

ALLIED: HISTORY OF INDIA FROM 1885 TO 1984

Dr. A. RAVISANKAR, Ph.D.,

UNIT-I

I: CONGRESS FROM 1885 TO 1905

1. Formed in 1885 by Allan Octavian Hume, a retired British civil servant.
2. Other founding members include Dadabhai Naoroji (Born on **September 4, 1825**) and Dinshaw Wacha.
3. The first session was held in Bombay under the presidency of Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee in 1885.
4. The first session was attended by 72 delegates from across the country.
5. Viceroy of India at the time was Lord Dufferin who gave his permission to Hume for the first session.
6. The Congress was formed with the intention of discussing problems faced by the people of the country irrespective of caste, creed, religion or language.
7. It was basically a movement of the upper and middle class, western-educated Indians in its moderate phase.
8. The second session of the Congress was held in Calcutta in 1886 followed by the third in Madras in 1887.

Moderate Phase (1885 to 1905)

- The moderate phase of the Congress (or the national movement) was dominated by the 'moderates'.
- They were people who believed in British justice and were loyal to them.

Aims and demands

- Education of the masses and organising public opinion, make people aware of their rights.
- Indian representation in the Executive Council and in the Indian Council in London.
- Reform of the legislative councils.
- Separation of the executive from the judiciary.
- Decreased land revenue tax and ending peasant oppression.
- After 1892, raised the slogan, "No taxation without representation."
- Reduced spending on the army.
- Abolishing salt tax and duty on sugar.
- Holding the ICS exam in India along with England to allow more Indians the opportunity to take part in the administration.
- Freedom of speech and expression.
- Freedom to form associations.
- Development of modern capitalist industries in India.
- End of economic drain of India by the British.
- Repealing the Arms Act of 1878.
- Increasing spending on education of Indians.

Methods of the moderates

- They believed in peaceful and constitutional methods to demand and fulfil those demands.
- Used petitions, meetings, resolutions, pamphlets, memoranda and delegations to voice their demands.
- Their method has been called 3P – Prayers, Petition and Protest.

- Had complete faith in the British justice system.
- Confined to the educated classes only. Did not try to employ the masses.
- They aimed only at getting political rights and self-government under British dominion.

Success of the Moderates

- Indian Councils Act of 1892 was the first achievement of the INC.
- This Act increased the size of the legislative councils and also increased the proportion of non-officials in them.
- They were able to sow the seeds of nationalism in the people.
- They popularised ideals like democracy, liberty and equality.
- They exposed many draining economic policies of the British.
- Leaders like Gopal Krishna Gokhale (Born on May 9 1866) and M G Ranade were social reformers too and opposed child marriage and imposed widowhood.

II: RISE OF EXTREMISM AND SURAT SPLIT

Causes of the rise of Extremism

- The failure of the moderate leaders in getting any significant results from the British authorities.
- The limitations of the moderates were the main causes of the rise of extremism.
- The partition of Bengal in 1905 opened the eyes of the Indians to the true colours of the British rulers.
- Lord Curzon and his disdain for anything Indian also created resentment and anger against the foreigners.
- There was a fear among some leaders that the moderates with their westernized notions were trying to create an India in the image of the West.
- There was a revival of national pride at that time.
- The extremist leaders were also influenced by the growth of spiritual nationalism at that time.
- The Delhi Durbar held in 1903 when people had not fully recovered from the horrific effects of the famine that killed lakhs of people drew widespread condemnation.
- Events happening around the world also inspired the extremist leaders. Abyssinia's successful repulsion of the Italian army in 1896 and Japan's defeat of Russia in 1905 shattered the notion of European invincibility.
- Other national movements like in Persia, Egypt and Turkey also motivated the Indian leaders

Surat Split, 1907

- The differences between the moderates and the extremists became official in the Surat session of the Indian National Congress (INC) in 1907.
- The meeting was to take place in Nagpur that year. The extremists wanted Lala Lajpat Rai or Bal Gangadhar Tilak to be the President. But the moderates wanted Rash Behari Ghosh as President. There was a rule that the session's President could not be from the home province. Tilak's home province was Bombay Presidency in which Surat was also situated. So, the moderates changed the venue to Surat so that Tilak could be excluded from the presidency.
- The moderates also wanted to drop the resolutions on swadeshi, boycott movements and national education.
- Rash Behari Ghosh became the president in the session which was held at Surat.

- Tilak was not even allowed to speak and this angered the extremists, who wanted to cancel the session.
- Both sides were firm on their demands and neither was willing to find a common path.
- The moderates then held a separate meeting in which they reiterated the Congress goal of self-government within the British Empire and to adopt only constitutional methods to achieve their goals.
- Unfortunately, the Surat session was marred by the use of sticks and chappals by the members on one another.

III: PARTITION OF BENGAL

Background and Partition

- Since 1765 (following the Battle of Buxar) the province of Bengal, which included present-day West Bengal, Bihar, Odisha, Bangladesh and Assam was under the British.
- It was a very large area and the population rose to almost 80 million by the first few years of the 20th century. Calcutta was the capital of the province and also of British India.
- There were difficulties in administering such a large area. The eastern part, especially in rural areas were neglected.
- That region was lacking in the fields of industry, education and employment. Much of the industry was centred on Calcutta.
- For administrative ease, the partition of the province had been proposed even before Curzon had arrived in India.
- In 1874, Assam was sliced away from Bengal and put under a Chief Commissioner.
- Initially, Lord Curzon proposed the partitioning of the province as an administrative measure solely. In 1904, he undertook a tour of eastern Bengal.
- The idea of using the Bengal partition as a political tool to undermine the growing nationalism in Bengal and other parts of India occurred later.
- As per Curzon, after the partition, the two provinces would be Bengal (including modern West Bengal, Odisha and Bihar) and Eastern Bengal and Assam.
- Bengal would also lose five Hindi-speaking states to the Central Provinces. It would gain Odia-speaking states from the Central Provinces.
- Eastern Bengal would consist of Hill Tripura, Chittagong, Rajshahi and Dhaka divisions. Its capital would be Dhaka.
- Bengal would have a Hindu majority and Eastern Bengal and Assam would have a Muslim majority population. Its capital would remain Calcutta.

Reaction to the partition

- There was widespread political unrest in the province after Curzon announced the partition.
- Many people in Bengal regarded this partition as an insult to their motherland. There was a huge cry for the unity of Bengal. Rabindranath Tagore composed the famous song 'Amar Sonar Bangla' which later became the national anthem of Bangladesh.
- The Indian National Congress protested this move to separate the province on communal lines.
- Most of the Bengalis in the western part protested against this step which would also make them a linguistic minority in their own province. There would be more Odia and Hindi speaking people than Bengalis.

- Many Muslims from the Bengali Muslim community welcomed this move since they thought that it would advance their educational, economic and political interests if they became the majority in the new province.
- Lord Curzon also promised to start a university in Dhaka. This was also seen as an opportunity for Muslims to develop in education and improve their standard of living.
- The general protest in the rest of the country was against this partition. The people saw through the 'divide and rule' policy of the British authorities.
- The chief aim of such a partition was only to create a rift between the two communities and hampering the unity and nationalism in the country.
- The agitation had started much before the date of the partition itself. On the date of the partition, people observed a day of mourning. Tagore asked Hindus and Muslims to tie rakhis to each other as a mark of protest.
- A few Muslims also were against the partition.
- The Swadeshi and Boycott movements in the national struggle started as a result of this partition.
- People started boycotting British goods which had flooded the Indian market and had dealt a blow to the indigenous industry.
- The partition did succeed in creating a communal rift in the country and even contributed to the birth of the Muslim League in 1906.

IV: SWADESHI MOVEMENT

1. This was a comprehensive movement that lasted 6 years.
2. Although this was regarded as a cultural movement celebrating the rich harvest of history- the rich traditions like folk music, paintings, the culture of Bengal was highlighted. But very soon, it got integrated with the political upheavals that followed after the partition of Bengal. Krishna Kumar Mitra, in his newspaper, 'Sanjivani' highlighted the prospects of national education and 'Economic Swadeshi'.
3. Very soon, this movement started gaining momentum with the help of the entire Bengali middle-class intelligentsia.
4. After the partition of Bengal, the Swadeshi movement got a big boost, because of the integration of the boycott movement with the Swadeshi movement.
5. Tilak called this movement "Bahishkar *Yoga*" and most of the Bengali intelligentsia that was initially not in favour of the boycott movement got integrated with the Swadeshi movement.
6. This was primary learning for the national movement. According to Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Lala Lajpat Rai, it was training in 'self-determination', 'self-help', and 'self-reliance'.
7. In fact, the Swadeshi movement can be called as a nursery of the further course that the Indian National Movement was to take. The programmes and ideas that were practised during the Swadeshi movement became the hallmark of the Gandhian movement as well.
8. Surendranath Bannerjee said that it is a 'protectionist movement'. And that it 'generates the material prosperity of the masses'.
9. Very soon, the Swadeshi movement spread to different parts of India, like Bihar, U.P., C.P., Bombay and Madras.
10. Radicalism also became a part of the Swadeshi movement after the partition of Bengal. After the partition of Bengal, industrial strikes became the hallmark of the Swadeshi movement.
11. There were strikes carried out in various cotton and jute factories of Bengal. Railway workers also went on strike. The Burnpur mill also went on strike.
12. But, the context of the anti-partition movement made it a very aggressive movement.

Problems with the Swadeshi Movement

1. But the problem with the Swadeshi movement was that it was not properly directed and it failed to unite the Hindus and Muslims because of the work of Nawab Salimullah of Dhaka and the establishment of the Muslim league.
 2. The demand of separate electorates became an issue to seek political mileage for the Muslims. Thus, the Swadeshi movement lacked having a large mass-base. The grievances of the peasants were not at all taken into consideration- such as lack of uniformity of the land revenue system, rights of the tenants, prevention of land grabbing, were not taken up by the Swadeshi movement, and thus the peasants did not become a part of the Swadeshi movement.
 3. But, overall, the period of 1903-1908, the partition of Bengal served as a catalyst for the Swadeshi Movement.
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