

Development of Indian Nationalism under British Rule

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Abstract-The Indian Nationalism during British period was solely efforts to meet the challenge of foreign domination. There growth of a national sentiment among the people was consequence of a foreign rule. The British had conquered India to promote their own interest and they ruled over whole period with that object in India.

Introduction-The realization in India for British government brought bitterness against foreign rule and that was responsible for the growth of the nationalist movement to drive out the foreigners from the country. All classes of people in India participated one stage or the other in the nationalist movement and all played their part in the freedom struggle. The British came to India as traders and founded an empire in 1757 which ended in 1947.

The remarkable growth of nationalism in India under British rule would have been possible through national unity and integrity in spite of the numerous class struggle and individual powers invested in political organizations of existed rulers. The Indian national movement was undoubtedly one of the biggest mass movements has ever seen in modern society. It was a movement which galvanized millions of people of all classes and ideologies into political action and brought to its knees a mighty colonial empire.

The British conquest of India was different in character from all the previous conquests of the country. In the past, the change of rulers implied merely a change of the dynasty that exercised political authority over the people, but it did not affect the social fabric, the productive organization, the property relations or the system of administration. Under the British rule all this was altered, and a socio-economic revolution was started which culminated in the destruction of the old institutions and in the emergence of new social classes and forces.

Story of Indian Nationalism-The Nationalist Movement in India was the outcome of a large number of factors and the most important among

them was British Imperialism. The whole of India was conquered and brought under one Sovereign authority during the British rule. This domination by Britain over the India compelled to think and act as one nation. British Imperialism helped the process of the unification of the country to revolt on various unwanted and suppressing rules to breakdown Indian society, economy and also culture.

There were several small kingdoms in India which formed their policies independently prior to the establishment of the British Empire in India. But in the British regime a Uniform Economic and Administrative System was established throughout the country. One rule, one set of laws, administrative officers who were transferred from one place to another all over India, etc., contributed to the concept of single citizenship and one national among the Indians.

The English was made the medium of instruction in 1835. It circulated as the language of the educated people of India irrespective of the different religion and region. This affected India so that no any discussion for common facing problems in country was possible without the common medium of the English language. Moreover, the educated Indians came in contact with the Western ideas and culture and ideas of liberty, equality, democracy, socialism etc., could infiltrate among them. Many Indians went abroad and came in direct contact with the Western World. It was these English educated Indians who led the national movement and helped to develop and organize Indian Nationalism.

Indians studied English Literature very deeply which broadened their outlook. Burke, Mill, Spencer, and Mazzini's works infused the spirit of independence into the people of India that they began to aspire after their own independence. However, Indian got inspiration from the American War of independence and French Revolution & Russian revolution. Thus, contact with foreign countries inspired Indian Nationalism in several ways. Western ideas of liberty, freedom, equality influenced the Indians.

The establishment of printing press helped in wide circulation of ideas. There were 644 newspapers in India in 1877 and onwards, most of them in regional language. The Indian press and literature both English and vernacular, also aroused national consciousness. There great was the influence of newspapers like the Indian Mirror, the Bombay Samachar, the Hindu patriot, the Amrita Bazar Patrika, the Hindu, Kesari, Sulabh Samachar, Indu Prakash, Swadeshmithan, etc. on the political

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life of the country. All these newspapers were mostly anti-British and considered publicity of racial arrogance, economic exploitation, personal misbehavior, etc., of the British towards Indians. Undoubtedly, the Indian Press played a meritorious role in not only creating a national awakening in the country but also guiding the people of India throughout their struggle for independence. It brought home to Indians that the main hurdle in the way of Indians uplift was her slavery and that a political organization was absolutely essential to check the misrule.

The vast network of communications and transportation made it possible for Indians to come together and communicate with one another and to discuss the anomaly and evils of British Rule. Railways, Telegraph, Wireless, Postal Services with Construction of roads and Canals facilitated communication among the people. The frequent meetings of the leaders among themselves and their personal contact with the people in different parts of the country gave a moment to the national movement.

Western impact had started the process of self-criticism and reform of religion in the first decades of the 19th century. The religious and social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Debendra Nath Tagore, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Ramakrishna Parmahans, Vivekanand and others exercised a tremendous influence on the people of India and they were responsible in different ways in putting the people of India on the road to progress. Among these, the names of the Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission and Theosophical Society made the people aware of the reality and directed them not to follow Western Civilization blindly. They revived the glory of ancient created faith among the people in their religion and culture and thus, gave the message of love to their motherland and to the people of India. The self consciousness arise the sense of self-respect, which, in its turn brought dissatisfaction against the British rule. Indians began to realize the evils of their subjection. Freedom began to be considered necessary even for the achievement of social and religious reforms. These Movements preached love for India, Indians and Indian things.

Britishers robbed the country which was known as the Golden Bird Mercilessly and endeavored to make economically crippled and financially bankrupt. They sent the raw material of India to England at low prices and by selling their manufactured goods on high rates in India, they exploited the people as well as the country As a result, the

Indian trade and industry were intensified the problem of unemployment. Moreover, the English government did not pay much attention to the advancement of agriculture; hence the economic conditions of the country went on worsening. The salaries for the Indians lower posts were so low that the people of India felt dissatisfied, hence, discontented merchants peasants and the educated unemployed all stood in anger against the English governments. The public debt increased tremendously. No proper use of the money was made while constructing the railways. The cruelties inflicted by the English also infused the spirit of nationalism into them and they supported the National Movement. India, therefore, lost its economic resources not only in the form of revenue, salary to the British officers, investments etc, but mostly because of unfavorable balance of trade which was primarily a creation of the British. People all over India suffered financially mere subsistence level and with no hope of any relief in future. It was found to react and it was one of the most important causes of Indian nationalism.

The relations between the English before the 1857 revolt, arose and the Indians were not un-cordial in spite of the fact that the policies of the former were anti-Indians but after the outbreak of this revolution, the tensions began to memo and the Indians became militant. The English began to look down on the people of India due to their feeling of superiority. Their behavior towards the Indians began to grow from bad to worse. British had a very low opinion of the characters. After 1857, the mutiny provided an excuse to keep Indians out of higher jobs. Hence it was but natural that feelings of hatred rose against such a government. So the people of India decided to throw the English out of India through the National Movement.

Many scholars, poets and religious reformers contributed towards the progress of the National Movement. The study and publication of the ancient Indian literature by Asiatic Society of Bengal and scholars like Max Muller. Monier Williams Colebrooke, M.G.Ranade, Har Prasad Sashtri, R. G.Bhandarkar, Rajendralal Mitra etc. revealed to the people of India the majesty of the Sanskrit language and also inculcated among them a feeling of pride in their past and their faith in future. However, the learned men and scholars made the people of India remember their glorious past, and awakened them buy in the 19th century nationalism emerged with renewed vigour, so the 19th century can be named as the century of National awakening. It goes without

saying that the concepts of nationality and patriotism were known to the Indians throughout their history. Ancient literature and religious texts testify to a well defined image of Mother India and to a closer consciousness of national solidarity. The ancient Indians gave it the name of Bharatvarsha or simply Bharat.

The British conquest of India finally enveloped the entire country the new social economy administrative system and modern education spread all over India and gave rise to new social classes on a National State. The role of the intelligentsia in the history of modern Indian Nationalism was decisive. They integrated to a great extent the Indian people into a modern nation and organized various progressive social and religious reform movements in the country. They were the pioneers, organizers and leaders of all political national movements. They brought ideas of nationalism and freedom to wider and wider sections of the Indian people, through educational and propaganda work which involved great self sacrifice & suffering. The fact of progressive intelligence, which assimilated modern western democratic culture and comprehended the complex problems of the incipient Indian Nation were the makers of modern India. The nationalist movement led by these poets, historians, scientists, sociologist, philosophers, economist, etc.

The controversy of Ilbert Bill also added to the development of National Movement. During the regime of Lord Ripon in 1883, Lord Ilbert was the law member in India. By one his proposals, he wanted to authorize the Indian Judges to settle the case of the English. It was vehemently opposed by the English hence the Bill could not be passed. The opposition to the Bill antagonized the Indian Public opinion. It made the British policy of racial discrimination very clear to them. The Indians realized that they could not except any justice or fair play form the English when their own interest were involved. The behavior of the English contributed to the rise of the spirit of nationalism and the Indians decided to root out the English government. Thus the period of Lord Lytton and Lord Ripon was the seed time of Indian Nationalism which brought forth the Indian National Congress.

The credit for starting the Indian National Congress is often given to A.O. Hume, who was a retired civilian from Poona and who is called the "Father of the Indian National Congress". The Indian National Congress, the premier Political organization of the Indian people, held its first session in Bombay in 1885. It was attended by almost all

outstanding leaders of Indian Nationalism. Its aim was to represent all Indians, without any distinction of caste community, color or sex. It claims to represent all Indian interest and classes.

Conclusion-History of the national movement causes of its origin, its growth, and its influence on the politics of the country. The main landmark in the history of the struggle for political freedom of India was played by MK Gandhi. There were several factors which contributed to the growth of political consciousness among the Indian people. British writers are of the opinion that "British imperialism itself was one of the important causes for the growth of freedom movement in India".

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