

Department of History
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Model Answer

Examination- BA (Hons) Vth Sem. Dec-2013
Paper:-5.4. History of Indian Freedom Movement (1857-1947AD)
Paper Code:- AS-2718

Section- A (Objective Type Questions)

1. 02 August, 1858
2. Calcutta, 27 Dec, 1911
3. 05 June, 1857
4. 1861 AD
5. 389 Members
6. Jinnah
7. Mr. Brels Ford
8. 05 Feb, 1922 AD
9. 21 March, 1919
10. Amritsar

Section- B (Descriptive Type Questions)

11. Till the outbreak of the First World War, Gandhi had complete faith in the justice and honesty of the English government. Therefore, he made an appeal to the people of India for cooperation during the First World War but just after the end of this war some such events occurred in the political sphere of India which made Mahatma Gandhi doubt the integrity of the British Government and declared a nonviolent movement against it. Really, it was a strange event that a person like Mahatma Gandhi who was a staunch supporter of the British raised his voice against them. Actually, the following reasons were responsible for Non-Cooperation a movement– (1) Rowlect Act (2) The Massacre of Jalianwala Bagh (3) Khilafat Problem 4. Change in the Policies of the Congress 5. Repressive Policies of the British Government etc. The effects of non-cooperation on the economic front were more dramatic. Foreign goods were boycotted, liquor shops picketed, foreign cloth burnt in huge bonfires. The effects of non-cooperation on the economic front were more dramatic. Foreign goods were boycotted, liquor shops picketed, foreign cloth burnt in huge bonfires. The import of foreign cloth halved between 1921 and 1922, its value dropping from Rs 102 crore to Rs 57 crore. In many places merchants and traders refused to trade in foreign goods or finance foreign trade. As the boycott movement spread, and people began discarding imported clothes and wearing only Indian ones, production of Indian textile mills and handlooms went up.

12. Many causes led to the outbreak of Revolt 1857. From the battle of Palessay in 1757, to the revolt 1857, it was a full century. During that period, the British Empire saw its rise and completion. The rulers of India fell one by one before the might of the Western arms. The British considered themselves invincible and their empire unassailable. But beneath their imperial sway there was growing serious discontent, which the rulers could not know. At last, the discontent culminated in a revolt. There were political, economic, social, religious and military causes of the Revolt. A brief account of those causes given below: 1. Social and Religious Causes :- (A) Change in pattern of trade and commerce (B) Ruination of Artisans and Craftsmen (c) Disgruntled Zamindars and Taluqdars (D) Disbanded soldiers were seething with anger and were determined to revenge (E) Activities Of Missionaries (F) New Laws :- Sati Ban Act & Widow Remarriage Act 2. Military Causes :- (A) Ill-Treatment of Indian Soldiers in The East India Company (B) Deprivation of foreign service allowance (Bhatta) (C) General Services Enlistment Act (D) Enfield Rifles Most of the early writings about rebellion were by British who were involved in the historical process. The soldier saw it as the

epic of his bravery and valour, the missionary saw the rebellion as a conflict between 'truth and error' and 'displeasure of God on the British' while others saw it as a conspiracy either by Muslims or Hindus or both together. The veterans of these campaigns against the rebels saw themselves as heroes. 'The Mutiny thus furnished an excellent medium for a display of the magnificent and shining exploits of British valour'. The works of these authors though helpful in terms of particular details of battles, lack the objectivity. It was narration of personal experience which was obviously heavily influenced by the emotions and excitement which is an essential component of any conflict. The writings by the military participants of the conflict are a good source for those who are interested in the military aspect but have very limited value in comprehensive analysis. There was no serious analysis of rebel leadership. The reason for this is obvious. After all if the brave and self-righteous British were fighting for a just cause, then the rebels were only a bunch of murderous mob led by some blood thirsty, debauch and corrupt leadership. In this view of a British historian there is not much room for any mention of rebel leadership except just few passing comments.

13. (A) Jallianwala Bagh :- The massacre which gave a deep shock to the people of Punjab and created wide reverberations in the country took place on 13 April, 1919 at a Public meeting which had been organized at Jallianwala Bagh in defiance of official prohibition banning such gatherings. About twenty thousand persons were present at the meeting. They included some people belonging to the surrounding countryside. Who had come to Amritsar on that day in connection with the Baisakhi festival. Brigadier General Reginald Dyer went along with soldiers to Jallianwala Bagh where the meeting was being held and immediately after his arrival, he ordered his men to fire. No warning was given, nor was the crowd asked to disperse. The firing continued for ten minutes; in all 1650 rounds were fired. Dyer ordered fire to be focused where the crowd was thickest including the exits. He gave orders to cease fire only when his ammunition was virtually exhausted. According to an official account, 379 people were killed and 1200 wounded. However, the official figure is very much on the lower side; the number of casualties was actually much higher. Winston Churchill called it 'a monstrous event, an event which stands in singular and sinister isolation'. Herbert Asquith expressed a similar view when he observed that it was 'one of the worst outrages in the whole of history'. These responses indicate that even those who believed that the British government in India was based on justice were shocked and disturbed.

(B) Lucknow Pact:- Lucknow Pact, (December 1916), agreement made by the Indian National Congress headed by Maratha Leader Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the All-India Muslim League led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah; it was adopted by the Congress at its Lucknow session on December 29 and by the league on Dec. 31, 1916. The meeting at Lucknow marked the reunion of the moderate and radical wings of the Congress. The pact dealt both with the structure of the government of India and with the relation of the Hindu and Muslim communities.

(C) Rowlett Act :- In the year 1919, the British government passed a new rule called Rowlett Act, under which the Government had the authority and power to arrest people and keep them in prisons without any trial if they are suspected with the charge of terrorism. The government also earned the power to refrain the newspapers from reporting and printing news. The Act was ill famed as 'Black Act' by the people and Indians revolt in protest against the Rowlett Act.

14. Two Home Rule Leagues were established, one by B.G. Tilak at Poona in April 1916 and the other by Mrs. Annie Besant at Madras in September 1916. Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a celebrated leader of the Indian national movement, also started Home Rule movement at about the same time Mrs. Annie Besant had begun her own. Being released from the prison Tilak founded the 'Home Rule for India League' in 1916. Tilak's vigorous movement in favour of the demand for Home Rule attained much popularity. It was during this period of his political career that Tilak was given the honorific title 'Lokmanya' by the people in recognition of his bold leadership. Annie Besant, one of the important leaders of the Theosophical Movement, began the Home Rule movement in 1916. She founded the organization 'All India Home Rule League', and it was through this organization that Annie Basant had popularized the movement. This organization had established various branches spread all over the country. Even it had a branch in England through

which public opinion was sought to be moulded in favour of the Home Rule for the Indians. Annie Besant adopted two-fold method to popularize the movement: a. through personal contact and bethought the newspaper 'New India' edited by her.

15. The Moderates wanted to achieve self-government; they did not aim for total independence. They demanded certain reforms and concessions from British government because they wanted to develop India under the guidance of benevolent British rule. On the other hand, Extremists wanted Swaraj ie, complete independence. Moderates were loyal to British rule and English crown. They considered British rule a gift for India. The Extremists were not loyal to British rule and they considered it as a curse and wanted to uproot it from India. Swaraj is better than best form of foreign rule- 'Bal Gangadhar Tilak. The moderates believed in adopting constitutional and peaceful method to achieve their objective. They had full faith in British sense of Justice. Extremists believed in non-cooperation and adopt method of boycott against foreign goods and propagation of swadeshi and national education. They believed in Indian culture, Civilization, religion and tradition. Whereas Moderates believed in British culture. Moderates believed that Indians were not fit to rule. Under the moderates, national movements was not a popular movement, it had no touch with people. While under extremists, people came under them.

16. The revolutionaries also established centers of activity abroad. In 1915 during an unsuccessful revolutionary attempt, Jatin Mukherjee popularly known as Bagha Jatin gave his life fighting a battle with the police at Balasore. Rash Bihari Bose, Raja Mahendra Pratap, Lala Hardayal, Abdul Rahim, Maulana Ubaidllah Sindhi, Champa Karaman Pillai, Sardar Singh Rana and Madam Cama were some of the prominent leaders who carried on revolutionary activities and propaganda outside India. Another reflection of the new mood was growing activity of the revolutionary terrorist movement which too was beginning to take a socialist turn. The failure of the first non-cooperation movement had led to the revival of the revolutionary movement. After an all India conference, the Hindustan Republican Association was founded in October 1924 to organize an armed revolution. The government struck at it by arresting a large number of terrorist youths and trying them in the Kakori conspiracy case (1925). Seventeen were sentenced to long term of imprisonment, four were transported for life and four including Ram Prasad Bismal and Ashfaquallah were hanged. The terrorists soon came under the influence of socialist ideas, and in 1928, under the leadership of Chandra Shekher Azad changed the name of their organization to the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). They also gradually began to move away from individual heroic action and terrorism. But the brutal lathi-charge on an anti-Simon Commission demonstration on 30 October, 1928 led to a sudden change. The great Punjabi Leader Lala Lajpat Rai died as a result of the lathi blows. This enraged the youth and on 17 December 1928, Bhagat Singh, Azad and Rajguru assassinated Saunders, the British Police officer who had led the Lathi Charge. The HSRA leadership also decided to let the people know about their changed political activities and objectives and the need for a revolution by the masses. Consequently, Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt a threw a bomb in the Central Legislative Assembly on 8 April 1929. The bomb did not harm anyone, for it had been deliberately made harmless. The aim was not to kill but, as their leaflet put it, "to make the deaf hear". Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt a could have easily escaped, but they deliberately chose to be arrested for they wanted to make use of the court as a forum for revolutionary propaganda. Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were executed on 23 March 1931.

17. On March 1, 1942, Mr. Winston Churchill (the Prime Minister) announced that the war cabinet had reached a unanimous decision on Indian policy and that the leader of the House of Commons, Sir Stafford Cripps, would proceed to India as soon as possible to explain the decision and "to satisfy himself on the spot, by personal consultations, that the conclusions upon which we all are agreed and which we believe represent a just and final solution, will achieve their purpose." Soon after reaching India, Sir Stafford communicated the Draft Declaration to the members of the Executive Council (on March, 1942) and two days later to the Indian leaders. The Draft Declaration of the British Government contained the following proposals:- (A) Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities steps shall be taken to set up in India in the manner prescribed hereafter an elected body, charged with the task of framing a new constitution for India. (B) "Provision shall be made for participation of Indian States in the constitution-making." (C)

The Constitution-making body would be elected by the members of the Lower House of the Provincial Legislatures by the system of proportional representation. (D) Until the new Constitution could be framed, the British Government would remain responsible for the defiance of India. **Merit:-** The Declaration marked a further notable advance. Even over the August Offer, in so far as it (a) granted the right of secession from the British Commonwealth; (b) said that the making of the new constituent would be, now solely (and not only mainly as before) in Indian hands; (c) proposed a plan for a Constituent Assembly; (d) was an improvement in respect of the interim system of Central Government. Further, the people of India were asked to take part in the highest counsels not only of India, but of the Commonwealth and United Nations also. **Demerit: -** However, these merits could not secure for the Declaration immunity from criticism. Each political party picked holes in it for reasons of its own and rejected the proposals. The Congress objected not so much to the long-term proposals as to the interim arrangements. The proposed arrangement about Defense was unacceptable to the Congress. Besides, the Congress had demanded, but did not receive an informal assurance that Governor-General would act as a constitutional head on the advice of the National Government consisting of Indian leaders. The rock on which the negotiations between Cripps and the Congress foundered was the veto power of the Viceroy. In regard to the long-term proposals. The Congress was opposed to the novel principle of non-accession of the provinces to the Union which seemed to be an axe applied to the very roots of the conception of Indian unity.

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