

SOCIAL REFORMS**Important Social Reforms under the British**

1. **The Prohibition of Female Infanticide (1795)**
The acting Governor-General, Sir John Shore, prohibited female child infanticide in 1795.
2. **The Munro Report and Metcalf Policy for Liberal Press (1823)**
Sir Thomas Munro was appointed by the British Government to send his report on Indian journalism. His harsh recommendations were passed as an Act in 1823, which advocated censorship of papers and books by the Government. Charles Metcalf, however, relaxed the restrictions on the Press and made it free. Only during the 1857 Mutiny, were the papers put under temporary scrutiny.
3. **The Prohibition of Sati pratha (1828)**
On 4 December 1828, Lord William Bentinck passed a law prohibition of sati. Nearly 7,000 instances of sati were reported to the Government every year.
4. **The Civil Marriage Act (1872)**
With this Act, marriages were transformed from a mere religious ceremony into a social practice. All the marriages were to be registered and the age of 14 years was fixed as legal age for marriage for females. This paved way to the acceptance of widow remarriage, inter-caste and inter-religion marriages. Child marriage was made illegal with the passing of the Age of Consent Act.
5. **Vernacular Press Act (1878)**
In 1870, an Act pertaining to journalism was passed to penalize papers that instigated the public to conspire against the Government. However, it was Lord Lytton who imposed severe restrictions on the Press in the Vernacular Press Act of 1878. This Act was not applicable to the English Press operating in India, but only to the Vernacular Press. However, these restrictions were taken off in stages with passing of the Acts of 1908 and 1910 and was completely removed by 1919.
6. **The Married Women 'v Property Act (1874)**
With this Act, the women had the right to claim ancestral property and property belonging to their husband. It empowered women to their rights over their own earnings, which used to be their father's, before marriage, and their husband's, after marriage.
7. **Justice Miller Committee (1918)**
Justice Miller, Justice of the Mysore High Court, was appointed as the President of the Committee for Backward Classes. The Committee's recommendations emphasized on professional education for backward classes and on increasing their representation in the government bodies. The Miller Committee recommended 50 per cent reservation on recruitment to government jobs, for 7 years, for backward classes. Free education, free books and relaxed conditions for admission to government and aided schools for students of backward classes were also recommended. The recommendations were vehemently protested by Brahmin leaders. But 50% recommendations were implemented with the support of the first non-Brahmin Diwan, Kantharaja Urs, in 1919.
8. **Indian Journalism Act (1932)**
This Act was passed to bring journalism under the control of the Government. Newspapers had started playing a vital role in national politics after the Lahore Congress Session in 1929, Journalists began reporting political leaders in jails, their sufferings and the harsh attitude of the Government, which sparked off patriotic feelings in the masses. The Government tried to restrict the press by subjecting them to severe censorship through this Act.

The Kuka Revolt (1863-1872)

The Kukas, a tribe in Punjab were implicit followers of Guru Gobind Singh. They hated both Muslims and the English. Their prominent leaders were Bhagat Jawaharmal, Ram Singh and Badan Singh. The agitation was on a full swing after the incident of dumping of cow bones at Amritsar. The other cities of Punjab that became centres of this agitation were Ludhiana deported their leaders to Rangoon and brought an abrupt end to this revolt.

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