UG HT S6-02 (DSC)

FOUR YEAR BACHELOR'S DEGREE COURSE

(CBCS in Accordance with NEP 2020)

SEMESTER VI

SOCIO ECONOMIC HISTORY OF MODERN INDIA

HISTORY

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Course Introduction:

This Course is meant for the Sixth semester learners of History of BA programme under the revised semester system of Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University. The course is titled Social and Economic History of Modern India. This course discusses the socio-economic history under the Colonial rule.

The first Unit is the Nature of Indian Economy in the 18th Century. The unit discusses the nature of economic scenario in India prior to the coming of the Europeans.

The second Unit Mercantilism and Colonial Economy discusses the mercantile system and its impact.

The third Unit The Drain Theory and Colonial Imperialism discusses the trading pattern under the Colonial regime.

The fourth unit System of Land Settlements and Land Revenue throws light on the land revenue administrative system under the Colonial rule.

The fifth unit is titled Rural Indebtness and Famine. The unit discusess the causes for rural indebtness and the impact.

The sixth unit is titled Decline of Traditional Industries. The unit discusses the de-industrilisation phase in India during colonial rule.

The seventh unit is titled Commercialisation of Agriculture. The unit discusses the expansion of market economy and the impact on agriculture.

The eighth Unit is titled Development of Communication System in Colonial India. The unit discusses the development of railways, roads, postal services in colonial India.

The ninth Unit Development of Social and Legal Infrastructure in Colonial India discusses the development of modern health, education and legal systems.

The tenth Unit Currency and Banking System discusses the currency system and the emergence of banking facility.

The eleventh unit Growth of Modern Educational System throws light on the educational policies of the British and the role of Misisonaries and other prominent Indian educationists.

The twelfth unit is Emergence of the Middle Class. The unit discusess the meaning and emregence of the Middle class and its impact.

The thirteenth unit is titled Reformation and Women. The unit discusses the impact of the socio-refom Moment on women and the role of women in the freedom struggle.

The fourteenth unit is titled Advent of the Print Media. The unit discusses the introduction of Press and its impact.

The fifteenth unit is titled Peasant Movements and Others in India. The unit deals with agrarian Movements that erupted in Colonial India.

While going through this paper, you will notice that some boxes are put in the left hand or right hand side of the text. These boxes are meant to serve the purpose of in-text glossary for you. Again, you may find some boxes marked with: “LET US KNOW”. These boxes will provide you with some additional interesting and relevant information. The boxes marked with “ACTIVITY” will help you in making your learning more active and efficient. And, at the end of each section, you will get “CHECK YOUR PROGRESS” questions. These have been designed to self-check your progress of study. It will be better if you solve the problems put in these boxes immediately after you go through the sections of the units and then match your answers with “ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS” given at the end of each unit.

UNIT 1 : NATURE OF INDIAN ECONOMY IN THE 18TH CENTURY

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives
1.2 Introduction
1.3 State of Indian Economy prior to the 18th Century
- Agrarian Structure
- Irrigation

1.4 Advent of the Europeans and Impact on the Indian Economy
Beginning of a National Market
1.5 Let Us Sum Up
1.6 Answers to Check Your Progress
1.7 Further Reading
1.8 Model Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- After going through this unit, you will be able to-
- explain the nature of Indian economy in the 18th century
- state the basic features of the self-sufficient village economy
- discuss the changes brought by the Europeans in terms of trade and economy
-

1.2 INTRODUCTION

This is the first Unit of Block 1 of the paper "Social and Economic History of Modern India". In this Unit, we will be deliberating on the issue of the status of Indian economy prior to the 18th century and then the impact of the British advent on the Indian economy. Economic history is the study of our past development, particularly in relation to economics, labour, and business. It includes, for example, the economic development of nations, the growth of business enterprise, and the organization of work. While economic history draws extensively on its close relationships with the disciplines of economics and history, its ultimate strength lies in its broad interdisciplinary connections across a wide range of social science and business subjects. It encourages diverse but rigorous approaches to understand our economic past, which draw upon theories, concepts, and a wide range of historical information. The studies on economic history of modern India had a very late beginning. During the early stage of historiography, a few historians recognized the connection between political and economic history remained a chapter on economic conditions only. Causes and effects of economy were never and analyzed.

Examining the characteristic of a colonial economy, this unit discusses the process of colonizing Indian economy, with speared focus on monopolistic trade tactics, banning of Indian products in Britain, transformation of trade after industrial revolution and entry of foreign enterprises in India. It also extend an elaborate discussion on land settlement, revenue policies, commercialization of agriculture, decline of handicrafts, state of irrigation, development of transport and communication and currency. Finally, it evaluates economic impact of British rule and addresses the issue of economic drain.

1.3 STATE OF TRADITIONAL INDIAN ECONOMY PRIOR TO THE 18th CENTURY

A self-sufficient village, based on agriculture carried on with the primitive plough and bullock-power and handicrafts by means of simple instruments, was the basic feature of pre-British Indian traditional society. The self-sufficient village as the basic economic unit had existed for centuries in India and except for some minor modifications, had survived till the advent of the British rule, in spite of all political convulsions, religious upheavals and devastating wars. The village population was mainly composed of peasants. The village committee, representing the village community which was the de-facto owner of the village land, distributed this land among the peasant families in the form of holdings. Each holding was cultivated by the peasant family by means of the collective members and with the aid of primitive plough and bullocks. The peasant family enjoyed a traditional hereditary right to possess and cultivate its holding from generation to generation.

The structure of agricultural production in the Indian village thus remained uninterfered with for centuries. No emperor ever challenged the ultimate customary right 0ver the village land by the village community. Further village production for the needs of the village and excepting a share of this produce which the village had to surrender to the lord of the moment- may be the suba of the Delhi Emperor, or the sardar of the Poona Peshwa – the entire produce was almost locally consumed by the peasant and non-peasant population. Besides the peasant families, the village population also included industrial workers- such as a smith, a carpenter, a potter, a weaver, a cobbler, a washer man, an oilman, a barber, and others. They all worked almost exclusively for satisfying the needs of the village population. The village did not have any appreciable exchange relations with the outside world and also within itself; the phenomenon of a market was absent. Another feature of the village economic life was the low stage of the division of labour based on insufficient differentiation of agriculture and industry. Thus, economically the village was predominantly autarchic. Local produce prepared mainly by means of local labour and resources was almost locally consumed. There was very little exchange between the village and outside world, whatever little trade existed, was carried on, generally, on a specific day of the week, at the market in a big village where a big variety of goods from a number of centers was sold.

- **Agrarian Structure**

It is generally held that the agrarian structure in the pre-British Indian rural society was self-sufficient village community based agriculture. Simple agricultural equipment and hand manipulated tools for manufacture were all that were known. The sickle and plough, the saw and chisel, the spinning wheel and pit-loom gave service for generations. The village artisans secured locally the raw materials, such as wood, clay and hide, required for their crafts. Wood was available from the forest area in the periphery of the village. The carcasses of dead animals of the village provided the cobbler with hides. Cotton grew in almost every part of the country. On the whole the village was self-sufficient regarding the raw materials needed for the village artisan industry.

Since neither the King nor the intermediaries such as the zaminders, jagirders or nobles or religious or charitable institutions were owners of the land, all conflicts which took place among rulers were only over the magnitude of the share of the village produce. Thus Indian feudalism was different from European feudalism by the fact that, under it no private property in land existed. The feudal nobility which was existed throughout the pre-British period was given by the monarch only the right to collect and appropriate revenue over a specific number of villages. The institution of the manor never existed in pre-British Indian society. The very fact that under all types of kings, benevolent or despotic, Hindu, Buddhist or Muslim, no attempt was made to deprive the village communities of the land and establish a class of land owners over them, is a testimony of the fact that land was not regarded as the property of the King, that the village community was the de facto owner of the village land and that the state or the monarch had a claim only over a share of the realized annual produce from it.

On the other hand, there was no individual peasant proprietorship over the land either. This means that there did not exist in pre- British India any form of private ownership of land.

- **Irrigation System**

Irrigation has been practiced in India for many centuries. But it is difficult to decide how exactly irrigation practices had begun in India. The earliest known system of irrigation in India includes Harappan irrigation and that of Inamgoan (Maharashtra) site. Harappan and Mohenjodaro civilizations (of 2500 B C) which were competitors with the “fertile crescent” of Babylon and the Nile as cradles of Neolithic civilization did rely on irrigation. There can be little doubt that the development of irrigation systems received a great impetus after the discovery of iron and extensive use of it about 3000 years ago. Irrigation practices have spread simultaneously developing into varieties of techniques suitable for diverse natural conditions. Some of the existing techniques might have originated at this time. The three most common types of traditional works found in India are: diversion channels, surface-drainage tanks and wells. The technique reached the most spectacular development in south India where the major rivers were also controlled by diversion method. Ghiyasuddin Tughluq (1220-1250) is credited to be the first ruler who encouraged digging canals. Firuz Tughlug (1351-86) is considered to be the greatest canal builder. Irrigation is said to be one of the major reasons for the growth and expansion of the Vijayanagar Empire in southern India in the fifteenth century. Babur, in his memoirs called

'Baburnamah' gave a vivid description of prevalent modes of irrigation practices in India at that time. The Gabar Bunds captured and stored annual runoff from surrounding mountains to be made available to tracts under cultivation. The primary purpose of diversion channels did differ from region to region. In the plains near the Himalayas, where the slope is higher, they were primarily for irrigation. But near the confluence, particularly in Ganga delta which includes the whole of Bengal, the primary purpose was drainage and flood control, though irrigation needs have also been met by these canals. These canals have been known here as 'drainage channels'. Unlike the piedmont canals, whose contents got eroded rapidly because of the slope of the terrain, the canals of the flood plains retained water them and reservoirs like 'system tanks' were unnecessary. And according to Wilcox (1930) some of the major rivers of Bengal today were originally artificial drainage channels. The antiquity of these systems cannot be dated. But technological considerations suggest that these may be quite old. The Indus valley probably had extensive system of inundation canals from time immemorial. But most parts of Ganga valley were merely royal monuments, probably initiations of West India, but notoriously poor in engineering and with little achievement in irrigation performance.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions-

Q1) Name a few tools used in cultivation.

Q2) What were the types of irrigation system that were prevalent at that time?

Q3) Who is credited to be the first ruler who encouraged digging canals?

1.4 THE ADVENT OF THE EUROPEAN AND IMPACT ON THE INDIAN ECONOMY

The arrival of the European Trading powers in India was a crucial landmark for Indian trade and economy. India had maintained its trade relations with the foreign merchants even during the earlier centuries. But there was a great difference between the foreign merchants who had earlier settled in and conducted brisk trade from India and the Europeans who came to India in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The earlier foreign merchants had mere commercial motives and had very little or no support from their native governments. In course of time the commercial motives of those European trading powers turned into territorial ambition and by close of the eighteenth century India, from a bulk exporter, it transformed into one of the biggest importers of the industrially manufactured goods.

However the British conquest of India was of a different type. It was the conquest of India by a modern nation which had abolished feudalism in its own country and had created a modern nation through the rise and expansion of capitalism. Since, unlike in the past, India was now ruled by a capitalist nation, this rule had a profound effect on the economic structure. The history of progressive British domination of India is therefore, at the same time, the history of the progressive transformation of the feudal economy of pre-British India into a capitalist economy, however imperfect or distorted. It is bound up with

the decay of old classes associated with old industries and land system and the rise of new classes resting on new land relations and new modern industries. In place of the village commune appeared the modern peasant proprietor or the zaminder, both private owners of land. While the class of artisans and handicraftsmen disappeared, with the rise of modern industry and transport under the British rule, new classes appeared such as the class of capitalists, the class of industrial and transport workers, the class of agricultural labourers, the class of tenants, the class of a new type of merchants connected with trade in products of modern Indian and foreign industries.

From 1600 to 1757, the East India Company was playing the role of a trading cooperation. They brought goods or precious metals to India and exchanged them for Indian goods like textile and spices. It earned its profit by selling Indian goods abroad. But they were not happy with the popularity which Indian textiles enjoyed in Britain. The British manufacturers put pressure on their government to restrict and prohibit the sale of Indian goods in England. By 1720, laws had been passed forbidding the wear or use of printed or dyed cotton cloth. Moreover heavy duties were imposed on the import of plain cloth. In spite of these laws, Indian silk and cotton textiles still held their position in foreign markets until the middle of the eighteenth century when the English textile industry began to develop on the basis of new and advanced technology.

After the Battle of Plassey in 1757, as the East India Company took over political control in Bengal, it could use its influence over trade and production. It used the revenues of Bengal to finance its export of Indian goods. The Company now forced the weavers of Bengal to sell their products at a cheaper price, even at a loss. Many of them were compelled to work for the Company at low wages and were forbidden to work for Indian merchants. The servants of the Company monopolized the sale of raw cotton and forced the Bengal weavers to pay a very high price for it. At the same time Indian textiles had to pay heavy duties on entering England. The real blow to Indian handicrafts fell after 1813, when they not only lost their foreign market, but also their market in India.

The Industrial Revolution in Britain completely transformed Britain's economy and its economic relations with India. The Industrial Revolution gave rise to a powerful class of manufacturers in Britain who had an important impact on Indian administration and its politics. And as this class grew in number and strength and political influence, it began to attack the trade monopoly of the Company. Since the profits of this class came from manufacturing and not from trading, it wanted to encourage not imports of manufactures, but exports of its own products to India as well as imports of raw materials like raw cotton from India. In 1769 by a law the British Industrialists compelled the Company to export every year British manufactures amounting to over 380,000 pound. In 1793, they forced the Company to grant them the use of 3,000 tons of shipping every year to carry their goods. As a result the export of British cotton goods to the East, mostly to India increased. But the British manufacturers were not satisfied. Between 1793 and 1813, they launched a powerful campaign against the Company and its commercial privileges. Finally in 1813 they succeeded in abolishing the Company's monopoly of Indian trade.

As a result of this development British goods started flooding the Indian market. The Indian handicraft industry suffered a lot as it could not face the competition from the machine made products coming from England. The British Government in India did not

take any effective step to protect these industries. Moreover the free trade imposed on India was one-sided. While foreign goods could easily enter India, the Indian products had to pay a heavy duty on entering Britain. As a result of the prohibitive import duties and development of machine industry, Indian export to foreign countries fell rapidly. India was now forced to export raw materials like raw cotton and silk to meet the need of the British industry. The British also promoted the sale of Indian opium in China in spite of China's ban on it. By the end of the nineteenth century Indian exports consisted primarily of raw cotton, jute and silk, oil-seeds, wheat, hides and skins, indigo and tea.

Thus the commercial policy of the East India Company after 1813 was guided by the needs of the British industry. Its main aim was to transform India into a consumer of British manufactures and a supplier of raw material.

The British exported to Britain part of India's wealth and resources for which India got no adequate economic or material return. This "Economic Drain" was a unique feature of British rule. The British government spent a large part of the taxes and income they drained from the Indian people not in India but in Britain.

The drain of wealth from Bengal began in 1757 when the Company's servants began to carry with them a huge amount of wealth extracted from Indian rulers, zamindars, merchants and the common people. In 1756, the Company acquired the 'Diwani' of Bengal and thus gained control over its revenues. The Company used the revenue of Bengal to purchase Indian goods and then exported them. These purchases were called 'Investments'. Thus, through these 'Investments', the revenue of Bengal was sent to England. By the end of the eighteenth century the drain constituted nearly nine percent of India's national income. The actual drain was even more. It was in the form of salaries and other incomes of English officials and the trading profits made by the English merchants.

The drain went on increasing after 1858. The wealth drained out of India played an important part in financing Britain's capitalist's development, especially during the period of Britain's early industrialization.

- **Beginning of a National Market**

There were two undeniable economic benefits provided by India. It was a captive market for British goods and services, and served defense needs by maintaining a large standing army at no cost to the British tax payer. The company brought goods and precious metals into India and exchanged them for Indian goods like textiles and spices, which it sold abroad. Its profits came primarily from the sale of Indian goods abroad. This is the reason why Indian rulers tolerated and even encouraged the establishment of the Company's factories in India. But from the very beginning, the British manufactures were jealous of the popularity that Indian textiles enjoyed in Britain. All of a sudden, dress fashions changed and light cotton textiles began to replace the coarse woolens of the English. The British manufacturers put pressure on their government to restrict and prohibit the sale of Indian goods in England. Heavy duties were imposed on the import of plain cloth. Other European countries, except Holland, also either prohibited the import of Indian cloth or imposed heavy import duties. In spite of these laws, however, Indian silk and cotton textiles still held their own in cotton textiles still held their own in foreign markets, until the middle of the eighteenth century when the English textile industry began

to develop on the basis of new and advanced technology. After the battle of Plassey in 1757, the pattern of the Company's commercial relations with India underwent a qualitative change. Now the Company could use its political control over Indian trade and production and push its Indian trade. Moreover, it utilized the revenues of Bengal to finance its export of Indian goods. The British government was determined to protect its rising machine industry whose products its rising machine industry whose products could still not compete with the better Indian goods. Even so Indian products held some of their ground. The real blow to Indian handicrafts fell after 1813, when they lost not only their foreign markets but, what was of much greater importance, their market in India itself. The Industrial Revolution in Britain completely transformed Britain's economy and its economic relations with India.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Fill in the blanks-

4. The village commune was replaced by _____.
5. The _____ put pressure on their government to restrict and prohibit the sale of Indian goods in England.
6. Modern industry led to the rise of _____ class.
7. Except _____ all other European countries prohibited the import of Indian cloth.

1.5 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, we have learnt about:

- The self- sufficient village economy of India prior to the coming of the British.
- The agrarian structure was mainly community based and it served for the local needs of the people.
- Irrigation system was already prevalent in India for quite a long period.
- The changes to the structure of Indian economy as well as the local industries after the arrival of the British were tremendous.
- The British East India Company slowly but steadily started building up their trading market in India at the cost of India's own revenue.

1.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No 1: The sickle and plough, the saw and chisel, the spinning wheel and pit-loom
Answer to Q No 2: Diversion channels, surface-drainage tanks and wells
Answer to Q No 3: Ghiyassudin Tughlaq
Answer to Q No 4: Private Land Owners
Answer to Q No 5: British manufacturers
Answer to Q No 6: Labour class/capitalist class
Answer to Q No 7: Holland
.

1.7 FURTHER READING

1. Desai, A.R. (2016). Social Background of Indian Nationalism. SAGE Publication India Pvt Ltd, New Delhi: India
2. Roy, Tirthankar. (2000). The Economic History of India: 1857-1947. Oxford University Press, USA
3. Habib, Irfan. (2016). Indian Economy: 1858-1914 (Volume 28) of People's History of India. Tulika Books, New Delhi: India

1.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)-

Q.1: What do you mean by self-sufficient village based agriculture?
Q.2: What are the differences between Indian and European feudalism?
Q.3: State one impact of the advent of British on the Indian handloom industry.

B) Short questions (Answer each question within 150- 300 words)

Q.1: Write a short note on the basic features of the agrarian structure of 18th century India.
Q.2: How the British were successful in opening a trading market in India and what were their basic motives behind it?
Q.3: Why did the Indian rulers appreciate the establishment of British factories in India?

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-400 words)

Q.1: Discuss the pattern of growth of India's trading economy in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.
Q.2: Analyse the changing pattern of India's trade during the second half of the 19th century.

UNIT 2 : MERCANTILISM AND COLONIAL ECONOMY

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives
2.2 Introduction
2.3 Mercantilism as a System
2.4 Features of a Colonial Economy
- Trade Monopoly
- Entry of Foreign Enterprises

2.5 Impact of Mercantilism in India
2.6 Let Us Sum Up
2.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
2.8 Further Reading
2.9 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- Trace the evolution of the theory of mercantilism and the role it played in the process of colonialism.
- Discuss the different stages of colonialism along with the features of colonial economy.
- Analyse the impact of mercantilism in India.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the state of Indian economy prior to the 18th century and the impact of British economic policy in India.

In this Unit, we will be discussing the concept of Mercantilism and its impact on the economy of India. Mercantilism was an economic theory and practice, common in Europe from the 16th to the 18th century that promoted governmental regulation of a nation's economy for the purpose of augmenting state power at the expanse of rival national powers. It was the economic counterpart of political absolutism. Its 17th century publicists- most notably Thomas Mun in England, Jean- Baptiste Colbert in France, and Antonio Serra in Italy- never, however used the term themselves; it was given currency by the Scottish economist Adam Smith in his Wealth Of Nations (1776).

2.3 MERCANTILISM AS A SYSTEM

Mercantilism contained many interlocking principles. Precious metals such as gold and silver were deemed indispensable to a nation's wealth. If a nation did not possess

mines or have access to them, precious metals should be obtained by trade. It was believed that trade balances must be favourable, meaning an excess of exports over imports. Colonial possessions should serve as markets for exports and as suppliers of raw materials to the mother country. Manufacturing was forbidden in colonies, and all commerce between the colony and the mother country was held to be a monopoly of the mother country.

A strong nation, according to this theory, was to have a large population, for a large population would provide a supply of labour, a market and soldiers. Human wants were to be minimized, especially for imported luxury goods, for they drained of precious foreign exchange. Sumptuary laws(affecting food and drugs) were to be passed to make sure that wants were held low. Thrift, saving and even parsimony were regarded as virtues, for only by these means could capital be created. In effect, mercantilism provided the favourable climate for the early development of capitalism, with its promises of profit. Mercantilist ideas were the dominant economic ideology of all of Europe in the early modern period, and most states embraced it to a certain degree. Mercantilism was centered on England and France, and it was in these states that mercantilist policies were most often enacted.

The policies included:

- High tariffs, especially on manufactured goods.
- Forbidding colonies to trade with other nations.
- Monopolizing markets with staple ports.
- Banning the export of gold and silver, even foe payments.
- Forbidding trade to be carried in foreign ships, as, per, for example, the Navigation Acts.
- Subsidies on exports.
- Promoting manufacturing and industry through direct subsidies.
- Limiting wages.
- Maximizing the use of domestic resources.
- Restricting domestic consumption through non-tariff barriers to trade.

Later, mercantilism was severely criticized. Advocates of ‘laissez-faire’ argued that there was really no difference between domestic and foreign trade and that all trade was beneficial both to the trader and to the public. They also maintained that the amount of money or treasure that a state needed would be automatically adjusted and that money, like any other commodity, could exist in excess. They denied the idea that a nation could grow rich only at the expense of another and argued that trade was in reality a two-way street.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions:

Q1) Which alternative theory criticized mercantilism?

Q2) Which metals were deemed indispensable to a nation’s wealth?

2.4 FEATURES OF A COLONIAL ECONOMY

Colonialism and economy are two interrelated processes as colonialism is often defined as the policy of a nation seeking to extend or retain its authority over other people or territories, generally with the aim of opening trade opportunities. The colonizing country seeks to benefit from the colonized country or land mass. Colonialism is best seen as a totality or unified structure. All the changes and the newly formed institutions and structures form a network, mutually interconnected and reinforcing each other, which sub serve and bring into being the colonial structure.

The first basic feature is the complete but complex integration and enmeshing of the colony with the world capitalist system in a subordinate or subservient position. Subordination means the fundamental aspects of the colony's economy and society are not determined by its own needs or the needs and interest of its dominant social classes but by the needs and interests of the metropolitan economy (colonizing nation) and its capitalist class. It is important to note that subordination of the colony's economy and society is the crucial or determining aspect, and not mere linkage or integration with world capitalism or the world market.

The second feature is encompassed by the twin notions of unequal exchange and internal disarticulation of the colonial economy and the articulation of its different disarticulated parts, through the world market and imperialist hegemony, with the metropolitan economy. For example, the colony's agriculture does not directly relate to the colony's industrial sector, it does not articulate internally. Rather it articulates with the world capitalist market and is linked to the metropolitan market which buys its products. The industrial products of the metropolitan economy are imported into the colony and sold in the rural market thus closing the circuit of commodity circulation. The colony thus experiences "a disarticulated generalized commodity production".

The third feature is the drain of wealth or unilateral transfer of social surplus to the metropolis through un- required exports. This aspect was the heart of the early Indian nationalists' critique of colonialism and their explanation of the economic underdevelopment and poverty of India. Even Marx's rethinking on the role of colonialism was also strongly influenced by this aspect. Early Indian nationalists, as also recent writers, also pointed to the fact that a great deal of the colonial state expenditure on the army and civil services in the colony represented a similar external drain of surplus.

In general, a colonizing nation establishes its firm roots over a colonized nation in three stages, each stage representing a different pattern of the subordination of the colonial economy and consequently different policies, ideologies, impact and the colonial people's response, although the time frame in different parts of the world, that is the time line for different metropolis and colonies may vary. They are:

1. Period of Mercantilism: This stage is also known as the stage of monopoly trade and direct appropriation of revenue as the main objectives of the colonizing nation were monopoly of trade and direct appropriation of revenue.
2. Period of industrial capital or free trade: Determination of the administrative policies and economic structure of the colony by the interests of the industrial bourgeoisie of the metropolis were the main features of this stage. Making a

colony a subordinate trading partner which would export raw materials and import manufactured goods.

3. Period of Finance Capital or Foreign Direct Investment: It was marked by intense struggle for new, secure and exclusive markets and sources of raw materials among the industrialized countries.

- **Trade Monopoly**

Monopoly trade or revenue appropriation is the first stage of colonialism. During this stage of colonialism the basic objectives of colonialism were: 1. The monopoly of trade with the colony vis-à-vis other European merchants and the colony's traders and producers, and 2. The direct appropriation of revenue or surplus through the use of state power.

Whenever craftsman or other producers were employed on account of the colonial state, corporation or merchants, their surplus was directly seized, not in the manner of industrial capitalists but that of merchant-users.

The colonial state or corporations required large financial resources to wage wars in the colony and on the seas, and to maintain naval forces, forts, armies and trading posts. Direct appropriation of the colony's finance was also needed to finance the purchase of colonial products since the colonies did not import sufficient quantities of metropolitan products. Directly appropriated surplus brought profit to the merchants, corporations and exchequer of the metropolis. The large number of Europeans employed in the colony also appropriated a large part of the colony's surplus directly, through extortion, corruption and high salaries. All these was done because the colonial mode of surplus appropriation via purchase of the colony's urban handicrafts and plantation and other products, through a buyers monopoly and control over its revenues, did not require basic socio economic and administrative changes in the colony. Such a mode of surplus appropriation could be super imposed over its existing economic, social, cultural, ideological and political structures. Also the colonial power did not feel the need to penetrate the villages in the colony further than their (indigenous) predecessors had done, so long as their economic surplus was successfully sucked out.

This lack of need for change was also reflected in the ideology of the rulers. There was, for one, no ideology of development. Not a changed colonial economy but the existing economy of the colony was to be the basis of economic exploitation. There was also, therefore, not much need to criticize the colony's civilization, religions, laws and so on, for they were not seen as obstacles to the then current modes of surplus appropriation. The need was to understand them so that the wheels of administration might move smoothly. Criticism was confined to missionaries.

- **Entry of Foreign Enterprises**

This falls in the third stage of colonialism which encompasses foreign investments and competition for colonies. A new stage of colonialism was ushered in as a result of several major changes in the world economy: spread of industrialization to several countries of Europe, North America and Japan; intensification of industrialization as a result of the application of scientific knowledge to industry; and further unification of the

world market due to a revolution in the means of international transport. There now occurred an intense struggle for new, secure and exclusive markets, and sources of agricultural and mineral raw materials and food stuffs. Moreover expanded reproduction at home and extended exploitation of colonies and semi-colonies abroad produced large accumulations of capital in the developed capitalist countries. There occurred simultaneously the concentration of capital and the merger of banking capital with industrial capital in several countries. This led to large scale export of capital and search for fields and areas where the imperialist countries could have a monopoly in capital investment.

All the three aspects namely, markets, sources of raw materials, and capital export, were, interlinked, and none of them should be overemphasized at the cost of the others. For example, investment abroad would sustain the rate of profit at home (metropolis), aid the production of raw materials and create a market for home industrial products directly or indirectly. As the struggle for the division and re division of the world among the imperialist countries was intensified , fresh use was found for the older colonies.

The major reason why metropolitan capital was not invested in these colonies to a significant extent and instead other foreign enterprises operated was that their economies had been wrecked or underdeveloped during the second stage of colonialism. If foreign capital was to be invested in the colonies, the resulting products had to be in the main sold in the company; but the failure to make them reproductive colonies during the second stage now stood in the way. Consequently, even the limited foreign capital was invested in only those agricultural or industrial enterprises whose products had a ready market outside the colony, or invested in providing infrastructure for such exports.

2.5 IMPACT OF MERCANTILISM IN INDIA

At the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century, Industrial Revolution transformed the way goods were produced in Europe. It made it possible to produce goods on a massive scale compared to handicraft and handloom industries. The industries driven by greed for money soon ran out of raw material and market to sell their finished goods. This duel need was served by the colonies acquired by them.

In India, during the same period as the Industrial Revolution, the British East India Company made its mark as a political power at The Battle of Plassey in 1757 and at The Battle of Buxar in 1764. It acquired Bengal and established its rule from Calcutta.

Despite being famous, Indian handicrafts industry began to fall at the beginning of the 18th century. The policy of mercantilism adopted by the British was the principal reason. Strategies were devised by Britain to enhance the consumption of finished goods from it. They encouraged the production of raw materials, while simultaneously imposing restrictions on domestic finished goods. For example, in 1835 only a minimal import duty of 2.5 per cent was levied on cotton cloth from Britain, whereas in export duty of 15 per cent was charged on the Indian cotton textiles. Further, goods from England can be brought only in England cargo ships. As a result, Indian goods could not enter the British market while British goods flooded the Indian market. For example, Murshidabad (West

Bengal), which rose to prominence as a centre of silk, declined in the course of century as the weavers faced competition from cheap mill-made cloth from Britain.

Thus, the import of finished goods from England also increased with the simultaneous export of raw materials from India. In England the ruin of the old handloom weavers was accompanied by the growth of the machine made industry. But in India the ruin of millions of artisans and craftsmen was not accompanied by any alternative growth of new industrial forms. This led to a massive loss of jobs. As R.C. Dutt quoted "Taxation raised by the king is like the moisture sucked up by the sun to be returned to earth as fertilizing rain; but the moisture raised from the Indian soil now descends as fertilizing rain largely on other lands, not in India".

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Fill in the blanks:

3. _____ is the first stage of colonialism.
4. Mercantilism was the economic counterpart of_____.
5. British East India Company made its mark as a political power at_____ in 1757 and at_____ in 1764.

2.6 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, you have learnt-

- The theory of mercantilism that came into existence and what role it played in determining the process of colonialism.
- The evolution of different stages of colonialism
- The characteristic features of colonial economy

2.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No 1:The theory of "laissez faire" criticized mercantilism.
Answer to Q No 2 : Precious metals such as gold and silver were deemed indispensable to a nation's wealth.
Answer to Q No 3: Trade monopoly or Revenue appropriation.
Answer to Q No 4:Political absolutism.
Answer to Q No 5:The Battle of Plassey and the Battle of Buxar.

2.8 FURTHER READING

1) Tomlinson, B.R.(1998), The New Cambridge History Of India, 1860-1970, Foundation Books PVT. LTD., Cambridge House, Ansari Road, Dayaganj, New Delhi.
2) Chandra, Bipan (2009), History Of Modern India, Orient Blackswan Private Limited, Himayatnagar, Hyderabad, Telangana

3) Roy, Tirthankar (2000), The Economic History Of India, 1857-1947, Oxford University Press.

⍰2.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (Answer each questions within 50 words) -

1. Define mercantilism.
2. Why did advocates of “laissez faire” criticize mercantilism?
3. What is drain of wealth?

B) Short Answer Questions (Answer each question within 150-300 words)

1. Explain how colonialism and a nation’s economy are interrelated.
2. Throw light on the first stage of colonialism?

C) Long Questions (Answer each question in about 300-400 words)

1. Discuss the impact of mercantilism in India.
2. Discuss the functioning of mercantilism as a system along with its policies.

UNIT 3 : THE DRAIN THEORY AND COLONIAL IMPERIALISM

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives
3.2 Introduction
3.3 Patterns of Trade
- Public Finance
- Savings and Investment

3.4 Balance of Payments
- Home Charges

3.5 Let us Sum Up
3.6 Answers to check your progress
3.7 Further Reading
3.8 Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain patterns of trade under colonial imperialism and the concept of public finance.
- explain nature of savings and investment in the light of the drain theory.
- discuss the balance of payments and home charges that constituted an important aspect of the drain of wealth under colonial imperialism.

3.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the concept of mercantilism and the various features of colonial economy.

In this Unit, we will discuss the financial aspect of the Colonial economy and the very famous “Drain Theory” of Naoroji. Colonial imperialism was essentially rooted in the ideology of economic domination and exploitation. The exploitation of resources subsequently took the form of bringing about a constant flow of wealth from India to England for which India did not get an adequate economic, commercial or material return. This in the long run facilitated the formulation of an economic critique of colonialism by the early nationalists, notably by moderate leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, R.C Dutt, etc. The primary focus of the nationalist critique of colonialism was the drain theory. Drain theory rested on the notion that a large part of India’s capital and wealth was being transferred or ‘drained’ to Britain in the form of salaries and pensions of British civil and military officials working in India, interest on loans taken by the Indian government, profits of British

capitalists in India and the Home Charges or expenses of the Indian government in Britain. The drain of wealth from India according to the early nationalists not only took the form of an excess of exports over imports but also was the basic cause of India's poverty and economic backwardness. The drain moreover deprived India of the productive capital that its agriculture and industries needed.

3.3 PATTERNS OF TRADE

While discussing the pattern of trade in relation to that of colonial imperialism, it is significant to note that with the introduction of new fiscal policies by the British, India's economy became complementary to that of Britain. Between 1814 and 1858, the value and volume of Indian exports and imports increased, but at the same time the commodity composition and direction of trade also changed. This change was linked to India's balance of payments and to the fact that Britain was becoming the world's leading industrial nation and the dominant centre of international trade and finance. Certain developments moreover were noticeable in the pattern of foreign trade in colonial India. These included- growing trade dependence in the nineteenth century, specialization in agricultural export, gradual shift from agriculture as industrialization progressed and the initial Britain centred trade tilted towards East Asia in the interwar period. In the year 1814, Indian exports primarily consisted of textiles, raw silk, cotton, opium, etc. India's major trade partners were Britain and China followed by France, USA, Burma, Indonesia, etc.

In the period from 1858-93, foreign trade of India increased rapidly for a variety of reasons. Firstly, the improvement in transport and communications in the form of the construction of railways and the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, facilitated speedy transportation of goods and reduced the distance between India and Europe. Secondly, free trade resulted in doing away with all kinds of tariff and non- tariff restrictions on imports which resulted in the entry of foreign goods into India. Thirdly, the export of surplus capital by Britain to India increased in the form of investment in tea, jute, coal, mining, etc. However, the period from 1894-1900 showed stagnation in India's foreign trade due to the outbreak of natural calamities like famines, plague, etc. Moreover, reimposition of import duties affected imports and the outbreak of war between China and Japan affected India's exports to China. During the second half of the nineteenth century, foodgrains, jute, oilseeds, cotton textiles dominated India's export trade. The export of foodgrains and agricultural raw materials increased due to the growing needs of the peasants for cash to pay rents and buy manufactured goods for daily use. In the direction of trade, while dependence on the Chinese and British markets was initially large, it declined in the pre-war period. In the inter- war period, there was a drop in Britain's share in India's foreign trade while there was an increase in those of Japan, USA, Germany and Italy. The inter-war period was in short one of diversification in India's trade partners.

- **Public Finance**

With reference to public finance, there were two main types of government expenditure in British India- expenditure in India and expenditure abroad. Government expenditure abroad was in the form of pensions paid in sterling to retired employees and interest on public debt raised in London. The government financed its expenditure by three

means: Firstly, it was done from current revenue and 70 to 80 percent from current revenues were raised in taxes. Secondly, were borrowings from abroad and thirdly were borrowings from home. The colonial government borrowed heavily to finance its expenditures not only in London but also in India. The borrowings reached its zenith during the time of the world wars. The London borrowings in the last quarter of the nineteenth century were used to finance wars and railway construction. However by the years 1900-1913, military compulsions were weaker and railway investment was showing signs of decline. The capacity to invest depended not only on the administrative expenditure but also in the capacity to borrow abroad.

- **Savings and Investment**

Sustained economic growth required a sufficiently high proportion of investment in national income. National income measure the monetary value of goods and services produced over a period of time. Investments were financed partly from domestic savings in bank deposits and securities and partly from foreign investment inflow. Deposits and securities were nonetheless not the only assets in which Indians saved. A considerable part of the savings was in the form of precious metals. Moreover, smaller parts of savings were spent on investments abroad and as purchases of government bonds in India. The proportion of investment in machinery, the percentage of investment in agriculture and the share of the government in aggregate investment was relatively small. The proportion of income going to the purchase of gold and silver deserves special mention. In a good agricultural year, Indians purchased gold and silver in large quantities. However, during the time of the Great Depression and the two World Wars, exceptions were visible. During the wars, gold import was restricted legally. At the same time, climatic risks and price fluctuations had an impact on the expected incomes from investment projects that in the long run reduced the demand for productive investment

All other forms of saving were essentially in the form of lendings to potential investors. But those who bought metals had the tendency of hoarding it and when metals were mortgaged against loans, these did not generate new investment. A smaller portion of financial saving was also hoarded in the form of notes and coins. Investment rates were however low in agriculture that denote stagnation of the economy as well as in the average standards of living. The inadequacy of investment in the agrarian sector was an outcome of low magnitude of financial saving. Majority of the financial savings were invested outside agriculture and approximately 8 percent of rural income was set aside for capital accumulation within agriculture. About a quarter of this amount was spent on the purchase of gold and silver ornaments. In any normal harvest year, huge quantities of gold and silver were imported into India that was subsequently converted to jewellery. Gold and silver were thus a drag on rural investment. The declining investment in agriculture also had got to do with the structure of rural credit and capital market. The moneylender was an exploitative agent and the potential surplus from the credit market was used for other purposes rather than in improving the crop output. In the long run, the peasants became caught in a debt trap owing to increased world market risks, shift in cropping pattern from food to cash crops and consequent exposure to famines.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions:

Q1) Economic critique of colonialism was formulated by moderate leaders like _____and _____.

Q2) A considerable part of the savings of the Indians was in the form of _____.

3.4 BALANCE OF PAYMENTS

An analysis of the pattern of receipts and payments in the nineteenth century reveals that the balance of trade was usually positive whereas remittances and precious metal transactions usually negative. Within total payments moreover, the share of private remittance and gold purchase were smaller while that of government remittance was larger.

Several types of capital flow both short term and long term were received by India. The short term flows were primarily used to meet the seasonal demands of trade. Bills were sold in London which was redeemable in India so as to meet export transactions in the peak of the harvest seasons. Interest rates varied greatly in India and the short term capital flows were influenced by high interest rates which prevailed in the harvest season. Long term capital flow was of two forms- net private foreign investment and net increase in public debt. Private foreign investment remained the weakest link in the balance of payments sector. While railways dominated the private investment in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, towards the end of the century this trend changed. This was primarily due to the formation of tea, jute and mining companies. Foreign investments moreover initially were in the form of shares sold in London by companies based in India. In the interwar period, the investments took the form of direct investment in subsidiaries of foreign firms. British companies owned 77 percent of foreign capital. Government remittance abroad was a significant aspect of the balance of payments. Every year, a considerable amount of money was paid to Britain in sterling known as ‘home charges’. These were essentially in the form of payment for maintenance of army, pension payment of officials, etc. These payments to a great extent reduced the capacity of the domestic economy to generate savings and investment. The payments compromised also with the government’s capacity to follow a stabilization policy that would be independent of British economic interests. The link between the budget and the balance of payments was maintained by India’s export surplus and the government’s capacity to raise sterling loans in London. These two together financed the government remittances abroad as well as a part of their investment. In the interwar period however, this system broke down. The balance of payments in the long run demonstrated a negative impact on the Indian economy.

- **Home Charges**

A significant portion of the drain of wealth constituted the home charges that hindered the development of the Indian economy. As mentioned above, the balance of payments in relation to government remittance abroad included the payment of a considerable sum of money. Home charges thus refer to the expenditure incurred in

England by the Secretary of State on behalf of India. The main constituents of the Home charges were in the form of interest on public debt raised abroad that was raised for purposes of railway construction, irrigation facilities and public works. Civil and military charges also constituted a significant portion of the home charges. These included payments towards pensions of British officers in the civil and military departments in India, expenses on India Office establishment in London, payments to the British war office, etc. Interest on foreign capital investments and foreign banking, insurance and shipping companies formed other important categories of the home charges.

The nature of foreign capital investments and the interests on them, did not contribute to India's industrial development; on the other hand it led to the exploitation of Indian resources by the foreign capitalists that gave a setback to the indigenous capitalist enterprises. For banking, insurance and shipping services, India had to make huge payments that drained the Indian economy and stunted the growth of Indian enterprises in these spheres. This had a significant impact on the generation of income and employment opportunities in India.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Fill in the blanks:

3. _____ dominated private investment in the third quarter of the nineteenth century.
4. _____ companies owned 77 percent of foreign capital.
5. Home charges had an impact on the generation of _____ and _____ opportunities in India.

3.5 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, we have learnt-

- the definition of drain theory and the proponents of the theory.
- the drain of wealth in relation to the patterns of trade, savings and investment and public finance.
- the nature of balance of payments and the home charges that constituted a significant portion of the drain of wealth from India.

3.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No 1:Dadabhai Naoroji and R.C. Dutt.
Answer to Q No 2:Precious metals.
Answer to Q No 3:Railways.
Answer to Q No 4: British
Answer to Q No 5:Income and Employment

3.7 FURTHER READING

1) Chandra Bipan (1988) India's Struggle for Independence, Penguin Books Ltd., Noida
2) Grover B.L. (2004), A New Look at Modern Indian History (From 1707 to the Modern Times), S. Chand & Comapny Ltd. New Delhi.
3) Roy Tirthankar (2000),The Economic History of India 1857-1947, Oxford University Press, New Delhi

3.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)-

1. What was the primary focus of the nationalist critique of colonialism?
2. What were the two main types of government expenditure in British India?
3. Mention the developments noticeable in the pattern of foreign trade in colonial India.

B) Short Questions (Answer each question within 150-300 words)-

1. Why did India witness an increase in foreign trade during the period 1858-1893?
2. Why did India's agricultural sector fail to attract adequate financial investments?

C) Long Questions: (Answer each question in about 300-400 words)-

1. Make an analysis of the balance of payments in colonial India.
2. Discuss on the different constituents of the Home Charges and its impact on the Indian economy.

UNIT 4 : SYSTEM OF LAND SETTLEMENTS AND LAND REVENUE

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives
4.2 Introduction
4.3 Concept of Common Land
- Permanent Settlements
- Land Use Pattern

4.4 Land Revenue Systems- Land Revenue Administration
Ryotwari System
Mahalwari System
Zamindari System
4.5 Let Us Sum Up
4.6 Answers to Check Your Progress
4.7 Further Reading
4.8 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to-

- Explain the land use pattern and the concept of Common Lands
- Describe the different Land Revenue Administrative systems- Ryotwari system, Mahalwari system, the Zamindari system, and
- Discuss the economic policy of the British behind the new land revenue system

4.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the trading system under the British and the concept of Drain Theory.

In this Unit, we will discuss the Land Revenue Administrative system of the British. We will be discussing the Ryotwari, Mahalwari and the Zamindari system in India.

4.3 CONCEPT OF COMMON LAND

Land system in India has been very complex from the start. By the term ‘‘Common Lands’’, it implies the lands used by the villagers of the community as grazing ground for their cattle, for the wood-lots etc. These lands had no individual owners. In ancient times, the land relations mostly involved private owners, lands under royal administration and communal lands.

Baden Powell in his book, ‘‘The Land Systems of British India’’ mentioned ‘‘waste and unoccupied land’’. Land which was not under cultivation (termed wasteland as it provided no revenue) was taken over by the State. Lands near villages were common resources for the entire village. It was only after the arrival of the British and the policy of enclosures brought a large area of common lands under the British Crown.

- **Permanent Settlement**

The Battle of Plassey and Buxar had placed Bengal under the administration of the British East India Company. The Company was in need of money for the expansion and administration of its territories. Land Revenue was the main source of income at that time. In fact, nearly all the major changes in the administration and judicial system till 1813 were geared to the collection of land revenues. In the beginning Lord Clive introduced the system of Dual Administration for revenue collection in Bengal. In 1773, the Company decided to manage the land revenues directly. Warren Hastings introduced a five years Settlement of land revenue by which the highest bidder would get the right of revenue collection for five years. In 1777, the system of bidding was made an annual affair. But his experiment did not succeed. During the time of auction the Zamindars and other speculators bid against each other. But actual collection varied from year to year and never reached the expectation of the Company. So, it affected the Company’s revenue.

To deal with the situation Lord Cornwallis introduced the Permanent Settlement in Bengal and Bihar in 1793. By this Settlement the Zamindars were made owner of the land in their entire zamindaris and they were to act as agents of the Government in collecting land revenue from the ‘ryots’. Their right of ownership was made hereditary and transferable. The Zamindars were to give 10/11th of the collected revenue to the Company, only 1/11th of the revenue collected they could keep for themselves. If the collection of revenue increases due to favorable circumstances, the Zamindars could keep the increased amount. But he had to pay his revenue rigidly on the due date even if the crop had failed for some reason. Otherwise his lands were to be sold.

The Permanent Settlement reduced the status of cultivators to mere tenants. They were deprived of their rights to the soil and other customary rights. Their right to use the pasture and forest lands, irrigation canals, fisheries and protection against enhancement of rent were taken away. With the Permanent Settlement the Government was able to get a fixed income in place of earlier fluctuating income. It solved the financial problem of the Company. The servants of the Company were now relieved of the problem of periodical assessment and collection of revenue. Besides extension of cultivation, clearing of forest and increase of production led to the benefit of the ryots as well as Zamindars.

However, the Permanent Settlement suffered from many defects. The chief among this was the failure on the part of the Zamindars to pay the high land revenue due to which a number of them surrendered their lands. No doubt the Company received a fixed income, but in the long run it proved to be disastrous. In course of time production greatly increased due to extension of cultivation and the Zamindars collected a very high amount, but the Company could not claim any part of this increased amount. The creation of a class of absentee landlords was a serious drawback. Many of them never visited their land or took interest in their zamindari. They left revenue collection to their agents and led an easy life in the city. The interest of the cultivator was totally ignored. The Permanent

Settlement was later extended to Orissa, the Northern District of Madras and the District of Varanasi.

- **Land Use Pattern**

In analysing the nature of colonial policies and its economic implications, the pattern of land use and the relationship of the colonial state in mediating the economic value of the common property resources need to be taken into consideration. Lands which lay outside the purview of habitation primarily comprised of forests and woods, grasslands and village grazing lands. Having access to and the use of these lands was regulated by certain rules and conventions. While in the pre- colonial days, having access to the common lands was largely decided by the prevalent customary laws and the dominant peasant families and clans, the onset of colonial rule brought significant changes. The colonial forest policy and the commercial exploitation facilitated state control and ownership of Indian forests. As such, huge areas of land identified as having commercial valuable species were systematically categorized as 'Reserved' and ' Protected' forests. This had a serious impact on the livelihood of the hunting-gathering and pastoral communities. The changes associated with land use pattern in the colonial times are also evident in the context of commercialisation of resources with huge areas being devoted towards the cultivation of cash crops. Commercialisation essentially denoted a move towards capitalist agriculture and production for the market. Since the peasants were forced to cultivate cash crops because of high revenue demand, they were exposed to the fluctuations of the market. The significant expansion of agriculture and the subsequent importance attached to settlement and market oriented economy altered land use. In the long run, it resulted in the reduction of land that served the purpose of commons and pasture areas as well as those of forest areas. The change in land use was also linked to a transition to cash crop cultivation which was encouraged by the colonial state.

The need to expand the revenue base led the colonial state to implement new revenue measures. Since agriculture was the main basis of economy and the main source of income, there was a need to adopt revenue experiments which would not only ensure improvement of agriculture but at the same time give the East India Company a source of regular income. With these objectives in mind, Lord Cornwallis introduced the Permanent Settlement in the year 1793 in the province of Bengal. The central idea of this settlement was to fix the revenue permanently so as to reduce the scope of corruption on the part of the officials to alter assessment at their will. By fixing the revenue demand high under the Permanent settlement, the British hoped that whatever surplus income could be derived, its benefit would directly go to the landlords who would invest money in improving the land and agrarian economy. The Permanent settlement was done with the zamindars and hence it was also known as the zamindari system.

The land revenue administration of the colonial state had the objective of maximising revenue and creating the notion of private property in land. While the Permanent Settlement was done with the zamindars, it was not extended beyond Bengal and this was followed by the introduction of two other revenue settlements. These were the Ryotwari Settlement done with the ryots or peasants and the Mahalwari Settlement done with the village community. All these settlements were characterised by high revenue assessments that were fixed in an arbitrary manner without taking into account the quality

of the land. Since the primary aim of the Company was to maximise revenue income, these land settlement created problems of mounting debt, arrears of payment as well as increased land sales and dispossession. The pattern of revenue settlements altered the existing agrarian structure that facilitated the rise of grievances against the colonial state and facilitated the emergence of agrarian disturbances in colonial India.

4.4 LAND REVENUE SYSTEMS- LAND REVENUE ADMINISTRATION

- **Ryotwari System**

In South and South-Western India the British followed a different policy. They introduced the Ryotwari Settlement by which the cultivator was to be recognized as the owner of his plot of land and he had to pay the revenue to the Company directly. The Settlement was not made permanent. It was revised periodically after 20 to 30 years. The Ryotwari Settlement also had many shortcomings. The peasants were now tenants of the government. If they could not pay the revenue in time, their lands were sold. The riot's ownership of land was totally ignored. In most areas, the land revenue was very high. Even in the best season, after paying the revenue, the ryots hardly had anything left for their own requirement. The government retained the right to enhance land revenue at will. The ryot had to pay revenue even if his crops failed due to natural calamity.

- **Mahalwari System**

A modified version of the zamindari settlement was introduced in the Ganga valley, the North-West Provinces, parts of Central India and the Punjab. It was known as the Mahalwari System. The revenue settlement was to be made village by village or estate by estate with landlords or heads of families who collectively claimed to be the landlords of the village or the estate. In Mahalwari areas also, the land revenue was periodically revised.

- **Zamindari System**

Under this system, the zamindars were vested with land ownership rights. As such, the peasants were at the mercy of the zamindars whose customary occupancy rights were ignored and they were now reduced to the status of tenants. The burden of high revenue assessment fell on the peasants who were also forced to pay a number of illegal cesses by the zamindars. This in the long run due to the coercive power exercised by the zamindars led to a massive decline in the quality of actual cultivation. The zamindari system though it ensured benefits to the zamindars also exposed them to certain difficulties. The burden of collecting the fixed high revenue threatened the zamindars ownership rights over his zamindari. The prevalence of the 'Sunset laws' according to which, the zamindars had to pay the revenue on a particular day before sunset proved to be challenging. The zamindars found it difficult to collect the revenue which was very high also due to the uncertainties of nature. The failure on the part of the zamindars to efficiently collect the revenue thus led to them losing their zamindaris that was auctioned by the colonial state and was sold to the highest bidder. The Permanent settlement moreover, did not give the Company a share of the increased income from land that was

garnered by the zamindars. Hence, no efforts were made by the zamindars to improve the quality of land under cultivation since they too were exposed to the burden of collecting the fixed high revenue. This overall had a serious impact on the agrarian economy.

Thus, under the British rule land was made private property which could be sold, mortgaged or transferred the Country's existing land settlements underwent fundamental changes after the land was made saleable. It hit the stability and continuity of the villages and the structure of the village society started disintegrating.

ACTIVITY

Write three differences between the Permanent Settlement and the Ryotwari System:

_____

_____

_____

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following-

Q 1: What was the "Sunset Laws"?

Q 2: When was the Permanent Settlement introduced?

Q 3: State one drawback of the Ryotwari System.

4.5 LET US SUM UP

After going through this Unit, you have learnt that-

- Common lands were those lands that were left uncultivated and considered as wastelands. However, these wastelands were later taken over by the zamindars and the British for further cultivation.
- The land revenue systems introduced by the Colonial Government were not without drawbacks.
- The impact of the land revenue administrative lapses had to be borne by the peasants at large.

4.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No 1: According to this Law, the zamindars had to pay the revenue on a particular day before sunset.

Answer to Q No 2:1793

Answer to Q No 3:The ryot had to pay revenue even if his crops failed due to natural calamity.

4.7 FURTHER READING

1) Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar. (2013). From Plassey to Partition. Orient Blackswan; New Delhi: India
2) Desai, A.R. (2013). Social Background of Indian Nationalism. Popular Prakashan; New Delhi: India
3) Desai, S.S.M. and Bhalerao, Nirmal. (2010). Economic History of India. Himalaya Publishing House; Mumbai: India
4) Grover, B.L. (2011). A New Look at Modern Indian History. S. Chand and Company; New Delhi: India

4.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (answer each in 50 words)

1. Who introduced the “Mahalwari System”
2. Mention one drawback of the Zamindari system?

B) Short Questions (answer each in 150 words)

1. Write a short note on-

a. Common Land
b. Ryotwari System
c. Permanent Settlement

C) Long Questions (answer each in 300-500 words)

1. Explain the land revenue system under the Colonial regime.
2. Discuss the drawbacks of land revenue administration in British India.

UNIT 5 : RURAL INDEBTEDNESS AND FAMINE

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives
5.2 Introduction
5.3 Rural Industries
- Causes of Rural Indebtedness
- Effects of Rural Indebtedness
- Famine and Food Riots

5.4 Famine Policy of the Government
5.5 Great Depression of 1929
5.6 Let Us Sum Up
5.7 Answer to Check Your Progress
5.8 Further Reading
5.9 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, we will be able to:

- explain about rural Indebtedness and its growth in modern India
- explain the causes and effects of Rural Indebtedness
- explain the causes of famines and its effect
- describe about the various famine relief policies adopted by the Government
- discuss briefly about the concept of Great Depression of 1929

5.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the land settlement policy and land revenue measures.

In this Unit we will discuss rural indebtedness which prevailed in Indian economy due to economic transition in India. During the British rule, the economic condition of peasants was very miserable. High revenue demand and family responsibilities very often forced them to choose one of these two options-sell parts of their land or borrow money from the village money lenders. Existence of several intermediaries between the peasants and the government, sub-division and fragmentation of land holdings, etc. resulted in the impoverishment of the Indian agriculture i.e. rural indebtedness.

5.3 CONCEPT OF COMMON LAND

The revenue policy of the British increased pressure for population on agriculture, existence of several intermediaries between the peasants and the government, sub-division and fragmentation of land-holdings, etc. resulted in the impoverishment of the Indian peasantry and thereby a great problem confronted India and that was rural indebtedness. The one cause of all these typical problems of Indian agriculture was the growth of population. There is no doubt that the population increase after 1921 aggravated

the problems which were already there but the origin of these problems is to be found somewhere else. Mostly these were because of the faulty policies of the British government or its neglectful attitude towards the welfare of the rural population. The same was the case with rural indebtedness.

- Causes of the impoverishment and indebtedness of the peasantry were:
  - The heavy assessment of land revenue held up agricultural progress.
  - The taxation burden was borne by the poor peasants.
  - Due to high rates of interest, it was not possible for capital to accumulate in agriculture.
  - There was no incentive left with the owner's of the land to make improvements in lands.
  - No surplus was left for the peasants for meeting the natural calamities.
  - The farmers fell into the clutches of the moneylenders.
  - The agricultural progress hindered due to the want of capital.
  - Over 75% of the peasants could not earn even bare minimum livelihood from land.
  - The world economic crisis of 1929 brought the catastrophic fall of prices of agricultural commodities.

Apart from all these factors, the policy of the government was also directly responsible for the growth of rural indebtedness. When the demand of the revenue was high, the government did nothing to remove the intermediaries who came into existence even where Ryotwari and Mahalwari system existed. By the first half of the 19th century the government started collecting revenue in cash except in such outlying areas as Assam and collected revenue by a fix date. All these measures in one way or the other forced the peasants to borrow money from the local money lenders who charged not only heavy interest but also took advantage of the ignorance and illiteracy of the peasants and resorted to deceitful measures such as false accounting, forced signatories, making the debtor sign for larger amount than he had actually borrowed.

- **EFFECTS OF RURAL INDEBTEDNESS**

The role of money lenders was highly responsible for the growth of rural indebtedness. Due to deplorable economic condition, the peasant borrowed money from the money lenders but he was not able to return the amount of borrowing money. The peasants therefore many times were forced to sell a part of their land or sell their produce at cheaper prices to the local baniyas who was also his money lender in most of the cases or to undergo debt.

A direct result of peasant indebtedness was that his land was taken away by the money lenders. Once the farmer was landless, he found it impossible to support his family. Some laws were passed to end indebtedness. Co-operative societies gave loans to farmers at low rates of interests. Certain restrictions were imposed on land transfer. Measures to put a check on the amount of interest, the money lenders could charge were also taken. However the effects of all these measures were minimal because of the unfair practices adopted by the money lenders and the un-caring attitude of the government.

In fact, the literature and shrewd money lenders would easily take advantage of the ignorance and illiteracy of the peasants to twist the complicated process of law to get favourable judicial decisions. So exploitation by the money lenders went on unabated and

therefore whenever the peasants rose in some uprisings quite often, their first target of attack was the money lenders and their account books. Even then, the oppression and suppression of the money lenders remained a constant cause which resulted in the impoverishment of the peasants. Thus, for the growth of rural indebtedness various factors contributed a lot which forced the peasants to undertake debts. As a result, rural indebtedness remained a serious problem for the Indian peasants. It was largely the creation of the British policies and it grew to large proportion with increasing years of their rule.

- **FAMINE AND FOOD RIOTS**

The existence of famines in India is not a new event as it was prevailed since the ancient period. During the rule of East India Company, India suffered in part or another from 12 famines and 4 severe scarcities. No attempt was made to formulate any general system of famine relief or prevention. However, the provincial government and district officers tried various experiments to afford relief to famine stricken areas such as storage of food grain by the government, penalties on holdings, bounties on imports, advancing loans for sinking of wells, etc.

Causes of famines in India : Considering the emergence of famines in India several factors contributed for its rise. As a tropical and sub tropical country, Indian agriculture depends very heavily on monsoon rains which are unpredictable. Generally, in a cycle of 5 years, during 2 years monsoon rains fail; 2 years they are unsatisfactory; and only one year satisfactory. This means recurrent failure of monsoon is the most important cause of famines in India. Then there is the cause of comparative neglect of irrigational works by the British in preference to railways which were given higher priority from defence consideration.

From time immemorial India has been frequently subjected to famine. In 1770 the Bengal famine broke out. From 1858-1900 more than twenty famines occurred in India. A severe famine broke out in Orissa (Orissa famine) in 1866-67. The history of famine commissions in India began with it. It led to the appointment of a commission led by Sir George Campbell.

Effects of famines: Famines in India used to produce disastrous effects on people and on the Indian economy.

i. Effects on Population: Famines left vast number of people debilitated and hence prone to death by many diseases. This had effects on birth rate during subsequent years. During the days of famine, people used to desert their homes and migrate especially to towns and cities where employment possibilities existed. This used to be only temporary migration for many, but it used to cause sufficient dislocation in the lives of vast masses of rural people and used to cause immense misery.

ii. Adverse effects on Agricultural Production: Famines produced disastrous results on agricultural production. Not only during the years of famine but in subsequent years also agricultural growth used to be reduced because of low investment capacity of farmers who had suffered from the famine because of the low morale of the farmers and so on.

iii. Effects on other Classes of People: Effects of famines on some other cases in rural areas were also disastrous. Landless agricultural workers, being the poorest class, were worst sufferers as they used to lose income for want of work on farms and due to high

prices of food grains. Village artisans and especially weavers suffered much for want of demand for their products. They had often to leave their occupation and work on relief work to which they were often not used.

iv. **Other effects:** Famines meant reduced purchasing power in the hands of people in general. This reduced demand for all types of goods produced by different industries both in rural and urban areas. Famines thus had adverse effects on trade and industries.

In 1878, Government of India set up the First Famine Commission under the chairmanship of Sir Strachey. Again in 1896 famine broke out which led to the appointment of Second Famine Commission under the chairmanship of Sir J. B. Lyall. Closing years of the 19th century saw another widespread famine affecting C.P., Rajputana, Southern Punjab and Central Bombay. Nearly 1.2 million people lost their lives. This famine led to the appointment of the Third Famine Commission under the chairmanship of Sir MacDonnell. Its report was submitted in 1901. The Bengal famine of 1943 was a major disaster in which about 3 million people died. This was essentially a 'man-made famine'.

Before 1850 inadequate of rains or floods even in certain parts of the vast country used to result in absolute scarcity of flood grains and fodder in particular local areas. Scarcity of food grains in a particular region used to mean a famine in that area, though in other parts of the country, the rains might be satisfactory and there might be bumper harvests and therefore abundance of food grains and fodder. These local famine due to scarcity or non- availability of food grains use to occur because it used to be practically impossible to bring food grains from other areas because of absence of inadequate means of transport before 1850.

With the development of roads and railways the nature of famines in India changed. After 1850, famines did not means absolute scarcity of food grains and fodder but meant considerable reduction in their supplies and therefore scarcity in prices of food grains and fodder. It was now possible to rush food grains from other areas but failure of rains in a particular area meant absence of employment opportunities in that region and lack of income coupled with extremely high prices of food grains and fodder.

The most common approach to famines is to propose explanations in terms of food availability decline (FAD). This FAD approach has been extensively used to analyse and explain the Bengal famine. The Woodhead Commission was appointed in 1944 to enquire into the causes of the Bengal famine of 1943. It pointed out that, the local shortage of food grains could have been made good by imports of food grains from outside Bengal, if the administrative machinery had been properly geared to the task. The Famine Enquiry Commission's view that primary cause of the famine was 'a serious shortage in the total supply of rice available for consumption in Bengal' provides the standard explanation of the famine.

- **FOOD RIOTS**

The late nineteenth-century famine was not simply a "natural" disaster caused by drought; rather, it was intensified by structural vulnerabilities embedded in the colonial economy. In the paper "Indian Famine (1896-1902) by Nibedita Shankar Ray-Bennett highlights that food riots and grain riots emerged as forms of collective desperation and resistance when local populations found themselves unable to access basic subsistence.

Even in regions where grain was physically available, it was often hoarded by traders or exported to more profitable markets under laissez-faire economic policies. This created a stark paradox: scarcity amid apparent supply. As prices soared beyond the reach of ordinary people, particularly peasants and laborers, tensions escalated.

Grain riots typically occurred in marketplaces, granaries, or transport points. Starving populations-often led by the most affected groups such as landless laborers or the rural poor— would seize stored grain, prevent its export, or demand fair pricing. These actions were not random outbreaks of violence but were shaped by a moral economy: a deeply held belief that food, especially during crisis, should be accessible and not subjected purely to market logic. When this expectation was violated, collective action became a means of restoring what communities perceived as justice. These riots were responses to administrative inadequacies. Relief measures under colonial rule were often delayed, bureaucratic, and insufficient. Strict eligibility criteria for famine relief and the insistence on labor tests (where the starving had to work for meager aid) exacerbated suffering. In such a context, riots became both a survival strategy and a critique of governance. Ray-Bennett state that colonial authorities frequently interpreted these incidents as law-and-order problems rather than symptoms of systemic distress. As a result, responses often involved policing and suppression rather than addressing underlying causes like price regulation, distribution failures, or relief accessibility. This further alienated affected populations and sometimes intensified unrest.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions-

1. What is one of the major causes for rural indebtedness?
2. When did the Orissa famine break out?
3. How many people lost their lives in Bengal famine?

5.4 FAMINE POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT

Famine relief policy during the Pre-British period was certainly less effective than at present. Therefore loss of life and cattle used to be considerable on account of famines. In the early part of the 19th century the East India Company did try to solve the problems of famine-affected people but by half-hearted measures. After the Mutiny of 1857, the British Crown took over the responsibility of governing India from the East India Company.

The responsibility of famine-relief work therefore fell upon the Imperial Government. After a number of local famines after 1857 came the famine of 1876-78 affecting a large part of the country and taking a very heavy toll of life. The Government of India appointed the First Famine Commission in 1778 under the presidency of Sir John Strachey. The commission formulated the general principles of famine relief policy and suggested preventive and protective measures for the famine relief.

- The Commission recognised the responsibilities of the Government towards the famine affected people
- Work was to be provided to all the able-bodied but wages paid were to be just sufficient for food grains

- Gratuitous relief was to be given to the aged and infirm in their own villages
- Takavi loans were to be given to the affected land owners for the purpose of cultivation
- Suspension and remission of land revenue were to be on fairy liberal terms in keeping with the intensity of the famine affecting the area
- Private trade in food grains was to be free

LET US KNOW MORE

Famine Commissions:

i. Sir George Campbell Commission (1867)
ii. Strachey Commission (1878)
iii. Lyall Commission (1898)
iv. MacDonnell Commission (1900)

The Second Famine Commission (1898): Under **Sir James Lyall** the Second Famine Commission endorsed the recommendations of the First Famine Commission of 1880, suggesting few changes in the detailed working of the scheme.

The severe famine of 1899-1900 led to the appointment of the **Third Famine Commission in 1901**, under the presidency of **Sir Antony MacDonell**;

- It put emphasis on the benefits of a policy of moral strategy
- It recommended early distribution of advances for
  (a) purchase of cattle and seeds
  (b) purchase and sinking of temporary wells
- It recommended for the appointment of famine commissioner
- Stricter regulation of a famine relief
- Preference of village works to the large public works
- Efforts to enlist non-official assistance on a large scale
- Agricultural banks should be established
- Measures to be taken to foster improved methods of agriculture
- Irrigation works should be pushed on.

With the growth of the machinery for famine relief development the policy of famine prevention through irrigation works improvement of agriculture and railways. Under the Government of India Act, 1919, each provincial government was required to contribute, out of its resources, every year, a definite sum for expenditure on famine.

The Woodhead Famine Enquiry Commission (1944): The tragic famine of Bengal in 1943 in which about 3 million people died led to the appointment of this Commission according to which;

- The state should recognise its ultimate responsibility of providing food to all the famine affected people.
- The creation of All India Food Council to deal with the food problem.
- Monopoly procurement of food grains by the state

- Distribution of food grains through a chain of fair-price shops at prices which should be reasonable from the point of both consumers and producers.

After **Montague-Chelmsford Reform of 1919**, famine relief was made provincial subject. Each province was required to establish and maintain Famine Relief Fund by regular annual assignments from their regular revenue according to scales laid down on the basis of the liability to famine.

The Government of India Act of 1935 contained no provision for the creation of separate Famine Relief Fund. But practically all the Provinces instituted the Famine Relief Fund along the old lines.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions-

4. Who was the chairman of the First Famine Commission?
5. Which Commission contained no provision for the creation of separate Famine Relief Fund?
6. When did the Third Famine Commission formed?

5.5 GREAT DEPRESSION OF 1929

The World Depression commonly known as the Great Depression of 1929-1933 engulfed the capitalist economics of Western Europe and of the USA. India which has established close links with the United Kingdom (UK) and the West European countries through her expanding export and import trade also suffered greatly on account of the impact of the Great Depression.

Factors causing the Depression-

- The increase productive capacity of agricultural and industrial sectors in the mature capitalist economies of USA and West European countries
- Mal-distribution of gold
- Post World War I currency
- Protective trade policies followed by capitalist countries
- Speculative tendencies in stock exchange and so on

The World Depression commenced in October 1917 in USA with collapse in the Stock Exchange Market in the Wall Street and quickly spread through to other countries of the world. The World Depression produced great impact on every aspect of Indian economy such as prices, agriculture, industry, trade, levels of income of the people, level of employment and so on.

The Great Depression resulted in the collapse of prices. It would be observed that prices of agricultural commodities and raw materials felt sharper than those of manufactured goods. The severe decline of agricultural prices meant serious fall in income of vast agricultural class in India. Naturally this put a great burden in the agricultural class whose indebtedness increased greatly during the period of depression due to steep decline in agricultural prices.

Indian agriculture along with agriculture in other capitalist countries suffered greatly on account of the Great Depression. The prises of main crops in India fell steeply between

1929 and 1933. The agriculturists were worst sufferers. The extra-ordinary distress which agriculturists suffered reduced their investments in lands and in fact increased their indebtedness. The agriculturists met the situation by selling “distress gold”. There was also considerable amount of unemployment in the industrial sector of the country.

But during the years of Great Depression, some factors favourable to the industrial development in the country were also operating. In the field of cotton and textile industry, in 1930, the government granted protection to this industry. Import duties were raised up to 15% on non-British cotton textile goods. In 1932, import duties on non-British textile goods raised to 50%.

During the period of Great Depression, there was fall in domestic consumption of coal and therefore coal prices collapsed and this resulted in the closure of many coal mines in the country. By 1933 production of coal fell substantially. It was only in 1934 that coal production started picking up.

The world demand for jute goods has always played a significant role in the development of jute industry in India. Collapse of agricultural prices and low purchasing power of agriculturists all over the world resulted in steep decline for jute manufacturers and produced adverse effects on India jute industry. The depression and difficulties of the jute industry in the country led to the appointment of the Jute Enquiry Commission in 1932. The Commission submitted its report in 1934 and recommended better control of jute cultivation and improved marketing arrangements.

The Iron and Steel Industry in India had made considerable progress since 1927 although the industry still needed protection. During the Great Depression, profits of the industry were adversely affected due to curtailment of railway programme and because of decline in demand from engineering firms of the country. The Depression produced great impact on world trade and therefore on India’s international trade.

By the above discussion it can be said that years of Great Depression were years of great turmoil (disaster) for the Indian economy. Indian agriculture was the most depressed sector compelling farmers to sell gold to meet their committed charges; industrial sector was also affected because of the currency depreciation and protective policy followed by many countries. The Government of India did practically nothing either to protect the Indian economy or to relief miseries of the people.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions-

7. Point out one important factor resulted due to the Great Depression.
8. When did the Jute Enquiry Commission formed?

5.6 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, we have learnt that-

- The British economic policy led to rural indebtedness, which affected all the classes of the people

- Famines in India during the colonial period were man-made at times and it brought much disaster even though the Government set up relief measures
- Food crises was one important result of the Famines
- The Great Depression had a far-reaching impact on Indian economy

✓ 5.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No 1: Poverty.
Answer to Q No 2: 1866-67.
Answer to Q No 3: About 3 million of people.
Answer to Q No 4: Sir Richard Strachey.
Answer to Q No 5: The Government of India Act 1935.
Answer to Q No 6: 1900.
Answer to Q No 7: Unemployment.
Answer to Q No 8: 1932.

5.8 FURTHER READING

1) Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar. (2013). From Plassey to Partition. Orient Blackswan; New Delhi: India
2) Desai, A.R. (2013). Social Background of Indian Nationalism. Popular Prakashan; New Delhi: India
3) Desai, S.S.M. and Bhalerao, Nirmal. (2010). Economic History of India. Himalaya Publishing House; Mumbai: India
4) Grover, B.L. (2011). A New Look at Modern Indian History. S. Chand and Company; New Delhi: India.
5) Roy Bennet, Nibeta Shankar. (2011). Indian Famine (1896-1902). encyclopedia of disaster relief sage.

? 5.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)-

1. Name any one Famine Enquiry Commission formed during British rule.
2. Mention one factor leading to rural indebtness.

B) Short Questions (Answer each question within 150 words)-

1. Write short notes on:
   (a) Role of middle man in rural indebtedness
   (b) Food crises during famines
   (c) Bengal famine of 1943
   (d) Factors leading to the Great Depression

C) Long Questions (Answer each question within 300-500 words)

1. Examine the main features of Famine Policy of Government of India.
2. Explain in brief about the several Famine Commissions adopted by the Government as a famine relief measure.

UNIT 6 : DECLINE OF TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives
6.2 Introduction
6.3 Traditional Industries
- Weaving and Textile Industry
- Other Industries

6.4 Causes of De-Industrialisation
6.5 Growth of Modern Industries
- Plantation Industries
- Mines and Others

6.6 India as a Feeder Economy
6.7 Let Us Sum Up
6.8 Answer to Check Your Progress
6.9 Further Reading
6.10 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, we will be able to:

- state the various causes responsible for the decline of the traditional industries of India
- explain the development and growth of modern industries
- discuss briefly how the British used India as a feeder economy

6.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we have discussed rural indebtness and the causes leading to it. We also discussed the famines that created havoc on the villagers and the subsequent agrarian crisis.

In this Unit, we shall discuss about the decline of traditional industries. The village artisan industries constituted the industrial part of the balanced and predominantly self sufficient village economy. During the first half of the 19th century or even up to 1880 India's economy witnessed a strange phenomenon. While western countries were experiencing industrialization. India suffered a period of industrial decline. This process has been described as 'de-industrialization'.

6.3 TRADITIONAL INDUSTRIES

The steady growth of modern industries in India during the second half of the 19th century accelerated the decline of traditional industries. The process of the decline of

village handicrafts (traditional industries) though universal, was due to social, economic and local reasons. The handloom industries in the villages were adversely affected by the influx of cheap machine made clothes.

The economic position of the village carpenters deteriorated. The adoption of devices as the iron plough and the iron cane-crushing machine seriously affected them. A section of them were incorporated in the furniture making and such other industries which sprang up in the towns. The import of cheap aniline dyes seriously affected the village dyeing industry and ruined the village dyers. By the end of the 19th century, the village artisan industry was completely damaged. The increasing substitution of kerosene in place of oil for lighting purposes by the villagers seriously affected the village oilmen. Enamel imported from foreign countries and metal produced by the brass and such other industries in India brought down the demand for the goods produced by the village potter.

The various famines which broke out also contributed to the decline of village artisan industries. During the period of famine poor artisans especially the weavers were compelled to seek relief by taking to other forms of work.

With the establishment of the British rule, several economic transition, in terms of commercialization of Indian agriculture, rise of modern industry, establishment of banking and insurance, etc. which led to the gradual decline of self-sufficient village economy which was basically based on traditional Indian industries.

● Weaving and Textile Industry

After 1757 degradation of weaving industry started. By exercising political power the company and its men compelled the weavers to sell goods at cheaper rates to the Company. The company's agents used to book weavers to produce goods for the company at cheaper rates. They would give money in advance for the purpose and would make a contract with the weaver to work for them exclusively. Thus the weaver was bound to sell his produce to the lender. The contract enjoined that the producer could not sell their goods to any other party. As such the weavers had no way to sell his produce at competitive rates in the open market. When things became unbearable some of the artisans left the loom for other alternatives. The same treatment was made to the silk industry too. The company's monopoly over these two prosperous industries caused their degradation.

In the meantime during 1760-80, Industrial Revolution took place in England. Machines made goods began to be produced in large scale. Manchester and Lancashire were the chief centres of textile industry. Aiming to capture the Indian market, the industrialists pressed the British Government to put a ban on sale of Indian clothes in England. Next, the cotton industrialists of England started to export their goods to India. The Company acquired monopoly right of trading with India by Parliament Charter. As a result, British mill clothes got entry into Indian markets from the year 1793. Thus, infiltration of cheap British mill products in India struck a heavy blow to the weavers.

At this critical moment the company began selling Bengal's fine clothes to European markets other than Britain. However, Napoleon's Continental System put a ban on import of British goods. Thus Britain lost its market leading to recess in Bengal. Starting

from 1806 export of Indian goods dwindled down gradually. Meanwhile the British policy of imposing heavy import duties or 'protection wall' against Indian industries also led to de-industrialization. Thus, due to the lack of a market at large and the uneven competition with foreign goods at home the once famous Weaving and Cottage industries of Bengal was destroyed.

Before the 19th century, jute industry was a cottage industry in Bengal. The cessation of Russian supplies of raw flex and hemp during the German war (1854) resulted in the increase in the demand of Indian jute. The prices of jute rose and high profits led to the extension and improvement of jute cultivation. Mr. George Auckland established the first jute mill in 1855 at Serampore in Bengal. By 1913-14 there were 64 jute mills employing 216,288 men in the country and the total output of these mills was greater than that produced at Dundee. After independence, India had to face stiff competition in international market. Also the use of substitutes like plastic bags, etc. brought down the demand for jute bags and canvas.

● Other Industries

Side by side cotton textile and jute industry there were other industries of less prominence in British India. These were glass, sugar, paper, cement, leather works, chemical products, machine tools, mining and tea plantation.

Sugar Industry: The modern sugar industry emerged in India at the beginning of 20th century. In 1936 there were 135 sugar mills all over the country and the production increased to 919,000 tons. The production was sufficient to meet the demands of the home markets. During the World War II sugar import was totally stopped and there were 161 sugar mills all over the country. Though sugar industry thrived under protection its cost of production was very high. The main places of sugar production were U.P. and Bihar.

Glass Industry: Towards the end of the 18th century a few glass factories were established in India. But they could not survive the competition with the European producers. At the beginning of 20th century glass works in India improved in quality. Its production increased as import from foreign countries stopped during the World War. The main problem of glass industry in India was lack of raw material and also expert hands. The government patronised the glass industry indirectly by reducing import duty on soda ash. Towards the end of the 1930s, glass products were sold at high profits. In the year 1946, there were 96 glass factories in India. Their production amounted to 105 lakh tons that were not sufficient to meet the demand within the country.

Paper Mills: The first mill was established at Bali upon the Hooghly River in 1870 and later at Titagarh, Lucknow, Poona and Ranigunj in Asansol. More mills with modern production methods were established in 20th century. The most notable of them were 'Mysore Paper Mill' at Bhadrabati (1939) and 'Shibpur Paper Mill' at Hyderabad (1942). The factories used woods and Sabai grass of Santal Parganas as raw materials for paper production. The Government gave protection to the paper industry by including it under protection. The reservation continued from 1925 to 1947. There were 16 paper mills in India on the eve of Independence.

Cement: Cement production in India started in 1904 in Madras with the production of 'Portland cement'. In 1912-13 three other cement factories established at Katni in Porbandar and at Bundi. During the World War I, there was increase in demand of cement. By 1924 the production was 2.4 lakh tons of cement. During the years production reached 12 lakh tons. The industry was subsidised by the Government.

Leather Industry: The Indian leather industry flourished due to war needs. A modern leather factory was established at Kanpur in 1860. During the World War I the demand of leather increased to manufacture boot shoes. India was then self sufficient in leather. Leather goods were exported from South India. In 1930 'Hides Cess Enquiry Committee' was formed to further the progress of leather goods in India. During the World War II leather goods production increased many times.

Chemical and Aluminium: It emerged and flourished in post World War I times. Before the World War I chemical stuff or products were imported. But foreign trade was cut short during the war years. This led to the establishment of such industries in the country. After the World War I Chemical and Aluminium industries were given short-term protection. During the World War II Chemical industry witnessed growth in its production.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions-

1. What do you mean by the term 'traditional industry'?
2. Name one of the important exports used by the cotton mills of Lancashire and Manchester.

6.4 CAUSES OF DE-INDUSTRIALISATION

During the first half of the 19th century India's traditional handicraft industry decayed beyond recovery. The East India Company deprived India from the benefits of Industrial Revolution and kept her predominantly agrarian for two reasons:

1. To secure cheap agricultural raw materials for British industries and,
2. To find ready markets in India for goods produced in England.

In India the decline of indigenous handicrafts was not accomplished by any rise of machine industry. The main causes were:

a. Influx of the cheap products of foreign machine.
b. Pressure of Foreign Government.

The result was:

a. Ruralisation of the country
b. Increasing pressure of population on land
c. Dependence of the natives on scanty resources of agriculture
d. Loss of the traditional industries
e. Foreign economic domination of the colonial masters of India, and
f. Acute poverty and unemployment.

Agriculture is the very backbone of Indian economic life. Among the goods of trade, handicraft industries occupied an important place. Cotton and silk clothes, ivory goods, items of wood, beads, etc, were important. But with the coming of British their policies were instrumental in destroying most of the handicraft industry in India. The process of destroying Indian handicraft industries or de-industrialization started from the provinces of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa as soon as the East India Company assumed the Diwani of these provinces. The company forced the weavers to produce cloth according to their requirements and on conditions of their own. A large number of weavers therefore left their profession. It ruined the cotton and silk clothes handicraft industries.

The impact of Industrial Revolution was felt everywhere. India was converted into supplier of raw materials for the British industries. India also became a market for British goods. The policy of free trade facilitated Britain to exploit the Indian market.

Another cause of de-industrialization was the slow pace of mechanical advancements and the social status of the workers and artisans. Therefore, the Indian handicraft industries made no progress.

During the 18th and 19th centuries, labourers and artisans therefore had suffered miserably resulting in a mass poverty. There is no doubt that, though there was a growth of modern industries in India, all its profits went to Britain resulting not only in destruction of Indian handcrafts but also a mass poverty of in this country.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

3. Name one of the important agro-product of Pre-British India.
4. Mention one of the important causes of deindustrialisation.
5. Give one reason for the British Capitalist to invest in India.

6.5 GROWTH OF MODERN INDUSTRIES

In the 30 years between 1845 and 1875, about 95 million were invested by British companies in Indian railways. Besides railways, British capital was also invested in jute manufacture, tea gardens, banks and shipping. The period witnessed the beginning of factories and plantations. But the progress was insignificant till 1875.

Until 1914, the policy of the government was to encourage private capital and enterprise. However, the World War I heralded a new period of industrial development as the war created a demand for India manufacture goods. The situation forced the Government to appoint an Industrial Commission in 1916. However most of the Indian industries were owned or controlled by British capital.

Practically the British policy restricted and slowed down the growth of Indian industries. The Indian business community were dissatisfied leading to the formation of Bengal National Centre of Commerce in 1887. The Swadeshi Movement of 1905 promoted the growth of Indian industries. But the British exploitation and dominance over the industrial sectors continued till independence.

- **Plantation Industries**

- **Tea Plantation:** India is one of the premier tea producing countries of the world at present. It was in 1820 that wild indigenous tea plants were found in Assam. In 1835 the Government started an experimental tea garden. The Assam Tea Company was the first Indian Tea Company.

During 1850 the cultivation of tea plant spread rapidly not only in Assam but also in Bengal, Nilgiris and Travancore. And by the end of 19th century, Indian tea successfully drove out Chinese tea from the markets in the United Kingdom.

Due to increased production of tea in India and Ceylon there was heavy fall in the prices of tea during the early years of the 20th century. There was also increase in domestic consumption of tea. The Indian Tea Association, formed in 1899 sought to improve the quality and standardization of Indian tea. When the World War II broke out in 1914, Indian tea industry was in a very prosperous condition. With the entry of Japan into the war in 1941, the supply of tea from Japan, Formosa, China and Dutch East Indies was completely cuts off for the allies. Since then because of increasing demand from USA, UK, Middle East countries and Australia, the Indian tea industry enjoyed certain amount of prosperity.

In 1839, a private company **Assam Tea Company** was founded by Merchants from London.

Coffee Plantations: The Moorish traders introduced coffee plants for the first time in India in 16th century but systematic cultivation of coffee began in 1830s. Since then the progress of the industry started, the chief centres of plantations being Mysore, Coorg, Travancore and Nilgiris. There was temporary lull in the Indian coffee industry which put a stop to replacement of coffee by tea cultivation. During the World War II European markets were lost to Indian coffee and there was fear of depression in the industry. The Indian Coffee Expansion Act was passed in 1943, which enabled to keep coffee prices at reasonable levels. The enforcement of the Act in coffee industry was however not strict.

Indigo Plantations: From earliest times, indigo has been grown in India and utilised as a dye. Since 18th century Indian indigo became an important export article. But towards the end of the 18th century trade in India, indigo began to decline mainly because of increasing competition from America and growing adulteration of the dye. The Company tried to revive indigo trade by bringing planters from West and settled them in Bengal. Up to 1850 the Indian industry registered rapid progress so much so that by 1850 indigo was one of the most important exports from India. European planters did not undertake direct cultivation of indigo. Since 1897 the Indian indigo industry began to decline because of severe competition from synthetic indigo from Germany.

During World War I as German dyes were shut off from the allied markets, demand for Indian indigo experienced a revival. But after the War ended German dyes reappeared and renewed the depression in Indian indigo industry.

Rubber Plantations: Rubber plantation was introduced into India towards the close of the 19th century. There was rapid expansion in the production of rubber during and after World War I. By the end of 1921 there was slump in rubber

prices due to over-production. As a consequence, 'Stevenson Plan' of limiting exports was adopted voluntarily by many planters in India. During World War II the strategic importance of rubber was fully realised. Until 1934 there was very little domestic consumption of Indian rubber. But since then internal consumption has been mounting. Demand for rubber has been continually rising and the Indian rubber plantation industry is not in a position to supply the needs of the Indian rubber manufacturing industry.

The rubber production and marketing act was passed in 1947 setting up the Indian Rubber Board, to register all rubber production and to fix prices for different grades of rubber and to advice the government on questions regarding export and import of raw rubber. In order to encourage domestic production of rubber, the Government of India banned imports of rubber and fixed the prices on the basis of actual cost plus a small margin of profits, thus keeping the prices of Indian rubber at a level higher than world prices of rubber.

- **Mines And Others**

Coal industry: It was at Raniganj (West Bengal) that the first coal mine was opened in 1820. But with the construction of railways the coal mining industry received a great boost. The Indian Railways served both as carriers of coal and consumer of Indian coal. With the opening of Suez Canal there was considerable increase in the import of coal. But in spite of competition by imported coal, the production of Indian coal registered increases.

The first attempt of coal mining began at Chhotta Nagpur during the Governor Generalship of Warren Hastings. The famous Bengal Coal Company was formed in 1843. In 1944 a Colliery Control Order was passed to regulate the conduct of collieries which were run by private capitalists. The coal industry was nationalised in 1973.

Iron and Steel industry: The first successful large scale iron and steel enterprise in India was established by the Bengal Iron Company founded in 1875 at Barakar. In 1919 this company was re-named as the Bengal Iron and Steel Company, producing iron, iron pipes, railway rails and other castings. In 1919 the Indian Iron and Steel Company was established with up-to-date American plant and machinery. The Mysore Iron Works was established in 1937 at Bhadrawati, while the Steel Corporation of Bengal was formed with a capacity of 250,000 tons of steel and began working in 1939.

Subsidiary industries: The development of iron and steel industry in India led to the development of various auxiliary industries before 1950, such as machine-tools, armament and ammunitions, textile and other machinery, locomotives, ship-building, aircraft and automobiles, bicycles, sewing machines and a host of other engineering goods.

6.6 INDIA AS A FEEDER ECONOMY

In modern times under-developed and developing countries welcome an inflow of capital, enterprise, technology, etc. from advanced countries to supplement domestic

resources and initiate the process of economic development. The unfortunate development with India in the colonial era was that foreign capital entered India in a big way but was used by the colonial administration not for development of colonial economy but for fuller exploitation of Indian resources. Capital inflow thus became another instrument of Indian exploitation.

LET US KNOW MORE

The term "Feeder Economy" is basically used to refer to India as a colony to the Great Britain. The sole purpose of the British colonial rule in India was to reduce the country to being a feeder economy for Great Britain's own rapidly expanding modern industrial base.

The Charter Act of 1833 gave rights to British citizens to carry on trade and commercial activities without hindrance. This attracted many investors from Britain.

The British policy was not in favour of industrialising India in the European way. In fact the British industrial enterprise in India was of colonial character. Development of India as an industrial country would be detrimental to their own business interest. They built the Railways to develop a communication network to easily procure raw materials from remote corners of India and send it home (Britain). The ships would pour in furnished products from England to Indian ports and the railways would transport them to local markets. In this context we should remember that the railways helped further foreign capital investment in future.

The British control over banking establishments was firmly maintained. Board of Directors of these banks were formed by Englishmen and all high ranking officials of them were Englishmen. Only 'Punjab National Bank' and the 'Bank of India' could retain their identity with some reputation in competition with foreign banks.

Dadabhai Naoroji, an early nationalist, first welcomed British capital; but later he condemned it. Most of the nationalist critics object to British capital as it opened up a new channel to drain out India's national wealth in a novel way. It is of course a fact that the British introduced modern industry. It is also true that they did not want India to be an industrially advanced country.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

6. Which period saw the profitable trading of tea?
7. When was the Indian Jute Mill Association founded?
8. Name the first Indian tea company.

6.7 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, we have learnt about;

- The factors responsible for the destruction of traditional or indigenous industries of India under the British colonial rule.

- The problems and damages faced by the weaving and textile industries under the colonial rule.
- The growth of modern industries in India during the British colonial period.
- The important aspects of the plantation industries, mines and other industries.
- The concept of India as a feeder economy.

✓ 6.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No 1: Traditional industries mean the indigenous industries. The traditional industries of India include handloom, handicrafts, bricks, etc.
Answer to Q No 2: Indigo.
Answer to Q No 3: Sugar.
Answer to Q No 4: Influx of the cheap products of foreign machines.
Answer to Q No 5: Labour was available cheap.
Answer to Q No 6: From 1836 to 1860.
Answer to Q No 7: 1884.
Answer to Q No 8: Assam Tea Company

6.9 FURTHER READING

1) Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar. (2013). From Plassey to Partition. Orient Blackswan. New Delhi: India
2) Desai, S.S.M. and Bhalerao, Nirmal. (2010). Economic History of India. Himalaya Publishing House. Mumbai: India
3) Maiti, Provatansu. (2012). Modern India. Sreedhar Publishers. Kolkata: India

6.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (answer each question within 50 words)-

1. Which two places were the chief centres of weaving industry?
2. What was the main problem of glass industry in India?
3. Where was the modern leather factory established?

B) Short Questions (answer each question within 150 words)-

1. Define the term “Drain of Wealth”?
2. What is meant by the term “De-industrialisation”?
3. Write a short note on cotton and jute industry

C) Long Questions (answer each question within 300-500 words)-

1. Give an account for the decline of cottage industries under colonial rule. Did it led to the growth of modern industry?
2. Examine the growth of modern industry in India during the British Colonial period.

UNIT 7 : COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives
7.2 Introduction
7.3 Effects of Market Expansion on Agriculture
7.4 Cash crops
7.5 Export Earnings from Agriculture
7.6 Let Us Sum Up
7.7 Answer to Check Your Progress
7.8 Further Reading
7.9 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to-

- Explain the effect of market expansion on the agricultural sector of India
- Explain the rise for the cultivation of cash crops and
- Discuss the financial earnings from agro based export

7.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the decline of the traditional cottage industries of India due to the various factors.

In this Unit, we will be discussing about the commercialization of agriculture and the growing demand for cash crops and the intrusion of market economy in the Indian context.

Agricultural policy during the British period had been directed towards 'commercialization of agriculture' which was sometimes hailed as the signs of 'modernization'. However, modernisation in the name of commercialization of agriculture was a big joke, since India had been allowed to prosper as a selling market for British manufactures at the expense of agriculture.

7.3 COMMERCIALIZATION OF AGRICULTURE AND MARKET EXPANSION

The main feature of Indian economy towards the last half of the 18th century was commercialization of agriculture. It means production of non-consumable agricultural products used as raw materials for industrial purposes and exchanged against cash. The various economic policies followed by the British led to the rapid transformation of India's economy into a colonial economy whose nature and structure were determined by needs of the British economy. One important aspect of British economic policy was commercialization of agriculture. Commercialization of agriculture means that the

agricultural crops and goods are produced by the peasants for sale in the market and not for their own consumption.

The British Era is also known as a period of commercial revolution in the agricultural sector. Commercialization of agriculture was coincident with Industrial Revolution and became prominent around 1860s. Cash transactions became the basis of exchange and largely replaced the barter system. The major reason of commercialization of agriculture was that India was now reduced to the supplier of raw materials and food grains to Britain and importer of British manufactured goods. The Land revenue payments were also monetized and India saw emergence of grain merchants. The commercialization of Indian agriculture took place not to feed the industries of India because India was far behind in industrial development as compared to Britain, France, Belgium and many other European countries of eighteenth century. The commercialization of Indian agriculture was done primarily to feed the British industries that it was taken up and achieved only in cases of those agricultural products which were either needed by the British industries or could fetch cash commercial gain to the British in the European or American market.

How Commercialization of Agriculture Happened?

Commercialization of agriculture in India was initiated by the British through their direct and indirect policies and activities. The new land tenure system introduced in the form of permanent settlement and Ryotwari settlement had made agricultural land a freely exchangeable commodity. The Permanent settlement by giving ownership right to the Zamindars created a class of wealthy landlords; they could make use of this ownership right by sale or purchase of land. Further, the agriculture which had been the way of life rather than a business enterprise now began to be practiced for sale in national and international market.

The commercialization of agriculture was a forced and artificial process for the majority of the Indian peasants. It was introduced under coercion of the British. The peasant had to pay the land revenue in time and had to grow commercial crops on a specified tract of his land under the pressures of the Planters.

Factors behind the commercialization of agriculture:

Large number factors encouraged and facilitated commercialization of Indian agriculture:

1. The political unity established by the British and the resultant rise of the unified national market was an important factor. Further, the spread of money economy replaced the barter and agricultural goods became market items.
2. The chief factor was the colonial subjugation of India under the British rule. The replacement of custom and tradition by competition and contract also led to the commercialization of Indian agriculture. Many commercial crops like cotton, jute, tea, tobacco were introduced to meet the demand in Britain.
3. Better means of communication (rapid development of railways and shipping) made trade in agricultural products feasible, especially over long distances.

4. Another boosting factor for the commercialization of Indian agriculture was the gaining of speed of Industrial Revolution in England. There was a demand of increasing raw materials for British industries.
5. The enlargement and expansion of international trade and the entry of British finance capital also belted commercialization of Indian agriculture.
6. Monetization of land revenue payment was another important factor for agricultural commercialization.
7. The peasants went in for growing commercial crops to pay back the interests due to money lenders in time.
8. The American civil war also indirectly encouraged commercialization of agriculture in India.

7.4 SHIFTING ATTENTION TOWARDS THE SELECTION OF CASH CROPS AND EFFECTS

There is no doubt a crucial question as to who the actual beneficiaries of commercialization of agriculture in India were. Were they ordinary Indian people or were they British capitalists and their domestic collaborators? AmalesTripathi argued, in his Trade and Finance in the Bengal Presidency (1956) that growth of commercial crops proved beneficial to the people of India. It is well known, however, that the East India Company developed India's resources not in the interest of the Indian people but of the British merchants and manufacturers. The increasing demand for some of the commercial crops in other foreign countries gave impetus to commercialization of agriculture. There was a shift in attention towards the selection of cash crops. We shall take up some case studies to illustrate this point.

The British chose their export crops very carefully. Cotton, silk, opium, indigo, sugar and tea were the cash crops to which the Company largely focused its attention. Cotton and silk could not be produced in Britain. Opium and tea directly hit China, for the former was exported against its consent and the latter was cultivated in India to break Chinese monopoly. Indigo and sugar were plantations in India that were encouraged to reduce British dependence on South American plantations. None of these competed or replaced any British product. In fact, their cultivation and export dovetailed with the interests of British commerce. Secondly, all of these articles were valuable in relation to their bulk. Their price per kilogram or cubic meter was high. We must remember that during this period transport costs were very high. If cheap bulky goods were exported, transport costs alone could have eaten away all profits. Only goods which were profitable in relation to their weight could ensure steady profits for exporters.

Cotton:

Indian cotton was the most important cash crop at that time. The export of Indian cotton to England began in 1783 and the quantity increased by more than 800 times by 1841. But the beneficiaries were chiefly the Lancashire mill owners, European business houses and the native elites. Manchester was the greatest textile producer in England. Raw cotton for the Manchester factories was imported from the USA. The civil war of 1860 in America made a severe blow to raw cotton supply business to England. To solve the

problem of cotton supply for the mills the owners thought of importing cotton from India. As a result the peasant of Gujarat and Bombay regions started cotton cultivation for enhanced profit margins. At the beginning of the twentieth century 90% of cotton produced in India was exported to foreign markets. But towards the end of the century, cotton producers depended mostly upon local factories.

It has been pointed out by a scholar named MaricaVicziani that the involvement of indigenous business interests in ginning and pressing companies did not go beyond motives of a good investment. However, the European managing firms viewed these companies as a tool for their advancement in the export trade. The country's export crops, especially raw cotton, thus became the property of the foreign export firms. As matter of fact, it was the Indian middlemen who kept the peasants in a state of perpetual financial bondage which passed on from one generation to another. They paid advances to the cultivator and purchased their cotton even before it had ripened.

Indigo:

Indigo was another important crop for export. It was grown in Bengal and Bihar through a system of coercion - people were forced to cultivate it. Indigo was needed in the west as a dyeing agent for the textile industry. Cultivation of indigo started in Bengal in the last quarter of the eighteenth century on the initiative of European adventurers and some agents of the East India Company. Many of the indigo planters were actually slave drivers from the West Indies. In fact, up to the 1790s much of the supply for Europe came from the Caribbean colonies. From the eighteenth century up to the first half of the nineteenth century indigo remained one of the major export commodities. Force was freely applied to make peasants grow indigo, for whom however indigo cultivation was far from profitable. D.H. Buchanan, referring to Parliamentary Papers, observed that cultivation of indigo entailed a loss because the production resources could have been devoted more profitably to other crops. That is the reason why advances were thrust upon the peasants who were not at all willing to cultivate indigo. For them it meant forced labour, growing indebtedness, insecurity of life and property.

The debts were often fictitious even as they passed from father to son. Once a peasant was forced to accept money advance, he had no escape from debt bondage. They became bonded slaves, as it were, and there were several other ways through which they could be harassed and humiliated. A District Magistrate of Faridpur in Bengal once remarked that 'not a chest of indigo reached England which is not stained in human blood.' Ultimately, it was a revolt of the peasants - also called the "blue mutiny" by historian Blair B Kling - which swept several districts of Bengal in 1860 that virtually put an end to indigo cultivation. There was another factor as well - synthetic chemical dyes were invented by Adolf Von Baeyer, a German scientist, in the late 1860s - significantly reducing the demand for natural indigo in the international market. Both these factors contributed to the decline and end of indigo cultivation.

Opium:

The East India Company was also very interested in the cultivation of poppy plants in Bihar and the neighboring districts, which formed part of the Bengal Presidency. The production and sale of opium, which was exported mainly to China, were under the complete control of the Company. As Michael Greenberg observed, "the Bengal opium

monopoly was one of the prizes of Clive's victory". Cultivators of poppy were offered unattractive prices and were coerced into maintaining a certain level of production. The Koeri caste of Bihar - to which the poppy growers largely belonged – were being forced to cultivate poppy by the influence of the mahtoos or village headmen, who had them completely under subjection. It was around opium that, as Tan Chung said, something like a "triangular trade" developed embracing Britain, India and China. From the year 1845-46 up to 1885-86 opium production increased at the rate of 22%.

Tea:

The British introduced the cultivation of tea in India in the 1830s to break the near monopoly of Chinese tea in the international market. Under government encouragement and with government help, tea plantations, owned exclusively by the Europeans, increased rapidly. Like indigo and opium, tea was also intended for export. This trade too was controlled by the Europeans. The profits and larger part of the salaries were remitted abroad or appropriated by planters here.

Oppression on the workers was so cruel that it beggars description. Usually innocent tribal men and women from distant places were recruited as tea garden workers, some of which were situated in highly inhospitable locations. These workers were duped by the planters' recruiting agents with false hopes about their future prospects. The mortality among the recruits during the long journey to the gardens was "fearful", and once they reached the gardens, they virtually became serfs. An Act of 1865 armed the planters with powers to arrest them if they attempted to do so. They could be imprisoned for refusing to do work. Buchanan has pointed out that among a group of about 50,000 coolies in the tea districts, 13,905 died and 4,425 deserted and disappeared in the forest within a year and a half. Viceroy Curzon had to admit that "on many plantations harsh and cruel and abominable things go on", "that the coolies get nothing like the wage which is stipulated for by the law".

Jute:

Jute was another cash crop of recent origin. At the second half of the 19th century jute was intensively cultivated in Bengal. As jute mills were founded on both side of the Hooghly river the demand of jute as a raw material increased by leaps and bounds. Raw jute was also exported for the Dundy factories in England. After 1875 there came a recess in the demands of jute and the industry incurred loss. The cultivators shifted to paddy production as scarcity of rice brought about famine conditions in Bombay and Madras.

LET US KNOW MORE

Fill in the blanks-

Q1: _____ introduced under coercion of the British.

Q2: "that the coolies get nothing like the wage which is stipulated for by the law" was the statement given by _____.

Q3: _____ is referred to as "blue mutiny".

Q4: At the _____ jute was intensively cultivated in Bengal

7.5 EXPORT EARNINGS FROM AGRICULTURE

Commercialization of agriculture was beneficial to the British planters, traders and manufactures who were provided with opportunity to make huge profits by getting the commercialized agricultural products at a throw away prices, it also partly benefitted moneylenders who made huge profit by working as middleman for the British. Commercialization made the peasant dependent upon the traders or business men who lent money in advance to the tillers on condition that they would be bound to sell their produce to the lenders at rates fixed by them. The peasants were forced to sell their produce just after harvest at whatever prices he could get since the peasants had to meet the demands of the government, landlords and moneylenders. Thus, peasant's harvest was in a way 'mortgaged' to the businessmen who made capital investment through loans to the tillers. These new lenders had deep concern and control over the crops produced by the peasants.

By growing cash crops the tiller's margin of profit did not increase significantly. The margin of profit whatever that be went into the lender's pocket as the producers were bound to sell their crops either partly or wholly, at rates fixed in advance by the lenders. The common fluctuations of price rates had no effect on the sale procedure of the commodity.

The lenders on cash crops were mostly English traders and businessmen. They controlled external trade, shipping, insurance and banking etc. They were the real beneficiary from cash crops. A part of profit of course was enjoyed by a small percentage of local mahajans, brokers, middlemen and stockists. A few peasants, who belonged already to the rich class also, were benefitted by the advance payment system. In Punjab wheat producers belonging to the rich class made some profits as they did not have to rely on borrowed money to cultivate their fields.

During the British rule the agricultural community suffered under burden of enhanced taxes and rents in gradual progression. Due to population increase greater pressure on land was inevitable. In a word demand of agricultural land increased while land was limited. Per capita land for a peasant was 2.23 acres in 1891-92. It came down to 1.90 in 1939-40.

Most of the Indian people suffered miserably due to the British policy of commercialization of Indian agriculture. It resulted in reduced area under cultivation of food crops due to the substitution of commercial non –food grains in place of food grains. During the period from 1894 to 1946, the production of commercial crops increased by 85 percent and that of food crops fell drastically. This had a devastating effect on rural economy and often took the shape of famines. Regional specialization of crop production based on climatic conditions, soil etc., was an outcome of the commercial revolution in agriculture like Bombay was focusing on cotton, Bengal on jute and Assam on tea etc.

Commercialization of agriculture linked the agriculture sector to the world market. Price movements and business fluctuations in the world markets affected the fortunes of Indian farmer. The commercialization of agriculture had mixed effects. While it assisted the Industrial revolution in Britain at the same time broke the economic self- sufficiency of villages in India. The worst effect of commercialization was the oppression of Indian

peasants at the hands of Europeans, which ultimately found its expression in peasants' revolts like Indigo revolt. Commercialization of agriculture brought some positive effects also on Indian rural economy: it brought about regional specialization of crops on an efficient basis.

First was the increasing dependence on agriculture. The percentage of the population engaged in agriculture increased from 61 percent in 1891 to 73 percent in 1921. On the other hand, the percentage of population dependent on industry declined from 5.5 percent in 1911 to 4.9 percent in 1921.

Secondly, George Blyn's research showed that per capita agricultural production declined by 0.72 percent per annum during the period 1911-47. Per capita food-grain output during the same period declined by 29 percent. Between 1892-93 and 1919-20, the area under food crops increased by 7 percent whiles the area under non-food crops increased by 43 percent. Amiya Bagchi's estimate shows that the value of commercial crops per acre increased marginally from Rs. 36.7 to Rs. 37.9 while that of food crops fell from Rs. 25.4 to Rs. 22.7.

These figures reveal that agriculture under the British rule stagnated and even deteriorated over the years. In fact, the growing dependence on agriculture and the increasing emphasis on non-food crops as exportable is the direct consequence of the British imperialist policy, thereby making India as a market and source of raw materials. Thus, the colonial structure as a whole constituted a 'built-in-depressor' for India's agrarian economy.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions-

Q5. State a positive effect of commercialization of agriculture on the Indian rural economy.

Q6. What was Amiya Bagchi's observation on the commercialization of the agricultural sector and its effect?

7.6 LET US SUM UP

After going through this Unit, we have learnt that-

- Commercialization of agriculture brought drastic changes in rural economy of India.
- The new pattern of exploitation of India in the 19th century brought about a change in the nature of the Indian economy. Self-sufficiency of the village community received its mortal blow. The union of agriculture and industry disintegrated. De-industrialization was complete.
- India was thus, forcibly transformed into a typical agricultural colony of British manufacturing capitalism.

✓ 7.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No 1: Cash Crops/Commercialization of agriculture
Answer to Q No 2: Viceroy Curzon
Answer to Q No 3: Indigo Revolt
Answer to Q No 4: At the second half of the 19th century
Answer to Q No 5: It linked India with world economy.
Answer to Q No 6: Amiya Bagchi observed that the value of commercial crops per acre increased marginally while that of food crops fell.

7.8 FURTHER READING

1) Chandra, Bipan. (2009). History of Modern India. Orient Blackswan. New Delhi: India
2) Chandra, Bipan. ( ). Essays in Colonialism. Orient Longman. New Delhi: India
3) Maiti, P. and Saha, P.K. (2012). Modern India: 1707-1947 A.D. Sreedhar Publisher. Kolkata: India
4) Dutt. R.C. (). The Economic History of India under Early British Rule. Trubner & Co. London: UK

7.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (answer each within 50 words)-

1) What led to the decline of the indigo cultivation?
2) Who were the Mahtoos?

B) Short Questions (answer each within 150 words)-

1) Write a short note on the “blur mutiny”.
2) Who benefitted from the commercialization of agriculture and how?

C) Long Questions (answer each within 300 words)-

1) Explain the rise of the demand for Cash crops and its impact on the peasants.
2) Discuss the impact of British policy on agricultural sector.

UNIT 8 : DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION SYSTEM IN COLONIAL INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

8.1 Earning objectives
8.2 Introduction
8.3 Development of roads
8.4 Railways
8.5 Port and waterways
8.6 Postal and Telegraph Services
8.7 Let us sum up
8.8 Answer to Check Your Progress
8.9 Futher Reading
8.10 Model Questions

8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- explain the communication system of India during the colonial period,
- discuss about the condition and development of roadways,
- describe about the development and growth of railways,
- discuss in brief about the system of ports and waterways,
- explain about the development of postal and telegraph services

8.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the Commercialisation of agriculture.

In this Unit, we shall discuss the development of the Communication system in India under the Colonial rule. Development of transport and means of communications are of very great significance from military, administrative, economic, political, cultural and social point of view. India being of sub-continental dimensions, the distances to be traversed are very great. There are formidable natural obstacles when travelling from one region to another. The conditions of the means of communications become much worse during rainy season. India has a vast coast line and wonderful potentiality for the development of communications by sea. It would be instructive to review the developments which have taken place in the sphere of transport and communications in India.

The transport and communication network in British India was established with the following developments;

- Introduction of steamships on the rivers.
- Improvement and construction of roads.
- Introduction of railways.
- Introduction of modern postal system and the telegraph.

8.3 DEVELOPMENT OF ROADS

Till the middle of the last century, the road transport in India was in the most unsatisfactory condition. The East India Company hardly took any interest in road building. The neglect of road by the East India Company in general would be appreciated by the fact that roads were made the responsibility of Provincial Military Boards, instead of Public Works Department being put in charge of them. Some individual administrators however took interest in road building. Thus, William Bentinck revived the idea of a highway connecting the Northern India with Bengal. This resulted in the construction of the Grand Trunk Road. It was during the regime of Lord Dalhousie that India entered upon a new epoch of road-making. After 1850s, railway construction also let to the road construction. With the extension of railways, it became necessary to construct roads as feeders to railways rather than as competitors to railways. Expansion of railways and the interest which government took in making railways financially profitable let to the neglect of roads, especially of Trunk Roads which were running parallel to railways.

Progressive policies of Lord Mayo and Lord Ripon in regard to local self-government resulted in roads being put in charge of local control. This acted as a stimulus to road development to some extent. Realising the need for building more roads, the Government of India appointed Road Development Committee in 1927 to examine the question of road development. The Committee suggested that the Central Government should build and maintain the Grand Trunk Roads, while Provincial Governments and Local Bodies should look after remaining roads. But the actual progress of road construction was very slow because of various difficulties such as delay in acquisition of land, difficulties of obtaining road-building machinery, cement, steel, shortage of technical personnel, delays in railways transferring road building machinery and above all growing shortage of funds for road-construction.

District roads and village roads did not progress but actually deteriorated owing to factors such as limited financial resources with local bodies. The astonishing rapidity with which motor transport has sprung up since the end of World War I, it has created new range of problem of road-construction and maintenance. There is no doubt that motor transport because of its inherent advantages, will play a predominant part in the transportation of man and materials in a country like India. This would be especially so in hilly tracts where railway construction is either impossible or very expensive but motorable roads can be constructed. Motor transport has also vast opportunity near the vicinity of towns.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following Questions :

Q.1. Under whose regime India entered upon a new epoch of road making?

Q.2. Which Roads run parallel to the Railways?

8.4 RAILWAYS

The growth of railway industry was the result of the consolidation of political and economic dominance of British over India. The earliest proposal for the construction of railways in India was made during 1843-44. In 1853, the first railway line was opened between Bombay and Thane. In 1855 a total length of 121 miles connecting Calcutta and Ranigunj was constructed. In 1856 the Madras Railway completed 65 miles from Madras to Arcot. In 1853, Lord Dalhousie proposed a railway system for the whole country. He wanted to connect the inferior parts of its presidency with its main ports. Until 1869 railway lines were constructed under a Guarantee System by joint stock companies. The Guarantee System was finally abandoned and the state decided to construct railways through its own agencies with borrowed capital. Between 1869 to 1880 the lines directly constructed by the state agencies were in the Indus Valley, Punjab, Northern Rajputana, Malwa and North Bengal. After 1880, there was a return to the Guarantee System of construction by private companies but on easier terms than before. Therefore the government regularly purchased the lines separating some by itself and allowing the companies to continue to operate the remainder.

By 1875 most of the big centres were connected by Trunk lines. Bombay and Calcutta were connected via Jabalpur in 1870; Bombay and Madras in 1871; Calcutta and Delhi in 1867. The most important Grain tract Chhattisgarh was reached by railways in the 1880s. By 1900 the major part of Indian Railway was completed with 25000 miles of tract. By 1914 another 10000 miles was added. In 1905, a Railway Board was constituted consisting of a chairman and two members. There was a rapid expansion of railways preceding the World War I but the outbreak of the war impeded the progress. Under pressure of public opinion the Government of India took under its direct management East India Railway and the great Indian Peninsula Railway in 1925, the Burma Railways in 1929 and the Southern Punjab Railway in 1930. The Railway Board was recognised and the Railway Budget was separated from the General Budget from 1925.

The growth of Railways in India has immense importance. The introduction of railways in India revolutionised the socio-economic life of the people. The communication became much quicker and comfortable as a result of railways. Surplus produce of one area could be transperred to another area for its distribution. The railways were instrumental in helping the growth of Indian industries specially coal and cotton. Plantation and factory industries were made possible because coal could be supplied for power at the point of production. The railway system ultimately became the fore-runner of modern industry in India. Railway revolutionised trade by making possible production for a market and for the opening up of the interior places. The railways helped the growth of a large export trade in raw agricultural produces.

The Railways were the largest employer of organised labour in the sub continent. There were however drawbacks to this piecemeal development. As different companies used different gauge this involved trans-shipment from one set of ruling stroke to another at certain main junctions. The lines had not been built to a plan. They were designed to integrate India into a single economic unit but rather to enable military control, to elevate famine and to open India to foreign trade. Many lines were built linking hinterland to coast

rather than region to region. This tended to harm internal trade and resulted in industrial concentration on the coast. The railway building posts certain ecological problem such as interference with natural drainage line and deforestation in the larger context. All India was brought within the orbit of the world economy.

When India was beginning to layout railways Marx recognised that the system was "truly the forerunner of modern industry".

The results of the development Railways are-

a. The consolidation of the country was promoted.
b. The concept of one country and one people was strengthened because the travel increased contact between peoples of different provinces.
c. The process of removing differences and assimilation accelerated. It intensified social mobility, which powerfully aided in the growth of the national consciousness.
e. It assisted in the stimulation of production. The railways brought the development of internal and external trade.

LET US KNOW MORE

The lines directly constructed by the State Agency:

1. Indus Valley
2. Northern Punjab
3. Rajputana
4. Malwa
5. North Bengal

The Government of India took the direct management of;

- East Indian Railway- January 01, 1925
- The Great Indian Peninsular Railway- June 30, 1925
- The Burma Railways- January 01, 1929
- Southern Punjab Railways- January 01, 1930

8.5 PORTS AND WATERWAYS

History of water transport can be dealt under two headings;

i. Inland waterways
ii. Oceanic waterways

Inland Waterways: India is not favoured by rivers which could serve as natural waterways as in England. While rivers in northern India (The Ganges, Yamuna, Brahmaputra) are navigable for hundreds of miles above their mouths, this is generally not so in the case of rivers in south India. Some of them are not navigable while some are navigable only at and near the mouth or during rainy season. Inland Waterways if properly developed would relieve congestion in the railways system and serve the needs of small scale transport in the country. It may also be possible to adopt at least to some extent the irrigation canals for navigation purposes. Regulation, development and control of the rivers and waterways through provincial and inter-provincial commissions for the benefit of agriculture and industry were suggested by the National Planning Commission (1938). The

Central Waterways Irrigation and Navigation Commission is carrying out an exhaustive investigation into the possibilities of extending inland navigation by means of new construction or revival of old waterways.

Oceanic Waterways: India might well aspire to become one of the principal carriers of the world trade on account of her extensive seaboard and her favourable geographical position. Till about the beginning of the 19th century, India could be spoken of as a great sea-faring country. Ship-building was in so excellent a condition in India that ships could be and were built which sailed to the Thames in company with British-built ships and under the convey of British frigates. However the introduction of iron-made ships deprived India of her differential advantage in respect of timber.

Maritime transportation in India is managed by the Shipping Corporation of India, a government owned company that also manages offshore and other marine transport infrastructure in the country. The only Indian state with three ports is Tamil Nadu they are Ennore, Chennai and Tuticorin.

8.6 POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH SERVICES

There was a sort of a system of postal communication through personal carriers moving on horses or on foot that operated during the pre-Mughal and Mughal periods. The system was continued by the East India Company during the days of its early rule. The credit for introducing the present system of uniform postage throughout India and the payment for postal service through postal stamps (instead of cash as during the previous period) goes to Lord Dalhousie. In his Minute of February 1856, Lord Dalhousie described the introduction of uniform postal service in India as a departmental revolution having widespread and generally beneficial consequences. It was also during Lord Dalhousie's regime that electric telegraph made its appearance in India. The strategic value of this extremely rapid means of communications was quickly appreciated. On the basis of a report submitted by Dr. W.O' Shaughnessy a telegraph line between Calcutta and was installed in 1853. The first message on this line being sent on 2nd march 1854 covering a distance of about 800 miles. By 1855 about 4000 miles of telegraph lines had come been installed. Through development of postal, telegraph and telephone facilities proceeded fairly steadily in the country, relative to the development of these facilities in developed countries, the pace of their development in India was very slow. As regards telegraph offices in 1950-51, their number was only about a quarter of the number of post offices. The post and telegraph departments after independence envisaged setting-up of a post office in every village with a population of 200 or above. The plan also envisaged expansion of telegraphic and telephone facilities in the country.

Postal System-

The postal system in colonial India did not emerge merely as a communication network, but gradually evolved into a crucial economic and financial institution. In its early phase (mid-late 19th century), the post office was primarily established by the colonial state to facilitate administrative communication and imperial control across vast territories. However, as the network expanded geographically-reaching towns, villages, and remote regions-it began to acquire a wider social and economic role. A key turning point in this

transformation was the introduction of money order services in the late nineteenth century. These allowed migrant workers-both within India and overseas—to send remittances safely to their families. According to Tumbe (2015), this system became foundational to what he calls a "money order economy," linking labour migration with rural livelihoods and making the post office an essential intermediary in everyday financial life. Another major development was the growth of postal savings schemes, which mobilised small deposits from ordinary people. These schemes were especially significant because they reached populations excluded from formal banking—rural households, low-income groups, and small savers. Over time, the post office became a trusted institution for secure savings, particularly where banks had little presence.

Telegraph Services- The telegraph in colonial India emerged as a state-driven communication infrastructure in the mid-19th century, primarily motivated by administrative and military needs rather than commercial ones. Its development began experimentally in the late 1830s and 1840s, when early lines were tested around Calcutta. A decisive shift occurred in the early 1850s when the colonial government approved a large-scale network linking major cities such as Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, and northern centres. By the mid-1850s, thousands of miles of telegraph lines had already been laid, and the network expanded rapidly thereafter across the subcontinent.

Andrabi et al. (2023) suggests that the telegraph had a significant and measurable impact on market functioning in colonial India, particularly in reducing price differences across regions. The telegraph improved the flow of information between geographically distant markets. Before its introduction, traders operated with delayed or incomplete knowledge about prices elsewhere. With telegraphic communication, price information could be transmitted almost instantly, enabling merchants to identify arbitrage opportunities-moving grain from low-price to high-price areas more efficiently. As a result, the telegraph connections reduced grain price dispersion by about 7-13%, even before the expansion of railways. This indicates that information alone—independent of transport improvements-played a key role in integrating markets. The effects were also rapid and widespread. Price convergence often occurred in the very first year a telegraph link was established, and neighbouring regions benefited through spillover effects.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following Question :

3. When did the first Railway line opened?
4. When did the Railway Board constituted?
5. Who introduced the uniform system of Postal service?

8.7 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, we have learnt about;

- The transport and communication system of Colonial India
- The condition and developments of Roadways
- The importance and growth of Railways in India

- The system of Ports and Waterways
- The development of Postal and Telegraph services

✓ 8.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q. No. 1: Lord Dalhousie
Answer to Q. No. 2: Grand Trunk Road
Answer to Q. No. 3: In 1853 between Bombay and Thane
Answer to Q. No. 4: In 1905
Answer to Q. No. 5: Lord Dalhousie

8.9 FURTHER READING

1. Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar. (2013) From Plassey to Partition. Orient Blackswan, New Delhi India
2. Desai, A.R. (2016) Social Background of Indian Nationalism, Popular Prakashan, New Delhi India
3. Desai, S.S.M. and Bhalerao, Nirmal. (2010) Economic History of India. Himalaya Publishing House, Mumbai India
4. Tumbe, Chinmay. (2015). Towards financial inclusion: The post office of India as a financial institution, 1880-2010 in The Indian Economic and Social History Review. 52 (4). Sage
5. Andrabi, Tahir, Bharat, Sheetal and Kuehlwein, Michael. (2023). Information and price convergence: Government telegraphs in British India in The Indian Economic and Social History Review. 60 (3). Sage

8.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)

1. Who revived the idea of a Highway connecting the Northern India with Bengal?
2. For what reason the district and village roads did not progress?
3. On what conditions were the Railways developed in India?
4. In which year did Dalhousie proposed a Railway system for whole country?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)

1. What were the results of Railways development?
2. Write short notes on: (a). Inland Waterways
   (b). Oceanic Waterways

C) Short Questions (Answer each question within 300 words)

1. Describe the development of transport and communication in colonial India.
2. Discuss about the importance of Railways in India.
3. Explain the development of Postal and Telegraph services.

UNIT 9 : DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL AND LEGAL INFRASTRUCTURE IN COLONIAL INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

9.1 Learning Obectives
9.2 Introduction
9.3 Growth of Modern Educational Facilities
9.4 Growth of Health Facilities
9.5 Legal systems of Modern India
9.6 Let Us Sum Up
9.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
9.8 Further Reading
9.9 Model Questions

9.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to-

- explain the infra-strcutural growth in Colonial India,
- explain the growth of educational and health facilities in Modern India, and
- discuss the development of legal system in Modern India.

9.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the development of communication system under the Colonial governance.

In this Unit, we will discuss the growth of infra-structure related to health, education and legal systems.

Colonialism in India functioned in various ways; as it penetrated deep into the social life of the colonized, it influenced their cultural fabric and strengthened the foundation of the colonial rule. The spread of British power to new areas, new problems, new needs, new experiences and new ideas led in the nineteenth century to more fundamental changes in the system of administration. But the overall objectives of imperialism were never forgotten. The western colonialism in India is not just the story of the process of the imposition of political control but also a saga of the establishment of the domination of western science, technology, medicine, education and legal system.

9.3 GROWTH OF MODERN EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

For the first 60 years of its dominion in India the East India Company- a trading, profit-making concern- took little interest in the education of its subjects. There were,

however, two very minor exceptions to this policy.In 1781, Warren Hastings set up the Calcutta Madrassa for the study and teaching of Muslim law and related subjects; and, in 1791, Jonathan Duncan started a Sanskrit College at Varanasi, where he was the Resident, for the study of Hindu law and philosophy. Both these institutions were designed to provide a regular supply of qualified Indians to help the administration of law in the courts of the Company.

Missionaries and their supporters and many humanitarians soon began to exert pressure on the Company to encourage and promote modern secular westernized education in India.

While the humanitarians, including many Indians, believed that modern knowledge would be the best remedy for the social, economic and political ills of the country, the missionaries believed that modern education would destroy the faith of the people in their own religions and lead them to adopt Christianity. A humble beginning was made in 1813 when the Charter Act incorporated the principle of encouraging learned Indians and promoting the knowledge of modern sciences in the country. The Act directed the Company to spend the sum of one lakh of rupees for the purpose. But even this petty amount was not made available by the Company authorities till 1823.

For years a great controversy raged in the country on the question of the direction that this expenditure should take. While one section of opinion wanted it to be spent exclusively for the promotion of modern Western studies, others desired that, while Western sciences and literature should be taught to prepare students to take up jobs, emphasis should be placed on the expansion of traditional Indian learning.Even among those who wanted to spread Western learning, differences arose on the question of the medium of instruction to be adopted in modern schools and colleges. Some recommended the use of vernacular languages, for the purpose, while others advocated the use of English.Unfortunately, there was a great deal of confusion on this question. Many people failed to distinguish between English as a medium and English as a subject for study and between Indian languages as medium and traditional Indian learning as the main subject of study.

The two controversies were settled in 1835 when the Government of India decided to devote the limited resources it was willing to spare to the teaching of Western sciences and literature through the medium of English language alone. Lord Macaulay, who was the Law Member of the Governor-General's Council, argued in a famous minute that Indian languages were not sufficiently developed to serve the purpose, and that "Oriental learning was completely inferior to European learning". It is to be noted that, though Macaulay's views betrayed prejudice against and ignorance of India's past achievements in the realms of science and thought, he was on solid ground when he held European knowledge in the fields of physical and social sciences to be superior to the existing Indian knowledge which though advanced at one time had stagnated too long and lost touch with reality. That is why the most advanced Indians of the time led by Raja Rammohun Roy fervently advocated the study of Western knowledge, which was seen by them as "the key to the treasures of scientific and democratic thought of the modern West". They also realized that traditional education had bred superstition, fear and authoritarianism.In other words, they realised that the salvation of the country lay in going forward and not in looking backwards.

In fact, no prominent Indian of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries deviated from this approach. Moreover, throughout the period of modern history the pressure exerted by Indians anxious to imbibe Western knowledge played an important part in persuading the government to expand its educational activities on modern lines.

The Government of India acted quickly, particularly in Bengal, on the decision of 1835 and made English the medium of instruction in its schools and colleges. It opened a few English schools and colleges instead of a large number of elementary schools. This policy was later sharply criticized for neglecting the education of the masses.In fact, the emphasis on the opening of institutes of modern and higher education was not wrong. If for nothing else, a large number of schools and colleges were needed to educate and train teachers for elementary schools. But along with the spread of higher education, the education of the masses should have been taken in hand.This the government would not do as it was not willing to spend more than an insignificant sum on education. To make up for the paucity of expenditure on education, the officials had recourse to the so-called ”downward filtration theory”.

Since the allocated funds could educate only a handful of Indians, it was decided to spend the money in educating a few persons from the upper and middle classes who were expected to assume the task of educating the masses and spreading modern ideas among them.Education and modern ideas were thus supposed to filter or radiate downwards from the upper classes. This policy continued until the very end of the British rule. It may also be pointed out here that even though education did not percolate downwards, modern ideas did to a large extent, though not in the form desired by the rulers.

Through political parties, the press, pamphlets, literature and public platform, though not through schools and textbooks, the educated Indians, or the intellectuals, spread ideas of democracy, nationalism, anti-imperialism and social and economic equality and justice among the rural and urban masses.If the educational system acted as the carrier of these ideas it did so indirectly by making available to its recipients some of the basic literature in the physical and social sciences and the humanities and thus stimulating their capacity to make social analysis. Otherwise its structure and pattern, aims, methods, curricula and content were all designed to serve colonialism.

The Wood’s Despatch (the document dispatched from the Court of Directors and popularly named after Sir Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control) of 1854 was another important step in the development of education in India.This is known all over India as the Magna Carta of English Education and therefore is a landmark policy in the early beginnings of modern education in the Indian subcontinent. The Dispatch asked the Government of India to assume responsibility for the education of the masses. It thus repudiated the “downward filtration” theory, at least on paper.In practice, the government did little to spread education and spent very little on it. As a result of the directions given by the Dispatch, Departments of Education were instituted in all provinces and affiliating universities were set up in 1857 at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, the famous Bengali novelist, became in 1858 one of the first two graduates of Calcutta University.

For all the loud claims that it made, the Government of India under the Company and later under the Crown did not really take serious interest in spreading Western

learning or any other learning in India. Even the limited effort that was made was the result of factors which had little to do with philanthropic motives.Of some importance in this respect was the agitation in favour of modern education by progressive Indians, foreign Christian missionaries, and humanitarian officials and other Englishmen.But the most important reason was the government's anxiety to economise on the cost of administration by getting a cheap supply of educated Indians to man the large and increasing number of subordinate posts in administration and British business concerns. It was manifestly too costly and perhaps not even possible to import enough Englishmen for the purpose.This emphasis on a cheap supply of clerks explains why the schools and colleges had to impart modern education, which fitted its recipients for their jobs in the westernized administration of the Company, and why these institutions had to emphasise English which was the language of the masters as well as the language of the administration.

Another motive behind the educational policy of the British sprang from the belief that educated Indians would help expand the market for British manufactures in India. Lastly, Western education was expected to reconcile the people of India to British rule particularly as it glorified the British conquerors of India and their administration.

The British thus wanted to use modern education to strengthen the foundation of their political authority in the country.

The traditional Indian system of education gradually withered away for lack of official support and even more because of the official announcement in 1844 that applicants for government employment should possess knowledge of English. This declaration made English- medium schools very popular and compelled more and more students to abandon the traditional schools.

A major weakness of the educational system was the neglect of mass education with the result that mass literacy in India was hardly better in 1921 than in 1821. As many as 94 per cent of Indians were illiterate in 1911 and 92 percent in 1921. The emphasis on English as the medium of instruction in place of the Indian languages also prevented the spread of education to the masses.It further tended to create a wide linguistic and cultural gulf between educated persons and the masses.

Moreover, because the students had to pay fees in schools and colleges, education was quite costly and became a virtual monopoly of the richer classes and the city-dwellers. For nearly one hundred years it was so very limited that it failed even to compensate for the ruin of the traditional educational system.

A major lacuna in the early educational policy was the almost total neglect of the education of girls for which no funds were allotted. This was partly due to the government's anxiety not to hurt the susceptibilities of orthodox Indians. Even more it was because female education lacked immediate usefulness in the eyes of the foreign officials since women could not be employed as clerks in the govern-ment.The result was that as late as 1921, only 2 out of 100 Indian women were able to read and write; and in 1919 only 490 girls were studying in the four top forms of high schools in the Bengal Presidency.

The Company's administration also neglected scientific and technical education. By 1857 there were only three medical colleges in the country at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. There was only one good engineering college at Roorkee to impart higher technical education and even this was open only to Europeans and Eurasians.

At the root of many of these weaknesses lay the problem of finance. The government was never willing to spend more than a scanty sum on education. As late as 1886, it devoted only about one crore of rupees to education out of its total net revenue of nearly Rs 47 crore.

Lord Curzon called for a Universities Commission in 1902 under the leadership of Thomas Raleigh, a law member of the Executive Council of the Viceroy. After the approval of the Commission's recommendations, comes the passage of the Indian Universities Act of 1904. The Act proposed changes in the organizational structure of Universities. Another commission was appointed called the Saddler Commission. Appointment was under the direction of Lord Chelmsford. Like other commissions, stress was on the significance of educating Indians using the mother tongue while reiterating the principle governing educational economy.

Armed with a strong determination to implement educational reforms, Hartog Committee (1929) was formed to inquire into all facets of the Indian educational system. The Committee identified numerous gaps and challenges in primary education and they are the following: majority of Indians are villagers, poverty, illiteracy, conservativeness, poor health of villagers, lack of teacher training, adoption of stereotype-laden and unscientific teaching methods, and lack of regulatory measures in schools. The Committee jointly recommended appointment of well-trained and highly qualified teachers and provision of security of teacher service

In the area of higher education the Committee has put forward the following measures: department examinations to be implemented in the recruitment of administrative services graduates, spreading political and social science to the common Indian, provision of employment opportunities for tertiary level graduates, promotion of efforts in raising higher education standards, building of extensive libraries, and establishment of affiliated, unitary residential and teaching universities

Sargeant Scheme of Education (1944) was also implemented during post war period to improve educational system in India. According to the Sargeant Plan of Education, education at the nursery level should target providing social experience and educating general behaviour on infants. For basic or primary education, the Committee considered making it compulsory and free and should cater children belonging to the 6-14 age. In higher education, the Sargeant education scheme suggested degree courses that can be completed within three years. Like Hartog, Sargeant also stressed the importance of vocational and industrial education.

9.4 GROWTH OF HEALTH FACILITIES

The evolution of public health in British India and the history of disease prevention in that part of world in the 19th and early 20th century provide a valuable insight into the period that witnessed the development of new trends in medical systems. The advent of infectious diseases and tropical medicine was a direct consequence of colonialism. The history of diseases and their prevention in the colonial context can be traced back to the epidemiology of infectious diseases, many of which are still prevalent in third world countries. It reveals the development of surveillance systems and the response to

epidemics by the imperial government. It depicts how the establishment of health systems under the colonial power helped to control disease in British India to improve the health of its citizens

The history of western medicine in India dates back to 1600, when the first medical officers arrived in India along with the British East India Company's first fleet as ship's surgeons. In 1757, the East India Company established political rule in India, which led to the development of civil and military services. A medical department was established in Bengal as far back as 1764, for rendering medical services to the troops and servants of the Company. In 1775, Hospital Boards were formed to administer European hospitals comprising of the Surgeon General and Physician General, who were in the staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Indian Army. In 1785, medical departments were set up in Bengal, Madras, and Bombay presidencies with 234 surgeons. The medical departments involved both military and civil medical services. In 1796, hospital boards were renamed as medical boards to look after the affairs of the civil part of the medical departments.

In 1857, the Indian Rebellion led to the transfer of administration of India to the Crown and different departments of civil services were developed. It wasn't until 1868 that a separate civil medical department was formed in Bengal. In 1869, a Public Health Commissioner and a Statistical Officer were appointed to the Government of India. In 1896, with the abolition of the presidential system, all three presidential medical departments were amalgamated to form the Indian Medical Services (IMS).

Medical departments were under the control of the central government until 1919. The Montgomery-Chelmsford Constitutional Reforms of 1919 led to the transfer of public health, sanitation, and vital statistics to the provinces. This was first step in the decentralization of health administration in India. In 1920-21, Municipality and Local Board Acts were passed containing legal provisions for the advancement of public health in provinces. The Government of India Act 1935 gave further autonomy to provincial governments. All the health activities were categorized in three parts: federal, federal-cum-provincial, and provincial. In 1937, the Central Advisory Board of Health was set up with the Public Health Commissioner as secretary to coordinate the public health activities in the country. In 1939, the Madras Public Health Act was passed, which was the first of its kind in India. In 1946, the Health Survey and Development Committee (Bhore Committee) was appointed by the Government of India to survey the existing health structure in the country and make recommendations for future developments. The Committee submitted its report in 1946 and the health of the nation was reviewed for Public Health, Medical Relief, Professional Education, Medical Research, and International Health.

Central asylums were established in Bengal, Bombay, Madras, United Provinces, and Punjab. Later, Government Mental Hospitals were established at provincial headquarters. Medical officers were encouraged to attend these facilities and conduct research for improving mental health. The military was the main beneficiary of the growing concern with the health of troops. High mortality rate among the British troops, as noted by the Royal Commission on the Sanitary State of the Army in India, made the Government to improve the sanitary administration. The history of sanitary work in British India began with the reports of the Royal Commission of 1859.The commission recommended the

establishment of a Commission of Public Health in each presidency and pointed out the need to improve sanitation and prevention of epidemics in civil society for improving the health of the British Army.Under the Military Cantonments Act of 1864, a sanitary police force was formed under the charge of military medical officers to improve military hygiene.The local self-government policies of Lord Ripon strengthened the efforts to improve sanitation by increasing the availability of funds at the local level. In 1885, the Local Self-Government act was passed and local bodies came into existence. These were now responsible for sanitation at the local level but the necessary staff was not provided by the Central Government. In 1912, the Government of India sanctioned the appointment of Deputy Sanitary Commissioners and Health Officers with the local bodies and released funds for sanitation. The history of vaccinations can be traced back to 1802 when a Superintendent General of Vaccination was appointed in India after the discovery of the small pox vaccine.

Local bodies were responsible for health administration in their respective territories. District boards constituted the local authorities for the non-municipal areas in the districts. The power conferred on these authorities in respect of health matters related to general sanitation, control of infectious disease, control of the purity of food and water supplies, etc.During the British period, hospital care was mainly provided for army personnel, and public health never went beyond sanitation and hygiene work in larger cities. However, it is an accepted fact that the British had left a good framework for developing a health care delivery system.

Thus, it is here noteworthy to mention that Government took certain steps in health administration in colonial India. They are as follows:

1. The appointment of Royal Commission to enquire into the health of the Army in India in 1859.
2. Reforms introduced by Government of India Act for Health, 1919.
3. Reforms introduced by Government of India Act for Health, 1935.

The above reports and Acts created top posts of various categories in the central and state governments, respectively. The Government of India Act of 1919 gave statutory sanction to decentralize the health administration to provinces which included medical administration, hospital administration, etc. The Act of 1935 further granted larger autonomy to provincial legislatures. The Centre further passed some legislation, such as the Quarantine Act 1825, Vaccination Act 1880, Medical Act 1886, Epidemic Diseases Act 1897, Indian Factories Act 1911, Poisons Act 1919, Indian Red Cross Act, Dangerous Drugs Act 1930, Indian Port Health Rules 1938, etc., to streamline health administration.

9.5 LEGAL SYSTEMS OF MODERN INDIA

The British laid the foundations of a new system of dispensing justice through a hierarchy of civil and criminal courts. Though given a start by Warren Hastings, the system was established by Cornwallis in 1793. In each district was established a DiwaniAdalat or civil court, presided over by the District Judge who belonged to the Civil Service. Cornwallis thus separated the posts of the Civil Judge and the Collector. Appeal from the District Court lay first to four Provincial Courts of Civil Appeal and then, finally, to the Sadar

Diwani Adalat. Below the District court were Registrars' Courts, headed by Europeans, and a number of subordinate courts headed by Indian Judges known as munsifs and amins. To deal with criminal cases Cornwallis divided the presidency of Bengal into four divisions, in each of which a Court of Circuit presided over by the civil servants was established. Below these courts came a large number of Indian magistrates to try petty cases. Appeals from the Courts of Circuit lay with the Sadar Nizamat Adalat. The Criminal courts applied Muslim Criminal Law in a modified and less harsh form so that the tearing apart of limbs and such other punishments were prohibited. The civil courts applied the customary law that had prevailed in any area or among a section of the people since time immemorial.

In 1831, William Bentinck abolished the provincial Courts of Appeal and Circuit. Their work was assigned first to Commissions and later to District judges and District Collectors. Bentinck also raised the status and powers of Indians in the judicial service and appointed them as Deputy Magistrates, Subordinate Judges and Principal Sadar Amins. In 1865, High courts were established at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay to replace the Sadar Courts of Diwani and Nizamat.

The British also established a new system of laws through the process of enactment and codification of old laws. The traditional system of justice in India had been largely based on customary law. Though they continued to observe customary law in general, the British gradually evolved a new system of laws. They introduced regulations, codified the existing laws and often systematized and modernized them through judicial interpretation.

The Charter Act of 1833 conferred all law-making power on the Governor-General-in-Council. All this meant that Indians were now to live increasingly under man-made laws, which might be good or bad but which had to be obeyed blindly and which could not be questioned as they were supposed to be divine and therefore sacred.

In 1833, the government appointed a Law Commission headed by Lord Macaulay to codify Indian laws. Its labours eventually resulted in the Indian Penal Code, the Western-derived Codes of Civil and Criminal Procedure and other codes of laws. The same laws now prevailed all over the country and they were enforced by a uniform system of courts. Thus it may be said that India was judicially unified.

The British introduced the modern concept of the rule of laws. This meant that their administration was to be carried out, at least in theory, in obedience to laws, which clearly defined the rights, privileges and obligations of the subjects and not according to the personal discretion of the ruler. The rule of law was to some extent a guarantee of the personal liberty of a person. It is true that previous rulers of India had been in general bound by tradition and custom. Under the British rule administration was largely carried on according to laws as interpreted by the courts though the laws themselves were often defective.

The Indian legal system under the British was based on the concept of equality before law. This meant that in the eyes of the law all men were equal. The same law applied to all persons irrespective of their caste, religion or class. Previously the judicial system paid heed to caste distinctions and had differentiated between the so-called high born and low born. For the same crime lighter punishment was awarded to a Brahmin than

to a non-brahmin. Similarly, in practice Zamindars and nobles were not judged as harshly as the commoner.

There was, however, one exception to this excellent principle of equality before law. The Europeans and their descendants had separate courts and even laws. In criminal cases they could be tried only by European judges. Many English officials, military officers, planters and merchants behaved with Indians in a haughty, harsh, and even brutal manner. There emerged another type of legal inequality. Justice became quite expensive as court fees had to be paid, lawyers engaged and the expenses of witness met. The complicated laws were beyond the grasp of the illiterate and ignorant peasants. Moreover, the widespread prevalence of corruption in the ranks of the police and the rest of the administrative machinery led to the denial of justice. Officials often favoured the rich. In contrast, the system of justice that had prevailed in pre-British times was comparatively informal, speedy and inexpensive.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following Questions :

Q.1. Who was Thomas Raleigh?

Q.2. Name the Magna Carta of Modern Indian education?

Q.3. Who were the munsif's?

Q.4. Where was the IMS (Indian Medical Services) formed?

9.6 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, we have learnt that-

- The British established educational institutions in India
- The British put forward policies for the health and legal benefit of the general people.

9.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q. No. 1 : Viceroy's Executive Council Member (Law)
Answer to Q. No. 2 : Wood's Despatch
Answer to Q. No. 3 : Indian judges
Answer to Q. No. 4 : 1896

9.8 FURTHER READING

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4. Harrison M., (1994), Public Health in British India: Anglo-Indian Preventive Medicine 1859-1914. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
5. Umair Mushtaq Muhammad (2009). Public health in British India: A brief account of the history of medical services and disease prevention in colonial India,Indian Journal of Community Medicine,vol.34,Issue.1,.
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9.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)-

Q 1: When was the first Superintendent General of Vaccination appointed?
Q 2: In 1857, how many Medical Colleges were there in India?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question within 150-300 words)-

Q 1: What was the significance of the Charter Act of 1833?
Q 2: State the recommendations of the University Commission of 1902?

C) Long Questions (Answer each question within 500 words)-

Q 1: State the development of the legal system under Colonial Rule.
Q 2: Explain the growth of health facilities under Colonial rule.

UNIT 10 : CURRENCY AND BANKING SYSTEM

UNIT STRUCTURE

10.1 Learning Objectives
10.2 Introduction
10.3 Currency System prior to the Company's rule
10.4 Currency System during the Company's Rule
- Revival of Currency and Exchange situation
- Gold Reserve

10.5 Second World War and its Effects on Currency
10.6 Formal and Informal Credit System
10.7 Emergence of Banking and Insurance
10.8 Let Us Sum Up
10.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
10.10 Further Reading
10.11 Model Questions

10.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- Explain the changes in the economy of the India as the English East India Company and English private traders became dominant in India from the 1750's;
- Explain the system of credit and the pattern of foreign exchange and
- Discuss the banking and insurance system promoted by British government in India.

10.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the development of social and legal infrastructure.

In this Unit, we will discuss the monetary system that is characteristic of the colonial system. We will discuss the currency and banking system.

10.3 CURRENCY SYSTEM PRIOR TO THE COMPANY'S RULE

Under the Mughals, the currency system was very well organized. A high level of purity of metals was also achieved. Silver coin was the base of the fiscal and monetary system. The silver coin was used during Delhi Sultanate for long as tanka. Sher Shah for the first time standardized the silver coin. It was called rupaya and had a weight of 178

grains (troy). During the Mughal period, the silver rupaya was the main coin used for business and revenue transactions. The Mughals issued a gold coin called asharfi or muhr. This coin was mainly used for hoarding purposes and also for giving in gift. The most common coin used for small transactions was the copper dam. Further, for very petty transactions kauris/cowries (sea-shells) were used in coastal areas.

Apart from the silver rupaya other types of coins were also used. The most important of these were mahmudis, silver coins of Gujarat. Even after the establishment of the Mughal rule in Gujarat it continued to be minted and used in Gujarat for commercial transaction.

In the Viyayanagar Empire, a gold coin called hun or pagoda was used. After the disintegration of Vijayanagar, its circulation continued in the kingdoms of Bijapur and Golkunda. In many Deccan kingdoms, an alloy of copper and silver called tanka was in use. After the expansion of the Mughals in Deccan a number of mints were established in that region to produce Mughal silver coins.

10.4 CURRENCY SYSTEM DURING THE COMPANY'S RULE

- **Revival of Currency and Exchange Situation**

In India, the monetary system built up by the Mughals was marked by a centrally directed system of coinage. The imperial coinage was unprecedented both in quantity and quality. Besides, the Mughal rulers also considered the right to strike sikka (or the coin) as the exclusive prerogative of the sovereign. Both these factors played a deterrent role in the growth of economic activities of the European trading companies in India, who had to depend on mints of the realm for their supply of cash. Further, due to the factors such as favourable balance of trade situation, absence of a market for European goods in India and the metal price disparity between India and Europe, these companies were obliged to finance their investments in India by importing precious metals. In doing so, either they sold the imported bullion to the Indian dealers, or took it to the imperial mints and got it converted into current coins for their own use.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century the process of rapid decentralization of the sovereign authority in India had started. The century is described as 'a period of transition' in which India had to pass through the strain and agony with rapid decline in her economic condition. The decline of the central authority of the Mughals was equated with the sharp downward trend in the Indian economy.

Currency played a vital role in the colonization of India by the British. For a trading Company that was always in a need of liquid cash for procurement of goods and its other commercial activities in India, control of the channels of money supply was crucial for its successful career. At the same time this was a subject that was linked with a number of internal and external factors. For example, the inflow-outflow of bullion through international trade resulted directly in the expansion-contraction of money supply, which in turn led to inflationary-deflationary price trends affecting the entire society.

The Company's revenue collection was able to finance not only its own investments in India, but it also opened up a regular stream of drain of wealth from India. It

was through its control over currency that the Company entered India's larger money market which during the pre-colonial regime was supported by a remarkable credit and banking networks. These networks suffered a severe blow due to its replacement by institutions fashioned on the European model by the Company. Thus, currency was one of the most potent tools in the hands of the colonizers. The drain of India's wealth by the Company, resulted in a serious of financial crisis for the Company.

Britain's economic dominion in the east was built upon the foundations of the Indian land revenues. Due to the monetization of land revenue, the currency reforms became inevitable. Thus, by 1806, a clear case in favour of silver monometallic was laid down which guided the future cause of currency reforms in India.

As a result of the Regulating Act of 1773, all the currency reforms were centered in Bengal. Similarly, when the Charter Act of 1793 confirmed and consolidated the supremacy of the Bengal presidency, the process of currency reforms through legislative enactments was instituted as part of the 'Cornwallis Code.' The Charter Act of 1833 created a central government in Bengal and empowered the Governor-General to make laws and regulations for India. The imperial government needed to create a uniform currency for its territorial possessions. By the end of 1835, a monetary union was established in British India. The abolition of minting rights of a number of Indian princely states and extension of British rupee into their territories was done simultaneously in the later years.

The Native Coinage Act, 1876, sought to give a definite form to this monetary union, by ensuring that the coins circulating in the princely states follow the standards of the British Rupee. The territorial expansion of the British during the post-1835 period saw the simultaneous introduction of the Company's Rupee which superseded the local currencies in the newly acquired territories. With the supply of this coin firmly secured in its hands, the Company was able to dominate the regional economies. Everywhere the sikka followed the flag.

- **Gold Reserve**

Gold standard means that the monetary authority holds sufficient gold reserves (100 per cent) to convert all of the representative money, it has issued, into gold at a promised exchange rate. However, originally, gold standard referred to actual circulation of monetary units in terms of gold. Under the gold standard, currency units were defined in terms of a given quantity of gold and were typically convertible into gold (and/or silver, in the case of a bimetallic system). The monetary unit was kept at a fixed gold value either by the direct convertibility of the paper or tokens into gold. The inter-war period made an innovation into a 'gold exchange standard'. Under this system gold was not in local circulation and yet prices were expressed in gold. In the post-war readjustment, the world reinvented gold standard which Goldenweiser (1929) described as the 'gold reserve standard' which is relatively independent of the specific legal provisions about convertibility of notes or the availability of gold for export. Thus, the phrase, **'gold standard'**, included a variety of standards which had the common feature of 'stable relationship', fluctuating only within the gold points, between a country's currency and its gold . The critical point of the system was the credibility of the official commitment to gold and such commitment was international. At any point of time the total demand for gold was much greater than its

limited supply, and hence the quantity of gold available in the world was smaller to sustain the ever growing modern-day economic activities among the countries. The gold standard was nearly universal in operation at the outbreak of war in 1914 (Hawtrey, 1919). It was also seen that the gold standard gave uniformity to the monetary unit, not only in time, but in space too. In the literature, the period from 1880 to 1914 has been widely referred to as the 'classical gold standard'

10.5 SECOND WORLD WAR AND ITS EFFECTS ON CURRENCY

During the Second World War, India's international financial position was transformed. The UK had enormous military expenditures for its own troops in India and also financed local costs of allied troops under Lease-Lend arrangements. Indian war finance was much more inflationary than in the UK and prices rose threefold, so these local costs of troop support were extremely high in terms of sterling, as the exchange rate remained unchanged. As a result, India was able to liquidate $1.2 billion of pre-war debt and acquired reserve assets of $5.1 billion, ending the war a large net creditor. These new assets and the disappearance of the colonial drain gave a formidable boost to post-war development politics.

10.6 FORMAL AND INFORMAL CREDIT SYSTEM

The elaborate credit network that indigenously developed in India supported a monetized system of exchange 'by allowing claims to money to be used for making payments and settling obligations. The most popular Indian credit instrument was the hundi. It not only facilitated transfer of money between places as distant as Calcutta and Bombay or Benares and Nasik, but also served as an 'important source of banking capital. The English Company, like their many other European competitors in India, made extensive use of hundis for cash remittances. During the period between 1757 and 1797, during which the scarcity of silver remained a cause of concern for the East India Company, the inter-presidency as well as intra-presidency remittances were largely carried out through hundis. Thus, for remittances of funds and proceeds and profits of trade, hundis were the most crucial instrument of Indian banking system. The traditional system of credit was challenged by the entry of European players and also by the Company's repressive action. The agency houses as well as European private merchants made inroads into banking and credit networks. In 1790, for example, there were fifteen agency houses in Calcutta alone, which ran three banks and four insurance companies at Calcutta and speculated in public securities. As a result, though the hundi-based credit network of Indian merchant-bankers lost some of its turf to the new players, the credit instrument itself was able to sustain the challenge. The Company too came in direct clash with the sarrafs on a number of occasions. However, in spite of Company's efforts to bring these indigenous sarrafs and bankers under their control, 'their control over credit remained unimpaired. In their bid to extend their control over the financial and credit transactions, in Bengal, the Company imposed heavy restrictions in 1814, when elaborate Stamp Duty rules were by which 'every bond, promissory note, bill of exchange, letter of credit, ……

shall be written on paper... impressed with the government stamp'. However, hundis then, as they are till this date, operated not on any legal obligation but on trust. The hundis did not bear any seal of signatures, or even has an envelope, and yet they enjoyed universal acceptance throughout the country. Hundis continued to play a major role in Indian money market not only in the private but also in official transactions. So much so that during the twentieth century, a number of Indian princely states, the British Government and the Government of independent India adopted hundis as an 'official' credit instrument.

The formal credit delivery system started towards the close of the 19th Century through cooperatives aiming at bringing together the people of small means for promoting thrift and to mutually help them for development. In India the first Cooperative Act was enacted in 1904 facilitating the emergence of credit cooperatives. The cooperative movement took significant strides in between 1904 and 1912 establishing a network of 'Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Societies', 'Urban Credit Societies' and 8 'Central Cooperative Banking Unions' with the total number of membership of all societies to 26,739. The Government of India Act of 1919 made the cooperation as provincial subject-a significant shift on policy front. The 'Royal Commission on Agriculture' in India (1928) suggested that the cooperative movement should continue to focus on expansion of rural credit. In the year 1929, the British Government constituted 'Indian Central Banking Enquiry Committee' to investigate the matter pertaining to charging of exorbitant interest by the money lenders. Based on the recommendations of the Committee 'Bengal Money Lenders Act' (1940) was adopted for regulating the activities of money lenders by fixing interest rate cap on unsecured loans at 20 and secured loans at 15 percent per annum. By this time almost all the states started establishing cooperative societies. A 'Grain Bank' was registered in the Nizamabad district of Hyderabad state in 1943. The loans were made and recovered in kind. The concept of multi-purpose society was also introduced during pre-independence period. For example, 'Alamura Cooperative Rural Bank' in Andhra State was a society formed in an area irrigated by canals of Godavari River. This society provided small loans to needy members during slack season for the purchase of consumer durables to ensure that the members are saved from the clutches of money lenders.

10.7 EMERGENCE OF BANKING AND INSURANCE

The terms indigenous banking denote all kinds of private bankers, moneylenders, banking or money lending firms. In addition to making loans. They received deposits and dealt in hundis. The European trading Companies were dependent on the highly developed indigenous money and credit network of India for their requirements of cash, money-transfer, short-term loans and conversion of bullion into coins. All these functions were performed by the sarrais, who served not only as money changers, but also as full-fledged bankers by accepting deposits and lending money.

By 1820s a treasury system was established by the East India Company and as a result district treasury bills replaced the hundi as the basic instrument of official transaction. This phase was marked by the dominance of joint-stock banks established by English Agency Houses. By the turn of the century, Indian money market had become

quite extensive. Banks founded on European lines became indispensable. The Asiatic Bank was established in 1804 at Madras.

It may thus be seen that in the nineteenth century a new phase of government supported banks dominated the economic scene, especially in Madras and Bengal. In the new arrangement the indigenous banking suffered greatly as a consequence. The success of these bank notes prepared the ground for introduction of a full-fledged government paper currency in India in 1861.

The origin of the Indian banking industry may be traced to the establishment of Bank of Bengal in Calcutta (now Kolkata) in 1786. The objective of banks in the colonial era was mainly helping the colonial rulers in raising the resources for their empire building activities. India has a long history of both public and private banking. Modern banking in India began in the 18th century, with the founding of the English Agency House in Calcutta and Bombay. In the first half of the 19th Century three presidency banks were founded. After 1860, private banks began to appear and foreign banks entered into the markets. The beginning of the 20th century saw the introduction of joint stock banks. In 1935, the presidency banks were merged together to form the Imperial Bank of India, which was subsequently renamed the State Bank of India. Also that year, The Reserve Bank of India began operating. The banks till then were discharging the functions of a traditional financial intermediary.

At the time of Independence in 1947, the banking system in India was fairly well developed with over 600 commercial banks operating in the country. To ensure better coverage of banking needs of larger parts of economy and the rural constituencies, the Government of India nationalized the Imperial bank which was established in 1921 and transformed it into the State Bank of India with effect from 1955. Despite the progress in 1950s and 1960s, it was felt that the creation of SBI was not far reaching enough since the banking needs of small scale industries and the agricultural structure was still not covered sufficiently. This was partially due to the existing close ties commercial and industry houses maintained with the established commercial banks, which give them an advantage in obtaining credit. Additionally, there was a perception that banks should play a more prominent rule in India's development strategy by mobilizing resources for sectors that were seen as crucial for economic expansion. As a result, the policy of social control over banks was announced. Its aim was to cause changes in the management and distribution of credit by commercial banks

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following-

1. Name the silver coins of Gujrat in pre-colonial India.
2. Where was the huns or pagodas used?
3. What were the objective behind the introduction of banking system in India?
4. What was the effect of Second World War on the Indian market?
5. When was the SBI formed?

10.8 LET US SUM UP

After going through this Unit, you have learnt about-

- The currency system in the colonial and pre-colonial era.
- The banking and credit system that emerged in modern India.
- The effect of World Wars on Indian economy.

✓ 10.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q. No. 1: Mahmudis
Answer to Q. No. 2: Viajayanagar Empire
Answer to Q. No. 3: The objective of banks in the colonial era was mainly helping the colonial rulers in raising the resources for their empire building activities.
Answer to Q. No. 4: Indian war finance was much more inflationary than in the UK and prices rose threefold.
Answer to Q. No. 5: 1955

10.10 FURTHER READING

1. Habib, Irfan. (2013). Agrarian System of Mughal India 1556-1707 Cup, Bombay, India
2. Chaudhuri, Tapan Ray. and Habib, Irfan (ed. 1982). The Cambridge Economic History of India, Vol-I. Cup. London.

10.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (answer each question within 50 words)-

1. What is “hundi”?
2. Who is a “sarraf”?

B) Short Questions (answer each question within 150 words)-

1. Write a short note on- Currency system under the pre-British rule
2. Explain the Credit System in Colonial India.

C) Long Questions (answer each question within 300-500 words)-

1. Discuss the banking system introduced under the colonial system.
2. Discuss the effect of World Wars on the Indian economic scenario.

UNIT 11: GROWTH OF MODERN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM

UNIT STRUCTURE

11.1 Learning Objectives
11.2 Introduction
11.3 Indigenous System of Education
11.4 Educational Policies during Colonial India
11.5 Contribution of the Missionaries
11.6 Contribution of Modern Indian Educationalist
11.7 Let Us Sum Up
11.8 Further Reading
11.9 Answers to Check Your Progress
11.10 Model Questions

11.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to-

- explain the system of education that prevailed before the advent of the colonial administration
- explain the changes brought about by the colonial administration in the education system in India
- describe the contribution of the Christian missionaries in spreading education in India and
- discuss the contribution of the modern Indian educationalist.

11.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we have discussed the currency and banking system of India.

In this Unit, we will discuss the modern educational system including the indigenous and colonial education system.

11.3 INDIGENOUS SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

The indigenous system of education consisted of Muslim Maktabs and Madrasas, Hindu Pathsalas, the Tolls of Bengal, Agraharas of southern India. The medium of instruction in these institutions was Sanskrit, Bengali, Hindi, Urdu, Persian, Telugu, Tamil etc. Provision for imparting higher education existed in Madrasas and other centers of higher learning. The importance of these institutions in fulfilling the educational needs of the Indian masses cannot be underestimated. Due to the unsatisfactory financial condition,

these institutions were declining gradually. Most of them were held in temples, private dwellings or sheds or the houses of the teachers themselves.

These institutions had hardly any continuity and sprang up or vanished according to local demand or its absence. As a rule, they were not communal in their working and were opened to all who could afford to pay for schooling. Most of the teachers were Brahmins and accepted teaching profession not for the profit in cash or kind but more for the respectability associated with it. The pupils of the indigenous schools came from different communities although the children of the upper classes formed the large majority. These schools taught the rudiments of reading, writing and arithmetic. These institutions were the main agency for the spread of mass education. The size of the school was generally small. At any time during the year the pupil could join the school and followed his own pace of study. The chief merit of the indigenous system of education was its adaptability to local environment and popularity they had earned by its existence under a variety of economic conditions. The lack of training and sound education of teachers in general, the narrow and limited curriculum and the severe forms of punishment adopted, were some of the short comings of the indigenous system of education.

The British Government crushed down the indigenous educational system, which had been prevalent in our country from time immemorial. Gradually the network of indigenous schools disappeared and a few new schools cropped up.

The expansion of education in India can be attributed to the efforts of Christian missionaries. Their earliest activities were confined mainly to elementary education. In different parts of the country elementary schools were established by them. Whatever might have been the nature and character of schools established by them, there is no denying the fact that they introduced a new phase in education of the country, which exercised a vital influence on the existing system of education.

11.4 EDUCATIONAL POLICIES DURING COLONIAL INDIA

The modern system of education was introduced in India during the British period at the cost of the traditional indigenous education system. The latter declenid gradually because of political turmoil and lack of a strong centralised political authority and want of patronage.

The development of education system during the British period was determined by the needs of the colonial powers. The East India Company became a ruling power in Bengal in 1765. Warren Hastings set up the Calcutta Madrasa in 1781 for the study of Persian and Arabic. In 1791, Jonathan Duncan established a Sanskrit College at Benares for the learning of laws, literature and religion of the Hindus. In the Judicial Department Indians conversant with Sanskrit, Arabic or Persian were required to sit as assessors with English judges. Besides, the knowledge of Persian and vernaculars was valued in the political department for correspondence with rulers of Indian states. The clerical staff in the revenue and commercial departments had contacts with uneducated masses and for them knowledge of vernaculars was a must.

The Charter Act of 1813, forms a turning point in the history of Indian education. The Charter Act made it obligatory on the part of the East India Company to spread

education in India. For the first time, the Governor General- in -Council was bound to keep aside a sum of not less than 1 lakh rupees for education. This Act produced two major changes: one was the assumption of a new responsibility towards native education, and the other was a relaxation of controls over missionary activity in India. Section 43 of the Charter Act 1813 had no directions regarding the methods to be employed to promote learning among the natives.

The vagueness of the Charter Act of 1813 intensified the educational controversy in India. One group was of the Orientalists who wanted the promotion of Indian education through the medium of Sanskrit, Arabic, and Persian whereas the other group was of Anglicists who were in favour of developing western education in India through the medium of English. The fund was kept unspent till 1823 due to the controversy. That's why the recommendations of the Charter Act of 1813 were delayed until 1823 when the Governor General in Council appointed a General Committee of Public Instruction (G.C.P.I.) for the Bengal Presidency to look after the development of education in India. As a result of the Orientalist-Anglicist controversy, the spread of education in India was halted until 1835, when Macaulay's Resolution provided a somewhat clear picture of the British education policy.

The Charter was eventually renewed for to years in 1833 and it added a Law Member to the Executive Council of the Governor General of Bengal. The first Law Member to be appointed was Macaulay. Macaulay rejected the claims of Arabic and Sanskrit as against English because he considered that English is the key to modern knowledge. In his Minute he stated that British government aim of the to spread European literature and science among Indians and so all the money granted for education should be spent for that purpose through English medium. His Minute ultimately decided the aims, means, medium and policy education in India. Ultimately Macaulay in his Minutes of 1835 instituted an education policy in support of the British Raj which denigrated Indian languages and knowledge and established the hegemonic influence of English as medium of colonial 'instruction' (not education).

In the beginning of 19th century the British rulers aimed to create a group of loyal Indians in favour of the Government. This they wanted to achieve though educating the higher classes by the Filtration Theory". According to this famous doctrine, "Education was to permeate the masses from above…" After educating the people from the higher class, the responsibility of educating the masses could be left to them.

(The British rulers needed educated employees to run the commerce and administration.)

The Government did not receive sufficient funds for educating the masses. As a result, the people educated on British lines through English medium would get appointed in Government services and as result the British would exert control over the masses indirectly.

In 1854, Wood's Despatch (Named after Charles Wood) was enacted which decided the educational policy of the Company Government. The function of education was to diffuse European knowledge in arts, philosophy, science and literature. English and vernacular languages of India would be the medium for the diffusion of European knowledge. An immediate outcome of this Despatch was the passing of the three

University Acts of 1857 establishing universities at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay and the creation of an Education Department in each province of British India.

The Indian Education Commission (1882) recommended the complete withdrawal and the transfer of all primary schools to the control of local self-government bodies such as municipalities and local boards. Thus it made the Government free from responsibility.

The major recommendations of the Commission included:

- Encouragement and support to indigenous schools for extending elementary education by declaring elementary education of the masses as the most important priority
- Freedom to the management committees for choosing vernacular language as a medium of instruction depending on the local needs;
- Establishment of secondary schools by the state, and setting up of primary schools with the support of local people;
- Gradual transfer of all government secondary schools to local native management committees with due consideration of maintenance of standards and quality of education;
- Bifurcation of secondary education into two streams—one leading to the entrance examination of the universities and the other of a more practical character preparing the students for commercial jobs.

The Calcutta University Commission was appointed by the Government of India in 1917 to inquire into the condition and prospects of Calcutta University under the chairmanship of Dr. Michael Sadler, the Vice-Chancellor of Leeds University. The major recommendations were –

- The Intermediate Classes of the university were to be transferred to Secondary Institutions;
- The duration of under-graduate courses for the first degree should be increased to three years with a provision of Honors courses;
- A Board of Secondary and Intermediate Education should be established for the purpose of reorganizing High School and Intermediate education on the lines recommended by it and for holding the Matriculation and Intermediate examinations;

In the year 1919, the Government of India passed a resolution known as Government of India Act, 1919, which is otherwise known as Montague-Chelmsford Reform. By this Act, education became the responsibility of Indian ministers however, there were drawbacks and education suffered. By this act finance was under the British Control and hence Indian education system suffered due to back of found. The Hartog Committee of 1929 pointed out that there was wastage and stage action in Indian education.

11.5 CONTRIBUTION OF THE MISSIONARIES

Ideally Christian missionaries aimed to spread education to eradicate the practices and behaviors of natives like Idol worship, polytheism, bigotry, polygamy and many

superstitions which they considered to be much uncivilized. Their ultimate aim was to proselytize the native population and prove the falsehood of the native religions. Regular Bible lessons were supposed to become the norm in the schools.

Getting employment under colonial government was the only major motive for Indians to pursue the education. This forced the Christian missionary schools to devote major part of their school time towards exam preparation rather than in spiritual or religious engagement. Any missionary school getting government funds could not force students to take religious lessons. They had to go through regular inspections by the government agencies with regard to compliance with the government rules and regulations.

Failure and difficulty in convincing students to accept Christianity, social and political influence in running the schools and pressure from back home forced Christian missionaries to take up the educational and later social cause of depressed castes and widows very seriously. They worked as intermediaries for the depressed class. In this manner Christian missionaries spearheaded the organization of untouchables as a strong pressure group.

The other group that the Christian missionaries brought within its fold of empovering were the widows. They started educating them and later on got them recruited as the teachers and practitioners of medicine for their missionary enterprises. Families in Indian society though initially resisted these moves by missionaries they gradually came to accept it. The missionaries' pioneered girl's education by opening many schools exclusively meant for girls. They intervened actively in the ban of sati system and promotion of girl's education and widow remarriage.

Impact of Christian missionary Education

V Subramaniam says that Indian nationalism at first took place as a religious counter propaganda to the activities of Christian missionaries in India. He justifies this by saying that people like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Annie Besant, B G Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi and many others used religious symbolism for the political awakening of natives. Religious counter propaganda was very effective also because of the perception of Christianity as a religion of the rulers. Even though the British were very cautious in bringing in the Christian missionaries and discouraged the missionary activity; the association of Christian missionaries with that of the colonial government by the natives could not be avoided. The activities of both colonial government and Christian missionaries in effect had cumulative negative consequences for each other. The missionary activities of conversion, and their use of education as a means of carrying out conversion along with the education of the untouchables and women hurt the sentiments of the natives; on the other hand government policies like the employment of Englishmen over the natives to the top posts in administration triggered resentment. These factors together led the nationalists to work on the counter religious propaganda.

Howevere, the missionaries contributed to the social level are of the oppossed clases like the Dalits, women etc. They advocated for education, to fight social civils.

11.6 CONTRIBUTION OF MODERN INDIAN EDUCATIONALIST

- Swami Vivekananda

He was not only a social reformer, but also an educationist who was born at Calcutta in 1863. If education is viewed as the most powerful instrument of social change, his contribution to educational thought is of paramount importance. According to him education is a continuous process; it should cover all aspects of life - physical, material, intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual. He wanted to free India from the four major evils-1) priest-craft, 2) poverty 3) ignorance 4) tyranny of the wise. His educational thought has very great significance today because modern education has lost much of its connection with human values. He suggested that education should not be for stuffing some facts into the brain, but should aim at reforming the human mind. True education to him, was not for the carrier, but for the contribution to the nation. He died in 1902 when he was just 39 years.

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy

The Maker of modern India, the founder of the greatest socio- religious reform movements, Brahmo Samaj, Raja Ram Mohan Roy was an Indian religious, social, educational reformer and humanitarian, who challenged traditional Hindu culture and indicated the line of progress for Indian societies under British rule. Raja Ram Mohan Roy may rightly be called the precursor of the modern system of education in India. His moral earnestness and energy, his boldness of imagination mark out Raja Ram Mohan Roy not mere as 'great educational reformer but as a Nation builder'.

He realized very early on that a synthesis of both the eastern and western cultures was necessary to bring progress. He was in favour of western knowledge of science and literature. He created major opinion in favor of the English education. His ideas of western education helped the Government of Lord William Bentinck to introduce European learning in India. The great contribution of Ram Mohan Roy to the system of modern education was his emphasis on the study of modern Indian languages. He also advocated the right for the education of women. Although the concept had already been put forward by missionaries, it was the Raja who helped to popularize it among the Hindus. He said that the education of women was in keeping with ancient religious traditions and beliefs. The Brahma Samaj did great service in removing the popular prejudices against the education of women that were the prevalent in the Hindu society and the credit for this goes mostly to Ram Mohan.

He set up the Hindu College at Calcutta with the help of David Hare. In 1826, he established the Vedanta College, where he insisted the synthesis of oriental and western knowledge. In the new system of education, he introduced the subjects of practical use like mathematics, philosophy, chemistry and anatomy with other useful sciences. He authored many books in different languages. He translated ancient Indian works on religion and philosophy into Bengali. He made his newspapers 'Sanvad Kaumudi' and 'Miratul Akhbari' vehicles to carry his thoughts to the people.

- **Maulana Abul Kalam Azad**

November 11 has been celebrated as the National Education Day since 2008 to commemorate the birth anniversary of independent India's first education minister – Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was born Abul Kalam Ghulam Muhiyuddin on November 11, 1888.

Post-independence, education was considered as a fundamental pillar in nation building. Speaking at All India Education on January 16, 1948, Abul Kalam had said, "We must not for a moment forget, it is a birthright of every individual to receive at least the basic education without which he cannot fully discharge his duties as a citizen."

When he was given the charge of the Education Minister the nation was suffering from widespread illiteracy. Understanding the fundamental role of education, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad' as the Chairman of Central Advisory Board of Education, gave impetus to Adult Education and Literacy. Not only did he lay emphasis on elementary education but also propagated diversification of secondary education and vocational training.

- **Sir Syed Ahmed Khan**

Born on October 17, 1817, **Sir Syed Ahmad Khan** was a reformist, philosopher and educationist. His contribution in uplifting the Muslim society cannot be ignored. He believed that the future of Muslims was doomed by the rigidity of their orthodox outlook, and began to promote Western-style scientific education by founding modern schools and journals and organising Sir Syed Ahmad Khan not only expounded the theory of democratizing education but also made relentless efforts towards achieving parity with Europe in terms of education.

With his zeal and dedication Sir Syed Ahmed Khan revolutionised the way Indians were educated. Sir Syed Ahmad Khan remarked that ignorance and lack of education was the major reason why Indians were poor despite India being rich in resources.

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was a great votary of women's right to education which was evident from his views on Muslim personal law. He greatly differed from other Muslim scholars on questions of divorce and women rights, and he also condemned domestic violence against women in the strongest words. Sir Syed established the Scientific Society in 1863 to inculcate scientific temper among the youth, particularly Muslim youth since it was perceived that they had lagged behind in modern scientific pursuits which were considered western and anti-religion in most parts of northern India. In 1875 Sir Syed established the Mohammedan Anglo Oriental College.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Fill in the blanks:

1._____ established the scientific society in 1863.

2._____ was the first Indian who founded a reformist movement in India.

3._____ was the shortcoming of the indigenous system of education.

4._____ established the Hindu College.

11.9 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit we have learned about:

- The system of modern western education introduced by the British Raj in India.
- The contribution of the modern Indian educationalist towards the development of Indian education.

✓ 11.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q. No.1: Sir Syed Ahmed Khan
Answer to Q. No.2: Raja Ram Mohan Roy
Answer to Q. No. 3: Limited curriculum
Answer to Q. No. 4: Ram Mohan Roy

11.11 FURTHER READING

1. Desai, A.R. (2005). Social Background of Indian Nationalism. Delhi, India: Popular Prakashan
2. Ghosh, Suresh Chandra. (2007). History of Education in India. New Delhi, India Rawat Publications
3. Seth, Sanjay. (2007). Subject Lessons. The Western Education of Colonial India. London, UK: Duke University Press

11.12 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions(answer each within 50 words)

1. Who was Swami Vivekanand?
2. Who was Raja Ram Mohan Roy?

B) Short Questions (answer each within 150 words)-

1. State two provisions of the Central Advisory Board of Education, 1921.
2. Write a short note on Lord Curzon's educational policies.

C) Long Questions (answer each within 300-500 words)-

1. Explain the indigenous system of education prevailing in India prior to British rule.
2. Explain the contributions of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad towards modernizing Indian education.

UNIT 12: EMERGENCE OF THE MIDDLE CLASS

UNIT STRUCTURE

12.1 Learning Objectives
12.2 Introduction
12.3 Middle Class- Meaning
- Factors for its emergence
- Its importance in the socio-political setting

12.4 Let Us Sum Up
12.5 Answers to Check Your Progress
12.6 Further Reading
12.7 Model Questions

12.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to-

- explain the concept of middle class
- explain the factors that led to the emergence of the new social classes in India during the British rule
- discuss the role played by the Middle classes in the socio political setting of the nation

12.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the growth of modern education system that was the result of colonial policies and the untiring works of the Christian missionaries.

In the Unit we will be discussing about the rise of the middle class in the Indian society and its impact during the Colonial period. We will discuss the factors that resulted in the rise of the middle class.

The term middle class was coined by James Bradshaw in 1745 The term has had various and sometimes even contradictory meanings.

12.3 MIDDLE CLASS-MEANING

In medieval European feudal society, a middle class composed primarily of peasants who formed a new bourgeoisie based on the success of their mercantile ventures, eventually overthrew the ruling monarchists of their society and ultimately led to the rise of ruling capitalists.

The emergence of the social classes in India was the direct consequence of the establishment of a new social economy, a new type of state system and state administrative machinery, and the spread of new education during British rule.

These classes were unknown to the past Indian society, since they were primarily the offspring of the new capitalist economic structure which developed in India as a result of the British conquest and the impact of the British and world economy. The Indian people were reshuffled into new social groupings, new classes as a result of the basic capitalist economic transformation of Indian society.

The process of the rise of new social classes in different parts of the country and among various communities was however and uneven one. This was due to the fact that the new social economy spread both in time and tempo unevenly, since this spread depended upon the political power of Britain in India. The conquest of India by Britain resulting in economic transformation which it led to was not a single simultaneous event. India was subdued by Britain by installments and through stages. Different parts of the country became more or less economically transformed on the new capitalist basis in sequence of their political subjugation. Hence new social classes came into being earlier in those zones which came under British influence earlier. Bengal was among the first prizes which fell to British and where the British Government created, for the first time in Indian history, private property in land in the shape of Zamindari. Therefore it was in Bengal that two of the new social classes, the zamindars and the tenants came first into existence.

- **Factors for its emergence**

Primarily, the new classes came into existence as a result of the basic economic transformation brought about by various acts of the British Government, the penetration of Indian society by commercial and other forces from the outside capitalist world, and the establishment of modern industries in India.

The introduction of private property in land in the form of Zamindari and Ryotwari by the British Government brought into being the new classes of large estate owners, the zamindars and the peasant proprietors. Further the creation of the right to lease land brought into being such classes as tenants and sub tenants: the creation of the right to purchase and sell land together with the right to hire and employ labor on land, created conditions for the growth of the class of absentee landlords and that of the agricultural proletariat.

Instead along with the classes of zamindars, tenants and peasant proprietors, and land laborers, there developed in the agrarian area, on an increasing scale such groups as modern moneylenders, merchants who were intermediaries between the peasants and the market and absentee landlords interested only in securing rent. These classes and groups were unknown in pre-British Indian society.

Though the classes of moneylenders and peasants existed in rural India and pre British India, their function and position in the old economy were substantially different from those in the new economy. The moneylender in the old Indian society played almost an insignificant role. He occasionally lent money to the village agriculturalist and artisan, the interest strictly fixed by the village panchayat. Since their roles were transformed, the classes of modern merchants and moneylenders in agrarian areas might be described as ne social classes linked up with the new capitalist economy and performed functions which

were quite different from those that they had performed in the social economy of the medieval pre British economic society. The modern commercial bourgeoisie was also a new evolution. Under the British rule all production in India, rural or urban, agricultural or industrial became production for the market.

The new commercial classes that grew out of the new economic situation were of a different type from their counterparts in pre British India. The merchant classes traded in all production, rural and urban, agricultural and industrial in the country. They purchased agricultural produce from the zamindars, tenants, peasant proprietors, and sold it in Indian and international markets. They purchased industrial goods from the modern industrial enterprises and likewise sold them in the Indian and world markets.

The establishment of the railways and accumulation of profits and savings in the hands of the Indian trading class, a section of zamindars and wealthy members of the professional classes, which could serve as capital, led to the rise of Indian owned textile, mining and other industries and the growth of the new class of industrial bourgeoisie in the country. Along with this class emerged the new class of modern proletariat in India. Indian society now included in its composition such new groups as mill owners, mine owners and other owners of new capitalist enterprises; also such groups as factory workers, mine workers, railway workers, workers on the plantations.

Indian industries were established and developed at a rapid rate only in the later decades of the nineteenth century and thereafter. The industrial bourgeoisie and the working class grew in number, in proportion as these industries developed.

The professional classes comprising modern lawyers, doctors, teachers, and professors associated with modern educational institutions, managers and clerks working in modern commercial and other enterprises, officials functioning in state administrative machinery, engineers, chemists, technologists, agronomists, journalists and others, formed another new social group which evolved in Indian society during the British period. The economic, social and state system required, as personnel, cadres of educated Indians, versed in modern law, technology, medicine, economics, administrative science and other subjects. In fact it was mainly due to the pressing need of the new commercial enterprises and the administrative system which prompted the British Government to inaugurate modern education and to establish on increasing scale modern educational institutions in India.

Economically their knowledge and skill, artistic, scientific or technical, could be at the disposal of any citizen who could pay for it. Socially they became an important part of the capitalist society which evolved in India. Further these professional classes were trained in modern knowledge, in modern western sciences and arts. They were lawyers who studied and practiced the new jurisprudence and laws enacted by the British government; doctors who studied modern medicine; engineers who became acquainted with modern technological science; teachers and professors who studied and taught advanced modern social, political, economic, natural and other sciences, which developed in the west. They were journalist and writer who edited papers and published books which were sold in the market and the content of which was assumed by thousands of people. They were managers and officials who staffed the enormous and complex economic administrative state machinery of a politically and economically unified India and tackled complex problems affecting the life of whole nation.

In addition to the new classes enumerated above, there existed in the urban area, in every town and city, a big class of petty traders and shopkeepers, which had developed with the growth of modern cities and towns.

- **Its importance in the socio-political setting**

One striking characteristic of the new social classes was their national character. This was due to the fact that they were integral part of a single state regime. This endangered community of economic, political and other interests, of the members of the each of the new social classes on an all India national basis. As the individuals and groups comprising the class became conscious of this basic identity of interests, they felt an urge to organize themselves on an all India scale and start movement to advance their common interests on a national basis.

The new social classes which emerged on the basis and lived under the auspices of a single national economy and state rule, stood in sharp contrast to the old classes. The industrialist, the factory and transport proletariat, the modern merchants, the peasant proprietors, tenants, land laborers and even professional classes, had respective common interests and problems such as protection, ratio, wages and conditions of work, state regulation of prices, level of revenue imposition, freight, services and others in the economic field, or franchise, representation in legislatures, civil liberties for advancing their own group interests, and others in the political sphere.

This was why with the establishment and development of the new economic system, which brought into existence the contemporary capitalist society and centralized state regime in India, we observe that each new class urged by the compelling force of its specific common interests, as it became conscious, moved towards a national i.e. and all India organization, the bourgeoisie increasingly felt as a national bourgeoisie and built of its Indian Chamber of Commerce and Federations of Industries. The proletariat felt as a national proletariat and built in course of time its all India organizations such as the All India Trade Union Congress

All such social groups such as students, women, depressed classes, doctors, editors, and others, who as they became conscious of common interests, endeavored to organize themselves on a national scale and built organizations like the All India Women's Conference, All India Medical Practitioners' Association, the All India Journalist and Editors Conference and others. Even the Indian princes, the modified survival of the corresponding old class, organized themselves on an all India basis, in the Indian Chamber of Princes.

Another feature of the new Indian society was that while the new social classes moved towards national organization and strove to accomplish their respective ends, allying or struggling among themselves as the exigencies of their interests dictated, these classes, in varying degrees, increasingly became conscious of certain common interests of Indian people such as the development of productive forces and the general economic advance of the Indian society, increased control state power by the Indians and spread of modern education and culture. The enlightened sections of the new classes increasingly recognized the sectional advance of those classes was bound up with the general advance of the Indian society as a whole.; that for rapid development of industries, restoration and reorganization of agriculture was indispensable, and also that a

prosperous agriculture implied, as a pre requisite, the expansion of industries which would relieve overpressure on agriculture. They realized that the prosperity of the professional classes mainly depended on the general prosperity; and that spread of education and culture were vital pre requisites for social and economic progress.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following-

1. Who coined the term "Middle Class"?
2. What was the striking feature of the Middle Class?
3. Who formed the Indian Chamber of Princes?
4. Who were the intermediaries between the peasants and the market and absentee landlords?

12.4 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit we have learned –

- That the middle class grew in colonial India due to various factors
- The middle class consisted of the Indians who were educated on western lines, and belonged to the zamindar class.
- The middle class was instrumental in creating an awareness among the common people against the British

12.5 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q.No.1: James Bradshaw
Answer to Q.No.2: National character
Answer to Q.No.3: The Indian Princes
Answer to Q.No.4: Middle Men/ Money Lenders

12.6 FURTHER READING

1. Desai, A.R. (2005). *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*. Popular Prakashan. New Delhi, India
2. Joshi, Sanjay. (2010). The Middle Class in Colonial India OUP. London.
3. Chandra, Bipan (2005). Essays in Colonialism. Orient London, Delhi, India.

12.7 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short questions (answer each question within 50 words)-

1. Define the term middle class.
2. Mention one factor which led to the emergence of the new social classes in India.

B) Short answer questions (answer each question within 150 words)-

1. Explain why the rise of the new social classes in different parts of the country uneven.
2. Explain the factors that led to the emergence of the modern educational classes.

C) Long questions (answer each question within 300-500 words)

1. Explain the role by the new social classes in the socio-political setting of the country.

UNIT 13: REFORMATION AND WOMEN

UNIT STRUCTURE

13.1 Learning Objectives
13.2 Introduction
13.3 Reform Movements and Women
13.4 Social Impact
13.5 Women's Organization
13.6 Freedom Movement and Women
13.7 Let Us Sum Up
13.8 Further Reading
13.9 Answer to Check Your Progress
13.10 Model Question

13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit, you will be able to-

- state the impact of the reform movements on women.
- discuss about the emergence of women's organization in India, and
- discuss the contribution of women to the Indian freedom movement.

13.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the emergence of the Middle Class in Colonial India and its significance.

In this Unit, we will discuss the impact of reform movement on women and the role of women in freedom struggle. India witnessed a series of socio-religious movement in the nineteenth century. The influence of western education and thoughts had a vital role in awakening the people of India. Some educated Indian reformists advocated gradual reform rather than revolution. Similarly the British government brought to India new ideas such as equality, liberty, human rights from the Renaissance. These ideas led to several reform movements in different parts of India. Some great reformists were Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Aruna Asaf Ali and Pandita Ramabai. These reformists basically focused for betterment of position of women in India. Meanwhile, the British colonial government had also supported to them by adopting a number of administrative measures to improve the condition of women. Later on, women had a significant role to play in the Indian freedom struggle against the British colonial rule. Many women such as Sarojini Naidu, Annie Besant, Kasturba Gandhi, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay played an important role in the freedom struggle. This unit highlights the reform movement along with emergence of women organizations and role of women in the Indian freedom struggle against the British colonial rule.

13.3 REFORM MOVEMENT AND WOMEN

The social reformers of India had to work against great odds. It may be noted that women were basically accorded to low position in the Indian society and were also considered to be inferior adjuncts to men. Moreover, education was generally denied to then. Similarly, women had no independence economically in Indian society. Therefore, the 'women question' loomed large in the nineteenth century. It became the main question in the nineteen century British India rule because the British government had focused their attention on this particular aspect of Indian society. At the same time, reformers were found throughout India and they addressed a number of social issues, most of them relating to marriage and the importance of female emancipation. The social reform movement aimed at uprooting the social evils for general good of the society. However, the most important problem that attracted enlightened opinion was the need for a better deal for women in society, in the abolition of the cruel practices of sati and female infanticide, in condemnation of child marriage and polygamy and popularization of widow remarriage.

A number of administrative measures were taken by the British Government to improve the condition of women because of the efforts of the social reformers of India in the nineteenth century.

- **Abolition of Sati Practice**

It is noted here that the term ***sati*** literally means a 'pure and virtuous woman'. Interestingly, ***sati*** was applied in case of a devoted wife who contemplated perpetual and uninterrupted conjugal union with her husband life after life and as proof thereof burnt herself with her deceased husband funeral pyre. Initially, the practice of sati was a voluntary act but later it became a forced practice. During the medieval period, Emperor Humayun banned the evil practice of sati but could not implement properly. Hence, Emperor Akbar imposed restrictions on the practice of sati but to appease his Hindu nobility allowed it. Historically, the evil practice of sati found among many castes and every social level of the Hindu society of India. Similarly, the early Governor General of British India like Lord Cornwallis, Lord Minto and Lord Hastings had introduced several steps to ban the evil practice of sati but their steps were failed.

Raja Rammohan Roy (1772-1833) who was one of the great enlightened Indian reformers launched a campaign against the practice of sati. It is necessary to note here that Raja Rammohan Roy is known as the pioneer of women's rights in India and he founded the Brahmo Samaj at Calcutta on 20 August, 1828. Raja Rammohan Roy was well aware of the patriarchal attitude behind consent in the case of women committing sati practice. He clearly argued that Hindu scriptures like Manusmriti ,Shrutis and Smritis did not encourage the practice of sati. But he had faced lot of oppose from the Hindu conservatives who were against the abolition of sati because they believed that it was a part of their customs. Finally, Raja Rammohan Roy urged Willian Bantinck who was the then Governor General of British India to take necessary steps to ban the evil practice of sati. Lord William Bantinck passed Regulation XVII on December 4, 1829 by declaring it an offence. The regulation of 1829 was applicable in the first place to Bengal Presidency

alone but in 1830 ,it was extended in different part of India. However, it was the great landmark moments in the history of India.

- **Abolition of Female Infanticide**

Another cruel practice particularly common among the upper caste Bengalis and the Rajputs was the practice of murdering female infants immediately after birth. So, the deliberate killing of newborn girl child is called as female infanticide. The practice of murdering of female infants has a history spanning centuries. The British Government of India first came to aware about the cruel practice of female infanticide in 1789. Later , in 1817 , the British officials noted that the practice of female infanticide was so entrenched that there were entire taluks of Rajputs in Gujarat where no female children of clan existed. Meanwhile ,the British Government enacted the Bengal Regulations of 1795 and 1804 by which it was declared as illegal. Later, the British Government enacted the Female Infanticide Prevention Act in 1870 to protect female child in India

- **Widow Remarriage**

There was a time in India when women were only considered as the door to hell. It is interesting to note that widow did not permit to remarry among the upper castes in the nineteenth century. The life of widow was so miserable that they preferred death through sati practice rather than living life to hell. But some enlightened reformers like Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Keshab Chandra Sen had advocated widow remarriage. Meanwhile, the Brahmo Samaj supported to widow remarriage and did much to popularize it. However, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar made a fight against all types of rotten customs related to women in India. He took necessary activities to start the culture of widow remarriage in the country. At last, the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act was enacted on 26 July 1856. It may be noted that the draft of the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 was prepared and also passed by Lord Dalhousie. But at the time of implementation of this act, the Governor General of India was Lord Canning. The Hindu Widow Remarriage Act of 1856 legalised the remarriage of widow in India and also provided all rights and all inheritance to them. Later, Vishnu Shastri Pandit founded the Widow Remarriage Association in the 1850s. Meanwhile, Karsondas Mulji advocated widow remarriage in Gujarat. Some prominent workers like B.M. Malabari, Justice Govind Mahadeo Ranade and K. Natarajan also advocated for the right of widows to remarriage.

- **Prevention of Child Marriage**

Social reformers also focused on the matter of child marriage in India during the colonial period. However, the British Government also interested to prevent the child marriage. It was Keshab Chandra Sen who was one of the great social reformers, persuaded the British Government to pass the Native Marriage Act or Child Marriage Act in 1872. This Act made the marriageable age of a boy to be 18 years and for a girl 14 years. Later, due to effort of B.M. Malabari, the Age of Consent Act was enacted in 1891 which forbade the marriage of girls below the age of twelve. Further, the Child Marriage Restraint act enacted in 1929 which popularly called as the Sarda Act after its sponsor Harbilas Sarda which fixed the age of marriage for girls at 14 years. In free India, the

Child Marriage Restraint (Amendment) Act of 1978 fixed the age of marriage for girls at 18 years.

- **Education of Women**

The British Government also played very important role to imparting education for girls during the nineteenth century. However, the Christian Missionaries were the first to set up the Calcutta Female Juvenile Society in 1819. Meanwhile, J.E.D. Bethune founded the Bethune School in 1849 for women education. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar also established more than 35 girls' schools in Bengal and considered him as the pioneer of women's education. Jyotirao Phule was also a pioneer in women's education. He with the help of his wife, Savitribai founded a girls' school at Poona. Professor D.K. Karve established the first Indian Women's University in 1916. Meanwhile, Lady Hardinge Medical College opened in 1916 at Delhi. Thus, women education expanded in India during the British colonial period.

LET US KNOW MORE

Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar (26 September 1820- 29 July 1891) was a great scholar and social reformer. He received the title "Vidyasagar" from Sanskrit College due to his excellence performance in Sanskrit studies. He also wrote several book such as Bangalar Itihaas (1848), Jeebancharit (1850), Bodhadoy (1851), Kotha Mala (1856).

ACTIVITY

Make a list of the social reformers of India in the nineteenth century.

13.4 SOCIAL IMPACT

The social reform movement in the nineteenth century was responsible for many socio-economic and political changes in the life of women in India. The women came to aware about some evil and cruel practices related to women and also became conscious for emancipation of women. Social reformers brought changes in life of women by persuading people to give up old practices related to women and adopt a new way of life. Women also realized the adverse impact of such evil practices upon their walks of life. Due to the reform movement in the nineteenth century, the victimized condition of the women was improved a lot. The reform movement ultimately helped for their united struggle against the British colonialism in the freedom movement.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following-

Q.1: Name the Governor General of British India who abolished Sati practice?

Q.2: Who established the Brahmo Samaj?

Q.3: When was the Female Infanticide Prevention Act enacted?
Q.4: When was the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act enacted?
Q.5: When was the Child Marriage Restraint act enacted?

13.5 WOMAN'S ORGANIZATION

The first organizations for women were formed by men who belonged to the social reform organizations. Keshab Chandra Sen who was one of well known social reformer of the nineteenth century India , developed educational programme , a women journal and Bharat Ashram (Indian Hermitage) for upliftment of women in India. Women reformers like Pandita Ramabai Sarasvati (23 April 1858- 5 April 1922) also took up the cause of Women's upliftment. In fact, Pandita Ramabai is known as the first Indian Feminist. With help of M.G. Ranade, she set up the Arya Mahila Samaj in 1881 to promote the cause of women's education and deliverance from the oppression of child marriage. She also founded Mukti Mission for young widows and Krupa Sadan and Sarda Sadan in 1889 to destitute women. It is also noted that Ramabai Ranade (25 January 1863- 25 January 1924) , wife of M.G. Ranade was a pioneer of India's social reform movement related women issues. Ramabai Ranade founded the Hindu Ladies' Social and Literary Club in Bombay (present Mumbai) in 1904 to develop public speaking among women. In fact, she was the first women's right activists. Further, in 1910, Sarala Devi Chaudhurani formed the Bharat Stree Mahamandal in Allahabad to promote female education and considered it as the first women's organization in India. Many branch of the organization set up in Lahore, Allahabad, Karachi, Kolkata, Dhaka, Amritsar and Midnapur.

Women's India Association (WIA) was the first purely feminist organization to set up in 1917 at Adayar, Madras. Annie Besant was the first president of WIA and Margaret Cousins, S. Ambujammal, Saralabai Naik were the honorary founding members of WIA. The mission of the association was to battled against the social evils which ranged from a lack of education of girls, child marriage and denial of voting rights. Later, the National Council of Women for India (NCWI) was established in 1925 which was basically affiliated to the International Council of Women. It was the first all India women's organization intimately associated with an international organization. It provided a platform to voice Indian opinion in international forums. Mehribai Tata, who was wife of the elder son of Jamsetjee Tata played a key role in its formation and advancement. Due to its elitist nature, it failed to grow and become a significant national women organization in India. Hence, the All India Women's Conference (AIWC) was established in January, 1927 and registered in 1930 under the Societies Registration Act of 1860. It was the most truly 'Indian' women organization. Margaret Cousins played a key role of its formation. It is interesting note that the AIWC started with a secular agenda on women's education and marriage reform in Poona in 1927. Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay was one of the first secretaries of AIWC and Amrit Kaur was one of its founding members. It has become less elitist and still function in India. The AIWC has also become involved with women's political rights and all questions which affected women.

LET US KNOW MORE

territory and population, which is not subject to any other power or state. While Margaret Cousins (1878-1954) was an Irish suffragist and theosophist who immigrated to India in 1915. She was actively involved in Indian women's and nationalist movement. Margaret Cousins became the first women magistrate in India (1922).She also initiated first All Asia Women's Conference at Lahore in January 1931.

13.6 FREEDOM MOVEMENT AND WOMEN

The history of India Freedom Struggle against the British rule would be incomplete without mentioning the contribution of women. In fact, women of India fought with true patriotic sense and undaunted courage to get freedom from the foreign rule. It is necessary to mentioning here that while most of male freedom fighters were in prison, hence women were played significant role to mobilize the mass movement.

Women's participation in the freedom struggle against the foreign role can be noticed in the Great Revolt of 1857. In fact, Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi was the great heroine of the Revolt of 1857. Meanwhile, Chauhan Rani, Hazarat Mahal, Rani Bai led their armies into the battlefield against the British role.

The India Freedom Movement was mainly started with the establishment of the National Congress in 1885. It is found that ten women actively participated in the Indian National Congress Session held in Bombay in 1889. However, the Swadeshi Movement of Bengal in 1905 saw women's entry into the freedom struggle against the British role. In fact, Swadeshi movement marked the formation of several women's organization like Mahila Shilpa Samithi (1906-1918). Sarala Devi initiated certain steps to organize women into the Swadeshi movement. Women actively involved in the protest meetings held all over Bengal and some of these mainly women's gatherings during the period of Swadeshi movement.

However, the participation of women in public domain began with the Non-cooperation movement in 1920, when M.K. Gandhi inspired large number of women to join the movement. Women participated in the protest programme such as picket liquor shops and holding dharnas. Sarojini Naidu who was popularly known as 'The Nightingale of India' actively involved in the Non-cooperation movement. It is also noted that Sarojini Naidu was the first Indian women president of INC in 1925. Meanwhile, Urmila Debi, Suniti Devi were well known women freedom fighters during the Non-cooperation movement.

Later on, large number of women participated in the Civil Disobedience movement in 1930. During the famous Salt March, thousands of women joined with Gandhi. Women also participated in the protest march, picketing of foreign cloth and liquor shops. Mirdula Sanuthai, Hansa Metha, Avabtujgavau Gokhale, Jamkidevi were prominent women leaders during the Civil Disobedience movement. The women played a key role in organizing young people into the Vaanara Sena (Monkey Army). No doubt, the entry of women into the Civil Disobedience movement gave a new enlightenment into the further national movement, particularly in the Quit India movement.

The Quit India movement of 1942 was unique in sense that it witnessed the large scale participation of women. Usha Mehta, Matangini Hazra , Aruna Asaf Ali were the prominent women leaders of the Quit India movement. Usha Mehta operated a secret clandestine radio transmitter in Bombay. Matangini Hazra was a great freedom fighter who actively participated in the Quit India movement. She was shot dead by the British Indian police in the Tamluk Police station on 29 September 1942. She was popularly known as Gandhi Buri or Old lady Gandhi. Meanwhile, Aruna Asaf Ali became a famous leader of the underground movement in 1942. Meanwhile, Kanaklata Barua was a great freedom fighter of India in the Quit India movement of 1942. Interestingly, she was gunned down by the British police in front of Gohpur police station of Assam on 29 September 1942.

Further, women of India also joined in the Subhas Chandra Bose's Indian National Army. He formed a unit of brave Indian women, called as the Rani of Jhansi Brigade and also appointed Dr. Lakshmi Sehgal as head. She was commonly known as 'Captain Lakshmi'. Thus, it can be said that women of India played a key role in the freedom movement of India.

ACTIVITY

Make a list of women's freedom fighters of your locality.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.6: Which of the following statement are true or false:-

i) Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi was the great heroine of the Revolt of 1857.

ii) The All India Women's Conference (AIWC) was established in January, 1930 .

Q.7: Fill in the blanks:-

i) …….. was the first Indian women president of INC.

(Annie Besant/ Sarojini Naidu)

ii)……became the first women magistrate in India.

(Annie Besant / Margaret Cousins)

13.7 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, you have learnt that,

- The social reform movement of the nineteenth century emphasized for betterment of women status in society. These reform movement sought to promote basic changes in women's society of India , including the abolition of Sati, female infanticide, education right etc. Both the British government and those Indian enlightened reformers, who welcomed the progressive march towards modernity, played a key role for betterment of women in India. The unit also helps us to understand the formation of women's associations during the

nineteenth century. These associations have done much for the emancipation of women.

- Many women also participated in the freedom struggle. These women freedom fighters closely associated with the organized nationalist movement of Satyagraha, non-violence and civil disobedience. Sarojini Naidu, Kamala Nehru, Annie Besant, Aruna Asaf Ali were the top women freedom fighters of India.

✓ 13.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No.1: Lord William Bentinck.
Answer to Q No.2: Raja Rammohan Roy.
Answer to Q No.3: 1870 A.D.
Answer to Q No.4: 20 July 1856 A.D.
Answer to Q No.5: 1929 A.D.
Answer to Q No.6: i) True. ii) False.
Answer to Q No.7: i) Sarojini Naidu ii) Margaret Cousins

13.9 FURTHER READING

1. Altekar, A.S. (1962). The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization. Motilal Banarasidas New Delhi, India
2. Ahir, Rajiv (2017). A Brief History of Modern India. Spectrum Books (P) LTD.
3. Bandyopadhyay, Sekhar (2004). From Plessey to Partition: A History of Modern India, Orient Blackswan.
4. Sigh, P. (2011). Women *in Indian Histo*ry. Delhi, India Mohit Publications.

13.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (answer each question within 50 words)-

Q.1: When did Sati practice end in India?
Q.2: When did the Brahmo Samaj establish?
Q.3: When did Women's India Association (WIA) set up?
Q.4: Who operated a secret clandestine radio transmitter in Bombay?

B) Short Questions (answer each question within 150 words)-

Q.1: Mention the two enlightened social reformers who advocated widow remarriage.
Q.2: Name the women freedom fighters who participated in the Non-cooperation movement.

C) Long Questions (answer each question within 300-500 words)-

Q.1: Discuss about the social reform movement of the nineteenth century India.
Q.2. Critically analyze the role of women in India's freedom struggle.

UNIT 14: ADVENT OF THE PRINT MEDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

14.1 Learning Objectives
14.2 Introduction
14.3 Introduction of the Press
- Growth of English and Vernacular Newspapers
- Impact on Society: Religion and Education

14.4 Struggle between Press and Government
14.5 Contribution of the Missionaries
14.6 Let Us Sum Up
14.7 Further Readings
14.8 Answer to Check Your Progress
14.9 Model Question

14.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit, you will be able to :

- explain the growth of print and press during the British colonial period,
- explain the impact of the press on the society,
- discuss about the conflict between the press and the Government, and
- discuss the role of Christian Missionaries in the development of Press in India.

14.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the reform Movement and impact on women. In this unit, me will discuss about the advent of press and its impact.

Printing Press in India dates back to the Sixteenth Century. As we know that Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press around 1440. Moreover, the art of printing was first entered in Goa, a small island of India on 6th September 1556 when Joao de Bwta Mante, a Spaniard came in India. The Printing press that was arrived in Goa was used to help missionary work in Abyssinia. However, Printing press started in Goa on 1556 resulting in the publication of ***Conclusiones Philosohicas***. It is also found that ***the Compendio Spiritual Da Vide Christaa*** (Spiritual Compendium of Christian Life) of Gaspar Jorge de Leao Pereira who was the Portuguese Archbishop of Goa is the earliest *surviving* printed book in India. ***Joao Quinquencio*** printed it in 1561. However, the first book printed in India was '**Doctrina Christa'** in 1578. Similarly, the missionary also started a printing press in Ventry in 1579. The British East India Company also installed a printing press in Bombay in 1674. Thus, the printing press gradually established in the different place of India. It is found that in 1835, Indians were also permitted to establish printing press. Later on, many newspapers both in English and vernacular languages began to

publish in India. Therefore, this unit highlights the development of the Newspapers in India during the British period.

14.3 GROWTH OF ENGLISH AND VERNACULAR NEWSPAPERS

James Augustus Hicky launched 'The Bengal Gazette' or ' Calcutta General Advertiser' on January 29, 1780 which was the first news paper in India. It was popularly known as 'Hickey's Gazette.' However, the first issue of Hicky's Gazette had two pages and later on. It was increased to four pages. However, it was seized in 1782 because of its outspoken criticism of the Government. Later on, more newspapers came to publish in India. After Hicky's the Bengal Gazette ,several newspapers such as The Calcutta Gazette (1784), The Bengal Journal (1785), The Calcutta Chronicle (1786), The Madras Courier (1788) , The Bombay Herald (1789), The Bombay Courier (1790), The Bombay Gazette (1791) etc. were published in India. Later on, many English newspapers came to publish in India. It is interesting to note here that in 1789, the first newspaper from Bombay , 'The Bombay Herald' was published , followed by 'The Bombay Courier' next year . This newspaper merged with 'The Times of India' in 1861. The first issue of 'The Times of India' was published by Robert Knight in 1861. These newspapers aimed to cater to the intellectual entertainment of the Europeans and Anglo-Indians. Meanwhile, the Company's officers were worried that these newspapers might reach London and expose their misdeeds. In Bombay and Madras, newspapers did not seem to have come into conflict with the Government in the early period. In the absence of press laws, the newspapers were at the mercy of the Company's officials.

We look at the growth of the vernacular newspapers during the British period. National awakening was the main motive of vernacular newspapers in India . The first vernacular newspaper in an Indian language was the Samachar Darpan in Bengali. It was published by Serampore Mission Press on May 23, 1818. Similarly, 'The Bombay Samachar', now Mumbai Samachar is the oldest continuously published newspaper in India . It was published in July, 1822 in Gujarati by Fardunjee Marzban. Meanwhile, many Kannada language newspapers were also published in India during the British period. Some of the famous Kannada language newspapers included Hosa-digantha, Kannada Prabha, Sanjevani and more. At the time of Great Revolt of 1857, many numbers of vernacular newspapers were in operation in India. Many of these like Bangadoot of Ram Mohan Roy, Rastgoftar of Dadabhai Naoroji, Samachar Sudhavarashan , Sultan-ul-Akhar etc were the most important vernacular newspapers in India. Similarly, 'Amrita Bazar Patrika' was one of the oldest daily vernacular newspapers in India. It was originally published on February 20, 1868 in Bengali script. Later on, it started to publish in English format. The founder of 'Amrita Bazar Patrika' was Sisir Kumar Ghose and Moti Lal Ghose. Meanwhile, Kesari, a Marathi weekly was published by B.G. Tilak from January 1, 1881. In fact, B.G. Tilak along with Agarkar and Chiplunkar began to publish another weekly newspaper, 'Maratha' in English. Lala Rajpat Rai also published the journals like the Punjabi, 'Bande Mataram' and 'The People' from Lahore. M.K. Gandhi started to publish the famous journals like Young India, Navjeevan, Harijan , Harijan Sevak and Harijan Bandhu. It is necessary to mention here that 'Yugantar' started by Barindra Kumar

Ghose was the famous vernacular newspaper which played an important role in the Revolutionary Movement against the British Government. It is interesting to note that the British colonial government saw the emergence of the vernacular newspapers as a threat to their supremacy in India.

LET US KNOW MORE

- James Augustus Hicky was born in Ireland on 29 January 1740. He launched the first printed newspaper of India, ***The Bengal Gazette*** in 1780. He came to conflict with the then Governor General, Warren ***Hastings***. In 1881, the Supreme Court found him guilty and sentenced him to Jail. But James Hicky continued to publish 'The Bengal Gazette' from Jail. However, this newspaper was seized on 1782. James Hicky died in 1802.

14.4 IMPACT ON SOCIETY : EDUCATION AND RELIGION

The impact of the press made its deep impact on Indian society during the British period. The beginning of print and press helped in the development of education in India during the British period. The printing press made it easy for Indian people to spread ideas through book and newspapers. It is interesting to note that by the second decade of 1800, noteworthy work was done in the development of education in India by Calcutta Book Society by reprinting science text books which printed in Europe. The Baptist Missionary played an important role in this field. By 1820, they claimed to have printed approximately 710,000 school books in various vernacular languages. During the British period, several printing and publishing houses like Vidyarambham Press and Book Depot in Alleppey (1931), Prasad Printing & Process in Madras (1935) were established in India. These publishing houses mainly involved in the printing of text books, news bulletins and other books which helped in the development of modern education system in India. Meanwhile, the printing press started emphasizing the importance of women education. In the early 19th century, many women writers like Kailashbashini Debi, Tarabai Shinde and Pandita Ramabai wrote books highlighting the real condition of woman in Indian society and inspired them to take education. Further, a large section woman devoted to education which became possible only due to beginning of the printing press.

The printing press made its impact on religion during the British colonial period. The Missionaries started the printing press in India to spread Christianity to new converts. They played an important role in promoting literature in vernacular language in India. They established many printing presses in India. The Christian Missionaries translated many Sanskrit religious texts into English language. Meanwhile, among Hindus, printing press encouraged the readings of religious texts , particularly in vernacular language. It is necessary to mention here that the first printed edition of the Ramcharitmanas of Tulsidas published in 1810 from Kolkata. Due to beginning of the printing press, religious texts started reaching a very wide circle of common people , encouraging debates within and among different religions of India. M.G. Ranade who was one of the leading socio-religious

reformer of India, started to write in Gyan Prakash and Indu Prakash. Interestingly, both of journals tried to awaken the consciousness of lower caste people. Moreover, Raja Rammohan Roy's "Sambad Kaumudi" helped in the development of progressive mindset against the conservative religious people. Later on, Gandhi also propagated his views against untouchability by his weekly journal, 'Harijan'. Thus , the printing press made it deep impact upon Indian society.

ACTIVITY

- Make a list of Vernacular Newspapers in the British India.

……..……..

……..……..

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following-

Q.1: Where was the first printing press established in India?
Q.2: Who invented the printing press?
Q.3: When was the printing press installed in Bombay?
Q.4: Which was the first newspaper of India?
Q.5: Which was the first vernacular newspaper of India?

14.5 STRUGGLE BETWEEN PRESS AND GOVERNMENT

The Government on its parts enacted many laws for regulating the newspapers, particularly vernacular newspapers in India during the British colonial period. Thus, they tried to introduce several laws for curbs in the press.

The Censorship of Press Act of 1799

Lord Wellesley enacted the Censorship of Press Act in 1799. This Act imposed almost wartime press restrictions including pre-censorship of press. According to this Act, Every newspaper should publish the name of the owner, the editor and the printer on it and publication. Later on, Lord Hastings gave some relaxations in this Act.

The Licensing Act of 1823

The British Government introduced the Licensing Act in 1823. It put again some restrictions on the publication of the newspapers. According to this Act, the Governor General of India was authorized to stop the publication of any paper. It is interesting to note here that these restrictions were mainly directed against the vernacular newspapers of India. Mirat-ul-Akbar of Raja Rammohan Roy had to stop publication (Ahir, Rajib, 2017:625).

The Press Act of 1835

It may be noted that Lord William Bentinck tried to adopt a liberal view towards the Indian Press. But the credit of removal of restriction mainly goes to Charles Metcalfe who

was remained as the Governor General of India for two years (1835-36). He introduced the new Press Act in 1835. It required a printer or publisher to give a precise account of premises of a publication and cease functioning, if required by a similar declaration. Lord Metcalfe is best known as 'Liberator of India Press.'

The Licensing Act of 1857

During the outbreak of the Great Revolt of 1857, some restrictions were again imposed on the newspapers. This Act enforced for one year. The British Government had unlimited rights to cancel the licenses of the newspapers. It is also stated that action could be taken against those newspapers which published anything against the Government.

Vernacular Press Act of 1878

In British India, Vernacular Press Act enacted to curtain the freedom of the vernacular newspapers of India in 1878. It is interesting to see that this Act excluded English language publications. It was basically proposed by Lord Lytton who was then the Viceroy of India to prevent the vernacular newspapers from expressing criticism of the British policies. The Act came to be known as Gagging Act. It discriminated between the vernacular press and the English Press. Under the vernacular Act of 1878, actions were taken against the vernacular newspapers like The Som Prakash , The Bharat Mihir, The Decca Prakash.

However, the Vernacular Press Act was repealed in 1882 under the Government of Lord Ripon. The Nationalist Movement since 1885 gave an impetus to the development of the press in India. But a number of Press Acts were enforced from time to time. Meanwhile, the struggle between the Press and the British Government to be continued. In fact, Surendranath Banerjee was the first Indian journalist to be imprisoned in 1883.

The Newspaper Act of 1908

The British Government enacted the Newspaper Act in 1908. It put some restrictions against nine newspapers and confiscated seven presses.

The Indian Press Act of 1910

The Indian Press Act was enacted in 1910. Moreover, the Act of 1910 was a revision of the Vernacular Press of 1872. According to the Act, Local Government was empowered to demand a security at registration from the printer/ publisher and also right to deregister if it was an offending newspaper. Hence, the printer of the newspaper required to submit two copies of each issue to the local government.

The Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act of 1931

When the Civil Disobedience Movement under the leadership of M. K. Gandhi had started against the British Colonial Government, hence the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act enacted in 1931. This Act was empowered to provisional government to suppress the propaganda of the newspapers for the Civil Disobedience Movement. However, in 1932, this Act was amplified in the form of Criminal Amendment Act of 1932.

During the period of the Second World War, the pre-censorship was reinforced. Meanwhile, the Press Emergency Act and the Official Secrets Act were also amended. However, in March 1947, the Government appointed a Press Enquiry Committee for examining the press laws in India. Later on, after the independence of India, the Press (Objectionable Matters) Act enacted in 1951. It was more comprehensive than any earlier

laws affecting the press under the British period. Thus, the press of India had faced a lot of problem during the British colonial rule.

ACTIVITY

- Make a list of the Press Acts during the British Rule in India.

……..……..

……..……..

14.6 CONTRIBUTION OF MISSIONARIES

It may be noted that the first printing press was installed in India in 1556 by the Christian Missionaries. Later on, most of vernacular language newspapers were mainly started by the Missionaries in India. It is also found that the first vernacular language magazine in India was published by Serampor missionaries. They published 'Dig Darshan' as a monthly in 1818. Dig Darshan was the first periodical of Bengali language. It is necessary to mention that the Serampor Mission was established on 10 January 1800 by William Carey and his two associates. It may be noted that William Carey basically came to Bengal to preach Christianity and translated the Bible into Bengali. Similarly, the Serampor Mission also published the Bengali newspaper 'Samarchar Darpan'. Meanwhile, Americal Baptist Missionaries also established their branch in Assam. They contributed a lot to growth of the Assamese literature. They published the first Assamese language magazine 'Orunodoi' from Sibsagar in 1846. Dr. Nathan Brown was the first editor of 'Orunodoi'. Although, in Colonial India, Missionaries used the press as a tool to preach Christianity in India but they have great contribution to development of vernacular language and literature.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.6: Which of the following statement are true or false:-

i) Lord Wellesley enacted the Censorship of Press Act in 1799.

ii) The Vernacular Press Act was repealed in 1878.

Q.7: Fill in the blanks:-

i) The Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act enacted in……

(1931 /1932/1933)

ii)…… came to be known as Gagging Act.

(The Newspaper Act of 1908/ The Vernacular Press Ac/ The Licensing Act of 1857)

14.7 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, you have learnt that,

- In the British colonial period, tremendous progress was made in the field of press and newspapers. Many vernacular newspapers came to publish in India. The growth of press and newspapers made its deep impact on Indian society, especially in the development of education. It is noted that the Christian Missionaries contributed a lot to the field of Press. They used it as a tool for propagating their religion.
- The British government also enacted many laws to curtail the freedom of the Indian Press, especially vernacular newspapers and also prevent the expression the criticism toward the British policies. They tried to introducing compulsory licensing for the owing or running of press and newspapers in India and also banned the publication of any newspaper which became a furor against government.

✓ 14.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Q No.1: Goa.
Answer to Q No.2: Johannes Gutenberg.
Answer to Q No.3: 1674.
Answer to Q No.4: Bengal Gazette.
Answer to Q No.5: Samachar Darpan.
Answer to Q No.6: i) True.
ii) False.
Answer to Q No.7: i)1931.
ii) The Vernacular Press Act.

14.9 FURTHER READING

1. Ahir, Rajiv- (2017) A Brief History of Modern India, Spectrum Books (P) LTD.
2. Bandyopadhyay , Sekhar- (2004) From Plessey to Partition : A History of Modern India, Orient Blac swan. New Delhi, India.
3. Natarajan, J. History of Indian Journalism, (1955) Publication Division Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, New Delhi, India

14.10 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very short questions (answer each question within 50 words)-

1. Define the term middle class.
2. Mention one factor which led to the emergence of the new social classes in India.

A) Very Short Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)

Q.1: When was the first printing press established in India?

Q.2: Who was James Augustus Hicky?

Q.3. Who is best known as 'Liberator of India Press.'?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question within 150 words)

Q.1: Mention the two Vernacular language newspapers of the British colonial period.

Q.2: Mention the two newspapers banned under the Vernacular Press Act of 1878.

C) Long Questions (Answer each question within 300-500 words)

Q.1: Discuss about the origin and development of the printing press in India.

Q.2. Discuss the struggle between the Government and the Press.

UNIT 15: PEASANT MOVEMENTS AND OTHERS IN INDIA

UNIT STRUCTURE

15.1 Learning Objectives
15.2 Introduction
15.3 Peasants Movements and the role of Kissan Sabhas
- Patharughat Movement
- Phulaguri Dhawa
- Lachima Riot
- Pabna Riot
- Santhal Rebellion

15.4 Let Us Sum Up
15.5 Further Reading
15.6 Answers to Check Your Progress
15.7 Model Questions

15.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this Unit, you will be able to-

- explain the agrarian unrest that swept over India,
- explain the rise of Peasant organisations and,
- discuss the various Peasant and Tribal Movements of colonial India

15.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous Unit, we discussed the growth of Press and its impact.
In this Unit, we will discuss the various agrarian revolts against the British.

15.3 PEASANTS MOVEMENTS AND THE ROLE OF KISSAN SABHAS

In spite of the fact that the Indian peasantry comprised of more than 80% of India's population and were also the worst victims of British rule, the peasant movements in British India, before the launching of the Kishan Sabha movement were very few, and isolated in nature. This was because the British divided the peasantry into various land revenue settlement areas. So, the grievances of the peasants also differ from one region to another. The caste groups among farming community also became an obstacle in the way of an united struggle against British rule. Moreover, after the introduction of the British land revenue settlement the autonomous Indian agrarian institutions like Panchayats and Gram Sabha had disappeared. A new leadership of the exploiter class, comprising of the

Zamindars, moneylenders, Mahaldars etc. emerged. The Indian agrarian life did not have the inner mechanism to unite and raise its voice against exploitation.

We can now begin our discussion by taking up some of the important peasants' movements that occurred against the Company's rule. Patharughat, Phulaguri Dhawa and Lachima Revolt broke out in Assam.

- **Patharughat Movement**

The rebellion of Patharughat is also commonly known among Assamese as Patharughatar Ran i.e. the battle of Patharughat. Patharughat is a place in the Darrang district where a revolt broke out in 1894. Here also the grievances of the people were against the enhancement of the rates of revenue. Raij-Mels were held in which not only a protest was lodged against the increased in the rates of land-revenue but a warning was also issued to the villagers to the effect that no one should pay the increased revenue to the government. On 28th January, 1894 when a police party went to the village to attach the property of a peasant cultivator, who was a defaulter, they were surrounded by a mob. Soon after the incident the rebels of Patharughat marched towards the police camp leading the police to open fire. Many of the villagers died and were injured. It led to the complete suppression of the rebels of Patharughat by the British.

- **Phulaguri Dhawa**

The Phulguri Uprising which is also known as 'Phulguri Dhawa' in Assamese was the first agrarian revolt in Assam after 1857. Phulguri is a place in present Nagaon district. Most of the people of this area belong to Lalung and Kachari tribes. As the people of Phulguri were mostly opium-eaters, the consumption of opium was higher there compared to other places. High price of opium fixed by the British government caused much resentment among the people of Phulguri. The ban imposed by the British government on private cultivation of opium also caused much dissatisfaction among the people of Phulguri. Besides, a rumour spread that the British government would soon impose duties on all their sources of income such as cultivation of betel leaf (pan) and cultivation of fruits in the garden.

Due to the above mentioned causes an uprising broke out which initially took the form of protest through *Raij Mels*. One day on 17 October, 1861 when people from district villages assembled in a mel the British police forcibly tried to disperse the villagemen. The incident enraged the native people so much that they jumped upon the police party who tried to disperse them. In this encounter many policemen were injured and Mr. Singer, the Assistant Commissioner of police of Nagaon district was beaten to death. However, an additional police force captured the rebels and their leaders were severally punished either with the death sentence or life imprisonment.

Though the Phulguri uprising was a failure its significance cannot be underrated. It was the first popular rebellion of the peasantry of Assam against the British colonial rule. For the first time the middle class intelligentsia came out in support of the Phulguri rebels. Not only that, it also served an inspiration to other villagemen and tribals. This is evident from the fact that within the next few years the peasants of the districts of Darrang and Kamrup broke out in rebellion against the exploitation of the British.

- **Lachima Revolt**

The cause of the Lachima Revolt was the increase in the land revenue. The rebels of Lachima took recourse to violence. They assaulted the revenue –collectors who were the agents of the British government. The incident took place in Kalpa, near Lachima, in the district of Kamrup on 21st January 1894. The revenue collectors were so severely beaten by the villagers that one of them died. The infuriated British police immediately arrested as many as seventy- five villagers. But the agitated villagers soon freed the arrested persons from the custody of the police. This led to a major police crackdown on the village. Unable to sustain the torture the rebels ultimately had to give in and the revolt came to an end.

- **Tribal Revolt**

The British administration gave a severe blow to the tribal economy on account of its policy of land revenue settlement. Increasing official control of forest zones for revenue purposes adversely affected the socio-economic life of the tribes. They lost the opportunities of shifting cultivation. They lost customary rights of using forest land for grazing and using forest timber as fuel. They found themselves exposed to exploitation by forest contractors. Their traditional religions life disintegrated due to the spread of Christianity by European Missionaries. The tribals felt that one of the objectives of the British rule was to convert them to Christianity. This particularly happened in Bihar and the hill areas of Assam. It was under these circumstances that tribal uprising broke out against the British government. Here we have discussed some major tribal uprisings, which posed a major threat to the company's rule.

- **Pabna Revolt**

In the permanent settlement areas of East Bengal (now in Bangladesh),the Zamindars used various methods to deprive the ryots of their occupancy rights. The peasants revolted when the Zamindars increased rent through cesses (tax) and tried to prevent them from acquiring the occupancy rights under the Act of 1859through fraudulent measurement, illegal coercion and forced eviction. In May 1874, an Agrarian League was formed. The storm centre of the movement was Pabna, a comparatively prosperous jute-growing district where peasants under the Agrarian league protested against the unjust demands of the Zamindars. The main leader of this agrarian league was Ishan Chandra Roy, Shambhu Pal and K. Mullah.Under the banner of this league the peasants of a number of districts of east Bengal launched a movement between 1870 and 1885.

The members of the Pabna league raised a litigation expenses fund, held mass meetings to which villagers were called by drumbeats, and organised a non-payments of rent campaign. The main form of resistance was legal and was generally peaceful. The Pabna unrest had two noteworthy features. First it provided a model for the peasants of combination at a time when there was no Kishan Sabha or political party to organize the peasantry. Secondly, it was non-communal. Though the majority of the Zamindars were Hindus and Muslims and formed a large part of the tenantry, yet Hindu peasants fought alongside their Muslims counterparts against the Hindu Zamindars. Many newspapers of the region, like Hindu Patriot and Amrita Bazar Patrika being Pro-landlord (sympathetic to

landlords) opposed the peasants' limited demands. They tried to portray it as a communal struggle of Muslim tenants against these Hindu landlords. But two prominent leaders of this movement Ishan Chand Roy and Shambhunath Pal were Hindus. Some other prominent leaders like R.C. Dutt also joined in favour of the tenants. R.C. Dutt also wrote a book "Peasantry of Bengal" in 1874 about this struggle.

The peasant discontent continued till 1885, a decade long struggle resulting in the passing of the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885. This Act ensured a limited protection to tenants from the worst aspects of Zamindari oppression. But it also gave rise to the powerful Jotedar groups. Some of them later turned but to be as exploitative as the Zamindars.

- **Santhal Rebellion**

A major tribal resistance movement broke out just before the Revolt of 1857 in the Santhal area of Chollangpur in the present state of Jharkhand which was known as the Santhal uprising. A major cause of their protest was the exploitation of the money lenders and intermediaries of the Zamindars. Confiscation of their properties as well as their lands compelled the Santhals to raise their voice against the British rule. Moreover, forced labour and sexual exploitation of tribal women at the worksites was also a greater concern of the Santhals. Under the leadership of Sidho and Kanhu, they stood up and defied their exploiters. On June 30, 1855 ten thousand Santhals assembled at Bhaghadihi where they announced their war against then British. The latter was compelled to deploy the regular columns of the army to suppress them. The defeat of the British army under Major Burrough by the Santhals at the initial stage was a significant incident of the rebellion. However, the Santhals were finally suppressed by the British army by the end of 1856. to prevent the Santhals from revolting in future, a separate district of Santhal Paragana was carved out by the company.

- **Role of Kisan Sabhas**

With the rise of policies detrimental to the interests of the peasants, it became compulsory to form peasant organizations. In 1929, the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha was established. Swami Sahajand Saraswati was the President. The Sabha offered tough resistance to the Government. The peasants mostly belonged to the oppressed class and they suffered from wanton misery. The Kisan Sabha was aimed to organize the peasants and make them politically and economic empowered. The All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) demanded for cancellation of all rent arrears, rent revenue immunity on account of indebtness, penalizing landlords for illegal practices etc. The Sabha represented all cultivating peasantries. In Bengal, the initiative to form the Bengal Provincial Kisan Sabha was taken up by the Communists.

LET US KNOW MORE

- **Munda Uprising-**The Munda uprising of 1899-1900 led by Birsa Munda also known as Birsite was the greatest Tribal uprising of the 19th century. He declared the end of the Company's (British) rule from the Munda areas and announced the establishment of the Mundagiri i.e. the Munda Government. The Munda uprising was the only one in which women rebels fought alongside with their men giving a very strong resistance to the

British. To suppress the rebellion, the British had to deploy the regular columns of the army. With the arrest of Birsa Munda and his subsequent death in prison, the Munda uprising collapsed.

• **Moplah Uprising-** In the Malabar region, the discontent of the Muslim Moplah peasants acquired a religious flavour, giving a Hindu-Muslim angle to the expression of anti-landlord and anti-foreign discontent. Twenty-two revolts were recorded between 1836 and 1854; more uprisings took place in 1882-85 and again in 1896. The Moplahs were organised by the Congress and Khilafatist during the Non-Cooperation phase of India's freedom struggle Promises of an imminent egalitarian Muslim State were made. On August 20, 1921, a police raid on Tiruraingadi Mosque in search of rebels sparked off a major rebellion with widespread attacks on police stations. In the British reprisals, by December 1921 unofficially over 10,000 Moplahs were killed and over 50,000 had either surrendered or were captured and the back of the revolt was broken.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer the following questions-

1. Raij-Mel is Gaon Panchayat/Peoples Assembly/Peoples Court (Choose the answer)
2. Who imposed a ban on the Raij-Mel of the people after the Rangia revolt?
3. The hilly tract of Angami Nagas were captured by the British in …….....
4. The Assistant Commissioner of Police of Nagaon who was killed in "Phulguri Dhawa" was
.....
5. The rebellion of Patharughat is commonly known in Assamese as …….....

15.5 LET US SUM UP

After going through this Unit, you have learnt that-

- peasants and tribal population revolted against the British rule across India.
- In Assam also the peasants and tribal communities revolted against the British to protect their agricultural rights and their farming lands.
- These uprisings, however failed but they opened the door to create an anti-British feeling among the masses.

✓ 15.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to QNo.1: People's Assembly
Answer to QNo.2: Mc. Cabe, the Deputy Commissioner of Kamrup
Answer to QNo.3: 1866

Answer to QNo.4: Mr. Siger
Answer to QNo.5: Patharughatar Ran

15.7 FURTHER READING

1. Desai, A.R. (1979). Peasant Struggles in India (Ed). Bombay, India
2. Chandra, Bipan (1966). Rise and Growth of Economic Nationalism in India. New Delhi, India
3. Chandra, Bipan (1988). India's Struggle for Independence (Ed). Delhi, India
4. Barpujari, H.K. (1993): The Comprehensive History of Assam(Ed), Vol- V, Guwahati, India
5. Choudhuri, K. (1997). New History of Assam and India. Guwahati, India
6. Guha, Ranajit. (1983). Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India. Delhi, India

15.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)

1. Who was the main leader of the Munda Uprising?
2. Name was the first Peasant Uprising in Assam?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question within 150 words)

1. Write about the peasant discontents in Assam.
1. What was the significance of the peasant's rebellion in Assam?

C) Long Questions (Answer each question within 300-500 words)

1. Discuss the cause and significance of the peasant uprisings?
2. Discuss about the tribal movements against the British rule.

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