
MIDDLE PHASE OF THE FREEDOM STRUGGLE (1915-1930)

WORLD WAR I-REFORMS AND AGITATION

When World War I began, the British were surprised to see the massive outpour of sympathy, loyalty and goodwill for them. On the contrary, they had feared that the Indians would use the opportunity to revolt. India supplied to the British with men and resources very generously. Nearly 1.3 million soldiers and labourers from India rendered their services in Europe, Africa and the Middle East. Not only the Indian government, but also the princes provided huge supplies of food, money and ammunition. However, the high rate of casualties, rising inflation fuelled by heavy taxation, an outbreak of influenza and the interruption of trade increased suffering in India. The nationalist movement again saw a revival. The moderate and the extremist groups within the Congress forgot their differences to stand as a united front. These were also a temporary alliance set up between the Congress and the Muslim League in 1916. The alliance was known as the Lucknow pact. The alliance was made over the issue of devolution of political power and the treatment met to Islam in the Middle East. The British adopted a 'carrot and stick' approach in acknowledging India's support during the war. In the month of August 1917, Edwin Montague, who was the secretary of State for India was 'increasing the association of Indians in every branch of administration of Indians in every branch of administration and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view on the progressive realisation of a responsible government in India as an Integral part of the British Empire'. The methods of attaining the suggested measure were later preserved in the government of India Act of 1919.

HOME RULE MOVEMENT (1915-1916)

The Home Rule Movement was launched by Dr. Annie Besant in 1916, who was inspired by the success of Irish rebellion. The movement expanded

very fast and subsidiaries of the Home Rule League were opened across India. Bal Gangadhar Tilak worked for the movement wholeheartedly. He joined with Dr. Besant and convinced the Muslim League to offer their cooperation to the movement.

Champan

The flocs of Champaran, a district in Bihar, were carried out against the zamindari system. The zamindars sublet their leases to English planters who forced the ryots to grow Indigo on 3/20 of their land (the notorious Tinkathia System) and 'bought' it from them forcibly at absurdly low prices. In the 1860s, this practice had already led to the massive indigo riots in which most indigo-growing districts in Bengal and Bihar participated, and the memory of that uprising remained among the ryots. From the turn of the century, as the demand for Indigo in Europe declined in the face of competition from synthetic dyes, the planters passed the burden onto the peasants by charging sharahbeshi (rent enhancement) or (lump-sum compensation), not to mention over 40 other types of fines, cesses, rents and son, arbitrarily invented and collected. The result was an explosive situation. In the Motihari – Bettiah region of Champaran, widespread resistance developed during 1905 – 1908, over an area of 400 square miles. By 1917, nevertheless, the situation had become even more explosive. The World War I led to an even sharper drop in the indigo exports, and the planters made up their losses with such vicious enhancements that another major riot was in store. It was in such a situation that Mahatma Gandhi was to make his entrance into Indian politics by launching Satyagraha.

LUCKNOW PACT (1916)**Change in the Attitude of the Muslim League**

At the time of its creation, the All India Muslim League was a moderate party. Its basic aim was to maintain friendly relations with the Government. However, when the British Government annulled the partition of Bengal, its leadership decided

to change its stance. In 1913, a new group of leaders entered the Muslims and the Hindus. The most important among those new leaders was Muhammad Ali Jinnah. He was already a member of the Indian National Congress. The Muslim League re-thought its goal and decided to cooperate with the Congress so that pressure could be exerted on the British Government. When Lord Chelmsford invited the Indian politicians for their suggestions on post- World War I reforms, there was further in the development of the situation.

Joint Sessions of the Congress and the Muslim League

Because of the efforts of Jinnah, the annual session was held at Mumbai in December 1915, in which both the Congress and the Muslim League met. The prominent leaders of both the political parties gathered at one place for the first time. Leaders from both the parties delivered speeches from a common platform which were also based on similar theme. After some months of the Mumbai meet, 19 elected members elected the members of the Imperial Legislative Council; both the Hindus and the Muslims, gave a memorandum to the Viceroy on the issue of reforms in October 1916. The suggestions they gave were not taken very seriously by the press, but they were debated, changed and accepted at a later meeting of the Congress and the Muslim League leaders which was held at Kolkata in the month of November, 1916.

The Lucknow Pact

An important step forward in achieving Hindu-Muslim unity was the Lucknow Pact, 1916. Anti-British feelings were generated among the Muslims following a war between Britain and Turkey, which opened the way for the Congress and Muslim League unity. Both the Congress and the Muslim League held sessions at Lucknow in 1916. This meeting settled the details of an agreement on the composition of the legislatures and the quantum of representation to be allowed to the two communities. The agreement was confirmed by the annual sessions of the Congress and the League held at Lucknow on 29

and 31 December 1916, respectively. The Congress accepted the separate electorates, and both the organizations jointly demanded dominion status for the country. Hindu-Muslim unity weakened the British attitude. In 1916, the British announced a policy whereby the association of Indians in the government was to be increased and there was to be a gradual development of local self-governing institutions. Sarojini Naidu gave Jinnah, the chief architect of the Lucknow Pact, the title 'the Ambassador of Hindu-Muslim Unity'.

AUGUST DECLARATION OF 1917

During World War I, the British claimed that they stood for the protection of democracy around the world. Thus Indians, who fought for them in this war, demanded that democracy should also be introduced in their country. In his famous August Declaration presented before the House of Commons on 20 August 1917, Lord Montagu, the Secretary of State for Indian Affairs, said that to satisfy the local demands, his government was interested in giving more representation to the natives of India. New reforms would be introduced in the country to meet this objective. The control over the Indian government would be transferred gradually to the Indian people. This was the result of the Hindu-Muslim unity exhibited by the Lucknow Pact.

BEGINNING OF THE GANDHIAN ERA

After World War I, the Britishers came up with some reforms. Indian leaders were, however, not appeased. The freedom movement had advanced far beyond such halting concession. It was, in fact, to enter its last phase called the Gandhian Era. Mahatma Gandhi dominated the Indian political scene from 1918 to 1947. It was the most intense and eventful phase of India's freedom struggle. Mahatma Gandhi provided leadership of the highest order and his philosophy of non-violent Satyagraha became the most potent weapon to drive out the British from the Indian soil.

Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms

Lord Montagu visited India and remained here for six months. During the period of his stay, he met various government and non-government people. At last, along with Governor-General Lord Chelmsford, he introduced a report on the constitutional reforms for India in 1918. There were discussions on the report in the British Parliament and it was approved. It became the Government of India Act of 1919. This act is popularly known as the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms.

THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT (1919)

The important features of the Act were:

1. The Council of the Secretary of State was to have eight to twelve members, including three Indians, and at least half of them should have spent a minimum of 10 years in India.
2. The Secretary of State was supposed to follow the advice of his council.
3. A portion of the expenditure of the office of the Secretary of State was to be met by the British Government.
4. The Secretary of State was not allowed to intervene in administrative issues of the provinces in the matters of 'Transferred Subjects' and also in the matters on which the Governor-General and his Legislative Council agreed.
5. The Governor-General was empowered to nominate as many members to his Executive Council as he wished.
6. Members appointed to the Executive Council were to have served in India for minimum of 10 years.
7. The Central Legislature was to be composed of two houses – the Council of the State

(Upper House) and the Legislative Assembly (Lower House).

8. The Council of the State was to be composed of 60 members, of which 33 would be elected and 27 nominated by the Governor-General.
9. The Legislative Assembly was to be composed of 144 members, of which 103 would be elected and 41 nominated by the Governor-General.
10. There was to be restricted franchise.
11. The term of the Upper House was to be 5 years and of the Lower House 3 years.
12. Both the houses enjoyed equal legislative powers. If there was a tie, the Governor-General was supposed to summon a joint meeting to decide the matter by majority vote.
13. The Executive Council was not responsible to the Legislature and the Governor-General could reject its advice.
14. Provincial legislatures were to be unicameral.
15. Seventy per cent members of the Provincial Legislative Councils were to be elected and the remaining 30 per cent were to be nominated.
16. The Governors were to be handed over an 'Instrument of Instructions' which was supposed to help them in executing their administrative functions.
17. The system of diarchy was set up in the provinces.
18. Apart from the Muslims, other minorities (Sikhs, Anglo-Indians, Christians and Europeans) were also accorded the right of separate electorates.
19. New reforms were to be introduced after 10 years.

Reaction to the Act of 1919

The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were not accepted by most quarters in India as they fell far short of the Indian expectations. It introduced the principle of a dual mode of administration, or diarchy, in which both the elected Indian legislators and the appointed British officials shared power. Dyarchy set in motion certain real changes of the provincial level; a number of non-controversial or 'transferred' portfolios, such as agriculture, local government, health, education and public works, were handed over to the Indians, while more sensitive matters such as finance, taxation and maintaining law and order, were retained by the provincial British administrators.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi ★**(1869 – 1948)**

M. K. Gandhi returned to India in 1914 and led three major crusades for the Indian independence from the British rule. The first was the Satyagraha campaign of peaceful non-cooperation urging the Indians to fast, close businesses and the boycott British goods in protest against the Rowlatt Bill of 1919 (a plan to imprison people suspected of trouble-making). By 1920, Gandhi was dominating Indian politics, thousands were jailed for supporting the Satyagraha, and in 1922, Gandhi was jailed for 6 years. In 1933, he launched his second major campaign to defy the law that forbade Indians to make their own salt. His journeys to the coast led thousands to follow him and his subsequent imprisonment. Finally, in 1942 he endorsed the 'Quit India' campaign, formally calling for the Indian Independence. Once again he was jailed, but negotiations led to the Mountbatten Plan of 1947, which formed India and Pakistan. He never wanted the partition of the country; he suggested that Jinnah should be invited to form the Government. To Gandhi's dismay, the country was split and the subsequent riots led to his assassination in January 1948. Nelson Mandela cites Gandhi as a dominant influence in his own struggle and described him as --- no ordinary leader. There are those who believe he was divinely inspired, and it is difficult not to believe with them.

ROWLATT ACT (1919)

During the viceroyalty of Lord Chelmsford, a sedition committee was appointed by the government in 1918, headed by Justice Rowlatt, which made certain recommendations to curb seditious activities in India. The Rowlatt Act, 1919, gave unbridled powers to the government to arrest and imprison suspects without trial. The Rowlatt Act was passed by the Government in spite of being opposed by all the Indian members of the Legislative Council. The act created anger among all sections of the society. Even before the act was passed popular agitations had begun against it. Gandhi decided to fight against this act and he gave a call for Satyagraha on 6 April 1919. He was arrested on 8 April 1919. This led to further intensification of the agitation in Delhi, Ahmedabad and Punjab.

Kheda Satyagraha ★

The Kheda Satyagraha which is also known as the no-tax peasant struggle was launched in March 1919 under the able leadership of Gandhiji along with Sardar Patel, N. M. Joshi and others. This movement provided an opportunity to the educated public workers to establish contact with the real life of the peasantry. The Kheda peasantry mainly consisted of the Patidar peasants. The Patidars have always been known for their skills in agriculture. The land of Kheda, a part of central Gujarat, is quite fertile for the cultivation of tobacco and cotton crops. The struggle of peasants was organized because the peasants had suffered a famine and this had resulted in a large scale failure of crops, but the government did not accept the failure of crops and insisted on the full realization of tax.

The Satyagraha of 1919 ★

The Satyagraha was to be a non-violent affair to the point of riot offering any real resistance. The plan for an all-India hartal was fixed on a Sunday. Two of the factors which contributed to the unexpected nationwide upsurge in answer to the Satyagraha call were the spontaneously growing labour movement (fueled by the fact that an 80-100 per cent increase in the price of food grains had been hardly offset by the

wage rises of say 15 per cent) and the remarkable Hindu-Muslim unity. The former phenomenon included the formation of the first regularly functioning trade unions, and the great largely spontaneous, Mumbai textile strike of January 1919. Hindu-Muslim unity had been facilitated partly by the 1916 Lucknow Pact between the Congress and the leaders of the Muslim League, whereby the Congress accepted separate electorates and a bargain was struck over the distribution of seats. Muslim politicians were agitated over the Khilafat issues. The Sultan of Turkey, who was accepted as the major Muslim power, was being subjected to humiliating terms by the British after World War I and Muslim leaders worldwide sympathized. The anxieties of Muslim politicians coincided in 1919, with the agitational plans of the Congress. And so, for the first time, the major politicians of both communities jointly gave a call for struggle.

JALLIANWALA BAGH MASSACRE (13 APRIL 1919)

The arrest of Dr. Kitchlu and Dr. Satyapal on 10 April 1919, under the Rowlatt Act in connection with the Satyagraha caused serious unrest in Punjab. Rioting started in Amritsar on 10 April 1919. The people of Amritsar took out processions to protest against the arrest. Police firing made it more violent and as a result five Europeans were killed by the mob. A public meeting was held the next day, 13 April 1919, in a park called Jallianwala Bagh where thousands of people, including women and children, assembled. These protestors were unaware of a ban that had been imposed by the martial law administrators on public meetings. Before the meeting could start General O'Dyer ordered indiscriminate heavy firing on the crowd and the people had no means of escape. Hundreds of men, women and children were killed and more than 1200 people wounded in the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. The Hunter Commission was appointed to look into the situation of unrest after the incident.

Public Response to the Massacre

The massacre was a turning point in Indo-British relations and inspired the people to begin a more unrelenting fight for freedom. It sickened some in

protest, Rabindranath Tagore returned the knighthood conferred on him. It gave strength to Gandhi's mission, which ultimately led to the British leaving India.

On 13 March 1940, Sardar Uddham Singh, an Indian patriot from Punjab visited England. He shot down Michael O'Dwyer, former Lieutenant Governor of Punjab, while the latter was addressing a meeting in Caxton Hall, London. Uddham Singh was executed on 31 July 1940, in England. Uddham Singh's ashes were brought back to India after 34 years on 19 July 1974.

KHILAFAT MOVEMENT (1920)

The Khilafat (The Caliphate)

The Khilafat, as an institution did not have a stable past. Initially, it had migrated from Medina to Damascus and from Damascus to Baghdad. It remained in Egypt for some time, and then it shifted to Turkey. The Indian Muslims had a strong sense of closeness to the world community of Islam. They had witnessed the fall in the political fortunes of Islam. They had seen how the European powers defeated the Muslim kingdoms and captured their lands one after the other. The Anglo-Russian convention held in 1908 had brought the status of Iran to just a dependency. Afghanistan was also reduced to a bone of contention between Russia and Britain. Ultimately, British established its control over Afghanistan.

Response of the Indian Muslims

The Indian Muslims had a feeling that the European powers were waging a war against Islam across the world so that its power and influence could be ended. Till then, the Ottoman Empire was the only Muslim power that had maintained an impression of authority. The Indian Muslims wished to stop the last Islamic political authority from becoming extinct. The Sultans of Turkey had proclaimed themselves to be the caliphs of the Muslims all over the world. Before the fall of the Mughal Empire, Muslims of India had not acknowledged their claim. However, when there was no other Indian Muslim sovereign power left, the

Muslims of India began to see the necessity of recognizing the Sultan of Turkey as their Caliph. Tipu Sultan also, who when first failed to gain recognition from the Mughals, had turned to the Sultan of Turkey to get recognition of a legal right to his throne.

Origin of the Khilafat Movement

As a consequence of the World War I, the Ottoman Empire faced humiliation. Two brothers also known as the Ali Brothers, **Maulana Muhammad Ali** and **Maulana Shaukat Ali**, inspired the Muslims of South Asia and initiated an anti-British movement in 1920 popularly known as the Khilafat Movement. The movement wished the restoration of the Caliphate. The objectives of the movement were: (i) to restore the Turkish caliphate; (ii) to safeguard the holy shrines of the Muslims; and (iii) to preserve the unity of the Ottoman Empire. The European forces had played a prime role in cutting the authority of Turkey in Europe to Eastern Thrace, Constantinople and the straits in the Balkan Wars fought between 1912 and 1913. As an act of revenge, Turkey decided to join the Germans against the Allied forces. The Indian Muslims hailed the decision and showed their anti-British attitude more aggressively.

British Response to the Khilafat Movement

The Indian Muslims were unanimous in their support to the Caliph. Despite the fact that they were separated from Turkey by thousands of miles, they were resolute to support Turkey from India. The conditions of the Treaty of Sèvres declared in 1920, led to resentment among the Muslims. They felt that they had been cheated. In the month of June 1920, ninety prominent Muslim personalities wrote to Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, declaring that they would start a non-cooperation movement against the government from August, if the conditions of the treaty with Turkey were not changed. This did not bring any positive results because the British Prime Minister Lloyd George was a bitter enemy of Turkey and also of the Indian Khilafat Movement. When the Indian Khilafat deputation reached England in 1920 to

express views before the British Government, they were not treated properly.

The Moplah Uprising

In the month of August 1921, peasant riots broke out in Nilambur, Kerala. The Moplah peasants rebelled against the oppressive policies of their Hindu landlords. The landlords worked in alliance with the British. The landlords re-distributed the lands of the peasants. This increased the suffering of the Moplahs, and rose in revolt. There started a pitched battle between the British regiment and the Moplahs. The Moplahs killed many Europeans. More than four thousand Moplahs were killed in the action and thousands were injured and then, the infamous Moplah train tragedy occurred. Nearly hundred prisoners, cramped in a closed and airtight goods van, were being transported by rail. When the door of the wagon was opened, sixty six Moplahs were found dead because of suffocation and the remaining were on the brink of collapse. This led to Hindu-Muslim communal clashes, especially in Multan and Bengal in the month of September, 1922. The *Sanghathan* and *Shuddhi* movements were launched as a result of these communal rioting. They were directed against the Muslims and aimed at the revival of Hinduism.

Decline of the Khilafat Movement

Along with other factors, the arrest of the Ali brothers in September 1921 was an important factor responsible for the decline of the Khilafat movement. After the Chaura-Chauri incident, Gandhi also withdrew his support from the movement. He had been a staunch supporter of the movement earlier. In the year 1924, Turks under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal were trying to consolidate their position in Turkey. They declared the end of the Khilafat. It was a big shock for the members of the Indian Khilafat movement, who had been supporting Turkey and the Khilafat. Slowly, the interest of the people in the movement died down and people associated with the movement started developing new interests.

Significance of the Khilafat Movement

The Lucknow Pact indicated that it was the Hindus and the Muslims belonging to the English educated middle-class, could reach at an amicable settlement on political and constitutional issues related to them. This unity peaked during the Khilafat and the non-cooperation movements. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad also guided the movement. Gandhi and the Indian National Congress wholeheartedly supported the movement and paved the way for Hindu-Muslim unity. It became an important countrywide popular movement. No doubt that the Khilafat movement failed to achieve its goals, it led to political awakening of the large masses of Muslims. It was during the days of the movement that representatives of the Indian Muslims had a chance of meeting eminent personalities from other Muslims countries.

Moplah Rebellion: I

A large number of people in Kerala were influenced by the Gandhian movement. They joined the Satyagraha campaign in large numbers. The non-cooperation movement was at its peak during this period of time. Gandhiji toured Malabar in 1921, giving more momentum to the movement. Khilafat Committees were established in large numbers and the sense of brotherhood between the Hindus and Muslims, through the efforts in Congress-Khilafat Committees, was really a noticeable feature of the non-cooperation movement initially. The pace of spreading of the Khilafat agitation particularly in the Eranca and Valluvanad taluks alarmed the administration. A stunned administrative system imposed prohibitory orders in the both the taluks. Gatherings of people were banned and many were imprisoned. A tragic event then took place, known as the Moplah Rebellion or the **Malabar Rebellion of 1921**. The police tried to arrest the secretary of the Khilafat Committee of Pokottur in Eranad allegedly for having stolen a pistol.

Moplah Rebellion: II

A mob of 2,000 Moplahs from the neighbourhood obstructed the police. The following day, a police

looking for the Khilafat rebels entered the renowned Mambaram mosque at Tirurangadi. They took some records and took into their custody some Khilafat volunteers. A rumour spread that the mosque had been defiled by the police. Hundreds of agitated Moplahs gathered on Tirurangadi and encircled the local police station. The police Violence stretched over Eranad and Valluvanad taluks and the neighbouring areas for more than 2 months. The Congress leaders tried to curb the violence but could not succeed. During the later stages, because of the rumour of Hindus having helped the police or sought police help, there were events of atrocities committed on the Hindus. This damaged the relations between the two communities. In the meantime, British and Gorkha regiments were sent to the area. Martial law was imposed. A number of repressive measures followed, and by the month of November, the rebellion was practically flattened. Many voluntary agencies carried out relief operations for almost 6 months with the active support from Gandhi.

NON-COOPERATION MOVEMENT (1920-1922)

Launching of the Non-Cooperation Movement

With the Congress support to the Khilafat movement, Hindu-Muslim unity was achieved which encouraged Gandhi to launch his non-violent, non-cooperation movement. When the British refused to fulfill the demands of the Congress, a programmed boycott of government schools, colleges and law courts was approved in an all-party joint conference held in Allahabad in June 1920. At Kolkata, the Congress organized a special session in September 1920, and resolved in favour of the non-violent, non-cooperation movement, and defined Swaraj as its ultimate aim. The movement envisaged (i) surrender of titles and honorary officers; (ii) resignation from nominated offices and posts in the local bodies; (iii) refusal to attend government darbars and boycott of British courts by the lawyers; (iv) refusal of members

of the public to join military and other government jobs; (v) boycott of government schools, colleges, courts and election process as per the Act of 1919 and (vi) boycott of foreign goods.

This led to the foundation of national schools and educational institutions and panchayats (which acted as private arbitration courts) throughout India. Swadeshi and Khadi became popular and domestic hand-spinning and hand-weaving industry began to grow. Nationwide programmes began for the removal of untouchability and for the upliftment of 'Harijans' and women. Participation of Muslims and other minorities helped in developing a sense of national unity.

Significance of the Movement

This was the first truly nationalist movement of India which brought together almost all working strata of the society such as peasants, teachers, students, women and merchants. It acquired a real mass base as it gained momentum and spread across the length and breadth of the country. The Congress also got a face lift with this movement, gaining recognition as an organization for action instead of a mere deliberative assembly. The development of national unity and willingness of people to make sacrifices for the cause of national independence also emerged from this movement.

Phases of the Movement

PHASE I (JANUARY – MARCH 1921)

Gandhi, along with the Ali brothers undertook a nationwide tour, addressing hundreds of meetings and a large number of political leaders. In the initial weeks itself, thousands of students left schools and colleges and joined more than 800 national schools and colleges that sprang up all over the country. The educational boycott was especially successful in Bengal, with Punjab too responding under the leadership of Lala Lajpat Rai. Other areas that were active were Mumbai, United Provinces, Bihar, Orissa, Assam and Chennai. Apart from educational boycott, there was a boycott of law courts which saw major

lawyers such as Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, C. Rajagopalachari, Saifuddin Kitchly, Vallabhbhai Patel and Aruna Asaf Ali, give up their lucrative practices, inspiring thousands of followers.

PHASE II (APRIL – JUNE 1921) Operation Tilak Swaraj Fund was organized throughout the country by which common people were enrolled in the Congress. The aim was to raise a fund for organizing the Congress activity on a larger platform. The Congress succeeded in creating a fund of more than crore from the donations. It installed spinning wheels throughout the nation to mark the success of the Tilak Swaraj Fund.

PHASE III (JULY – SEPTEMBER 1921)

The non-cooperation movement also saw picketing of shops selling foreign cloth and boycott of foreign cloth by the followers of Gandhi. Another dramatic event during this period was the visit of the Prince of Wales. The day he landed in Mumbai, 17 November 1921, he was greeted with empty streets and downed shutters wherever he went.

PHASE IV (NOVEMBER 1921 – FEBRUARY 1922)

The non-cooperation movement had other indirect effects also, it led to the Kisan movement throughout the country, Akaji movement in Punjab, strikes in steamer service and Assam – Bengal Railways and many other local movements. There was a mood of civil mass disobedience throughout the country. The unrest and defiance of authority engendered by the non-cooperation movement contributed to the rise of many local movements in different parts of the country, movements which did not often adhere strictly to the programme of the non-cooperation movement or to the policy of non-violence. In December 1921, at the annual session of Congress at Ahmedabad under the presidentship of C. R. Das, a resolution was passed affirming the fixed determination of the Congress to continue the programme of non-violent, non-cooperation till the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and Khilafat wrongs were redressed and Swarajya was established.

CHAURI – CHAURA INCIDENT (1922)

The Congress session held at Ahmedabad in December 1921, decided to launch a civil disobedience movement while reiterating its stand on the non-violent, non-cooperation movement of which Gandhi was the appointed leader. Before Gandhi could launch the civil disobedience movement, a mob at Chauri-Chaura led by **Jawahar Yadav**, near Gorakhpur in the present day Uttar Pradesh, clashed with the police which opened fire. In retaliation, the mob burnt the police station and killed 22 policemen. This compelled Gandhi to call off the civil disobedience movement on 11 February 1922. Even so Gandhi was arrested and sentenced to 6 years imprisonment. The Chauri-Chaura incident convinced Gandhi that the nation was not yet ready for mass disobedience and he prevailed upon the Congress Working Committee in Bardoli on 12 February 1922, to call off the non-cooperation movement.

Trade Unionism: Ideological Battleground

Ideological differences in the labour movement began to appear within a few years after the birth of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC). The three distinct ideological groups in the trade union organization had entirely different views regarding the labour movement. These groups were; (i) Communists led by M. N. Roy and Shripad Amrut Dange who wanted AITUC to be affiliated to such --- international organizations as the League against imperialism and the Pan-Pacific Trade Union Secretariat. The party ideology was supreme to these leaders and they took the unions as instruments for furthering it. (ii) Moderates led by N. M. Joshi and V. V. Giri, who wanted affiliation with the British labour Organization (BLO) and the international Federation of Trade Unions based in Amsterdam. The moderates were ... unionists at heart who did not want to crush trade units under political interests. (iii) Nationalists led by the freedom fighters Gandhi and Nehru, who argued that affiliation with the latter organizations would be accepting unending dominion status for the country under the British rule.

TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

The working class of the developed capitalist countries began powerful struggles that affected other nations as well like India, where the reformers started organized successful struggles with the workers. Organizations such as the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of India and Burma, Unions of Printers in Kolkata, which were not exactly trade unions, came into existence. The first trade union was formed on permanent basis in 1906 in the Postal Offices at Mumbai and Kolkata. By the early years of the twentieth century, strikes by workers and visible links between nationalist politics and labour movement had become quite common.

MUMBAI MILL WORKER'S

STRUGGLE In 1908, a week long protest was held by the Mumbai Mill workers against the conviction of the nationalist leader Bal Gangadhar Tilak on charges of sedition. An uproar against the indenture system of labour recruitment for the plantations led to the abolition of the system in 1922.

SHOLAPUR COMMUNE The workers of Sholapur established workers power for the first time in India – the heroic Sholapur Commune. The colonial ruler prosecuted the workers and detained the leaders in the Meerut conspiracy case.

CHENNAI LABOUR UNION It was an association of the textile workers including workers of other trades in the European owned Buckingham and Carnatic Mills which was founded in 1918 by the nationalist leaders like Thiru Vi. Ka. (Real name T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar) and B. P. Wadia. There was a remarkable disagreement between the union and caused strike and lockout. A civil suit was filed against Wadia claiming the payment of damages for inciting workers to breach their contract. The court ruled out that the Chennai Labour Union was an illegal conspiracy to hurt trading interests and demanded the restraining of activities of the union. Finally, it ended into a compromise which led to reinstatement of all the victimized workers except 13 strike leaders. Wadia

and other outside leaders separated themselves from the union.

TEXTILE LABOUR ASSOACIATION

At the time when Chennai Labour Union was being organized, Anasuyaben Sarabhai began working for the mill workers in Ahmedabad which eventually led to the formation of the famous Mazdoor Mahajan – Textile Labour Association in 1920.

GANDHI'S BACKING TO THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Gandhi called the Textile Labour Association, Ahmedabad, as his laboratory where he experimented upon his ideas on industrial relations and a model labour union. Being successful with his experiments, he advised other trade unions to follow it.

GROWTH OF TRADE UNIONS IN INDIA

Several reasons support the coming up of unions in the 1920s. Against this background N. M. Joshi introduced a bill for the rights of a Trade Union. But the then member for Industries, Commerce and Labour promised to legislate the subject himself and the Trade Union Act of 1926 was enacted. By this time, many active trade union leaders notably N. M. Joshi, Zabwalla, Solicitor Jinwalla, S. C. Joshi, V. G. Dalvi and Dr. Baptista organized strong unions specially in Port Trust, Dock staff, Bank employees (especially in Imperial Bank and currency office), Customs, Income – Tax, Ministerial staff, etc.

AMALGAMATION OF NATIONALIST AND TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

After the war, the growth of the nationalist Home Rule Movement encouraged the labour movement to take part in its nationalist effort. Following World War I, the wages were not at par with the price hike. The workers being unaware about the concept of trade union needed the guidance of philanthropists and social workers (politicians) who recognized labour's potential for their political

organization. There were different kinds of politicians like Gandhians, socialists and communists supporting the workers.

GREAT OCTOBER SOCIALIST REVOLUTION

After World War I, workers throughout the country took inspiration from the Great October Socialist Revolution of Russia and struggled against British colonialism.

Labour Movements After 1939

When World War II broke out in 1939, the workers opposed the war through a series of strikes. Favourable conditions such as worldwide anti-imperialist struggles, establishment of rule of under working class leadership in one third of the globe defeat of fascist powers and the role of working class encouraged anti-imperialist struggles in India. Some of the incidents that showed the working class power were the nationwide post and telegraph strike, the Mumbai general strike in support of the naval mutiny and street battles. In the princely feudal states, the working class supported the Telegana armed struggle and was in the forefront of Punnapra-Vygiayar struggle.

BIRTH OF AITUC

The need felt for a central organization was fulfilled with the birth of the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) in 1920. Many protests and martyrdom of many gave the working class the right to organize itself into trade unions and the right to strike. In 1926, the India Trade Union Act was enacted.

TRADE UNIONS ACT, 1926

The Indian Trade Unions Act, 1926, legalized that seven workers can combine to make a trade union. It also removed the pursuit of legitimate trade union activity from the purview of civil and criminal proceedings which is still the basic law governing trade unions in the country.

SPLIT IN AITUC AND FORMATION OF NTUF

From the mid-1920s of the twentieth century, the communists launched a major offensive to capture the AITUC. They started rival unions in opposition to those dominated by the nationalists. By 1928, they fielded their candidate for election to the office of the President of the AITUC in opposition to the nationalist candidate Nehru who managed to win the election by a narrow margin. In the 1929 session of the AITUC chaired by Nehru, the communists garnered enough support to carry a resolution to affiliate the Union to International Communist Forum. This resolution sparked the first split in the labour movement. The moderates, who deeply opposed it, walked out and eventually formed the National Trade Union Federation (NTUF).

RED TRADE UNION CONGRESS

Within 2 years of this event, the Union suffered another split. The communists walked out of AITUC in 1931 and formed the Red Trade Union Congress but following its ban by the British, they returned. The British being most favourably disposed towards the moderate NTUF, appointed N. M. Joshi, the moderate leader as a member of the Royal Commission.



Trade Union Movement : The Beginning

The corresponding growth of nationalist and the trade union movement rose consciousness among the struggling Indian Industrial workers who emerged as winners and stood by the nationalist organisers.

In the years after the revolt of 1857, the British imperialists had a firm footing in the country and they began to set up industrial enterprises. But the inhuman conditions in which the Indian labourers worked resulted in a struggle by the workers throughout the later half of the nineteenth century at various industrial centres like Mumbai and Howrah.

Strike at Empress Mills Nagpur This was an erratic struggle by the workers of the Empress Mills at Kanpur in 1877 following a wage cut. But because of poor organization, it failed and led to more cruelty by the rulers.

Agitation of Mumbai Textile Workers Regular payment of wages and improved working conditions were demanded by 5,000 Mumbai Textile workers, in 1884. This was followed by unsuccessful strikes between 1882 and 1890. Because of oppression, many workers quit their jobs. Concerned about low labour costs, which gave an unfair advantage to Indian made goods, the Lancashire and Manchester Chambers of Commerce called for an inquiry into the conditions of the Indian workers.

The First Factories Act, 1881 In 1875, the first appointed committee enquired into the conditions of factory workers and demanded factory laws. The first Factories Act was adopted in 1881 and The Factory Commission was appointed in 1885.

The Factories Act, 1891 Another Factories Act came up in 1891, and a Royal Commission on labour was appointed in 1892. This forced restrictions on the working hours and the employment of women.

The Mumbai Millhand's Association This association formed in 1890 was the first workers organization headed by Narayan lakhande who can be treated as the Father of India's modern trade union movement. This organization with no rules, regulations or funds worked for the welfare of workers. Soon other organizations like Kamgar Hitvardhak Sabha and Social Service League also came up.

MERGING OF NTUF WITH AITUC

The breaking away of the NTUF cost the AITUC 30 affiliated unions having close to hundred thousand members. The Red Trade Union Congress quickly fell apart, and the communists returned to the AITUC. During the next few years, there was compromise between the AITUC and NTUF as well. The split had occurred on issues such as affiliation with international organizations which were of no concern to the ordinary worker. By 1940, the NTUF merged completely with the AITUC and it was agreed that the AITUC would not affiliate itself with any international organization and political decisions would be taken on the basis of a two-thirds majority. In conclusion, the thirties involved wage cuts, wartime inflation, political dissent and the Government's failure

in 1937 to meet the expectations of the workers depicting a depressing period for Indian labour. However, some prominent labour leaders such as Shri Nanda and Shri Giri did pass some useful legislations, major being the Mumbai Industrial Disputes Act of 1938, which attempted to eliminate inter-union rivalries by introducing a system recognising the dominant union.

VISIT OF SIMON COMMISSION

The victorious October Revolution led to the development of the ideology of scientific socialism in the working class movement in India and put forth immediate political demands. Simon Commission's visit to India was marked by protests by the working class.

Conspiracy Trials against the Communists ★

To stop the communists effort for a united party, the British banned their activity with four conspiracy trials between 1921 and 1924. These were the First Peshawar Conspiracy Case, the Second Peshawar Conspiracy Case, the Moscow Conspiracy Case and the Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy Case, which had great political impact.

COMMUNIST MOVEMENT IN INDIA

Manabendra Nath Roy, earlier known as Narendra Nath Bhattacharyya, is credited to be the founder of the communist movement in India. He attended the Second Congress of Communist International in Russia and in Tashkent along with Evelina Trench Roy, Abani Mukherji, Rosa Fitingof, Mohammad Ali (Ahmed Hasan), Mohammad Shafiq Siddiqui; he founded the emigre Communist Party of India on 17 October 1920. He had earlier played an important role in the forming of the Communist Party of Mexico in 1919. Roy kept in contact with the Anushilan and Yugantar groups in Bengal and tried to strengthen the movement in India. Small communist groups were formed in Bengal (led by Muzaffar Ahmed), Mumbai (led by S. A. Dange), Chennai (led by Singaravelu

Chettiar), United Provinces (led by Shaukat Usmani) and Punjab (led by Ghulam Hussain). The activities of the new breed of revolutionaries caused panic among the British administrators and on 17 March 1924, M. N. Roy, S. A. Dange, Muzaffar Ahmed, Nalini Gupta, Shaukat Usmani, Singaravelu Chettiar, Ghulam Hussain and R. C. Sharma were charged for starting a violent revolution to deprive the King Emperor of his sovereignty of the British in India. This was termed as the Kanpur Bolshevik Conspiracy case. This action of the government, however, blessing in disguise for the communists as they became aware of the plans, doctrines and the aims of Communist International in India.

Kanpur Communist Conference was held 25 December 1925, where more than 500 participated and adopted the name 'Communist Party of India' (CPI). The Labour and Swaraj Party of the Indian National Congress were formed in Bengal on 1 November 1925. The name of the party was changed to Workers and Peasants Party of Bengal (WPP) on 6 February 1925 at a conference in Krishnanagar. After the conference, the underground CPI members joined the provincial WPPs to carry out their activities. WPP became the face of the communist movement, which was declared illegal. M. N. Roy in this period opposed nationalism in India and argued that India was not ready for a socialist revolution as it was populated by an industrial working class. On the other hand, the Berlin group of the Indian revolutionaries represented by Virendranath Chattopadhyay, Maulana Barkatullah and Bhupendranath Datta had a positive aspect of nationalism and considered India as an agrarian country.

SIXTH CONGRESS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

The sixth congress of the Communist International met in 1928. The colonial thesis of the 6th Comintern Congress demanded the Indian communists to protest against the national-reformist leaders thus opposing Swarajists, Gandhists and their expression of passive resistance. The Tenth Plenum of

the Executive Committee of the Communist International. 3-19 July 1929 directed Indian Communists to sever ties with WPP to which they obliged.

MERRUT CONSPIRACY CASE

On 20 March 1929, Meerut Conspiracy case involved the arrests of WPP, CPI and other labour leaders in several parts of India. The trial proceedings of Communist leadership lasted for years. The main centres of activity of CPI were Mumbai, Kolkata, Punjab and Chennai.

CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY

The Congress Socialist Party (CSP) formed by the Indian left-wing elements in 1934 was branded as 'Social Fascist' by the CPI. After 1936, both these parties worked together and the period between 1936 and 1937 saw the co-operation of these parties attaining zenith. During the third CSP Congress in Faizpur, several communists got included into the CSP National Executive Committee.

Nagpur Session of the INC

The Nagpur session held in December 1920, brought change, in the Constitution of the Congress. These include that the Congress was now supposed to be led by a 15 member working committee. Membership was thrown open to all and women of the age of 21 years or more on the payment of 4 annas as annual subscription (Age limit reduced to 18 years in 1921).

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, G. S. Khaparde, Bipin Chandra Pal, Annie Besant and so on left the Congress as they did not believe in Gandhi's non cooperation strategy.

SWARAJ PARTY (1922)

Origin and Purpose

Gandhi's decision to call off the agitation caused frustration among the masses. His decision came in for severe criticism from his colleagues such as Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das and N. C. Kelkar, who

organised the Swaraj Party. The foundations of the Swaraj Party were laid on 1 January 1923. as the Congress-Khilafat-Swarajya Party with C. R. Das as the President and Motilal Nehru as one of the secretaries. It proposed that an alternative programme of diverting the movement from a widespread civil disobedience programme to restricted programme would be undertaken. By this programme, its members would enter the legislative councils by contesting elections to wreck the legislature from within and use moral pressure to compel the authorities to concede to the popular demand for self-government. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Ansari and Rujendra Prasad opposed council entry and were known as non-changers. They warned that legislative politics would weaken nationalist fervour and create rivalries among the leaders.

Rise and Decline

In the elections held in 1923, the Swaraj Party captured 42 of the 101 elected seats. In provincial elections, they secured a few seats, but in the Central Provinces they secured a clear majority. In Bengal, the Swaraj Party was the largest party. It followed the policy of undiluted opposition. The Swarajists demanded the release of all political prisoners, provincial autonomy and repealing of the repressive laws imposed by the British government. However, after the death of C. R. Das in 1925, the party drifted towards a policy of cooperation with the government. This led to dissensions in the party and it broke up in 1926. In the 1926 general elections, the party fared badly in the United Provinces and Punjab which were its stronghold earlier. Finally, in 1930, it merged with the Congress.

MUDDIMAN COMMITTEE (1924)

In 1924, a nine-member committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Sir Muddiman to enquire about the dyarchy, instituted by the Morley-McCluskey Reforms. The committee submitted its report in 1925. The majority report stated that the trials of the dyarchy system were not fair and adequate resources and time frame was not provided to check

the validity of the system. It recommended the continuation of the system with the incorporation of only a few changes. The majority report actually constituted the views and opinions of the loyalists and officials. The Secretary of State for India took a note of the majority report and issued a statement that action would be taken based on the report. There was, however, a minority report as well as which consisted of opinions of other non-official Indians who had categorically opposed dyarchy and recommended the framing of a new constitution. This view was not justly presented by the Muddiman Committee.

SIMON COMMISSION (1927)

Appointment of the Commission

The Government of India Act of 1919 was essentially transitional in character. Under Section 84 of the said Act, a statutory commission was to be appointed at the end of 10 years to determine the next stage in the realisation of self-rule in India. The activities of the Swaraj Party had induced the British government to review the working of dyarchy introduced by the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms and to report as to what extent a representative government could be introduced in India. The British government appointed a commission under Sir John Simon in November 1927. The commission, which had no Indian members, was sent to investigate India's constitutional problems and make recommendations to the government on a future constitution for India. Indian political leaders felt insulted and decided to boycott the commission.

Boycott of the Commission

The call for the boycott of the Simon Commission was endorsed by the Liberal Federation led by Tej Bahadur Sapru, by the Indian Industrial and Commercial Congress and by the Hindu Mahasabha. The Muslim League split on the issue, with Mohammed Ali Jinnah carrying the majority with him in favour of a boycott. Sir Muhammad Shall, who wanted to cooperate with the commission, decided to convene a Muslim League session in Lahore in

December 1927. The Jinnah faction held a Muslim League session at Kolkata, and decided to form a sub-committee to confer with the working committee of the Indian National Congress and other organizations, with a view to draft a constitution for India.

The Congress decided to boycott the Simon Commission and challenged Lord Birkenhead, Secretary of State for India, to produce a constitution acceptable to the various elements in India. An all parties' conference appointed the Nehru Committee to produce an agreed constitution. The Congress was moving from the demand of 'Dominion Status' to 'Complete Independence'. The Chennai session of the Congress in 1927, passed a resolution of 'Complete National Independence' and later, in 1928, the All Party Muslim Conference also adopted 'the goal of complete independence' as its objective. The Congress boycotted the Commission as it had no Indian member.



Transformation of Boycott into a Movement

It was the Indian National Congress that turned the boycott into a movement. The action began as soon as Sir John Simon and his colleagues landed in Mumbai on 3 February 1928. All the major cities and towns observed a complete hartal and people came out on the streets to participate in mass rallies, processions and black flag demonstrations. Wherever the commission went, they were met with the slogans of 'Simon, go back'. While leading the demonstration at Lahore, Lala Lajpat Rai was severely beaten in a police lathicharge and succumbed to his injuries. It charged the political atmosphere in India it was his death that Bhagat Singh and his comrades were seeking, to avenge when they killed a white police official, Saunders, in December 1928.

BUTLER COMMITTEE (1927)

In 1927, the British government constituted the Indian States Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Harcourt Butler. The other two members in the committee were S. C. Peel and W. S. Holdsworth. The

purpose of the committee was to inquire into the relationship between the Indian states and the British throne; and suggest measures for improvement. The committee submitted its report in 1929, which was subsequently endorsed by the Simon Commission. The committee found that the relations of the British Crown with the Princely states in India was a thriving and growing one, and it was suggested that the states should be transferred to British India without any contract with a new government which would be responsible for an Indian legislature. It also divided the roles of the Governor-General and the Viceroy of India stating that the Viceroy should be the agent of the British Crown in its relation with the princes.

DELHI MUSLIM PROPOSAL (1927)

Considering separate electorates to be the main hindrance in improving Hindu-Muslim relations, Jinnah proposed that if the Congress agreed to provide certain safeguards, the Muslim League would give up this demand. Consequently, the proposals were formally approved at a conference held by the Muslim League in 1927 at Delhi. The Delhi Muslim proposals proposed the following safeguards: (i) the formation of a separate province of Sindh and (ii) introduction of reforms in the North West Frontier Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in the other provinces.

Unless and until the above proposals were implemented the Muslim League would not surrender the right of their representation through separate electorates. The Muslim League was willing to abandon separate electorates in favour of joint electorates with the reservation of seats fixed in proportion to the population of different communities if the above two proposals were implemented to their full satisfaction and also, if the following proposals were accepted: (a) Hindu minorities in Sindh, Baluchistan and the North-West Frontier Province be accorded the same concessions in the form of reservation of seats over and above the proportion of their population as Muslims would get in Hindu

majority provinces; (b) Muslim representation in the Central Legislature would not be less than one-third; and (c) in addition to provisions such as religious freedom, there was to be a further guarantee in the constitution that on communal matters, no bill or resolution would be considered or passed, if, three-fourth of the members of the community concerned were opposed to it. These proposals were to be accepted or rejected in total.

Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964)

Jawaharlal Nehru was born on 14 November 1889. He was the son of a rich Brahman lawyer from Kashmir. When he reached the age of 16, he went to England to get educated at the Harrow School and at the University of Cambridge. He returned to India in 1912, and started the practice of law. Soon, in 1919 he joined the Indian National Congress. It was the major nationalist organization of India. Its leader was Mohandas K. Gandhi. Very soon, Nehru became the leader of the nationalist movement. He was imprisoned nine times by the British for his participation in the activities related to the independence of India. He remained the president of the Congress party from 1929 to 1931. He was again appointed the president of the party for five more times. Nehru remained a staunch supporter of Gandhi until Gandhi's demise in 1940; however, he did not endorse Gandhi's views of passive resistance as a means of pushing the British out of India. Rather, he suggested a militant program which involved the use of all possible measures, just short of armed resistance to the British.

NEHRU REPORT (1928)

When the Simon Commission failed miserably, there was no substitute for the British government but to invite the Indians to draft a constitution for themselves. They understood that the two main parties, the Congress and the Muslim League, had serious differences of opinions. Lord Birkenhead, Secretary of State for Indian Affairs, threw the ball in the Indian politicians' court and

invited them to plan of the future action to which both Hindus and Muslims would agree. The Indian leaders took the opportunity and the All parties Conference was summoned at Delhi in January 1928. Over a hundred representatives of almost all the parties of India participated in the conference. However, the leaders could not arrive at any consensus. The biggest obstruction was the issue of the rights of the minorities. Another meeting of the All Parties Conference took place in the month of March. The leaders once again could not resolve their differences and did not reach a conclusion. The sub-committees too proved a failure because of the difference in opinions of the Congress and the Muslim League.

The meeting of the All Parties Conference was conducted for the third time in Mumbai on 19 May 1928. There was no prospect of an agreed constitution. It was decided that a small committee should be appointed to look into the details of the constitution. Jawaharlal Nehru was appointed the head of this committee. The committee included nine other members including two Muslim League representatives, Syed Ali Imam and Shoaib Qureshi. The committee worked for 3 months at Allahabad and the memorandum that it presented was known as the Nehru Report. The report suggested that a Declaration of Rights should be included in the constitution making sure complete liberty of conscience and religion.

The following were the recommendations put forward by the Nehru Report:

1. India should be accorded the status of a dominion.
2. There should be federal system of government: residuary powers lying with the centre.
3. India should have a parliamentary system of government headed by a Prime Minister and six other ministers designated by the Governor-General.
4. The legislature should be bicameral.
5. There should be no separate electorates for any community.

6. The proposal of reservation for the minorities was as bad as that of separate electorates.
7. Reservation of seats for Muslims could be possible in provinces where Muslim population was at least 10 per cent of the total, but this was to be in strict proportion to the size of the community.
8. Muslims should be given one-fourth representation in the Central Legislature.
9. Sindh should be separated from Mumbai only if the committee approved that it was financially self-reliant.
10. The North-West Frontier Province should be given a complete provincial status.
11. A new Kanarese speaking province, Karnataka, should be established in South India.
12. Hindi should be made the official language of India.
13. Provision of Fundamental Rights for the people of India in the Constitution.

Events that Unfolded after Nehru Report

Despite opposition from the Muslim League, the Congress government with a disobedience movement if the Nehru Report was not implemented into the Government of India December 1929. This attitude of the Congress proved to be pivotal in the partition of India, it also proved to be a turning point in the life of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. After reading the Nehru Report, Jinnah announced a 'parting of the ways'.

Muslim League's Reaction to Nehru Report

The recommendations of the Nehru Report were not accepted by the Muslim League. Jinnah claimed it to be going against the interests of the Muslim community on account of rejection of separate electorates. He had expected the report to take into account the Delhi Proposals fully. The Muslim League had been asking for one-third representation at the centre while the Nehru Committee gave them only one-fourth representation. Though both the demands of the Muslim League were considered in the Nehru Report, they were incomplete. It was said that Sindh

should be separated from Mumbai but the condition of self-economy was also put forward. It demanded constitutional reforms in the North-West Frontier Province but Baluchistan was overlooked in the report.

ALL PARTIES MUSLIM CONFERENCE (1929)

The immediate result of the publication of the Nehru Report was that Muslims of all shades of opinion united in opposition to it. The two wings of the Muslim League that had been split since 1924 came closer. On 21 January 1929, an All Parties Muslim Conference was convened in Delhi under Aga Khan. The Conference laid down the Muslims' demands in the clearest possible terms: (i) The only form of government suitable to Indian conditions was a federal system, with complete autonomy and residuary powers vested in the constituent states, (ii) Muslims should not be deprived of the right to elect their representatives through separate electorates without their consent, (iii) Muslims should continue to have weightage in the Hindu majority provinces and they were willing to accord the same privilege to non-Muslim minorities in Sindh, the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan, (iv) Muslims should have their due share in the central and provincial cabinets, (v) The Muslim majority in all Muslim majority provinces (with particular reference to Bengal and Punjab) should in no way be disturbed.

This resolution was the Muslim League's reply to the Nehru Report. The rejection of the Congress-inspired constitution was completely unanimous and clear. The Muslims were adamant on two points—continuation of separate electorates; and a federal form of government for India. The Nehru Report was primarily repudiated because it denied these conditions.

At this critical juncture, Jinnah tried to wrestle for his position by asking the Congress for certain modifications to be made in the recommendations of the Nehru Report. At the all Parties Convention at Kolkata in 1929, he argued that (i) one-third of the elected representatives of both the houses of the

Central Legislature should be Muslim; (ii) in the event of adult suffrage not being established in Punjab and Bengal, there should be reservations of seats for the Muslims on the basis of population for 10 years, subject to a re-examination after that period, but that they shall have no right to contest additional seats; and (iii) residuary powers should be left to the provinces and should not rest with the Central Legislature. The Nehru Committee rejected these suggestions. In March 1929, Jinnah compiled a set of recommendations that provoked Muslim thinking for the better part of the next decade.

Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876-1948)

Referred to as the 'Father of Pakistan', Jinnah was born in Karachi in 1876. He went to England to be a barrister. He returned to India in 1896 and became a close friend with moderate leaders such as Gokhale and Naoroji. He became a member of the Muslim League in 1913, but remained very close to the Indian National Congress till the 1930s. However, he had little appreciation for the Gandhian techniques of civil disobedience and non-cooperation. He articulated the idea of a separate nation of Pakistan and became the first Governor-General of Independent Pakistan. On 11 September 1948, he died after a protracted illness at Karachi.

JINNAH'S FOURTEEN POINTS (1929)

On March 28 1929, a meeting of the council of the All India Muslim League was held. In the meeting, the members of both the league, i.e. Shah league and Jinnah league took part. Jinnah called the Nehru Report a Hindu document, but suggested that merely rejecting the report was not adequate. He decided that he would give a different Muslim League agenda. In this meeting he introduced his Fourteen Points. These points were as follows:

1. The structure of the constitution to be constructed should be federal in nature, in which residuary powers would be vested in the provinces.

2. A standardised measure of autonomy shall be offered to all provinces.
3. The legislatures and other elected bodies shall be created on the principle of adequate and effective representation of minorities in each province without curtailment of the majority in any province to a minority even equality.
4. The representation of the Muslims shall not be less than one-third in the Central Legislature.
5. Communal group representation shall be continued through the means of separate electorates with the condition that it shall be open to any community at any time to give up its separate electorate in favour of a joint electorate.
6. Any necessary territorial distribution shall not affect the Muslim majority in the provinces of Punjab, Bengal, and the North-West Frontier Province.
7. All religious communities will be given full religious liberty, that is, liberty of belief, worship and observance, propaganda, association and education.
8. Any bill or resolution or any part thereof shall not be passed in any legislature or any other elected body, in case three-fourth of the members of any community oppose such a bill, resolution, or any part thereof, if it would be injurious to the interests of that community or in the alternative, such other method would be devised as may be found feasible and practicable to deal with such cases.
9. The region of Sindh should be separated from the Mumbai presidency.
10. Like all other provinces, reforms should be brought in the North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan.
11. Such provision should be made in the constitution which give Muslims a sufficient share, along with other Indians, in all the services of the state and in local self-governing bodies having due consideration to the requirements of efficiency.
12. The constitution should symbolise for the protection of Muslim culture and for the

protection and promotion of Muslim education, language, religion, personal laws and Muslim charitable institutions and for their due share in the grants-in-aid given by the state and by the local self-governing bodies.

13. No central or provincial cabinet should be formed without there being a proportion of at least one-third Muslim ministers.
14. The constitution cannot be amended by the Central Legislature except with the concurrence of the States' contribution to the Indian federation.

The given Fourteen Points were accepted by the Council of the All India Muslim League. They passed a resolution according to which no scheme for the future constitution was tolerable to the Muslim League, if it did not include the demands presented in the Fourteen Points.

The Meerut conspiracy

Beginning in March 1929, the British Government had unleashed a reign of terror on the rapidly-growing labour movement in India. By 20 March 1929, 31 of India's most important labour leaders were arrested. They included Dange, Mirajkar, Ghate, Joglekar, Adhikari, Nimbkar, Alve and Kasse from Mumbai; Mazaffar Ahmed, Kishorilal Ghosh, Dharani Goswami, Gopen Chakraborty, Radharaman Mitra, Gopal Basak and Sibnath Bannerji from Kolkata; Sohan Singh Joshi who had associated closely with Bhogai Singh and whose Kirti Kisan Party cooperated with the Naujawan Bharat Sabha from Punjab; P. C. Joshi and Viswanath Mukherji from UP; as well as three English Communists active in the Indian Trade Union Movement. They were implicated in a conspiracy case and the trial was to be staged at Meerut. This was the famous Meerut Conspiracy Case. While the Congress condemned the arrests, it was an open secret that the leadership was somewhat relieved and mounted no nationwide campaign for their release. Certainly, the arrests crippled the radical wing of the Congress. The arrested included about eight members of the All

India Congress Committee

LAHORE SESSION (1929)

In December 1929, under the presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru, the Indian National Congress at its Lahore session declared Poortm Swaraj (complete independence) to be the goal of the national movement. It was Gandhi again, who was the decisive voice in investing Jawaharlal Nehru with the office of president in what was to be a critical year of mass struggle.

Jawaharlal Nehru's presidential address was a stirring call to action: 'We have now an open conspiracy to free this country from foreign rule, and you, comrades and all the countrymen and countrywomen are invited to join it'. Nehru also made it known that in his view, liberation did not mean only throwing off the foreign yoke: I must frankly confess that I am a socialist and a republican, and am no believer in kings and princes, or in an order which produces the modern kings of industry, who have greater power over the lives and fortunes of men than even the kings of old, and whose methods are as predatory as those of old feudal aristocracy.' He also spelt out the method of struggle: 'Any great movement for liberation today must necessarily be a mass movement, and mass movements must essentially be peaceful, in times of organised and if the principal movement is a peaceful one, contemporaneous attempts at a sporadic violence can only distract attention and weaken it'.

On 31 December 1929, the newly adopted tricolour flag was unfurled, and 26 January fixed as India's Republic Day, which was to be celebrated every year.

ALLAHABAD ADDRESS (1930)

Several Muslim leaders and thinkers having insight into the Muslim-Hindu situation proposed the separation of Muslim India. However, Allama Muhammad Iqbal gave the most lucid explanation of the inner feelings of the Muslim community in his

presidential address to the All India Muslim League at Allahabad in 1930. Allama Muhammad Iqbal was not only a poet, philosopher and thinker who had gained countrywide fame and recognition by 1930. Political events had taken an ominous turn. The Muslim League leaders were frustrated because they were edged out by the Congress, in their opposition of the Nehru Report. On the other hand, the British government in India had totally ignored their demands in the Simon Commission report.

As a permanent solution to the Muslim-Hindu problem, Iqbal proposed that Punjab, North-West Frontier Province, Baluchistan and Sindh should be converted into one province. He declared that the north-western part of the country was destined to unite as a self-governed unit, within the British Empire or without it. This, he suggested, was the only way to do away with communal riots and bring peace in India.

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