

5th semester history

Unit-I

The Colonial Legacy

The industrial revolution in Britain led to the rise of a **powerful class of manufacturers** that were from here on going to influence the British policies in a big way. They urged the British government **to do away with the monopoly of the company in trade with India and hence, finally succeeded in 1813 in abolishing its monopoly over trade with the Charter act of 1813.**

This marked the beginning of a new phase in Britain's economic relations with India, with government now following the policy of free trade or unrestricted entry of British goods into the Indian market. Thus, a stagnating per capita income, abysmal standards of living, stunted industrial development and low-productivity and semi-feudal agriculture marked the economic legacy of colonialism as it neared the end.

De-industrialisation

Ruin of Artisans and Handicraftsmen:

Cheap machine made goods flooded the Indian markets and the Indian goods found it more and more difficult to penetrate the European markets.

The loss of traditional means of livelihood was not accompanied by a process of industrialisation. This happened at a time when artisans were already feeling the crunch due to loss of patronage by princes and nobility, who now developed western tastes.

Earlier, **Indian handloom had a big market in Europe.** Indian textiles such as cotton, linen, silk and woolen goods already had markets in Asia and Africa. With the coming of industrialisation in England, the textile industry there made important headway. There was **now a reverse of the direction of textile trade between Britain and India.** There was a massive import of machine made clothes from English factories to Indian markets. .

The British succeeded in selling their goods at a cheap price as **foreign goods were given free entry in India without paying any duty.** On the other hand, Indian handicrafts were taxed heavily when they were sent out of the country. Besides, under the pressure of its industrialists, British government often imposed a protective tariff on Indian textiles. Therefore, within a few years, India from being an exporter of clothes became an exporter of raw cotton and an importer of British clothes.

This reversal made a huge impact on the Indian handloom weaving industry leading to its virtual collapse. **It also created unemployment for a large community of weavers. Many of them migrated to rural areas to work on their lands as agricultural laborers.** This in turn put increased pressure on the rural economy and livelihood. This process of uneven competition faced by the Indian handloom industry was later dubbed by the Indian nationalist leaders as de-industrialisation.

Ruralisation of India and Overburdening of agriculture and impoverishment of peasantry:

De-industrialisation led to decline of many cities and hence, ruralisation of India with many artisans returning back to villages and taking up agriculture.

The cultivator had neither the means nor any incentive to invest in agriculture. The zamindar had no roots in the villages, while the Government spent little on agricultural, technical or mass education. All this, **together with fragmentation of land due to sub-**

infeudation, made it difficult to introduce modern technology which caused a perpetually low level of productivity.

The peasants already suffering under landlord-moneylender nexus, saw increased pressure on land with ruralisation and deindustrialisation. India became a net importer.

Commercialisation of Agriculture

So far, agriculture was a way of life but now it began to be influenced by commercial considerations. Certain specialised crops began to be grown not for the purpose of consumption but for sale in national and international markets as raw material for industries.

A major economic impact of the British policies in India was the **introduction of a large number of commercial crops such as tea, coffee, indigo, opium, cotton, jute, sugarcane and oilseed.**

Different kinds of commercial crops were introduced with different intentions. **Indian opium** was used to balance the trade of Chinese tea with Britain in the latter's favor. The market for opium was strictly controlled by British traders which did not leave much scope for Indian producers to reap profit.

Indians were forced to produce indigo and sell it on the conditions dictated by the Britishers. Indigo was sent to England and used as a dyeing agent for cloth produced in British towns. Indigo was grown under a different system where all farmers were compelled to grow it on **3/20th part of their land**. Unfortunately cultivation of Indigo left the land infertile for some years. This made the farmers reluctant to grow it.

In the **tea plantations** ownership changed hands quite often. The workers on these plantations worked under a lot of hardships.

Development of industry and Lopsided industrial development

In the second half of 19th century modern machine based industries were set up in India. This period also saw a **rush of foreign capital into India.**

The industrial development was characterised by a **lopsided pattern when core and heavy industries were ignored and some regions were favoured more than the others.**

Modern industries did develop in India from the second half of the nineteenth century. **But, both in terms of production and employment, the level of industrial development was stunted and paltry compared with that of the developed countries.**

It did not compensate even for the handicraft industries it displaced. Industrial development was mainly confined to cotton, jute and tea in the nineteenth century and to sugar, cement and paper in the 1930s.

Development of transport and communication

In the 1940s, India had 65,000 miles of paved roads and nearly 42,000 miles of railway track. Roads and railways unified the country and made rapid transit of goods and persons possible.

However, **in the absence of a simultaneous industrial revolution, only a commercial revolution was produced which further colonialized the Indian economy.**

Also, railway lines were laid primarily with a view to **link India's inland raw material-producing areas with the ports of export and to promote the spread of imported manufactures from the ports to the interior.** The needs of Indian industries with regard to their markets and sources of raw materials were neglected as no steps were taken to

encourage traffic between inland centres. The railway freight rates were also so fixed as to favour imports and exports and to discriminate against internal movement of goods.

Moreover, unlike in Britain and the United States, railways did not initiate steel and machine industries in India. Instead, it was the British steel and machine industries which were the beneficiaries of railway development in India.

Rise of Indian bourgeoisie

Indian traders, moneylenders and bankers amassed some wealth as junior partners of British capitalists in India. These further provided loans to Indian agriculturists and aided British revenue collection.

The rise of a strong indigenous capitalist class with an independent economic and financial base. The Indian capitalists were, in the main, independent of foreign capital. They were also perhaps more enterprising than the foreign capitalists in India, with the result that investment under Indian capital grew considerably faster than British and other foreign investment.

By 1947, Indian capital had also made a great deal of headway in banking and life insurance. Indian joint-stock banks held 64 per cent of all bank deposits, and Indian-owned life insurance companies controlled nearly 75 per cent of life insurance business in the country.

The bulk of internal trade and part of foreign trade was also in Indian hands. These positive features of the Indian economy have, however, to be seen in a wider historical context. **First, the development of Indian industry and capitalism was still relatively stunted and severely limited. Then, occurring within the framework of a colonial economy, this industrialization took place without India undergoing an industrial revolution as Britain did**

Economic drain:

The term '**economic drain**' refers to a portion of national product of India which was **not available for consumption of its peoples**, but was being drained away to Britain for political reasons and India was not getting adequate economic or material returns for it.

The drain theory was put forward by **Dadabhai Naoroji in his book Poverty and Un-British Rule in India.** The major components of this drain were salaries and pensions of civil and military officials, interests on loans taken by the Indian Government from abroad, profits on foreign investment in India, stores purchased in Britain for civil and military departments, payments to be made for shipping, banking and insurance services which stunted the growth of Indian enterprise in these services.

The drain of wealth **checked and retarded capital formation in India** while the same portion of wealth accelerated the growth of British economy. The surplus from British economy re-entered India as finance capital, further draining India of its wealth. This had immense effect on income and employment potential within India.

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Education

Already by the end of the nineteenth century it was fully recognized that education was a crucial input in economic development, but the vast majority of Indians had almost no

access to any kind of education and, in 1951, nearly 84 per cent were illiterate, the rate of illiteracy being 92 per cent among women.

This was marked by the prevalence of the extreme inequality of income, resources and opportunities. A vast human potential was thereby left untapped in societal development for very few from the poorer sections of society were able to rise to its middle and upper levels. The colonial educational system, otherwise, also suffered from many weaknesses which still pervade India's schools and colleges. It encouraged learning by rote, memorization of texts, and proof by authority. The rational, logical, analytical and critical faculties of the students remained underdeveloped; in most cases the students could reproduce others' opinions but had difficulty in formulating their own.

A major weakness of the colonial educational system was the neglect of mass education as also of scientific and technical education.

Health

Health services were dismal. In 1943, there were only 10 medical colleges turning out 700 graduates every year and 27 medical schools turning out nearly 7,000 licentiates. In 1951, there were only about 18,000 graduate doctors, most of them to be found in cities. The vast majority of towns had no modern sanitation and large parts of even those cities which did, were kept out of the system, modern sanitation being confined to areas where the Europeans and rich Indians lived. A modern water supply system was unknown in villages and absent in a large number of towns. The vast majority of towns were without electricity, and electricity in the rural areas was unthinkable. Epidemics of smallpox, plague and cholera and diseases like dysentery, diarrhoea, malaria and other fevers carried away millions every year. Malaria alone affected one-fourth of the population.

Development of Regional Languages:

The British evolved a general educational system, based on English as the common language of higher education, for the entire country. This system in time produced an India-wide intelligentsia which tended to have a similar approach to society and common ways of looking at it and which was, at its best, capable of developing a critique of colonialism—and this it did during the second half of the nineteenth century and after.

But English-based education had two extremely negative consequences. One, it created a wide gulf between the educated and the masses. Though this gulf was bridged to some extent by the national movement which drew its leaders as well as its cadres from the intelligentsia, it still persisted to haunt independent India. Second, the emphasis on English prevented the fuller development of Indian languages as also the spread of education to the masses.

Legal system:

The character of the colonial state was quite paradoxical. While it was basically authoritarian and autocratic, it also featured certain liberal elements, like the **rule of law** and a relatively **independent judiciary**.

Administration was normally carried out in obedience to laws interpreted by the courts. This acted as a partial check on the autocratic and arbitrary administration and to a certain extent protected the rights and liberties of a citizen against the arbitrary actions of the bureaucracy. The laws were, however, often repressive. Not being framed by Indians, or through a democratic process, they left a great deal of arbitrary power in the hands of civil servants and the police. **There was also no separation of powers between**

administrative and judicial functions. The same civil servant administered a district as collector and dispensed justice as a district magistrate.

The colonial legal system was based on the concept of equality of all before the law irrespective of a person's caste, religion, class or status, but here too it fell short of its promise.

The court acted in a biased manner whenever effort was made to bring an European to justice. Besides, as court procedures were quite costly, the rich had better access to legal means than the poor.

Colonial rulers also extended a certain amount of civil liberties in the form of the freedoms of the Press, speech and association in normal times, but curtailed them drastically in periods of mass struggle. But, after 1897, these freedoms were increasingly tampered with and attacked even in normal times. Another paradox of the colonial state was that after 1858 it regularly offered constitutional and economic concessions while throughout retaining the reins of state power. At first, British statesmen and administrators strongly and consistently resisted the idea of establishing a representative regime in India, arguing that democracy was not suited to India. They said only a system of 'benevolent despotism' was advisable because of India's culture and historical heritage.

Unity of india

The colonial state brought about a greater political and administrative unification of India than ever achieved before.

Building on the Mughal administrative system, it established a uniform system which penetrated the country's remotest areas and created a single administrative entity.

The British also evolved a common educational structure which in time produced an India-wide intelligentsia which shared a common outlook on society and polity, and thought in national terms.

Combined with the formation of a unified economy and the development of modern means of communication, colonialism helped lay the basis for the making of the Indian nation.

But having unified India, the British set into motion contrary forces. Fearing the unity of the Indian people to which their own rule had contributed, they followed the classic imperial policy of divide and rule. The diverse and divisive features of Indian society and polity were heightened to promote cleavages among the people and to turn province against province, caste against caste, class against class, Hindus against Muslims, and princes and landlords against the national movement. They succeeded in their endeavours to a varying extent, which culminated in India's Partition.

Bureaucracy

The British ruled India through a modern bureaucracy headed by the highly paid Indian Civil Service (ICS) whose members were recruited through merit based on open competition. The bureaucracy was rule-bound, efficient and, at the top, honest.

Following Indian pressure the different services were gradually Indianized after 1918—by 1947, nearly 48 per cent of the members of the ICS were Indian—but positions of control and authority were up to the end retained by the British.

Indians in these services too functioned as agents of British rule. Though their senior echelons developed certain traditions of independence, integrity, hard work, and subordination to higher political direction they also came to form a rigid and exclusive caste, often having a conservative and narrow social, economic and political outlook.

When massive social change and economic development was sought after 1947, the rigidity and the outlook of the bureaucracy became a major obstacle.

While the ICS was more or less free of corruption, corruption flourished at the lower levels of administration, especially in departments where there was scope for it, such as public works and irrigation, the Royal Army Supply Corps, and the police. During the Second World War, because of government regulation and controls, corruption and black marketing spread on a much wider scale in the administration as also did tax evasion, once rates of income tax and excise were revised to very high levels. There was also the rise of the parallel black economy.

Armed forces

The British left behind a strong but costly armed forces which had acted as an important pillar of the British regime in India. The British had made every effort to keep the armed forces apart from the life and thinking of the rest of the population, especially the national movement. Nationalist newspapers, journals and other publications were prevented from reaching the soldiers' and officers' messes. The other side of the medal, of course, was the tradition of the army being 'apolitical' and therefore also being subordinated, as was the civil service, to the political authorities. This would be a blessing in the long run to independent India, in contrast to the newly created Pakistan.

THE LEGACY OF THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT

While India inherited its economic and administrative structures from the precolonial and colonial period, the values and ideals—the vision—and the well-defined and comprehensive ideology that were to inspire it in nation-building were derived from the national movement.

Representing the Indian people, it incorporated various political trends from the right and the left which were committed to its ideological goals; it excluded only communalists and those loyal to the colonial rulers.

Characteristics of the National Movement

Mass movement:

The Indian freedom struggle was perhaps the greatest mass movement in world history.

After 1919, it was built around the basic notion that the people had to and could play an active role in politics and in their own liberation, and it succeeded in politicizing, and drawing into political action a large part of the Indian people.

Gandhiji, the leader who moved and mobilized millions into politics, all his life propagated the view that the people and not leaders created a mass movement, whether for the overthrow of the colonial regime or for social transformation.

He added, though, that the success or failure of a movement depended a great deal on the quality of its leadership. **Satyagraha**, as a form of struggle, was based on the active participation of the people and on the sympathy and support of the non-participating millions. In fact, unlike a violent revolution, which could be waged by a minority of committed cadres and fighters, a non-violent revolution needed the political mobilization of millions and the passive support of the vast majority. It may be pointed out, parenthetically, that it was because of the long experience of this kind of political participation by common people that the founders of the Indian republic, who also led the freedom struggle in its last phase, could repose full faith in their political capacity.

The leaders unhesitatingly introduced adult franchise despite widespread poverty and illiteracy.

Based on idea of Representative Democracy:

The Indian national movement was fully committed to a polity based on representative democracy and the full range of civil liberties for the individual. It provided the experience through which these two could become an integral part of Indian political thinking.

From the very beginning the movement popularized democratic ideas and institutions among the people and struggled for the introduction of parliamentary institutions on the basis of **popular elections**.

Starting from the turn of the twentieth century, the nationalists demanded the introduction **of adult franchise**.

Much attention was also paid to the defence of the **freedom of the Press** and speech against attacks by the colonial authorities besides the promotion of other political and economic policies.

Throughout, the movement struggled to expand the semi-democratic political arena and prevent the rulers from limiting the existing space within which legal political activities and **peaceful political agitations and mass struggle** could be organized.

Congress ministries, formed in 1937, visibly extended civil liberties to the resurgent peasants', workers' and students' movements as also to radical groups and parties such as the Congress Socialist party and Communist Party

From its foundation in 1885, the Indian National Congress, the main political organ of the national movement, was organized on democratic lines. It relied upon discussion at all levels as the chief mode for the formation of its policies and arriving at political decisions.. Some of the most important decisions in its history were taken after rich and heated debates and on the basis of open voting. For example, the decision in 1920 to start the Non-Cooperation Movement was taken with 1,336 voting for and 884 voting against Gandhiji's resolution.. During the Second World War, Gandhiji's stand on cooperation with the war effort was rejected by Congress in January 1942.

Congress did not insist on uniformity of viewpoints or policy approach within its ranks. It allowed dissent and not only tolerated but encouraged different and minority opinions to be openly held and freely expressed. In fact, dissent became a part of its style. At independence, Congress, thus, had the experience of democratic functioning and struggle for civil liberties for over sixty years.

Furthermore, the democratic style of functioning was not peculiar to Congress. Most other political organizations such as the Congress Socialist Party, trade unions and Kisan Sabhas, students', writers' and women's organizations, and professional associations functioned in the manner of political democracies. The major leaders of the movement were committed wholeheartedly to civil liberties. It is worth quoting them. For example, Lokamanya Tilak proclaimed that 'liberty of the Press and liberty of speech give birth to a nation and nourish it'.

Further, the resolution on Fundamental Rights, passed by the Karachi Congress in 1931, guaranteed the rights of free expression of opinion through speech or the Press, and freedom of association. The consensus on the practice of non-violence during the national movement also contributed to the creation of a temper of democracy in the country.

. The basic notions of popular sovereignty, representative government and civil liberties to be exercised even against the rulers were not part of India's tradition nor were they, as some wrongly hold, 'the lasting contribution of colonialism'.

It was the national movement and not the bureaucratic, authoritarian colonial state that indigenized, popularized and rooted them in India.

Contribution of the National Movement:

The Indian national movement developed a complex and sophisticated critique of the basic features of India's colonial economy, especially of its subordination to the needs of the British economy.

On the basis of this critique, the movement evolved a broad economic strategy to overcome India's economic backwardness and underdevelopment.

This was to form the basis of India's economic thinking after independence. The vision of a self-reliant independent economy was developed and popularized. Self-reliance was defined not as autarchy but as avoidance of a subordinate position in the world economy.

As Jawaharlal Nehru put it in 1946, self-reliance 'does not exclude international trade, which should be encouraged, but with a view to avoid economic imperialism'.

At the same time, the nationalists accepted from the beginning and with near unanimity the objective of **economic development towards modern agriculture and industry** on the basis of modern science and technology—India, they held, had to industrialize or go under.

Importance of Industrialisation:

Nationalists emphasized the **close link between industry and agriculture**. Industrial development was seen as essential for rural development, for it alone could reduce population pressure on land and rural unemployment.

Within industrialization, the emphasis was on the creation of an **indigenous heavy capital goods or machine-making sector** whose absence was seen as a cause both of economic dependence and underdevelopment.

Simultaneously, for essential consumer goods, the nationalists advocated reliance on **medium, small-scale and cottage industries**. Small-scale and cottage industries were to be encouraged and protected as a part of the development strategy of increasing employment.

Indian nationalists were opposed to the unrestricted entry of foreign capital because it replaced and suppressed Indian capital, especially under conditions of foreign political domination. According to them, real and self-reliant development could occur only through **indigenous capital**.

During the 1930s and 1940s a **basic restructuring of agrarian relations** also became one of the objectives of the national movement. All intermediary rent receivers such as the zamindars and other landlords were to be abolished and agriculture based on peasant proprietors.

Rapid industrialization, in particular, needed a comprehensive policy of direct and systematic **state intervention**. Economic planning by the government and the massive development of the public sector were widely accepted in the 1930s. The state was to develop large-scale and key industries apart from infrastructure, such as power, irrigation, roads and water supply, where large resources were needed, and which were beyond the capacity of Indian capital.

As early as 1931, the Resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Programme, adopted at the Karachi session of the Indian National Congress, declared that in independent India 'the State shall own or control key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport'.

To promote **planning as an instrument of integrated and comprehensive development** Congress sponsored in 1938 the National Planning Committee while the Indian capitalists formulated the Bombay Plan in 1943.

Gandhi's view on industrialisation:

Although initially opposed to modern industry, he later on realised it's significance.

In the 1930s, he repeatedly asserted that he was not opposed to all machine industries but only to those which displaced human labour.

He added that he would 'prize every invention of science made for the benefit of all'. But this was subject to one condition: all large-scale industries should be owned and controlled by the state and not by private capitalists.

Nevertheless, Gandhiji did not insist that the national movement should accept his economic approach or agenda, as he did in the case of non-violence, Hindu-Muslim unity and opposition to untouchability.

He also did not counterpose his views to those of the other nationalists as witnessed by his moving the resolution at the Karachi session of the Congress in 1931 which favoured development of large-scale industry under state ownership or control.

It is also significant that in 1942 he made Jawaharlal Nehru his heir despite the latter's total commitment to the development of industry and agriculture on the basis of modern science and technology.

At the same time, the nationalist movement accepted the Gandhian perspective on cottage and small-scale industries. This perspective was to find full reflection in the Nehruvian Second Five Year Plan.

A Pro-Poor orientation:

The Indian national movement was quite radical by contemporary standards. From the beginning it had a pro-poor orientation. For example, the poverty of the masses and the role of colonialism as its source was the starting point of Dadabhai Naoroji's economic critique of colonialism.

With Gandhiji and the rise of a socialist current this orientation was further strengthened. The removal of poverty became the most important objective next to the overthrow of colonialism.

From the late 1920s, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose, the Congress socialists, the Communists, the Revolutionary Terrorists and various other socialist groups strove to give the national movement a socialist orientation and to popularize the vision of a socialist India after independence. Socialist ideas assumed prominence within the movement, attracting the younger nationalist cadre and large sections of the nationalist intelligentsia, but they did not become the dominant current.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the major ideologue of socialism in pre-1947 India, readily conceded that Congress had not in any way accepted socialism as its ideal. Rather the goal it sought was the creation of an egalitarian society in which all citizens would have equal opportunities and 'a civilised standard of life . . . so as to make the attainment of this equal opportunity a reality'.

It was committed to carrying out basic changes in society, economy and polity. It went on defining itself in more and more radical terms, based on equity and social justice and greater social and economic equality.

It accepted and propagated a programme of reforms that was quite radical by contemporary standards:

Compulsory and free primary education, lowering of taxes on the poor and lower middle classes, reduction of the salt tax, land revenue and rent, debt relief and provision of cheap credit to agriculturists, protection of tenants' rights and ultimately the abolition of landlordism and 'land to the tiller', workers' right to a living wage and a shorter working day, workers' and peasants' rights to organize themselves, and reform of the machinery of law and order. A dramatic moment in the evolution of this radical orientation of the national movement was the Karachi Resolution of the 1931 Congress session which declared that 'in order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions'.

And to crown this growing radicalism was that of Gandhiji who declared in 1942 that 'the land belongs to those who work on it and to no one else'.

Gender sensitisation:

An aspect of its commitment to the creation of an egalitarian society was the national movement's opposition to all forms of inequality, discrimination and oppression based on gender and caste.

It allied itself with and often subsumed movements and organizations for the social liberation of women and the lower castes. The national movement brought millions of women out of the home into the political arena. Its reform agenda included the improvement of their social position including the right to work and education and to equal political rights.

Untouchability:

As part of its struggle against caste inequality and caste oppression, abolition of untouchability became one of its major political priorities after 1920. The movement, however, failed to form and propagate a strong anti-caste ideology, though Gandhiji did advocate the total abolition of the caste system itself in the 1940s. It was because of the atmosphere and sentiments generated by the national movement that no voices of protest were raised in the Constituent Assembly when reservations for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes were mooted. Similarly, the passage of the Hindu Code Bills in the 1950s was facilitated by the national movement's efforts in favour of the social liberation of women.

Secularism

From its early days, the national movement was committed to secularism.

Secularism was defined in a comprehensive manner which meant the separation of religion from politics and the state, the treatment of religion as a private matter for the individual, state neutrality towards or equal respect for all religions, absence of discrimination between followers of different religions, and active opposition to communalism.

For example, to counter communalism and give expression to its secular commitment, Congress in its Karachi Resolution of 1931 declared that in free India 'every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion', that all citizens would be 'equal before the law, irrespective of caste, creed or sex', that no disability would attach to any citizen because of caste, creed or gender 'in regard to public

employment, office of power or honour, and in the exercise of any trade or calling', and that 'the State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions'.

Mahatma Gandhi's view on Religion

It is true that in his early years, Gandhi, a deeply religious person, emphasized the close connection between religion and politics. This was because he believed that politics had to be based on morality, and to him all religions were the source of morality.

Religion was, in fact, he believed, itself morality in the Indian sense of dharma.

But he not only moved the Karachi Resolution in 1931, but when he saw that communalists were using religion as a sectarian belief system to divide the people, he overtly began to preach the separation of religion from politics.

Jawaharlal Nehru wrote and spoke passionately and with deep understanding on communalism. He was perhaps the first Indian to see communalism as the Indian form of fascism. Interestingly, the leaders of the national movement never appealed to the people on religious grounds or that the British rulers' religion was Christianity. Their critique of British rule was invariably economic, political, social or cultural. It is true that the national movement was not able to counter forces of communalism adequately or evolve an effective strategy against them.

This contributed to the Partition and the communal carnage of 1946–47. But it was because of the strong secular commitment of the national movement that, despite these traumatic events, independent India made secularism a basic pillar of its constitution, as also of its state and society.

Nation-in-the-making

The national movement recognized early on that the process of nation-formation in India was a recent one. In other words, India was a nation-in-the-making.

Promoting this process through the common struggle against colonialism became a basic objective. In this respect, the leadership of the movement acknowledged the role of colonialism in unifying India economically and administratively even while it criticized its furthering all kinds of politically divisive tendencies.

From the outset the movement emphasized its all-Indianness. For example, the Indian National Congress was founded in 1885 not as a federation of the existing provincial political organizations but as a new nationwide organization committed to nationwide political mobilization on the basis of all-India demands.

In fact, it was the alliance of the states' peoples' movements, as part of the all-Indianational movement, that enabled easy integration of the princely states with the rest of India after independence.

This all-Indianness was not a feature peculiar to the Indian National Congress. Other political parties and popular mass organizations too followed suit.

To the nationalist leaders, the notion of a structured nation did not contradict its unity. They not only acknowledged but also appreciated India's rich cultural, linguistic, religious, ethnic and regional diversity. The emergence of a strong national identity and the flowering of other narrower identities were seen as mutually reinforcing processes.

The diversity and multiple identities were not seen as obstacles to be overcome but as positive features that were sources of strength to Indian culture, civilization and the nation, and were integral to the emerging nationhood.

These regional-cultural identities, in particular, developed not in opposition to but as part of the national movement and the all-India identity.

Indian society was also divided by class. But while not letting class divisions to segment it, the movement did not stand in the way of class organizations and class struggles. Over time, the national movement evolved the dual concepts and objectives of unity in diversity and national integration. The former was to be based on cultural diversity and cultural interaction, leading to a federal polity. National integration was to lead to a strong political centre and the weaving of the different cultural strands into an evolving composite Indian culture.

Foreign Policy

Independent India's foreign policy was also rooted in the principles and policies evolved by the nationalists since the 1870s. Over time, Indian leaders had developed a broad international outlook based on opposition to colonialism and sympathy and support for the peoples fighting for their independence.

In the 1930s and 1940s, the national movement took a **strong anti-fascist stand**. This was put forward in a most expressive manner by Gandhi. Condemning Hitler for the genocide of the Jews, and condoning violence, perhaps for the first time, he wrote in 1938: 'If there ever could be a justifiable war in the name of and for humanity, a war against Germany, to prevent the wanton persecution of a whole race, would be completely justified.'

The nationalist approach to world problems during the 1930s was clearly enunciated by Jawaharlal Nehru in his presidential address at the Lucknow session of the Congress in 1936: We see the world divided up into two vast groups today— the imperialist and fascist on one side, the socialist and nationalist on the other . . . Inevitably, we take our stand with the progressive forces of the world which are ranged against fascism and imperialism.

Political Norms

In a mass-based struggle, ideology and its influence plays a critical role. Yet, a mass movement has also to incorporate and accommodate diverse political and ideological currents in order to mobilize millions.

Besides, it has to be disciplined and organizationally strong and united; yet it cannot afford to be monolithic or authoritarian. Recognizing this duality, Congress, under whose leadership and hegemony the anti-imperialist struggle was waged, was highly ideological and disciplined while also being ideologically and organizationally open-ended and accommodative.

Unit-II

Land reforms

After Gandhi died (1948), Bhave was widely accepted as his successor. More interested in land reform, accomplished voluntarily, than in politics, he founded in 1951, the Bhoodan Movement, or land-gift movement. He travelled thousands of miles by foot accepting donations of land for redistribution to the landless. By 1969, the Bhoodan had collected over 4 million acres (1.6 million hectares) of land for redistribution. His writings include

“The Principle and Philosophy of Bhoodan Yajna (1955)”:
Bhoodan Yajna: All Comprehensive Programme:

Bhoodan Yajna is an all comprehensive movement directed to the reform in all walks of life. Today everyone thinks of himself alone and feels for himself only. But Bhoodan makes the people think and do just the opposite of what they do now; It makes the people look around and say, “I will first think of my neighbour, and if he has no land, I must consider it is my duty to provide him with” In Bhoodan, distribution of land is not the only question. In fact, it aims at the moral regeneration of the whole nation. Through it, Bhave said, “We hope to solve the economic difficulties in our society.” The focus of the Bhoodan (land gift) movement is in improving the position of the most submerged and dis-advantaged class in the country side, the utterly landless.

Assuming that there were 50 million landless peasants in India. Vinobaji set himself the task of collecting in land gifts of 50 million acres, so that one acre could be given to each landless peasant with an average of five members. Each such family, it was hoped, would end up with 5 acres.

He called in Gandhian terms upon the landowners to feel compassion for the plight of the landless and to demonstrate their compassion by giving to the Bhoodan movement one sixth of their holdings. Since roughly 300 million acres were under cultivation in India, such gifts, if made all over the country, would total up in the required 50 million acres.

Under the guidance of Bhoodan workers, these gifts would then be suitably redistributed. “Bhoodan movement is a challenge to communism in that through non-violent and persuasion, landlords can be urged to give their surplus to the landless without any compensation.....” —Dr. B.R.Mehta

The Ideological Background of the Movement

“Bhoodan movement was historically originated with the dissolution of primitive communist society and the rise of class society, when as a result of the private ownership of the social means of production, exploitation and economic inequalities came into existence in the social world.” —C.G. Shah

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The movement got off to a good start from 1952 to 1954. More than 3 million acres of land were received as Bhoodan during these periods. But the movement could not continue with that vigour and success due to certain weaknesses.

The fundamental weakness of Bhoodan movement was that its appeal was directed not to the poor and landless, but to the rich and landlords. When the Bhoodan campaigners marched into the village of the well off, they made a good show by giving away a few patches of land.

But they are careful to retain securely in their grasp the holdings and essential economic operations upon which their control of the village rests. So the voluntary donations of lands were not the generous offerings of the rich. In many States the landlords donated lands to escape from the ceiling laws. They have "no free will".

Another weakness is that the depressed people and the exploited section of the society have already exhausted patience. They are in no mood to indefinitely wait for the positive results of the movement.

But it is needless to say that the movement has certain positive advantages:

1. It is a bold step towards solving the problems of landless labourers in very peaceful manner.
2. It helps in bringing more land under plough. Even uncultivable land is cultivated.
3. It helps in the direction of tax burden. When no compensation amount is to be paid, less amount will be needed on that account; which means less burden which when viewed In Indian context where the people are already over taxed, means much.
4. It helps in reducing exploitation of the poor cultivators by the rich zamindars.

The Bhoodan movement acquires great significance in the context of urgent change. “It underlines traditions that are implicit in the Indian way of life. It recaptures the idea of the social order as the family writ large...” says Radhakrishnan

Land Reforms

During the British times, the tillers of the lands were not its owners. So a farmer did not have actual ownership of the land. The ownership was with the intermediaries, i.e. the zamindars, jagirdars etc. The farmer would farm the land and pay rent to these zamindars.

This did not motivate the zamindars to invest in the farm or invest in the agricultural practices. They were only focussed on collecting their rent. And as you can imagine the farm and the farmer both suffered.

But after independence, the government realized that the agricultural output was not sufficient for the whole country. One way to boost the produce was to make the tillers of the land its owner. And so efforts were made to abolish the intermediaries and this was known as the land reforms.

Objectives of the Land Reforms

The government of a newly independent India had a few objectives in mind to implement these land reforms. Let us take a look at the few important ones

- The main objective was to bring systematic and complete changes to the agrarian structure of the country.
- Its other main aim was to abolish the intermediaries of the semi-feudal landlordism system of India, i.e. get rid of the zamindars

- Bring about equity in the economy and society and ensure social justice for past atrocities towards farmers
- The land reforms would also prevent any exploitation of the tenant farmers by the hands of the landlords
- And finally to motivate these farmers and implement practices to increase agricultural output.

Steps Implemented under the Land Reforms

Immediately after independence, many states in India passed the *Zamindari Abolition Act*. In the states of Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar etc the surplus land of the landlords were seized by the states. Although the Supreme Court found the act unconstitutional, the legislature amended the article and corrected their actions.

By the abolition of intermediaries of all types, nearly 2 crore tenants became owners of their own lands. The tenure laws were updated and the land reforms were finally showing some positive results.

The other important step taken was the *imposition of the land ceiling*. This law fixes the total amount of land an individual or family can hold. Not only does the law implement the fixation of the ceiling, it also allows the government to take over the surplus land. Such land was then distributed among landless farmers or small farmers. The imposition of such a ceiling was to deter the concentration of land in the hands of a few.

The reforms also promoted *consolidation of holdings*. If a farmer had a few plots of land in the village, under this scheme these lands would be consolidated into one big piece of land. This can be done by the purchase or exchange of land. Actually, one problem of agriculture in India is that the land parcels are too small for commercial farming. This method can solve the problem of land fragmentation.

To solve the problems of land subdivision and lack of financing the government also began promoting *co-operative farming*. Here farmers can pool their lands and resources and gain the advantages of economies of scale and capital investment. But co-operative farming in India has only seen limited success.

Importance of Land Reforms

The main incentive of these land reforms is to act as an incentive for the farmers and the cultivators of the land. If the government can assure their protection (from exploitation) and

provide them financial help, these farmers are willing to do the hard work. Once he is actually granted ownership he can raise credit and cultivate his land to the full potential.

Another major advantage of such land reforms is that they can increase the agricultural output of the country. This is done without any major influx of capital by the state. India was anyways struggling with food self-sufficiency. These land reforms were a cost-free method to increase grain and agricultural output from farms. And once the farmer is self-sufficient he will sell the market surplus and help the economy.

These land reforms also helped in establishing a relationship between the farmers and the government. During the British rule these farmers were heavily exploited and hence they became disenfranchised. These reforms opened a dialogue between the government and the farmers. They both cooperated to boost the agricultural sector of our economy.

And land reforms fulfilled one of the major goals of the five-year plan – Equity. It provided social justice to the crores of farmers across the country. It made sure the farmers benefitted from their own labour and promoted equality of wealth.

After Gandhi died (1948), Bhave was widely accepted as his successor. More interested in land reform, accomplished voluntarily, than in politics, he founded in 1951, the Bhoodan Movement, or land-gift movement. He travelled thousands of miles by foot accepting donations of land for redistribution to the landless. By 1969, the Bhoodan had collected over 4 million acres (1.6 million hectares) of land for redistribution. His writings include

“The Principle and Philosophy of Bhoodan Yajna (1955)”:
Bhoodan Yajna: All Comprehensive Programme:

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Unit iii:-

Major political developments

Emergency administration and Formation of nationalist government:-

The years of 1940s were turbulent in the Indian subcontinent due to unrest caused by world war II, Quit india movement and unending communal riots. These events convinced the British government both at home and in India that their days of rule are strictly counted. Seeing explicitly writing on the wall the British government at home acting on the advice of viceroy, Lord Mountbatten announced partition plan i.e; India was to be divided in to two dominions viz dominion of India and dominion of Pakistan and the 562 odd princely states were given the option to join either of the two dominions by or before 15th August 1947. However, the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir remained indecisive giving birth to” Kashmir imbroglio”.

Hearing of tribal advancement from Pakistan to Srinagar for forcibly occupying the state, Maharaja Hari Singh along with the entire council of ministers left the valley on 26th of October 1947, thereby creating vacuum which at this critical juncture was filled by the

national conference. It organized district and Mohalla committees to function as local government. It organized a National militia for repulsing invaders who were fastly approaching to Srinagar. Moreover, the economic blockade of the state by Pakistan, together with the severe winter of 1947-48 added to the hardships of people. It is said that salt, an essential commodity of both rich and poor could not be had even for Rs 10 per kilogram. The conference despite all odds ensured essential supply to the states people over snowbound Banihal pass. Besides catering to needs of people the emergency administration (as it was called) with Sheikh Abdullah as head provided all possible assistance to the army in the form of pack- ponies, transport, vehicles, labour etc who were busy fighting the tribals. It is important to mention that Indian narrative is that the Maharaja Hari Singh on 26th October 1947 signed instrument of accession (conditional) with India, surrendering three of its vital powers viz defence, communication and foreign affairs to Indian government. The Jammu and Kashmir government retained autonomy in all other matters which was reinforced by Article 370 of the Indian constitution.

Maharaja Hari Singh probably partly due to the influence of the Indian government and partly due to the marvelous role of National Conference emergency administration deposed Meharchand Mahajan as prime minister of the state and converted the emergency administration into a regular council of Ministers with Sheikh Abdullah as prime minister on 5th March 1948.

5th March 1948 is a very important date in the history of Kashmir because two and half decades resistance to Dogra rule bore fruit and a popular government with Sheikh M. Abdullah as its head was established. The other members of his cabinet were:

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad- Deputy prime minister

Mirza Afzal Beg--- Revenue Minister.

Sardar Budhsingh ----- Health and rehabilitation minister.

Gulam Mohammad Sadiq ----- Development minister.

Shyamlal Saraf ----- Minister of Civil supplies and local self government.

Girdharilal Dogra ----- Finance minister.

Pir Mohammad Khan ----- Education minister.

National conference had in year 1944 through Naya Kashmir manifesto envisaged a programme of social and agrarian reforms, including abolition of landlordism. The

formation of the popular government, no wonder, could have raised hopes of people, believing that a just socio economic order is not a distant dream. People had right to expect and dream on these lines after all it is what for they had struggled and made sacrifices. National conferences didn't let people down.

Formation of constituent assembly and end of monarchy:-

The state of Jammu and Kashmir by 1950 though ruled by the popular government but it still derived its powers from the Maharaja. The National conference had promised a democratic government to people, which it realized could not be established without formulating constitution and ending centuries old monarchical rule. On 27th October, 1950, the general council of the conference passed a resolution asking for elections to the constituent assembly for the purpose of giving to the state a constitution and simultaneously functioning as its legislature. On 1st May 1951, Karan Singh, the then head of the state issued a proclamation directing the formation of the assembly. The assembly was to be constituted of elected representatives of the people of the state. The election took place in August- September 1951. All the 75 seats were won by the national conference.

The constituent assembly hence formed had three objectives.

- i. Framing a constitution for the state and finalizing administrative arrangements with the centre.
- ii. Decide the future of the ruling family.
- iii. Decide about the compensation to expropriated proprietaries.

The elections and its results in favour of National conference led to formation of a democratic government with Sheikh Abdullah as the prime-minister of the state. The constituent assembly in March 1952 took a historic decision that no compensation will be paid to expropriated landholders who were affected by the Abolition of Big landed estates act.

The constituent assembly in November 1952 decided to abolish monarchy and the head of the state was to be called the Sadar-i-Riyasat, to be elected by the legislative assembly for a period of five years. Dr. Karan Singh (Yuvaraj) was the first Sadri-Riyasat of the state.

The formation of a constitution is long and slow process, the constituent assembly which functioned legislature of the state as well, formed various committees and it was due to their sustained efforts state constitution was drafted. The constituent assembly adopted the states constitution on November 17, 1956 and it came in to effect on 26th January 1957.

Praja Parishad Agitation

Praja Parishad was a political party active in the [Jammu division](#) of the [Jammu and Kashmir](#). It was founded in November 1947 by the [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh](#) activist [Balraj Madhok](#), and served as the main opposition party in the state. It maintained close ties with [Bharatiya Jana Sangh](#) during its lifetime and merged with the latter in 1963. Its main activity was to campaign for the close integration of Jammu and Kashmir with India and oppose the special status granted to the state under the [Article 370](#) of the Indian constitution. After its merger with the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, the precursor of the present day [Bharatiya Janata Party](#), the party gradually rose in stature. As an integral part of the Bharatiya Janata Party, it is currently a partner in the ruling coalition led by the [People's Democratic Party](#).



Inception

The [Dogra](#) Hindus of Jammu were originally organised under the banner of *All Jammu and Kashmir Rajya Hindu Sabha*, with [Prem Nath Dogra](#) as a leading member.^[3] The [Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh](#) was established in Jammu in 1939 with the efforts of Kishen Dev Joshi.^[4] Jagdish Abrol and later [Balraj Madhok](#), who arrived in 1942, are credited with its expansion. Madhok moved to the [Kashmir Valley](#) in 1944 and established RSS there. Prem Nath Dogra was also the chairman (*sanghchalak*) of the RSS in Jammu.^{[5][6]}

In May 1947, following the [partition plan](#), the Hindu Sabha threw in its support to whatever the [Maharaja](#) might decide regarding the state's status, which in effect meant support for the state's independence. However, following the communal upheaval of the partition and the [tribal raid](#), its position changed to supporting the accession of the state to India and, subsequently, full integration of Jammu with India.^{[7][8]}

The *Praja Parishad* was founded in November 1947 with this background, soon after the Pakistani tribal invasion. Balraj Madhok was a key organiser of the party and Hari Wazir became its first President. Prem Nath Dogra and others soon joined in. According to Madhok, the objective of the party was to achieve the "full integration" of Jammu and Kashmir with India and to oppose the "communist-dominated anti-Dogra government of Sheikh Abdullah."

Praja parishad agitation (1949–1953)

In early 1949, the Praja Parishad started protesting against the policies of the [National Conference](#) government led by [Sheikh Abdullah](#). The government swiftly suppressed it by arresting as many as 294 members of the Praja Parishad including Prem Nath Dogra, its president.^[9] Balraj Madhok was externed from the state.^[11] The Praja Parishad's call for full integration directly clashed with the demands of National Conference for complete autonomy of the state. The Indian leaders intervened and arranged a temporary truce. However, the simmering tensions came to the fore again in the [elections for the Jammu and Kashmir Constituent Assembly](#) in 1951.^[12]

The Praja Parishad initially contested 28 out of 30 seats allocated to Jammu in the 1951 elections. However, the nomination papers of thirteen of its candidates were rejected on the grounds of technicalities. Sensing that the elections were being railroaded by the ruling National Conference, the Praja Parishad announced a boycott of the elections shortly before the polling. Consequently, all National Conference candidates were declared as winners from the Jammu province. Thus obstructed from democratic participation, the Praja Parishad took to the streets organising protests.^{[13][14]}

Calling for "full integration" of the state with the rest of India, the Parishad issued a rallying cry of "*Ek Vidhan, Ek Nishan, Ek Pradhan*" ("one constitution, one flag and one premier"). This was in marked opposition to the state trying to formulate its own constitution, carrying its own flag and calling its head of executive "Prime Minister."^[15] On 15 January 1952, students staged a demonstration against the hoisting of the state flag alongside the Indian Union flag. They were penalised, giving rise to a big procession on 8 February. The military was called out and a 72-hour curfew imposed. [N. Gopaldaswami Ayyangar](#), the Indian Cabinet minister in charge of Kashmir affairs, came down to broker peace, which was resented by Sheikh Abdullah.^[16]

By this time, the [Bharatiya Jana Sangh](#) was formed in Delhi to champion [Hindu nationalist politics](#), and the Praja Parishad became its affiliate in Jammu and Kashmir.^[17] Even though Jana Sangh won only 3 seats in the Indian Parliament in the [1951–52 general elections](#), [Shyama Prasad Mukherjee](#) was a powerful leader, commanding a big block of support from various opposition parties. The Party and Mukherjee took up the cause of Jammu with vigour. The Praja Parishad submitted a memorandum to the President of India in June 1952, calling for full integration and staged a big demonstration outside the Indian Parliament. The [Hindu Mahasabha](#) Member of Parliament N. C. Chatterjee ridiculed the autonomy of Jammu and Kashmir as a "Republic within a Republic."^[18]

In order to break the constitutional deadlock, the National Conference was invited to send a delegation to Delhi. The 1952 Delhi Agreement was formulated to settle the extent of applicability of the Indian Constitution to the state. Following this, the Constituent Assembly abolished the monarchy in Kashmir, and adopted an elected Head of State (*Sadr-i Riyasat*). However, the Assembly was slow to implement the remaining measures agreed in the Delhi Agreement.^[19]

The Praja Parishad undertook a civil disobedience campaign for a third time in November 1952, which again led to repression by the state government. The Parishad accused Abdullah of communalism (sectarianism), favouring the Muslim interests in the state and sacrificing the interests of the others. The Jana Sangh joined hands with the [Hindu Mahasabha](#) and [Ram Rajya Parishad](#) to launch a parallel agitation in Delhi. In May 1953, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee made a bid to enter Jammu and Kashmir, citing his rights as an Indian citizen to visit any part of the country. Abdullah prohibited his entry and promptly arrested him when he attempted. An estimated 10,000 activists were imprisoned in Jammu, Punjab and Delhi, including Members of Parliament. Unfortunately, Mukherjee died in detention on 23 June 1953, leading to an uproar in India and precipitating a crisis that spiralled out of control. Sheikh Abdullah lost majority within his five-member Cabinet. He was dismissed from the post of Prime Minister and put in prison, by the orders of *Sadr-i Riyasat* [Karan Singh](#).^{[19][20]}

[Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad](#), who succeeded Abdullah as the Prime Minister, implemented all the measures of the Delhi Agreement, making further concessions of powers to the Union government. The Praja Parishad agitation largely subsided after these events.

Dismissal of sheikh Abdullah and change of the government:-

Sheikh Abdullahs dismissal on 8th August 1953 was not spontaneous but well thought out decision, hatched both at New Delhi and in the valley. The principal actors who

played part in it were Pandit Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, B.N Mullick and from the valley Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, G.M Sadiq, Shyam Lal Saraf and Dr. Karan Singh, the Sadar-i-riyasat. The change in ideology of Sheikh Abdullah sent ripples across India and the Indian government thought it prudent to have a loyalist in power in the state. The conditions were manufactured to ensure Sheikh Abdullah's dismissal and subsequent arrest.

The announcement of Delhi agreement was followed by outbreak of a powerful agitation of Praja Parishad against it. The Praja Parishad was in favour of total merger of the state with the Indian union. In support of this Dr. S.P. Mookerjee of the Jana Sangh in May 1953, travelled to Jammu, where he was arrested and detained in Srinagar Jail. His death there in the following month under suspicious circumstances raised a storm of indignation in India against Sheikh Abdullah. It is from there onwards ways began to be devised for his removal and above all his voice against India had become louder.

Sheikh Abdullah in his speeches at Jammu and Srinagar on 12th, 15th, 18th of June, 1953 hinted that he was being forced to re-assess the Delhi agreement due to growing communal wave in Jammu and in India. He was quite emphatic in his speeches that the state had acceded only three subjects viz, defence, Communication and foreign affairs and had complete autonomy in all matters, nullifying even Delhi agreement.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in order to persuade the Sheikh to be moderate in his criticism of Hindus and to shun hate speeches, sent Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad to the state to advise him. But Maulana failed and in fact advised Pandit Nehru to dismiss him "before he commits more mischief".

On top of it writes Korbil, "Came the highly inflammatory rumours that the United States was backing the idea of Kashmir independence and that Sheikh Abdullah had been encouraged in it when Adlai Stevenson had visited Srinagar in May 1952."

Probably working at the behest of the Indian government, many of the working committee members headed by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad began opposing Sheikh Abdullah for his change in attitude towards the position of the

state in the Indian union. An open rift developed in the cabinet. Three of the five members differed on the measures taken by the government in ameliorating the economic condition of the people and the slow implementation of the provisions of the Delhi agreement.

The state of crisis was precipitated by the sheikh Abdullah's demand for the resignation of a member of his cabinet, Mr. Sham Lal Saraf, the development minister. He refused to resign unless whole cabinet was dissolved and a new government formed. The memorandum was submitted to Sadr-i-riyasat by the cabinet group led by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad, accusing Sheikh Abdullah for deterioration in administration. The Sadr-i-riyasat no doubt acting at the instance and with the support of the central government, issued an order on 8th August, 1953 dismissing Sheikh Abdullah from the prime ministership of the state on the charge of having lost the confidence of the cabinet. He however, was denied in a democratic way an opportunity to prove his majority on the floor of the house. On 9th of August 1953, sheikh Abdullah along with some of his confidants was arrested at Gulmarg and kept in detention at Udampur in the Jammu province.

On 9th August 1953, Sadr-i-riyasat invited Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad to form a new government. He accepted the invitation and was sworn in as prime minister on the same day. He said in his radio broadcast,

“Recent developments have made it abundantly clear to all of us that a betrayal of the Country's interest was in the offing which would have led to grave consequences.”

He further added, “An independent Kashmir under the influence of an imperialist power will be a grave threat to freedom and independence of Indian and Pakistani people”.

In order to completely erode Sheikh's influence on the politics of the state, the “Kashmir conspiracy case” was launched against him, Mirza Afzal Beg and 22 other people on charge of having conspired with Pakistan for making of an independent Kashmir. Sheikh Abdullah spent almost eleven years behind bars. He was released in 1964 and the case was withdrawn.

Unit iv:-

Land Reforms: The Big landed estates Abolition act, 1950:-

The most pressing demand to which the national conference and popular government had to turn was to ameliorate the condition of peasants and to free them from the clutches of the cunning landlords. It is important to mention that by 1947, the number of absentee landlords was 1,50,000 who possessed about 11 percent of the total cultivated area. There were around more than 8 lakh peasant cultivators who had 32 percent of cultivated land under their possession. About 10 Percent of land was cultivated by 3 lakh tenants, Who did not possess any land of their own. This disproportionate distribution of land together with many who did not own any piece of land had created great unrest and consequently division in the society.

The popular government in October 1948, as an immediate relief to the tenants amended the state tenancy act 1924. The amended act had following features.

1. It granted fixity of tenure to the tenants in respect of holdings not exceeding 2.1/8 acres of wet or 4.1/8 acres of dry land in the Kashmir province and about double the size in Jammu Province.
2. It fixed the maximum rent payable by a tenant to his landlord in respect of tenancy holdings exceeding 12.5 acres at 1/4th of produce or cash value thereof, in case of wet lands and at 1/3rd in case of dry lands.
3. It also provided for re-instatement of a tenant who had been wrongfully ejected after April, 1947 and prohibited the execution after 18th November, 1948 of government orders or decrees passed by any court against a tenant who has acquired the right of protected tenancy.

In April 1949, the government appointed a land reforms committee to take a giant leap in reforming agrarian relations. The mandate of the committee was to prepare plan for the abolition of big landed estates and transfer of land to the tiller. On 17th October 1950, the big landed estates abolition act was passed which brought a fundamental change in land relationship. The state of Jammu and Kashmir earned the distinction of being the first state to introduce land reforms. The main features of the act were.

- i. The proprietor was allowed to retain only 22.75 acres (182 kanals) of land. Out of this 20 acres (160 kanals) were earmarked for agricultural purposes, 1 acre (8 kanals) for vegetable gardening ½ acres (4 kanals) for residential purpose and 1.25 acres (10 kanals) for orchards . The landlord was allowed to choose his retainable land.
- ii. Fixation of ceiling on the holding of proprietors at 22.75 acres of land excluded orchards, grass farms, fuel reserves and uncultivated waste land.
- iii. The expropriated land was to be transferred with full ownership to the tiller/tenant to the maximum of 20 acres (160 kanals), thus putting ceiling on holdings of tenants as well.
- iv. The lands from which owners were expropriated and were not in cultivating possession of any person, went to the government, who distributed it among landless tillers field labours or made available for collective farming.
- v. The law provides that no tiller would be transferred land if he already owns more than 20 acres of land in ownership right.
- vi. The act placed restrictions on the transfer of land. All transfers after 13th April 1947 were declared null and void.

As far as the question of compensation to expropriators is concerned, the act provided that it will be settled by the constituent assembly of the state. The constituent assembly by its resolution dated November 6, 1951 appointed an eleven member committee to examine and report on the desirability or otherwise of the Payment of compensation to landlords for lands expropriated from them. The committee after looking in to pros and cons of compensation recommended that the payment of compensation to the expropriated proprietor was not desirable. It was also stated that compensation would only perpetuate the then already existing inequitable distribution of wealth.

The constituent assembly of the state on 26th March 1952, took a historic and unparalleled decision that no compensation whatsoever should be paid in respect of the land from which expropriation had taken place under the big landed estates abolition act. The decision freed the state peasants/tillers from the enslavement of jagirdars. The decision was in tune with the democratic essence of ensuring social justice, social equality and social stability. It is worth to mention that though land reforms were carried throughout India but the

expropriated proprietor was compensated but Jammu and Kashmir is the only state where no compensation was given to expropriators.

Delhi Agreement (1952) :-

The instrument of accession signed by Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir on 26th October 1947, was ambiguous in its terms. Meanwhile, as the constituent assembly of the state was at work to frame constitution, the Indian statesman thought it expedient to have the nature of the relationship between the state and the Indian government well defined, which it thought will be binding up on the constituent assembly and thereof, to the constitution of the state as well.

To quote Alaister Lamb "It was evident that the constitution would take its time in the production of a definite document. In the meantime, given the Indian diplomatic emphasis, which was being placed on its proceedings, Nehru soon concluded that it would be as well to obtain from Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, some interim based definition of the kind of relationship between the Indian union and the state of Jammu and Kashmir that would in due course emerge. Above all it would be extremely useful to have the ambiguities of the interpretation of the word "accession" clarified".

He adds that "It was the aforesaid objective that government of India requested the then Kashmiri leaders to come to Delhi for discussion headed by Mirza Afzal Beg. He held discussion with Jawaharlal Nehru in June 1952. In July 1952 Sheikh Abdullah along with Bakshi Ghulam Mohammad and others joined the talks. The result was an agreement between known as "Delhi Agreement" signed on 24th July 1952."

The main features of Delhi agreement are:

- i. That the sovereignty in all matters other than those specified in the instrument of accession continues to reside in the state. The government of India agreed

that while the residuary powers in respect of all the states are vested in the centre, in case of Jammu and Kashmir, they shall be vested in the state itself.

- ii. The two governments agreed that in accordance with article 5 of the Indian constitution, persons who have their domicile in Jammu and Kashmir shall be regarded as citizens of India, but the state legislature was given power to make laws for conferring special rights and privileges on the state subjects in view of state subject notifications of 1927 and 1932.
- iii. It was agreed that the President of India shall command the same respect in the state as he does in other units of India. Articles 52 to 62 of the constitution relating to him should be applicable to the state.
- iv. The union government agreed that the state should have its own flag in addition to the union flag, but it was agreed by the state government that the state flag would not be a rival of the union flag. It was also recognized that the union flag should have the same status and position in Jammu and Kashmir as in the rest of India.
- v. There was complete agreement with regard to the position of the *sadar-i-riyasat*, though the *Sardar-i-riyasat* was to be elected by the state legislature, he had to be recognized by the president of India before his installation as such; in other Indian states the head of the state was appointed by the president and was as such his nominee but the person to be appointed as the head, had to be a person acceptable to the government of the state. With regard to the powers and functions of the *sadr-i-riyasat*, the following was mutually agreed upon.
 - a) The head of the state shall be a Person recognized by the president of the union on the recommendations of the legislature of the state.
 - b) He shall hold office during the pleasure of the president.
 - c) He may by writing under his hand addressed to the president resign his office.
 - d) The head of the state shall hold office for a term of five years from the date he enters upon his office.
- vi. With regard to the fundamental rights, it was agreed that the state were to have fundamental rights. But in view of the peculiar position in which the state was

placed, the whole chapter relating to “Fundamental rights” of the Indian constitution could not be made applicable to the state.

- vii. With regard to the jurisdiction of the supreme court of India, it was accepted that for the time being, owing to the existence of the board of Judicial advisors in the state, which was the states highest judicial authority , the supreme court should have only appellate jurisdiction.
- viii. With regard to emergency, it was agreed that under Article 352, incase of external aggression, the government of India would have full authority to proclaim emergency in the state. However, incase of internal disturbance, emergency could be declared only with the concurrence of the state government. It was also agreed that article 356, dealing with suspension of the state legislature and article 360 dealing with financial emergency shall not be applicable to the state.

Plebiscite movement / Plebiscite Front:-

The dismissal of Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah and his arrest along with some of his confidants made these leaders to re-think not only about the political uncertainty of the state but also about themselves as to how they can carve a niche in the politics of the state because the state by then was determined to devoid any space to these political dissenters. It also seems that while in prison the leaders had thought of organizing plebiscite front. As Mirza Afzal Beg was released from jail on 29th November 1954, he began to conduct activities underground for the front. On 9th August 1955, he founded the “All Jammu and Kashmir plebiscite front” or plebiscite front. The front called for “Popular plebiscite’ to decide if the state should remain part of India or join Pakistan or become independent. Mirza Afzal Beg was the president of the front, the patron being Sheikh Abdullah who was Still in jail.

The plebiscite front fought on two fronts firstly, it demanded the government of India to fulfill its promise to hold a plebiscite in the state under

the auspices of the United Nations, to decide the future of the state once for all. Secondly, it consistently opposed the government and rejected any decision taken by the states constituent assembly regarding the accession of the state with India.

The front asked people for the non-cooperation with the government of the state and the centre. The front highlighted the failure of the government in various spheres and underrated the benefits to the people from various government measures. As the front propagated that the states accession to India was conditional therefore, it invalidated all elections, state or parliamentary. It regularly asked people to boycott General elections from 1956-1967. The front played a decisive role in internationalization of Kashmir issue by submitting memorandums to president of U.S.A on his visit to India in 1959. Similarly, a memorandum was submitted to commonwealth prime-ministers conference held in London in 1962. In 1964, it brought out a white paper refuting "The contention that Kashmir's accession to India was final and irrevocable."

The beginning of 1970s brought a sea change in the ideology of Sheikh Abdullah and he dropped plebiscite idea and began to crave for power. There were many forces behind his drift in ideology. In 1971, the government of Jammu and Kashmir banned the plebiscite front. Though Sheikh Abdullah vehemently criticized the government but to no avail. He even challenged the validity of the accession of the state to India. The government of India therefore, exiled Sheikh Abdullah from the state. While in exile, Sheikh Abdullah was overawed by the charisma of Mrs. Gandhi. To quote contemporary Indian historian Ram Chandra Guha, "Throughout the 1971, he had been living in New Delhi, so had witnessed at first hand Mrs. Gandhi's emergence as a national leader. The outbreak of war made him less confused; it now appeared to him that independence for his people was quite out of question. In June 1972, he met Mrs. Indra Gandhi and shortly afterwards he was allowed to go to Kashmir". He returned to Kashmir with an altered psyche. In September, while speaking at a function the Sheikh Abdullah went so far as to say I am an Indian and India is my homeland. It is also true that government of India by then had realized Abdullah's impact on the

people of the state because in 1972 municipal elections, banned plebiscite front won a massive victory. The government of India therefore, thought it prudent to break deadlock with Sheikh Abdullah. It seems that some kind of understanding had already developed between Mrs. Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah therefore, once sheikh returned back to valley, he was not only speaking different language but there were hectic movements for dialogue. The first meeting for dialogue was held on January 8 and 9, 1974 between the Sardar Swaran Singh (the then external affairs minister) from the Indian government side and the Sheikh Abdullah. It was followed by series of talks and eventually culminated in an Agreement, known as “Indira-Sheikh accord or “Kashmir accord”.