

## Chapter 3

### Retaliation and Struggle of British Empire

The Western countries discovered colonies in different countries to fulfil their economic goals, and later on to set up their empire at these places. British Colonial Era in India (Bharat) began with treachery, atrocity and exploitation. From ancient times, India (Bharat) was a prosperous nation. Therefore, along with world's other countries, the Britishers always eyed India (Bharat) with good and were always in search of opportunities to exploit. The Britishers arrived in India (Bharat) in the form of traders, soon they transformed themselves into rulers. Due to the Britishers, India's (Bharat's) social, economic and cultural fabric and ethos system endured a significant setback.

#### Spirit of Independence from 1757 AD to 1857

#### AD

On 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1600 AD, some major British traders started "The Governor and Company of Merchants of London Trading in to the East Indies" in the form of a joint venture company called East India Company. On 31<sup>st</sup> December 1600 AD, Elizabeth I granted a Charter to this company, permitting it with the sole right to trade with the East. In 1612 AD, the East India Company established its first permanent trading hub in Surat. In Madras (Chennai) 1604 AD, it built Fort Saint George. In 1717 AD, it acquired a farman from Mughal Emperor Farrukhsiyar and obtained the ownership of land of 38 villages. In exchange of a small grant of three thousand rupees the emperor made the Company's goods duty free and also granted rebate in toll tax, he allowed the Britishers



Fig 3.1: Battle of Plassey

to issue Dastak (special letter of approval). The Company paid more attention to Bengal.

Before 1757 AD, the Britishers defeated other European companies and established their supremacy. After obtaining farman from the Mughals, East India Company increased its interference. Nawab of Bengal Alivardi Khan died on 10<sup>th</sup> April 1756 AD. His successor Siraj-ud-Daulah who was the son of his younger daughter became the Nawab. On the other hand, Shaukat Jung, the Governor of Purnia, also wished to become the Nawab. The Britishers took advantage of this conflict and started patronizing opponents of the Nawab. Many disputes regarding financial issues arose between the Nawab and the Britishers. As a result, Battle of Plassey took place on 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 1757 AD, in which the Britishers emerged victorious and the Nawab was killed. The Britishers appointed Mir Jafar as the Nawab of Bengal by which British sovereignty was established in Bengal.

In 1760 AD, when Mir Jafar was unable to fulfil financial obligations towards the British, the Britishers appointed Mir Kasim as the Nawab. After becoming the Nawab, Mir Kasim made efforts for administrative reforms in Bengal, but he was unable to do due to corruption and British

interference. Disputes related to financial issues and grant of concessions began to rise between nawab Mir Kasim and the Britishers. As a result, the Battle of Buxar took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1764, in which the Nawab was defeated and the Britishers emerged victorious. This battle proved to be a big blow for the Indians (Bhartiyas). After this battle, the Britishers got the revenue rights of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. As a result, Indian (Bhartiya) trade and industry experienced a setback.

### **Struggle of the Britishers against the Marathas and Mysore**

In the eighteenth century, the Marathas were a major power in India (Bharat) but after the Battle of Panipat on 14th January, 1761 AD, the Maratha power suffered a setback. Only the Marathas were capable of stopping the Britishers from occupying India (Bharat). Now, the Britishers were searching for opportunities to establish their domination over the Marathas. In 1772 AD, after the death of Peshwa Madhavrao, his brother Narayan became the Peshwa but Raghunath Rao, who was the uncle of the previous Peshwa, desired to become the Peshwa.

The Britishers got a chance to divide the Maratha kingdom. On 6th March, 1775 AD, Treaty of Surat



**Fig. 3.2: Maratha struggle against the Britishers**

took place between the Britishers and Raghunath Rao, according to which, the Britishers would help Raghunath Rao in becoming the Peshwa and the Peshwa would grant half of the Lagaan (land revenue) obtained from Bassien, Salset and Surat. In this way, ambition of Raghunath Rao and the Treaty made by him with Bombay (Mumbai) government made the struggle between the Marathas and Britishers unavoidable.

### **First Anglo-Maratha War-**

Clashes took place between the Britishers and Marathas from 1775 AD to 1782 AD. In this struggle, the British army was defeated by the united Maratha army and they had to sign the humiliating Treaty of Badgaon in 1779 AD, according to which the Britishers were to give back the regions they had won previously from the Marathas and hand over Raghunath Rao to the Pune court. Besides, they had to pay Rs 41,000 as war damages.

### **Second Anglo-Maratha War**

This struggle continued from 1802 to 1805 AD. The reason of this clash was the imperialistic ambitions of Lord Wellesley and the mutual conflict between Maratha chiefs. In this struggle, the Maratha chiefs fought independently against the Britishers and were defeated. Bhonsle struggled in South India (Bharat) and after being defeated in the Battle of Amargaon in 1803 AD, Treaty of Deogaon was signed with the Britishers on 17th December 1803 AD. Sindhia was defeated in the Battle of Lalwadi and the Treaty of Surji-Anjangaon was signed on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1803 AD. The struggle which took place between the Holkars and the Britishers remained indecisive and the Treaty of Rajghat inked between both the parties in 1806 AD, according to it the Holkars gave up their right of the Northern region of river Chambal and promised not to interfere in the internal matters of Rajputana.

### **Third Anglo-Maratha War-**

On 13th June 1817 AD, the Britishers signed a humiliating treaty with the Peshwas and on 5<sup>th</sup> November 1817 AD, another humiliating treaty with the Sindhias. Both these treaties were signed

to strengthen the supremacy of the Britishers in India (Bharat). To get rid of these humiliating bonds, the Marathas started a struggle. But the Peshwas lost at a place called Kirki, Bhonsle lost at Sitabardi and Holkars lost at Mahidpur. On 18<sup>th</sup> June 1818 AD, Malcolm entered into a treaty with the Peshwas. According to it the post of Peshwa was abolished and the Peshwa was sent to Bithoor with a sanctioned pension of eight lakhs, there he died in 1852 AD. In this way the Britishers defeated the Marathas through struggle, by diplomacy and their policy of divide and rule.

### **Anglo-Mysore War**

In 1761 AD, Hyder Ali usurped the power from Mysore king Nandaraja and became omnipotent. After the death of Mysore king in 1776 AD, he proclaimed himself as the ruler. The Britishers regarded Hyder Ali as an obstacle in their imperialistic ambition. Therefore, the Britishers formed a union with the Marathas and the Nizam to counter Hyder Ali, but Hyder Ali diplomatically counterbalanced the Marathas during the war and allied the Nizam with him by promising him a grant of a large region. In 1767, Hyder Ali invaded the regions under British influence. Finally, the Britishers were defeated, and helpless Britishers signed the Treaty of Madras (Chennai) on 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1769 AD with Hyder Ali. According to the provisions of this treaty, they both returned each other's regions.

### **Second Anglo-Mysore War-**

The Britishers wanted to avenge the humiliating defeat they suffered faced in their first struggle, while Hyder Ali was annoyed due to the occupation of the Britishers on Guntur. Finally, Hyder Ali joined hands with the Nizam and the Marathas and waged a war against the Britishers. The battle started in July, 1780. Initially, Hyder Ali was successful, but he died on 7<sup>th</sup> December, 1782 and his son Tipu Sultan had to take charge. Tipu continued the struggle for one year, and after being tired of the war, both the parties signed the Treaty of Mangalore on 11<sup>th</sup> March, 1784 AD. They returned each other's regions and the Britishers promised not to interfere in the internal issues of Mysore.



### **Third Anglo-Mysore War-**

The Britishers wished to end the influence of Mysore while Tipu wanted to buy Dutch forts of Kagnnaur and Arcot in Kochin to defend Malabar. These were the reasons behind this war. But the king of Travancore who favoured the Britishers bought these forts and displeased Tipu. In April 1790 AD, Tipu attacked Travancore. But Cornwallis invaded Mysore with a huge army. Tipu faced him courageously but finally on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1792 AD, he had to sign the Treaty of Srirangapatnam. Due to this treaty, half of Mysore went into the hands of the Britishers and Britishers were paid three crore ` as war indemnity. Tipu was forced to hand over his two sons as prisoners in the custody of the British.

### **Fourth Anglo-Mysore War -**

In 1798 AD, Lord Wellesley came to India (Bharat) as the Governor of the East India Company. Wellesley was an imperialistic Governor general. He decided to eliminate Tipu completely or to dominate him completely. To fulfill this objective, he used the ploy of Subsidiary Alliance. Tipu Sultan rejected this Subsidiary Alliance. In April 1799 AD, he started a campaign against Tipu. The Srirangapatnam fort was occupied on 4th May, 1799 and Mysore lost its independence. Tipu attained martyrdom while fighting the Britishers.

### **Ango-Sikh Wars-**

The ruler of Afghanistan made Ranjit Singh the Governor of the Punjab. Ranjit Singh wished to occupy the provinces situated on the East of Sutlej River, while the British wanted to establish sovereignty in this region. In February 1809 AD, Ochter Lony declared British occupancy on the eastern regions of river Sutlej and warned, if any invasion took place from Lahore side, it would be stopped through military power. The Maharaja was defeated and on 25<sup>th</sup> April, 1809 AD the Treaty of Amritsar was signed between Ranjit Singh and the Britishers, according to which, the Britishers established their control on the Eastern regions of Sutlej River.

Relations with the Britishers remained cordial during the reign of Ranjit Singh. But after the

demise of Ranjit Singh on 27<sup>th</sup> June, 1839 AD, several groups were formed in the court due to greed of the chiefs. Khadak Singh became the ruler but he was not a skilled administrator, due to this the interference of Dogra brothers increased in the court. The Britishers took advantage of this maladministration and formed a basis for a war between the two.

### **First Anglo-Sikh War-**

Imperialistic ambition of the Britishers and the policy of Divide and Rule was the cause of this war. After the first struggle, Lord Hardinge declared war against the Sikhs on 13<sup>th</sup> December, 1845 AD. On 10<sup>th</sup> February, 1846 AD, the Sikhs were completely defeated in the Battle of Sobraon. On 13<sup>th</sup> February, 1846 AD, the Britishers occupied Lahore. The Treaty of Lahore took place on 1<sup>st</sup> March, 1846 AD according to it, Jalandhar Doab was annexed in British Empire and the Sikhs were asked to pay an amount of one crore and fifty lakhs to the Britishers in the form of war indemnity. The strength of Sikh soldiers in the army was also reduced. Hardinge wanted to maintain control on the administration of the Punjab till Dalip Singh became an adult. Therefore, a supplementary Treaty of Bhaironval was signed on 22 December 1846 AD accordingly the Britishers became the owners of a part of the Punjab.

### **Second Anglo-Sikh War and Merger of Punjab in the British Empire -**

During 1847-48, the Britishers introduced reforms that were anti-Sikh. The soldiers who were released from military services were dissatisfied. The rights of Rani Jinda were taken away and she wanted to avenge it. All these were the reasons of the Second Anglo-Sikh war. Excessive internal interference of the Resident and Dalhousie's desire of British rule the Punjab were the factors that made the Second Anglo Sikh war unavoidable.

With Governor General Dalhousie's declaration of a final war against the Sikhs, the war started on 10<sup>th</sup> October, 1848 AD and ended on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1849 AD with the surrender of Sikhs like Sher Singh, Chattar Singh, Mulraj and others. Dalhousie annexed the Punjab in British India (Bharat) via a



Declaration of 29<sup>th</sup> March 1849 AD. With this Declaration, the Punjab lost its status of an independent state.

### **Freedom Struggle of 1857 -**

Before 1857 AD, the East India Company faced opposition from the provincial states, princely estates, farmers and tribals continuously for a hundred years. But in 1857 AD, the Britishers had to face a united revolt of the Indians (Bhartiyas) for the first time. But the Britishers used diplomacy and the Policy of Divide and Rule to crush this struggle. However, they were forced to amend their policies.

### **Form of Freedom Struggle -**

Historians differ regarding the form of this first struggle of Indian (Bhartiya) independence. On one hand the British and European historians call it as the "Sepoy Mutiny", reaction of the aristocrats or Muslim conspiracy, on the other hand, the Indian (Bhartiya) historians and scholars believe that starting from military unrest, this struggle took an extreme form of the first mass revolt. Later, this struggle took the form of nation-wide revolt and freedom struggle. Surendra Nath Sen wrote - "This struggle started in the name of religion and ended in the form of freedom struggle". In his book "War of Indian Independence", Dr Vinayak Damodar Savarkar has called this struggle as the Indian War of Independence.

### **Reasons of the Freedom Struggle**

1. Economic Policy of the Britishers
2. Annexation Policy of Lord Dalhousie
3. British Policy of Empire Extension
4. Social, Religious and Military Causes

### **Start and Spread of Freedom Struggle**

When the soldiers refused to use fat-coated cartridges, they were charged with indiscipline and were punished. On 29<sup>th</sup> March, 1857 AD, a soldier named Mangal Pandey revolted in Barrackpore Cantt and killed an officer. The British officers dismissed the 34<sup>th</sup> BNI Regiment and punished the Indian (Bhartiya) soldiers. In May 1857 AD, when 85 soldiers refused to use fat-coated cartridges in

Meerut cantonment, they were sentenced to long term imprisonment by the military court. On 10<sup>th</sup> May, the soldiers revolted openly and assassinated their officers by shooting them. After freeing their fellow soldiers, they advanced towards Delhi. The soldiers occupied Delhi on 12<sup>th</sup> May, Bahadur Shah II was declared as the Indian (Bhartiya) Emperor. Losing control of Delhi was a big setback for the Britishers. The revolution soon spread to Lucknow, Allahabad, Kanpur, Bareilly, Varanasi, some parts of Bihar, Jhansi and various other regions.

In order to reoccupy Delhi, the Britishers called armies from the Punjab. The Indian (Bhartiya) soldiers fought fiercely but finally, in September 1857 AD, the Britishers reoccupied Delhi. A British officer John Nicholson was killed in the battle. The Emperor was imprisoned. The residents of Delhi were avenged. Lieutenant Hudson shot down two sons and a grandson of the emperor.

On 4<sup>th</sup> June 1857 AD, the revolution started in Lucknow, and the Indian (Bhartiya) soldiers surrounded the Residency in which a British resident Henry Lawrence died. Havelock and Outram made efforts to reoccupy Lucknow but were unsuccessful. In November 1857 C E, Chief Commander Sir Colin Campbell entered the city with Gorkha Regiment. In March 1858 AD, the Britishers reoccupied the city.

On 5<sup>th</sup> June 1857 AD, the revolutionaries occupied Kanpur and declared Nana Saheb as the Peshwa. The cantonment commander Sir Hugh Wheeler surrendered on 27<sup>th</sup> June. Tatya Tope favoured Peshwa Nana Saheb. On 6<sup>th</sup> December 1857, Sir Campbell reoccupied Kanpur. Tatya Tope fled to Jhansi.

Revolution took place in Jhansi in June 1857 AD. Rani Laxmi Bai was declared the ruler of the state. Sir Hugh Rose invaded Jhansi and reoccupied in April 1858 AD. After the Britishers occupied Jhansi, Rani and Tatya Tope proceeded towards Gwalior where the soldiers welcomed them. But the Scindias decided to remain loyal to the Britishers and took refuge in Agra. Gwalior was re-occupied by the Britishers in June 1858 AD. On 17<sup>th</sup> June 1858 AD, Rani Laxmi Bai received

martyrdom during confrontation with the British army. Taty Tope managed to escape again but a Scindia lord caught him and handed him over to the Britishers, who hanged him.

In Bihar, this revolution was led by a landlord named Kunwar Singh of Jagdishpur. He was 80 years old. Kunwar Singh defeated the British officers Milmel, Colonel Dax, Marc and Major Douglas. In April 1858 AD, he reoccupied his estate. On 26<sup>th</sup> April 1858 AD, Kunwar Singh waged a war against the Britishers but was unsuccessful. In Bareilly, Bahadur Khan participated in the revolution. A revolution also took place in Varanasi but was crushed by Colonel Neil.

Although the number of revolutionaries in South India (Bharat) was comparatively lesser than that in North India (Bharat), yet in this great struggle, many revolutionaries of South India (Bharat) received martyrdom. Some others suffered atrocities and were imprisoned. The major leaders who led the struggle in South India (Bharat) include- Rang Bapu Ji Gupte (Satara), Sona ji Pundit, Ranga Rao Pange, Maulvi Sayyed Alauddin, Bhim Rao and Mundargi Chota Singh (Karnataka), Annaji Phadnavis (Kolhapur), Ghulamgaus and Sultan Baksh (Madras), Aranagiri and Krishna (Chigalphut), Mulgabai Swami (Coimbatore), Mulla Sani, Vijay Kudarath (Kerala) and several others.

In this manner, the Freedom Struggle of 1857 AD spread across the entire nation and people from all regions, languages, religions, castes, including the farmers and landlords participated and cooperated with the soldiers.

### **Tribal Movements**

On 23rd June 1757 AD, after the Battle of Plassey, the East India Company established its control over

Bengal. After the Battle of Buxar in 1764 AD, the East India Company started the process of transforming India (Bharat) into a British colony. This process of colonization gave rise to several mass revolts, one of which was the tribal movement. The reasons behind these Tribal Movements include the tribals losing their independence, foreign interference in the nation's administration, administrative changes, demand of excessive taxes, decline in the economy of the country etc.

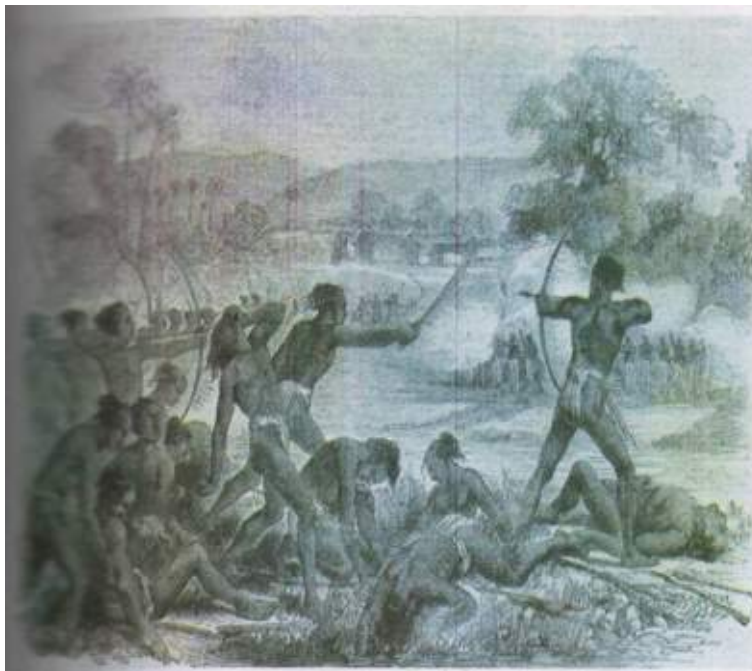
### **Tribal Rebellions in Bengal and Eastern India-**

**1. Sanyasi Rebellion-** After the establishment of British rule in Bengal, the British officers strictly collected taxes even during a severe famine of Bengal in 1769 — 70 AD. The Sanyasis used to conduct religious travels along with farming from time to time. The Sanyasis were annoyed by the ban on travel for pilgrimages. There was a tradition of these Sanyasis to revolt against injustice and they joined hands with the masses to loot the hubs and treasuries of the Company. They fought bravely against the Company soldiers, but after a long campaign, Warren Hastings crushed this revolt. This is mentioned in a novel entitled "Anand Math" written by Bankim Chandra Chatterjee.

**2. Kol Rebellion-** The Kol tribe revolted against the exploitation born out of British mal administration, rigid land revenue system and misbehaviour of local administrative officers. This revolt became more intense in 1831 AD after their land was snatched away from their leaders i.e. the Mundas and allotted to some outsiders. This revolt was extremely violent. It spread to Ranchi, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh. Palamu and the Western regions of Manbhum.

After a long and extended military campaign, peace was established. President of the Calcutta Council i.e. Metcalfe accepted that in this revolt, an anti-British spirit was evident.

**3. Santhal Rebellion -** Santhal rebellion was an



**Fig. 3.3 : Kol Rebellion**

important mass revolt against the British rule during 1855 - 1856 AD. Its leadership and unity was well organized. This revolt spread to Veerbhumi, Bakura, Singhbhum, Hazaribagh, Bhagalpur and Munger. The reasons behind this revolt included misbehaviour with the Santhals by revenue officers, exploitation by the police and forceful collection of taxes by the landlords and moneylenders. This revolt was headed by two brothers i.e. Sidhu and Kanhu, who declared themselves independent and the end of the Company rule. After an extended military campaign, the situation came under control in 1856 AD and the Government was forced to form an independent and separate Santhal Pargana.

**4. Bhil Rebellion-** The Bhil tribals used to reside in Khandesh district of the Western Coast. From 1812 - 1819 AD, they started a revolt against their new masters- the British. The Company officers believed that this revolt was promoted by Peshwa Baji Rao II and his representative Trikbakaji Dangalia. The actual reasons were problems associated with farming and fear of the new government. Several troops of British army were used to crush this revolt. Under the leadership of Sevram, they revolted again in 1825 AD followed

by another revolt in 1846 AD.

**5. Ramosi Rebellion-** Ramosi was a tribe residing on the Western Ghats. They were unhappy with the British administration system and rule. In 1822 AD, its chief Chittar Singh revolted and looted the region around Satara. Revolts again took place in 1825- 26 AD. The British became successful in crushing this revolt only after employing a massive military force.

### **Contribution of Revolutionary Organizations in the Freedom Movement -**

Indians (Bhartiyas) never accepted British sovereignty whole heartedly. The (Bhartiyas) Indians started to struggle from 1757 AD till they attained independence. A massive revolt which took place in 1857 AD proved to be unsettling for the British. From the end of the nineteenth century to the beginning of the twentieth century, till the time they became independent, the revolutionary martyrs wrote the history of Indian independence with their blood.

The reasons behind the rise of revolutionary movement were the same due to which the extremists emerged in the movement. In 1857 AD,



after a tough struggle, the Britishers re-established their empire. But the retaliatory policies of Lord Curzon forced the Indians (Bhartiyas) to start a revolutionary movement. The pride of every Indian (Bhartiya) suffered a setback by the blow of partition of Bengal in 1905 AD. The revolutionary movement was born due to the frustration which was the result of the British atrocities and incapable leaders who remained unsuccessful in providing capable leadership to the masses.

The revolutionaries believed that the essential elements for nationalism such as religious and political freedom, moral values and Indian (Bhartiya) culture- all will be destroyed under the foreign rule. Therefore, all the revolutionaries had one and the only objective of ousting the foreigners out of the country and making India (Bharat) free.

### **Revolutionary Movement In Maharashtra-**

Revolutionary activities started in Maharashtra by a government employee named Vasudev Balwant in 1876 AD. He resigned from the government job to throw off the British yolk through delivering provocative speeches in 1876 AD. Due to Phadke's speeches, unrest began to spread. Phadke was arrested and sent to Adan (Arabia) jail in 1879 AD, where he died in 1889.

### **Assassination of Rand by Chapekar Brothers-**

Damodar Hari Chapekar, Balkrishna Hari Chapekar and Vasudeo Hari Chapekar from Pune (Maharashtra) guided the revolutionary movement. In 1893 AD, they formed the "Hindu Dharma Sanrakshan Sabha". Under this, Shivaji and Ganesha festivals began to be celebrated, as a result the masses were infused with the spirit of nationalism and joy. In 1897 AD, plague spread in the form of an epidemic in Pune, but the plague commissioner Rand and Lieutenant Ayerst were busy spreading terror amongst the masses instead of helping the plague victims. Both officers were corrupt, despotic and infamous for hatching conspiracies. The city of Poona was terrified by their atrocities, therefore, the Chapekar Brothers assassinated both of them on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1897 AD. The Chapekar Brothers were arrested and hanged.

### **Shyamji Krishna Verma and Establishment of**

### **India House in London –**

Shyamji Krishna Verma was a resident of Kathiawar in western India (Bharat). He was educated in Cambridge University and became a barrister. After returning to India (Bharat), he was hurt by the corrupt nature of British political residents and he firmly decided to make India (Bharat) free by making London his workplace. Shyamji Krishna Verma was the first to take an initiative of setting up a revolutionary organization for freedom outside the country. In 1905 AD, he formed the Bharat Swashasan Samiti which is renowned by the name of India House. He published a monthly magazine called "India Socialism" and started six fellowships of ` one thousand each for the Indians (Bhartiyas) who went abroad. Shortly, India House became the centre of revolution for Indians (Bhartiyas) who lived in London. Revolutionaries such as V. D. Savarkar, Hardayal and Madan Lal Dhingra became its members. Noticing the activities of Shyamji Verma, the British government started taking action against him. He left England and went to Paris and continued his revolutionary activities from there.

### **Vinayak Damodar Savarkar**

Veer Savarkar was a great revolutionary, nationalist and an organizer. His lifetime sacrifice for the freedom of the nation cannot be described in words. The public adorned Savarkar with the title of Veer. He was addressed as Veer Savarkar. Veer Savarkar was born on 28<sup>th</sup> May, 1883 in Bhagur village in Maharashtra. In 1901, after passing the Secondary Examination, he got admission in Fergusson College where he came in contact with Lokmanya Tilak.





**Fig. 3.6: Veer Savarkar**

During the Partition of Bengal, he formed an organization named "Mitra Mela" with his companions and made a bonfire of imported clothes. For this reason, he was rusticated from the college. Savarkar was the only Indian (Bhartiya) revolutionary who got two life imprisonments from the British government. British government had imposed a ban on his book, "The Indian War of Independence" even before it could be published. This book was later introduced in India (Bharat) with different titles. In 1904 AD, he established –"Abhinav Bharat". Savarkar was the first person who didn't term the revolution of 1857 as a revolt, but instead, called it as the First War of Indian (Bhartiya) Independence. Savarkar spent a long time in the Cellular Jail of Andaman. He became ill due to the hard work. These sufferings from the upset are in the government before the mercy petition sent- First mercy petition was sent on 30th August 1911 next on 04th November 1913. In this letter Savarkar mentioned himself as a 'Prodigal son'. He mentioned in his letter that he was ready to serve the government in any capacity they like, his third mercy petition was sent in 1917 & forth mercy

petition was on 1st February 1918 after this petition. In 1920 the Indian National Congress and leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Bal Gangadhar and Patel demanded his unconditional release. In 1924 British government accepted Savarkar's mercy petition & released him from Solikur Jail and 2nd May 1921 under stringent restrictions & sent to Ratangiri and later to the Yerwada Central Jail. The restriction was that he will not participate in politics up to the five years. After finally released from jail in 1924 he joined Hindu Mahasabha in 1937 he became president of Hindi Mahasabha. Savarkar campaigned for keeping India to be a Hindu nation. At the time of second world war he asked Hindus to stay active in the work effort & not disobey the government he gave slogan- "Hinduize all political and Militarize Hinduism." Savarkar urged Hindus to enlist in the armed forces to learn the art of war.

When Congress launched the Quit India Movement in 1942, Savarkar criticised it. He also assailed the British proposal for transfer of power. Assassination of Mahatma Gandhi on 30th January 1948 Savarkar was also arrested on 7th February 1948. He was charged with the murder conspiracy to murder and abetment to murder. But due to lack of evidence Savarkar was acquitted.

### **Revolutionary Movement in Bengal**

Mr P. Mishra started the revolutionary movement in Bengal by forming an organization named "Anushilan Samiti". Political renaissance arose in Bengal after its partition. Now, the objective of this movement was not just forcing the Britishers to take back the order of partition, but instead, getting India (Bharat) freed from the clutches of the Britishers. In 1905 AD, Barindra Kumar Ghosh had written a book entitled "Bhawani Mandir" and gave detailed information about organizing various revolutionary activities. Magazines such as "Yugantar" and "Sandhya" - also started publishing anti-British opinions in their content. Another book named "Mukti Kaun Pathe" urged the soldiers to provide arms and ammunition to Indian revolutionaries.

## Peasants' Movements

The ancient agricultural system was gradually destroyed by the new administrative system and agricultural policies formed of the Britishers. This new British system gave rise to a new breed of land owners which emerged in rural India (Bharat). The farmers continued to get trapped in the clutches of the moneylenders and traders due to excessive burden of government taxes and taxes imposed by the landlords. This new class of landlords and the outsider middlemen formed by the British government, greedy and corrupt moneylenders together made the life of common Indian (Bhartiya) farmer a miserable one. By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Indian (Bhartiya) farmers came to such a position that they wanted to confront, break or weaken the hold of British administration, local exploiters and capitalists.

### Reasons of Peasants' Movements

1. Administrative land revenue policies of the British Government.
  2. Continuously occurring famines for a long time.
  3. Extracting excessive land revenue from farmers by the zamindars and moneylenders.
1. Preparation of fake documents by the traders and moneylenders.

### Major Peasants' Movements-

**1. Rebellion of indigo Farmers in Bengal-** This revolt was against the British monarch. In this revolt, the farmers were assisted by zamindars, moneylenders, rich peasants and the rural folk. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, some retired European officers obtained land from the zamindars of Bengal and Bihar and began growing indigo. They forced the farmers to grow indigo in conditions, which were unfavourable to the farmers. In April 1860 AD, the Barasat subdivision and all the farmers from Purna and Nadia district went on strike and refused to grow indigo. This strike spread in various parts of Bengal. The government was forced to appoint an Indigo Commission in 1860 AD to avoid any major chaos.

**2. Southern Rebellion during 1875 AD-** The major causes of this revolt included-excessive land revenue, reduction in the price and collection of excessive tax from Maratha farmers. The greedy Marwari and Gujarati moneylenders manipulated the accounts by forging the signatures of illiterate farmers, through which the civil courts gave verdict in favour of these moneylenders and farmers got dispossessed of their land. In 1875 AD, the farmers attacked the houses as well as shops of the landlords in Poona and burnt those documents which the moneylenders had forced the farmers to sign. Later on this revolt spread to Ahmednagar and this could only be crushed after employing massive police and military force. To determine the reasons behind the riots, the government appointed a Deccan Riots Commission and passed the Agriculturists Relief Act in 1879 AD. According to the provision of this Act, if the farmers were unable to repay their loans, they could not be arrested or imprisoned.

**3. Peasant Revolt in the Punjab-** The reason of farmers' movement in the Punjab was the huge debts owed by common farmers and transfer of farming land into the hands of non-farming community. To curb this land transfer, the government introduced the Punjab Land Alienation Act, 1900.

**4. Peasant Revolt in Champaran-** In Champaran district of Northern Bihar, Europeans used to exploit the indigo farmers. To oppose it, Gandhiji, with the help of Babu Rajendra Prasad evaluated the actual position. Farmers were asked to organize a non-violent movement, but later, an enquiry committee was constituted in June 1917. On the basis of its report, the Champaran Agrarian Act was passed. According to the provision of this Act, the farmers could not be forced to grow indigo.

**5. Peasant Revolt in Kheda-** This movement was against the Bombay government. In 1918 AD, the crops were damaged during the spring season. Even then, the Bombay government continued to demand taxes, while it was made clear in the land revenue laws that if the harvest was below 25 percent of the normal harvest, then the land



revenue will be waived off completely. But the government refused to provide this rebate. Gandhiji organized the farmers and performed Satyagraha. Finally, the government was forced to accept the demands made by Gandhiji.

**6. Other Organized Efforts-** Akhil Bharatiya Kisan Sabha was constituted in Lucknow, on 11<sup>th</sup> April 1936 AD to run a peasant movement on an all- India (Bharat) level. The Kisan sabha organized a movement opposing the land system of landlords in Andhra Pradesh. They also organized a movement against Bakasht land (lands claimed by the landlords from tenants who had held it for innumerable years) in 1936 AD in Bihar. On 18th October 1937 AD, the Kisan Sabhas celebrated the Farmers' Day against the atrocities committed towards the Satyagrahis.

### **Political Movements (1857 — 1919 AD)**

After the failure of the freedom struggle of 1857 AD, the leadership of the freedom struggle came in to the hands of the modern educated landlords and aristocratic class from India (Bharat). These sections used to send reminders and applications to the Parliament for getting their demands fulfilled. They organized the educated class and made people aware of the atrocities committed by the

Britishers. The people who initially led these struggles had faith in the moderate class from England. These people wanted to convince moderates to understand the actual scenario in India (Bharat), to make them fulfil the ambitions of Indians (Bhartiyas) and prepare them to implement Constitutional and administrative reforms. Along with this, they also wanted to spread the movement by making aware the masses about the exploitation and atrocities of the Britishers and to unite people from all parts, sections and religions of the country.

### **Spread of Political Renaissance after 1858 AD-**

Political ambitions of the Indians (Bhartiyas) started gaining momentum gradually. They desired not only to be employed in the Civil Services, but also to control it. A demand of government elected by the people and responsible towards the people started rising. In 1868 AD, one such demand was

made by Kristo Das Pal who was the editor of a leading newspaper named "Patriot" published from Bengal. In 1874 AD, in an article titled "Swarajya", he talked about provision of a Constitutional form of government by Indians (Bhartiyas) and for Indians (Bhartiyas) in India (Bharat).

The political organizations which were present in India (Bharat) at that time were not ready for this kind of progressive demand and the struggle to achieve it. For it, several scholars and intellectuals from Bengal formed the Indian League in 1875. Its objective was to induct the feeling of nationalism and political awareness among the Indians (Bhartiyas). This was the first political organization which had been formed through public awareness.

### **Indian (Bhartiya) Association**

This association was formed under the leadership of Surendranath Banerjee in 1876 AD in Albert Hall in Calcutta. Around 800 delegates participated in this event when it was decided that the organization will form a forum of people with similar political ideas and will unite the masses.

### **Indian National Congress-**

Indian National Congress was the outcome of the political development which took place in India (Bharat) after 1858 AD. It was formed by Allen Octavian Hume, a retired British officer of Indian Civil Services. The objective of British government behind its formation was to collect information about the mindset of the Indians (Bhartiyas) and to form such an association in which the political leaders get a chance for venting their anger, so that the British government could prevent them from making concerted efforts to oust the Britishers from the country. On 28th December 1885 AD, its first meeting was held at Gokul Das Tejpal Sanskrit College in Mumbai under the Presidentship of Womesh Chandra Banerjee. In it 72 representatives participated. Four objectives behind the formation of the Congress were highlighted in the meeting as:

1. To provide an opportunity of mutual

interaction to people who were employed in the cause or nation's development.

2. Discussing the programmes for the coming years.
3. Keeping full faith and loyalty towards the British Empire and opposing the government's works which are performed against the principles framed by the Parliament of England.
4. This organization will indirectly take the form of Indian (Bhartiya) Parliament and give a suitable answer to the belief of the Britishers that the representatives elected by India (Bharat) are incapable to handle the administration. The period of Congress can be divided into two phases. The first phase from 1885 to 1905 AD is regarded as the period of Moderate politics or political beggary. The second phase from 1905 to 1919 AD is regarded as the period of Extremists or extremist politics.

In the Congress, moderate leaders of the first phase such as Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha, Vyomesh and Surendranath Banerjee dominated the political horizon of the Congress. These people believed in moderate and

reasonable politics. They interpreted their politics as the fusion of Liberalism and moderation. These people advocated end of religious and caste discrimination, professed equality among human beings, equality before law, extension of civil liberties of the masses and development of representative organizations. In this period, there was a predominance of wealthy, middle income group, and intellectuals that included doctors, engineers, journalists and litterateurs in the Congress. The representatives of Congress of this period hailed from big cities and had no connection with the masses. The moderates were in favour of maintaining and strengthening the British Empire. They feared that if the Britishers left India (Bharat), it would cause mismanagement. Colonial rule was a symbol of peace and good system according to them and they believed that it was important for India (Bharat) that the Britishers should remain

here for a long time. The moderates believed that the Britishers were just and they would do justice with India (Bharat). The complaints of Indians (Bhartiyas) were due to British employees or because the Britishers did not have thorough knowledge about problems of Indians (Bhartiyas). This was the reason that the moderates paid more attention to cowards propaganda in England. In this period, the Congress did not demand independence for India (Bharat), rather they just demanded for certain concessions.

### **Second Phase: Beginning of Extremist National Movement**

During the end of the Nineteenth century and the beginning of the Twentieth century, the influence of people with extremist views began to rise in the Congress. Split began in the Congress at the time when a conflict took place between the extremist reformers on Lokmanya Tilak's issue of social reforms. Tilak was of the view that there can be no social reform, development, purposeful education and provision of a life full of nationalism without Swarajya (independent rule). Four major Congress leaders namely Lokmanya Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghosh and Lala Lajpat Rai headed this movement. In the programmes of the extremist movement, emphasis was laid on renouncing imported goods, adopting Indian (Bhartiya) goods, nationalistic education and Satyagrah. They also emphasized on promoting Indian (Bhartiya) industries so that the Indians (Bhartiyas) could get an opportunity to work and serve. They also believed that instead of government educational institutions, a national education policy must be formulated and the involvement of students in service of the nation was required.

### **Home Rule Movement-**

From 1915AD, Mrs. Annie Besant declared to form the Home Rule League on the Model of Irish Home Rule League. In 1916, Tilak established his own Home Rule League in Belgaon. Both the organizations used to work in unison. Their objective was to spread the demand of freedom from British Empire for the people.

## **Political Movements from 1919 to 1947 AD-**

**Rowlatt Act-** After the end of First World War, the British government assured that the Indians (Bhartiyas) would be given maximum benefits. But the reforms made after the end of the war were unsatisfactory, and on the contrary, economic exploitation, strict restrictions on press and other exploitative measures were introduced. The Indian (Bhartiyas) people were standing firmly in opposition to the Britishers. The government feared a conspiracy and finally it formed a committee under the Chairmanship of Sidney Rowlatt in 1917 AD. The Bill formed by this committee was passed by the legislature on 17<sup>th</sup> March, 1919 AD. Under this Act, any person could be arrested based on doubt. Such a person would have no appellate, argumentative, or legal aid rights. This was called a Black Law (Kala Kanoon).

### **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre-**

On 13<sup>th</sup> April, 1919 AD, an assembly was organized at Jallianwala Bagh to protest against the Rowlatt Act. 20,000 women, men and children gathered there. General Dyer entered the assembly and ordered to open fire on the public. Firing continued till the cartridges were finished. According to official statistics, 379 people were killed, but the Congress committee claimed that number of people killed was around 1000.

### **Non-Cooperation and Khilafat Movement-**

The Khilafat Movement was organized by Indian (Bhartiya) Muslims in honour of the Khalifa of Turkey. The Khalifa of Turkey was the religious chief of the Muslim society. This movement created the atmosphere of national unity in India (Bharat). Khilafat Day was celebrated in the country on 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1919 AD. Gandhiji also participated in this movement and returned the honour of "Kesar-e-Hind". This movement ended on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 1920 along with the Treaty of Sevres. According to the provisions of this treaty, Turkey was divided and declared as a Democratic nation and the post of Khalifa was abolished.

### **Non-Cooperation Movement -**

Gandhiji was deeply pained by incidents such as

Rowlatt Act, Jallianwalla Bagh massacre, Hunter Committee's report, partition of Turkey, abolition of the post of Khalifa, etc. In 1920 AD, the Congress passed a resolution to non-cooperate with the unjust government. Under this resolution, there was a provision of renouncing government titles, renouncing the legislatures, courts, government educational institutions, discard imported goods and not to pay taxes. On the contrary, people had to keep themselves in discipline, national educational institutions were to be established, mutual conflicts had to be resolved through panchayats and hand woven clothes were to be used. In 1921 AD, around 30,000 people went to jail under this movement. This was for the first time in the history of India (Bharat) when so many people participated for the cause of an independent nation. But when the movement was at its peak, on 5<sup>th</sup> February, 1922 AD, police committed atrocities on the peaceful march which took place at Chauri Chaura in Gorakhpur. As a result, public set the police station on fire, 21 sepoys and 1 inspector were burnt to death. Observing that the movement was transforming into a violent one, Gandhiji called it off on 12<sup>th</sup> February, 1922 AD. Major leaders of the country were surprised by the decision taken by Gandhiji. Subhash Chandra Bose interpreted this as extremely painful. Motilal Nehru and C. R. Das formed the Swaraj Party under the banner of Congress, through which they participated in Vidhan Parishads and hampered the smooth functioning of the government.

### **Simon Commission**

For evaluating the working of reforms of the Indian (Bhartiya) government in 1919 AD, the British government formed a Commission in 1927 AD under the Chairmanship of Sir John Simon. There were 7 members in the commission but none of them was an Indian (Bhartiya). When this commission reached Mumbai on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 1928 AD, it was rigidly opposed by the people. In Lahore, it was initially opposed under the leadership of Lala Lajpat Rai. The police lathi charged the mob, consequently Lala Lajpat Rai suffered injuries on head and died within a month. This commission gave its report in 1930. There was



no mention of establishment of colonial self rule in the report.

### **Civil Disobedience Movement-**

In the Congress meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> December 1929 AD, the Congress passed the resolution to obtain complete Swaraj under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru. In order to achieve the objective of complete Swaraj, Gandhiji, along with 78 companions, marched on foot towards Dandi village situated on the sea coast in Gujarat, around 358 kms away from Sabarmati Ashram. On 6<sup>th</sup> April, 1930 he reached Dandi and broke the law by making salt without any order. Through this movement, Gandhiji urged the people to form salt without permit, he urged women to perform Dharna in front of liquor shops, opium outlets and shops that sold imported goods. He also asked people to burn imported goods, use charkha and abolish untouchability. He asked the students to leave government schools and colleges and urged the government employees to resign from their jobs. This movement spread rapidly across the country. People across the entire nation participated in strikes, campaigns and boycotted imported goods. A unique feature of this movement was the participation of women in large numbers. In a short period, 60,000 people were imprisoned.

On 5<sup>th</sup> March, 1931, Gandhi-Irwin Pact took place between the government and the Congress. The Viceroy declared that the objective of development of Indian (Bhartiya) Constitution is giving a Dominion Status to India (Bharat). Gandhiji participated in the Second Round Table conference which was called for Indian (Bhartiya) Constitutional reforms. He returned unsatisfied and started the Second Civil Disobedience Movement again in 1932 AD. In 1933 AD, Gandhiji accepted the failure of his movement and resigned from the membership of the Congress.

### **Personal (Vyaktigat) Satyagraha-**

The Second World War had started. Strikes and campaigns were taking place in the country to oppose India's (Bharat's) inclusion in the war. At that time, Gandhiji proposed to perform a personal

satyagraha instead of a satyagraha,, which was accepted by the Congress. On 17<sup>th</sup> October, 1940, the Congress started a personal Satyagraha Movement. It was decided that the Satyagrahis selected by Gandhiji will proceed towards public places one by one, give speeches against the war and get arrested. Vinoba Bhave was the first Satyagrahi who was sentenced to three months imprisonment. Jawaharlal Nehru was the second, while Brahmdukt was the third Satyagrahi. 30,000 people were arrested in this Personal Satyagraha.

### **Quit India (Bharat) Movement**

Due to failure of Cripps Mission, fear of Japanese attack on India (Bharat), decisions in Wardha Congress meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> July 1942, Gandhiji's proposal of "Quit India" (Bharat) was accepted by the All India Congress Committee in its meeting, which was held in Mumbai on 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1942. Gandhiji said, "I am giving a short mantra to all of you- 'Do or Die'. We all will either get India (Bharat) freed or die for this cause, but we will not remain alive to be dominated". Even before the dawn of 9<sup>th</sup> August, Gandhiji was arrested along with several other Congress leaders and the Congress was declared to be an illegal or invalid association.

No action plan was fixed for this movement. In this movement, it was decided to observe peaceful strikes, organize public assemblies, refuse to pay land revenue and non-cooperate with the government. Gandhiji called this movement the Final Struggle. Therefore, the public reacted in the manner they thought it to be right. A self generated movement spread in the whole country. Strikes and refusal to perform work in factories, schools and colleges. police stations, post offices and railway stations were attacked. Most of the leaders of Congress Socialist Party managed to save themselves from being arrested. These leaders remained underground and continued the movement. Among such leaders, Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Achyut Patwardhan, Ramanand Mishra and S. M. Joshi were prominent. Jayaprakash Narayan played an important role in this movement. Aruna Asaf Ali

led this movement successfully in Mumbai. The revolutionaries of this movement were also successful in forming a parallel government at various cities, towns and villages. This movement was also crushed. During firing in this movement, more than 10000 people were killed. The revolting villages had to pay a large amount as a fine. The government blamed Gandhi ji for the violence that took place during this movement.

This movement paved the path for independence of India (Bharat). It infused the spirit of bravery, excitement, strength and sacrifice for the nation among the Indians (Bhartiyas). A new generation of leadership emerged in the country, due to which the strength and power to resist the colonial rule increased among the people. Now, India (Bharat) demanded nothing less than complete independence.

### **Tribal, Peasant and Praja Mandal Movements in Rajasthan-**

#### **Tribal and Peasant movements in Rajasthan-**

Political awareness began in Rajasthan with the efforts of the farmers and tribals. When exorbitant burden of taxes was imposed on farmers, they opposed and challenged the contemporary political system. In tribal areas of Rajasthan, such movements were self-motivated, and became a source of inspiration for the future movements which had started against injustice and unnecessary exploitation. Bhils used to reside in the Southern regions of Rajasthan, mainly Dungarpur, Mewar, Pratapgarh, Banswara and Kushalgarh. Bhil is an extremely traditional tribe which is aware of its social and economic status. When their traditional rights were violated, they started opposing the rulers and the Britishers.

#### **Bhagat Movement**

For social and moral upliftment of the Bhils, Govind Guru established the Samp Sabha and formed the Bhagat Movement to keep them in Hinduism. The administration was concerned about the social renaissance sponsored by the Samp Sabha among the Bhils from Mewar, Dungarpur, Idar, Gujarat, Vijaynagar and Malwa. Therefore, it forced the Bhils not to participate in the Bhagat

Movement. When the Bhils were forced to perform Begar (forceful work in fields) and deprived them of their Fundamental Rights, they began a movement. The Britishers felt that the objective of this social reform movement run by Govind Guru is the formation of a Bhil state. Govind Guru was arrested by Dungarpur state in April 1913, but released later. Govind Guru proceeded towards Mangarh hills with his companions. In October 1913 AD, through a message, urged the Bhils to assemble on Mangarh hill. The Bhils assembled in large numbers with arms and ammunition. Scared by the unity of Bhils, the British sent a massive army, that reached the Mangarh hills and opened fire on the Bhils in order to disperse them. According to official estimates, 1500 Bhils were killed. Thus, the Bhagat Movement was crushed mercilessly and Govind Guru was sentenced to 10 years of imprisonment.

#### **Eki Movement**

Even after crushing the Bhagat Movement, the government policies against the Bhils continued. In 1917, the Bhils and Garasiyas jointly sent a letter to the Maharana and expressed their protest against the exploitative policies and begar. When the expected results were not obtained, the Bhils began a movement under the leadership of Motilal Tejawat. This movement came to be known as Eki Movement.

#### **Peasant Movements in Rajasthan-**

The political, social and economic structure of Rajasthan was feudalistic. This structure was three-tier, in which rulers, jagirdars and farmers were included. This system was based upon the mutual coordination of all these people. Till the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, their relations remained cordial, but after that the scenario of Rajasthan began to change. As a consequence, different parts of Rajasthan had to face several peasant movements. Following were the major reasons behind these movements:

1. Due to the influence of the Britishers, the rulers did not pay attention to their subjects. The rulers and the jagirdars assumed that their mere existence depended on the British rule. Therefore, the

dependence of the rulers on the jagirdars and the dependence of the jagirdars on the farmers continued to weaken.

2. In addition to with collecting excessive revenue, the Begar and Lagaan taken from farmers was increasing significantly. In some states, the number of such taxes was even more than 300.

3. In this period, the number of agricultural labourers increased significantly as many people depended on agriculture after being displaced from other occupations. Due to this increase in number of agricultural labourers, the jagirdars started acting more arrogantly.

4. The swing out in agricultural prices was not beneficial for the farmers. Due to decline in prices the savings of the farmers were reduced, whereas, in case of increase in prices, they could not get any profit because the jagirdars used to collect land revenue from them in the form of commodities.

5. After adopting the British administration system, the kind and paternal outlook of the jagirdars towards the farmers changed.

### **Bijolia Peasant Movement (Bhilwara)**

Bijolia Peasant Movement was the pioneer of other peasant movements of Rajasthan. Most of the farmers of this region were from Dhakar caste. In 1894 AD, till the time of death of Rao Govind Das of Bijolia, the farmers were not in extreme opposition of Jagirdars. But in 1894 AD, the newly appointed jagirdar Krishna Singh (Kishan Singh) introduced several changes in the thikana (estate) and jagir (ancestral) policies. In his time, around 87 per cent of the income of the farmers was taken away by the jagirdars through 84, taxes and revenues. Even after this, they were forced to do additional begar.

It 1897 AD, during the death feast of Gangaram Dhakar's father in village Girdharpur, thousands of farmers openly discussed their grievances and informed the Maharana of Mewar about their condition. After hearing it, the Maharana appointed an assistant revenue officer named Hamid Hussain to examine the complaints related to land revenue

and begar. Hamid Hussain reported against the estate in Mahkamah Khas, but without any result. The state instructed the estate to reduce merely one or two taxes. This increased the influence of Rao Krishna Singh.

The situation of Bijolia farmers was already miserable due to various types of taxes and severe famine (Chhappania Akal) of 1899- 1900 AD. Even after this, Rao Krishna Singh imposed a new tax named "Chanwari tax" on the farmers in 1903 AD. Under this, every person had to deposit five rupees. in the estate treasury on the occasion of his daughter's marriage. Chanwari tax was not only a form of economic burden on the residents of Bijolia, but also extremely offensive from social view point. The farmers opposed this tax peacefully and did not get their daughters married for two years. Due to the opposition of the farmers, Rao was forced to remove Chanwari tax, collecting 2/5<sup>th</sup> part from the produce in lieu of the estate, and stopped sending armed men along with the Alahakars who used to collect the produce (Kunta).

In 1906 AD, the newly appointed jagirdar Prithvi Singh of Bijolia not only ended the existing old concessions, but also imposed a new tax named "Talwar Bandhai" on his subjects. During the time of Prithvi Singh, when plunder and exploitation had reached its height, in 1913 AD, under the leadership of Sadhu Sitaramdas, Fatehkaran Charan and Brahmadeo, the farmers refused to plough the fields in the jagir region. As the fields of jagir region remained uncultivated, the estate

incurred huge loss. After this, the atrocities and exploitation committed by the thakurs increased. Fatehkaran and Brahmadeo got terrified by all this and left Bijolia and Sadhu Sitaramdas was deprived of his job in the library.

After being invited by Sadhu Sitaramdas, Vijay Singh Pathik led the movement and in 1917 AD on the day of Haryali Amavasya, he formed an association named "Uparmal Panch Board" in village Bairisal and under this banner the movement was inaugurated. Impressed by the bravery and unity of the farmers, Tilak not only wrote a newspaper column in his newspaper "Kesari", but also wrote a letter to Maharana Fateh



Singh of Mewar that the royals of Mewar made immense sacrifices for independence. He further stated that "You yourself are the worshipper of freedom and it is a dishonor that the worshippers of freedom in your state are being put in the prison". On one hand, in order to revive the Bijolia farmers, a song "Panchira" composed by Manikyalal Verma was sung, while on the other hand, Pragyachakshu Bhanwarlal Swarnakar was also going from village to village to infuse the flame through his poems. With the objective of inducting the spirit of nationalism in Bijoliya's young men, Pathik established an association named "Uparmal Sewa Samiti" and published a Panchayat paper named "Uparmal Ka Danka". In order to promote the movement across India (Bharat), Pathik sent a silver bracelet to Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi, the editor of newspaper 'Pratap' published from Kanpur on behalf of the farmers. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi accepted the bracelet and promised to support the movement. 'Pratap' newspaper provided a national identity to Bijolia Peasant Movement. The representation of public movement of Mewar in Premchand's novel 'Rangbhoomi' is a reflection of the Bijolia Peasant Movement itself.

In April 1919 AD, the Udaipur state government formed a commission under Chairmanship of Mandalgarh hakim Bindulal Bhattacharya in order to listen to the complaints of Bijolia farmers. The commission advocated various recommendations for the benefit of the farmers but as the Mewar government didn't pay attention to them, the movement continued, to function as usual. Officers of the Foreign Ministry of Indian (Bhartiya) government believed that a quick alliance should be made with the Bijolia Kisan Panchayat, otherwise the peasant movement may take a violent form in Rajputana. In order to pacify and weaken down the Bijolia Movement, a high level committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Robert Holland the AGG of Rajasthan. In February 1922, Robert Holland held a meeting with the farmers and waived off 35 taxes. Unfortunately, due to complications in the estate, this alliance could not take a permanent form.

In 1927, in opposition to the new arrangement of high rates of land revenue, the farmers left their cultivable land as advised by Vijay Singh Pathik to pressurize the state government. But contrary to the farmers' belief, when the estate sought to auction this land, it got new farmers who were ready to claim that land. Pathik was blamed be responsible for making the farmers leave their cultivable land, after which he detached from the movement. The farmers continued the movement to get their land back. It continued till 1941 AD.

### **Sikar Peasant Movement-**

This peasant movement started when the new Rao of Sikar estate Raja Kalyan Singh increased the land revenue by 25 to 50 per cent. On pretext of over-expenditure at the time of funeral of the previous Rao Raja in 1922 AD and during his own coronation ceremony, he increased the land revenue by promising a tax concession from the following year, but in 1923 AD, Rao Raja backed out from his promise of giving concession in land tax. Under the leadership of Minister Ramnarayan Chaudhary of Rajasthan Sewa Sangh, the farmers raised their voice against it. A London based newspaper 'Daily Herald' published articles in support of the farmers and in 1925 AD, the Labour member Sir Pathic Lawrence from Leicester (west) raised his voice in support of the farmers in the Lower house (House of Commons) of the British Parliament.

After the formation of "Rajasthan Jat Kshetriya Sabha" in 1931 AD, the peasant movement was infused with renewed vigour. To organize the farmers on religious basis, Thakur Deshraj decided to perform "Jat Pragyapati Mahayajna" after holding a meeting in Pathana. On 20<sup>th</sup> January 1934 AD, on the day of Basant Panchmi, this yajna was performed under the guidance of Yagnacharya Pt. Khemraj Sharma in Sikar. After performing the yajna, the farmers wished to seat the yagnapati Kunwar Hukam Singh on an elephant and organize a procession. But, Rao Raja Kalyan Singh and the jagirdar of the estate were in opposition of this. The reason behind this was that the ruler of the estate and the jagirdar regarded the farmers to be socially

inferior in status and regarded the right of riding an elephant as their sole right. For this reason, the Sikar estate stole the elephant on the first night of the yajna. This incident of stealing the elephant agitated the public and the situation became intense. A renowned farmer named Choturam sent a telegram to Jaipur Maharaja warning him that if anything unfortunate happened to even a single farmer, there would be immense loss at other places and the Jaipur state will have to suffer serious consequences. Finally the Sikar estate bowed in front of the persistence of the farmers and the estate itself provided a well decorated elephant for the procession. In this yajna programme which continued for seven days, around three lakhs people participated from areas as far as Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Loharu, Patiala and Hisar. This was the biggest yajna which took place in the Rajputana in the twentieth century.

Women played a significant role in Sikar Peasant Movement. Thakur Nam Singh of Sihot organized a massive women's meeting under the Chairmanship of Mrs Kishori Devi at Katrathal on 25th April, 1934 AD to protest against atrocities committed towards the peasant women in a village named Sotion-ka-Bas. To stop this meeting, the Sikar estate imposed section 144. Even after this, women's meeting took place after breaking all rules. In this meeting, women participated in large numbers. Mrs Durgadevi Sharma, Mrs Phulandevi, Mrs Ramadevi Joshi, Mrs. Uttamadevi and several others were among the prominent participants in this meeting. On 25<sup>th</sup> April 1935 AD, when a group of revenue officers went to Kudan village to collect land tax, on being provoked by an elderly woman named Dhapa Dadi the farmers united and refused to pay the tax. To suppress the peasant revolt, the police opened fire. Four farmers- Chetram, Tikuram, Tulcharam and Asharam became martyrs and 175 other farmers were imprisoned. After this terrible massacre, the echo of Sikar Peasant Movement was once again heard in the British Parliament. By the end of 1935 AD, most of the demands of the farmers were accepted. Sardar Harlal Singh, Netramsingh Gaurir, Pannesingh Batdanau, Harusingh Palthana, Gorusingh

Katrathal, Ishwarsingh Bhairunpura, Lekhram Kaswali, etc. were among the prominent leaders of this movement.

### **Begoon Peasant Movement (Chittorgarh)-**

Inspired by the Bijolia Peasant Movement, the farmers of Begoon estate too started a movement in 1921 AD, because the residents of that region were also suffering from excessive land revenue and the atrocities of other sub taxes. Just like the Bijolia farmers, most of the farmers of Begoon estate were from Dhakar caste. They were suffering from the vicious circle of various inputs, begar, high rate of land revenue and the atrocities of the estate. After sustained efforts of the members of Rajasthan Sewa Sangh, Vijay Singh Pathik, Ramnarayan Chaudhary and Manikyalal Verma, the farmers were inspired and war awakened.

In 1921 in Menal, the lease farmers of Begoon assembled at Bhairon Kund and had a meeting. Influenced by the power of Bijolia Movement, the farmers contacted Pathik and requested him to lead a movement against sub taxes, begar and high rate of land revenue. Pathik appointed Ramnarayan Chaudhary a minister of Rajasthan Sewa Sangh, as the leader of this movement.

After two years of struggle, Begoon's Thakur Rawat Anup Singh was forced to give in. He accepted the demands of the farmers and entered into an alliance with them. But the Mewar government and resident did not approve of all this. They interpreted the alliance which had taken place between the Rajasthan Sewa Sangh and Rawal Anup Singh to be a "Bolshevik" decision and

interned Anup Singh in Udaipur and placed a Munsarmat upon the estate.

To solve the complaints of the farmers of the estate, a commission was constituted under the leadership of Mewar's additional commissioner Trench. Begoon farmers assembled in Govindpura to discuss the decisions of Trench. About 600 farmer heads (panchs) were present at that place for five months. Trench and Lala Amritlal reached there and ordered the farmers to accept the decision of the commission and disperse from there, but the

farmers did not disperse. On 13th July, 1923 AD, the farmers had to face firing, in which two farmers, named Rupaji and Krupaji Dhakar were martyred. The women were insulted and more than five hundred farmers were imprisoned. When Pathik felt that the morale of the farmers was declining due to atrocities of the state, he secretly reached Begoon and himself took command of the movement. He was arrested by Mewar government on 10<sup>th</sup> September, 1923 AD after which the movement gradually ended.

### **Barad Peasant Movement (Bundi)-**

Just like the farmers of Bijolia and Begoon, the farmers of Bundi were suffering from various burdens, like begaar - and had to pay high rates of land revenue. Suffering from all this, the farmers of Barad region of Bundi state which has common borders with Bijolia; started a movement against the Bundi administration in April 1922 AD. The leadership of this movement was in the hands of three dedicated workers i.e. Nyunram Sharma of Rajasthan Sewa Sangh. On 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1923 AD, a meeting of farmers was held in village Dabi under the Chairmanship of Nyunram Sharma when the sepoys opened fire under the leadership of police commissioner Ikraam Hussain. In this, Nanak Bhil and Devlal Gurjar were martyred. On 27<sup>th</sup> September, 1925 AD, Pt. Nyunram Sharma was authorized to apprise the administration with the problems of the farmers, for which a meeting was organized in Hadoti branch of Rajasthan Sewa Sangh. After 1927 AD, Rajasthan Sewa Sangh closed down due to mutual conflicts. Thus, along with the closure of Rajasthan Sewa Sangh, the Barad Peasant Movement of Bundi also ended.

### **Neemuchana Peasant Movement (Alwar)-**

Killing of pigs was banned in Alwar as pigs would destroy the crops. Vexed by the nuisance of pigs, the farmers of Alwar began a movement in 1921 AD. Being pressurized by this movement, the Maharaja was forced to give permission to kill pigs. After the third land arrangement in Alwar in 1922 AD, new rates of tax revenue were imposed from 1923 — 24 AD. Before this new arrangement, lower land revenue was collected from the

Brahmins and Rajputs as compared to other castes. But according to the provisions of this new arrangement, this exclusive right of these castes came to an end, which obviously resulted into dissatisfaction among these sections. Although the farmers of other castes were also dissatisfied by the new arrangement, yet the Rajputs played the role of leading this opposition. Rajput Vishvedars from Bansur and Ghazi-ka-Thana of Alwar opposed these taxes which were imposed in the name of land arrangement and also made complaints to the resident. Maharaja Jaidev Singh was angry on such type of complaints.

On 14<sup>th</sup> May, 1925 AD, the farmers gathered in Neemuchana village of Bansur tehsil in Alwar district to discuss about the loot which was made in the name of collecting land revenue. All of a sudden, the state army surrounded these farmers and opened fire on them under the leadership of army commander Chajju Singh and also put their houses on fire, 156 people were killed in this incident and around 600 people were injured. A newspaper, "Riyasat" compared this massacre with the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, while Mahatma Gandhi addressed this massacre as "Dohari Dyershami" in "Young India" and described this massacre as more violent than the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

### **Praja Mandal Movement in Rajasthan-**

In the initial decades of the Twentieth century, several movements had started in different parts of Rajasthan in opposition to the atrocities committed by the feudals, but the sole objective of these movements was concession in land revenue and freedom from feudal atrocities. In 1920 AD, the nationalistic people of the Rajputana became desperate when the Congress passed a resolution of not interfering in the internal affairs of princely states. In 1927, after the formation of Akhil Bhatatiya Desi Rajya Lok Parishad, the political workers received a platform through which they could raise their voice. This association was formed and its first meeting was held from 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> December 1927 AD under the Chairmanship of Diwan Bahadur Ramchandra Rao in Mumbai.



Among the executive members of this association, seven members were nominated from Rajasthan. These included- Nyunram Sharma (Kota), Shankarlal Sharma (Ajmer), Jai Narayan Vyas and Kanhaiyalal Kalyantri (Jodhpur), Ramdev Poddar and Balkrishna Poddar (Bikaner) and Trilokchand Mathur (Karauli). Vijay Singh Pathik was elected as the Vice President and Ramnarayan Chaudhry was elected as the Provincial Secretary of Rajasthan and Central India. The major objective of formation of this association was to establish a responsible government in the princely states under the leadership of their rulers through legal and peaceful ways.

After a resolution of supporting the movements of

the princely states was passed Haripura summit of the Congress in 1938 AD, Praja Mandals were systematical organized in various princely states. Those political organizations, which were formed to establish a responsible government in the princely states, to oppose atrocities and exploitation by the feudals. They also infused political awareness in the princely states and provided fuel to the nationalistic movements taking place in the country. They were called Praja Mandel. All the riyasats of Rajasthan had their individual Praja Mandals. which initiated several movements on the above mentioned issues at different times till independence.

1.	Jaipur Praja Mandal	1931	Jamnalal Bajaj and Kapurchand Patni
2.	Bundi Praja Mandal	1931	Kantilal
3.	Hadoti Praja Mandal	1934	Pt. Nyunram Sharma
4.	Marwar Praja Mandal	1934	Jainarayan Vyas
5.	Sirohi Praja Mandal	1934	Vridhishankar Trivedi
6.	Bikaner Praja Mandal	1936	Magharam Vaidya
7.	Kota Praja Mandal	1939	Pt. Nyunram Sharma
8.	Mewar Praja Mandal	1938	Manikyalal Verma
9.	Alwar Praja Mandal	1938	Harinarayan Sharma
10.	Bharatpur Praja Mandal	1938	Kishanlal Joshi
11.	Shahpura Praja Mandal	1938	Rameshchandra Ojha
12.	Dholpur Praja Mandal	1938	Jwalaprasad Jigyasu
13.	Karauli Praja Mandal	1938	Trilokchandra Mathur
14.	Kishangarh Praja Mandal	1939	Kantilal Chothani
15.	Jaisalmer Praja Mandal	1945	Mithalal Vyas
16.	Kushalgarh Praja Mandal	1942	Bhawarlal Nigam
17.	Dungarpur Praja Mandal	1944	Bhogilal Pandya
18.	Banswara Praja Mandal	1945	Bhupendranath Trivedi
19.	Pratapgarh Praja Mandal	1945	Amritlal Payak
20.	Jhalawar Praja Mandal	1946	Mangilal Bhavya

## **Establishment of Major Praja Mandals in Rajasthan–**

The most significant achievement of Praja Mandal was that it led the women out of their homes and made them stand equally with men. Many women started to participate actively in these movements and were arrested. Women folk participated in the movements organized by Jaipur Praja Mandal.

Ramadevi Deshpande, Sushila Devi, Indira Devi, Anjana Devi Chaudhary, etc. were among the prominent women of Jaipur Praja Mandal. At the time of Quit India Movement, Gorja Devi, Savitri Devi Bhati, Sirekanwal Vyas, Rajkaur Vyas. etc. were arrested in Jodhpur, while in Udaipur, Manikyalal Verma's wife Narayan Devi went to jail along with a six month old son. The workers of Praja Mandal also gave attention to social reforms, spread of education, abolishing beggary and welfare of the dalits and tribals. These associations started movements and struggles due to which spirit of nationalism was infused among people who were suffering from atrocities committed by the royals and feudals. Before 1938 AD, direct coordination between the public of princely states and the national movement was absent, but after the formation of Praja Mandals, the local movements became a part of the national movement during the Quit India Movement of 1942. The National Movement got fillip by it.

### **EXERCISE**

#### **Very Short Answer Type Questions**

1. When was the East India Company established?
2. When and between whom did the Treaty of Surjigaon take place ?
3. Which region did Tipu Sultan rule?
4. When did the Treaty of Amritsar take place?
5. Why were the Sanyasis dissatisfied with the Britishers?
6. Vasudev Phadke was from which province?

7. Who led the revolution in Bihar in 1857 AD?
8. Who was the first Satyagrahi of Personal Satyagraha?
9. When did the Begoon Peasant Movement start?

#### **Short Answer Type Questions-**

1. Describe the First Anglo-Maratha War.
2. What were the consequences of the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War?
3. What is the contribution of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar in freedom struggle?
4. Write a note on Champaran Peasant Movement.
5. When and how was the Indian National Congress formed?
6. Which movement was started by Govind Guru?
7. Explain the Bijolia Peasant Movement.
8. Why did the Indians (Bhartiyas) oppose Simon Commission?
9. Why were Praja Mandals formed in Rajasthan?

#### **Essay Type Questions-**

1. Describe the struggle that took place between the Britishers and the Marathas and Mysore
2. Describe the First Freedom Struggle of 1857 AD.
3. Describe the public movements conducted between 1919 AD and 1949 AD.
4. What was the contribution of revolutionaries in the freedom struggle of Bharat? Elucidate.
5. Describe the peasant movements of Rajasthan.