. He was a staunch British loyalist and was fully convinced of the usefulness of British Rule in India. For him, the best course was to be loyal to the British rule. He was a bitter opponent of the Indian national congress, whereby in 1888, he founded the **United Indian Patriotic Association** to inculcate a sense of loyalty towards the British.

Amir chand (1869-1915)

- A revolutionary, he was arrested in connection with the Lahore bomb and Delhi conspiracy cases (The later an alleged plot to kill the viceroy lord Harding's) in February 1914. He was sentenced to death and executed on may 8, 1915.

Charles Ferrer Andrews (Dinabandhu Andrews) (1871-1940)

- An English missionary and a teacher at St. Stephen's college, Delhi. Had deep sympathy for India and wanted to be an Indian in every respect. Closely associated with Rabindranath Tagore , G.K. Gokhale , Mahatma Gandhi. With Gandhiji, he lived with at the Phoenix Ashram in south Africa actively participated in trade union activities and was twice elected president of the trade union congress, in 1925 and 1927. He joined the vaikam Satyagraha in 1925 and worked with Dr. Ambedkar in formulating the harijan demands in 1933. Gandhi called him Dinbandhu.

Kumaran Asan(1873-1924)

- A renowned social reformer, scholar and poet from Kerala. His spiritual guide was Sri Narayana Guru. An acknowledged leader of the Ezhava community, a pioneer in social reforms and a great malayali poet.

Asur Singh (1872-1916)

- Active in killing of the policemen and sabotaging railway lines. Played vital role in Delhi conspiracy case. He remained underground for 18 month. He died at Lahore jail in December 1916.



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Bhai Balmukand (1891-1916)

- A great follower of Lala Lajpat Rai and Lala Hardayal. Joined the revolutionary movement of the first phase and was a close associate of Rasbihari Bose of the Hardinge Bomb case. He was arrested in connection of Harding bomb case in 1912 and was hanged at the age of 25.

Pre-Congress Organizations

Important Pre-Congress Organizations are as follows:

Landholders Society

This was established by Dwarkanath in 1931 and is considered to be *first organization of Bengal with distinct political object*.

British India Society

British India Society was founded in 1839 in England with the efforts of William Adam, one of the friends of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. William Adam had come to India and got in touch with Raja Ram Mohan Roy and when he returned England, he took up India's cause along with George Thompson, William Ednis, and Major General Briggs. The result was organizing meetings at several places and creating awareness about the conditions in India. In 1841, this society started printing a newspaper "**British Indian Advocate**".

Bengal British India Society

It was set up by Dwarkanath Tagore in April 1843. The idea was to secure the welfare, and advance the interests of all classes, in pure loyalty to the government of the reigning sovereign of the British dominions.

British Indian Association 1851

In 1851, the *Landholders Society* and British India Society were merged to create British Indian Association. This became the first political organization that brought the Indian together. Its president was Radhakant Deb while secretary was Debendranath Tagore. It published "Hindu Patriot" edited by *Harish Chandra Mukherjee*. Its tone was critical to British. In the wake of the upcoming charter act (of 1853) in 1852, this organization sent a delegation to England, pleading for separation of Judiciary with executive, higher posts and pays for Indians, abolition of salt duty and inclusion of Indians in the legislative councils. But all expectations were negated by the **Charter Act of 1853**.

Bombay Association (1852)

The first political organization of the Bombay Presidency was the **Bombay Association** which was started on 26 August 1852, to vent public grievances to the British. It was founded by Dadabhai Naoroji.

Madras Native Association

The first organization in the Madras Presidency to vent for the rights of Indians was the Madras



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Native Association which was established by *Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty* in 1849.

East Indian Association 1867

This organization was also founded by **Dadabhai Naoroji** in London. It was one of the predecessor organizations of the Indian National Congress in 1867. The idea was to present the correct information about India to the British Public and voice Indian Grievances. In 1869, this organization opened branches in Bombay, Kolkata and Madras. It became defunct in 1880s.

National Indian Association 1870 (Mary Carpenter)

Mary Carpenter was an English educational and social reformer who came to India in 1866. She was inspired by Keshab Chandra Sen to form an organization in Britain to improve communication between British and Indian reformers. In 1870 she established **National Indian Association**.

Indian National Association 1876 (Surendra Nath Banerjee and Anand Mohan Bose)

Indian National Association was the first declared Nationalist Organization founded in British India by Surendranath Banerjee and Anand Mohan Bose in 1876. It was originally established as Bharat Sabha and held its first annual conference in Calcutta. It merged in INC in 1885.

Indian National Congress

Indian National Congress: Birth and Initial Demands

The need for the formation of an all-India political organization had become an objective necessity. The pre-congress organizations were limited in scope and objectives. This led to development of some basic needs and objectives before the leaders. It was said that the Indians need to be welded together for their political advancements.

It was Allan Octavian Hume, who embarked on an endeavor to start an organization of select alumni of the University of Calcutta in 1883. By May 1885, he was able to secure the Viceroy's approval to create an "Indian National Union", which would be affiliated with the government and act as a platform to voice Indian public opinion. At the time of General Elections in Britain in 1885, A O Hume published an "*Appeal from the People of India*" to the electors of Great Britain and Ireland. This appeal asked the British Voters to support the candidates who were sympathetic to the Indian public opinions. However, there was no substantial result of this appeal. The major issues raised by these people were:

- Spending Indian taxpayer's money on British Indian campaigns in Afghanistan
- Legislative reforms on India for greater participation of the Indian people.
- Increased pressure on India by annexation of Burma.

On 28 December 1885, the Indian National Congress was founded at Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College in Bombay, with 72 delegates in attendance. The first meeting was originally scheduled for Pune but due to plague outbreak, the venue was shifted to Mumbai. The first Session of INC was



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held from 28-31 December 1885, and was attended by 72 delegates. A O Hume assumed office as the General Secretary. Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee of Calcutta was elected President. The additional British Members were William Wedderburn and Justice John Jardine. All others were the Hindus from Calcutta and Madras Presidency.

Initial Sessions

In the First session of the Congress, it adopted a resolution expressing the dissatisfaction on the current system of Governance and demanded reforms in the Councils. After this resolution, Lord Dufferin had established a committee for the reforms in the councils and this resulted in the Indian Councils Act 1892. This act introduced the principle of representation in India. The second session of Indian National Congress met at Calcutta in December 1886 under Dadabhai Naoroji.

Congress Demands in Early Years

During the early years, Congress passed the resolutions on the related to political, administrative and economic public grievances. The main political demand was the reform in the legislative councils so that the Indians get wider powers such as discussion on Budget, so that they work as representatives of the people. There was a demand of local self-government at a wider level. They wanted reforms in the Civil services and through a simultaneous ICS examination at India as well as England, so that the administration becomes more responsive to the needs of the Indian People.

The other demands were:

- Separation of Judiciary with Executive
- Repeal of the arms act
- Higher jobs in the army for the Indians
- Rising of an Indian volunteers force.
- Similarly, the economic issues were based upon the drain of wealth from India to England.
- It was documented and published by Dada Bhai Naoroji as "Poverty and un-British Rule in India".
- The Congress leaders wanted an inquiry into India's growing poverty and famines, reduction in military expenditure and home expenditures
- They wanted more funds for technical education to promote Indian industries.
- Another demand was to put an end to unfair tariffs and excise duties imposed on Indian traders very discriminately.
- They wanted extension of permanent settlement to other areas.

Early Congress and British

The idea behind these reasonable demands was to put a national character to the British Government of India. The methodology of the early Congress leaders was limited to pass resolutions and prepare petitions to be sent to England. The British Committee of INC was founded in 1889 and



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in 1890; this committee started a journal called India.

Thus we see that initially the Indian National Congress wished to achieve the Indian Objectives within the British Empire. But in the due course, Congress became the focus and fulcrum of Indian Nationalist aspirations and it was in 1929, when independence was kept above all the other goals. Initially the objectives were limited and it worked with the constitutional limits. But still it was being looked with suspicion with the by the British.

When Congress was formed, the secretary of state for India was Earl of Kimberley, who served in this capacity from December 1882 to 9 June 1885. But when the Congress met for the first time on 28 December 1885, the Secretary of State for India was Lord Randolph Churchill, whose tenure was from 24 June 1885 28 January 1886, just 6 months. After that Earl of Kimberley again became secretary of state for India and served in this capacity from 6 February 1886 to 20 July 1886. *This question has been asked many times in examinations.*

The demands of the Congress were ridiculed in the British Media. But it was Earl of Kimberley, the Secretary of State for India who somewhat supported the reasonable demands. Lord Dufferin initially did not take Congress much seriously. Then, there was a blast and all of a sudden a Pamphlet appeared titled "**The Rising Tide**". Another pamphlet appeared titled "*An Old Man's Home*". These were against the British and Lord Dufferin took no time to react and express objection to these mischief. He initially called Congress as representative of "**microscopic minority of India**" but later in the fourth session of Allahabad, the Government servants were disallowed to take part in the proceedings of the Congress. Thus was the beginning of the movement of Independence in India.

Indian National Congress: Safety Valve Theory

The concept of Safety Valve Theory says that the British had seen the political situation in the country leading to another rebellion on the lines of the Mutiny of 1857; and they wished to avoid such a situation. So, they wanted to provide a platform to the people, where they could discuss their political problems. Indian National Congress was founded by a Retired Civil Servant and not by any Indian. It was said that the INC was started by Viceroy Lord Dufferin with the help of an ex Civil Services member as a "Safety Valve" against the popular discontent.

The following arguments were put forward to the safety valve theory:

- A O Hume and other British thought that *the educated Indians may become leaders of the Indian public and organize a rebellion against the government*. So if the Government itself provides them a platform to raise their voice, it may be possible to stop such nuisance.
- A O Hume was a retired British Civil Servant and he had a series of meetings with Lord Dufferin, the Viceroy.
- He also lobbied with some other people such as **Sir James Caird**, Lord Ripon, John Bright



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etc.

- A large number of British in India such as **Sir William Wedderburn, George Yule, Charles Bradlaugh** etc. supported AO Hume.

This theory has been discarded now. But still, the contribution of British cannot be disregarded in creation of first all India political front in which majority of the people were Hindus. The Muslims took congress negatively in the beginning but there were leaders such as Badruddin Taybji who were active leaders. The contribution of British in foundation of this organization was accepted and verbalized by Gopal Krishna Gokhle in 1913 as follows:

“No Indian could have started the Indian National Congress...if an Indian had come forward to start such a movement embracing all Indians, the officials in India would not have allowed the movement to come into existence. If the founder of the Congress had not been an Englishman and a distinguished ex-official, such was the distrust of political agitation in those days that the authorities would have at once found some way or the other to suppress the movement”

The second session of Indian National Congress met at Calcutta in December 1886. The president was Dadabhai Naoroji. Now the number was 436 and these delegates were elected by different local organizations and groups. Most of these were the educated class of India consisting of lawyers, journalists, traders, industrialists, teachers, and some of them were landlords.

The success of second INC session led the leaders decide to meet every year in December in different parts of the country. By 1889, the number of the delegates rose to 2000.

General Knowledge Today



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Model Questions

Kindly Check Prelims Model Questions at the end of this module.

Social Reforms Movements

Socio-religious reforms in the 19th century provided the soil for growth of Indian Nationalism. The main reason of emergence of the reform movements was spread of western education and liberal ideas. These reforms, as we all know started in Bengal and soon spread in all parts of India. We note here that *these movements were largely confined to specific regions, specific religions and evolved in different parts of the country on different times*. Despite of that, there were certain similarities in them:

- All demanded changes in society through social or education reforms.
- The key areas of their focus included social issues such as emancipation of women's problems {Sati, female infanticide, widow remarriage, women's education etc.}; questioning the casteism and untouchability; and religious issues such idolatry, polytheism, religious superstitions and exploitation by priests.

Causes of Social Awakening

The *first and foremost reason was the British rule* and its deep influence on political, economic, social and culture life of India. It created conditions favourable to intellectual growth. *Second was the effort of the European Orientalists*, whose efforts put India's glorious past into limelight. This includes work done by Sir William Jones, James Princep, Charles Wilkins, Max Muller etc. Further, many Indian scholars such as Raja Rammohan Roy, Radhakanta Deb, Rajendralal Mitra, MG Ranade etc. also contributed in reinterpreting India's past. *Third was the highly creative literature*, marked by fusion of old and new. *Fourth was the detrimental effect of the Christian missionaries* who held that propaganda of Christianity in India would serve Britain's imperial interests; and would secure the empire. The Indians took it as an onslaught on their religion and social customs. They wanted to reform it so that evil social practices could be removed from society.

Reformism versus Revivalism

All the social awakening movements can be grouped into two schools viz. Reformist and Revivalist. The colonial rule reflected that many of the Indian social practices and institutions had become obsolete and they needed reforms. This school felt shackled in within the archaic traditional set up and wanted to inculcate the liberal ideas and education to reform the society. This was called reformism. Reformists included the newly emerging western educated section of society in India, who pioneered reform movements to bring about conclusive changes in Indian society. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was one example. On the other hand the *revivalism focussed on golden ancient period of*



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India and efforts to bring back the past glory.

Types of Reform Movements

The reform movements could be identified with four methods viz. (1) reforms from within; (2) reform through legislation; (3) reform through symbols of change; and (4) reform through social work.

Reform from Within

The advocates of this method believed that a reform can be effective if it emerged from within the society itself and it should create a sense of awareness among the people. For instance, Raja Ram Mohan Roy believed that Philosophy of Vedanta was based on principle of reason; and there is no need of blind reliance of India's own past or blind aping of west. He believed that India should learn from west not copy the west. He was ardent defender of Hindu religion and staunch critic of Christian missionaries.

Reforms through Legislation

This method believed that reforms cannot be effective unless supported by the State. Therefore, they appealed to the government to give legislative sanction for reforms like civil marriage, widow remarriage and increase in the age of consent.

Reform through Symbol of Change

This method represented radical reforms such as attack on old customs and rejection of traditional archaic social norms of Indian Society. Henry Louis Vivian Derozio and his Young Bengal Movement came into this category.

Reform Through Social Work

As per this method, the question whether a social reform was having religious sanctions or not, is an immaterial. This method included social work such as schools, colleges, missions, hospitals etc.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy and Brahma Samaj

Raja Ram Mohan Roy is considered to be the first Indian who tried to pull out the Indian society out of the medieval age. He is known as "*Father of Modern India*"; "*Father of Indian Renaissance*" and "*bridge between past and future*".

Birth and Family

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born in Radhanagar village in Hooghly district in Bengal on May 22, 1772 in an orthodox Brahmin family. His forefathers were in the services of Nawabs of Bengal. He got early education in Patna and Varanasi.

Mahanirvana Tantra

He became profound learner and scholar of Arabic, Persian, Sanskrit, English and Bengali; and foreign languages such as Greek, Latin and Hebrew.

At the age of 20 years, he came in touch with William Carey, an English follower and propagator of



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Jesus Christ, who wished to translate the Bible into Indian Languages and then propagate the Christianity in India. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was interested in the English Language. He, William Carey and one more friend Hariharananda Vidyabagish, who was a tantric, published a work on Trantrism known as "*Maha Nirvana Tantra*" in 1897. This work tried to portray the One God of ancient religious texts and endeavored to link the *Brahma* with *Jesus*, but the work could not impress the British, who termed it a forgery. Nevertheless, it was a great attempt to revitalize the ancient Hindu law, which was used by the East India Company to work out some disputes in Zamindari.

Work in East India Company

Raja Ram Mohan Roy joined East India Company and worked as Munshi of Registrar of the Appellate Court at Murshidabad. He left the company later on some minor corruption charges which were never proved.

Key Events

- In 1815, he established the Atmiya Sabha, a precursor in the socio-religious reforms in Bengal.
- In 1817, he founded Mahapathshala (Hindu College) at Kolkata along with Radhakanta Deb and others. It was renamed as Presidency College in 1855 and was upgraded as full university recently in 2010.
- In 1821, He launched a Bengali weekly newspaper *Sambad Kaumudi*. *Sambad Kaumudi* was first Indian newspaper edited, published and managed by Indians. In this newspaper, he wrote on subjects such as freedom of press, induction of Indians into higher services and separation of judiciary with executive.
- In 1822, he published a Persian newsmagazine titled *Mirat-ul-Akbar*.
- His other Persian works include *Tuhfat-ul-Muwahhidin* (Gift to Monotheists) and *Manazarutul Adyan* {a discussion in Persian on various religions}
- He translated some parts of Vedanta texts and also the Kena Upanishad.
- In 1828, he launched Brahma Sabha with Devendranath Tagore. By 1828, he had become a well known figure in India.
- In 1830, he had gone to England as an envoy of the Mughal Emperor, Akbar Shah II, who invested him with the title of Raja to the court of King William IV. He was expected to represent to the British sovereign the inadequacy of the pension granted to the Mughal emperor.
- He was well received in various circles in England, where he stayed for three years and died of meningitis there on September 27, 1833.



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His Social Ideas

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a reformist who wanted to get the Hindu Society rid of irrational practices and evil customs. The turning point in his life came in 1811 when wife of his deceased elder brother committed Sati. This event filled Raja Ram Mohan Roy with unspeakable remorse and pity and made him determined to get this inhuman practice abolished. He launched a sustained campaign for promulgation of a law for the abolition of Sati. As a result of his sustained efforts, the Governor General Lord William Bentinck passed Regulation XVII on December 4, 1829 which declared Sati illegal and punishable as a criminal offence. This regulation, though was effective in Bengal only, began the process of social reform through social legislation.

In 1822, he had published "*Modern Encroachments on the Ancient Rights of Females according to the Hindu law of Inheritance.*" In this pamphlet, on the authority of the ancient Smriti writers, he opposed all discriminations and evil practices against women. He opposed polygamy, Kulinism and Sati and came out in support of the inheritance of property by daughters. He was also a relentless crusader against child marriage and the rigidity of the caste system, which he described as undemocratic and inhuman. He stood for the freedom of widows to remarry and equal rights of men and women.

Religious Ideas-Brahmo Samaj

Raja Ram Mohun Roy was deeply influenced by the monotheism and anti-idolatry of Islam, Sufism, the ethical teachings of Christianity and the liberal and rationalist doctrines of the West. He attacked idol worship as degrading and expounded the conception of "*One God of all religions and humanity*".

To propagate the monotheistic doctrine of Hindu scriptures, he founded the Atmiya Sabha (1815-19). In 1828, he established the Brahmo Sabha, later the Brahmo Samaj. The new faith did not lay down any definite rites and rituals. It was the society of the worshippers of one God. The principles of the Samaj were defined in the Trust Deed and in a pamphlet published about the same time.

- Brahmo Samaj believed that God is the cause and source of all that exists; so that nature, earth and heaven are all His creations.
- In the Brahmo conception of God, there is no place for such doctrines as incarnation and meditation.
- It does not recognize any specially privileged priestly class as mediators between God and man.
- In the Brahmo Samaj no sacrifice was permitted nor was any object of worship to be reviled.
- Brahmo religion laid emphasis on the love of mankind, irrespective of colour, race or creed and upon the service of humanity as the highest rule of life.

Political Ideas

Raja Ram Mohan Roy looked favored the British rule and admired it for inaugurating progressive measures of social reform and establishing modern educational institutions. At the same time, he



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also organized a protest movement against the measures to restrict the freedom of the press. He also criticized the government for excluding Indians from the higher posts.

He asked the government to concentrate on modern western education. He was opposed to the Sanskrit system of education, because “*it would keep the country in darkness*”. He silently worked for the foundation of the Hindu College, Calcutta.

An exposition of the Revenue and Judicial Systems in India

In a pamphlet titled “*An exposition of the Revenue and Judicial Systems in India*”, Raja Ram Mohan Roy raised some very important questions on the administration system of the day and also urged the Government to separate the legislative and judicial powers. He suggested 22 years as minimum qualification age for the appointment to the Civil Services. He advocated the Jury system also.

Legacy and Death

Raja Ram Mohan Roy demanded property inheritance rights for women and fought the social evils of the Bengali Society. Sati, Caste rigidity, polygamy, child marriages etc. were targeted and he led this reform movement personally. He died of meningitis in England in 1833. He along with Mahatma Gandhi represented the two ends, the beginning and the culmination, of the first epoch of Modern India.

Tattvabodhini Sabha

After death of Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1833, there was a dearth of dynamic leadership in Brahmo Samaj for some time. However, later true leadership was provided by Devendranath, eldest son of Dwarkanath Tagore. Before joining the Brahmo Samaj, Devendranath Tagore had organized the Tattvaranjini Sabha at Jorasanko (Calcutta), which was later renamed as Tattvabodhini Sabha. Its inception “*ushered in a new epoch not only in the Brahmo movement, but in the Bengal Renaissance*”. Its main objectives were promotion of religious enquiry and dissemination of the knowledge of the Upanishads. Weekly meetings were arranged and papers on different subjects were read and discussed in it, and once a month Divine Service was also held. Shortly, a sizable section of the elite became its members. As its programme was intimately connected with the Brahmo Samaj, the Tattvabodhini Sabha became its main organizational wing.

In 1840, the Tattvabodhini School was founded, where Akshay Kumar Datta was appointed as a teacher. Among its members were Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Rajendra Lal Mitra, Tara Chand Chakravarty, Peary Chand Mitra and others representing people of different shades of opinion and different walks of life. No other organization in the first half of the 19th century exercised so much influence on society as did the Tattvabodhini Sabha, which published a monthly journal called *Tattvabodhini Patrika* to propagate its social welfare programmes.

Devendranath and his 20 associates formally joined the Brahmo Samaj on December 21, 1843. He not only continued the religious mission of Ram Mohan Roy with renewed zeal, but also boldly



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stood against the ultra radical trend of missionary attacks on Indian culture.

He compiled a religious text called 'Brahmo Dharma' containing spiritual and moral texts from different Hindu scriptures and also introduced the Brahmo form of worship or Brahmopasana. For about two years he retired to Simla hills (1856-58).

Keshav Chandra Sen and Sangat Sabha

When Debendranath was retired to Shimla, Keshav Chandra Sen joined the Brahmo Samaj in 1857 and became a full-time missionary. Under the combined influence of Devendranath and Keshab Chandra Sen, the Brahmo Samaj entered into a new phase of unusual activity. Young Keshab drew around him a number of earnest enthusiasts, mostly young men with whom he established in 1859 a small society known as *Sangat Sabha* ('*Friendly Association*'). Its main objective was to discuss the spiritual and social problems of the day.

In various meetings of the Sangat Sabha, members decided to give up their caste, to discard the sacred thread, to accept no invitation to any idolatrous festival, to give no countenance to the dancing of public women, to practice temperance, to give their wives and sisters the advantages of the light they had themselves received and to be strictly truthful, honest and just in all their dealings with their fellowmen.

In 1861, Keshab Chandra launched a fortnightly journal "Indian Mirror" which later became *First Indian Daily in English in 1871*. Under *Sangat Sabha*, he also launched humanitarian and philanthropic activities, such as providing help during famines and epidemics. He tried to make the Brahmo Samaj an all-India movement, for which he extensively toured various parts of the country. As a result of his mission *Ved Samaj* was established in Madras and *Prarthana Samaj* in Maharashtra. He strove for radical social changes and emerged as a staunch supporter of emancipation of women, female education, inter-caste marriages and launched an organized campaign against child marriage.

The First Schism

In 1866, the radical reforms by Keshab Chandra Sen led to a schism in Brahmo sabha. The Debendranath Tagore group calling itself as "Adi Brahmo Samaj" separated from Keshab's group, which had now assumed the name "Brahmo Samaj of India" or Nav Vidhana. While the slogan of Adi Brahmo Samaj was "*Brahmoism is Hinduism*", the slogan of Nav Vidhana was "*Brahmoism is Catholic and Universal*".

The key features of *Nava Vidhana* were as follows:

- Emphasis on the mystic aspects of religion
- An attempt to combine Christian and Hindu ideals and practices, marking a distinct break with Hinduism.

Keshab visited England in 1870 and returned with more vigor. He rallied for putting the Brahmo



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Marriage Act in statute book legalizing the marriage as per Brahma rites. He also established the *Indian Reform Association*, which greatly worked for the spread of western education, emancipation of women, female education and social work.

However, Keshab Chandra Sen failed the organization in the end. He gave his daughter in marriage to Maharaja of Cooch Behar in 1878, but both the bride and groom were under-age. Not only this, the marriage was conducted as per Hindu rites and this violated the Brahma Marriage Act of 1872. Due to this, many of the Nav Vidhana members separated in a second schism from Keshab and established the *Sadharana Brahma Samaj*. The constitution of the Sadharana Brahma Samaj, drafted by Anand Mohan Bose, was based on democratic principles and gave equal rights to all members in the management of the Samaj.

However, this schism gave a fatal blow to Brahma Samaj as no leader of his stature rose later.

Evaluation of Brahma Samaj

The important contribution of the Brahma Samaj was in its negative approach. It aimed at building a new social order devoid of all evils of the distinction of caste, creed and sex. The incessant efforts of the Samaj for the regeneration of Indian women are of no less value. "Ram Mohun Roy and his Brahma Samaj form the starting point for various reform movements whether in Hindu religion, society or politics which have agitated Modern India". Raja Ram Mohun Roy strove to create a consciousness in his countrymen and that was achieved through the Brahma movement.

Young Bengal Movement

Young Bengal Movement was launched by Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809-1831), who had come to Calcutta in 1826 and was appointed in the Hindu College as a teacher of English literature and History. Besides this he edited *Hesperus* and *Calcutta Literary Gazette*. He was connected with *India Gazette* as well.

Derozio drew round him students of the Hindu College and exercised unprecedented influence over his pupils both in and outside the class. He urged them to live and die for truth-to cultivate and practice all the virtues, shunning vice in every shape. He gave the greatest impetus to free discussion on all subjects -social, moral and religious.

Derozio was one of those rare teachers whose attachment to knowledge, love of truth, and hatred of evil made a profound impression upon those who came in contact with him. Like Socrates, he pursued what was right and was accused of misguiding the youth. Some influential Hindus had him removed from service and shortly thereafter, he died. But the Derozian influence continued and it was known as the Young Bengal Movement. All the leading movements of the period were connected with it.



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Prarthana Samaj

Prarthana Samaj was founded by Dr Atmaram Pandurang in 1867 when Keshab Chandra Sen visited Maharashtra. Another leader of Prarthana Samaj was R.G. Bhandarkar.

In 1870, Justice Mahadev Gobind Ranade joined this society and much of the work of this society was done by zeal and dedication of Ranade only. Under Ranade, it got all India character.

Notes on Prarthana Samaj

- The two main planks of the Samaj were worship and social reforms.
- Ranade was a revivalist, who pointed that most of the prevailing evil customs ran counter to the practices observed in earlier times.
- Ranade also launched a Purity Movement comprising anti-dancing and temperance agitation, admission of converts from other faiths and reduction in extravagant marriage expenses.
- Hinduism the faith of Prarthana Samaj but it needed to be purified and reinterpreted in the light of the modern theistic philosophy.
- His views regarding theism are set out in 39 articles which he drew up under the title ‘Theist’s Confession of Faith’.

Two other champions of social reform with him were Dhondo Keshav Karve and Vishnu Shastri. Ranade and Karve launched the Widow Remarriage Movement and started Widows’ Home Association, to provide education to widows. The Widows’ Home aimed at making widows self supporting by giving them training as teachers, midwives or nurses. In no other part of India did the social reform movement work so successfully and create so profound an influence as in Maharashtra under the auspices of the Prarthana Samaj.

Jyotiba Phule and Satya Shodhak Samaj

In early 19th century, Mahatma Jyotiba Phule organized a powerful non-Brahmin movement. He was born in 1828 in a Mali family and his education, personal experience and association with the Christian missionaries made him staunch critic of the prevailing Hindu religion and custom. In 1854, he opened a school for the ‘untouchables’ and started a private orphanage to help widows. Jyoti Phule had a violent dislike of the Brahmin priesthood. He made no distinction between non-Brahmins and untouchables.

The cause of the poor was so dear to him that when he met the Duke of York, he presented himself in a loin-cloth as the true representative of the poverty stricken Indian peasant. To liberate the depressed classes and make them conscious of their rights by educating them, he founded the Satya Shodhak Samaj in 1873. To carry forward his anti-Brahmin activities in an organized manner, he wrote two critical works – *Sarvajnik Satyadharma Pustak and Ghulamgiri.*



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Veda Samaj

Veda Samaj was established by Keshab Chandra Sen and K. Sridharalu Naidu when the former visited Madras in 1864. K. Sridharalu Naidu later visited Calcutta to study the Brahmo Samaj movement and when he returned, he renamed the Veda Samaj as *Brahmo Samaj of Southern India* in 1871. He translated the books of Brahmo Dharma into Tamil and Telugu and undertook missionary tours to propagate the faith. However, Naidu's untimely death in 1874 in an accident led to several schisms into this organization.

Dayanand Saraswati and Arya Samaj

Dayanand Saraswati was born in 1824 in a Brahmin family in Morvi in Gujarat as *Mula Shankar*. At 21, he left home in order to escape the entanglement of marriage and to seek to pacify the turmoil and commotion of his soul. For 15 years he led the life of a wandering scholar in search of knowledge. Finally, he spent two and a half years at Mathura as a disciple of a blind saint scholar Swami Virjananda, who taught him the philosophic interpretation of the Vedas and then charged him with the mission to purge Hinduism of all its ugly accretions and aberrations.

After deeply studying the Vedas and Indian philosophy, Dayanand Saraswati came to conclusion that the *Aryans were the chosen people, the Vedas the chosen gospel and India the chosen land*. Based on this belief, he founded the Arya Samaj in Bombay in 1875. A few years later the headquarters of the Arya Samaj were established at Lahore. During the remaining eight years of his life Dayanand devoted himself to preaching his new gospel, writing books, embodying his teachings and organising the Arya Samaj throughout India. He translated the Vedas and wrote three books viz. *Satyartha Prakash* in Hindi, *Veda Bhasya Bhumika*, an introduction to his Vedic commentary, and *Veda Bhasya*, a Vedic commentary in Sanskrit on the Yajurveda and the major part of the Rig-Veda. His mission of spreading the message of the Arya Samaj proved very successful in the Punjab and to a certain degree also in U.P., Gujarat and Rajasthan.

Vedas-India's Rock of Ages

Dayanand Saraswati looked upon the Vedas as 'India's Rock of Ages'. He believed that the Hindu religion and the Vedas on which it was based were *eternal, unalterable, infallible and divine*. Therefore, he gave the slogan '*Go back to the Vedas*' and '*the Vedas are the source of all knowledge*'. According to him, the later Hindu scriptures such as Puranas were responsible for the evil practices of idol worship and other superstitious beliefs in the Hindu religion.

Thus, Arya Samaj *rejected all the post-Vedic developments in Hinduism* and thus denounced meaningless rites, worship of the images of different gods and goddesses which split the people into numerous belligerent sects, repudiated the authority of the Brahmins and launched a crusade against all



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religious superstitions. Its slogan 'Back to Vedas' was inspired to **revive** the true Vedic religion and bring about national unity and to kindle national pride and consciousness.

The above description makes it clear that Dayanand was a revivalist and was also the first Hindu reformer who turned from defense to attack, from protecting the Hindu faith from the assaults of the Christian and Muslim critics to challenging them on their own ground in order to force them to defend their position.

Key Principles of Arya Samaj

Main principles and objectives of the Arya Samaj are as follows:

- Believes in infallibility of Vedas and takes them as only truth and source of all source all knowledge. Believed that post-vedic texts such as Puranas were responsible for pollution of Vedic religion.
- Opposes the idol-worship and reincarnation theory of God but accepts the doctrine of 'Karma' and transmigration of soul. Dayanand also rejected the theory of destiny / fate {Niyati}.
- Believes in one God who has no physical existence.
- Rejects Brahmanical dominance of spiritual and social life of Hindus. Denounces claim of Brahmins as intermediaries between man and God.
- Supported Four Varna System but the Varna system should be based on merit not birth. Hindu religion gives everyone an equal place in the spiritual and social life.
- Advocated equal status for women in the society. There is no room for any kind of discrimination against women on the basis of gender.
- Advocated widow remarriage, female education and opposed polygamy, child marriage, Sati, etc.
- Backed propagation of Hindi and Sanskrit. Considered good education as base of a good and solid social system. It did phenomenal work in the field of education even for women.
- Denounces socio-religious evils such as animal sacrifices, religious pilgrimages, feeding the dead through sraddhas, magic and charms etc. According to Swami Dayanand, these evils exist in the society due to ignorance of the teaching of the Vedas.

Arya Samaj established a chain of DAV educational institutions for the education of both boys and girls. It represented a form of national awakening of the Indian people and drew to its fold hundreds of nationalist Indians. It played a very progressive role in the earlier stages of national awakening when it attacked religious superstitions, the supremacy of the Brahmins, polytheism, untouchability, and when further it adopted the programme of mass education, elimination of sub-castes, and equality of men and women.



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Controversies – Shuddhi Movement

Some activities of the Arya Samaj were very controversial. The foremost was the **Shuddhi** programme, to open the doors of Hinduism for those who had embraced other religions. Shuddhi provided for the reconversion of such persons to Hinduism. This movement was *primarily directed against the Christian missionaries*, who had converted a large number of Hindus, particularly from the depressed classes to Christianity. Another controversial issue was on protection of the cow.

In 1882 the Arya Samaj formed a 'Cow Protection Association'. However, this antagonized the Muslim theologians and resulted in serious Hindu Muslim riots.

Comparison between the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj

Raja Rammohan Roy's Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj led by Swami Dayanand were the two prominent socio-religious movements of India in the 19th century. Both the organisations were against the social and religious evils like Sati, polygamy, child marriage, idol worship and other malpractices prevalent in the society especially among the Hindus. Both the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj advocated for the women education and equal status to all in the society. Both the movements worked to develop a sense of national consciousness among the fellow countrymen. But there were many differences in their views, philosophy and mode of working.

Major ideological differences between the Brahmo Samaj and the Arya Samaj are as follow:

- The Brahmo Samaj drew its inspiration from the Vedas, Upanishads and other holy scriptures of ancient India, whereas the Arya Samaj believes in the Vedas only.
- Brahmo Samaj was primarily reformist, Arya Samaj was primarily revivalist. Brahmo Samaj believed in the western culture and philosophy while the Arya Samaj rejected the western culture and accepted the Indian culture only.
- For the Brahmo Samaj, human reason is supreme whereas the Arya Samaj believes in the infallibility of the Vedas.
- The Brahmo Samaj had full faith in the goodness of British government, while Arya Samaj had no faith in the integrity of British government.
- Brahmo Samaj treated Islam and Christianity at par with Hinduism, Arya Samaj claimed the superiority of Hinduism and claimed that it was best way of life.
- Brahmo Samaj adopted a conciliatory and peaceful approach, while Arya Samaj propagated its views in an aggressive, authoritative and candid way.
- Brahmo Samaj mainly influenced educated and intellectuals while Arya Samaj was able to touch the minds of educated and uneducated alike.

Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Mission

The Ramakrishna Mission was established in 1887 by Swami Vivekananda, the chief disciple of



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Swami Ramakrishna Paramahansa. The first Math was established at Baranagar. In 1899, another 'math' was started at Belur, which became the central 'math'. It looks after the organization and working of all 'maths' spread all over India and even outside it. It is also the educational centre of the saints of the Ramakrishna Mission.

The Mission has drawn all into ideals and principles from the life and teachings of Sri Ramakrishna. Born in a poor Brahmin family, the childhood name of Ramakrishna was Gadadhar Chattopadhyay. He is regarded as one of the greatest spiritual leaders of India. He was the devotee of Goddess Kali, and lived and worshipped at the Dakshineswar temple.

His disciple Vivekananda {born Narendranath Datta} represented the very soul of Hinduism and spiritualism. His message of spiritualism contributed remarkably towards strengthening not only Hindu religion and society but also Indian nationalism. He regarded religion as the manifestation of the divinity that is already in man. He once said, *'Religion is neither in books, nor in intellectual consent, nor in reason. Reason, theories doctrines, books, religious ceremonies are all helps to religion, religion consists in realization.'* He believed in the fundamental unity of all religions.

Contributions of Ramakrishna Mission

Thoughts of Swami Vivekananda and his contribution are as follows:

- The mission worked to help the poor, improve the conditions of women, and fight against untouchability and superstition and to overhaul the education system.
- He stressed the supremacy of the Hindu religion and culture.
- He anticipated that Hinduism was based on spiritual values while the western culture and civilization was materialistic.
- He believed in the unity and equality of all religions.
- Economically, he was in favour of agrobased small-scale industries.
- Humanism was the soul of his religious, spiritual and social ideas.
- He gave social relevance to monasticism and spiritual relevance to the life of the normal householder.
- He was the first to ask the priests to make it their mission to alleviate the sufferings of human beings.
- He believed that Indian Nationalism can be based on four pillars viz. Consciousness and pride in the ancient glory of India; Awakening of the country men; Development of moral and physical strength and Unity based on common spiritual ideas
- He wanted that the Indian youth should rise, awake and work to eradicate hunger and ignorance among the masses.



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Theosophical Movement

The Theosophical Society was founded by Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott in New York in 1875. The founders arrived in India in January 1879, and established the headquarters of the Society at Adyar near Madras. In 1888, Mrs. Annie Besant joined the Society in England. Her membership proved an asset of greatest value to the Society.

The Theosophical Society stood for making a comparative study of all oriental religions, but it considered ancient Hinduism as the most profoundly spiritual religion in the world. Theosophy subscribed to the spiritual philosophy of Hinduism and its doctrine of Karma and transmigration of the soul. The beliefs of the Theosophical Society were a strange mixture of religion, philosophy and occultism. It preached universal brotherhood of men irrespective of distinctions of caste, creed, race or sex. It promoted a spirit of national pride among the Indians. In an atmosphere surcharged with proud assertions of the white man's racial superiority and denunciations of Hinduism, renowned European Theosophists like Annie Besant proclaimed India's cultural supremacy and helped in arousing Indian nationalism.

The Theosophical Society did commendable work in the field of education. Its most successful venture in this direction was the opening of the Central Hindu College at Varanasi in 1898. The Society opened schools for boys, for women, for the depressed classes and also encouraged participation in the Boy Scout movement. The Society opposed child marriage, advocated abolition of caste, the uplift of outcastes, and the amelioration of the condition of widows. The Theosophical Society proved to be a very potent factor "in the awakening and self-respect of Indians".

Orthodox Hindu Religious Movements

In response to the reformist movements, some organizations were launched by educated orthodox Hindus for "protection of Sanatana Dharma" from pollution with western culture.

Bharat Dharma Mahamandala

Bharat Dharma Mahamandala was a prominent Hindu organization founded by Pandit Din Dayalu Sharma in Hardwar in 1887, who also founded the Hindu College, Delhi, on May 15, 1899.

Its objective was to bring together all leaders of the orthodox Hindu community and to work together for the preservation of Sanatan Dharma.

The offshoots of the Mahamandala were the *Sanatan Dharma Sabhas*, founded for the defense of Hinduism from critics both within the community and outside it. In the early years of the 20th century, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was very closely associated with the Mahamandala and the Sanatan Dharma movements.

Dharma Sabha

It was launched in 1830 by Radhakant Deb (1794-1876). Members of the Sabha defended the socio-



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religious status quo against both reformers and radicals, mainly through its newspaper. They even opposed the abolition of Sati. Nevertheless, the Sabha played an active role in promoting Western education, even among girls.

Other Hindu Reform Movements and Sects

Swami Narain Sect

Swami Narayan sect was launched by Swami Sahajanand in Gujarat in beginning of the 19th century. He preached a puritanical ideology both of belief and practice. This sect was a sort of protest against the epicurean and luxurious practices of Vaishnavism. The sect advocated vegetarianism and advised people to shun liquor and drugs.

The Swami Narain sect preached monotheism. On the social front it emphasised the primary importance of character building in individuals, the necessity of a pure and simple life and social unity. The sect attacked the restrictions on widow remarriage, the institution of Sati, and the practice of female infanticide. Anyone was welcome to join it, irrespective of caste or creed, even Parsis and Muslims.

Sarvadeshik Hindu Sabha

To counter the challenge from the Muslim League, founded in 1906, the politically conscious Hindus founded the Punjab Hindu Conference in 1909. In 1915, at its annual meeting, this conference renamed itself the *Sarvadeshik Hindu Sabha*, and in 1921, the *Akhil Bharat Hindu Mahasabha*. By the mid-1930s, the Mahasabha, under the leadership of V.D. Savarkar, began to expound a Hindu nationalism opposed both to the secular nationalism of the Indian National Congress and the communal nationalism of the Muslim League.

Radhaswami Movement

Radhaswami Movement was founded in 1861 by Tulsi Ram, of Agra, a banker by profession. Tulsi Ram was also popularly known as Shiv Dayal Saheb or Swamiji Maharaj. The Radhaswamis believe in one Supreme Being, the supremacy of the Guru, a “company of the pious people” (Satsang), and simple social life. They believe that there is no need to renounce the worldly life for spiritual attainments. They further hold that all religions are true. The sect recognises no temples, shrines or sacred places. Works of faith and charity, the spirit of service and prayer are laid down as necessary duties.

Deva Samaj

This sect was founded in 1887 at Lahore by Shiv Narain Agnihotri, an erstwhile follower of Brahma Samaj. The teachings of the Samaj were compiled in book form in *Deva Shastra*. The teachings of the Deva Samaj emphasise the Supreme Being, eternity of the soul, the supremacy of the Guru and need for good action. The Samaj prescribed ideal social conduct and moral ethics, such as not accepting bribe, abstaining from gambling, intoxicants, non-vegetarian food and violence. The movement,



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however, lost its popular appeal after 1813, when Agnihotri appointed his second son, Devanand, to succeed him.

Madras Hindu Associations

There were two of them: the Madras Hindu Social Reforms Association founded by Veresalingam Pantulu (1848-1939) in 1892, and the Madras Hindu Association founded by Mrs. Annie Besant in 1904. Pantulu's Hindu Association was a social purity-movement advocating temperance and combating the devadasi custom. Besant's organisation was intended "to promote Hindu social and religious advancement on national lines with the spirit of Hindu civilization."

Satnamis of Chhattisgarh

It was launched by one branch of Satnamis led by Ghasi Das in Bilaspur district Chhattisgarh. An untouchable belonging to the cobbler caste, he opposed the caste system and taught that all men are equal. He propounded the concept of *Satnam*, a single true god, and urged his followers to abandon idol worship. His followers were forbidden the consumption of meat, drugs, liquor and tobacco. After Ghasi Das's death in 1850, his son Balak Das took over the leadership of the Satnamis. He was more aggressive and radical in his attitude to caste discrimination.

The Satya Mahima Dharma

Mukund Das, known as Mahima Gosain, founded the Satya Mahima Dharma in the 1860s, assisted mainly by Govinda Baba and Bhima Bhoi. Mahima Gosain preached the existence of one deity-Alakh Param Brahma, an eternal being, who was formless and indescribable. No other deity existed, hence idol worship was in vain. Brahman priests and their rituals were declared to be signifying nothing. Members of the lower castes and some tribals were particularly attracted to this sect. Joranda, in Orissa, was the headquarters and a shrine for the Satya Mahima Dharmis. Under Bhima Bhoi, they criticised Vaishnavism and the worship of Lord Jagannath, which led to their open conflict with the orthodox Hindus.

The Paramahansa Mandali

Paramahansa Mandali was founded by Dadoba Panderung (1842-82) and Bal Shastri Jambhekar of Maharashtra in 1849. Dadoba in his book *Dharma Vivechan*, outlined seven principles of this new movement: that God alone should be worshipped; real religion is based on love and moral conduct; spiritual religion is one; every individual should have freedom of thought; our actions and speech should be consistent with reason; mankind is one caste; and the right kind of knowledge should be given to all. These principles denied polytheism of popular Hinduism, the caste system and the Brahmanical monopoly of knowledge. All members were required to take a pledge that they would abandon caste restrictions and take food and drink prepared by a member of a lower caste.

The Paramahansa Mandali met in secret. "Its insistence on remaining a secret organisation illustrated an unwillingness to openly challenge Hindu orthodoxy." Young educated Brahmans from



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Maharashtra joined the Mandali, but the movement collapsed after 1860.

Other Secular / Non-Hindu Social Movements

Seva Sadan

The Parsi social reformer Behramji M. Malabari campaigned all his life against child marriage and “enforced widowhood”. He founded the Seva Sadan as a social reform and humanitarian organization in 1885. The Seva Sadan specialized in the care of socially discarded and exploited women of all castes, providing education, welfare and medical services.

Servants of India Society

Servants of India Society was founded in 1915 by Gopal Krishna Gokhale to build a dedicated group of people for social service and reforms. In the field of famine relief, union organisation, cooperatives and uplift of tribals and depressed, the Society did commendable work.

Indian (National) Social Conference

Indian (National) Social Conference was founded by M.G. Ranade and Raghunath Rao. It was virtually the social reform cell of the Indian National Congress. Its first session was held in Madras in December 1887. The Conference met annually as a subsidiary convention of the Indian National Congress, at the same venue, and focused attention on social reform. The Conference advocated intercaste marriages and opposed *kulinism* and polygamy. It launched the famous “Pledge Movement” to inspire people to take an oath to prohibit child marriage.

Social Service League

Narayan Malhar Joshi, a leading member of the Servants of India Society, founded the Social Service League in 1911. The objective of the movement was “to collect and study social facts and discuss social problems with a view to forming public opinion on questions of social service” and to secure for the masses a better quality of life and work. The League opened a number of day and night schools, libraries, dispensaries and started boys’ clubs and scouts corps.

Seva Samiti

Seva Samiti was another organization founded by another prominent member of the Servants of India Society, Hridayanath Kunzru. Founded in 1914 at Allahabad, the Seva Samiti had as its objective to organise social service during natural disasters like floods and epidemics, to promote the spread of education, cooperation, sanitation, to uplift depressed classes, reform criminals and rescue the fallen.

Lokhitawadi

Gopal Hari Desmukh (1823-92), popularly known as “Lokhitawadi”, was a product of the Western learning in India. He was a judge and a member of the Governor-General’s Council in 1880. As a votary of national self-reliance, he attended the Delhi Durbar in 1876, wearing handspun khadi.

A great social reformer and rational thinker, “Lokhitawadi” urged the people to be self-reliant and



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seek Western learning. These were, in his view, tools for cultivating a rational outlook and for solving the country's pressing problems. He advocated humanitarianism and social service as the two driving forces in India. A profound scholar, he wrote hundreds of articles on social issues and volumes on history. In his essays, "Lokahitawadi" deplored the prevalent ignorance, the hold of outdated social values, the dominance of religion in social life, and the selfishness of the upper classes. He supported the cause of women and advocated female education.

Rahanumai Mazdayasanan Sabha (Religious Reform Association)

The Western-educated progressive Parsis like Dadabhai Naoroji, J.B. Wacha, S.S. Bangali and Naoroji Furdonji founded the Rahanumai Mazdayasanan Sabha (Religious Reform Association) in 1851. The association had for its object "the regeneration of the social condition of the Parsis and the restoration of the Zoroastrian religion to its pristine purity". *Rast Goftar* (Voice of Truth) was its weekly organ.

The Rahanumai Mazdayasanan Sabha was fortunate in having the unstinted support of the Parsi community for its reform efforts. Education as the driving force of social reform was its prime objective. The Sabha campaigned ardently for the education of Parsi priests and for the spread of Western education among the Parsis, including girls. Through its efforts the age of marriage was increased and Parsi women achieved emancipation.

To accelerate the reform movement, the Zoroastrian Conference was also organised to discuss the social, religious, and educational issues before the community. The first such conference was held in 1890.

Anti-Untouchability Movements

Aravipuram Movement

Aravipuram Movement was launched by Sri Narayana Guru on Shivaratri day of 1888. On that day, Sri Narayana Guru defied the religious restrictions traditionally placed on the Ezhava community, and consecrated an idol of Shiva at Aravipuram.

Sri Narayana Guru, born in a low-caste Ezhava family, had studied Sanskrit, Malayalam, Tamil and astrology. The *Aravipuram Pratistha* was a historic event, because a member of a lower caste, forbidden from entering the temple, had himself consecrated the Shiva image in a temple. On the wall of the temple Sri Narayana Guru inscribed the words: "Devoid of the dividing walls of caste or race, or hatred of rival faith, we all live here in brotherhood."

Millions saw Sri Narayana Guru as a saint, seer, philosopher, poet and social reformer. Education and organisation were amongst his many slogans for freedom and strength. He held that the essence of all religions is one and the same, and advocated the comparative study of all faiths.

Sri Narayana Guru articulated a doctrine aimed at improving the Ezhavas' social position. He urged



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them to abandon the occupation of toddy-tapping and to abstain from liquor. He summed up his message in a slogan: “Drink not, serve not, brew not.” He condemned all forms of animal sacrifice, the singing of obscene songs etc. The organisation which he set up to maintain and manage the institutions he had founded later became known as Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (Society for the Propagation of Sri Narayana Guru’s Tenets).

In the early years of the 20th century, the Aravipuram movement was given new vigour when two new leaders, Dr Palpu and Kumaran Asan, joined Sri Narayana Guru, Dr Palpu was the first Ezhava to receive education in Western medicine. Kumaran Asan was a well-known writer and poet. Thus invigorated, the movement began to condemn the caste system as the basis of Hindu social structure.

Temple Entry Movements

The Aravipuram movement was of far-reaching importance in South India. Inspired by its success, a number of socio-religious reform movements were launched in the South. The Temple Entry Movement is the more prominent among them.

The struggle against the disabilities imposed on the *avarnas* or members of depressed classes in various parts of South India was being waged since the end of the 19th century. In Kerala, leading the struggle were several reformers and intellectuals such as Sri Narayana Guru, N. Kumaran Asan and T.K. Madhavan. In 1924, another beginning was made for opening the doors of the temples for the *avarnas*. After 1924 the anti-untouchability programme became a part of the Gandhian constructive programme, attracting to it a new popularity. The temple entry movement used the techniques developed in the course of the nationalist struggle. The temple entry movement was the Gandhian or nationalist approach to fight caste oppression.

As a result of the movement, in November 1936, the Maharaja of Travancore issued a proclamation throwing open all government controlled temples to all Hindus irrespective of caste. Madras also followed suit.

Nair Service Society

In the Travancore State Namboodiris and non-Malayali Brahmans occupied privileged positions in the State administration, with the Namboodiris enjoying big tax-free *jemi* estates. A number of modern Malayali novels attacked the Brahman domination and the exploitative and humiliating customs perpetrated by them on the Nairs.

Among such customs, for example, was the insistence by the upper castes that Nair women must appear bare breasted before Namboodiri visitors and must enter into temporary relations (*sambandham*) with them. The Nairs also faced numerous internal social problems on account of *taravad* or matrilineal joint family, which was unsuited to modern economic conditions, and embarrassing and retrograde social customs.



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Towards the end of the 19th century a powerful Nair leadership emerged under K. Ramakrishna Pillai and Mannath Padmanabha Pillai. They assailed the Travancore court and demanded political rights for the Nairs. Mannath Padmanabha Pillai founded the Nair Service Society in 1914 in Travancore. The Society combined caste aspirations with a measure of social reform. For some time, the Nair Service Society also maintained links with the Justice Party of Madras.

Bahujan Samaj Movement

The Satyashodhak Samaj later on turned out to be socially and politically divisive and loyalist, when the Maharaja (Shahu) of Kolhapur, who was having problems with his Brahman courtiers, patronised it. So did the British. They supported this movement, and also the Maharaja of Kolhapur, with the objective of creating an anti-Congress front against Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

After 1919, Bhaskar Rao Jadhav, inspired by the ideas of Jyotiba Phule, formed an anti-Brahman and strongly anti-Congress party, which attacked the caste system and claimed to speak for the Bahujan Samaj against the money-lenders and Brahmans. From 1920 Mukundrao Patil began to publish a Satyashodhak paper, *Din-Mitra*, and soon the Bahujan Samaj established a powerful rural base in Maharashtra, the Deccan and the Vidarbha-Nagpur region. The Satyashodhak message was spread in the countryside through *tamasha*-the folk drama tradition of Maharashtra.

Praja Mithra Mandali

This was an anti-Brahman platform founded by a Madras-based politician, C.R. Reddy. Earlier in 1905-6, a *Vokkaliga Sangha* and a *Lingayat Education Fund Association* were founded in Karnataka.

Sikh Movements

Important Sikh Movements of 19th century are discussed briefly below.

The Nirankari Movement

This movement, initially an offshoot of Sikhism, was founded in the 1840s by Baba Dayal Das (1783-1885), who emphasized the worship of God as *nirankar* (formless God). His approach meant a rejection of idols, rituals associated with idolatry and the Brahman priests who conducted these rituals. Dayal Das's disciples were to worship the formless God, obey the *shabad* (preaching) of the Guru, serve their parents, avoid bad habits and earn their livelihood through work. Eating meat, drinking liquor, lying, cheating, etc., were forbidden. The Nirankari movement stressed proper religious practice and issued *hukmnamas* (injunctions) to define its ideology and precepts. The Nirankaris set up a chain of worship centres staffed by their own priests and thus became a permanent subset of the Sikh religion.

The Namdhari Movement

The Namdhari movement of the Sikhs was an offshoot of the Kuka movement in Punjab, founded by Balak Singh. Balak Singh's followers saw in him a reincarnation of Guru Govind Singh.



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The Singh Sabha

The Namdhari unrest, the activities of the Sanatan Dharmis, the Arya Samajists and Christian conversions had shaken the foundations of the Sikh religion. To strengthen Sikhism, a small group of prominent Sikhs, led by Thakur Singh Sandhawalia and Giani Gian Singh, founded the Singh Sabha of Amritsar on October 1, 1873. The objectives of the Sabha were to restore Sikhism to its pristine purity, to publish historical religious books and periodicals, to propagate knowledge using Punjabi, to return Sikh apostates to their faith and to involve Englishmen in the educational programme of the Sikhs.

Gurdwara Reform Movements

Before 1920 the Sikh Gurdwaras were governed by the Udasi Sikh *mahants*, who treated the gurdwara offerings and other income of the gurdwaras as their personal income. The British Government supported these *mahants* as a counterpoise to the rising tide of nationalism among the Sikhs. Matters came to such a pass that the priests of the Golden Temple issued *kukamnama* (injunction) against the Ghadarites, declaring them renegades, and then honoured General Dyer, the butcher of Jallianwala massacre, with a *saropa*.

The Gurdwara Reform Movement launched an agitation for freeing the gurdwaras from these corrupt *mahants* and for handing over the gurdwaras to a representative body of Sikhs. Under the growing pressure of the nationalists and the gurdwara agitators, the gurdwaras came under the control of an elected committee known as the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, in November 1920. The movement for the liberation of the gurdwaras soon turned into the Akali movement, which later on got divided into three streams, namely moderate nationalist reformers, pro-government loyalists and the political organ of Sikh communalism.

Movements for the Emancipation of Women

In the 19th century the emancipation of women became a matter of prime concern for the socio-religious reformers.

Individual Activists

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy campaigned for abolition of Sati practice and was successful in getting a legislation enacted by company.
- Efforts of Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar led to enactment of Widow Remarriage Act in 1856.
- John Elliot Drink Water Bethune {JED Bethune}, a British law member of Governor General's Council established a school for girls {Hindu Kanya Vidyalaya} in 1849 in Calcutta. This was later known as Bethune school. One student of this school Kadambini Ganguly joined Calcutta Medical College as the first Indian girl student of a medical college and later she became first practicing lady doctor in India.



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- In South India, Kandukuri Virasalingam Pantulu (1848-1919) published *Viveka Vardhani* and opened his first girls' school in 1874 and made widow remarriage and female education the key points of his programme for social reform. He also launched *antinautch* movement (against hiring of dancing girls for celebrations).
- Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842-1901) and his wife Ramabai also contributed greatly to the cause of women. In 1869, Ranade founded the Widow Remarriage Association and encouraged widow remarriage and female education and opposed child marriage. He founded the National Social Conference, which became a pre-eminent institution for social reform. Pandita Ramabai (1858-1922) was also a pioneer in women's education and a rebel champion of women's rights. She founded the *Sharda Sadan*, a school for widows, in Bombay and at Mukti, near Pune. Her greatest legacy was her effort, the first in India, to educate widows.
- Dhondo Keshav Karve (1858-1962) founded the female school and widow homes in Pune. The curriculum in his schools was designed to make young widows employable and self-sufficient. Karve believed that "widows needed an education that would make them economically independent and enable them to think for themselves". He also founded the first Indian women's university in 1916.

Associations for Women

Bharat Mahila Parishad

It was a part of the National Social Conference to provide a forum for the discussion of social issues.

The Arya Mahila Samaj

It was founded by Ramabai, wife of Justice Ranade, to provide a support network for newly educated women.

Bharat Stree Mahamandal

It was founded by Sarladevi Chaudhurani at Allahabad in 1910. It was the first permanent association of Indian women to promote their common interests. The Mahamandal's leaders regarded purdah as the main stumbling-block to female education and defined women's issues such as female education, child marriage and women's status in the family.

The Women's Indian Association

It was founded by an Irish feminist and theosophist, Dorothy Jinarajadasa, in 1915, with its membership open to both Indians and Europeans. Annie Besant became its first President. The principal work of the WIA was educational and its branches were encouraged to set up adult classes for literacy, sewing and first aid.

The National Council of Women for India

It was an all-India organisation established in 1925, which was affiliated to the International Council of Women. Mehribai Tata (wife of Dorab Tata) played a key role in its advancement. But on account of its elitist nature, the Council failed to grow and become a vital national organisation.



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The All-India Women's Conference (AIWC)

It was the most important and the most truly "Indian" organisation, secular in outlook. The AIWC first met at Pune in January 1927, through the efforts of Margaret Cousins and other women belonging to the WIA. The Conference discussed vital issues on female education, child marriage and purdah. By 1928 the All-India Women's Conference on Educational Reform decided that there could be little progress in educational matters unless harmful social customs were eradicated. Beginning with education, then adding customs which restricted female education, notably child marriage and purdah, the AIWC continued to enlarge its purview. By the 1940s the AIWC was establishing itself as the premier organisation representing women. In 1941 the AIWC established its quarterly journal, *Roshni*, and in 1946 set up a central office. The AIWC created a great deal of public opinion in favour of the Child Marriage Restraint Act or Sharda Act. When the Muslim leaders asked that the Sharda Act be amended to exclude Muslims the AIWC combated this move, claiming that it spoke for all women in India. In support of this stand, Muslim women members presented a memorandum endorsing the Sharda Act.

The foundation of the AIWC coincided with two developments. First, Muthulakshmi Reddy, the first woman legislator, was appointed to the Madras Legislative Council in 1927. Secondly, various women's organisations in India launched a campaign for enfranchising women. Their efforts, however, had limited success, and women were given restricted-franchise in the Government of India Act, 1935.

Islamic Reform Movements

There were a number of religious-revivalist and even religious-reform movements launched by the Muslim reformers. However, these were less powerful and lacked national standings. Some notable are as follows:

Anjuman-i-Himayat-i-Islam

It was founded in Lahore in 1866 by Muhammad Shafi and Shah Din, both followers of Sayyid Ahmad Khan, the founder of the Aligarh movement. This Islamic society opened schools imparting Western education, emphasized female education, loyalty to the British Government and opposed the Indian National Congress.

Ahl-i-Hadith

The death of Saiyid Ahmad Raebareli, the founder of the Wahabi movement in India, divided his followers into two groups. The more devoted and radical considered him to be *the imam-i-mahdi* and expected that he would return to lead them once again. His moderate followers, led by Saiyid Nazir, who did not regard him as *mahdi* and his concept of *jihad*, founded the Ahl-i-Hadith, a branch of Tariqah-i-Muhammadiyah. The leaders of the Ahl-i-Hadith rejected Sufism and condemned



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polytheism. The movement advocated widow remarriage as Islamic and attacked the institution of dowry as a non-Muslim innovation.

Aligarh Movement

This movement was launched by Syed Ahmad Khan, who was in the judicial service of the Company at the time of the rebellion of 1857 and stood loyal to the Government. After his retirement from service he appeared in the role of a socio-religious reformer. His articles in *Tahzib-al-Akhlaq*, which he started in 1870, as well as his other writings, gave evidence of the markedly rationalistic and non-conformist trend of his thoughts.

Sir Syed liberalized Indian Islam and took upon himself the triple task of religious reinterpretation, social reform and education. He came to the conclusion that only by taking to Western education would the Muslims be able to rise above their backwardness and come to an understanding with their rulers. He made the town of Aligarh, a predominantly Muslim area, the centre of his activities. The range of his activities is known as the Aligarh movement.

With the full backing of the bureaucracy he founded the Aligarh School on May 24, 1875, on the birth anniversary of Queen Victoria. This school was upgraded in 1877 to a college and named Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College, the forerunner of the Aligarh Muslim University. One of the objects of the Aligarh movement was to prevent the Muslims from joining the Congress which Sir Syed condemned as anti-British and anti-Government.

In 1887, when Badr-ud-din Tyabji was elected President of the Indian National Congress, Syed Ahmad Khan emerged actively in opposition to it. In his view a Hindu-Muslim alliance could only be disadvantageous to the Muslim community, which was much smaller in number, educationally backward, politically immature, and economically insecure. Alliance with the Hindus against the British could only lead to the loss of British patronage and to the exploitation and subjugation of the Muslims by the overwhelming Hindu majority. Thus began modern Muslim political separatism in India.

Ahmadiya Movement

The Ahmadiya movement was launched by Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian (1839-1908) in 1889, who began his work as a defender of Islam against the polemics of the Arya Samaj and the Christian missionaries. In 1889 he claimed to be *masih* (messiah) and *mahdi*, and later also to be an incarnation of the Hindu god Krishna and Jesus returned to earth. Ghulam Ahmad, though called himself a minor prophet, regarded Muhammad as the true and great Prophet whom he followed.

The Ahmadiya movement based itself, like the Brahma Samaj, on the principles of a universal religion of all humanity. Ghulam Ahmad was greatly influenced by Western liberalism, Theosophy, and the religious-reform movements of the Hindus. The Ahmadiyas opposed *jihad* or sacred war



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against non-Muslims and stressed fraternal relations among all people. The movement spread Western liberal education among Indian Muslims and started a network of schools and colleges for that purpose.

Deoband Movement

The Islamic Seminary at Deoband was founded in 1867 by two theologians, Muhammad Qasim Nanautavi (1837-80) and Rashid Ahmad Gangohi. The Deoband School of Islamic Theology was a poor man's school and its teachers and students lived frugal lives. The followers of this school were concerned with the problems of education and character. The questions of "society and State" were as important for them as those of "belief and practices of the individual". Rashid Ahmad Gangohi advised the Muslim community in India to cooperate with the Congress in its activities. The Deoband School declared in unambiguous terms that the concept of nationality was based upon the unity of all religious groups and did not contravene any Islamic principle. This declaration created a gulf between the Deoband and Aligarh movements.

Among the supporters of the Deoband school was Shibli Numani (1857-1914), a profound scholar of Persian and Arabic and a prolific writer in Urdu. He was in favour of reforming the traditional Islamic system of education by cutting down its formal studies and including the English language and European sciences. He founded the *Nadwat-ul-Ulama* and *Dar-ul-Uloom* in Lucknow in 1894-96, where he tried to give effect to his educational ideas. Shibli admired the Congress for its high idealism and for its concern for the welfare and advancement of the Indian people. He believed that Muslims were citizens of India and they owed loyalty to their motherland. He was convinced that "the Muslims could, jointly with the Hindus, create a State in which both could live honourably and happily". As a result of these reform movements, the Muslim urban society started taking to modern ways. The modern awakening among the Muslims led to a decline in the practice of polygamy, and widow remarriage was encouraged. The great political upheavals of this period thus helped in bringing about a renaissance of Indian Islam and a reorientation of Muslim society.

Notwithstanding the obvious differences between the different Hindu and Muslim reformative schools of thought, they showed a keen consciousness of the need for religious reconstruction and moral reform and a keenness to unite all those professing the same faith. They fostered a rational outlook and individualism, which is the basis of modern secular thought.

Depressed Caste Movements

One, of the earliest lower caste movements, which became the torch bearer for the future caste movements, was founded in Maharashtra in the 1870s by Jyotiba Phule, who with his books *Gulamgiri* (1872) and *Sarvajanik Satyadharma Pustak* and his organisation Satya Shodhak Samaj, proclaimed the need "to save the lower castes from the hypocritical Brahmins and their opportunistic



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scriptures”. His main work was to rouse the masses and lead them to an organized resistance against the unreasonable claims of the priestly class. He made no distinction between non-Brahmins and untouchables. Dr. B R Ambedkar was also influenced with this movement and Jyotiba Phule. Important notes about other movements are as follows:

Shri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDPY) Movement

The untouchable Ezhavas or Iravas of Kerala clustered around the religious leader Shri Narayana Guru (1855-1928), who formed the Sri Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDPY) in 1902-3. It organized some temple entry rights movements.

Adi Movements

From the 1920s there was a rise of dalit movements in various parts of the country. The Montagu Chelmsford reforms and massive economic and political upheavals of the post-World War I period, provided the background for most of their organisations. Their common theme was *adi*, or a definition of themselves as the original inhabitants of the country, a claim that their own inherent traditions were those of equality and unity, and a total rejection of castes as the imposition of the conquering Aryans who used this to subjugate and divide the natives. Of these, the most important were the *Adi Dravida movement in Tamil Nadu*, the *Adi Andhra movement in Andhra*, *Adi Karnataka movement*; the organization of Purayas and Cherumans in Kerala; and the *Adi Hindu movement*, mainly centred around Kanpur in U.P.

In Punjab, the Adi Dharma movement claimed that untouchables formed distinct religious community like Hindus, Muslims or Sikhs and that this had existed even before the arrival of the Hindus. Later on this movement was absorbed into Ambedkar’s Scheduled Caste Federation, which by the 1940s was providing an all-India umbrella to such dalits movements.

Congress and the Harijan Movement

Congress did not have social reforms in its agenda in the beginning. However, when in 1918 the first Depressed Classes Conference was organized in Bombay and the Dalits and non-Brahmins made proposals for separate electorates, the Congress reversed its policy.

First All India Depressed Classes Conference

All-India Depressed Classes Conference was held in March 1918, which was attended by prominent political leaders, issued an All-India Anti-Untouchability Manifesto to the effect that it would not observe untouchability in its everyday affairs.

Entry of Gandhiji in politics ushered a new era in history of lower caste movements consciousness. In 1921, Congress appealed to the Hindus to *bring about removal of untouchability and to help the improvement of the submerged classe*ŝ. In 1922, it appointed a committee “to formulate a scheme embodying practical measures to be adopted for bettering the condition untouchables”. In 1923, it



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again passed a resolution requesting the All-India Hindu Mahasabha also to take up this matter and make efforts to remove this evil from the Hindu community. In 1928 the Indian National Social Conference also gave a call for removing this “great obstacle to unification of Hindu society”. In 1931, the Karachi Congress Session propounded a programme of fundamental rights which called for equal access for all to public employment etc., regardless of caste, and equal rights to the use of public roads, wells, schools and other facilities.

During the second half of 1932, while Gandhiji was in jail and was thinking of shifting to constructive work, Ramsay Macdonald’s Communal Award with its creation of separate electorates for untouchables, helped to focus his attention primarily on “Harijan” welfare. Gandhiji began a fast unto death on the separate electorate issue on September 20, 1932 and was able to secure an agreement between the caste Hindus and untouchables’ leaders through the Poona Pact signed on September 24, 1932. The pact retained the Hindu joint electorate with reserved seats for untouchables, who were given greater representation than awarded by Macdonald.

The very next day (September 25, 1932) a Conference of the Hindus at Bombay passed a resolution “that henceforth, amongst Hindus, no one shall be regarded as an untouchable by reason of his birth and that those who have been so regarded hitherto will have the same right as other Hindus in regard to the use of public wells, public schools, public roads, and all other public institutions. It shall be the duty of all Hindu leaders to secure, by every legitimate and peaceful means, the removal of all disabilities upon the so-called untouchable classes, including the bar in respect of admission to temples.” This resolution was followed by feverish activity on the part of the Hindus to throw open temples to the untouchables. Ranga Iyer introduced a Bill in the Central Legislature on the subject of temple entry. Similar Bills were also introduced in the Madras and Bombay Legislatures. Baroda and Travancore States proclaimed temple entry in 1933 and 1936 respectively.

Harijan uplift now became Gandhiji’s principal concern. He started an All-India Anti-Untouchability League or Harijan Sevak Sangh in September 1932 for improving the lot of the untouchables and for providing medical education and technical facilities to the Harijans. In 1933, he founded the weekly *Harijan*. Every week the *Harijan* published a long list of temples, wells and schools thrown open to the untouchables, and reported other humanitarian and constructive work. Gandhiji also went on a 12,500 miles “Harijan Tour” between 1933 and August 1934.

Depressed Classes Movement of B R Ambedkar

The most important challenge to Gandhiji’s Harijan Welfare Programme as also to the Communists came from Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, who belonged to the untouchable Mahar caste. His programmes were intended to integrate untouchables into Indian society in modern, not traditional ways, and based on education and exercise of legal and political rights, as well as refusal to perform



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the demeaning traditional caste duties. His movement provided an all-India organisation for the rejection of all forms of feudal bondage imposed upon the Dalits, and ranged from mass campaigns, to a demand for separate electorates, the burning of the *Manusmriti*, the breaking of caste restrictions like use of temples and wearing of prohibited colour like red. This programme came in conflict with both the Congress and the radicals and tended to verge almost on loyalist and separatist lines. A major untouchability movement was launched by Ambedkar in the 1920s in Maharashtra, which continues in various forms till today and has acquired an all-India character. In 1924 Dr. Ambedkar founded the Depressed Classes Institute (*Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha*) in Bombay. Three years later (1927), he started a Marathi fortnightly, *Bahishkrit Bharat*, and the same year established the *Samaj Samta Sangh* to propagate the gospel of social equality between caste Hindus and untouchables. Ambedkar also organised the Independent Labour Party on secular lines for protecting the interest of the labouring classes. In December 1927 he led the Mahad Satyagraha to establish the rights of untouchables to draw water from public wells and tanks. He also organised temple entry movements like the Parvati temple satyagraha of 1928 and the Kalasam temple satyagraha of 1930-35. There were similar satyagrahas in Kerala, such as the Vaikom temple road satyagraha of 1924-25 and the Guruvayoor satyagraha of 1930-32.

Before the Round Table Conference of 1930-31 Ambedkar emerged as the major leader of the depressed classes. He took a separatist stand and demanded constitutional safeguards for the depressed classes. The untouchables demanded separate electorates in the 1930s, which led to a conflict between Ambedkar and Gandhiji, with the former feeling cheated by the Poona Pact. In 1942 Ambedkar founded the Scheduled Caste Federation. The Federation fought for the reserved seats in the 1946 elections but lost heavily to 'Congress Harijans' in the strongly nationalist and caste-Hindu dominated constituencies. The Scheduled Caste Federation then launched satyagrahas in Bombay, Poona, Lucknow, Kanpur and Wardha, demanding that the Congress make known its proposals to Dalits.

Ambedkar had concluded the in 1930s that the only way of improving the status of the untouchables was to renounce the Hindu religion, and gave the slogan "You have nothing to lose except your religion." In the 1950s he embraced Buddhism.

Other Movements

Justice Party Movement

The birth of the Dravidian movement, the oldest and most enduring anti-British movement in the country, can be traced to November 20, 1916, when a group of leading non-Brahmin citizens of Madras such as Dr. T.M. Nair, Sir Pitti Theagaraja Chettiar and the Raja of Panagal came together to form the South Indian Liberal Federation (SILF), which was also known as Justice Party. Their joint



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declaration, which came to be called the *Non-Brahmin Manifesto*, demanded the representation of non-Brahmins in government jobs. This was the first cohesive demand for reservation raised in India.

SILF soon launched a newspaper called *Justice*. When elections were held in 1920 for the Madras Legislative Council under the Government of India Act 1919, SILF was generally referred to by the public as the Justice Party. The party won that election as the Indian National Congress boycotted it. To a great extent the Justice Party and its popularity was a reaction to the domination of the Congress in the then Madras Presidency by Brahmins and other upper castes. This was used by the British rulers as a platform against the Congress, which was attracting more and more educated Brahmins and upper castes.

The Justice Party was responsible for many changes, including the passing of a Government Order in 1930 providing for reservations for various groups, including non-Brahmin Hindus.

Self-Respect Movement

The anti-Brahmin crusade got a further impetus when E. V. Ramaswamy Naicker, popularly known as Periyar, joined the anti-Brahmin movement. Naicker, who actively participated in the Non-Cooperation movement, broke with the Congress in 1924 to develop an anti-Brahmin, anti-caste populist and radical alternative to Justice elitism. He had been with the Congress and had even served a term as the President of the Tamilnadu Congress, before he quit the party in 1924 following differences over the issue of social justice and representation of non-Brahmins. After leaving the Congress, Periyar launched the Self-Respect Movement (1925) aimed at awakening non-Brahmins. His journal *Kudi Arasu* and his movement progressed from advocating weddings without Brahmin priests, forcible temple entry, the burning of *Manusmriti* to outright atheism at times. In fact he tried to provide an umbrella movement to all non-Brahmins of South India, particularly of Tamilnadu.

When the mantle of Justice Party leadership fell on Periyar after 1937, he considered moving away from electoral politics and confining the role of the non-Brahmin movement to a reformist one. Accordingly, at the Salem conference in 1944, the Justice Party was renamed Dravidar Kazhagam. Along with the renaming came a redefinition of its course of action.

This was when Periyar came up with the concept of Dravida Nadu, a land for Dravidians on the lines of a separate state for the Muslim League. By this time Periyar had also popularised the theory of Aryan invasion of the Dravidian land, in which the Brahmins were equated with the subjugating Aryans and the non-Brahmins with subjugated Dravidians, thus adding a virulent note to the anti-Brahmin movement.

It is probably the Dravida Nadu theory that confined this potent movement to the boundaries of present-day Tamil Nadu. The Madras Presidency of the time also included large chunks of what are



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now parts of Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka, and it is doubtful if the people of these regions would have bought this theory.

Periyar had lent a cutting edge to anti-Brahmin tirades by targeting Hindu religion and its practices, decrying the gods of the Hindu pantheon as figments of imagination created by the invading Aryans to keep the Dravidians subjugated. He propounded his theory of rationalism, which denied the existence of god (that is, Hindu gods). It was basically because of the agitation by the Dravida Kazhagam that the first amendment to the Constitution was made to incorporate a provision granting concessions to the socially and economically backward. But it was not long before differences crept in over the question whether the Dravida Kazhagam should remain only a social movement. When Periyar's marriage to Maniammai, a woman much younger to him, sparked it controversy, some leading lights of the DK led by C.N. Annadurai walked out and formed the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) in 1949, and three years later DMK decided to enter electoral politics.

Prelims Model Questions

1. With reference to Raja Rammohan Roy, which among the following is / are correct statements?
 1. During early phase of freedom struggle in India, he released a pamphlet titled "An exposition of the Revenue and Judicial Systems in India"
 2. He started a campaign and wrote in favour of widow remarriage in Tattva Bodhini
 3. He highlighted the plight of widows in his paper-"The modern encroachment on the Ancient rights of females"

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1 & 2
- [B] Only 2 & 3
- [C] Only 1 & 3
- [D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [C] Only 1 & 3

The first statement is correct. Raja Ram Mohan Roy highlighted the plight of widows in his paper-"The modern encroachment on the Ancient rights of females" (1822).

The second statement is incorrect. It was Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, who started a campaign and wrote in favor of widow remarriage in Tattva Bodhini.

Third statement is correct. Raja Ram Mohan Roy was the "Father of Constitutional agitation in India". In the pamphlet "An exposition of the Revenue and Judicial Systems in India", he raised some very important questions on the administration system of those times and also



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urged the Government to separate the legislative and judicial powers. Please note that it was Raja Ram Mohan Roy who suggested 22 years as minimum qualification age for the appointment to the Civil Services. He advocated the Jury system also.

2. Which among the following statements is / are correct?

1. The first political organization of the Bombay Presidency was the Bombay Association
2. The first organization in the Madras Presidency was Madras Mahajan Sabha
3. Mary Carpenter established National Indian Association on advice of Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Choose the correct option from the options given below:

- [A] Only 1
 [B] Only 1 & 2
 [C] Only 2 & 3
 [D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [A] Only 1

The first political organization of the Bombay Presidency was the Bombay Association which was started on 26 August 1852, to vent public grievances to the British. The first organization in the Madras Presidency to vent for the rights of Indians was the Madras Native Association which was established by Gazulu Lakshminarasu Chetty in 1849. In May 1884, S. Ramaswami Mudaliar and P. Anandacharlu established the Madras Mahajana Sabha. Mary Carpenter came to India in 1866, to fulfill her long cherished desire to, after she met Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1833. But in India, she met Keshab Chandra Sen, the leader of Brahma Samaj, who asked her to form an organization in Britain to improve communication between British and Indian reformers. In 1870 she established National Indian Association.

3. Brahma Samaj:

1. was founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy
2. does not permit idol or image worship
3. permitted worship only through prayers, meditation and readings from Upanishads

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

- [A] 1 Only
 [B] 2 and 3 Only
 [C] 1 and 2 Only
 [D] 1, 2 and 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 and 3

Brahma Samaj was started by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1828. It was open to members from all caste to worship Brahma. It denied the authority of Vedas and does not permit idol or



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image worship. It permitted worship only through prayers, meditation and readings from upanishads.

4. Henry Vivian Derozio was the leader of ___:

- [A] Self Respect Movement
- [B] Justice Party Movement
- [C] Young Bengal Movement
- [D] Seva Sadan

Answer: [C] Young Bengal Movement

Henry Louis Vivian Derozio was an Indian poet and assistant headmaster of Hindu College, Kolkata, a radical thinker and one of the first Indian educators to disseminate Western learning and science among the young men of Bengal. In 1828, Raja Ram Mohan Roy established the Brahma Samaj, which kept Hindu ideals but denied idolatry. This resulted in a backlash within orthodox Hindu society. It is in the perspective of these changes that Derozio was appointed at Hindu college, where he helped released the ideas for social change already in the air. At 17 years of age, he was considered a great scholar and a thinker. Within a short period of time, he drew around him a group of intelligent boys in college. He constantly encouraged them to think freely, to question and not to accept anything blindly. His teachings inspired the development of the spirit of liberty, equality and freedom. His activities brought about intellectual revolution in Bengal. It was called the Young Bengal Movement and his students, also known as Derozians, were fiery patriots.

5. For the regeneration of Hindu society and religion various means suggested by Raja Ram Mohan Roy included:

1. Western Education for both boys and girls
2. Freedom of India from British rule
3. Separation of religion from social practices
4. Rational approach towards religion

Select the correct option from the codes given below:

- [A] Only 1, 2 & 3
- [B] Only 2, 3 & 4
- [C] Only 1, 3 & 4
- [D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [C] Only 1, 3 & 4

6. Arya Samaj:

1. discarded all later than Vedas outgrowths



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2. upheld monotheism
3. confined its educational efforts to Sanskrit studies only

Choose the correct option from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2 & 3

[C] Only 1 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [A] Only 1 & 2

A social reform body, was founded by swami Dyananda Saraswati in 1875. Under the influence of western education and science many amongst the educated Indians were tending to become Christian. The Arya Samaj, like the Brahma Samaj and the Prarthana Samaj, was started to stop this process and largely succeeded in its efforts. Its motto was “go back to the Vedas” and it wanted to reform society on the model of the Vedas and discard all later outgrowths. It upheld monotheism, condemned polytheism and the use of image. It was opposed to caste restriction and child marriages and it supported sea-voyage, female education and remarriages of widows. It aimed at uplifting the down-trodden classes or castes amongst the Indians. It claimed that Hinduism was a proselytizing religion and by what is known as the Suddhi (purification) movement it converted many non-Hindus to Hinduism and thus gave a new dynamic force to Hinduism. It has done a great deal of social and educational work, especially in the Punjab.

At first it confined its educational efforts to Sanskrit studies only, but later on one section of it led by Lala Hansraj supported the cultivation of western education as well as founded the Dayananda Anglo Vedic College at Lahore. The orthodox section continued to believe in the necessity of reviving the Vedic ideal in modern life and founded the Gurukul at Haridwar in 1902. It has still a large following in upper India.

7. Which among the following statements conform to the ideology of the Arya Samaj ?

1. The Vedas are infallible
2. The marriageable age of the boys and girls should be 25 and 16 respectively
3. Encouraging female education
4. Recognition of interreligious marriages

Select the correct statements from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1, 2 & 3

[B] Only 2, 3 & 4

[C] Only 1, 3 & 4



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[D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

Answer: [D] 1, 2, 3 & 4

The first statement is obviously correct. The Samaj regards the Vedas as infallible, eternal and divine. The second statement is also correct. The Samaj, to prevent child marriage, fixed the minimum marriageable age at 25 years for boys and 16 for girls. Inter-caste marriage and widow remarriage were encouraged. Third statement is also correct. Arya Samaj has been a pioneer for education of all. Arya Samaj promotes both Vedic religious and secular education for boys, girls and adults. Fourth statement is also correct albeit, it does not allow Muslims, Jews, Christians etc. marriages unless they conform to their so called Shuddhi rituals and convert to Hinduism.

8. The Theosophical Society of India:

1. supported the interest and pride in the ancient culture and philosophies of India
2. advocated universal brotherhood
3. recognized the Hindu doctrines of Karma and transmigration of soul and the Buddhist doctrine of Nirvana

Select the correct statements from the codes given below:

[A] Only 1 & 2

[B] Only 2

[C] Only 2 & 3

[D] 1, 2 & 3

Answer: [D] 1, 2 & 3

All the given statements are correct in this question. The society accepted the Hindu beliefs in re-incarnation, Karma and drew inspiration from the philosophy of the Upanishads and Samkhya, Yoga, Vedanta school of thoughts and Buddhist doctrine of Nirvana. It supported the ancient Indian culture and Philosophy. The basic objective was to advocate universal brotherhood.

9. Which among the following questions led to a schism in the Brahmo Samaj and formation of Bhartiya Brahmo Samaj?

[A] Infallibility of the Vedas

[B] Child-marriages

[C] Widow-remarriage

[D] Inter caste marriage

Answer: [A] Infallibility of the Vedas

10. Consider the following:



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1. Humanism
2. Reason
3. Vedas and Upanishads
4. Ramayana and Mahabharata

Which of the above formed the twin pillars of Brahmo Samaj?

- [A] 1 & 2
- [B] 2 & 3
- [C] 3 & 4
- [D] 1 & 3

Answer: [B] 2 & 3

The twin pillars of Brahmo Samaj were Reason and Vedas & Upanishads.