

# Encyclopedia of Indian History 19th Century, Vol 3

Gordon McConnell





**ENCYCLOPEDIA OF  
INDIAN HISTORY  
19TH CENTURY, VOL 3**



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## Chapter 25

# Panic of 1857

The **Panic of 1857** was a financial panic in the United States caused by the declining international economy and over-expansion of the domestic economy. Because of the invention of the telegraph by Samuel F. Morse in 1844, the Panic of 1857 was the first financial crisis to spread rapidly throughout the United States. The world economy was also more interconnected by the 1850s, which also made the Panic of 1857 the first worldwide economic crisis. In Britain, the Palmerston government circumvented the requirements of the Bank Charter Act 1844, which required gold and silver reserves to back up the amount of money in circulation. Surfacing news of this circumvention set off the Panic in Britain.

Beginning in September 1857, the financial downturn did not last long, but a proper recovery was not seen until the onset of the American Civil War in 1861. The sinking of *SS Central America* contributed to the panic of 1857, as New York banks were awaiting a much-needed shipment of gold. American banks did not recover until after the Civil War. After the failure of Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company, the financial panic quickly spread as businesses began to fail, the railroad industry experienced financial declines, and hundreds of workers were laid off.

Because the years immediately preceding the Panic of 1857 were prosperous, many banks, merchants, and farmers had seized the opportunity to take risks with their investments,



and, as soon as market prices began to fall, they quickly began to experience the effects of financial panic.

## Background

The early 1850s saw great economic prosperity in the United States, stimulated by the large amount of gold mined in the California Gold Rush that greatly expanded the money supply. By the mid-1850s, the amount of gold mined began to decline, causing western bankers and investors to become wary. Eastern banks became cautious with their loans in the eastern US, and some even refused to accept paper currencies issued by western banks.

The US Supreme Court decided *Dred Scott v. Sandford* in March 1857. After the slave Dred Scott sued for his freedom, Chief Justice Roger Taney ruled that Scott was not a citizen because he was Black, and so did not have the right to sue in court. Taney also called the Missouri Compromise unconstitutional and said that the federal government could not prohibit slavery in US territories. The decision would clearly have a significant impact on the development of the western territories. Soon after the decision, "the political struggle between 'free soil' and slavery in the territories" began. The western territories north of the Missouri Compromise line were now opened to the expansion of slavery, which would obviously have drastic financial and political effects: "Kansas land warrants and western railroad securities' prices declined slightly just after the Dred Scott decision in early March." This fluctuation in railroad securities proved "that political news about future territories called the tune in the land and railroad securities markets".

Before 1857, the railroad industry had been booming due to large migrations of people to the west, especially to Kansas. The large influx of people made the railroads a profitable industry, and the banks began to provide railroad companies with large loans. Many of the companies never made it past the stage of a paper railroad and never owned the physical assets necessary to run a real one. Prices of railroad stocks as a whole began to experience a stock bubble, and railroad stocks saw increasingly-speculative entries into the fray, worsening the bubble. In the meantime, the Dred Scott decision lent uncertainty to railroads in general.

## **Stock market decline**

In July 1857, railroad stock values peaked. On August 11, 1857, N. H. Wolfe and Company, the oldest flour and grain company in New York City, failed, shaking investor confidence and beginning a slow selling-off in the market that continued into late August.

## **Failure of Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company**

On the morning of August 24, 1857, the president of Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Company announced that its New York branch had suspended payments. The company, an Ohio-based bank with a second main office in New York City, had large mortgage holdings and was the liaison to other Ohio investment banks. Ohio Life failed because of fraudulent activities by the company's management, which threatened to

precipitate the failure of other Ohio banks or, even worse, to create a run on the banks. According to an article printed in the *New York Daily Times*, Ohio Life's "New York City and Cincinnati [branches were] suspended; with liabilities, it is said, of \$7,000,000". Fortunately, the banks connected to Ohio Life were reimbursed and "avoided suspending convertibility by credibly coinsuring one another against runs." The failure of Ohio Life brought attention to the financial state of the railroad industry and land markets and caused the financial panic to become more public.

## **Lasting effects**

By the spring of 1858, "commercial credit had dried up, forcing already debt-ridden merchants of the West to curtail new purchases of inventory". The limited purchasing in the West led to merchants around the country seeing decreases in sales and profits. The railroads "had created an interdependent national economy, and now an economic downturn in the West threatened.... [an] economic crisis. Since many banks had financed railroads and land purchases, they began to feel the pressures of the falling value of railroad securities. The Illinois Central; Erie; Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne and Chicago; and Reading Railroad lines were all forced to shut down by the financial downturn. The Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad and the Fond du Lac Railroad were forced to declare bankruptcy. The Boston and Worcester Railroad Company also experienced heavy financial difficulties. The employees were informed in a memo written in late October 1857 that "the receipts from Passengers and Freight have fallen off during [the] last month (as compared with the corresponding month of

last year), over twenty thousand dollars, with very little prospect of any improvement during the coming winter." The company also announced that their workers would receive a "reduction in pay of ten percent". In addition to the decreasing value of railroad securities, farmers began to default on payments on their mortgaged lands in the West, which put even more financial pressure on banks.

The prices of grain also decreased significantly, and farmers experienced a loss in revenue, causing banks to foreclose on recently-purchased lands. Grain prices in 1855 had skyrocketed to \$2.19 a bushel, and farmers began to purchase land to increase their crop supply, which, in turn, would increase their profits. However, by 1858, grain prices dropped severely to \$0.80 a bushel. Many Midwestern towns felt the pressures of the Panic. For example, the town of Keokuk, Iowa, experienced financial strife from the economic downturns of the Panic:

A huge municipal debt magnified Keokuk's problems. By 1858 the town owed \$900,000, mostly on railroad bonds, while the value of its taxable property dropped by \$5.5 million. Lots that brought \$1,000 before the crash now could not be sold for \$10. Hard-hit property owners were unable to pay their taxes, and thousands of properties slipped into tax delinquency.

As a result of such a decrease of prices, land sales declined dramatically and westward expansion essentially halted until the Panic ended. Both merchants and farmers began to suffer for the investment risks that they had taken when the prices were high.

## **Remedies**

By 1859, the Panic began to level off, and the economy had begun to stabilize. President James Buchanan announced that the paper-money system seemed to be the root cause of the Panic and then decided to withdraw the usage of all bank notes under twenty dollars. He also "advised the State banks to break away from the banks [and urged] them to follow the example of the Federal Government." He felt that would decrease the paper money supply to allow the specie supply time to increase and to reduce inflation rates. Buchanan wanted the state banks to follow the federal government, specifically the Independent Treasury system, which allowed the federal government to keep up with specie payments. That helped to alleviate some of the financial stress that had been brought on by the bank suspensions.

In his State of the Union message December 7, 1857, Buchanan said:

Thanks to the independent treasury, the government has not suspended [specie] payments, as it was compelled to do by the failure of the banks in 1837. It will continue to discharge its liabilities to the people in gold and silver. Its disbursements in coin pass into circulation and materially assist in restoring a sound currency.

He also revealed the new strategy of "reform not relief" and expressed his feeling that "the government sympathized but could do nothing to alleviate the suffering individuals." To avoid further financial panics, Buchanan encouraged the US Congress to pass a law to provide the immediate forfeiture of a

bank's charter if a bank suspended specie payments. Additionally, he asked state banks to keep one dollar in specie for every three issued as paper, and he discouraged the use of federal or state bonds as security on bank notes to avoid future inflation.

## **Results**

The result of the Panic of 1857 was that the largely-agrarian southern economy, which had few railroads, suffered little, but the northern economy took a significant hit and made a slow recovery. The area affected the most by the Panic was the Great Lakes region, and the troubles of that region were "quickly passed to those enterprises in the East that depended upon western sales". After approximately a year, much of the economy in the North and the entire South had recovered from the Panic.

By the end of the Panic, in 1859, tensions between the North and South regarding the issue of slavery in the United States were increasing. The Panic of 1857 encouraged those in the South who believed the North needed the South to keep a stabilized economy, and southern threats of secession were temporarily quelled. Southerners believed that the Panic of 1857 made the North "more amenable to southern demands" and would help to keep slavery alive in the United States.

According to Kathryn Teresa Long, the religious revival of 1857–1858 led by Jeremiah Lanphier began among New York City businessmen in the early months of the Panic.



## Chapter 26

# Bahadur Shah Zafar

- **Bahadur Shah Zafar** or **Bahadur Shah II** (born **Mirza Abu Zafar Siraj-ud-din Muhammad**) (24 October 1775 – 7 November 1862) was the twentieth and last Mughal Emperor of India. He was the second son of and became the successor to his father, Akbar II, upon his death on 28 September 1837. He was a titular Emperor, as the Mughal Empire existed in name only and his authority was limited only to the walled city of Old Delhi (Shahjahanbad). Following his involvement in the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the British exiled him to Rangoon in British-controlled Burma (now in Myanmar), after convicting him on several charges.

Zafar's father, Akbar II, had been imprisoned by the British and he was not his father's preferred choice as his successor. One of Akbar Shah's queens, Mumtaz Begum, pressured him to declare her son, Mirza Jahangir, as his successor. However, The East India Company exiled Jahangir after he attacked their resident, in the Red Fort, paving the way for Zafar to assume the throne.

## Reign

Bahadur Shah Zafar ruled over a Mughal Empire that had by the early nineteenth century been reduced to only the city of Delhi and the surrounding territory as far as Palam. The

Maratha Empire had brought an end to the Mughal Empire in the Deccan during the 18th century and the regions of India formerly under Mughal rule had either been absorbed by the Marathas or had declared independence and become smaller kingdoms. The Marathas installed Shah Alam II in the throne in 1772, under the protection of the Maratha general Mahadaji Shinde and maintained suzerainty over Mughal affairs in Delhi. The East India Company became the dominant political and military power in mid-nineteenth-century India. Outside the region controlled by the company, hundreds of kingdoms and principalities, fragmented their land. The emperor was respected by the company, who provided him with a pension. The emperor permitted the company to collect taxes from Delhi and maintain a military force in it. Zafar never had any interest in statecraft or had any "imperial ambition". After the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the British exiled him from Delhi.

Bahadur Shah Zafar was a noted Urdu poet, having written a number of Urdu *ghazals*. While some part of his opus was lost or destroyed during the Indian Rebellion of 1857, a large collection did survive, and was compiled into the *Kulliyat-i-Zafar*. The court that he maintained was home to several prolific Urdu writers, including Mirza Ghalib, Dagh, Mumin, and Zauq.

## **Rebellion of 1857**

As the Indian rebellion of 1857 spread, Sepoy regiments reached the Mughal Court at Delhi. Because of Zafar's neutral views on religions, many Indian kings and regiments accepted and declared him as the Emperor of India.

On 12 May 1857, Zafar held his first formal audience in several years. It was attended by several sepoys who were described as treating him "familiarily or disrespectfully". When the sepoys first arrived at Bahadur Shah Zafar's court, he asked them why they had come to him, because he had no means of maintaining them. Bahadur Shah Zafar's conduct was indecisive. However, he yielded to the demands of the sepoys when he was told that they would not be able to win against the East India Company without him.

On 16 May, sepoys and palace servants killed fifty-two Europeans who were prisoners of the palace and who were discovered hiding in the city. The executions took place under a peepul tree in front of the palace, despite Zafar's protests. The aim of the executioners who were not the supporters of Zafar was to implicate him in the killings. Once he had joined them, Bahadur Shah II took ownership for all the actions of the mutineers. Though dismayed by the looting and disorder, he gave his public support to the rebellion. It was later believed that Bahadur Shah was not directly responsible for the massacre, but that he may have been able to prevent it, and he was therefore considered a consenting party during his trial.

The administration of the city and its new occupying army was described as "chaotic and troublesome", which functioned "haphazardly". The Emperor nominated his eldest son, Mirza Mughal, as the commander in chief of his forces. However, Mirza Mughal had little military experience and was rejected by the sepoys. The sepoys did not have any commander since each regiment refused to accept orders from someone other than their own officers. Mirza Mughal's administration extended no

further than the city. Outside Gujjar herders began levying their own tolls on traffic, and it became increasingly difficult to feed the city.

During the Siege of Delhi when the victory of the British became certain, Zafar took refuge at Humayun's Tomb, in an area that was then at the outskirts of Delhi. Company forces led by Major William Hodson surrounded the tomb and Zafar was captured on 20 September 1857.

The next day, Hodson shot his sons Mirza Mughal and Mirza Khizr Sultan, and grandson Mirza Abu Bakht under his own authority at the Khooni Darwaza, near the Delhi Gate and declared Delhi to be captured.

Bahadur Shah himself was taken to his wife's *haveli*, where he was treated disrespectfully by his captors. When brought news of the executions of his sons and grandson, the former emperor was described as being so shocked and depressed that he was unable to react.

## **Trial**

The trial was a consequence of the Sepoy Mutiny and lasted for 41 days, had 19 hearings, 21 witnesses and over a hundred documents in Persian and Urdu, with their English translations, were produced in the court. At first the trial was suggested to be held at Calcutta, the place where Directors of East India company used to their sittings in connection with their commercial pursuits. But instead, Red Fort in Delhi was selected for the trial. It was the first case to be tried at the Red Fort.

Zafar was tried and charged on four counts:

- Aiding and abetting the mutinies of the troops
- Encouraging and assisting divers persons in waging war against the British Government
- Assuming the sovereignty of Hindostan
- Causing and being accessory to the murder of the Christians.
- — *Proceedings of the April 1858 Trial of Bahadur Shah Zafar 'King of Delhi'*

On the 20th day of the trial Bahadur Shah II defended himself against these charges. Bahadur Shah, in his defense, stated his complete haplessness before the will of the sepoys. The sepoys apparently used to affix his seal on empty envelopes, the contents of which he was absolutely unaware. While the emperor may have been overstating his impotence before the sepoys, the fact remains that the sepoys had felt powerful enough to dictate terms to anybody. The eighty-two-year old poet-king was harassed by the mutineers and was neither inclined to nor capable of providing any real leadership. Despite this, he was the primary accused in the trial for the rebellion.

Hakim Ahsanullah Khan, Zafar's most trusted confidant and both his Prime Minister and personal physician, had insisted that Zafar did not involve himself in the rebellion and had surrendered himself to the British. But when Zafar ultimately did this, Hakim Ahsanullah Khan betrayed him by providing evidence against him at the trial in return for a pardon for himself.

Respecting Hodson's guarantee on his surrender, Zafar was not sentenced to death but exiled to Rangoon, Burma. His wife Zeenat Mahal and some of the remaining members of the family accompanied him. At 4 am on 7 October 1858, Zafar along with his wives, two remaining sons began his journey towards Rangoon in bullock carts escorted by 9th Lancers under command of Lieutenant Ommaney.

## **Death**

In 1862, at the age of 87, he had reportedly acquired some illness. In October, his condition deteriorated. He was "spoon-fed on broth" but he found that difficult too by 3 November. On 6 November, the British Commissioner H.N. Davies recorded that Zafar "is evidently sinking from pure desuetude and paralysis in the region of his throat". To prepare for his death Davies commanded for the collection of lime and bricks and a spot was selected at the "back of Zafar's enclosure" for his burial. Zafar died on Friday, 7 November 1862 at 5 am. Zafar was buried at 4 pm near the Shwedagon Pagoda at 6 Ziwaka Road, near the intersection with Shwedagon Pagoda road, Yangon. The shrine of Bahadur Shah Zafar Dargah was built there after recovery of its tomb on 16 February 1991. Davies commenting on Zafar, described his life to be "very uncertain".

## **Family and descendants**

Bahadur Shah Zafar had four wives and numerous concubines. His wives were:

- Begum Ashraf Mahal



- Begum Akhtar Mahal
- Begum Zeenat Mahal
- Begum Taj Mahal

He had twenty two sons including:

- Mirza Dara Bakht Miran Shah (1790–1841)
- Mirza Muhammed Shahrukh Bahadur
- Mirza Kayumar Bahadur
- Mirza Fath-ul-Mulk Bahadur (alias Mirza Fakhru) (1816–1856)
- Mirza Muhammad Quwaish Bahadur
- Mirza Mughal (1817–1857)
- Mirza Farkhanda Shah Bahadur
- Mirza Khizr Sultan (1834–1857)
- Mirza Bakhtavar Shah Bahadur
- Mirza Sohrab Hindi Bahadur
- Mirza Abu Nasr
- Mirza Muhammad Bahadur
- Mirza Abdullah
- Mirza Kuchak Sultan
- Mirza Abu Bakr (1837–1857)
- Mirza Jawan Bakht (1841–1884)
- Mirza Shah Abbas (1845–1910)

He had at least thirty-two daughters including:

- Rabeya Begum
- Begum Fatima Sultan
- Kulsum Zamani Begum
- Raunaq Zamani Begum (possibly a granddaughter, d. 1930)

Many individuals claim to be descendants of Bahadur Shah Zafar, living in places throughout India, such as Hyderabad, Aurangabad, Delhi, Bhopal, Kolkata, Bihar, and Bangalore. However, the claims are often disputed.

## Religious beliefs

- Bahadur Shah Zafar was a devout Sufi. He was regarded as a Sufi Pir and used to accept *murids* or pupils. The newspaper *Delhi Urdu Akhbaar* described him as "one of the leading saints of the age, approved of by the divine court." Before his accession, he lived like "a poor scholar and dervish", differing from his three royal brothers, Mirza Jahangir, Salim and Babur. In 1828, a decade before he succeeded the throne, Major Archer said that "Zafar is a man of spare figure and stature, plainly apparelled, almost approaching to meanness." His appearance is that of an indigent munshi or teacher of languages".

As a poet, Zafar imbibed the highest subtleties of mystical Sufi teachings. He was also a believer of the magical and superstitious side of the Orthodox Sufism. Like many of his followers, he believed that his position as both a Sufi pir and emperor gave him spiritual powers. In an incident in which one of his followers was bitten by a snake, Zafar tried to cure him by giving a "seal of Bezoar" (a stone antidote to poison) and some water on which he had breathed to the man to drink.

The emperor had a staunch belief in *ta'aviz* or charms, especially as a palliative for his constant complaint of piles, or

to ward off evil spells. During a period of illness, he told a group of Sufi pirs that several of his wives suspected that someone had cast a spell over him. He requested them to take some steps to remove all apprehension on this account. The group wrote some charms and asked the emperor to mix them in water and drink it, which would protect him from the evil. A coterie of pirs, miracle workers and Hindu astrologers were always in touch with the emperor. On their advice, he would sacrifice buffaloes and camels, buried eggs and arrested alleged black magicians, and wore a ring that cured for his indigestion. He also donated cows to the poor, elephants to the Sufi shrines and horses to the *khadims* or clergy of Jama Masjid.

In one of his verses, Zafar explicitly stated that both Hinduism and Islam shared the same essence. This philosophy was implemented by his court which embodied a multicultural composite Hindu-Islamic Mughal culture.

## Epitaph

- He was a prolific Urdu poet and calligrapher. He wrote the following Ghazal (Video search) as his own epitaph. In his book, *The Last Mughal*, William Dalrymple states that, according to Lahore scholar Imran Khan, the beginning of the verse, *umr-e-darāz māñg ke* ("I asked for a long life") was not written by Zafar, and does not appear in any of the works published during Zafar's lifetime. The verse was allegedly written by Simab Akbarabadi.

## **In popular culture**

Zafar was portrayed in the play *1857: Ek Safarnama* set during the Indian Rebellion of 1857 by Javed Siddiqui. It was staged at Purana Qila, Delhi ramparts by Nadira Babbar and the National School of Drama repertory company in 2008. A Hindi-Urdu black-and-white movie, *Lal Quila* (1960), directed by Nanabhai Bhatt, showcased Bahadur Shah Zafar extensively. A television show "Bahadur Shah Zafar" aired on Doordarshan in 1986. Ashok Kumar played the lead role in it.

## **Chapter 27**

# **University of Mumbai, Madras and Calcutta**

## **University of Mumbai**

The **University of Mumbai**, informally known as **Mumbai University (MU)** is a collegiate public state university located in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

The University of Mumbai is one of the largest universities in the world. The university in 2013 had 711 affiliated colleges. Ratan Tata is the appointed head of Mumbai University's advisory council.

## **History**

In accordance with "Wood's despatch", drafted by Sir Charles Wood in 1854, The University of Bombay was established in 1857 after the presentation of a petition from the Bombay Association to the British colonial government in India. The University of Mumbai was modeled on similar universities in the United Kingdom, specifically the University of London.

The first departments established were the Faculty of Arts at Elphinstone College in 1835 and the Faculty of Medicine at Grant Medical College in 1845. Both colleges existed before the university was founded and surrendered their degree-granting privileges to the university. The first degrees awarded in 1862

were Bachelor of Arts and Licentiate in Medicine. Medical schools such as Sindh Medical School in Hyderabad, Sindh were affiliated with the University as well.

Cornelia Sorabji, who later studied law at Somerville College becoming Oxford's first female law student and India's first female advocate, was the university's first female graduate in 1888.

Until 1904, the university only conducted examinations, awarded affiliations to colleges, developed curricula, and produced guidelines for colleges developing curricula. Teaching departments, research disciplines, and post-graduate courses were introduced from 1904, and several additional departments were established. After India achieved independence in 1947, the functions and powers of the university were re-organised under The Bombay University Act of 1953. The name of the University was changed from University of Bombay to University of Mumbai in 1996.

- In 1949, student enrollment was 42,272 with 80 affiliated colleges. By 1975, these numbers had grown to 156,190 and 114 respectively.

## **Kalina Campus**

Examination processes were made more efficient by the introduction of online delivery of question papers for examinations, and assessment of answer books by scanning at remote examination centres. The academic depository of the university was started in collaboration with CDSL in 2015. The university is the first university in the country to start an academic depository.



- Jawaharlal Nehru Library
- Alkesh Dinesh Mody Institute for Financial and Management Studies (ADMI) which offers BMS, MFMS and MMS programmes

## **Library**

### **Rajabai Clock Tower**

One of Mumbai's landmarks, the Rajabai Clock Tower was completed in the 1870s and houses the University of Mumbai's library. Sir George Gilbert Scott modelled the Rajabai Clock Tower on the clock tower of the Palace of Westminster in London. Local businessman Premchand Roychand contributed to the cost of construction and named the tower in memory of his mother, Rajabai. The tower is 85 m (280 ft) tall and has five storeys. At a height of 9.1 m (30 ft) from the ground, there are eight statues representing the Indian castes. The tower clock is reported to have played 16 tunes including "Rule Britannia", "God Save the Queen", "Home! Sweet Home!" and "A Handel Symphony". On the initiative of the then Vice-Chancellor, Dr. Rajan Welukar, the first phase of restoration of Rajabai Clock Tower started in 2013 and was completed in May 2015. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) gave a Rs 4 crore grant for this phase of the restoration project.

### **Prominent institutes**

Several departments of the University of Mumbai are located away from the four Mumbai campuses. These include the departments of Medicine and Medical Research located in

several prominent hospitals in Mumbai, such as the Tata Memorial Hospital, Bombay Hospital and G.S. Medical College and King Edward Memorial Hospital. Institute of Chemical Technology (then known as the University Department of Chemical Technology, UDCT), was originally an institution of MU, but later gained university status. Tata Memorial Hospital is now affiliated to the Homi Bhabha National Institute.

Similarly, Veermata Jijabai Technological Institute was the first Engineering Institute in the University of Mumbai (1887) and Thadomal Shahani Engineering College was the first Engineering college in the University of Mumbai to start courses in Computer Engineering, Information Technology, Electronics Engineering and Biomedical Engineering. Sardar Patel College of Engineering is another engineering college affiliated to the University . Further, K.J. Somaiya College of Engineering is an additional engineering college affiliated to the University. Along with these, Fr. C. Rodrigues Institute of Technology, D.Y.Patil's Ramrao Adik Institute of Technology, Lokmanya Tilak College of Engineering and SIES Graduate School of Technology are also affiliated with the University of Mumbai.

## **University of Madras**

The **University of Madras** or **Madras University** is a public state university in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. Established in 1857, it is one of the oldest universities in India, incorporated by an Act of Legislative Council of India under the British government.

It is a collegiate research university and has six campuses in the city: Chepauk, Marina, Guindy, Taramani, Maduravoyal and Chetpet. It offers more than 230 courses under 87 academic departments of post-graduate teaching and research grouped under 18 schools, covering diverse areas such as sciences, social sciences, humanities, management and medicine along with 121 affiliated colleges and 53 approved research institutions. The university houses the national centres for advanced research in nanotechnology, photonics and neurotoxicity. Besides, having three *Centres of Advanced Study (CAS)* in biophysics, botany and mathematics.

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council has conferred 'five star' accreditation to the university in the first cycle, and subsequently with its highest 'A' grade. The University of Madras has been given the status of 'University with Potential for Excellence (UPE)' by the University Grants Commission. Madras University is also recognized among the 18 universities in India having the 'Centre with Potential for Excellence in Particular Area (CPEPA)' with a focus on drug development and climate change.

University of Madras is the alma mater of two Indian Physics Nobel Laureates, CV Raman and Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar, five Presidents of India, including A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, and several notable mathematicians including Srinivasa Ramanujan.

## **History**

The first ever demand for higher education in Madras Presidency was given in a public address to Lord John

Elphinstone, Governor of Madras, signed by 70,000 residents when the Governor in Council was contemplating "some effective and liberal measures for the establishment of an improved system of national education." This public petition, which was presented by the Advocate General Mr. George Norton on 11 November 1839, pressed the need for an English college in the city of Madras. Pursuant to this, Lord Elphinstone evolved a plan for the establishment of a central collegiate institution or a 'university.' This university had twin departments – a high school for the cultivation of English literature, regional language, philosophy and science, and a college for instruction in the higher branches of literature, philosophy and science.

The University Board was constituted in January 1840 with Mr. George Norton as its president. This was the precursor of the present Presidency College, Chennai. A systematic educational policy for India was formulated 14 years later by Wood's despatch, which pointed out the rationale for "creating a properly articulated system of education from the primary school to the University." The Dispatch recommended the establishment in the universities of Professorships "for the purposes of the delivery of lectures in various branches of learning including vernacular as well as classical languages." As a result, the University of Madras, organised on the model of the University of London, was incorporated on 5 September 1857 by an Act of the Legislative Council of India.

The university progressed and expanded through the 19th century to span the whole of South India, giving birth to universities like Mysore University (1916), Osmania University (1918), Andhra University (1926), Annamalai University (1929),

Travancore University (1937) presently University of Kerala, Sri Venkateswara University (1954), Madurai Kamaraj University (1966), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (1971), Anna University (1978), Tamil University (1981), Bharathidasan University (1982), Bharathiar University (1982), Mother Teresa Women's University (1984), Alagappa University (1985), Dr. M.G.R. Medical University (1989), Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (1989), Manonmaniam Sundaranar University (1990), Periyar University (1997), Dr. Ambedkar Law University (1996) and Thiruvalluvar University (2002).

In 1912 endowments were made to the university to establish departments of Indian History, Archaeology, Comparative Philology and Indian Economics. In that year the university had 17 departments, 30 teachers, and 69 research scholars. Later the research and teaching functions of the university were encouraged by the Sadler Commission and the gains of the university were consolidated by the enactment of the *Madras University Act* of 1923. About this time, the territorial ambit of the Madras University encompassed from Berhampur of Odisha in the North East, Trivandrum of Kerala in the South West, Bangalore and Mangalore of Karnataka in the West and Hyderabad of Andhra Pradesh in the North.

Between 1926 and 1939, the university published the comprehensive *Tamil Lexicon* dictionary, which is the first among the dictionaries published in any Indian language.

## **Coat of arms**

The description of the coat of arms of the university, designed in 1857, is:

"Argent (silver or white) on a Mount issuant from the basement a Tiger passant proper (walking and coloured naturally), on a Chief Sable (black across the top), a Pale Or (a gold or yellow vertical strip down the centre 1/3 of the top or chief), thereon, between two Elephants heads couped of the field, a lotus flower leaved and slipped of the third, together with this motto Doctrina Vim Promovet Insitam".

The coat of arms colours are: the base is light green, the tiger is yellow on a white background, the elephant is grey on a black background, the lotus is a white flower with olive green leaves, on a gold background. The motto scroll is edged red, with black lettering. The English translation of the motto of the University of Madras is: "Learning promotes natural talent."

## **Campus**

The university has six campuses: Chepauk, Marina, Guindy, Taramani, Chetpet and Maduravoyal. The Chepauk campus of the university houses the administrative buildings, the historic Senate House, central library, clock tower, centenary auditorium, and several departments under arts, humanities and social science streams. The schools of oriental and Indian are located in the Marina campus. The Guindy campus incorporates the natural sciences departments while the campus at Taramani houses the school of basic medical sciences. The sports union and the botanical garden are based in Chetpet and Maduravoyal campus respectively. The Department of Mathematics of the university is operated as the Ramanujan Institute for Advanced Study in Mathematics located close to the Chepauk campus. The university has two constituent college, in Nemmeli and Thiruvottiur, offerings

courses in arts and science. Since 1981, the university has also developed an Institute of Distance Education (IDE), offering various academic and professional programmes approved by Distant Education Bureau under the Choice based credit system (CBCS) pattern.

## **Senate House**

- The University of Madras has a historical monument – Senate House – which is one of the landmarks of the city of Chennai. The Senate House, the university's first building, inaugurated in the year 1879, is a masterpiece of Robert Fellowes Chisholm, an architect of the 19th century, who blended the Indo-Saracenic style with Byzantine and European architectural features. The university renovated the Senate House in 2006.

## **Academics**

### **Rankings and reputation**

Internationally, Madras University is ranked 1213rd overall and 559th in the field of Chemistry by *U.S. News & World Report* for the year 2020. In India, the National Institutional Ranking Framework ranked it 22nd among universities in 2020. The Week-Hansa Research best university survey of 2019 ranked it 11th in the multi-disciplinary university category and it was ranked 20th in the Outlook-ICARE university ranking of 2020.

## **Madras University Library System**

The library system of the university consists of four central libraries located at its Chepauk, Marina, Guindy and Taramani campus. Besides, many of the departments and centres have their own library collections. The main university library located at Chepauk was started in 1907 in the Connemara Public Library, later shifted to the existing building in 1936. S. R. Ranganathan (a mathematician) was appointed as the first librarian of the university, whose contribution in the development of the field of library sciences is noteworthy. The library collection includes textbooks, reference books, journals, theses, archives of government gazettes, newsprints, magazines, photographs, rare manuscripts, with a total collection of approximately 1 million volumes, which is among the largest collection of a university library in India. The library system also maintains a database of e-books, digital multimedia resources and subscribed to over four thousand e-journals under the UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium. The Government of Tamil Nadu oriental manuscripts library and research centre is located within the main library building at Chepauk. The library is considered as the treasure house for ancient Indian knowledge. Comprises over 25,373 reference books and 72,714 Sanskrit and Tamil manuscripts written on palm leaf, copper plates, tree barks, leather etc. on subjects, like mathematics, astronomy, ayurveda, architecture, fine arts, grammar and literature. The Library of the Indian Mathematical Society, started in 1907 in Pune, is now housed in the campus of the Ramanujan Institute for Advanced Study in Mathematics.



## Research

In 2007, the university was given a special grant of ₹100 crores by the Ministry of Human Resource Development to establish a nanotechnology research centre in commemoration of its sesqui-centenary (150th year) celebration. In 2011, University Grants Commission (UGC) selected the university for its third phase of *University with Potential for Excellence (UPE)* scheme, under which ₹25 crores were sanctioned for a period of five years. Earlier, the university was selected for the inaugural phase of the scheme in 2001-02 along with JNU, Hyderabad University, Jadavpur University and Pune University. The *National Centre for Ultrafast Process (NCUFP)* of the university has mobilized research grants to the tune ₹7 crores through several funded projects including the DST, CSIR, DRDO and UGC.

The Department of Crystallography and Biophysics was upgraded as a *Centre of Advanced Study (CAS)* in 2007 and a grant of ₹2.53 crores was given for modernising research laboratories. The *School of Life Sciences* of the university received a grant of ₹5.24 crores by the Department of Biotechnology, under BUILDER (Boost to University of Interdisciplinary Life Science Departments for Education and Research) for strengthening teaching and research programmes during 2014–2019. A study performed by the NISTADS on the research performance of universities in India during 1998–2008 ranked Madras University at No. 5 based on publication for that period.

In addition, UGC has identified the Department of Geology and Department of Zoology as the *Centres of Excellence* and has allotted ₹ 3.25 crores each for their development. In 2019, Ministry of Human Resource Development of Government of India granted ₹ 50 crores to the university for upgrading its research capabilities under Rashtriya Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) scheme.

## **Notable alumni**

- University of Madras has a strong alumni network with its alumni taking over many prestigious positions across the world. Some of the prominent alumni include Nobel laureates C. V. Raman and S. Chandrasekhar, mathematicians Srinivasa Ramanujan and S. R. Srinivasa Varadhan, leading scientists, Raja Ramanna, Rajagopala Chidambaram, E. C. George Sudarshan, G. N. Ramachandran, V. S. Ramachandran and Alladi Ramakrishnan former presidents Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, V. V. Giri, Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, R. Venkataraman and A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, politicians Chakravarthi Rajagopalachari, C Subramaniam, CN Annadurai and V. K. Krishna Menon, civil servants T. N. Seshan, Benegal Rama Rau and Y. Venugopal Reddy, Rhodes scholars, Eric Prabhakar and Tanjore R. Anantharaman, pioneers Verghese Kurien, Raj Reddy and M. S. Swaminathan, economist K. N. Raj and C. Rangarajan, business persons Indra Nooyi, Ram Shriram and Prathap C. Reddy, artists and film personality M.G. Ramachandran, K. C. S. Paniker

Gemini Ganesan Mani Ratnam, and Mahesh Babu, sports stars Viswanathan Anand, Vijay Amritraj, and Ramanathan Krishnan among others.

## University of Calcutta

The **University of Calcutta** (informally known as **Calcutta University** or abbreviated as **CU**) is a collegiate public state research university located in Kolkata, West Bengal, India. It was established on 24 January 1857 and is the first multidisciplinary and Western-style institutions in Asia. Today, the university's jurisdiction is limited to a few districts of West Bengal. Within India, it is recognized as a "Five-Star University" and accredited an "A" grade by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). The University of Calcutta was awarded the status of "Centre with Potential for Excellence in Particular Area" and "University with potential for excellence" by the University Grants Commission (UGC).

The university has a total of fourteen campuses spread over the city of Kolkata and its suburbs. As of 2020, 151 colleges and 21 institutes and centres are affiliated with it. The university was seventh in the Indian University Ranking 2020 list, released by the National Institutional Ranking Framework of the Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Government of India.

Its alumni and faculty include several heads of state and government, social reformers, prominent artists, the only Indian Academy award winner and Dirac medal winner, many Fellows of the Royal Society and five Nobel laureates—the

highest number in South Asia—as of 2019. The five Nobel laureates associated with this university are: Ronald Ross, Rabindranath Tagore, C. V. Raman, Amartya Sen and Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee. The university has the highest number of students who have cleared the National Eligibility Test. The University of Calcutta is a member of the United Nations Academic Impact.

The **history of the University of Calcutta** began in 1857; it is the oldest of the modern universities in India.

## **Pre-independence (1857–1947)**

The University of Calcutta was founded in 1857. Dr. Fredrick John, the education secretary to the then British Government in India, first tendered a proposal to the British Government in London for the establishment of a university in Calcutta, along the lines of London University, but at that time the plan failed to obtain the necessary approval. However, a proposal to establish two universities, one in Calcutta and the other in Bombay was later accepted in 1854 and the necessary authority was given through Wood's despatch. The Calcutta University Act came into force on 24 January 1857 and a 41-member Senate was formed as the policy making body of the university. When the university was first established it had a catchment area covering the area from Lahore to Rangoon (now in Myanmar)—the largest of any Indian university.

On 30 January 1858, the Syndicate of the Calcutta University started functioning. The first meeting of the Senate was held in the Council room of the Calcutta Medical College. A temporary office of the university was started in a few rented rooms in

Camac Street. For several years afterwards the meetings of the Senate and Syndicate were held in a room of the Writers' building. 244 candidates appeared for the first Entrance Examination of the university, held in March 1857 in the Town Hall of Calcutta.

The first Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor of the Calcutta University were Governor General Lord Canning and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Sir William Colvile, respectively. In 1858, Joddu Nath Bose and Bankim Chandra Chatterjee became the first graduates of the university.

From 1860 to 1890, Government Science College, Jabalpur, the first science college of India, was affiliated to the University of Calcutta.

In 1862, a decision was taken by the Senate to construct for the university a building of its own. Accordingly, the historical Senate Hall was constructed at a cost of Rs. 2,52,221/- and inaugurated on 12 March 1873 by holding the convocation of the university.

The university library was also started soon after.

## **1900-1947**

In 1914, the University College of Science or Rajabazar Science College was established. A centralized Post-Graduate system of teaching and research was started in 1917. The Asutosh building was opened in 1926. The Asutosh Museum of Indian Art started in 1937.

in 1937 when Dr. Syamaprasad Mookerjee was the Vice-Chancellor, he requested Rabindranath Tagore to compose a song to be adopted as the university song of the University of Calcutta. Tagore composed two songs instead of one. Later the second song, *Subho Karmapathe Dharo Nirvayo Gaan* was chosen to be the university song.

The Institute of Nuclear Physics, the first of its kind in Asia, was founded under the leadership of Meghnad Saha in 1945.

## **Post-independence (1947–present)**

In the year 2001 the University of Calcutta was awarded with the 'Five Star' status in the first cycle of the University's accreditation by the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC). In 2009 and 2017, the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) awarded its highest grade of 'A' to the University of Calcutta in 2nd & 3rd cycle of the University's accreditation.

In 2019, the university's central library and 40 departmental libraries were opened to the general public.

## **Seals**

The first seal was adopted when the university was founded on 24 January 1857, when India was under company rule.

The second seal of the university was adopted after the formation of the British Raj. It features within it a coat of arms, with a lion and the St Edward's Crown at the crest,

symbolizing the formation of the British Raj when India was brought under direct rule by the British Crown. It features a lion and unicorn as supporters, and the motto *Dieu et mon droit* at the bottom.

The third seal was used for a brief period of time in 1930. It features three elephants carrying a book.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth seals are very similar, and they all feature lotuses.

The seventh seal is currently used today.

## Chapter 28

# Rani of Jhansi

- **Lakshmibai**, the **Rani of Jhansi** (19 November 1828 — 18 June 1858), was the Maharani consort of the Marathaprincely state of Jhansi from 1843 to 1853 as the wife of Maharaja Gangadhar Rao. She was one of the leading figures of the Indian Rebellion of 1857 and became a symbol of resistance to the British Raj for Indian nationalists. She died in the Rebellion, wounded and killed in a battle on 18 June 1858. The Rebellion was suppressed by November that year.

## Early life

Rani Lakshmibai was born on 19 November 1828 in the town of Varanasi into a MarathiKarahade Brahmin family. She was named Manikarnika Tambe and was nicknamed Manu. Her father was Moropant Tambe and her mother Bhagirathi Sapre (Bhagirathi Bai). Her parents came from Maharashtra. Her mother died when she was four years old. Her father was the Commander of the war of Kalyanpranth. Her father worked for PeshwaBaji Rao II of Bithoor district. The Peshwa called her "Chhabili", which means "playful". She was educated at home, able to read and write, and was more independent in her childhood than others of her age; her studies included shooting, horsemanship, fencing and mallakhamba with her childhood friends Nana Sahib and Tatya Tope. Rani Lakshmibai contrasted many of the patriarchal cultural expectations for women in India's society at this time.



Rani Lakshmibai was accustomed to riding on horseback accompanied by escorts between the palace and the temple, although sometimes she was carried in a palanquin. Her horses included Sarangi, Pavan and Baadal; according to historians she rode Baadal when escaping from the fort in 1858. Her palace, the Rani Mahal, has now been converted into a museum. It houses a collection of archaeological remains of the period between the 9th and 12th centuries AD.

## **History of Jhansi, 1842 - May 1857**

Manikarnika was married to the middle-aged Maharaja of Jhansi, Gangadhar Rao Newalkar, in May 1842 and was afterwards called Lakshmibai (or Laxmibai) in honour of the Hindu goddess Lakshmi and according to the Maharashtrian tradition of women being given a new name after marriage. In September 1851, she gave birth to a boy, later named Damodar Rao, who died four months after birth. The Maharaja adopted a child called Anand Rao, the son of Gangadhar Rao's cousin, who was renamed Damodar Rao, on the day before the Maharaja died. The adoption was in the presence of the British political officer who was given a letter from the Maharaja instructing that the child be treated with respect and that the government of Jhansi should be given to his widow for her lifetime.

After the death of the Maharaja in November 1853, because Damodar Rao (born Anand Rao) was an adopted son, the British East India Company, under Governor-General Lord Dalhousie, applied the Doctrine of Lapse, rejecting Damodar Rao's claim to the throne and annexing the state to its territories. When she was informed of this she cried out "*Main*

*apni Jhansi nahi doongi*" (I shall not surrender my Jhansi). In March 1854, Rani Lakshmibai was given an annual pension of Rs. 60,000 and ordered to leave the palace and the fort.

According to Vishnu Bhatt Godse the Rani would exercise at weightlifting, wrestling and steeplechasing before breakfast. An intelligent and simply-dressed woman, she ruled in a business-like manner.

## **Indian Rebellion of 1857**

### **Beginning of the Rebellion**

On 10 May 1857 the Indian Rebellion started in Meerut. When news of the fighting reached Jhansi, the Rani asked the British political officer, Captain Alexander Skene, for permission to raise a body of armed men for her own protection; Skene agreed to this. The city was relatively calm in the midst of the regional unrest, but the Rani conducted a Haldi Kumkum ceremony with pomp in front of all the women of Jhansi to provide assurance to her subjects, in the summer of 1857 and to convince them that the British were cowards and not to be afraid of them.

Until this point, Lakshmibai was reluctant to rebel against the British. In June 1857, rebels of the 12th Bengal Native Infantry seized the Star Fort of Jhansi containing the treasure and magazine, and after persuading the British to lay down their arms by promising them no harm, broke their word and massacred 40 to 60 European officers of the garrison along with their wives and children. The Rani's involvement in this massacre is still a subject of debate. An army doctor, Thomas

Lowe, wrote after the rebellion characterising her as the "Jezebel of India ... the young rani upon whose head rested the blood of the slain".

Four days after the massacre the sepoys left Jhansi, having obtained a large sum of money from the Rani, and having threatened to blow up the palace where she lived. Following this, as the only source of authority in the city the Rani felt obliged to assume the administration and wrote to Major Erskine, commissioner of the Saugor division explaining the events which had led her to do so. On 2 July, Erskine wrote in reply, requesting her to "manage the District for the British Government" until the arrival of a British Superintendent. The Rani's forces defeated an attempt by the mutineers to assert the claim to the throne of a rival prince Sadashiv Rao (nephew of Maharaja Gangadhar Rao) who was captured and imprisoned. There was then an invasion of Jhansi by the forces of Company allies Orchha and Datia; their intention however was to divide Jhansi between themselves. The Rani appealed to the British for aid but it was now believed by the governor-general that she was responsible for the massacre and no reply was received. She set up a foundry to cast cannon to be used on the walls of the fort and assembled forces including some from former feudatories of Jhansi and elements of the mutineers which were able to defeat the invaders in August 1857. Her intention at this time was still to hold Jhansi on behalf of the British.

## **Siege of Jhansi**

From August 1857 to January 1858 Jhansi under the Rani's rule was at peace. The British had announced that troops

would be sent there to maintain control but the fact that none arrived strengthened the position of a party of her advisers who wanted independence from British rule. When the British forces finally arrived in March they found it well-defended and the fort had heavy guns which could fire over the town and nearby countryside. According to one source Hugh Rose, commanding the British forces, demanded the surrender of the city; if this was refused it would be destroyed. The same source claims that after due deliberation the Rani issued a proclamation: "We fight for independence. In the words of Lord Krishna, we will if we are victorious, enjoy the fruits of victory, if defeated and killed on the field of battle, we shall surely earn eternal glory and salvation." Other sources, for example, have no mention of a demand for surrender. She defended Jhansi against British troops when Sir Hugh Rose besieged Jhansi on 23 March 1858.

The bombardment of Jhansi began on 24 March but was met by heavy return fire and the damaged defences were repaired. The defenders sent appeals for help to Tatya Tope; an army of more than 20,000, headed by Tatya Tope, was sent to relieve Jhansi but they failed to do so when they fought the British on 31 March. During the battle with Tatya Tope's forces part of the British forces continued the siege and by 2 April it was decided to launch an assault by a breach in the walls. Four columns assaulted the defences at different points and those attempting to scale the walls came under heavy fire. Two other columns had already entered the city and were approaching the palace together. Determined resistance was encountered in every street and in every room of the palace. Street fighting continued into the following day and no quarter was given, even to women and children. "No maudlin clemency was to

mark the fall of the city" wrote Thomas Lowe. The Rani withdrew from the palace to the fort and after taking counsel decided that since resistance in the city was useless she must leave and join either Tatya Tope or Rao Sahib (Nana Sahib's nephew).

According to tradition with Damodar Rao on her back she jumped on her horse Badal from the fort; they survived but the horse died. The Rani escaped in the night with her son, surrounded by guards. The escort included the warriors Khuda Bakhsh Basharat Ali (commandant), Gulam Gaus Khan, Dost Khan, Lala Bhau Bakshi, Moti Bai, Sunder-Mundar, Kashi Bai, Deewan Raghunath Singh and Deewan Jawahar Singh. She decamped to Kalpi with a few guards, where she joined additional rebel forces, including Tatya Tope. They occupied the town of Kalpi and prepared to defend it. On 22 May British forces attacked Kalpi; the forces were commanded by the Rani herself and were again defeated.

### **Flight to Gwalior**

The leaders (the Rani of Jhansi, Tatya Tope, the Nawab of Banda, and Rao Sahib) fled once more. They came to Gwalior and joined the Indian forces who now held the city (Maharaja Scindia having fled to Agra from the battlefield at Morar). They moved on to Gwalior intending to occupy the strategic Gwalior Fort and the rebel forces occupied the city without opposition. The rebels proclaimed Nana Sahib as Peshwa of a revived Maratha dominion with Rao Sahib as his governor (subedar) in Gwalior. The Rani was unsuccessful in trying to persuade the other rebel leaders to prepare to defend Gwalior against a British attack which she expected would come soon. General

Rose's forces took Morar on 16 June and then made a successful attack on the city.

## **Death and aftermath**

On 17 June in Kotah-ki-Serai near the Phool Bagh of Gwalior, a squadron of the 8th (King's Royal Irish) Hussars, under Captain Heneage, fought the large Indian force commanded by Rani Lakshmibai, who was trying to leave the area. The 8th Hussars charged into the Indian force, slaughtering 5,000 Indian soldiers, including any Indian "over the age of 16". They took two guns and continued the charge right through the Phool Bagh encampment. In this engagement, according to an eyewitness account, Rani Lakshmibai put on a sowar's uniform and attacked one of the hussars; she was unhorsed and also wounded, probably by his sabre. Shortly afterwards, as she sat bleeding by the roadside, she recognised the soldier and fired at him with a pistol, whereupon he "dispatched the young lady with his carbine". According to another tradition Rani Lakshmibai, the Queen of Jhansi, dressed as a cavalry leader, was badly wounded; not wishing the British to capture her body, she told a hermit to burn it. After her death a few local people cremated her body.

The British captured the city of Gwalior after three days. In the British report of this battle, Hugh Rose commented that Rani Lakshmibai is "personable, clever and beautiful" and she is "the most dangerous of all Indian leaders". Rose reported that she had been buried "with great ceremony under a tamarind tree under the Rock of Gwalior, where I saw her bones and ashes".

Her tomb is in the Phool Bagh area of Gwalior. Twenty years after her death Colonel Malleson wrote in the *History of the Indian Mutiny*; vol. 3; London, 1878-

Whatever her faults in British eyes may have been, her countrymen will ever remember that she was driven by ill-treatment into rebellion, and that she lived and died for her country, We cannot forget her contribution for India.'

- — *Colonel Malleson*

## **Descendant**

According to a memoir purporting to be by 'Damodar Rao', the young prince was among his mother's troops and household at the battle of Gwalior. Together with others who had survived the battle (some 60 retainers with 60 camels and 22 horses) he fled from the camp of Rao Sahib of Bithur and as the village people of Bundelkhand dared not aid them for fear of reprisals from the British, they were forced to live in the forest and suffer many privations. After two years there were about 12 survivors and these, together with another group of 24 they encountered, sought the city of Jhalrapatan where there were yet more refugees from Jhansi. Damodar Rao of Jhansi surrendered himself to a British official and his memoir ends in May 1860. He was then allowed a pension of Rs. 10,000, seven retainers, and was in the guardianship of Munshi Dharmanarayan. The whole memoir was published in Marathi in Kelkar, Y. N. (1959) *Itihasachyaaa Sahali* ("Voyages in History"). It is likely that this text is a written version based on tales of the prince's life in oral circulation and that what actually happened to him remains unknown.

## Cultural depictions and statues

Statues of Lakshmibai are seen in many places of India, which show her and her son tied to her back. Lakshmibai National University of Physical Education in Gwalior, Lakshmibai National College of Physical Education in Thiruvananthapuram, Maharani Laxmi Bai Medical College in Jhansi are named after her. Rani Lakshmi Bai Central Agricultural University in Jhansi was founded in 2013. The Rani Jhansi Marine National Park is located in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal. A women's unit of the Indian National Army was named the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. In 1957 two postage stamps were issued to commemorate the centenary of the rebellion. Indian representations in novels, poetry, and film tend towards an uncomplicated valorization of Rani Lakshmibai as an individual solely devoted to the cause of Indian independence.

The Indian Coast Guard ship ICGS Lakshmi Bai has been named after her.

### Songs and poems

- A number of patriotic songs have been written about the Rani. The most famous composition about Rani Lakshmi Bai is the Hindi poem *Jhansi ki Rani* written by Subhadra Kumari Chauhan. An emotionally charged description of the life of Rani Lakshmibai, it is often taught in schools in India. A popular stanza from it reads:



Translation: "From the bards of Bundela we have heard this story / She fought valiantly like a man, she was the queen of Jhansi."

For Marathi people there is an equally well-known ballad about the brave queen penned at the spot near Gwalior where she died in battle, by B. R. Tambe, who was a poet laureate of Maharashtra and of her clan. A couple of stanzas run like this:

Translation: "You, denizen of this land, pause here and shed a tear or two / For this is where the flame of the valorous lady of Jhansi was extinguished / ... / Astride a stalwart stallion / With a naked sword in hand / She burst open the British siege / And came to rest here, the brave lady of Jhansi!"

## Novels

- *Quest for a Throne* by Emilio Salgari in 1907, a novel of the Sandokan series. The Rani of Janshi appears commanding a relief force by the end of the novel, when the protagonists are besieged in the capital of Assam.
- *Flashman in the Great Game* by George MacDonald Fraser, a historical fiction novel about the Indian Revolt describing several meetings between Flashman and the Rani.
- *La femme sacrée*, in French, by Michel de Grèce. A novel based on the Rani of Jhansi's life in which the author imagines an affair between the Rani and an English lawyer. Pocket, 1988, ISBN 978-2-266-02361-0

- *La Reine des cipayes*, in French, by Catherine Clément, Paris: Seuil, 2012, ISBN 978-2-021-02651-1
- *Rani*, a 2007 novel in English by Jaishree Misra.
- *Nightrunners of Bengal*, a 1951 novel in English by John Masters.
- *Manu* (ISBN 072788073X) and *Queen of Glory* (ISBN 0727881213), (2011 & 2012) by Christopher Nicole, two novels about Lakshmibai from the time of her marriage until her death during the 'Indian Revolt' as seen and experienced by an English woman companion.
- *Rebel Queen: A Novel* by Michelle Moran "A Touchstone Book" New York: Simon and Schuster, March 2015 (ISBN 978-1476716367)
- *Seeta*: This mutiny novel written by Philip Meadows Taylor in 1872 is showing the admiration of Taylor for the Rani.
- *Lachmi Bai, Rani of Jhansi: The Jeanne D'Arc of India*: This novel written by Michael White in 1901 depicts the Rani in a romanticised way.
- *The Rane: A legend of the Indian Mutiny*: In this novel written by Gillean, a British military officer, in 1887 the Rani is shown as an unscrupulous and cruel woman.
- *The Queen's Desire*: This novel written by Hume Nisbet in 1893 focuses on the Rani's sexuality. However, she does not want to use her sexuality to manipulate the British, but she cannot resist a British officer and consequently falls in love with him.

## Film and television

- *The Tiger and the Flame* (1953), directed and produced by Sohrab Modi.
- *Jhansi Rani* (1985), an Indian Tamil film by M. Karnan, starring Pandharibai in the titular role.
- In 1988 Doordarshan serial *Bharat Ek Khoj* produced and directed by Shyam Benegal also included a full episode on Revolt 1857. The titular role of Rani Lakshmibai was played by noted TV actress Ratna Pathak Shah
- *Jhansi Ki Rani*, a television series aired on Doordarshan starring Varsha Usgaonkar as Rani Laxmibai.
- *Jhansi Ki Rani* (2009), a television series aired on Zee TV starring Kratika Sengar as Rani Lakshmibai and Ulka Gupta as young Rani Lakshmibai
- *Jhansi Ki Rani Laxmibai* (2012), a Hindi film by Indian filmmaker Rajesh Mittal, starring Vandana Sen Kashish as the queen.
- *The Rebel*, a film by Ketan Mehta, a companion piece to his film *Mangal Pandey: The Rising*
- *The Warrior Queen of Jhansi* (2019), a British film starring Devika Bhise as Rani Lakshmibai.
- *Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi* (2019), a Hindi film starring Kangana Ranaut as Rani Lakshmibai.
- *Sye Raa Narasimha Reddy* (2019), a Telugu language film starring Anushka Shetty as Rani Lakshmi Bai.
- *Khoob Ladi Mardaani...Jhansi Ki Rani* (2019), a television series airing on Colors TV starring Anushka Sen as Rani Lakshmibai.

## Video game

- *The Order: 1886*, a single-player third-person shooter video game features a fictional version of Rani Lakshmi Bai. In the game, she is the rebel leader fighting the United India Company plotting to rule the world with unethical force.
- *Fate/Grand Order*, a mobile turn based RPG based on the popular Fate franchise, Lakshmibai appears as a playable "Servant" in the "Saber" class. Her design is based on that of "Fate" Jeanne D'Arc, in reference to the 1901 novel *Lachmi Bai, Rani of Jhansi: The Jeanne D'Arc of India* by Michael White which described her as "The Jeanne D'Arc of India".

## Other works

- *The Queen of Jhansi*, by Mahasweta Devi (translated by Sagaree and Mandira Sengupta). This book is a reconstruction of the life of Rani Lakshmi Bai from extensive research of both historical documents (collected mostly by G. C. Tambe, grandson of the Queen) and folk tales, poetry and oral tradition; the original in Bengali was published in 1956; the English translation by Seagull Books, Calcutta, 2000, ISBN 8170461758.
- *The Rebellious Rani*, 1966; by Sir John George Smyth, 1st Baronet.
- *The Rani of Jhansi: Gender, History, and Fable in India*, by Harleen Singh (Cambridge University Press, 2014. The book is a study of the many

representations of Rani Lakshmibai in British novels, Hindi novels, poetry, and film.

- *Good Night Stories for Rebel Girls*, a children's book which features short stories about women models to children, includes an entry on the queen.

## Chapter 29

# British Raj

- The **British Raj** was the rule by the British Crown on the Indian subcontinent from 1858 to 1947. The rule is also called **Crown rule in India**, or **direct rule in India**. The region under British control was commonly called **India** in contemporaneous usage, and included areas directly administered by the United Kingdom, which were collectively called British India, and areas ruled by indigenous rulers, but under British tutelage or paramountcy, called the princely states. The region was sometimes called the **Indian Empire**, though not officially.

As "India", it was a founding member of the League of Nations, a participating nation in the Summer Olympics in 1900, 1920, 1928, 1932, and 1936, and a founding member of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945.

This system of governance was instituted on 28 June 1858, when, after the Indian Rebellion of 1857, the rule of the British East India Company was transferred to the Crown in the person of Queen Victoria (who, in 1876, was proclaimed Empress of India). It lasted until 1947, when the British Raj was partitioned into two sovereign dominion states: the Dominion of India (later the Republic of India) and the Dominion of Pakistan (later the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the eastern part of which, still later, became the People's Republic of Bangladesh in 1971). At the inception of the Raj in 1858, Lower Burma was already a part of British India; Upper

Burma was added in 1886, and the resulting union, Burma (Myanmar), was administered as an autonomous province until 1937, when it became a separate British colony, gaining its own independence in 1948.

## **Geographical extent**

The British Raj extended over almost all present-day India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, except for small holdings by other European nations such as Goa and Pondicherry. This area is very diverse, containing the Himalayan mountains, fertile floodplains, the Indo-Gangetic Plain, a long coastline, tropical dry forests, arid uplands, and the Thar Desert. In addition, at various times, it included Aden (from 1858 to 1937), Lower Burma (from 1858 to 1937), Upper Burma (from 1886 to 1937), British Somaliland (briefly from 1884 to 1898), and Singapore (briefly from 1858 to 1867). Burma was separated from India and directly administered by the British Crown from 1937 until its independence in 1948. The Trucial States of the Persian Gulf and the states under the Persian Gulf Residency were theoretically princely states as well as presidencies and provinces of British India until 1947 and used the rupee as their unit of currency.

Among other countries in the region, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) was ceded to Britain in 1802 under the Treaty of Amiens. Ceylon was part of Madras Presidency between 1793 and 1798, but for later periods the British governors reported to London, and it was not part of the Raj. The kingdoms of Nepal and Bhutan, having fought wars with the British, subsequently signed treaties with them and were recognised by the British as independent states. The Kingdom of Sikkim was established

as a princely state after the Anglo-Sikkimese Treaty of 1861; however, the issue of sovereignty was left undefined. The Maldives Islands were a British protectorate from 1887 to 1965, but not part of British India.

## **History**

After the first war for Indian independence, the British Government took over the administration to establish the British Raj.

The British Raj refers to the period of British rule on the Indian subcontinent between 1858 and 1947. The system of governance was instituted in 1858 when the rule of the East India Company was transferred to the Crown in the person of Queen Victoria

It lasted until 1947, when the British provinces of India were partitioned into two sovereign dominion states: the *Dominion of India* and the *Dominion of Pakistan*, leaving the princely states to choose between them. Most of the princely states decided to join either Dominion of India or Dominion of Pakistan, except the state of Jammu and Kashmir. It was only at the last moment that Jammu and Kashmir agreed to sign the "Instrument of Accession" with India.

The two new dominions later became the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (the eastern half of which, still later, became the People's Republic of Bangladesh). The province of Burma in the eastern region of the Indian Empire had been made a separate colony in 1937 and became independent in 1948.



The East India Company, was an English and later British joint-stock company. It was formed to trade in the Indian Ocean region, initially with Mughal India and the East Indies, and later with Qing China. The company ended up seizing control of large parts of the Indian subcontinent, colonised parts of Southeast Asia, and colonised Hong Kong after a war with Qing China.

## **Effects on the economy**

In the later half of the 19th century, both the direct administration of India by the British crown and the technological change ushered in by the industrial revolution, had the effect of closely intertwining the economies of India and Great Britain. In fact, many of the major changes in transport and communications (that are typically associated with Crown Rule of India) had already begun before the Mutiny. Since Dalhousie had embraced the technological change then rampant in Great Britain, India too saw rapid development of all those technologies. Railways, roads, canals, and bridges were rapidly built in India and telegraph links equally rapidly established in order that raw materials, such as cotton, from India's hinterland could be transported more efficiently to ports, such as Bombay, for subsequent export to England. Likewise, finished goods from England were transported back just as efficiently, for sale in the rising(burgeoning) Indian markets. However, unlike Britain itself, where the market risks for the infrastructure development were borne by private investors, in India, it was the taxpayers—primarily farmers and farm-labourers—who endured the risks, which, in the end, amounted to £50 million.

In spite of these costs, very little skilled employment was created for Indians. By 1920, with a history of 60 years of its construction, only ten per cent of the "superior posts" in the railways were held by Indians.

The rush of technology was also changing the agricultural economy in India: by the last decade of the 19th century, a large fraction of some raw materials—not only cotton, but also some food-grains—were being exported to faraway markets. Consequently, many small farmers, dependent on the whims of those markets, lost land, animals, and equipment to money-lenders. More tellingly, the latter half of the 19th century also saw an increase in the number of large-scale famines in India. Although famines were not new to the subcontinent, these were particularly severe, with tens of millions dying, and with many critics, both British and Indian, laying the blame at the doorsteps of the lumbering colonial administrations.

In terms of the longer lasting effects and legacies of the economic impact of the British Raj, the impact predominantly stems from the irregular investment of areas of infrastructure. Simon Carey explains how the investment into Indian society was 'narrowly focused' and favoured the growth of transportation of goods and workers. Therefore India has since seen an uneven economic development of society. For example, Acemoglu et al. (2001) identify how the inability of certain areas of rural India to cope with disease and famine best explain this uneven development of the nation. Carey also points out that a lasting impact of the British Raj is the transformation of India into an agricultural trading economy. However, since the rise of technology in the latter 20th Century, India has been able to become a leading nation in the

production of technology, with companies like the IT company Tata Consultancy service employing 470,000 people spanning over 50 countries, and the Tata Group taking an annual revenue of US\$113 billion, making it the largest IT service provider in the world. Therefore, some areas of India, predominantly in affluent urban areas, have benefited from the legacies of the British Raj in the long term due to the transformation of Indian economic culture to a production based economy. However the majority of Indian society has experienced a negative impact of the British Raj, especially in rural and suburban areas, due to the focus of investment into transport such as railways and canals rather than into healthcare and primary education.

## **Beginnings of self-government**

The first steps were taken toward self-government in British India in the late 19th century with the appointment of Indian counsellors to advise the British viceroy and the establishment of provincial councils with Indian members; the British subsequently widened participation in legislative councils with the Indian Councils Act 1892. Municipal Corporations and District Boards were created for local administration; they included elected Indian members

The Indian Councils Act 1909 – also known as the Morley-Minto Reforms (John Morley was the secretary of state for India, and Gilbert Elliot, fourth earl of Minto, was viceroy) – gave Indians limited roles in the central and provincial legislatures, known as legislative councils. Indians had previously been appointed to legislative councils, but after the reforms some were elected to them. At the centre, the majority

of council members continued to be government-appointed officials, and the viceroy was in no way responsible to the legislature. At the provincial level, the elected members, together with unofficial appointees, outnumbered the appointed officials, but responsibility of the governor to the legislature was not contemplated. Morley made it clear in introducing the legislation to the British Parliament that parliamentary self-government was not the goal of the British government.

The Morley-Minto Reforms were a milestone. Step by step, the elective principle was introduced for membership in Indian legislative councils. The "electorate" was limited, however, to a small group of upper-class Indians. These elected members increasingly became an "opposition" to the "official government". The Communal electorates were later extended to other communities and made a political factor of the Indian tendency toward group identification through religion.

## **World War I and its causes**

World War I would prove to be a watershed in the imperial relationship between Britain and India. 1.4 million Indian and British soldiers of the British Indian Army would take part in the war and their participation would have a wider cultural fallout: news of Indian soldiers fighting and dying with British soldiers, as well as soldiers from dominions like Canada, Australia and New Zealand, would travel to distant corners of the world both in newsprint and by the new medium of the radio. India's international profile would thereby rise and would continue to rise during the 1920s. It was to lead, among other things, to India, under its own name, becoming a

founding member of the League of Nations in 1920 and participating, under the name, "Les Indes Anglaises" (The British Indies), in the 1920 Summer Olympics in Antwerp. Back in India, especially among the leaders of the Indian National Congress, it would lead to calls for greater self-government for Indians.

In 1916, in the face of new strength demonstrated by the nationalists with the signing of the Lucknow Pact and the founding of the Home Rule leagues, and the realisation, after the disaster in the Mesopotamian campaign, that the war would likely last longer, the new Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, cautioned that the Government of India needed to be more responsive to Indian opinion. Towards the end of the year, after discussions with the government in London, he suggested that the British demonstrate their good faith – in light of the Indian war role – through a number of public actions, including awards of titles and honours to princes, granting of commissions in the army to Indians, and removal of the much-reviled cotton excise duty, but most importantly, an announcement of Britain's future plans for India and an indication of some concrete steps. After more discussion, in August 1917, the new Liberal Secretary of State for India, Edwin Montagu, announced the British aim of "increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realization of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire." This envisioned reposing confidence in the educated Indians, so far disdained as an unrepresentative minority, who were described by Montague as "Intellectually our children". The pace of the reforms were to be determined by Britain as and

when the Indians were seen to have earned it. However, although the plan envisioned limited self-government at first only in the provinces – with India emphatically within the British Empire – it represented the first British proposal for any form of representative government in a non-white colony.

Earlier, at the onset of World War I, the reassignment of most of the British army in India to Europe and Mesopotamia had led the previous Viceroy, Lord Harding, to worry about the "risks involved in denuding India of troops." Revolutionary violence had already been a concern in British India; consequently in 1915, to strengthen its powers during what it saw was a time of increased vulnerability, the Government of India passed the Defence of India Act, which allowed it to intern politically dangerous dissidents without due process and added to the power it already had – under the 1910 Press Act – both to imprison journalists without trial and to censor the press. Now, as constitutional reform began to be discussed in earnest, the British began to consider how new moderate Indians could be brought into the fold of constitutional politics and simultaneously, how the hand of established constitutionalists could be strengthened. However, since the reform plan was devised during a time when extremist violence had ebbed as a result of increased wartime governmental control and it now feared a revival of revolutionary violence, the government also began to consider how some of its wartime powers could be extended into peacetime.

Consequently, in 1917, even as Edwin Montagu announced the new constitutional reforms, a sedition committee chaired by a British judge, Mr. S. A. T. Rowlatt, was tasked with investigating wartime revolutionary conspiracies and the

German and Bolshevik links to the violence in India, with the unstated goal of extending the government's wartime powers. The Rowlatt committee presented its report in July 1918 and identified three regions of conspiratorial insurgency: Bengal, the Bombay presidency, and the Punjab. To combat subversive acts in these regions, the committee recommended that the government use emergency powers akin to its wartime authority, which included the ability to try cases of sedition by a panel of three judges and without juries, exaction of securities from suspects, governmental overseeing of residences of suspects, and the power for provincial governments to arrest and detain suspects in short-term detention facilities and without trial.

With the end of World War I, there was also a change in the economic climate. By year's end 1919, 1.5 million Indians had served in the armed services in either combatant or non-combatant roles, and India had provided £146 million in revenue for the war. The increased taxes coupled with disruptions in both domestic and international trade had the effect of approximately doubling the index of overall prices in India between 1914 and 1920. Returning war veterans, especially in the Punjab, created a growing unemployment crisis and post-war inflation led to food riots in Bombay, Madras, and Bengal provinces, a situation that was made only worse by the failure of the 1918–19 monsoon and by profiteering and speculation. The global influenza epidemic and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 added to the general jitters; the former among the population already experiencing economic woes, and the latter among government officials, fearing a similar revolution in India.

To combat what it saw as a coming crisis, the government now drafted the Rowlatt committee's recommendations into two Rowlatt Bills. Although the bills were authorised for legislative consideration by Edwin Montagu, they were done so unwillingly, with the accompanying declaration, "I loathe the suggestion at first sight of preserving the Defence of India Act in peace time to such an extent as Rowlatt and his friends think necessary." In the ensuing discussion and vote in the Imperial Legislative Council, all Indian members voiced opposition to the bills. The Government of India was nevertheless able to use of its "official majority" to ensure passage of the bills early in 1919. However, what it passed, in deference to the Indian opposition, was a lesser version of the first bill, which now allowed extrajudicial powers, but for a period of exactly three years and for the prosecution solely of "anarchical and revolutionary movements," dropping entirely the second bill involving modification of the Indian Penal Code. Even so, when it was passed the new Rowlatt Act aroused widespread indignation throughout India and brought Mohandas Gandhi to the forefront of the nationalist movement.

### **Montagu-Chelmsford Report 1919**

Meanwhile, Montagu and Chelmsford themselves finally presented their report in July 1918 after a long fact-finding trip through India the previous winter. After more discussion by the government and parliament in Britain, and another tour by the Franchise and Functions Committee for the purpose of identifying who among the Indian population could vote in future elections, the Government of India Act 1919 (also known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms) was passed in December 1919. The new Act enlarged the provincial councils and



converted the Imperial Legislative Council into an enlarged Central Legislative Assembly. It also repealed the Government of India's recourse to the "official majority" in unfavourable votes. Although departments like defence, foreign affairs, criminal law, communications and income-tax were retained by the Viceroy and the central government in New Delhi, other departments like public health, education, land-revenue and local self-government were transferred to the provinces. The provinces themselves were now to be administered under a new dyarchical system, whereby some areas like education, agriculture, infrastructure development, and local self-government became the preserve of Indian ministers and legislatures, and ultimately the Indian electorates, while others like irrigation, land-revenue, police, prisons, and control of media remained within the purview of the British governor and his executive council. The new Act also made it easier for Indians to be admitted into the civil service and the army officer corps.

A greater number of Indians were now enfranchised, although, for voting at the national level, they constituted only 10% of the total adult male population, many of whom were still illiterate. In the provincial legislatures, the British continued to exercise some control by setting aside seats for special interests they considered cooperative or useful. In particular, rural candidates, generally sympathetic to British rule and less confrontational, were assigned more seats than their urban counterparts. Seats were also reserved for non-Brahmins, landowners, businessmen, and college graduates. The principal of "communal representation", an integral part of the Minto-Morley Reforms, and more recently of the Congress-Muslim League Lucknow Pact, was reaffirmed, with seats being

reserved for Muslims, Sikhs, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians, and domiciled Europeans, in both provincial and Imperial legislative councils. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms offered Indians the most significant opportunity yet for exercising legislative power, especially at the provincial level; however, that opportunity was also restricted by the still limited number of eligible voters, by the small budgets available to provincial legislatures, and by the presence of rural and special interest seats that were seen as instruments of British control.

### **Round Table Conferences 1930-31-32**

The three Round Table Conferences of 1930–32 were a series of conferences organised by the British Government to discuss constitutional reforms in India. They were conducted according to the recommendation of Muslim leader Muhammad Ali Jinnah to the Viceroy Lord Irwin and the Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald, and by the report submitted by the Simon Commission in May 1930. Demands for swaraj, or self-rule, in India had been growing increasingly strong. By the 1930s, many British politicians believed that India needed to move towards dominion status. However, there were significant disagreements between the Indian and the British leaders that the Conferences could not resolve.

### **Willingdon imprisons leaders of Congress**

In 1932 the Viceroy, Lord Willingdon, after the failure of the three Round Table Conferences (India) in London, now confronted Gandhi's Congress in action. The India Office told Willingdon that he should conciliate only those elements of Indian opinion that were willing to work with the Raj. That did

not include Gandhi and the Indian National Congress, which launched its Civil Disobedience Movement on 4 January 1932. Therefore, Willingdon took decisive action. He imprisoned Gandhi. He outlawed the Congress; he rounded up all members of the Working Committee and the Provincial Committees and imprisoned them; and he banned Congress youth organisations. In total he imprisoned 80,000 Indian activists. Without most of their leaders, protests were uneven and disorganised, boycotts were ineffective, illegal youth organisations proliferated but were ineffective, more women became involved, and there was terrorism, especially in the North-West Frontier Province. Gandhi remained in prison until 1933. Willingdon relied on his military secretary, Hastings Ismay, for his personal safety.

### **Communal Award: 1932**

MacDonald, trying to resolve the critical issue of how Indians would be represented, on 4 August 1932 granting separate electorates for Muslims, Sikhs, and Europeans in India and increased the number of provinces that offered separate electorates to Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians. Untouchables (now known as the Dalits) obtained a separate electorate. That outraged Gandhi because he firmly believed they had to be treated as Hindus. He and Congress rejected the proposal, but it went into effect anyway.

## **Government of India Act (1935)**

In 1935, after the failure of the Round Table Conferences, the British Parliament approved the Government of India Act 1935,

which authorized the establishment of independent legislative assemblies in all provinces of British India, the creation of a central government incorporating both the British provinces and the princely states, and the protection of Muslim minorities. The future Constitution of independent India would owe a great deal to the text of this act. The act also provided for a bicameral national parliament and an executive branch under the purview of the British government. Although the national federation was never realized, nationwide elections for provincial assemblies were held in 1937. Despite initial hesitation, the Congress took part in the elections and won victories in seven of the eleven provinces of British India, and Congress governments, with wide powers, were formed in these provinces. In Great Britain, these victories were to later turn the tide for the idea of Indian independence.

## **World War II**

India played a major role in the Allied war effort against both Japan and Germany. It provided over 2 million soldiers, who fought numerous campaigns in the Middle East, and in the India-Burma front and also supplied billions of pounds to the British war effort. The Muslim and Sikh populations were strongly supportive of the British war effort, but the Hindu population was divided. Congress opposed the war, and tens of thousands of its leaders were imprisoned in 1942–45. A major famine in eastern India led to hundreds of thousands of deaths by starvation, and remains a highly controversial issue regarding Churchill's reluctance to provide emergency food relief.

With the outbreak of World War II in 1939, the viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, declared war on India's behalf without consulting Indian leaders, leading the Congress provincial ministries to resign in protest. The Muslim League, in contrast, supported Britain in the war effort; however, it now took the view that Muslims would be unfairly treated in an independent India dominated by the Congress. Hindus not affiliated with the Congress typically supported the war. The two major Sikh factions, the Unionists and the Akali Dal, supported Britain and successfully urged large numbers of Sikhs to volunteer for the army.

### **Quit India movement or the Bharat Chhodo Andolan**

The British sent a high level Cripps' mission in 1942 to secure Indian nationalists' co-operation in the war effort in exchange for postwar independence and dominion status. Congress demanded immediate independence and the mission failed. Gandhi then launched the "Quit India" movement in August 1942, demanding the immediate withdrawal of the British from India or face nationwide civil disobedience. Along with thousands of other Congress leaders, Gandhi was immediately imprisoned, and the country erupted in violent local episodes led by students and later by peasant political groups, especially in Eastern United Provinces, Bihar, and western Bengal. According to John F. Riddick, from 9 August 1942 to 21 September 1942, the Quit India movement:

- attacked 550 post offices, 250 railway stations, damaged many rail lines, destroyed 70 police stations, and burned or damaged 85 other government buildings. There were about 2,500

instances of telegraph wires being cut....The Government of India deployed 57 battalions of British troops to restore order.

The police and Army crushed the resistance in a little more than six weeks; nationalist leaders were imprisoned for the duration.

### **Bose and the Indian National Army (INA)**

With Congress leaders in jail, attention also turned to Subhas Chandra Bose, who had been ousted from the Congress in 1939 following differences with the more conservative high command; Bose now turned to Germany and Japan for help with liberating India by force. With Japanese support, he organised the Indian National Army, composed largely of Indian soldiers of the British Indian army who had been captured at Singapore by the Japanese, including many Sikhs as well as Hindus and Muslims. Japan secret service had promoted unrest in South east Asia to destabilise the British War effort, and came to support a number of puppet and provisional governments in the captured regions, including those in Burma, the Philippines and Vietnam, the Provisional Government of Azad Hind (Free India), presided over by Bose. Bose's effort, however, was short lived; after the reverses of 1944, the reinforced British Indian Army in 1945 first halted and then reversed the Japanese U Go offensive, beginning the successful part of the Burma Campaign. Bose's Indian National Army surrendered with the recapture of Singapore; Bose died in a plane crash soon thereafter. The British demanded trials for INA officers, but public opinion—including Congress and even the Indian Army—saw the INA as fighting for Indian

independence and demanded a termination. Yasmin Khan says "The INA became the real heroes of the war in India." After a wave of unrest and nationalist violence the trials were stopped.

## **Finances**

Britain borrowed everywhere it could and made heavy purchases of munitions and supplies in India during the war. Previously India owed Britain large sums; now it was reversed. Britain's sterling balances around the world amounted to £3.4 billion in 1945; India's share was £1.3 billion (equivalent to \$US 74 billion in 2016 dollars.) In this way the Raj treasury accumulated very large sterling reserves of British pounds that was owed to it by the British treasury. However, Britain treated this as a long-term loan with no interest and no specified repayment date. Just when the money would be made available by London was an issue, for the British treasury was nearly empty by 1945. India's balances totalled to Rs. 17.24 billion in March 1946; of that sum Rs. 15.12 billion [£1.134 billion] was split between India and Pakistan when they became independent in August 1947. They finally got the money and India spent all its share by 1957; mostly buying back British owned assets in India.

## **Transfer of Power**

The All India Azad Muslim Conference gathered in Delhi in April 1940 to voice its support for an independent and united India. Its members included several Islamic organisations in India, as well as 1400 nationalist Muslim delegates. The pro-separatist All-India Muslim League worked to try to silence

those nationalist Muslims who stood against the partition of India, often using "intimidation and coercion". The murder of the All India Azad Muslim Conference leader Allah Bakhsh Soomro also made it easier for the All-India Muslim League to demand the creation of a Pakistan.

In January 1946, a number of mutinies broke out in the armed services, starting with that of RAF servicemen frustrated with their slow repatriation to Britain. The mutinies came to a head with mutiny of the Royal Indian Navy in Bombay in February 1946, followed by others in Calcutta, Madras, and Karachi. Although the mutinies were rapidly suppressed, they found much public support in India and had the effect of spurring the new Labour government in Britain to action, and leading to the Cabinet Mission to India led by the Secretary of State for India, Lord Pethick Lawrence, and including Sir Stafford Cripps, who had visited four years before.

Also in early 1946, new elections were called in India in which the Congress won electoral victories in eight of the eleven provinces. The negotiations between the Congress and the Muslim League, however, stumbled over the issue of the partition. Jinnah proclaimed 16 August 1946, Direct Action Day, with the stated goal of highlighting, peacefully, the demand for a Muslim homeland in British India. The following day Hindu-Muslim riots broke out in Calcutta and quickly spread throughout India. Although the Government of India and the Congress were both shaken by the course of events, in September, a Congress-led interim government was installed, with Jawaharlal Nehru as united India's prime minister.



Later that year, the Labour government in Britain, its exchequer exhausted by the recently concluded World War II, decided to end British rule of India, and in early 1947 Britain announced its intention of transferring power no later than June 1948.

As independence approached, the violence between Hindus and Muslims in the provinces of Punjab and Bengal continued unabated. With the British army unprepared for the potential for increased violence, the new viceroy, Louis Mountbatten, advanced the date for the transfer of power, allowing less than six months for a mutually agreed plan for independence. In June 1947, the nationalist leaders, including Nehru and Abul Kalam Azad on behalf of the Congress, Jinnah representing the pro-separatist Muslim League, B. R. Ambedkar representing the Untouchable community, and Master Tara Singh representing the Sikhs, agreed to a partition of the country along religious lines. The predominantly Hindu and Sikh areas were assigned to the new India and predominantly Muslim areas to the new nation of Pakistan; the plan included a partition of the Muslim-majority provinces of Punjab and Bengal. In the years leading up to the partition of India, the pro-separatist All-India Muslim League violently drove out Hindus and Sikhs from the western Punjab.

Many millions of Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu refugees trekked across the newly drawn borders. In Punjab, where the new border lines divided the Sikh regions in half, massive bloodshed followed; in Bengal and Bihar, where Gandhi's presence assuaged communal tempers, the violence was more limited. In all, anywhere between 250,000 and 500,000 people on both sides of the new borders died in the violence. On 14

August 1947, the new Dominion of Pakistan came into being, with Muhammad Ali Jinnah sworn in as its first Governor General in Karachi. The following day, 15 August 1947, India, now a smaller *Union of India*, became an independent country with official ceremonies taking place in New Delhi, and with Jawaharlal Nehru assuming the office of the prime minister, and the viceroy, Louis Mountbatten, staying on as its first Governor General.

### **1860s–1890s: Rise of the Indian National Congress**

By 1880, a new middle class had arisen in India and spread thinly across the country. Moreover, there was a growing solidarity among its members, created by the "joint stimuli of encouragement and irritation". The encouragement felt by this class came from its success in education and its ability to avail itself of the benefits of that education such as employment in the Indian Civil Service. It came too from Queen Victoria's proclamation of 1858 in which she had declared, "We hold ourselves bound to the natives of our Indian territories by the same obligation of duty which bind us to all our other subjects." Indians were especially encouraged when Canada was granted dominion status in 1867 and established an autonomous democratic constitution. Lastly, the encouragement came from the work of contemporaneous Oriental scholars like Monier Monier-Williams and Max Müller, who in their works had been presenting ancient India as a great civilisation. Irritation, on the other hand, came not just from incidents of racial discrimination at the hands of the British in India, but also from governmental actions like the use of Indian troops in imperial campaigns (e.g. in the Second

Anglo-Afghan War) and the attempts to control the vernacular press (e.g. in the *Vernacular Press Act of 1878*).

It was, however, Viceroy Lord Ripon's partial reversal of the Ilbert Bill (1883), a legislative measure that had proposed putting Indian judges in the Bengal Presidency on equal footing with British ones, that transformed the discontent into political action. On 28 December 1885, professionals and intellectuals from this middle-class—many educated at the new British-founded universities in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, and familiar with the ideas of British political philosophers, especially the utilitarians assembled in Bombay. The seventy men founded the Indian National Congress; Womesh Chunder Bonerjee was elected the first president. The membership comprised a westernised elite and no effort was made at this time to broaden the base.

During its first twenty years, the Congress primarily debated British policy toward India; however, its debates created a new Indian outlook that held Great Britain responsible for draining India of its wealth. Britain did this, the nationalists claimed, by unfair trade, by the restraint on indigenous Indian industry, and by the use of Indian taxes to pay the high salaries of the British civil servants in India.

Thomas Baring served as Viceroy of India 1872–1876. Baring's major accomplishments came as an energetic reformer who was dedicated to upgrading the quality of government in the British Raj. He began large scale famine relief, reduced taxes, and overcame bureaucratic obstacles in an effort to reduce both starvation and widespread social unrest. Although appointed

by a Liberal government, his policies were much the same as Viceroys appointed by Conservative governments.

Social reform was in the air by the 1880s. For example, Pandita Ramabai, poet, Sanskrit scholar, and a champion of the emancipation of Indian women, took up the cause of widow remarriage, especially of Brahmin widows, later converted to Christianity. By 1900 reform movements had taken root within the Indian National Congress. Congress member Gopal Krishna Gokhale founded the Servants of India Society, which lobbied for legislative reform (for example, for a law to permit the remarriage of Hindu child widows), and whose members took vows of poverty, and worked among the untouchable community.

By 1905, a deep gulf opened between the moderates, led by Gokhale, who downplayed public agitation, and the new "extremists" who not only advocated agitation, but also regarded the pursuit of social reform as a distraction from nationalism. Prominent among the extremists was Bal Gangadhar Tilak, who attempted to mobilise Indians by appealing to an explicitly Hindu political identity, displayed, for example, in the annual public Ganapati festivals that he inaugurated in western India.

## **1905–1911: Partition of Bengal, rise of the Muslim League**

The viceroy, Lord Curzon (1899–1905), was unusually energetic in pursuit of efficiency and reform. His agenda included the creation of the North-West Frontier Province; small changes in the civil services; speeding up the operations of the secretariat;

setting up a gold standard to ensure a stable currency; creation of a Railway Board; irrigation reform; reduction of peasant debts; lowering the cost of telegrams; archaeological research and the preservation of antiquities; improvements in the universities; police reforms; upgrading the roles of the Native States; a new Commerce and Industry Department; promotion of industry; revised land revenue policies; lowering taxes; setting up agricultural banks; creating an Agricultural Department; sponsoring agricultural research; establishing an Imperial Library; creating an Imperial Cadet Corps; new famine codes; and, indeed, reducing the smoke nuisance in Calcutta.

Trouble emerged for Curzon when he divided the largest administrative subdivision in British India, the Bengal Province, into the Muslim-majority province of Eastern Bengal and Assam and the Hindu-majority province of West Bengal (present-day Indian states of West Bengal, Bihar, and Odisha). Curzon's act, the Partition of Bengal, had been contemplated by various colonial administrations since the time of Lord William Bentinck, but was never acted upon. Though some considered it administratively felicitous, it was communally charged. It sowed the seeds of division among Indians in Bengal, transforming nationalist politics as nothing else before it. The Hindu elite of Bengal, among them many who owned land in East Bengal that was leased out to Muslim peasants, protested fervidly.

Following the Partition of Bengal, which was a strategy set out by Lord Curzon to weaken the nationalist movement, Tilak encouraged the Swadeshi movement and the Boycott movement. The movement consisted of the boycott of foreign goods and also the social boycott of any Indian who used

foreign goods. The Swadeshi movement consisted of the usage of natively produced goods. Once foreign goods were boycotted, there was a gap which had to be filled by the production of those goods in India itself. Bal Gangadhar Tilak said that the Swadeshi and Boycott movements are two sides of the same coin. The large Bengali Hindu middle-class (the *Bhadralok*), upset at the prospect of Bengalis being outnumbered in the new Bengal province by Biharis and Oriyas, felt that Curzon's act was punishment for their political assertiveness. The pervasive protests against Curzon's decision took the form predominantly of the *Swadeshi* ("buy Indian") campaign led by two-time Congress president, Surendranath Banerjee, and involved boycott of British goods.

The rallying cry for both types of protest was the slogan *Bande Mataram* ("Hail to the Mother"), which invoked a mother goddess, who stood variously for Bengal, India, and the Hindu goddess Kali. Sri Aurobindo never went beyond the law when he edited the *Bande Mataram* magazine; it preached independence but within the bounds of peace as far as possible. Its goal was Passive Resistance. The unrest spread from Calcutta to the surrounding regions of Bengal when students returned home to their villages and towns. Some joined local political youth clubs emerging in Bengal at the time, some engaged in robberies to fund arms, and even attempted to take the lives of Raj officials. However, the conspiracies generally failed in the face of intense police work. The *Swadeshi* boycott movement cut imports of British textiles by 25%. The *swadeshi* cloth, although more expensive and somewhat less comfortable than its Lancashire competitor, was worn as a mark of national pride by people all over India.

The Hindu protests against the partition of Bengal led the Muslim elite in India to organise in 1906 the All India Muslim League. The League favoured the partition of Bengal, since it gave them a Muslim majority in the eastern half. In 1905, when Tilak and Lajpat Rai attempted to rise to leadership positions in the Congress, and the Congress itself rallied around the symbolism of Kali, Muslim fears increased. The Muslim elite, including Dacca Nawab and Khwaja Salimullah, expected that a new province with a Muslim majority would directly benefit Muslims aspiring to political power.

The first steps were taken toward self-government in British India in the late 19th century with the appointment of Indian counsellors to advise the British viceroy and the establishment of provincial councils with Indian members; the British subsequently widened participation in legislative councils with the Indian Councils Act of 1892. Municipal Corporations and District Boards were created for local administration; they included elected Indian members.

The Indian Councils Act 1909, known as the Morley-Minto Reforms (John Morley was the secretary of state for India, and Minto was viceroy)—gave Indians limited roles in the central and provincial legislatures. Upper class Indians, rich landowners and businessmen were favoured. The Muslim community was made a separate electorate and granted double representation. The goals were quite conservative but they did advance the elective principle.

The partition of Bengal was rescinded in 1911 and announced at the Delhi Durbar at which King George V came in person and was crowned Emperor of India. He announced the capital

would be moved from Calcutta to Delhi. This period saw an increase in the activities of revolutionary groups, which included Bengal's Anushilan Samiti and the Punjab's Ghadar Party. The British authorities were, however, able to crush violent rebels swiftly, in part because the mainstream of educated Indian politicians opposed violent revolution.

### **1914–1918: First World War, Lucknow Pact**

- The First World War would prove to be a watershed in the imperial relationship between Britain and India. Shortly before the outbreak of war, the Government of India had indicated that they could furnish two divisions plus a cavalry brigade, with a further division in case of emergency. Some 1.4 million Indian and British soldiers of the British Indian Army took part in the war, primarily in Iraq and the Middle East. Their participation had a wider cultural fallout as news spread of how bravely soldiers fought and died alongside British soldiers, as well as soldiers from dominions like Canada and Australia. India's international profile rose during the 1920s, as it became a founding member of the League of Nations in 1920 and participated, under the name "Les Indes Anglaises" (British India), in the 1920 Summer Olympics in Antwerp. Back in India, especially among the leaders of the Indian National Congress, the war led to calls for greater self-government for Indians.

At the onset of World War I, the reassignment of most of the British army in India to Europe and Mesopotamia, had led the



previous viceroy, Lord Harding, to worry about the "risks involved in denuding India of troops". Revolutionary violence had already been a concern in British India; consequently, in 1915, to strengthen its powers during what it saw was a time of increased vulnerability, the Government of India passed the Defence of India Act 1915, which allowed it to intern politically dangerous dissidents without due process, and added to the power it already had—under the 1910 Press Act—both to imprison journalists without trial and to censor the press. It was under the Defence of India act that the Ali brothers were imprisoned in 1916, and Annie Besant, a European woman, and ordinarily more problematic to imprison, was arrested in 1917. Now, as constitutional reform began to be discussed in earnest, the British began to consider how new moderate Indians could be brought into the fold of constitutional politics and, simultaneously, how the hand of established constitutionalists could be strengthened. However, since the Government of India wanted to ensure against any sabotage of the reform process by extremists, and since its reform plan was devised during a time when extremist violence had ebbed as a result of increased governmental control, it also began to consider how some of its wartime powers could be extended into peacetime.

After the 1906 split between the moderates and the extremists in the Indian National Congress, organised political activity by the Congress had remained fragmented until 1914, when Bal Gangadhar Tilak was released from prison and began to sound out other Congress leaders about possible reunification. That, however, had to wait until the demise of Tilak's principal moderate opponents, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Pherozeshah Mehta, in 1915, whereupon an agreement was reached for

Tilak's ousted group to re-enter the Congress. In the 1916 Lucknow session of the Congress, Tilak's supporters were able to push through a more radical resolution which asked for the British to declare that it was their "aim and intention ... to confer self-government on India at an early date". Soon, other such rumblings began to appear in public pronouncements: in 1917, in the Imperial Legislative Council, Madan Mohan Malaviya spoke of the expectations the war had generated in India, "I venture to say that the war has put the clock ... fifty years forward ... (The) reforms after the war will have to be such, ... as will satisfy the aspirations of her (India's) people to take their legitimate part in the administration of their own country."

The 1916 Lucknow Session of the Congress was also the venue of an unanticipated mutual effort by the Congress and the Muslim League, the occasion for which was provided by the wartime partnership between Germany and Turkey. Since the Turkish Sultan, or *Khalifah*, had also sporadically claimed guardianship of the Islamic holy sites of Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem, and since the British and their allies were now in conflict with Turkey, doubts began to increase among some Indian Muslims about the "religious neutrality" of the British, doubts that had already surfaced as a result of the reunification of Bengal in 1911, a decision that was seen as ill-disposed to Muslims. In the Lucknow Pact, the League joined the Congress in the proposal for greater self-government that was campaigned for by Tilak and his supporters; in return, the Congress accepted separate electorates for Muslims in the provincial legislatures as well as the Imperial Legislative Council. In 1916, the Muslim League had anywhere between 500 and 800 members and did not yet have the wider following

among Indian Muslims that it enjoyed in later years; in the League itself, the pact did not have unanimous backing, having largely been negotiated by a group of "Young Party" Muslims from the United Provinces (UP), most prominently, two brothers Mohammad and Shaukat Ali, who had embraced the Pan-Islamic cause; however, it did have the support of a young lawyer from Bombay, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who was later to rise to leadership roles in both the League and the Indian independence movement. In later years, as the full ramifications of the pact unfolded, it was seen as benefiting the Muslim minority *élites* of provinces like UP and Bihar more than the Muslim majorities of Punjab and Bengal; nonetheless, at the time, the "Lucknow Pact" was an important milestone in nationalistic agitation and was seen as such by the British.

During 1916, two Home Rule Leagues were founded within the Indian National Congress by Tilak and Annie Besant, respectively, to promote Home Rule among Indians, and also to elevate the stature of the founders within the Congress itself. Besant, for her part, was also keen to demonstrate the superiority of this new form of organised agitation, which had achieved some success in the Irish home rule movement, over the political violence that had intermittently plagued the subcontinent during the years 1907–1914. The two Leagues focused their attention on complementary geographical regions: Tilak's in western India, in the southern Bombay presidency, and Besant's in the rest of the country, but especially in the Madras Presidency and in regions like Sind and Gujarat that had hitherto been considered politically dormant by the Congress. Both leagues rapidly acquired new members—approximately thirty thousand each in a little over a year—and began to publish inexpensive newspapers. Their propaganda

also turned to posters, pamphlets, and political-religious songs, and later to mass meetings, which not only attracted greater numbers than in earlier Congress sessions, but also entirely new social groups such as non-Brahmins, traders, farmers, students, and lower-level government workers. Although they did not achieve the magnitude or character of a nationwide mass movement, the Home Rule leagues both deepened and widened organised political agitation for self-rule in India. The British authorities reacted by imposing restrictions on the Leagues, including shutting out students from meetings and banning the two leaders from travelling to certain provinces.

### **1915–1918: Return of Gandhi**

The year 1915 also saw the return of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi to India. Already known in India as a result of his civil liberties protests on behalf of the Indians in South Africa, Gandhi followed the advice of his mentor Gopal Krishna Gokhale and chose not to make any public pronouncements during the first year of his return, but instead spent the year travelling, observing the country at first hand, and writing. Earlier, during his South Africa sojourn, Gandhi, a lawyer by profession, had represented an Indian community, which, although small, was sufficiently diverse to be a microcosm of India itself. In tackling the challenge of holding this community together and simultaneously confronting the colonial authority, he had created a technique of non-violent resistance, which he labelled *Satyagraha* (or Striving for Truth). For Gandhi, *Satyagraha* was different from "passive resistance", by then a familiar technique of social protest, which he regarded as a practical strategy adopted by the weak

in the face of superior force; *Satyagraha*, on the other hand, was for him the "last resort of those strong enough in their commitment to truth to undergo suffering in its cause". Ahimsa or "non-violence", which formed the underpinning of *Satyagraha*, came to represent the twin pillar, with Truth, of Gandhi's unorthodox religious outlook on life. During the years 1907–1914, Gandhi tested the technique of *Satyagraha* in a number of protests on behalf of the Indian community in South Africa against the unjust racial laws.

Also, during his time in South Africa, in his essay, *Hind Swaraj*, (1909), Gandhi formulated his vision of *Swaraj*, or "self-rule" for India based on three vital ingredients: solidarity between Indians of different faiths, but most of all between Hindus and Muslims; the removal of untouchability from Indian society; and the exercise of *swadeshi*—the boycott of manufactured foreign goods and the revival of Indian cottage industry. The first two, he felt, were essential for India to be an egalitarian and tolerant society, one befitting the principles of Truth and *Ahimsa*, while the last, by making Indians more self-reliant, would break the cycle of dependence that was perpetuating not only the direction and tenor of the British rule in India, but also the British commitment to it. At least until 1920, the British presence itself was not a stumbling block in Gandhi's conception of *swaraj*; rather, it was the inability of Indians to create a modern society.

Gandhi made his political debut in India in 1917 in Champaran district in Bihar, near the Nepal border, where he was invited by a group of disgruntled tenant farmers who, for many years, had been forced into planting indigo (for dyes) on a portion of their land and then selling it at below-market

prices to the British planters who had leased them the land. Upon his arrival in the district, Gandhi was joined by other agitators, including a young Congress leader, Rajendra Prasad, from Bihar, who would become a loyal supporter of Gandhi and go on to play a prominent role in the Indian independence movement. When Gandhi was ordered to leave by the local British authorities, he refused on moral grounds, setting up his refusal as a form of individual Satyagraha. Soon, under pressure from the Viceroy in Delhi who was anxious to maintain domestic peace during wartime, the provincial government rescinded Gandhi's expulsion order, and later agreed to an official enquiry into the case. Although the British planters eventually gave in, they were not won over to the farmers' cause, and thereby did not produce the optimal outcome of a Satyagraha that Gandhi had hoped for; similarly, the farmers themselves, although pleased at the resolution, responded less than enthusiastically to the concurrent projects of rural empowerment and education that Gandhi had inaugurated in keeping with his ideal of *swaraj*. The following year Gandhi launched two more Satyagrahas—both in his native Gujarat—one in the rural Kaira district where land-owning farmers were protesting increased land-revenue and the other in the city of Ahmedabad, where workers in an Indian-owned textile mill were distressed about their low wages. The satyagraha in Ahmedabad took the form of Gandhi fasting and supporting the workers in a strike, which eventually led to a settlement. In Kaira, in contrast, although the farmers' cause received publicity from Gandhi's presence, the satyagraha itself, which consisted of the farmers' collective decision to withhold payment, was not immediately successful, as the British authorities refused to back down. The agitation in Kaira gained for Gandhi another lifelong lieutenant in Sardar

Vallabhbhai Patel, who had organised the farmers, and who too would go on to play a leadership role in the Indian independence movement. Champaran, Kaira, and Ahmedabad were important milestones in the history of Gandhi's new methods of social protest in India.

### **1916–1919: Montagu-Chelmsford reforms**

In 1916, in the face of new strength demonstrated by the nationalists with the signing of the Lucknow Pact and the founding of the Home Rule leagues, and the realisation, after the disaster in the Mesopotamian campaign, that the war would likely last longer, the new viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, cautioned that the Government of India needed to be more responsive to Indian opinion. Towards the end of the year, after discussions with the government in London, he suggested that the British demonstrate their good faith—in light of the Indian war role—through a number of public actions, including awards of titles and honours to princes, granting of commissions in the army to Indians, and removal of the much-reviled cotton excise duty, but, most importantly, an announcement of Britain's future plans for India and an indication of some concrete steps. After more discussion, in August 1917, the new Liberal secretary of state for India, Edwin Montagu, announced the British aim of "increasing association of Indians in every branch of the administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions, with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire". Although the plan envisioned limited self-government at first only in the provinces—with India emphatically within the

British Empire—it represented the first British proposal for any form of representative government in a non-white colony.

Montagu and Chelmsford presented their report in July 1918 after a long fact-finding trip through India the previous winter. After more discussion by the government and parliament in Britain, and another tour by the Franchise and Functions Committee for the purpose of identifying who among the Indian population could vote in future elections, the Government of India Act 1919 (also known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms) was passed in December 1919. The new Act enlarged both the provincial and Imperial legislative councils and repealed the Government of India's recourse to the "official majority" in unfavourable votes. Although departments like defence, foreign affairs, criminal law, communications, and income-tax were retained by the Viceroy and the central government in New Delhi, other departments like public health, education, land-revenue, local self-government were transferred to the provinces. The provinces themselves were now to be administered under a new diarchical system, whereby some areas like education, agriculture, infrastructure development, and local self-government became the preserve of Indian ministers and legislatures, and ultimately the Indian electorates, while others like irrigation, land-revenue, police, prisons, and control of media remained within the purview of the British governor and his executive council. The new Act also made it easier for Indians to be admitted into the civil services and the army officer corps.

A greater number of Indians were now enfranchised, although, for voting at the national level, they constituted only 10% of the total adult male population, many of whom were still



illiterate. In the provincial legislatures, the British continued to exercise some control by setting aside seats for special interests they considered cooperative or useful. In particular, rural candidates, generally sympathetic to British rule and less confrontational, were assigned more seats than their urban counterparts. Seats were also reserved for non-Brahmins, landowners, businessmen, and college graduates. The principal of "communal representation", an integral part of the Minto-Morley Reforms, and more recently of the Congress-Muslim League Lucknow Pact, was reaffirmed, with seats being reserved for Muslims, Sikhs, Indian Christians, Anglo-Indians, and domiciled Europeans, in both provincial and Imperial legislative councils. The Montagu-Chelmsford reforms offered Indians the most significant opportunity yet for exercising legislative power, especially at the provincial level; however, that opportunity was also restricted by the still limited number of eligible voters, by the small budgets available to provincial legislatures, and by the presence of rural and special interest seats that were seen as instruments of British control. Its scope was unsatisfactory to the Indian political leadership, famously expressed by Annie Besant as something "unworthy of England to offer and India to accept".

### **1917–1919: Rowlatt Act**

- In 1917, as Montagu and Chelmsford were compiling their report, a committee chaired by a British judge, Sidney Rowlatt, was tasked with investigating "revolutionary conspiracies", with the unstated goal of extending the government's wartime powers. The Rowlatt Committee presented its report in July 1918 and identified three regions of conspiratorial

insurgency: Bengal, the Bombay presidency, and the Punjab. To combat subversive acts in these regions, the committee recommended that the government use emergency powers akin to its wartime authority, which included the ability to try cases of sedition by a panel of three judges and without juries, exaction of securities from suspects, governmental overseeing of residences of suspects, and the power for provincial governments to arrest and detain suspects in short-term detention facilities and without trial.

With the end of World War I, there was also a change in the economic climate. By the end of 1919, 1.5 million Indians had served in the armed services in either combatant or non-combatant roles, and India had provided £146 million in revenue for the war. The increased taxes coupled with disruptions in both domestic and international trade had the effect of approximately doubling the index of overall prices in India between 1914 and 1920. Returning war veterans, especially in the Punjab, created a growing unemployment crisis, and post-war inflation led to food riots in Bombay, Madras, and Bengal provinces, a situation that was made only worse by the failure of the 1918–19 monsoon and by profiteering and speculation. The global influenza epidemic and the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 added to the general jitters; the former among the population already experiencing economic woes, and the latter among government officials, fearing a similar revolution in India.

To combat what it saw as a coming crisis, the government now drafted the Rowlatt committee's recommendations into two Rowlatt Bills. Although the bills were authorised for legislative

consideration by Edwin Montagu, they were done so unwillingly, with the accompanying declaration, "I loathe the suggestion at first sight of preserving the Defence of India Act in peacetime to such an extent as Rowlatt and his friends think necessary." In the ensuing discussion and vote in the Imperial Legislative Council, all Indian members voiced opposition to the bills. The Government of India was, nevertheless, able to use of its "official majority" to ensure passage of the bills early in 1919. However, what it passed, in deference to the Indian opposition, was a lesser version of the first bill, which now allowed extrajudicial powers, but for a period of exactly three years and for the prosecution solely of "anarchical and revolutionary movements", dropping entirely the second bill involving modification the Indian Penal Code. Even so, when it was passed, the new Rowlatt Act aroused widespread indignation throughout India, and brought Gandhi to the forefront of the nationalist movement.

### **1919–1939: Jallianwala Bagh, non-cooperation, Government of India Act**

The Jallianwala Bagh massacre or "Amritsar massacre", took place in the Jallianwala Bagh public garden in the predominantly Sikh northern city of Amritsar. After days of unrest Brigadier-General Reginald E.H. Dyer forbade public meetings and on Sunday 13 April 1919 fifty British Indian Army soldiers commanded by Dyer began shooting at an unarmed gathering of thousands of men, women, and children without warning. Casualty estimates vary widely, with the Government of India reporting 379 dead, with 1,100 wounded. The Indian National Congress estimated three times the number of dead. Dyer was removed from duty but he became a

celebrated hero in Britain among people with connections to the Raj. Historians consider the episode was a decisive step towards the end of British rule in India.

In 1920, after the British government refused to back down, Gandhi began his campaign of non-cooperation, prompting many Indians to return British awards and honours, to resign from the civil services, and to again boycott British goods. In addition, Gandhi reorganised the Congress, transforming it into a mass movement and opening its membership to even the poorest Indians. Although Gandhi halted the non-cooperation movement in 1922 after the violent incident at Chauri Chaura, the movement revived again, in the mid-1920s.

The visit, in 1928, of the British Simon Commission, charged with instituting constitutional reform in India, resulted in widespread protests throughout the country. Earlier, in 1925, non-violent protests of the Congress had resumed too, this time in Gujarat, and led by Patel, who organised farmers to refuse payment of increased land taxes; the success of this protest, the Bardoli Satyagraha, brought Gandhi back into the fold of active politics.

At its annual session in Lahore, the Indian National Congress, under the presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru, issued a demand for *Purna Swaraj* (Hindustani language: "complete independence"), or Purna Swarajya. The declaration was drafted by the Congress Working Committee, which included Gandhi, Nehru, Patel, and Chakravarthi Rajagopalachari. Gandhi subsequently led an expanded movement of civil disobedience, culminating in 1930 with the Salt Satyagraha, in which thousands of Indians defied the tax on salt, by marching

to the sea and making their own salt by evaporating seawater. Although, many, including Gandhi, were arrested, the British government eventually gave in, and in 1931 Gandhi travelled to London to negotiate new reform at the Round Table Conferences.

In local terms, British control rested on the Indian Civil Service (ICS), but it faced growing difficulties. Fewer and fewer young men in Britain were interested in joining, and the continuing distrust of Indians resulted in a declining base in terms of quality and quantity. By 1945 Indians were numerically dominant in the ICS and at issue was loyal divided between the Empire and independence. The finances of the Raj depended on land taxes, and these became problematic in the 1930s. Epstein argues that after 1919 it became harder and harder to collect the land revenue. The Raj's suppression of civil disobedience after 1934 temporarily increased the power of the revenue agents but after 1937 they were forced by the new Congress-controlled provincial governments to hand back confiscated land. Again the outbreak of war strengthened them, in the face of the Quit India movement the revenue collectors had to rely on military force and by 1946–47 direct British control was rapidly disappearing in much of the countryside.

In 1935, after the Round Table Conferences, Parliament passed the Government of India Act 1935, which authorised the establishment of independent legislative assemblies in all provinces of British India, the creation of a central government incorporating both the British provinces and the princely states, and the protection of Muslim minorities. The future Constitution of independent India was based on this act.

However, it divided the electorate into 19 religious and social categories, e.g., Muslims, Sikhs, Indian Christians, Depressed Classes, Landholders, Commerce and Industry, Europeans, Anglo-Indians, etc., each of which was given separate representation in the Provincial Legislative Assemblies. A voter could cast a vote only for candidates in his own category.

The 1935 Act provided for more autonomy for Indian provinces, with the goal of cooling off nationalist sentiment. The act provided for a national parliament and an executive branch under the purview of the British government, but the rulers of the princely states managed to block its implementation. These states remained under the full control of their hereditary rulers, with no popular government. To prepare for elections Congress built up its grass roots membership from 473,000 in 1935 to 4.5 million in 1939.

In the 1937 elections Congress won victories in seven of the eleven provinces of British India. Congress governments, with wide powers, were formed in these provinces. The widespread voter support for the Indian National Congress surprised Raj officials, who previously had seen the Congress as a small elitist body.

## **1939–1945: World War II**

With the outbreak of World War II in 1939, the viceroy, Lord Linlithgow, declared war on India's behalf without consulting Indian leaders, leading the Congress provincial ministries to resign in protest. The Muslim League, in contrast, supported Britain in the war effort and maintained its control of the government in three major provinces, Bengal, Sind and the

Punjab. While the Muslim League had been a small elite group in 1927 with only 1300 members, it grew rapidly once it became an organisation that reached out to the masses, reaching 500,000 members in Bengal in 1944, 200,000 in Punjab, and hundreds of thousands elsewhere. Jinnah now was well positioned to negotiate with the British from a position of power. Jinnah repeatedly warned that Muslims would be unfairly treated in an independent India dominated by the Congress. On 24 March 1940 in Lahore, the League passed the "Lahore Resolution", demanding that, "the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in majority as in the North-Western and Eastern zones of India should be grouped to constitute independent states in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign." Although there were other important national Muslim politicians such as Congress leader Ab'ul Kalam Azad, and influential regional Muslim politicians such as A. K. Fazlul Huq of the leftist Krishak Praja Party in Bengal, Fazl-i-Hussain of the landlord-dominated Punjab Unionist Party, and Abd al-Ghaffar Khan of the pro-Congress Khudai Khidmatgar (popularly, "red shirts") in the North West Frontier Province, the British, over the next six years, were to increasingly see the League as the main representative of Muslim India.

The Congress was secular and strongly opposed to having any religious state. It insisted there was a natural unity to India, and repeatedly blamed the British for "divide and rule" tactics based on prompting Muslims to think of themselves as alien from Hindus. Jinnah rejected the notion of a united India, and emphasised that religious communities were more basic than an artificial nationalism. He proclaimed the Two-Nation Theory, stating at Lahore on 23 March 1940:

[Islam and Hinduism] are not religions in the strict sense of the word, but are, in fact, different and distinct social orders and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality ... The Hindu and Muslim belong to two different religions, philosophies, social customs and literature [sic]. They neither intermarry nor interdine together and indeed they belong to two different civilizations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different ... To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state.

While the regular Indian army in 1939 included about 220,000 native troops, it expanded tenfold during the war, and small naval and air force units were created. Over two million Indians volunteered for military service in the British Army. They played a major role in numerous campaigns, especially in the Middle East and North Africa. Casualties were moderate (in terms of the world war), with 24,000 killed; 64,000 wounded; 12,000 missing (probably dead), and 60,000 captured at Singapore in 1942.

London paid most of the cost of the Indian Army, which had the effect of erasing India's national debt; it ended the war with a surplus of £1,300 million. In addition, heavy British spending on munitions produced in India (such as uniforms, rifles, machine-guns, field artillery, and ammunition) led to a rapid expansion of industrial output, such as textiles (up 16%), steel (up 18%), and chemicals (up 30%). Small warships were built, and an aircraft factory opened in Bangalore. The



railway system, with 700,000 employees, was taxed to the limit as demand for transportation soared.

The British government sent the Cripps mission in 1942 to secure Indian nationalists' co-operation in the war effort in exchange for a promise of independence as soon as the war ended. Top officials in Britain, most notably Prime Minister Winston Churchill, did not support the Cripps Mission and negotiations with the Congress soon broke down.

Congress launched the Quit India Movement in July 1942 demanding the immediate withdrawal of the British from India or face nationwide civil disobedience. On 8 August the Raj arrested all national, provincial and local Congress leaders, holding tens of thousands of them until 1945. The country erupted in violent demonstrations led by students and later by peasant political groups, especially in Eastern United Provinces, Bihar, and western Bengal. The large wartime British Army presence crushed the movement in a little more than six weeks; nonetheless, a portion of the movement formed for a time an underground provisional government on the border with Nepal. In other parts of India, the movement was less spontaneous and the protest less intensive, however it lasted sporadically into the summer of 1943. It did not slow down the British war effort or recruiting for the army.

Earlier, Subhas Chandra Bose, who had been a leader of the younger, radical, wing of the Indian National Congress in the late 1920s and 1930s, had risen to become Congress President from 1938 to 1939. However, he was ousted from the Congress in 1939 following differences with the high command, and subsequently placed under house arrest by the British before

escaping from India in early 1941. He turned to Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan for help in gaining India's independence by force. With Japanese support, he organised the Indian National Army, composed largely of Indian soldiers of the British Indian Army who had been captured by the Japanese in the Battle of Singapore. As the war turned against them, the Japanese came to support a number of puppet and provisional governments in the captured regions, including those in Burma, the Philippines and Vietnam, and in addition, the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, presided by Bose.

Bose's effort, however, was short lived. In mid-1944 the British Army first halted and then reversed the Japanese U-Go offensive, beginning the successful part of the Burma Campaign. Bose's Indian National Army largely disintegrated during the subsequent fighting in Burma, with its remaining elements surrendering with the recapture of Singapore in September 1945. Bose died in August from third degree burns received after attempting to escape in an overloaded Japanese plane which crashed in Taiwan, which many Indians believe did not happen. Although Bose was unsuccessful, he roused patriotic feelings in India.

### **1946–1947: Independence, Partition**

In January 1946, a number of mutinies broke out in the armed services, starting with that of RAF servicemen frustrated with their slow repatriation to Britain. The mutinies came to a head with mutiny of the Royal Indian Navy in Bombay in February 1946, followed by others in Calcutta, Madras, and Karachi. Although the mutinies were rapidly suppressed, they had the effect of spurring the new Labour government in Britain to

action, and leading to the Cabinet Mission to India led by the secretary of state for India, Lord Pethick Lawrence, and including Sir Stafford Cripps, who had visited four years before.

Also in early 1946, new elections were called in India. Earlier, at the end of the war in 1945, the colonial government had announced the public trial of three senior officers of Bose's defeated Indian National Army who stood accused of treason. Now as the trials began, the Congress leadership, although ambivalent towards the INA, chose to defend the accused officers. The subsequent convictions of the officers, the public outcry against the convictions, and the eventual remission of the sentences, created positive propaganda for the Congress, which only helped in the party's subsequent electoral victories in eight of the eleven provinces. The negotiations between the Congress and the Muslim League, however, stumbled over the issue of the partition. Jinnah proclaimed 16 August 1946, Direct Action Day, with the stated goal of highlighting, peacefully, the demand for a Muslim homeland in British India. The following day Hindu-Muslim riots broke out in Calcutta and quickly spread throughout British India. Although the Government of India and the Congress were both shaken by the course of events, in September, a Congress-led interim government was installed, with Jawaharlal Nehru as united India's prime minister.

Later that year, the British Exchequer exhausted by the recently concluded World War II, and the Labour government conscious that it had neither the mandate at home, the international support, nor the reliability of native forces for continuing to control an increasingly restless British India,

decided to end British rule of India, and in early 1947 Britain announced its intention of transferring power no later than June 1948.

As independence approached, the violence between Hindus and Muslims in the provinces of Punjab and Bengal continued unabated. With the British army unprepared for the potential for increased violence, the new viceroy, Louis Mountbatten, advanced the date for the transfer of power, allowing less than six months for a mutually agreed plan for independence. In June 1947, the nationalist leaders, including Sardar Patel, Nehru and Abul Kalam Azad on behalf of the Congress, Jinnah representing the Muslim League, B. R. Ambedkar representing the Untouchable community, and Master Tara Singh representing the Sikhs, agreed to a partition of the country along religious lines in stark opposition to Gandhi's views. The predominantly Hindu and Sikh areas were assigned to the new nation of India and predominantly Muslim areas to the new nation of Pakistan; the plan included a partition of the Muslim-majority provinces of Punjab and Bengal.

On 15 August 1947, the new Dominion of Pakistan (later Islamic Republic of Pakistan), with Muhammad Ali Jinnah as the governor-general; and the Dominion of India, (later Republic of India) with Jawaharlal Nehru as the prime minister, and the viceroy,

Louis Mountbatten, staying on as its first governor-general came into being; with official ceremonies taking place in Karachi on 14 August and New Delhi on 15 August. This was done so that Mountbatten could attend both ceremonies.

The great majority of Indians remained in place with independence, but in border areas millions of people (Muslim, Sikh, and Hindu) relocated across the newly drawn borders. In Punjab, where the new border lines divided the Sikh regions in half, there was much bloodshed; in Bengal and Bihar, where Gandhi's presence assuaged communal tempers, the violence was more limited. In all, somewhere between 250,000 and 500,000 people on both sides of the new borders, among both the refugee and resident populations of the three faiths, died in the violence. Other estimates of the number of deaths are as high as 1,500,000.

## **British India and the princely states**

India during the British Raj was made up of two types of territory: *British India* and the *Native States* (or *Princely States*). In its Interpretation Act 1889, the British Parliament adopted the following definitions in Section 18:

(4.) The expression "British India" shall mean all territories and places within Her Majesty's dominions which are for the time being governed by Her Majesty through the Governor-General of India or through any governor or other officer subordinates to the Governor-General of India.

(5.) The expression "India" shall mean British India together with any territories of any native prince or chief under the suzerainty of Her Majesty exercised through the Governor-General of India, or through any governor or other officer subordinates to the Governor-General of India.

In general, the term "British India" had been used (and is still used) to refer also to the regions under the rule of the British East India Company in India from 1600 to 1858. The term has also been used to refer to the "British in India".

The terms "Indian Empire" and "Empire of India" (like the term "British Empire") were not used in legislation. The monarch was officially known as Empress or Emperor of India and the term was often used in Queen Victoria's Queen's Speeches and Prorogation Speeches. In addition, an order of knighthood, the Most Eminent Order of the Indian Empire, was set up in 1878.

Suzerainty over 175 princely states, some of the largest and most important, was exercised (in the name of the British Crown) by the central government of British India under the viceroy; the remaining approximately 500 states were dependents of the provincial governments of British India under a governor, lieutenant-governor, or chief commissioner (as the case might have been). A clear distinction between "dominion" and "suzerainty" was supplied by the jurisdiction of the courts of law: the law of British India rested upon the laws passed by the British Parliament and the legislative powers those laws vested in the various governments of British India, both central and local; in contrast, the courts of the Princely States existed under the authority of the respective rulers of those states.

### **Princely states**

A Princely State, also called a Native State or an Indian State, was a British vassal state in India with an indigenous nominal Indian ruler, subject to a subsidiary alliance. There were 565

princely states when India and Pakistan became independent from Britain in August 1947. The princely states did not form a part of British India (i.e. the presidencies and provinces), as they were not directly under British rule. The larger ones had treaties with Britain that specified which rights the princes had; in the smaller ones the princes had few rights. Within the princely states external affairs, defence and most communications were under British control. The British also exercised a general influence over the states' internal politics, in part through the granting or withholding of recognition of individual rulers. Although there were nearly 600 princely states, the great majority were very small and contracted out the business of government to the British. Some two hundred of the states had an area of less than 25 square kilometres (10 square miles).

The states were grouped into agencies and residencies.

## **Organisation**

Following the Indian Rebellion of 1857 (usually called the Indian Mutiny by the British), the Government of India Act 1858 made changes in the governance of India at three levels:

- in the imperial government in London,
- in the central government in Calcutta, and
- in the provincial governments in the presidencies (and later in the provinces).

In London, it provided for a cabinet-level Secretary of State for India and a fifteen-member Council of India, whose members were required, as one prerequisite of membership, to have spent at least ten years in India and to have done so no more

than ten years before. Although the secretary of state formulated the policy instructions to be communicated to India, he was required in most instances to consult the Council, but especially so in matters relating to spending of Indian revenues. The Act envisaged a system of "double government" in which the Council ideally served both as a check on excesses in imperial policy-making and as a body of up-to-date expertise on India. However, the secretary of state also had special emergency powers that allowed him to make unilateral decisions, and, in reality, the Council's expertise was sometimes outdated. From 1858 until 1947, twenty-seven individuals served as Secretary of State for India and directed the India Office; these included: Sir Charles Wood (1859–1866), the Marquess of Salisbury (1874–1878; later British prime minister), John Morley (1905–1910; initiator of the Minto–Morley Reforms), E. S. Montagu (1917–1922; an architect of the Montagu–Chelmsford Reforms), and Frederick Pethick-Lawrence (1945–1947; head of the 1946 Cabinet Mission to India). The size of the Advisory Council was reduced over the next half-century, but its powers remained unchanged. In 1907, for the first time, two Indians were appointed to the Council. They were K.G. Gupta and Syed Hussain Bilgrami.

In Calcutta, the governor-general remained head of the Government of India and now was more commonly called the viceroy on account of his secondary role as the Crown's representative to the nominally sovereign princely states; he was, however, now responsible to the secretary of state in London and through him to Parliament. A system of "double government" had already been in place during the Company's rule in India from the time of Pitt's India Act of 1784. The



governor-general in the capital, Calcutta, and the governor in a subordinate presidency (Madras or Bombay) was each required to consult his advisory council; executive orders in Calcutta, for example, were issued in the name of "Governor-General-in-Council" (*i.e.* the Governor-General with the advice of the Council). The Company's system of "double government" had its critics, since, from the time of the system's inception, there had been intermittent feuding between the governor-general and his Council; still, the Act of 1858 made no major changes in governance. However, in the years immediately thereafter, which were also the years of post-rebellion reconstruction, Viceroy Lord Canning found the collective decision making of the Council to be too time-consuming for the pressing tasks ahead, so he requested the "portfolio system" of an Executive Council in which the business of each government department (the "portfolio") was assigned to and became the responsibility of a single council member. Routine departmental decisions were made exclusively by the member, but important decisions required the consent of the governor-general and, in the absence of such consent, required discussion by the entire Executive Council. This innovation in Indian governance was promulgated in the Indian Councils Act 1861.

If the Government of India needed to enact new laws, the Councils Act allowed for a Legislative Council—an expansion of the Executive Council by up to twelve additional members, each appointed to a two-year term—with half the members consisting of British officials of the government (termed *official*) and allowed to vote, and the other half, comprising Indians and domiciled Britons in India (termed *non-official*) and serving only in an advisory capacity. All laws enacted by Legislative Councils in India, whether by the Imperial

Legislative Council in Calcutta or by the provincial ones in Madras and Bombay, required the final assent of the secretary of state in London; this prompted Sir Charles Wood, the second secretary of state, to describe the Government of India as "a despotism controlled from home". Moreover, although the appointment of Indians to the Legislative Council was a response to calls after the 1857 rebellion, most notably by Sayyid Ahmad Khan, for more consultation with Indians, the Indians so appointed were from the landed aristocracy, often chosen for their loyalty, and far from representative. Even so, the "... tiny advances in the practice of representative government were intended to provide safety valves for the expression of public opinion, which had been so badly misjudged before the rebellion". Indian affairs now also came to be more closely examined in the British Parliament and more widely discussed in the British press.

With the promulgation of the Government of India Act 1935, the Council of India was abolished with effect from 1 April 1937 and a modified system of government enacted. The secretary of state for India represented the Government of India in the UK. He was assisted by a body of advisers numbering from 8–12 individuals, at least half of whom were required to have held office in India for a minimum of 10 years, and had not relinquished office earlier than two years prior to their appointment as advisers to the secretary of state.

The viceroy and governor-general of India, a Crown appointee, typically held office for five years though there was no fixed tenure, and received an annual salary of Rs. 2,50,800 p.a. (£18,810 p.a.). He headed the Viceroy's Executive Council, each member of which had responsibility for a department of

the central administration. From 1 April 1937, the position of Governor-General in Council, which the viceroy and governor-general concurrently held in the capacity of representing the Crown in relations with the Indian princely states, was replaced by the designation of "HM Representative for the Exercise of the Functions of the Crown in its Relations with the Indian States", or the "Crown Representative". The Executive Council was greatly expanded during the Second World War, and in 1947 comprised 14 members (secretaries), each of whom earned a salary of Rs. 66,000 p.a. (£4,950 p.a.). The portfolios in 1946–1947 were:

- External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations
- Home and Information and Broadcasting
- Food and transportation
- Transport and Railways
- Labour
- Industries and Supplies
- Works, Mines and Power
- Education
- Defence
- Finance
- Commerce
- Communications
- Health
- Law

Until 1946, the viceroy held the portfolio for External Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, as well as heading the Political Department in his capacity as the Crown representative. Each department was headed by a secretary excepting the Railway

Department, which was headed by a Chief Commissioner of Railways under a secretary.

The viceroy and governor-general was also the head of the bicameral Indian Legislature, consisting of an upper house (the Council of State) and a lower house (the Legislative Assembly). The viceroy was the head of the Council of State, while the Legislative Assembly, which was first opened in 1921, was headed by an elected president (appointed by the Viceroy from 1921–1925). The Council of State consisted of 58 members (32 elected, 26 nominated), while the Legislative Assembly comprised 141 members (26 nominated officials, 13 others nominated and 102 elected). The Council of State existed in five-year periods and the Legislative Assembly for three-year periods, though either could be dissolved earlier or later by the Viceroy. The Indian Legislature was empowered to make laws for all persons resident in British India including all British subjects resident in India, and for all British Indian subjects residing outside India. With the assent of the King-Emperor and after copies of a proposed enactment had been submitted to both houses of the British Parliament, the Viceroy could overrule the legislature and directly enact any measures in the perceived interests of British India or its residents if the need arose.

Effective from 1 April 1936, the Government of India Act created the new provinces of Sind (separated from the Bombay Presidency) and Orissa (separated from the Province of Bihar and Orissa). Burma and Aden became separate Crown Colonies under the Act from 1 April 1937, thereby ceasing to be part of the Indian Empire. From 1937 onwards, British India was divided into 17 administrations: the three Presidencies of

Madras, Bombay and Bengal, and the 14 provinces of the United Provinces, Punjab, Bihar, the Central Provinces and Berar, Assam, the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), Orissa, Sind, British Baluchistan, Delhi, Ajmer-Merwara, Coorg, the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Panth Piploda. The Presidencies and the first eight provinces were each under a governor, while the latter six provinces were each under a chief commissioner. The viceroy directly governed the chief commissioner provinces through each respective chief commissioner, while the Presidencies and the provinces under governors were allowed greater autonomy under the Government of India Act. Each Presidency or province headed by a governor had either a provincial bicameral legislature (in the Presidencies, the United Provinces, Bihar and Assam) or a unicameral legislature (in the Punjab, Central Provinces and Berar, NWFP, Orissa and Sind). The governor of each presidency or province represented the Crown in his capacity, and was assisted by a ministers appointed from the members of each provincial legislature. Each provincial legislature had a life of five years, barring any special circumstances such as wartime conditions. All bills passed by the provincial legislature were either signed or rejected by the governor, who could also issue proclamations or promulgate ordinances while the legislature was in recess, as the need arose.

Each province or presidency comprised a number of divisions, each headed by a commissioner and subdivided into districts, which were the basic administrative units and each headed by a district magistrate, collector or deputy commissioner; in 1947, British India comprised 230 districts.

## **Legal system**

Singha argues that after 1857 the colonial government strengthened and expanded its infrastructure via the court system, legal procedures, and statutes. New legislation merged the Crown and the old East India Company courts and introduced a new penal code as well as new codes of civil and criminal procedure, based largely on English law. In the 1860s–1880s the Raj set up compulsory registration of births, deaths, and marriages, as well as adoptions, property deeds, and wills. The goal was to create a stable, usable public record and verifiable identities. However, there was opposition from both Muslim and Hindu elements who complained that the new procedures for census-taking and registration threatened to uncover female privacy. Purdah rules prohibited women from saying their husband's name or having their photograph taken. An all-India census was conducted between 1868 and 1871, often using total numbers of females in a household rather than individual names. Select groups which the Raj reformers wanted to monitor statistically included those reputed to practice female infanticide, prostitutes, lepers, and eunuchs.

Murshid argues that women were in some ways more restricted by the modernisation of the laws. They remained tied to the strictures of their religion, caste, and customs, but now with an overlay of British Victorian attitudes. Their inheritance rights to own and manage property were curtailed; the new English laws were somewhat harsher. Court rulings restricted the rights of second wives and their children regarding inheritance. A woman had to belong to either a father or a husband to have any rights.

# Economy

## Economic trends

The Indian economy grew at about 1% per year from 1880 to 1920, and the population also grew at 1%. All three sectors of the economy—agriculture, manufacturing, and services—accelerated in the postcolonial India. In agriculture a "green revolution" took place in the 1970s. The most important difference between colonial and postcolonial India was the utilisation of land surplus with productivity-led growth by using high-yielding variety seeds, chemical fertilizers and more intensive application of water. All these three inputs were subsidised by the state. The result was, on average, no long-term change in per capita income levels, though cost of living had grown higher. Agriculture was still dominant, with most peasants at the subsistence level. Extensive irrigation systems were built, providing an impetus for switching to cash crops for export and for raw materials for Indian industry, especially jute, cotton, sugarcane, coffee and tea. India's global share of GDP fell drastically from above 20% to less than 5% in the colonial period. Historians have been bitterly divided on issues of economic history, with the Nationalist school (following Nehru) arguing that India was poorer at the end of British rule than at the beginning and that impoverishment occurred because of the British.

Mike Davis writes that much of the economic activity in British India was for the benefit of the British economy and was carried out relentlessly through repressive British imperial policies and with negative repercussions for the Indian

population. This is reified in India's large exports of wheat to Britain: despite a major famine that claimed between 6 and 10 million lives in the late 1870s, these exports remained unchecked. A colonial government committed to laissez-faire economics refused to interfere with these exports or provide any relief.

## **Industry**

With the end of the state-granted monopoly of the East India Trading Company in 1813, the importation into India of British manufactured goods, including finished textiles, increased dramatically, from approximately 1 million yards of cotton cloth in 1814 to 13 million in 1820, 995 million in 1870, to 2050 million by 1890. The British imposed "free trade" on India, while continental Europe and the United States erected stiff tariff barriers ranging from 30% to 70% on the importation of cotton yarn or prohibited it entirely. As a result of the less expensive imports from more industrialized Britain, India's most significant industrial sector, textile production, shrank, such that by 1870–1880 Indian producers were manufacturing only 25%–45% of local consumption. Deindustrialization of India's iron industry was even more extensive during this period.

The entrepreneur Jamsetji Tata (1839–1904) began his industrial career in 1877 with the Central India Spinning, Weaving, and Manufacturing Company in Bombay. While other Indian mills produced cheap coarse yarn (and later cloth) using local short-staple cotton and cheap machinery imported from Britain, Tata did much better by importing expensive longer-stapled cotton from Egypt and buying more complex ring-



spindle machinery from the United States to spin finer yarn that could compete with imports from Britain.

In the 1890s, he launched plans to move into heavy industry using Indian funding. The Raj did not provide capital, but, aware of Britain's declining position against the US and Germany in the steel industry, it wanted steel mills in India. It promised to purchase any surplus steel Tata could not otherwise sell. The Tata Iron and Steel Company (TISCO), now headed by his son Dorabji Tata (1859–1932), opened its plant at Jamshedpur in Bihar in 1908. It used American technology, not British, and became the leading iron and steel producer in India, with 120,000 employees in 1945. TISCO became India's proud symbol of technical skill, managerial competence, entrepreneurial flair, and high pay for industrial workers. The Tata family, like most of India's big businessmen, were Indian nationalists but did not trust the Congress because it seemed too aggressively hostile to the Raj, too socialist, and too supportive of trade unions.

## **Railways**

British India built a modern railway system in the late 19th century, which was the fourth largest in the world. At first the railways were privately owned and operated. They were run by British administrators, engineers and craftsmen. At first, only the unskilled workers were Indians.

The East India Company (and later the colonial government) encouraged new railway companies backed by private investors under a scheme that would provide land and guarantee an annual return of up to 5% during the initial years of operation.

The companies were to build and operate the lines under a 99-year lease, with the government having the option to buy them earlier. Two new railway companies, the Great Indian Peninsular Railway (GIPR) and the East Indian Railway Company (EIR) began to construct and operate lines near Bombay and Calcutta in 1853–54. The first passenger railway line in North India, between Allahabad and Kanpur, opened in 1859. Eventually, five British companies came to own all railway business in India, and operated under a profit maximization scheme. Further, there was no government regulation of these companies.

In 1854, Governor-General Lord Dalhousie formulated a plan to construct a network of trunk lines connecting the principal regions of India. Encouraged by the government guarantees, investment flowed in and a series of new rail companies was established, leading to rapid expansion of the rail system in India. Soon several large princely states built their own rail systems and the network spread to the regions that became the modern-day states of Assam, Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh. The route mileage of this network increased from 1,349 to 25,495 kilometres (838 to 15,842 mi) between 1860 and 1880, mostly radiating inland from the three major port cities of Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta.

After the Sepoy Rebellion in 1857, and subsequent Crown rule over India, the railways were seen as a strategic defense of the European population, allowing the military to move quickly to subdue native unrest and protect Britons. The railway thus served as a tool of the colonial government to control India as they were "an essential strategic, defensive, subjugators and administrative 'tool'" for the Imperial Project.

Most of the railway construction was done by Indian companies supervised by British engineers. The system was heavily built, using a broad gauge, sturdy tracks and strong bridges. By 1900 India had a full range of rail services with diverse ownership and management, operating on broad, metre and narrow gauge networks. In 1900, the government took over the GIPR network, while the company continued to manage it. During the First World War, the railways were used to transport troops and grain to the ports of Bombay and Karachi en route to Britain, Mesopotamia, and East Africa. With shipments of equipment and parts from Britain curtailed, maintenance became much more difficult; critical workers entered the army; workshops were converted to making artillery; some locomotives and cars were shipped to the Middle East. The railways could barely keep up with the increased demand. By the end of the war, the railways had deteriorated for lack of maintenance and were not profitable. In 1923, both GIPR and EIR were nationalised.

Headrick shows that until the 1930s, both the Raj lines and the private companies hired only European supervisors, civil engineers, and even operating personnel, such as locomotive engineers. The hard physical labor was left to the Indians. The colonial government was chiefly concerned with the welfare of European workers, and any Indian deaths were "either ignored or merely mentioned as a cold statistical figure." The government's Stores Policy required that bids on railway contracts be made to the India Office in London, shutting out most Indian firms. The railway companies purchased most of their hardware and parts in Britain. There were railway maintenance workshops in India, but they were rarely allowed

to manufacture or repair locomotives. TISCO steel could not obtain orders for rails until the war emergency.

The Second World War severely crippled the railways as rolling stock was diverted to the Middle East, and the railway workshops were converted into munitions workshops. After independence in 1947, forty-two separate railway systems, including thirty-two lines owned by the former Indian princely states, were amalgamated to form a single nationalised unit named the *Indian Railways*.

India provides an example of the British Empire pouring its money and expertise into a very well-built system designed for military purposes (after the Mutiny of 1857), in the hope that it would stimulate industry. The system was overbuilt and too expensive for the small amount of freight traffic it carried. Christensen (1996), who looked at colonial purpose, local needs, capital, service, and private-versus-public interests, concluded that making the railways a creature of the state hindered success because railway expenses had to go through the same time-consuming and political budgeting process as did all other state expenses. Railway costs could therefore not be tailored to the current needs of the railways or of their passengers.

## **Irrigation**

The British Raj invested heavily in infrastructure, including canals and irrigation systems in addition to railways, telegraphy, roads and ports. The Ganges Canal reached 560 kilometres (350 miles) from Haridwar to Cawnpore (now Kanpur), and supplied thousands of kilometres of distribution

canals. By 1900 the Raj had the largest irrigation system in the world. One success story was Assam, a jungle in 1840 that by 1900 had 1,600,000 hectares (4,000,000 acres) under cultivation, especially in tea plantations. In all, the amount of irrigated land multiplied by a factor of eight. Historian David Gilmour says:

- By the 1870s the peasantry in the districts irrigated by the Ganges Canal were visibly better fed, housed and dressed than before; by the end of the century the new network of canals in the Punjab at producing even more prosperous peasantry there.

## **Policies**

In the second half of the 19th century, both the direct administration of India by the British Crown and the technological change ushered in by the industrial revolution had the effect of closely intertwining the economies of India and Great Britain. In fact many of the major changes in transport and communications (that are typically associated with Crown rule of India) had already begun before the Mutiny. Since Dalhousie had embraced the technological revolution underway in Britain, India too saw rapid development of all those technologies. Railways, roads, canals, and bridges were rapidly built in India and telegraph links equally rapidly established in order that raw materials, such as cotton, from India's hinterland could be transported more efficiently to ports, such as Bombay, for subsequent export to England. Likewise, finished goods from England, were transported back, just as efficiently, for sale in the burgeoning Indian markets. Massive railway projects were begun in earnest and

government railway jobs and pensions attracted a large number of upper caste Hindus into the civil services for the first time. The Indian Civil Service was prestigious and paid well. It remained politically neutral. Imports of British cotton covered 55% of the Indian market by 1875. Industrial production as it developed in European factories was unknown until the 1850s when the first cotton mills were opened in Bombay, posing a challenge to the cottage-based home production system based on family labour.

Taxes in India decreased during the colonial period for most of India's population; with the land tax revenue claiming 15% of India's national income during Mughal times compared with 1% at the end of the colonial period. The percentage of national income for the village economy increased from 44% during Mughal times to 54% by the end of colonial period. India's per capita GDP decreased from 1990 Int'l\$550 in 1700 to \$520 by 1857, although it later increased to \$618, by 1947.

## **Economic impact of the Raj**

Historians continue to debate whether the long-term intention of British rule was to accelerate the economic development of India, or to distort and retard it. In 1780, the conservative British politician Edmund Burke raised the issue of India's position: he vehemently attacked the East India Company, claiming that Warren Hastings and other top officials had ruined the Indian economy and society. Indian historian Rajat Kanta Ray (1998) continues this line of attack, saying the new economy brought by the British in the 18th century was a form of "plunder" and a catastrophe for the traditional economy of the Mughal Empire. Ray accuses the British of depleting the

food and money stocks and of imposing high taxes that helped cause the terrible Bengal famine of 1770, which killed a third of the people of Bengal.

2018 research by Indian economist Utsa Patnaik estimated the resources taken by the British to amount to \$45 trillion, taking India's export surplus earnings over the 173 year rule and compounding at a 5 per cent rate of interest.

P. J. Marshall shows that recent scholarship has reinterpreted the view that the prosperity of the formerly benign Mughal rule gave way to poverty and anarchy. He argues the British takeover did not make any sharp break with the past, which largely delegated control to regional Mughal rulers and sustained a generally prosperous economy for the rest of the 18th century. Marshall notes the British went into partnership with Indian bankers and raised revenue through local tax administrators and kept the old Mughal rates of taxation.

The East India Company inherited an onerous taxation system that took one-third of the produce of Indian cultivators. Instead of the Indian nationalist account of the British as alien aggressors, seizing power by brute force and impoverishing all of India, Marshall presents the interpretation (supported by many scholars in India and the West) that the British were not in full control but instead were players in what was primarily an Indian play and in which their rise to power depended upon excellent co-operation with Indian elites. Marshall admits that much of his interpretation is still highly controversial among many historians.

# Demography

The population of the territory that became the British Raj was 100 million by 1600 and remained nearly stationary until the 19th century. The population of the Raj reached 255 million according to the first census taken in 1881 of India.

Studies of India's population since 1881 have focused on such topics as total population, birth and death rates, growth rates, geographic distribution, literacy, the rural and urban divide, cities of a million, and the three cities with populations over eight million: Delhi, Greater Bombay, and Calcutta.

Mortality rates fell in the 1920–1945 era, primarily due to biological immunisation. Other factors included rising incomes and better living conditions, improved nutrition, a safer and cleaner environment, and better official health policies and medical care.

Severe overcrowding in the cities caused major public health problems, as noted in an official report from 1938:

- In the urban and industrial areas ... cramped sites, the high values of land and the necessity for the worker to live in the vicinity of his work ... all tend to intensify congestion and overcrowding. In the busiest centres houses are built close together, eave touching eave, and frequently back to back .... Space is so valuable that, in place of streets and roads, winding lanes provide the only approach to the houses. Neglect of sanitation is often evidenced by heaps of rotting garbage and pools of sewage, whilst



the absence of latrines enhance the general pollution of air and soil.

## **Famines, epidemics, public health**

- During the British Raj, India experienced some of the worst famines ever recorded, including the Great Famine of 1876–1878, in which 6.1 million to 10.3 million people died and the Indian famine of 1899–1900, in which 1.25 to 10 million people died. Recent research, including work by Mike Davis and Amartya Sen, argue that famines in India were made more severe by British policies in India.

The first cholera pandemic began in Bengal, then spread across India by 1820. Ten thousand British troops and countless Indians died during this pandemic. Estimated deaths in India between 1817 and 1860 exceeded 15 million. Another 23 million died between 1865 and 1917. The Third Pandemic of plague which started in China in the middle of the 19th century, eventually spread to all inhabited continents and killed 10 million people in India alone. Waldemar Haffkine, who mainly worked in India, became the first microbiologist to develop and deploy vaccines against cholera and bubonic plague. In 1925 the Plague Laboratory in Bombay was renamed the Haffkine Institute.

Fevers ranked as one of the leading causes of death in India in the 19th century. Britain's Sir Ronald Ross, working in the Presidency General Hospital in Calcutta, finally proved in 1898 that mosquitoes transmit malaria, while on assignment in the

Deccan at Secunderabad, where the Centre for Tropical and Communicable Diseases is now named in his honour.

In 1881 there were around 120,000 leprosy patients. The central government passed the Lepers Act of 1898, which provided legal provision for forcible confinement of leprosy sufferers in India. Under the direction of Mountstuart Elphinstone a program was launched to propagate smallpox vaccination. Mass vaccination in India resulted in a major decline in smallpox mortality by the end of the 19th century. In 1849 nearly 13% of all Calcutta deaths were due to smallpox. Between 1868 and 1907, there were approximately 4.7 million deaths from smallpox.

Sir Robert Grant directed his attention to establishing a systematic institution in Bombay for imparting medical knowledge to the natives. In 1860, Grant Medical College became one of the four recognised colleges for teaching courses leading to degrees (alongside Elphinstone College, Deccan College and Government Law College, Mumbai).

## **Education**

Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800–1859) presented his Whiggish interpretation of English history as an upward progression always leading to more liberty and more progress. Macaulay simultaneously was a leading reformer involved in transforming the educational system of India. He would base it on the English language so that India could join the mother country in a steady upward progress. Macaulay took Burke's emphasis on moral rule and implemented it in actual school reforms, giving the British Empire a profound moral mission to

"civilise the natives". Yale professor Karuna Mantena has argued that the civilising mission did not last long, for she says that benevolent reformers were the losers in key debates, such as those following the 1857 rebellion in India, and the scandal of Edward Eyre's brutal repression of the Morant Bay rebellion in Jamaica in 1865. The rhetoric continued but it became an alibi for British misrule and racism. No longer was it believed that the natives could truly make progress, instead, they had to be ruled by heavy hand, with democratic opportunities postponed indefinitely. As a result:

The central tenets of liberal imperialism were challenged as various forms of rebellion, resistance and instability in the colonies precipitated a broad-ranging reassessment....the equation of 'good government' with the reform of native society, which was at the core of the discourse of liberal empire, would be subject to mounting scepticism.

English historian Peter Cain, has challenged Mantena, arguing that the imperialists truly believed that British rule would bring to the subjects the benefits of 'ordered liberty', thereby Britain could fulfil its moral duty and achieve its own greatness. Much of the debate took place in Britain itself, and the imperialists worked hard to convince the general population that the civilising mission was well under-way. This campaign served to strengthen imperial support at home, and thus, says Cain, to bolster the moral authority of the gentlemanly elites who ran the Empire.

Universities in Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras were established in 1857, just before the Rebellion. By 1890 some 60,000 Indians had matriculated, chiefly in the liberal arts or law.

About a third entered public administration, and another third became lawyers. The result was a very well educated professional state bureaucracy. By 1887 of 21,000 mid-level civil services appointments, 45% were held by Hindus, 7% by Muslims, 19% by Eurasians (European father and Indian mother), and 29% by Europeans. Of the 1000 top-level civil services positions, almost all were held by Britons, typically with an Oxbridge degree. The government, often working with local philanthropists, opened 186 universities and colleges of higher education by 1911; they enrolled 36,000 students (over 90% men). By 1939 the number of institutions had doubled and enrolment reached 145,000. The curriculum followed classical British standards of the sort set by Oxford and Cambridge and stressed English literature and European history. Nevertheless, by the 1920s the student bodies had become hotbeds of Indian nationalism.

## **Missionary work**

In 1889, the prime minister of the United Kingdom, Robert Gascoyne-Cecil, 3rd Marquess of Salisbury stated, "It is not only our duty but is in our interest to promote the diffusion of Christianity as far as possible throughout the length and breadth of India."

The growth of the British Indian Army led to the arrival of many Anglican chaplains in India. Following the arrival of the Church of England's Church Mission Society in 1814, the Diocese of Calcutta of the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon (CIBC) was erected, with its St. Paul's Cathedral being built in 1847. By 1930, the Church of India, Burma and Ceylon had fourteen dioceses across the Indian Empire.

Missionaries from other Christian denominations came to British India as well; Lutheran missionaries, for example, arrived in Calcutta in 1836 and by "the year 1880 there were over 31,200 Lutheran Christians spread out in 1,052 villages". Methodists began arriving in India in 1783 and established missions with a focus on "education, health ministry, and evangelism". In the 1790s, Christians from the London Missionary Society and Baptist Missionary Society, began doing missionary work in the Indian Empire. In Neyoor, the London Missionary Society Hospital "pioneered improvements in the public health system for the treatment of diseases even before organised attempts were made by the colonial Madras Presidency, reducing the death rate substantially".

Christ Church College (1866) and St. Stephen's College (1881) are two examples of prominent church-affiliated educational institutions founded during the British Raj. Within educational institutions established during the British Raj, Christian texts, especially the Bible, were a part of the curricula. During the British Raj, Christian missionaries developed writing systems for Indian languages that previously did not have one. Christian missionaries in India also worked to increase literacy and also engaged in social activism, such as fighting against prostitution, championing the right of widowed women to remarry, and trying to stop early marriages for women. Among British women, zenana missions became a popular method to win converts to Christianity.

## **Legacy**

The old consensus among historians held that British imperial authority was quite secure from 1858 to World War II.

Recently, however, this interpretation has been challenged. For example Mark Condos and Jon Wilson argue that imperial authority was chronically insecure. Indeed the anxiety of generations of officials produced a chaotic administration with minimal coherence. Instead of a confident state capable of acting as it chose, these historians find a psychologically embattled one incapable of acting except in the abstract, small scale, or short term. Meanwhile, Durba Ghosh offers an alternative approach.

### **Ideological impact**

At independence and after the independence of India, the country has maintained such central British institutions as parliamentary government, one-person, one-vote and the rule of law through nonpartisan courts. It retained as well the institutional arrangements of the Raj such as the civil services, administration of sub-divisions, universities and stock exchanges. One major change was the rejection of its former separate princely states. Metcalf shows that over the course of two centuries, British intellectuals and Indian specialists made the highest priority bringing peace, unity and good government to India. They offered many competing methods to reach the goal. For example, Cornwallis recommended turning Bengali Zamindar into the sort of English landlords that controlled local affairs in England. Munro proposed to deal directly with the peasants. Sir William Jones and the Orientalists promoted Sanskrit, while Macaulay promoted the English language. Zinkin argues that in the long-run, what matters most about the legacy of the Raj is the British political ideologies which the Indians took over after 1947, especially the belief in unity, democracy, the rule of law and a certain equality beyond caste

and creed. Zinkin sees this not just in the Congress party but also among Hindu nationalists in the Bharatiya Janata Party, which specifically emphasises Hindu traditions.

## **Cultural impact**

The British colonisation of United India influenced Indian culture noticeably. The most noticeable influence is the English language which emerged as the administrative and lingua franca of India followed by the blend of native and gothic/sarcenic architecture. Similarly, the influence of the languages of India and culture can be seen on Britain, too; for example, many Indian words entering the English language, and also the adoption of Indian cuisine.

## **Chapter 30**

# **Partition of Bengal (1905), Swadeshi Movement and All-India Muslim League**

## **Partition of Bengal (1905)**

The first **Partition of Bengal** (1905) was a territorial reorganization of the Bengal Presidency implemented by the authorities of the British Raj. The reorganization separated the largely Muslim eastern areas from the largely Hindu western areas. Announced on 19 July 1905 by Lord Curzon, the then Viceroy of India, and implemented on 16 October 1905, it was undone a mere six years later.

The Hindus of West Bengal complained that the division would make them a minority in a province that would incorporate the province of Bihar and Orissa. Hindus were outraged at what they saw as a "divide and rule" policy, even though Curzon stressed it would produce administrative efficiency. The partition animated the Muslims to form their own national organization along on communal lines. To appease Bengali sentiment, Bengal was reunited by Lord Hardinge in 1911, in response to the Swadeshi movement's riots in protest against the policy.



## **Background**

The Bengal Presidency encompassed Bengal, Bihar, parts of Chhattisgarh, Orissa, and Assam. With a population of 78.5 million it was British India's largest province. For decades British officials had maintained that the huge size created difficulties in effective management and had caused neglect of the poorer eastern region. The idea of the partition had been brought up only for administrative reasons. Therefore, Curzon planned to split Orissa and Bihar and join fifteen eastern districts of Bengal with Assam. The eastern province held a population of 31 million, most of which was Muslim, with its centre at Dhaka. Once the Partition was completed Curzon pointed out that he thought of the new province as Muslim. Lord Curzon's intention was not specifically to divide Hindus from Muslims, but only to divide Bengalis. The Western districts formed the other province with Orissa and Bihar. The union of western Bengal with Orissa and Bihar reduced the speakers of the Bengali language to a minority. Muslims led by the Nawab Sallimullah of Dhaka supported the partition and Hindus opposed it.

## **Partition**

The English-educated middle class of Bengal saw this as a vivisection of their motherland as well as a tactic to diminish their authority. In the six-month period before the partition was to be effected the Congress arranged meetings where petitions against the partition were collected and given to impassive authorities. Surendranath Banerjee had suggested that the non-Bengali states of Orissa and Bihar be separated

from Bengal rather than dividing two parts of the Bengali speaking community, but Lord Curzon did not agree to this. Banerjee admitted that the petitions were ineffective; as the date for the partition drew closer, he began advocating tougher approaches such as boycotting British goods. He preferred to label this move as "swadeshi" instead of a boycott. The boycott was led by the moderates but minor rebel groups also sprouted under its cause.

Banerjee believed that other targets ought to be included. Government schools were spurned and on 16 October 1905, the day of partition, schools and shops were blockaded. The demonstrators were cleared off by units of the police and army. This was followed by violent confrontations, due to which the older leadership in the Congress became anxious and convinced the younger Congress members to stop boycotting the schools. The president of the Congress, G.K. Gokhale, Banerji and others stopped supporting the boycott when they found that John Morley had been appointed as Secretary of State for India. Believing that he would sympathise with the Indian middle class they trusted him and anticipated the reversal of the partition through his intervention not necessarily.

## **Political crisis**

The partition triggered radical nationalism.

Bengali Hindus were upset with their minority status in the new province. They began an angry agitation, featuring attack against unwanted government as younger members adopted the use of bombings, shootings, and assassinations in a blend of

religious and political feelings. Bengal was interpreted as the goddess which had been victimized by the British government. Although there were prominent Muslim speakers the Muslims were indifferent to the movement. The British government would have been spared from many complications had they not split Bengal. With each case of suppression, assertive nationalism increased in Bengal. Indian nationalism would have been more liberal in the absence of this partition.

Nationalists all over India supported the Bengali cause, and were shocked at the British disregard for public opinion and what they perceived as a "divide and rule" policy. The protests spread to Bombay, Poona, and Punjab. Lord Curzon had believed that the Congress was no longer an effective force but provided it with a cause to rally the public around and gain fresh strength from. The partition also caused embarrassment to the Indian National Congress. Gokhale had earlier met prominent British liberals, hoping to obtain constitutional reforms for India. The radicalization of Indian nationalism because of the partition would drastically lower the chances for the reforms. However, Gokhale successfully steered the more moderate approach in a Congress meeting and gained support for continuing talks with the government. In 1906 Gokhale again went to London to hold talks with Morley about the potential constitutional reforms. While the anticipation of the liberal nationalists increased in 1906 so did tensions in India. The moderates were challenged by the Congress meeting in Calcutta, which was in the middle of the radicalised Bengal. The moderates countered this problem by bringing Dadabhai Naoroji to the meeting. He defended the moderates in the Calcutta session and thus the unity of the Congress was maintained. The 1907 Congress was to be held at Nagpur. The

moderates were worried that the extremists would dominate the Nagpur session. The venue was shifted to the extremist free Surat. The resentful extremists flocked to the Surat meeting. There was an uproar and both factions held separate meetings. The extremists had Aurobindo and Tilak as leaders. They were isolated while the Congress was under the control of the moderates. The 1908 Congress Constitution formed the All-India Congress Committee, made up of elected members. Thronging the meetings would no longer work for the extremists.

## **Reunited Bengal (1911)**

The authorities, not able to end the protests, assented to reversing the partition. King George announced at Delhi Darbar on 12 December 1911 that eastern Bengal would be assimilated into the Bengal Presidency. Districts where Bengali was spoken were once again unified, and Assam, Bihar and Orissa were separated. The capital was shifted to New Delhi, clearly intended to provide the British colonial government with a stronger base. Muslims of Bengal were shocked because they had seen the Muslim majority East Bengal as an indicator of the government's enthusiasm for protecting Muslim interests. They saw this as the government compromising Muslim interests for Hindu appeasement and administrative ease.

The partition had not initially been supported by Muslim leaders. After the Muslim majority province of Eastern Bengal and Assam had been created prominent Muslims started seeing it as advantageous. Muslims, especially in Eastern Bengal, had been backward in the period of United Bengal. The Hindu

protest against the partition was seen as interference in a Muslim province. With the move of the capital to a Mughal site, the British tried to satisfy Bengali Muslims who were disappointed with losing hold of eastern Bengal.

## **Aftermath**

The uproar that had greeted Curzon's contentious move of splitting Bengal, as well as the emergence of the 'Extremist' faction in the Congress, became the final motive for separatist Muslim politics. In 1909, separate elections were established for Muslims and Hindus. Before this, many members of both communities had advocated national solidarity of all Bengalis. With separate electorates, distinctive political communities developed, with their own political agendas. Muslims, too, dominated the Legislature, due to their overall numerical strength of roughly twenty two to twenty eight million. Muslims began to demand the creation of independent states for Muslims, where their interests will be protected.

In 1947, Bengal was partitioned for the second time, solely on religious grounds, as part of the Partition of India following the formation of the nations India and Pakistan. In 1947, East Bengal became East Pakistan, and in 1971 became the independent state of Bangladesh.

## **Swadeshi movement**

The **Swadeshi movement** was part of the Indian independence movement and contributed to the development of Indian nationalism. After Partition of Bengal Swadeshi movement was

formally started from Town Hall Calcutta on 7 August 1905 to curb foreign goods by relying on domestic production. Swadeshi was a focus of Mahatma Gandhi, who described it as the soul of swaraj (self-rule). The movement took its vast size and shape after rich Indians donated money and land dedicated to Khadi & Gramodyog societies which started cloth production in every household. It also included other village industries so as to make village self sufficient and self reliant. Indian National Congress used this movement as arsenal for freedom struggle and ultimately on 15 August 1947, a hand spun Khadi 'tricolor ashok chakra' Indian flag was unfurled at 'Princess Park' near India Gate, New Delhi by Pandit Nehru.

The government's decision to partition Bengal was made in December 1903. The official reason was that Bengal, with a population of 78 million, was too large to be administered; the real reason, however, was that it was the center of the revolt and company officials could not control the protests which they thought would spread throughout India. Reappointed George Curzon, 1st Marquess Curzon of Kedleston Viceroy of India (1899–1905), in August 1904, he presided over the 1905 partition of Bengal.

In 'Lion and the Tiger : The Rise and Fall of the British Raj, 1600-1947', Denis Judd wrote: "Curzon had hoped... to bind India permanently to the Raj. Ironically, his partition of Bengal, and the bitter controversy that followed, did much to revitalize Congress. Curzon, typically, had dismissed the Congress in 1900 as 'tottering to its fall'. But he left India with Congress more active and effective than at any time in its history."

Bengal was divided by language and religion: the western half would be primarily Hindu, and the eastern half would be primarily Muslim. This divide-and-conquer strategy sparked the Swadeshi movement. British reunited Bengal in 1911 and shifted their capital to New Delhi. Swadeshi movement took new definition after reunification event.

## **Timeline**

Swadeshi Movement has been characterized as cloth production in India. It originated from Bengal because the sentiments due to closed down domestic cloth industry was very high. In 1757 East India Company exported muslin cloth to Europe but by 1857 they had conspired and crushed local cloth industry by cutting the thumbs of spinners who used to spin fine muslin cloth (exceeding 200 counts) in order to make way for English cloth which was not as fine as Indian hand spun cloth.

- 1850–1904: Dadabhai Naoroji, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Ganesh Vyankatesh Joshi, and Bhaswat K. Nigoni began organizing to promote Indian nationalism (the First Swadeshi Movement).
- 1871-1872: Namdhari Sikhs boycotted English cloth in Punjab. Ram Singh Kuka boycotted English cloths, education and courts and instead promoted hand spun cloths 'khaddar', vernacular education and khap panchayats.
- 1905–1917: The movement opposed the 1905 Partition of Bengal, which was ordered by Lord Curzon. Revolutionary groups in form of local clubs

grew. Anushilan Samitee and Jugantar Party made attempts of arm revolts and assassination of notorious administrators.

- 1918–1947: The movement was further strengthened by Mahatma Gandhi when he took a pledge to boycott foreign goods by burning 150,000 English cloths at Elphinstone Mill Compound, Parel, Mumbai on 31 July 1921. Mahatma Gandhi organized Khadi spinning centres all over the country and branded Khadi spinners as freedom fighters.

Indians started ditching British goods for Indian products, even though they were costlier. The impact was strong with British seeing 20% fall in its product sales. The trio of Lal-Bal-Pal organized several samitis, Bal Gangadhar Tilak led Ganesh Utsavs as a means to popularize use and consumption of indigenous products from soil to sweets. Another notable figure in Swadeshi movement, largely forgotten now, is Chidambaram Pillai in Tuticorin took over British India Steam Navigation Company and converted it into Indian-owned shipping company and named it **Swadeshi Shipping Company** in October 1906.

## **Influence**

According to a 1999 article, E. F. Schumacher (author of *Small Is Beautiful*) was influenced by Gandhi's concept of Swadeshi. On 7 August 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi commemorated the first annual National Handloom Day in India to promote indigenous handloom and khadi products. The date was chosen because on 7 August 1905, the Swadeshi movement was proclaimed to avoid foreign goods and use only



Indian-made products. Shripad Naik, minister of state for the Ministry of AYUSH, promoted Swadeshi Shopping (a marketplace for small and medium-sized enterprises) in 2017 as part of the government's Make in India initiative.

## Legacy

- In 1982 the movie Gandhi (film) by Richard Attenborough, Gandhi gives a speech outside a Fort and immediately thereafter spectators take a vow on the bonfire of English cloths to wear **swadeshi khadi**.
- In 2019 the movie Manikarnika: The Queen of Jhansi (film) by Kangana Ranaut on the Queen, who fought valiantly with English in 1857, vivaciously created khadi ( hand spun fabrics ) in cotton, brocade and paithani were crafted to mark the **spirit of swadeshi** with freedom struggle.
- In July 2020 Tooter is a new social media platform that was launched which is a cross-over between Facebook and Twitter. The social media platform has now garnered attention for calling itself the **Swadeshi Andolan 2.0**.
- On 14 May 2020 Home Minister Amit Shah announced that all Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) canteens across the country from June 1 will mandatory stock all goods amounting to around Rs 2800 crore from **Swadeshi brands**.
- On 18 August 2020 IT minister Ravi Shankar Prasad on Tuesday announced **Swadeshi Microprocessor**

**Challenge** with award money of Rs 4.3 crore to key challenges after ban on Chinese investments.

- In July 2020 **Digital Atamnirbhar Bharat App Innovation Challenge** announced CaptionPlus, Meme Chat and FTC Talent as winners for mobile in entertainment category followed by Logically and IsEqualTo in news and Hitwicket Superstars, ScarFall and WCC2 in games categories respectively. These are Made-in-India mobile applications among 24 which have been declared as winners under Digital India initiative.
- On 17 July 2021 at the 18th Investiture Ceremony of the Border Security Force (BSF), Home Minister Amit Shah said that the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and other agencies are working on an anti-drone **swadeshi technology** to deal with this danger of "Smuggling of drugs, arms, and explosives by drones has become a major challenge.
- On 25 July 2021 Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed the nation through the 79th episode of his monthly radio programme 'Mann Ki Baat' encouraging the people to buy Indian arts and crafts and attributed the increase in sales of khadi to its Indian patrons. "To buy khadi is to serve the people and the country #myhandloommypride should be used when you buy and post it online. He also reminded the celebration of National Handloom Day on August 7 "When the **Swadeshi movement** was launched years ago, many of our artisans were associated with it."

- On 28 July 2021 Bangalore based GoCoop, India's first online marketplace for artisans and weavers is hosting **Go Swadeshi**, an exhibition showcasing handcrafted weaves from 30,000+ artisans, 12,000+ woman showcasing their largest collection of handmade textiles from India with over 70,000 products across sarees, apparel, accessories, home furnishings and fabrics. In 2015, GoCoop was the winner of Govt. of India's first National Award for Handlooms marketing (eCommerce) 2015.

## **All-India Muslim League**

The **All-India Muslim League** (popularised as the **Muslim League**) was a political party established in 1906 in British India. Its strong advocacy, from 1930 onwards, for the establishment of a separate Muslim-majority nation-state, Pakistan, successfully led to the partition of India in 1947 by the British Empire.

The party arose out of a literary movement begun at The Aligarh Muslim University and was formed in Dhaka (now in Bangladesh) many years after the death of Syed Ahmad Khan who was a central figure for the formation of the university. It remained an elitist organization until 1937 when the leadership began mobilising the Muslim masses and the league then became a popular organization.

In the 1930s, the idea of a separate nation-state and influential philosopher Sir Muhammad Iqbal's vision of uniting the four provinces in North-West British India further supported the rationale of the two-nation theory aligning with

the same ideas proposed by Syed Ahmad Khan who in 1888 at Meerut said, "After this long preface I wish to explain what method my nation — nay, rather the whole people of this country — ought to pursue in political matters. I will treat in regular sequence of the political questions of India, in order that you may have full opportunity of giving your attention to them. The first of all is this — In whose hands shall the administration and the Empire of India rest? Now, suppose that all English, and the whole English army, were to leave India, taking with them all their cannon and their splendid weapons and everything, then who would be rulers of India? Is it possible that under these circumstances two nations — the Mahomedans and the Hindus — could sit on the same throne and remain equal in power? Most certainly not. It is necessary that one of them should conquer the other and thrust it down. To hope that both could remain equal is to desire the impossible and the inconceivable." With global events leading up to World War II and the Congress party's effective protest against the United Kingdom unilaterally involving India in the war without consulting the Indian people, the Muslim League went on to support the British war efforts. The Muslim League played a decisive role in the 1940s, becoming a driving force behind the division of India along religious lines and the creation of Pakistan as a Muslim state in 1947.

After the partition and subsequent establishment of Pakistan, All-India Muslim League was formally disbanded in India and the leftover Muslim League diminished to a minor party, that too only in Kerala, India. In Bangladesh, the Muslim League was revived in 1976 but it was reduced in size, rendering it insignificant in the political arena. In India, a separate independent entity called the Indian Union Muslim League was

formed, which continues to have a presence in the Indian parliament to this day. In Pakistan, the Pakistan Muslim League eventually split into several political parties, which became the successors of the All-India Muslim League.

## **History**

### **Foundation**

With the sincere efforts by the pioneers of the Congress to attract Muslims to their sessions the majority of the Islamic leadership, with exception of few scholars like Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Syed Ameer Ali, who focused more on Islamic education and scientific developments, rejected the notion that India's has two distinct communities to be represented separately Congress sessions.

In 1886, Sir Syed founded the Muhammadan Educational Conference, but a self-imposed ban prevented it from discussing politics. Its original goal was to advocate for British education, especially science and literature, among India's Muslims. The conference, in addition to generating funds for Sir Syed's Aligarh Muslim University, motivated the Muslim upper class to propose an expansion of educational uplift elsewhere, known as the Aligarh Movement. In turn, this new awareness of Muslim needs helped stimulate a political consciousness among Muslim elites, For a few of them, many years after the death of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan the All-India Muslim League was formed in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

The formation of a Muslim political party on the national level was seen as essential by 1901. The first stage of its formation

was the meeting held at Lucknow in September 1906, with the participation of representatives from all over India. The decision for the re-consideration to form the all-Indian Muslim political party was taken and further proceedings were adjourned until the next meeting of the All India Muhammadan Educational Conference. The Simla Deputation reconsidered the issue in October 1906 and decided to frame the objectives of the party on the occasion of the annual meeting of the Educational Conference, which was scheduled to be held in Dhaka. Meanwhile, Nawab Salimullah Khan published a detailed scheme through which he suggested the party to be named All-India Muslim Confederacy.

Pursuant to the decisions taken earlier at the Lucknow meeting and later in Simla, the annual meeting of the All-India Muhammadan Educational Conference was held in Dhaka from 27 December until 30 December 1906. Three thousand delegates attended, headed by both Nawab Waqar-ul-Mulk Kamboh and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk (the Secretary of the Muhammadan Educational Conference), in which they explained its objectives and stressed the unity of Muslims under the banner of an association. It was formally proposed by Nawab Salimullah Khan and supported by Hakim Ajmal Khan, Maulana Muhammad Ali Jauhar, Zafar Ali Khan, Syed Nabiullah, a barrister from Lucknow, and Syed Zahur Ahmad, an eminent lawyer, as well as several others.

### **Separate electorates**

The Muslim League's insistence on separate electorates and reserved seats in the Imperial Council were granted in the Indian Councils Act after the League held protests in India and

lobbied London. The draft proposals for the reforms communicated on 1 October 1908 provided Muslims with reserved seats in all councils, with nominations only being maintained in Punjab. The communication displayed how much the Government had accommodated Muslim demands and showed an increase in Muslim representation in the Imperial and provincial legislatures. But the Muslim League's demands were only fully met in UP and Madras. However, the Government did accept the idea of separate electorates. The idea had not been accepted by the Secretary of State, who proposed mixed electoral colleges, causing the Muslim League to agitate and the Muslim press to protest what they perceived to be a betrayal of the Viceroy's assurance to the Simla deputation.

On 23 February Morley told the House of Lords that Muslims demanded separate representation and accepted them. This was the League's first victory. But the Indian Councils Bill did not fully satisfy the demands of the Muslim League. It was based on the October 1908 communique in which Muslims were only given a few reserved seats. The Muslim League's London branch opposed the bill and in a debate obtained the support of several parliamentarians. In 1909 the members of the Muslim League organised a Muslim protest. The Reforms Committee of Minto's council believed that Muslims had a point and advised Minto to discuss with some Muslim leaders. The Government offered a few more seats to Muslims in compromise but would not agree to fully satisfy the League's demand.

Minto believed that the Muslims had been given enough while Morley was still not certain because of the pressure Muslims

could apply on the government. The Muslim League's central committee once again demanded separate electorates and more representation on 12 September 1909. While Minto was opposed, Morley feared that the Bill would not pass parliament without the League's support and he once again discussed Muslim representation with the League leadership. This was successful. The Aga Khan compromised so that Muslims would have two more reserved seats in the Imperial Council. The Muslim League hesitantly accepted the compromise.

## **Early years**

Sultan Muhammad Shah (Aga Khan III) was appointed the first honorary president of the Muslim League, though he did not attend the Dhaka inaugural session. There were also six vice-presidents, a secretary, and two joint secretaries initially appointed for a three-year term, proportionately from different provinces. The League's constitution was framed in 1907, espoused in the "Green Book," written by Maulana Mohammad Ali.

Aga Khan III shared Ahmad Khan's belief that Muslims should first build up their social capital through advanced education before engaging in politics, but would later boldly tell the British Raj that Muslims must be considered a separate nation within India. Even after he resigned as president of the AIML in 1912, he still exerted a major influence on its policies and agendas. In 1913, Mohammed Ali Jinnah joined the Muslim league.

Intellectual support and a cadre of young activists emerged from Aligarh Muslim University. Historian Mushirul Hasan



writes that in the early 20th century, this Muslim institution, designed to prepare students for service to the British Raj, exploded into political activity. Until 1939, the faculty and students supported an all-India nationalist movement. After 1939, however, sentiment shifted dramatically toward a Muslim separatist movement, as students and faculty mobilised behind Jinnah and the Muslim League.

### **Communalism grows**

Politically, there was a degree of unity between Muslim and Hindu leaders after World War I, as typified by the Khilafat Movement. Relationships cooled sharply after that campaign ended in 1922. Communalism grew rapidly, forcing the two groups apart. Major riots broke out in numerous cities, including 91 between 1923 and 1927 in Uttar Pradesh alone. At the leadership level, the proportion of Muslims among delegates to the Congress party fell sharply, from 11% in 1921 to under 4% in 1923.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah became disillusioned with politics after the failure of his attempt to form a Hindu-Muslim alliance, and he spent most of the 1920s in Britain. The leadership of the League was taken over by Sir Muhammad Iqbal, who in 1930 first put forward the demand for a separate Muslim state in India. The "Two-Nation Theory", the belief that Hindus and Muslims were two different nations who could not live in one country, gained popularity among Muslims. The two-state solution was rejected by the Congress leaders, who favoured a united India based on composite national identity. Congress at all times rejected "communalism" — that is, basing politics on religious identity. Iqbal's policy of uniting the North-West

Frontier Province, Baluchistan, Punjab, and Sindh into a new Muslim majority state became part of the League's political platform.

The League rejected the Committee report (the Nehru Report), arguing that it gave too little representation (only one quarter) to Muslims, established Devanagari as the official writing system of the colony, and demanded that India turn into a *de facto* unitary state, with residuary powers resting at the centre – the League had demanded at least one-third representation in the legislature and sizeable autonomy for the Muslim provinces. Jinnah reported a "parting of the ways" after his requests for minor amendments to the proposal were denied outright, and relations between the Congress and the League began to sour.

## **Conception of Pakistan**

On 29 December 1930, Sir Muhammad Iqbal delivered his monumental presidential address to the All-India Muslim League annual session. He said:

I would like to see the Punjab, North-West Frontier Province [modern-day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa], Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single State. Self-government within the British Empire or without the British Empire, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to me to be the final destiny of the Muslims, at least of North-West India.

Sir Muhammad Iqbal did not use the word "Pakistan" in his address. Some scholars argued that "Iqbal never pleaded for any kind of partition of the country. Rather he was an ardent

proponent of a 'true' federal setup for India..., and wanted a consolidated Muslim majority within the Indian Federation".

Another Indian historian, Tara Chand, also held that Iqbal was not thinking in terms of partition of India, but in terms of a federation of autonomous states within India. Dr. Safdar Mehmood also asserted in a series of articles that in the Allahabad address, Iqbal proposed a Muslim majority province within an Indian federation and not an independent state outside an Indian Federation.

On 28 January 1933, Choudhary Rahmat Ali, founder of the Pakistan National Movement, voiced his ideas in the pamphlet entitled "Now or Never; Are We to Live or Perish Forever?" In a subsequent book, Rehmat Ali discussed the etymology in further detail. 'Pakistan' is both a Persian and an Urdu word and literally means the land of the pure. It is composed of letters taken from the names of all our South Asia homelands; that is, Punjab, Afghanistan, Kashmir, Sindh and Balochistan. It means the land of the Pure".

The British and the Indian Press vehemently criticised these two different schemes and created confusion about the authorship of the word "Pakistan" to such an extent that even Jawaharlal Nehru had to write:

Iqbal was one of the early advocates of Pakistan and yet he appears to have realised its inherent danger and absurdity. Edward Thompson has written that in the course of a conversation, Iqbal told him that he had advocated Pakistan because of his position as President of Muslim League session, but he felt sure that it would be injurious to India as a whole and to Muslims especially.

## **Campaign for Pakistan**

Until 1937, the Muslim League had remained an organisation of elite Indian Muslims. The Muslim League leadership then began mass mobilisation and it then became a popular party with the Muslim masses in the 1940s, especially after the Lahore Resolution. Under Jinnah's leadership, its membership grew to over two million and became more religious and even separatist in its outlook.

The Muslim League's earliest base was the United Provinces, where they successfully mobilised the religious community in the late 1930s. Jinnah worked closely with local politicians, however, there was a lack of uniform political voice by the League during the 1938–1939 Madhe Sahaba riots in Lucknow. From 1937 onwards, the Muslim League and Jinnah attracted large crowds throughout India in its processions and strikes.

At a League conference in Lahore in 1940, Jinnah said:

Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literature... It is quite clear that Hindus and Mussalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, different heroes and different episodes ... To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state.

In Lahore, the Muslim League formally recommitted itself to creating an independent Muslim state which would include Sindh, Punjab, Baluchistan, the North West Frontier Province,

and Bengal, and which would be "wholly autonomous and sovereign". The Lahore Resolution, moved by the sitting Chief Minister of Bengal A. K. Fazlul Huq, was adopted on 23 March 1940, and its principles formed the foundation for Pakistan's first constitution. In the Indian provincial elections of 1946, the Muslim League won 425 out of 476 seats reserved for Muslims (and about 89.2% of Muslim votes) on a policy of creating the independent state of Pakistan, and with an implied threat of secession if this was not granted. Congress, led by Gandhi and Nehru, remained adamantly opposed to dividing India.

In opposition to the Lahore Resolution, the All India Azad Muslim Conference gathered in Delhi in April 1940 to voice its support for a united India. Its members included several Islamic organisations in India, as well as 1400 nationalist Muslim delegates; the "attendance at the Nationalist meeting was about five times than the attendance at the League meeting." The All-India Muslim League worked to try to silence those Muslims who stood against the partition of India, often using "intimidation and coercion".

For example, Deobandi scholar Maulana Syed Husain Ahmad Madani traveled across British India, spreading the idea he wrote about in his book, *Composite Nationalism and Islam*, which stood for Hindu-Muslim unity and opposed the concept of a partition of India; while he was doing this, members of the pro-separatist Muslim League attacked Madani and disturbed his rallies. The murder of the All India Azad Muslim Conference leader Allah Bakhsh Soomro also made it easier for the All-India Muslim League to demand the creation of Pakistan.

## **Role in communal violence**

In the British Indian province of Sind, the historian Ayesha Jalal describes the actions that the pro-separatist Muslim League used in order to spread communal division and undermine the elected government of Allah Bakhsh Soomro, which stood for a united India:

Even before the 'Pakistan' demand was articulated, the dispute over the Sukkur Manzilgah had been fabricated by provincial Leaguers to unsettle Allah Bakhsh Soomro's ministry which was dependent on support from the Congress and Independent Party. Intended as a way station for Mughal troops on the move, the Manzilgah included a small mosque which had been subsequently abandoned. On a small island in the near distance was the temple of Saad Bela, sacred space for the large number of Hindus settled on the banks of the Indus at Sukkur. The symbolic convergence of the identity and sovereignty over a forgotten mosque provided ammunition for those seeking office at the provincial level. Making an issue out of a non-issue, the Sind Muslim League in early June 1939 formally reclaimed the mosque. Once its deadline of 1 October 1939 for the restoration of the mosque to Muslims had passed, the League started an agitation. In the few years before the partition, the Muslim League "monetarily subsidized" mobs that engaged in communal violence against Hindus and Sikhs in the areas of Multan, Rawalpindi, Campbellpur, Jhelum and Sargodha, as well as in the Hazara District. The Muslim League paid assassins money for every Hindu and Sikh they murdered. As such, leaders of the Muslim League, including Muhammad

Ali Jinnah, issued no condemnation of the violence against Hindus and Sikhs in the Punjab.

## **Impact on the future courses of the Subcontinent**

### **Pakistan**

After the partition of the British Indian Empire, the Muslim League played a major role in giving birth to modern conservatism in Pakistan and the introduction of the democratic process in the country. The Pakistani incarnation was originally led by the founder of Pakistan, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and later by Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan, but suffered from ill-fate following the military intervention in 1958. One of its factions remained supportive of President Ayub Khan until 1962, when all factions decided to reform into the Pakistan Muslim League led by Nurul Amin, and to support Fatima Jinnah in the presidential elections in 1965. Furthermore, it was the only party to have received votes from both East and West Pakistan during the elections held in 1970. During the successive periods of Pakistan, the Pakistan Muslim League went on to be one of the ruling parties holding alternating power within the nation.

### **India**

After the partition of India in 1947, the All-India Muslim League was disbanded. It was succeeded by Indian Union Muslim League in the new India.

Indian Union Muslim League contests Indian General Elections under the Indian Constitution. The party has always had a constant, if small presence, in the Indian Parliament. The party has had two members in every Lower House from the third to the 16th House, with the exception of the Second, in which it had no members, and the fourth, in which it had three members. The party had a single member in the 14th Lower House. The party currently has four members in Parliament. The party is currently a part of the United Progressive Alliance in national level.

Indian Union Muslim League is recognized by the Election Commission of India as a State Party in Kerala. The party is a major member of the opposition United Democratic Front, the Indian National Congress-lead pre-poll state-level alliance in Kerala. Whenever the United Democratic Front rules in Kerala, the party leaders are chosen as important Cabinet Ministers.

## **Bangladesh**

The Muslim League formed its government in East Bengal immediately after the partition of Bengal, with Nurul Amin becoming the first Chief Minister.

Problems in East Pakistan for the Muslim League began to rise following the issue of the Constitution of Pakistan. Furthermore, the Bengali Language Movement proved to be the last event that led the Muslim League to lose its mandate in East Bengal. The Muslim League's national conservatism program also faced several setbacks and resistance from the Communist Party of Pakistan. In an interview given to print media, Nurul Amin stated that the communists had played an



integral and major role in staging the massive protests, mass demonstrations, and strikes for the Bengali Language Movement. All over the country, the political parties had favoured the general elections in Pakistan with the exception of the Muslim League. In 1954, legislative elections were to be held for the Parliament. Unlike in West Punjab, not all of the Hindu population migrated to India, instead a large number stayed in the state. The influence of the Communist Party deepened, and its goal of attaining power was finally realised during the elections. The United Front, the Communist Party, and the Awami League returned to power, inflicting a severe defeat to the Muslim League. Out of 309, the Muslim League only won 10 seats, whereas the Communist Party got 4 seats of the ten contested. The communists working with other parties had secured 22 additional seats, totalling 26. The right-wing Jamaat-e-Islami had completely failed in the elections.

In 1955, the United Front named Abu Hussain Sarkar as the Chief Minister of the State and he ruled the state in two non-consecutive terms until 1958, when martial law was imposed. The Muslim League remained as a minor party in East Pakistan but participated with full rigour during the Pakistan general elections in 1970. It won 10 seats from East Pakistan and 7 seats from other parts of Pakistan. After the independence of Bangladesh, the Muslim League was revived in 1976 but its size was reduced, rendering it insignificant in the political arena.

## **United Kingdom**

During the 1940s, the Muslim League had a United Kingdom chapter active in the British politics. After the establishment of

Pakistan, the Pakistani community's leaders took over the UK branch, choosing Zubeida Habib Rahimtoola as president of the party to continue to serve its purpose in the United Kingdom. At present, the Muslim League's UK branch is led by the PML-N, with Zubair Gull as its president.

## **Historical versions**

Historically, Pakistan Muslim League can also refer to any of the following political parties in Pakistan:

- Muslim League, the original successor of the All-India Muslim League, which was disbanded during the first martial law.
- Convention Muslim League, a political platform created by General Ayub Khan in 1962 when he became the president.
- Council Muslim League, a party created by political leaders who opposed General Ayub Khan.
- Muslim League, a party created by Khan Abdul Qayyum Khan when he split with the *Council Muslim League* to run for the 1970 general elections.

## **Chapter 31**

# **Bipin Chandra Pal, Rabindranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda**

## **Bipin Chandra Pal**

- **Bipin Chandra Pal** (7 November 1858 – 20 May 1932) was an Indian nationalist, writer, orator, social reformer and Indian independence movement freedom fighter. He was one third of the “Lal Bal Pal” triumvirate. Pal was one of the main architects of the Swadeshi movement along with Sri Aurobindo. He also opposed the partition of Bengal by the British colonial government.

## **Early life and background**

Bipin Chandra Pal was born in the village of Poil, Habiganj, Sylhet District, Bengal Presidency of British India, in a Hindu Bengali Kayastha family. His father was Ramchandra Pal, a Persian scholar, and small landowner. He studied and taught at the Church Mission Society College (now the St. Paul's Cathedral Mission College), an affiliated college of the University of Calcutta. His son was Nirranjan Pal, one of the founders of Bombay Talkies. His son-in-law was the ICS officer, S. K. Dey, who later became a union minister. His another son-in-law was freedom fighter Ullaskar Dutta who

married Lila Dutta his childhood love interest after many circumstances at their last age.

Family of Bipin Chandra Pal

Son - Niranjan Pal(founder of Bombay Takies)

Grandson- Colin pal (writer of Shooting Star) film directer

Great Grandson - Deep pal (studycame camerawork)

As revolutionary as he was in politics, Pal was the same in his private life as well. After his first wife died, he married a widow and joined the Brahmo Samaj.

## **Work**

Pal is known as the *Father of Revolutionary Thoughts* in India and was one of the freedom fighters of India. Pal became a major leader of the Indian National Congress. At the Madras session of Indian National Congress held in 1887, Bipin Chandra Pal made a strong plea for repeal of the Arms Act which was discriminatory in nature. Along with Lala Lajpat Rai and Bal Gangadhar Tilak he belonged to the Lal-Bal-Pal trio that was associated with revolutionary activity. Sri Aurobindo Ghosh and Pal were recognised as the chief exponents of a new national movement revolving around the ideals of Purna Swaraj, Swadeshi, boycott and national education. His programme consisted of Swadeshi, boycott and national education. He preached and encouraged the use of Swadeshi and the boycott of foreign goods to eradicate poverty and

unemployment. He wanted to remove social evils from the form and arouse the feelings of nationalism through national criticism. He had no faith in mild protests in the form of non-cooperation with the British colonial government. On that one issue, the assertive nationalist leader had nothing common with Mahatma Gandhi. During the last six years of his life, he parted company with the Congress and led a secluded life. Sri Aurobindo referred to him as one of *mightiest prophets of nationalism*. Bipin Chandra Pal made his efforts to remove social and economic ills. He opposed caste system and advocated widow remarriage. He advocated 48 hours of work week and demanded for the hike in wages of workers. He expressed his disdain for Gandhi's ways, which he criticised for being rooted in "magic" instead of "logic".

As a journalist, Pal worked for *Bengal Public Opinion*, *The Tribune* and *New India*, where he propagated his brand of nationalism. He wrote several articles warning India of the changes happening in China and other geopolitical situations. In one of his writings, describing where the future danger for India will come from, Pal wrote under the title "Our Real Danger".

## Rabindranath Tagore

**Rabindranath Tagore**<sup>FRAS</sup> born **Robindronath Thakur**, 7 May 1861 – 7 August 1941; sobriquet **Gurudev**, **Kobiguru**, **Bishokobi**) was a Bengali polymath – poet, writer, playwright, composer, philosopher, social reformer and painter. He reshaped Bengali literature and music as well as Indian art with Contextual Modernism in the late 19th and early 20th

centuries. Author of the "profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse" of *Gitanjali*, he became in 1913 the first non-European to win the Nobel Prize in Literature. Tagore's poetic songs were viewed as spiritual and mercurial; however, his "elegant prose and magical poetry" remain largely unknown outside Bengal. He is sometimes referred to as "the Bard of Bengal".

A Bengali Brahmin from Calcutta with ancestral gentry roots in Burdwan district and Jessore, Tagore wrote poetry as an eight-year-old. At the age of sixteen, he released his first substantial poems under the pseudonym *Bhānusiṃha* ("Sun Lion"), which were seized upon by literary authorities as long-lost classics. By 1877 he graduated to his first short stories and dramas, published under his real name. As a humanist, universalist, internationalist, and ardent anti-nationalist, he denounced the British Raj and advocated independence from Britain. As an exponent of the Bengal Renaissance, he advanced a vast canon that comprised paintings, sketches and doodles, hundreds of texts, and some two thousand songs; his legacy also endures in the institution he founded, Visva-Bharati University.

Tagore modernised Bengali art by spurning rigid classical forms and resisting linguistic strictures. His novels, stories, songs, dance-dramas, and essays spoke to topics political and personal. *Gitanjali* (*Song Offerings*), *Gora* (*Fair-Faced*) and *Ghare-Baire* (*The Home and the World*) are his best-known works, and his verse, short stories, and novels were acclaimed—or panned—for their lyricism, colloquialism, naturalism, and unnatural contemplation. His compositions were chosen by two nations as national anthems: India's "Jana

Gana Mana" and Bangladesh's "Amar Shonar Bangla". The Sri Lankan national anthem was inspired by his work.

## Family history

The original surname of the Tagores was Kushari. They were Rarhi Brahmins and originally belonged to a village named *Kush* in the district named Burdwan in West Bengal. The biographer of Rabindranath Tagore, Prabhat Kumar Mukhopadhyaya wrote in the first volume of his book *Rabindrajibani O Rabindra Sahitya Prabeshak* that

The Kusharis were the descendants of Deen Kushari, the son of Bhatta Narayana; Deen was granted a village named Kush (in Burdwan zilla) by Maharaja Kshitisura, he became its chief and came to be known as Kushari.

## Life and events

### Early life: 1861–1878

- The youngest of 13 surviving children, Tagore (nicknamed "Rabi") was born Robindronath Thakur on 7 May 1861 in the Jorasanko mansion in Calcutta, the son of Debendranath Tagore (1817–1905) and Sarada Devi (1830–1875).

Tagore was raised mostly by servants; his mother had died in his early childhood and his father travelled widely. The Tagore family was at the forefront of the Bengal renaissance. They hosted the publication of literary magazines; theatre and

recitals of Bengali and Western classical music featured there regularly. Tagore's father invited several professional Dhrupad musicians to stay in the house and teach Indian classical music to the children. Tagore's oldest brother Dwijendranath was a philosopher and poet. Another brother, Satyendranath, was the first Indian appointed to the elite and formerly all-European Indian Civil Service. Yet another brother, Jyotirindranath, was a musician, composer, and playwright. His sister Swarnakumari became a novelist. Jyotirindranath's wife Kadambari Devi, slightly older than Tagore, was a dear friend and powerful influence. Her abrupt suicide in 1884, soon after he married, left him profoundly distraught for years.

Tagore largely avoided classroom schooling and preferred to roam the manor or nearby Bolpur and Panihati, which the family visited. His brother Hemendranath tutored and physically conditioned him—by having him swim the Ganges or trek through hills, by gymnastics, and by practising judo and wrestling. He learned drawing, anatomy, geography and history, literature, mathematics, Sanskrit, and English—his least favourite subject. Tagore loathed formal education—his scholarly travails at the local Presidency College spanned a single day. Years later he held that proper teaching does not explain things; proper teaching stokes curiosity:

After his *upanayan* (coming-of-age rite) at age eleven, Tagore and his father left Calcutta in February 1873 to tour India for several months, visiting his father's Santiniketan estate and Amritsar before reaching the Himalayan hill station of Dalhousie. There Tagore read biographies, studied history, astronomy, modern science, and Sanskrit, and examined the classical poetry of Kālidāsa. During his 1-month stay at



Amritsar in 1873 he was greatly influenced by melodious gurbani and nanak bani being sung at Golden Temple for which both father and son were regular visitors. He mentions about this in his *My Reminiscences* (1912)

The golden temple of Amritsar comes back to me like a dream. Many a morning have I accompanied my father to this Gurudarbar of the Sikhs in the middle of the lake. There the sacred chanting resounds continually. My father, seated amidst the throng of worshippers, would sometimes add his voice to the hymn of praise, and finding a stranger joining in their devotions they would wax enthusiastically cordial, and we would return loaded with the sanctified offerings of sugar crystals and other sweets.

He wrote 6 poems relating to Sikhism and a number of articles in Bengali children's magazine about Sikhism.

Tagore returned to Jorosanko and completed a set of major works by 1877, one of them a long poem in the Maithili style of Vidyapati. As a joke, he claimed that these were the lost works of newly discovered 17th-century Vaiṣṇava poet Bhānusiṃha. Regional experts accepted them as the lost works of the fictitious poet. He debuted in the short-story genre in Bengali with "Bhikharini" ("The Beggar Woman"). Published in the same year, *Sandhya Sangit* (1882) includes the poem "Nirjharer Swapnabhanga" ("The Rousing of the Waterfall").

### **Shelaidaha: 1878–1901**

- Because Debendranath wanted his son to become a barrister, Tagore enrolled at a public school in Brighton, East Sussex, England in 1878. He stayed

for several months at a house that the Tagore family owned near Brighton and Hove, in Medina Villas; in 1877 his nephew and niece—Suren and Indira Devi, the children of Tagore's brother Satyendranath—were sent together with their mother, Tagore's sister-in-law, to live with him. He briefly read law at University College London, but again left school, opting instead for independent study of Shakespeare's plays *Coriolanus*, and *Antony and Cleopatra* and the *Religio Medici* of Thomas Browne. Lively English, Irish, and Scottish folk tunes impressed Tagore, whose own tradition of Nidhubabu-authored *kirtans* and *tappas* and Brahmo hymnody was subdued. In 1880 he returned to Bengal degree-less, resolving to reconcile European novelty with Brahmo traditions, taking the best from each. After returning to Bengal, Tagore regularly published poems, stories, and novels. These had a profound impact within Bengal itself but received little national attention. In 1883 he married 10-year-old Mrinalini Devi, born Bhabatarini, 1873–1902 (this was a common practice at the time). They had five children, two of whom died in childhood.

In 1890 Tagore began managing his vast ancestral estates in Shelaidaha (today a region of Bangladesh); he was joined there by his wife and children in 1898. Tagore released his *Manasi* poems (1890), among his best-known work. As *Zamindar Babu*, Tagore criss-crossed the Padma River in command of the *Padma*, the luxurious family barge (also known as "budgerow"). He collected mostly token rents and blessed villagers who in turn honoured him with banquets—occasionally of dried rice

and sour milk. He met Gagan Harkara, through whom he became familiar with Baul Lalon Shah, whose folk songs greatly influenced Tagore. Tagore worked to popularise Lalon's songs. The period 1891–1895, Tagore's *Sadhana* period, named after one of his magazines, was his most productive; in these years he wrote more than half the stories of the three-volume, 84-story *Galpaguchchha*. Its ironic and grave tales examined the voluptuous poverty of an idealised rural Bengal.

### **Santiniketan: 1901–1932**

In 1901 Tagore moved to Santiniketan to found an ashram with a marble-floored prayer hall—*The Mandir*—an experimental school, groves of trees, gardens, a library. There his wife and two of his children died. His father died in 1905. He received monthly payments as part of his inheritance and income from the Maharaja of Tripura, sales of his family's jewellery, his seaside bungalow in Puri, and a derisory 2,000 rupees in book royalties. He gained Bengali and foreign readers alike; he published *Naivedya* (1901) and *Kheya* (1906) and translated poems into free verse.

In November 1913, Tagore learned he had won that year's Nobel Prize in Literature: the Swedish Academy appreciated the idealistic—and for Westerners—accessible nature of a small body of his translated material focused on the 1912 *Gitanjali: Song Offerings*. He was awarded a knighthood by King George V in the 1915 Birthday Honours, but Tagore renounced it after the 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Renouncing the knighthood, Tagore wrote in a letter addressed to Lord Chelmsford, the then British Viceroy of India, "The disproportionate severity of the punishments inflicted upon the

unfortunate people and the methods of carrying them out, we are convinced, are without parallel in the history of civilised governments...The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in their incongruous context of humiliation, and I for my part wish to stand, shorn of all special distinctions, by the side of my country men."

In 1919, he was invited by the president and chairman of Anjuman-e-Islamia, Syed Abdul Majid to visit Sylhet for the first time. The event attracted over 5000 people.

In 1921, Tagore and agricultural economist Leonard Elmhirst set up the "Institute for Rural Reconstruction", later renamed Shriniketan or "Abode of Welfare", in Surul, a village near the *ashram*. With it, Tagore sought to moderate Gandhi's *Swaraaj* protests, which he occasionally blamed for British India's perceived mental – and thus ultimately colonial – decline. He sought aid from donors, officials, and scholars worldwide to "free village[s] from the shackles of helplessness and ignorance" by "vitalis[ing] knowledge". In the early 1930s he targeted ambient "abnormal caste consciousness" and untouchability. He lectured against these, he penned Dalit heroes for his poems and his dramas, and he campaigned—successfully—to open Guruvayoor Temple to Dalits.

### **Twilight years: 1932–1941**

- Dutta and Robinson describe this phase of Tagore's life as being one of a "peripatetic litterateur". It affirmed his opinion that human divisions were shallow. During a May 1932 visit to a Bedouin encampment in the Iraqi desert, the tribal chief told

him that "Our Prophet has said that a true Muslim is he by whose words and deeds not the least of his brother-men may ever come to any harm ..." Tagore confided in his diary: "I was startled into recognizing in his words the voice of essential humanity." To the end Tagore scrutinised orthodoxy—and in 1934, he struck. That year, an earthquake hit Bihar and killed thousands. Gandhi hailed it as seismic *karma*, as divine retribution avenging the oppression of Dalits. Tagore rebuked him for his seemingly ignominious implications. He mourned the perennial poverty of Calcutta and the socioeconomic decline of Bengal, and detailed these newly plebeian aesthetics in an unrhymed hundred-line poem whose technique of searing double-vision foreshadowed Satyajit Ray's film *Apur Sansar*. Fifteen new volumes appeared, among them prose-poem works *Punashcha* (1932), *Shes Saptak* (1935), and *Patraput* (1936). Experimentation continued in his prose-songs and dance-dramas— *Chitra* (1914), *Shyama* (1939), and *Chandalika* (1938)— and in his novels— *Dui Bon* (1933), *Malancha* (1934), and *Char Adhyay* (1934).

Tagore's remit expanded to science in his last years, as hinted in *Visva-Parichay*, a 1937 collection of essays. His respect for scientific laws and his exploration of biology, physics, and astronomy informed his poetry, which exhibited extensive naturalism and verisimilitude. He wove the *process* of science, the narratives of scientists, into stories in *Se* (1937), *Tin Sangi* (1940), and *Galpasalpa* (1941). His last five years were marked by chronic pain and two long periods of illness. These began when Tagore lost consciousness in late 1937; he remained

comatose and near death for a time. This was followed in late 1940 by a similar spell, from which he never recovered. Poetry from these valetudinary years is among his finest. A period of prolonged agony ended with Tagore's death on 7 August 1941, aged 80. He was in an upstairs room of the Jorasanko mansion in which he grew up. The date is still mourned. A. K. Sen, brother of the first chief election commissioner, received dictation from Tagore on 30 July 1941, a day prior to a scheduled operation: his last poem.

I'm lost in the middle of my birthday. I want my friends, their touch, with the earth's last love. I will take life's final offering, I will take the human's last blessing. Today my sack is empty. I have given completely whatever I had to give. In return if I receive anything—some love, some forgiveness—then I will take it with me when I step on the boat that crosses to the festival of the wordless end.

## Travels

Between 1878 and 1932, Tagore set foot in more than thirty countries on five continents. In 1912, he took a sheaf of his translated works to England, where they gained attention from missionary and Gandhi protégé Charles F. Andrews, Irish poet William Butler Yeats, Ezra Pound, Robert Bridges, Ernest Rhys, Thomas Sturge Moore, and others. Yeats wrote the preface to the English translation of *Gitanjali*; Andrews joined Tagore at Santiniketan. In November 1912 Tagore began touring the United States and the United Kingdom, staying in Butterson, Staffordshire with Andrews's clergymen friends. From May 1916 until April 1917, he lectured in Japan and the United States. He denounced nationalism. His essay

"Nationalism in India" was scorned and praised; it was admired by Romain Rolland and other pacifists.

Shortly after returning home the 63-year-old Tagore accepted an invitation from the Peruvian government. He travelled to Mexico. Each government pledged US\$100,000 to his school to commemorate the visits. A week after his 6 November 1924 arrival in Buenos Aires, an ill Tagore shifted to the Villa Miralrío at the behest of Victoria Ocampo. He left for home in January 1925. In May 1926 Tagore reached Naples; the next day he met Mussolini in Rome. Their warm rapport ended when Tagore pronounced upon *Il Duce's* fascist finesse. He had earlier enthused: "[w]ithout any doubt he is a great personality. There is such a massive vigour in that head that it reminds one of Michael Angelo's chisel." A "fire-bath" of fascism was to have educated "the immortal soul of Italy ... clothed in quenchless light".

On 1 November 1926 Tagore arrived to Hungary and spent some time on the shore of Lake Balaton in the city of Balatonfüred, recovering from heart problems at a sanitarium. He planted a tree and a bust statue was placed there in 1956 (a gift from the Indian government, the work of Rasithan Kashar, replaced by a newly gifted statue in 2005) and the lakeside promenade still bears his name since 1957.

On 14 July 1927 Tagore and two companions began a four-month tour of Southeast Asia. They visited Bali, Java, Kuala Lumpur, Malacca, Penang, Siam, and Singapore. The resultant travelogues compose *Jatri* (1929). In early 1930 he left Bengal for a nearly year-long tour of Europe and the United States. Upon returning to Britain—and as his paintings were exhibited

in Paris and London—he lodged at a Birmingham Quaker settlement. He wrote his Oxford Hibbert Lectures and spoke at the annual London Quaker meet. There, addressing relations between the British and the Indians – a topic he would tackle repeatedly over the next two years – Tagore spoke of a "dark chasm of aloofness". He visited Aga Khan III, stayed at Dartington Hall, toured Denmark, Switzerland, and Germany from June to mid-September 1930, then went on into the Soviet Union. In April 1932 Tagore, intrigued by the Persian mystic Hafez, was hosted by Reza Shah Pahlavi. In his other travels, Tagore interacted with Henri Bergson, Albert Einstein, Robert Frost, Thomas Mann, George Bernard Shaw, H.G. Wells, and Romain Rolland. Visits to Persia and Iraq (in 1932) and Sri Lanka (in 1933) composed Tagore's final foreign tour, and his dislike of communalism and nationalism only deepened. Vice-President of India M. Hamid Ansari has said that Rabindranath Tagore heralded the cultural rapprochement between communities, societies and nations much before it became the liberal norm of conduct. Tagore was a man ahead of his time. He wrote in 1932, while on a visit to Iran, that "each country of Asia will solve its own historical problems according to its strength, nature and needs, but the lamp they will each carry on their path to progress will converge to illuminate the common ray of knowledge."

## **Works**

Known mostly for his poetry, Tagore wrote novels, essays, short stories, travelogues, dramas, and thousands of songs. Of Tagore's prose, his short stories are perhaps most highly regarded; he is indeed credited with originating the Bengali-



language version of the genre. His works are frequently noted for their rhythmic, optimistic, and lyrical nature. Such stories mostly borrow from the lives of common people. Tagore's non-fiction grappled with history, linguistics, and spirituality. He wrote autobiographies. His travelogues, essays, and lectures were compiled into several volumes, including *Europe Jatrir Patro* (*Letters from Europe*) and *Manusher Dhormo* (*The Religion of Man*). His brief chat with Einstein, "Note on the Nature of Reality", is included as an appendix to the latter. On the occasion of Tagore's 150th birthday, an anthology (titled *Kalanukromik Rabindra Rachanabali*) of the total body of his works is currently being published in Bengali in chronological order. This includes all versions of each work and fills about eighty volumes. In 2011, Harvard University Press collaborated with Visva-Bharati University to publish *The Essential Tagore*, the largest anthology of Tagore's works available in English; it was edited by Fakrul Alam and Radha Chakravathy and marks the 150th anniversary of Tagore's birth.

## **Drama**

Tagore's experiences with drama began when he was sixteen, with his brother Jyotirindranath. He wrote his first original dramatic piece when he was twenty — *Valmiki Pratibha* which was shown at the Tagore's mansion. Tagore stated that his works sought to articulate "the play of feeling and not of action". In 1890 he wrote *Visarjan* (an adaptation of his novella *Rajarshi*), which has been regarded as his finest drama. In the original Bengali language, such works included intricate subplots and extended monologues. Later, Tagore's dramas used more philosophical and allegorical themes. The play *Dak Ghar* (*The Post Office*; 1912), describes the child Amal defying

his stuffy and puerile confines by ultimately "fall[ing] asleep", hinting his physical death. A story with borderless appeal—gleaning rave reviews in Europe—*Dak Ghar* dealt with death as, in Tagore's words, "spiritual freedom" from "the world of hoarded wealth and certified creeds". Another is Tagore's *Chandalika* (*Untouchable Girl*), which was modelled on an ancient Buddhist legend describing how Ananda, the Gautama Buddha's disciple, asks a tribal girl for water. In *Raktakarabi* ("Red" or "Blood Oleanders") is an allegorical struggle against a kleptocrat king who rules over the residents of *Yaksha puri*.

*Chitrangada*, *Chandalika*, and *Shyama* are other key plays that have dance-drama adaptations, which together are known as *Rabindra Nritya Natya*.

## Short stories

Tagore began his career in short stories in 1877—when he was only sixteen—with "Bhikharini" ("The Beggar Woman"). With this, Tagore effectively invented the Bengali-language short story genre. The four years from 1891 to 1895 are known as Tagore's "Sadhana" period (named for one of Tagore's magazines). This period was among Tagore's most fecund, yielding more than half the stories contained in the three-volume *Galpaguchchha*, which itself is a collection of eighty-four stories. Such stories usually showcase Tagore's reflections upon his surroundings, on modern and fashionable ideas, and on interesting mind puzzles (which Tagore was fond of testing his intellect with). Tagore typically associated his earliest stories (such as those of the "Sadhana" period) with an exuberance of vitality and spontaneity; these characteristics were intimately connected with Tagore's life in the common

villages of, among others, Patisar, Shajadpur, and Shilaida while managing the Tagore family's vast landholdings. There, he beheld the lives of India's poor and common people; Tagore thereby took to examining their lives with a penetrative depth and feeling that was singular in Indian literature up to that point. In particular, such stories as "Kabuliwala" ("The Fruitseller from Kabul", published in 1892), "Kshudita Pashan" ("The Hungry Stones") (August 1895), and "Atithi" ("The Runaway", 1895) typified this analytic focus on the downtrodden. Many of the other *Galpaguchchha* stories were written in Tagore's *Sabuj Patra* period from 1914 to 1917, also named after one of the magazines that Tagore edited and heavily contributed to.

## Novels

Tagore wrote eight novels and four novellas, among them *Chaturanga*, *Shesher Kobita*, *Char Odhay*, and *Noukadubi*. *Ghare Baire* (*The Home and the World*)—through the lens of the idealistic *zamindar* protagonist Nikhil—excoriates rising Indian nationalism, terrorism, and religious zeal in the *Swadeshi* movement; a frank expression of Tagore's conflicted sentiments, it emerged from a 1914 bout of depression. The novel ends in Hindu-Muslim violence and Nikhil's—likely mortal—wounding.

*Gora* raises controversial questions regarding the Indian identity. As with *Ghare Baire*, matters of self-identity (*jāti*), personal freedom, and religion are developed in the context of a family story and love triangle. In it an Irish boy orphaned in the Sepoy Mutiny is raised by Hindus as the titular *gora*—"whitey". Ignorant of his foreign origins, he chastises Hindu

religious backsliders out of love for the indigenous Indians and solidarity with them against his hegemon-compatriots. He falls for a Brahmo girl, compelling his worried foster father to reveal his lost past and cease his nativist zeal. As a "true dialectic" advancing "arguments for and against strict traditionalism", it tackles the colonial conundrum by "portray[ing] the value of all positions within a particular frame [...] not only syncretism, not only liberal orthodoxy, but the extremest reactionary traditionalism he defends by an appeal to what humans share." Among these Tagore highlights "identity [...] conceived of as *dharma*."

In *Jogajog (Relationships)*, the heroine Kumudini—bound by the ideals of *Śiva-Sati*, exemplified by *Dākshāyani*—is torn between her pity for the sinking fortunes of her progressive and compassionate elder brother and his foil: her roue of a husband. Tagore flaunts his feminist leanings; *pathos* depicts the plight and ultimate demise of women trapped by pregnancy, duty, and family honour; he simultaneously trucks with Bengal's putrescent landed gentry. The story revolves around the underlying rivalry between two families—the Chatterjees, aristocrats now on the decline (Biprodas) and the Ghosals (Madhusudan), representing new money and new arrogance. Kumudini, Biprodas' sister, is caught between the two as she is married off to Madhusudan. She had risen in an observant and sheltered traditional home, as had all her female relations.

Others were uplifting: *Shesher Kobita*—translated twice as *Last Poem* and *Farewell Song*—is his most lyrical novel, with poems and rhythmic passages written by a poet protagonist. It contains elements of satire and postmodernism and has stock

characters who gleefully attack the reputation of an old, outmoded, oppressively renowned poet who, incidentally, goes by a familiar name: "Rabindranath Tagore". Though his novels remain among the least-appreciated of his works, they have been given renewed attention via film adaptations by Ray and others: *Chokher Bali* and *Ghare Baire* are exemplary. In the first, Tagore inscribes Bengali society via its heroine: a rebellious widow who would live for herself alone. He pillories the custom of perpetual mourning on the part of widows, who were not allowed to remarry, who were consigned to seclusion and loneliness. Tagore wrote of it: "I have always regretted the ending".

## Poetry

Internationally, *Gitanjali* (Bengali: গীতাঞ্জলি) is Tagore's best-known collection of poetry, for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913. Tagore was the first non-European to receive a Nobel Prize in Literature and second non-European to receive a Nobel Prize after Theodore Roosevelt.

Besides *Gitanjali*, other notable works include *Manasi*, *Sonar Tori* ("Golden Boat"), *Balaka* ("Wild Geese" — the title being a metaphor for migrating souls)

Tagore's poetic style, which proceeds from a lineage established by 15th- and 16th-century Vaishnava poets, ranges from classical formalism to the comic, visionary, and ecstatic. He was influenced by the atavistic mysticism of Vyasa and other *rishi*-authors of the Upanishads, the Bhakti-Sufi mystic Kabir, and Ramprasad Sen. Tagore's most innovative and mature poetry embodies his exposure to Bengali rural folk

music, which included mystic Baul ballads such as those of the bard Lalou. These, rediscovered and repopularised by Tagore, resemble 19th-century Kartābhajā hymns that emphasise inward divinity and rebellion against bourgeois *bhadralok* religious and social orthodoxy. During his Shelaidaha years, his poems took on a lyrical voice of the *moner manush*, the Bāuls' "man within the heart" and Tagore's "life force of his deep recesses", or meditating upon the *jeevan devata*—the demiurge or the "living God within". This figure connected with divinity through appeal to nature and the emotional interplay of human drama. Such tools saw use in his Bhānusiṃha poems chronicling the Radha-Krishna romance, which were repeatedly revised over the course of seventy years.

Later, with the development of new poetic ideas in Bengal – many originating from younger poets seeking to break with Tagore's style – Tagore absorbed new poetic concepts, which allowed him to further develop a unique identity. Examples of this include *Africa* and *Camalia*, which are among the better known of his latter poems.

### **Songs (Rabindra Sangeet)**

Tagore was a prolific composer with around 2,230 songs to his credit. His songs are known as *rabindrasangit* ("Tagore Song"), which merges fluidly into his literature, most of which—poems or parts of novels, stories, or plays alike—were lyricised. Influenced by the *thumri* style of Hindustani music, they ran the entire gamut of human emotion, ranging from his early dirge-like Brahmo devotional hymns to quasi-erotic compositions. They emulated the tonal colour of classical *ragas* to varying extents. Some songs mimicked a given raga's melody

and rhythm faithfully; others newly blended elements of different *ragas*. Yet about nine-tenths of his work was not *bhanga gaan*, the body of tunes revamped with "fresh value" from select Western, Hindustani, Bengali folk and other regional flavours "external" to Tagore's own ancestral culture.

In 1971, *Amar Shonar Bangla* became the national anthem of Bangladesh. It was written – ironically – to protest the 1905 Partition of Bengal along communal lines: cutting off the Muslim-majority East Bengal from Hindu-dominated West Bengal was to avert a regional bloodbath. Tagore saw the partition as a cunning plan to stop the independence movement, and he aimed to rekindle Bengali unity and tar communalism. *Jana Gana Mana* was written in *shadhu-bhasha*, a Sanskritised form of Bengali, and is the first of five stanzas of the Brahmo hymn *Bharot Bhagyo Bidhata* that Tagore composed. It was first sung in 1911 at a Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress and was adopted in 1950 by the Constituent Assembly of the Republic of India as its national anthem.

The Sri Lanka's National Anthem was inspired by his work.

For Bengalis, the songs' appeal, stemming from the combination of emotive strength and beauty described as surpassing even Tagore's poetry, was such that the *Modern Review* observed that "[t]here is in Bengal no cultured home where Rabindranath's songs are not sung or at least attempted to be sung... Even illiterate villagers sing his songs". Tagore influenced *sitar* maestro Vilayat Khan and *sarodiyas* Buddhadev Dasgupta and Amjad Ali Khan.

## **Art works**

At sixty, Tagore took up drawing and painting; successful exhibitions of his many works—which made a debut appearance in Paris upon encouragement by artists he met in the south of France—were held throughout Europe. He was likely red-green colour blind, resulting in works that exhibited strange colour schemes and off-beat aesthetics. Tagore was influenced by numerous styles, including scrimshaw by the Malanggan people of northern New Ireland, Papua New Guinea, Haida carvings from the Pacific Northwest region of North America, and woodcuts by the German Max Pechstein. His artist's eye for handwriting was revealed in the simple artistic and rhythmic leitmotifs embellishing the scribbles, cross-outs, and word layouts of his manuscripts. Some of Tagore's lyrics corresponded in a synesthetic sense with particular paintings.

Surrounded by several painters Rabindranath had always wanted to paint. Writing and music, playwriting and acting came to him naturally and almost without training, as it did to several others in his family, and in even greater measure. But painting eluded him. Yet he tried repeatedly to master the art and there are several references to this in his early letters and reminiscence. In 1900 for instance, when he was nearing forty and already a celebrated writer, he wrote to Jagadishchandra Bose, "You will be surprised to hear that I am sitting with a sketchbook drawing. Needless to say, the pictures are not intended for any salon in Paris, they cause me not the least suspicion that the national gallery of any country will suddenly decide to raise taxes to acquire them. But, just as a mother lavishes most affection on her ugliest son, so I feel secretly drawn to the very skill that comes to me least easily." He also



realized that he was using the eraser more than the pencil, and dissatisfied with the results he finally withdrew, deciding it was not for him to become a painter.

India's National Gallery of Modern Art lists 102 works by Tagore in its collections.

## Politics

- Tagore opposed imperialism and supported Indian nationalists, and these views were first revealed in *Manast*, which was mostly composed in his twenties. Evidence produced during the Hindu–German Conspiracy Trial and latter accounts affirm his awareness of the Ghadarites, and stated that he sought the support of Japanese Prime Minister Terauchi Masatake and former Premier Ōkuma Shigenobu. Yet he lampooned the Swadeshi movement; he rebuked it in *The Cult of the Charkha*, an acrid 1925 essay. According to Amartya Sen, Tagore rebelled against strongly nationalist forms of the independence movement, and he wanted to assert India's right to be independent without denying the importance of what India could learn from abroad. He urged the masses to avoid victimology and instead seek self-help and education, and he saw the presence of British administration as a "political symptom of our social disease". He maintained that, even for those at the extremes of poverty, "there can be no question of blind revolution"; preferable to it was a "steady and purposeful education".

Such views enraged many. He escaped assassination—and only narrowly—by Indian expatriates during his stay in a San Francisco hotel in late 1916; the plot failed when his would-be assassins fell into argument. Tagore wrote songs lionising the Indian independence movement. Two of Tagore's more politically charged compositions, "Chitto Jetha Bhayshunyo" ("Where the Mind is Without Fear") and "Ekla Chalo Re" ("If They Answer Not to Thy Call, Walk Alone"), gained mass appeal, with the latter favoured by Gandhi. Though somewhat critical of Gandhian activism, Tagore was key in resolving a Gandhi–Ambedkar dispute involving separate electorates for untouchables, thereby mooting at least one of Gandhi's fasts "unto death".

## **Repudiation of knighthood**

Tagore renounced his knighthood in response to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in 1919. In the repudiation letter to the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, he wrote

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

## **Santiniketan and Visva-Bharati**

Tagore despised rote classroom schooling: in "The Parrot's Training", a bird is caged and force-fed textbook pages—to death. Tagore, visiting Santa Barbara in 1917, conceived a new

type of university: he sought to "make Santiniketan the connecting thread between India and the world [and] a world center for the study of humanity somewhere beyond the limits of nation and geography." The school, which he named Visva-Bharati, had its foundation stone laid on 24 December 1918 and was inaugurated precisely three years later. Tagore employed a *brahmacharya* system: *gurus* gave pupils personal guidance—emotional, intellectual, and spiritual. Teaching was often done under trees. He staffed the school, he contributed his Nobel Prize monies, and his duties as steward-mentor at Santiniketan kept him busy: mornings he taught classes; afternoons and evenings he wrote the students' textbooks. He fundraised widely for the school in Europe and the United States between 1919 and 1921.

### **Theft of Nobel Prize**

On 25 March 2004, Tagore's Nobel Prize was stolen from the safety vault of the Visva-Bharati University, along with several other of his belongings. On 7 December 2004, the Swedish Academy decided to present two replicas of Tagore's Nobel Prize, one made of gold and the other made of bronze, to the Visva-Bharati University. It inspired the fictional film *Nobel Chor*. In 2016, a baul singer named Pradip Bauri accused of sheltering the thieves was arrested and the prize was returned.

## **Impact and legacy**

- Every year, many events pay tribute to Tagore: *Kabipranam*, his birth anniversary, is celebrated by groups scattered across the globe; the annual Tagore

Festival held in Urbana, Illinois (USA); *Rabindra Path Parikrama* walking pilgrimages from Kolkata to Santiniketan; and recitals of his poetry, which are held on important anniversaries. Bengali culture is fraught with this legacy: from language and arts to history and politics. Amartya Sen deemed Tagore a "towering figure", a "deeply relevant and many-sided contemporary thinker". Tagore's Bengali originals—the 1939 *Rabindra Rachanāvalī*—is canonised as one of his nation's greatest cultural treasures, and he was roped into a reasonably humble role: "the greatest poet India has produced". Tagore was renowned throughout much of Europe, North America, and East Asia. He co-founded Dartington Hall School, a progressive coeducational institution; in Japan, he influenced such figures as Nobel laureate Yasunari Kawabata. In colonial Vietnam Tagore was a guide for the restless spirit of the radical writer and publicist Nguyen An Ninh Tagore's works were widely translated into English, Dutch, German, Spanish, and other European languages by Czech Indologist Vincenc Lesný, French Nobel laureate André Gide, Russian poet Anna Akhmatova, former Turkish Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit, and others. In the United States, Tagore's lecturing circuits, particularly those of 1916–1917, were widely attended and wildly acclaimed. Some controversies involving Tagore, possibly fictive, trashed his popularity and sales in Japan and North America after the late 1920s, concluding with his "near total eclipse" outside Bengal. Yet a latent reverence of Tagore was discovered by an astonished

Salman Rushdie during a trip to Nicaragua. By way of translations, Tagore influenced Chileans Pablo Neruda and Gabriela Mistral; Mexican writer Octavio Paz; and Spaniards José Ortega y Gasset, Zenobia Camprubí, and Juan Ramón Jiménez. In the period 1914–1922, the Jiménez-Camprubí pair produced twenty-two Spanish translations of Tagore's English corpus; they heavily revised *The Crescent Moon* and other key titles. In these years, Jiménez developed "naked poetry". Ortega y Gasset wrote that "Tagore's wide appeal [owes to how] he speaks of longings for perfection that we all have [...] Tagore awakens a dormant sense of childish wonder, and he saturates the air with all kinds of enchanting promises for the reader, who [...] pays little attention to the deeper import of Oriental mysticism". Tagore's works circulated in free editions around 1920—alongside those of Plato, Dante, Cervantes, Goethe, and Tolstoy.

Tagore was deemed over-rated by some. Graham Greene doubted that "anyone but Mr. Yeats can still take his poems very seriously." Several prominent Western admirers—including Pound and, to a lesser extent, even Yeats—criticised Tagore's work. Yeats, unimpressed with his English translations, railed against that "Damn Tagore [...] We got out three good books, Sturge Moore and I, and then, because he thought it more important to see and know English than to be a great poet, he brought out sentimental rubbish and wrecked his reputation. Tagore does not know English, no Indian knows English." William Radice, who "English[ed]" his poems, asked: "What is their place in world literature?" He saw him as "kind

of counter-cultur[al]", bearing "a new kind of classicism" that would heal the "collapsed romantic confusion and chaos of the 20th [c]entury." The translated Tagore was "almost nonsensical", and subpar English offerings reduced his trans-national appeal:

Anyone who knows Tagore's poems in their original Bengali cannot feel satisfied with any of the translations (made with or without Yeats's help). Even the translations of his prose works suffer, to some extent, from distortion. E.M. Forster noted [of] *The Home and the World* [that] '[t]he theme is so beautiful,' but the charms have 'vanished in translation,' or perhaps 'in an experiment that has not quite come off.'

- — *Amartya Sen, "Tagore and His India".*

## Museums

There are eight Tagore museums. Three in India and five in Bangladesh:

- Rabindra Bharati Museum, at Jorasanko Thakur Bari, Kolkata, India
- Tagore Memorial Museum, at Shilaidaha Kuthibadi, Shilaidaha, Bangladesh
- Rabindra Memorial Museum at Shahzadpur Kachharibari, Shahzadpur, Bangladesh
- Rabindra Bhavan Museum, in Santiniketan, India
- Rabindra Museum, in Mungpoo, near Kalimpong, India
- Patisar Rabindra Kacharibari, Patisar, Atrai, Naogaon, Bangladesh

- Pithavoge Rabindra Memorial Complex, Pithavoge, Rupsha, Khulna, Bangladesh
- Rabindra Complex, Dakkhindihi village, Phultala Upazila, Khulna, Bangladesh

Jorasanko Thakur Bari (Bengali: *House of the Thakurs*; anglicised to *Tagore*) in Jorasanko, north of Kolkata, is the ancestral home of the Tagore family. It is currently located on the Rabindra Bharati University campus at 6/4 Dwarakanath Tagore Lane Jorasanko, Kolkata 700007. It is the house in which Tagore was born. It is also the place where he spent most of his childhood and where he died on 7 August 1941.

Rabindra Complex is located in Dakkhindihi village, near Phultala Upazila, 19 kilometres (12 mi) from Khulna city, Bangladesh. It was the residence of Tagore's father-in-law, Beni Madhab Roy Chowdhury. Tagore family had close connection with Dakkhindihi village. The maternal ancestral home of the great poet was also situated at Dakkhindihi village, poet's mother Sarada Sundari Devi and his paternal aunt by marriage Tripura Sundari Devi; was born in this village. Young Tagore used to visit Dakkhindihi village with his mother to visit his maternal uncles in her mother's ancestral home. Tagore visited this place several times in his life. It has been declared as a protected archaeological site by Department of Archaeology of Bangladesh and converted into a museum. In 1995, the local administration took charge of the house and on 14 November of that year, the Rabindra Complex project was decided. Bangladesh Government's Department of Archaeology has carried out the renovation work to make the house a museum titled 'Rabindra Complex' in 2011–12 fiscal year. The two-storey museum building has four rooms on the first floor and two

rooms on the ground floor at present. The building has eight windows on the ground floor and 21 windows on the first floor. The height of the roof from the floor on the ground floor is 13 feet. There are seven doors, six windows and wall almirahs on the first floor. Over 500 books were kept in the library and all the rooms have been decorated with rare pictures of Rabindranath. Over 10,000 visitors come here every year to see the museum from different parts of the country and also from abroad, said Saifur Rahman, assistant director of the Department of Archeology in Khulna. A bust of Rabindranath Tagore is also there. Every year on 25–27 Baishakh (after the Bengali New Year Celebration), cultural programs are held here which lasts for three days.

## **Swami Vivekananda**

- **Swami Vivekananda** (12 January 1863 – 4 July 1902), born **Narendranath Datta** (Bengali: [nɔrendronath̪ dɔto]), was an Indian Hindu monk. He was a chief disciple of the 19th-century Indian mystic Ramakrishna. He was a key figure in the introduction of the Indian philosophies of Vedanta and Yoga to the Western world, and is credited with raising interfaith awareness, bringing Hinduism to the status of a major world religion during the late 19th century. He was a major force in the contemporary Hindu reform movements in India, and contributed to the concept of nationalism in colonial India. Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Math and the Ramakrishna Mission. He is perhaps best known for his speech which began



with the words "Sisters and brothers of America ...," in which he introduced Hinduism at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893.

Born into an aristocratic Bengali Kayastha family of Calcutta, Vivekananda was inclined towards spirituality. He was influenced by his guru, Ramakrishna, from whom he learnt that all living beings were an embodiment of the divine self; therefore, service to God could be rendered by service to humankind. After Ramakrishna's death, Vivekananda toured the Indian subcontinent extensively and acquired first-hand knowledge of the conditions prevailing in British India. He later travelled to the United States, representing India at the 1893 Parliament of the World's Religions. Vivekananda conducted hundreds of public and private lectures and classes, disseminating tenets of Hindu philosophy in the United States, England and Europe. In India, Vivekananda is regarded as a patriotic saint, and his birthday is celebrated as National Youth Day.

## **Early life (1863–1888)**

Vivekananda was born Narendranath Datta (shortened to Narendra or Naren) in a Bengali family at his ancestral home at 3 Gourmohan Mukherjee Street in Calcutta, the capital of British India, on 12 January 1863 during the Makar Sankranti festival. He belonged to a traditional family and was one of nine siblings. His father, Vishwanath Datta, was an attorney at the Calcutta High Court. Durgacharan Datta, Narendra's grandfather was a Sanskrit and Persian scholar who left his family and became a monk at age twenty-five. His mother, Bhubaneswari Devi, was a devout housewife. The progressive,

rational attitude of Narendra's father and the religious temperament of his mother helped shape his thinking and personality.

Narendranath was interested in spirituality from a young age and used to meditate before the images of deities such as Shiva, Rama, Sita, and Mahavir Hanuman. He was fascinated by wandering ascetics and monks. Narendra was naughty and restless as a child, and his parents often had difficulty controlling him. His mother said, "I prayed to Shiva for a son and he has sent me one of his demons".

## **Education**

In 1871, at the age of eight, Narendranath enrolled at Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's Metropolitan Institution, where he went to school until his family moved to Raipur in 1877. In 1879, after his family's return to Calcutta, he was the only student to receive first-division marks in the Presidency College entrance examination. He was an avid reader in a wide range of subjects, including philosophy, religion, history, social science, art and literature. He was also interested in Hindu scriptures, including the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, the *Ramayana*, the *Mahabharata* and the Puranas. Narendra was trained in Indian classical music, and regularly participated in physical exercise, sports and organised activities. Narendra studied Western logic, Western philosophy and European history at the General Assembly's Institution (now known as the Scottish Church College). In 1881, he passed the Fine Arts examination, and completed a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1884. Narendra studied the works of David Hume, Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, Baruch

Spinoza, Georg W. F. Hegel, Arthur Schopenhauer, Auguste Comte, John Stuart Mill and Charles Darwin. He became fascinated with the evolutionism of Herbert Spencer and corresponded with him, translating Herbert Spencer's book *Education* (1861) into Bengali. While studying Western philosophers, he also learned Sanskrit scriptures and Bengali literature.

William Hastie (principal of Christian College, Calcutta, from where Narendra graduated) wrote, "Narendra is really a genius. I have travelled far and wide but I have never come across a lad of his talents and possibilities, even in German universities, among philosophical students. He is bound to make his mark in life".

Narendra was known for his prodigious memory and the ability at speed reading. Several incidents have been given as examples. In a talk, he once quoted verbatim, two or three pages from *Pickwick Papers*. Another incident that is given is his argument with a Swedish national where he gave reference to some details on Swedish history that the Swede originally disagreed with but later conceded. In another incident with Dr. Paul Deussen's at Kiel in Germany, Vivekananda was going over some poetical work and did not reply when the professor spoke to him. Later, he apologised to Dr. Deussen explaining that he was too absorbed in reading and hence did not hear him. The professor was not satisfied with this explanation, but Vivekananda quoted and interpreted verses from the text, leaving the professor dumbfounded about his feat of memory. Once, he requested some books written by Sir John Lubbock from a library and returned them the very next day, claiming that he had read them. The librarian refused to believe him

until cross-examination about the contents convinced him that Vivekananda was being truthful.

Some accounts have called Narendra a *shrutidhara* (a person with a prodigious memory).

### **Spiritual apprenticeship – influence of Brahmo Samaj**

In 1880 Narendra joined Keshab Chandra Sen's *Nava Vidhan*, which was established by Sen after meeting Ramakrishna and reconverting from Christianity to Hinduism. Narendra became a member of a Freemasonry lodge "at some point before 1884" and of the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj in his twenties, a breakaway faction of the Brahmo Samaj led by Keshab Chandra Sen and Debendranath Tagore. From 1881 to 1884, he was also active in Sen's Band of Hope, which tried to discourage youths from smoking and drinking.

It was in this cultic milieu that Narendra became acquainted with Western esotericism. His initial beliefs were shaped by Brahmo concepts, which included belief in a formless God and the deprecation of idolatry, and a "streamlined, rationalized, monotheistic theology strongly coloured by a selective and modernistic reading of the *Upanisads* and of the Vedanta." Rammohan Roy, the founder of the Brahmo Samaj who was strongly influenced by unitarianism, strove towards a universalistic interpretation of Hinduism. His ideas were "altered [...] considerably" by Debendranath Tagore, who had a romantic approach to the development of these new doctrines, and questioned central Hindu beliefs like reincarnation and karma, and rejected the authority of the *Vedas*. Tagore also brought this "neo-Hinduism" closer in line with western

esotericism, a development which was furthered by Sen. Sen was influenced by transcendentalism, an American philosophical-religious movement strongly connected with unitarianism, which emphasised personal religious experience over mere reasoning and theology. Sen strived to "an accessible, non-renunciatory, everyman type of spirituality", introducing "lay systems of spiritual practice" which can be regarded as prototypes of the kind of Yoga-exercises which Vivekananda popularised in the west.

The same search for direct intuition and understanding can be seen with Vivekananda. Not satisfied with his knowledge of philosophy, Narendra came to "the question which marked the real beginning of his intellectual quest for God." He asked several prominent Calcutta residents if they had come "face to face with God", but none of their answers satisfied him. At this time, Narendra met Debendranath Tagore (the leader of Brahmo Samaj) and asked if he had seen God. Instead of answering his question, Tagore said "My boy, you have the *Yogi's* eyes." According to Banhatti, it was Ramakrishna who really answered Narendra's question, by saying "Yes, I see Him as I see you, only in an infinitely intenser sense." Nevertheless, Vivekananda was more influenced by the Brahmo Samaj's and its new ideas, than by Ramakrishna. It was Sen's influence who brought Vivekananda fully into contact with western esotericism, and it was also via Sen that he met Ramakrishna.

### **With Ramakrishna**

In 1881 Narendra first met Ramakrishna, who became his spiritual focus after his own father had died in 1884.

Narendra's first introduction to Ramakrishna occurred in a literature class at General Assembly's Institution when he heard Professor William Hastie lecturing on William Wordsworth's poem, *The Excursion*. While explaining the word "trance" in the poem, Hastie suggested that his students visit Ramakrishna of Dakshineswar to understand the true meaning of trance. This prompted some of his students (including Narendra) to visit Ramakrishna.

They probably first met personally in November 1881, though Narendra did not consider this their first meeting, and neither man mentioned this meeting later. At this time, Narendra was preparing for his upcoming F. A. examination, when Ram Chandra Datta accompanied him to Surendra Nath Mitra's, house where Ramakrishna was invited to deliver a lecture. According to Paranjape, at this meeting Ramakrishna asked young Narendra to sing. Impressed by his singing talent, he asked Narendra to come to Dakshineswar.

In late 1881 or early 1882, Narendra went to Dakshineswar with two friends and met Ramakrishna. This meeting proved to be a turning point in his life. Although he did not initially accept Ramakrishna as his teacher and rebelled against his ideas, he was attracted by his personality and began to frequently visit him at Dakshineswar. He initially saw Ramakrishna's ecstasies and visions as "mere figments of imagination" and "hallucinations". As a member of Brahmo Samaj, he opposed idol worship, polytheism and Ramakrishna's worship of Kali. He even rejected the Advaita Vedanta of "identity with the absolute" as blasphemy and madness, and often ridiculed the idea. Narendra tested

Ramakrishna, who faced his arguments patiently: "Try to see the truth from all angles", he replied.

Narendra's father's sudden death in 1884 left the family bankrupt; creditors began demanding the repayment of loans, and relatives threatened to evict the family from their ancestral home. Narendra, once a son of a well-to-do family, became one of the poorest students in his college. He unsuccessfully tried to find work and questioned God's existence, but found solace in Ramakrishna and his visits to Dakshineswar increased.

One day, Narendra requested Ramakrishna to pray to goddess Kali for their family's financial welfare. Ramakrishna suggested him to go to the temple himself and pray. Following Ramakrishna's suggestion, he went to the temple thrice, but failed to pray for any kind of worldly necessities and ultimately prayed for true knowledge and devotion from the goddess. Narendra gradually grew ready to renounce everything for the sake of realising God, and accepted Ramakrishna as his Guru.

In 1885, Ramakrishna developed throat cancer, and was transferred to Calcutta and (later) to a garden house in Cossipore. Narendra and Ramakrishna's other disciples took care of him during his last days, and Narendra's spiritual education continued. At Cossipore, he experienced *Nirvikalpa samadhi*. Narendra and several other disciples received ochre robes from Ramakrishna, forming his first monastic order. He was taught that service to men was the most effective worship of God. Ramakrishna asked him to care for the other monastic disciples, and in turn asked them to see Narendra as their leader. Ramakrishna died in the early-morning hours of 16 August 1886 in Cossipore.

## **Founding of first Ramakrishna Math at Baranagar**

After Ramakrishna's death, his devotees and admirers stopped supporting his disciples. Unpaid rent accumulated, and Narendra and the other disciples had to find a new place to live. Many returned home, adopting a *Grihastha* (family-oriented) way of life. Narendra decided to convert a dilapidated house at Baranagar into a new *math* (monastery) for the remaining disciples. Rent for the Baranagar Math was low, raised by "holy begging" (*mādhukarī*). The math became the first building of the Ramakrishna Math: the monastery of the monastic order of Ramakrishna. Narendra and other disciples used to spend many hours in practicing meditation and religious austerities every day. Narendra later reminisced about the early days of the monastery:

We underwent a lot of religious practice at the Baranagar Math. We used to get up at 3:00 am and become absorbed in *japa* and meditation. What a strong spirit of detachment we had in those days! We had no thought even as to whether the world existed or not.

In 1887, Narendra compiled a Bengali song anthology named *Sangeet Kalpataru* with Vaishnav Charan Basak. Narendra collected and arranged most of the songs of this compilation, but could not finish the work of the book for unfavourable circumstances.

## **Monastic vows**

In December 1886, the mother of Baburam invited Narendra and his other brother monks to Antpur village. Narendra and



the other aspiring monks accepted the invitation and went to Antpur to spend a few days. In Antpur, in the Christmas Eve of 1886, Narendra and eight other disciples took formal monastic vows. They decided to live their lives as their master lived. Narendranath took the name "Swami Vivekananda".

## **Travels in India (1888–1893)**

In 1888, Narendra left the monastery as a *Parivrājaka*— the Hindu religious life of a wandering monk, "without fixed abode, without ties, independent and strangers wherever they go". His sole possessions were a kamandalu (water pot), staff and his two favourite books: the *Bhagavad Gita* and *The Imitation of Christ*. Narendra travelled extensively in India for five years, visiting centres of learning and acquainting himself with diverse religious traditions and social patterns. He developed sympathy for the suffering and poverty of the people, and resolved to uplift the nation. Living primarily on bhiksha (alms), Narendra travelled on foot and by railway (with tickets bought by admirers). During his travels he met, and stayed with Indians from all religions and walks of life: scholars, *dewans*, rajas, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, *paraiyars* (low-caste workers) and government officials. Narendra left Bombay for Chicago on 31 May 1893 with the name "Vivekananda", as suggested by Ajit Singh of Khetri, which means "the bliss of discerning wisdom," from Sanskrit *viveka* and *ānanda*.

## **First visit to the West (1893–1897)**

Vivekananda started his journey to the West on 31 May 1893 and visited several cities in Japan (including Nagasaki, Kobe,

Yokohama, Osaka, Kyoto and Tokyo), China and Canada en route to the United States, reaching Chicago on 30 July 1893, where the "Parliament of Religions" took place in September 1893. The Congress was an initiative of the Swedenborgian layman, and judge of the Illinois Supreme Court, Charles C. Bonney, to gather all the religions of the world, and show "the substantial unity of many religions in the good deeds of the religious life." It was one of the more than 200 adjunct gatherings and congresses of the Chicago's World's Fair, and was "an avant-garde intellectual manifestation of [...] cultic milieus, East and West," with the Brahmo Samaj and the Theosophical Society being invited as being representative of Hinduism.

Vivekananda wanted to join, but was disappointed to learn that no one without credentials from a *bona fide* organisation would be accepted as a delegate. Vivekananda contacted Professor John Henry Wright of Harvard University, who invited him to speak at Harvard. Vivekananda wrote of the professor, "He urged upon me the necessity of going to the Parliament of Religions, which he thought would give an introduction to the nation". Vivekananda submitted an application, "introducing himself as a monk 'of the oldest order of *sannyāsis* ... founded by Sankara,'" supported by the Brahmo Samaj representative Protapchandra Mozoombar, who was also a member of the Parliament's selection committee, "classifying the Swami as a representative of the Hindu monastic order." Hearing Vivekananda speak, Harvard psychology professor William James said, "that man is simply a wonder for oratorical power. He is an honor to humanity."

## Parliament of the World's Religions

The Parliament of the World's Religions opened on 11 September 1893 at the Art Institute of Chicago, as part of the World's Columbian Exposition. On this day, Vivekananda gave a brief speech representing India and Hinduism. He was initially nervous, bowed to Saraswati (the Hindu goddess of learning) and began his speech with "Sisters and brothers of America!". At these words, Vivekananda received a two-minute standing ovation from the crowd of seven thousand. According to Sailendra Nath Dhar, when silence was restored he began his address, greeting the youngest of the nations on behalf of "the most ancient order of monks in the world, the Vedic order of sannyasins, a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance". Vivekananda quoted two illustrative passages from the "Shiva mahimna stotram": "As the different streams having their sources in different places all mingle their water in the sea, so, O Lord, the different paths which men take, through different tendencies, various though they appear, crooked or straight, all lead to Thee!" and "Whosoever comes to Me, through whatsoever form, I reach him; all men are struggling through paths that in the end lead to Me." According to Sailendra Nath Dhar, "it was only a short speech, but it voiced the spirit of the Parliament."

Parliament President John Henry Barrows said, "India, the Mother of religions was represented by Swami Vivekananda, the Orange-monk who exercised the most wonderful influence over his auditors". Vivekananda attracted widespread attention in the press, which called him the "cyclonic monk from India". The *New York Critique* wrote, "He is an orator by divine right, and his strong, intelligent face in its picturesque setting of

yellow and orange was hardly less interesting than those earnest words, and the rich, rhythmical utterance he gave them". The *New York Herald* noted, "Vivekananda is undoubtedly the greatest figure in the Parliament of Religions. After hearing him we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation". American newspapers reported Vivekananda as "the greatest figure in the parliament of religions" and "the most popular and influential man in the parliament". The *Boston Evening Transcript* reported that Vivekananda was "a great favourite at the parliament... if he merely crosses the platform, he is applauded". He spoke several more times "at receptions, the scientific section, and private homes" on topics related to Hinduism, Buddhism and harmony among religions until the parliament ended on 27 September 1893. Vivekananda's speeches at the Parliament had the common theme of universality, emphasising religious tolerance. He soon became known as a "handsome oriental" and made a huge impression as an orator.

### **Lecture tours in the UK and US**

After the Parliament of Religions, he toured many parts of the US as a guest. His popularity opened up new views for expanding on "life and religion to thousands". During a question-answer session at Brooklyn Ethical Society, he remarked, "I have a message to the West as Buddha had a message to the East."

Vivekananda spent nearly two years lecturing in the eastern and central United States, primarily in Chicago, Detroit, Boston, and New York. He founded the Vedanta Society of New York in 1894. By spring 1895 his busy, tiring schedule had

affected his health. He ended his lecture tours and began giving free, private classes in Vedanta and yoga. Beginning in June 1895, Vivekananda gave private lectures to a dozen of his disciples at Thousand Island Park, New York for two months.

During his first visit to the West he travelled to the UK twice, in 1895 and 1896, lecturing successfully there. In November 1895, he met Margaret Elizabeth Noble an Irish woman who would become Sister Nivedita. During his second visit to the UK in May 1896 Vivekananda met Max Müller, a noted Indologist from Oxford University who wrote Ramakrishna's first biography in the West. From the UK, Vivekananda visited other European countries. In Germany, he met Paul Deussen, another Indologist. Vivekananda was offered academic positions in two American universities (one the chair in Eastern Philosophy at Harvard University and a similar position at Columbia University); he declined both, since his duties would conflict with his commitment as a monk.

Vivekananda's success led to a change in mission, namely the establishment of Vedanta centres in the West. Vivekananda adapted traditional Hindu ideas and religiosity to suit the needs and understandings of his western audiences, who were especially attracted by and familiar with western esoteric traditions and movements like Transcendentalism and New thought. An important element in his adaptation of Hindu religiosity was the introduction of his "four yogas" model, which includes Raja yoga, his interpretation of Patanjali's Yoga sutras, which offered a practical means to realise the divine force within which is central to modern western esotericism. In 1896, his book *Raja Yoga* was published, becoming an instant success; it was highly influential in the western understanding

of yoga, in Elizabeth de Michelis's view marking the beginning of modern yoga. Vivekananda attracted followers and admirers in the US and Europe, including Josephine MacLeod, William James, Josiah Royce, Robert G. Ingersoll, Lord Kelvin, Harriet Monroe, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, Sarah Bernhardt, Emma Calvé and Hermann Ludwig Ferdinand von Helmholtz. He initiated several followers : Marie Louise (a French woman) became Swami Abhayananda, and Leon Landsberg became Swami Kripananda, so that they could continue the work of the mission of the Vedanta Society. This society still is filled with foreign nationals and is also located in Los Angeles. During his stay in America, Vivekananda was given land in the mountains to the southeast of San Jose, California to establish a retreat for Vedanta students. He called it "Peace retreat", or, *Shanti Asrama*. The largest American centre is the Vedanta Society of Southern California in Hollywood, one of the twelve main centres. There is also a Vedanta Press in Hollywood which publishes books about Vedanta and English translations of Hindu scriptures and texts. Christina Greenstidel of Detroit was also initiated by Vivekananda with a mantra and she became Sister Christine, and they established a close father-daughter relationship.

From the West, Vivekananda revived his work in India. He regularly corresponded with his followers and brother monks, offering advice and financial support. His letters from this period reflect his campaign of social service, and were strongly worded. He wrote to Akhandananda, "Go from door to door amongst the poor and lower classes of the town of Khetri and teach them religion. Also, let them have oral lessons on geography and such other subjects. No good will come of sitting idle and having princely dishes, and saying

"Ramakrishna, O Lord!"—unless you can do some good to the poor". In 1895, Vivekananda founded the periodical *Brahmavadin* to teach the Vedanta. Later, Vivekananda's translation of the first six chapters of *The Imitation of Christ* was published in *Brahmavadin* in 1889. Vivekananda left for India on 16 December 1896 from England with his disciples Captain and Mrs. Sevier and J.J. Goodwin. On the way, they visited France and Italy, and set sail for India from Naples on 30 December 1896. He was later followed to India by Sister Nivedita, who devoted the rest of her life to the education of Indian women and India's independence.

## **Back in India (1897–1899)**

- The ship from Europe arrived in Colombo, British Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) on 15 January 1897, and Vivekananda received a warm welcome. In Colombo, he gave his first public speech in the East. From there on, his journey to Calcutta was triumphant. Vivekananda travelled from Colombo to Pamban, Rameswaram, Ramnad, Madurai, Kumbakonam and Madras, delivering lectures. Common people and rajas gave him an enthusiastic reception. During his train travels, people often sat on the rails to force the train to stop, so they could hear him. From Madras (now Chennai), he continued his journey to Calcutta and Almora. While in the West, Vivekananda spoke about India's great spiritual heritage; in India, he repeatedly addressed social issues: uplifting the people, eliminating the caste system, promoting science and industrialisation,

addressing widespread poverty and ending colonial rule. These lectures, published as *Lectures from Colombo to Almora*, demonstrate his nationalistic fervour and spiritual ideology.

On 1 May 1897 in Calcutta, Vivekananda founded the Ramakrishna Mission for social service. Its ideals are based on *Karma Yoga*, and its governing body consists of the trustees of the Ramakrishna Math (which conducts religious work). Both Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission have their headquarters at Belur Math. Vivekananda founded two other monasteries: one in Mayavati in the Himalayas (near Almora), the *Advaita Ashrama* and another in Madras (now Chennai). Two journals were founded: *Prabuddha Bharata* in English and *Udbhodan* in Bengali. That year, famine-relief work was begun by Swami Akhandananda in the Murshidabad district.

Vivekananda earlier inspired Jamsetji Tata to set up a research and educational institution when they travelled together from Yokohama to Chicago on Vivekananda's first visit to the West in 1893. Tata now asked him to head his Research Institute of Science; Vivekananda declined the offer, citing a conflict with his "spiritual interests". He visited Punjab, attempting to mediate an ideological conflict between Arya Samaj (a reformist Hindu movement) and *sanatan* (orthodox Hindus). After brief visits to Lahore, Delhi and Khetri, Vivekananda returned to Calcutta in January 1898. He consolidated the work of the math and trained disciples for several months. Vivekananda composed "Khandana Bhava-Bandhana", a prayer song dedicated to Ramakrishna, in 1898.



## Second visit to the West and final years (1899–1902)

Despite declining health, Vivekananda left for the West for a second time in June 1899 accompanied by Sister Nivedita and Swami Turiyananda. Following a brief stay in England, he went to the United States. During this visit, Vivekananda established Vedanta Societies in San Francisco and New York and founded a *shanti ashrama* (peace retreat) in California. He then went to Paris for the Congress of Religions in 1900. His lectures in Paris concerned the worship of the *lingam* and the authenticity of the Bhagavad Gita. Vivekananda then visited Brittany, Vienna, Istanbul, Athens and Egypt. The French philosopher Jules Bois was his host for most of this period, until he returned to Calcutta on 9 December 1900.

After a brief visit to the Advaita Ashrama in Mayavati, Vivekananda settled at Belur Math, where he continued co-ordinating the works of Ramakrishna Mission, the math and the work in England and the US. He had many visitors, including royalty and politicians. Although Vivekananda was unable to attend the Congress of Religions in 1901 in Japan due to deteriorating health, he made pilgrimages to Bodhgaya and Varanasi. Declining health (including asthma, diabetes and chronic insomnia) restricted his activity.

## Death

On 4 July 1902 (the day of his death), Vivekananda awoke early, went to the monastery at Belur Math and meditated for

three hours. He taught *Shukla-Yajur-Veda*, Sanskrit grammar and the philosophy of yoga to pupils, later discussing with colleagues a planned Vedic college in the Ramakrishna Math. At 7:00 pm Vivekananda went to his room, asking not to be disturbed; he died at 9:20 p.m. while meditating. According to his disciples, Vivekananda attained *mahasamādhi*; the rupture of a blood vessel in his brain was reported as a possible cause of death. His disciples believed that the rupture was due to his *brahmarandhra* (an opening in the crown of his head) being pierced when he attained *mahasamādhi*. Vivekananda fulfilled his prophecy that he would not live forty years. He was cremated on a sandalwood funeral pyre on the bank of the Ganga in Belur, opposite where Ramakrishna was cremated sixteen years earlier.

## Teachings and philosophy

Vivekananda propagated that the essence of Hinduism was best expressed in Adi Shankara's Advaita Vedanta philosophy. Nevertheless, following Ramakrishna, and in contrast to Advaita Vedanta, Vivekananda believed that the Absolute is both immanent and transcendent. According to Anil Sooklal, Vivekananda's neo-Advaita "reconciles Dvaita or dualism and Advaita or non-dualism". Vivekananda summarised the Vedanta as follows, giving it a modern and Universalistic interpretation:

Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this Divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or mental discipline, or philosophy—by one, or more, or all of these—and be free. This

is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals, or books, or temples, or forms, are but secondary details.

Nationalism was a prominent theme in Vivekananda's thought. He believed that a country's future depends on its people, and his teachings focused on human development. He wanted "to set in motion a machinery which will bring noblest ideas to the doorstep of even the poorest and the meanest".

Vivekananda linked morality with control of the mind, seeing truth, purity and unselfishness as traits which strengthened it. He advised his followers to be holy, unselfish and to have *shraddhā* (faith). Vivekananda supported *brahmacharya*, believing it the source of his physical and mental stamina and eloquence. He emphasised that success was an outcome of focused thought and action; in his lectures on Raja Yoga he said, "Take up one idea. Make that one idea your life – think of it, dream of it, live on that idea. Let the brain, muscles, nerves, every part of your body, be full of that idea, and just leave every other idea alone. This is the way to success, that is the way great spiritual giants are produced".

## Influence

- Vivekananda was one of the main representatives of Neo-Vedanta, a modern interpretation of selected aspects of Hinduism in line with western esoteric traditions, especially Transcendentalism, New Thought and Theosophy. His reinterpretation was, and is, very successful, creating a new understanding and appreciation of Hinduism within and outside India, and was the principal reason for

the enthusiastic reception of yoga, transcendental meditation and other forms of Indian spiritual self-improvement in the West. Agehananda Bharati explained, "...modern Hindus derive their knowledge of Hinduism from Vivekananda, directly or indirectly". Vivekananda espoused the idea that all sects within Hinduism (and all religions) are different paths to the same goal. However, this view has been criticised as an oversimplification of Hinduism.

In the background of emerging nationalism in British-ruled India, Vivekananda crystallised the nationalistic ideal. In the words of social reformer Charles Freer Andrews, "The Swami's intrepid patriotism gave a new colour to the national movement throughout India. More than any other single individual of that period Vivekananda had made his contribution to the new awakening of India". Vivekananda drew attention to the extent of poverty in the country, and maintained that addressing such poverty was a prerequisite for national awakening. His nationalistic ideas influenced many Indian thinkers and leaders. Sri Aurobindo regarded Vivekananda as the one who awakened India spiritually. Mahatma Gandhi counted him among the few Hindu reformers "who have maintained this Hindu religion in a state of splendor by cutting down the dead wood of tradition".

B. R. Ambedkar, an Indian polymath and the father of the Indian Constitution, said "the Buddha was the greatest person India had ever produced. The greatest man India produced in recent centuries was not Gandhi but Vivekananda." The first governor-general of independent India, Chakravarti

Rajagopalachari, said "Vivekananda saved Hinduism, saved India". According to Subhas Chandra Bose, a proponent of armed struggle for Indian independence, Vivekananda was "the maker of modern India"; for Gandhi, Vivekananda's influence increased Gandhi's "love for his country a thousandfold". Vivekananda influenced India's independence movement; his writings inspired independence activists such as Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Aurobindo Ghose, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bagha Jatin and intellectuals such as Aldous Huxley, Christopher Isherwood, and Romain Rolland. Many years after Vivekananda's death, Rabindranath Tagore told French Nobel laureate Romain Rolland,

"If you want to know India, study Vivekananda. In him everything is positive and nothing negative". Rolland wrote, "His words are great music, phrases in the style of Beethoven, stirring rhythms like the march of Händel choruses. I cannot touch these sayings of his, scattered as they are through the pages of books, at thirty years' distance, without receiving a thrill through my body like an electric shock. And what shocks, what transports, must have been produced when in burning words they issued from the lips of the hero!"

## **Legacy**

Jamsetji Tata was inspired by Vivekananda to establish the Indian Institute of Science, one of India's best-known research universities. While National Youth Day in India is observed on his birthday, 12 January, the day he delivered his masterful speech at the Parliament of Religions, 11 September 1893, is "World Brotherhood Day". In September 2010, India's Finance Ministry highlighted the relevance of Vivekananda's teachings

and values to the modern economic environment. The then Union Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee, the President of India before the current President Ram Nath Kovind, approved in principle the Swami Vivekananda Values Education Project at a cost of ₹1 billion (US\$14 million), with objectives including: involving youth with competitions, essays, discussions and study circles and publishing Vivekananda's works in a number of languages. In 2011, the West Bengal Police Training College was renamed the Swami Vivekananda State Police Academy, West Bengal. The state technical university in Chhattisgarh has been named the Chhattisgarh Swami Vivekanand Technical University. In 2012, the Raipur airport was renamed Swami Vivekananda Airport.

The 150th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated in India and abroad. The Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in India officially observed 2013 as the occasion in a declaration. Year-long events and programs were organised by branches of the Ramakrishna Math, the Ramakrishna Mission, the central and state governments in India, educational institutions and youth groups. Indian film director Utpal Sinha made a film, *The Light: Swami Vivekananda* as a tribute for his 150th birth anniversary. Other Indian films about his life include: *Swamiji* (1949) by Amar Mullick, *Swami Vivekananda* (1955) by Amar Mullick, *Birieswar Vivekananda* (1964) by Modhu Bose, *Life and Message of Swami Vivekananda* (1964) documentary film by Bimal Roy, *Swami Vivekananda* (1998) by G. V. Iyer, *Swamiji* (2012) laser light film by Manick Sorcar. *Sound of Joy*, an Indian 3D-animated short film directed by Sukankan Roy depicts the spiritual journey of Vivekananda. It won the National Film Award for Best Non-Feature Animation Film in 2014.

Plays about his life and work have been produced in India, *Biley* by Ujjwal Chattopadhyay in 2012 and *Bireswar* by Basab Dasgupta in 2013.

Vivekananda was featured on stamps of India (1963, 1993, 2013, 2015 and 2018), Sri Lanka (1997 and 2013) and Serbia (2018).

## **Works**

### **Lectures**

Although Vivekananda was a powerful orator and writer in English and Bengali, he was not a thorough scholar, and most of his published works were compiled from lectures given around the world which were "mainly delivered [...] impromptu and with little preparation". His main work, *Raja Yoga*, consists of talks he delivered in New York.

### **Literary works**

According to Banhatti, "[a] singer, a painter, a wonderful master of language and a poet, Vivekananda was a complete artist", composing many songs and poems, including his favourite, "Kali the Mother". Vivekananda blended humour with his teachings, and his language was lucid. His Bengali writings testify to his belief that words (spoken or written) should clarify ideas, rather than demonstrating the speaker (or writer's) knowledge.

*Bartaman Bharat* meaning "Present Day India" is an erudite Bengali language essay written by him, which was first

published in the March 1899 issue of Udbodhan, the only Bengali language magazine of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission. The essay was reprinted as a book in 1905 and later compiled into the fourth volume of *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*. In this essay his refrain to the readers was to honour and treat every Indian as a brother irrespective of whether he was born poor or in lower caste.