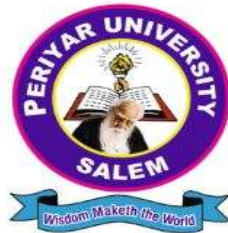


PERIYAR UNIVERSITY

**(NAAC 'A++' Grade - State University - NIRF Rank 56 – State
Public University Rank 25)
SALEM - 636 011, Tamil Nadu, India.**

**CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION
(CDOE)**

**M.A. SOCIOLOGY
SEMESTER - II**



**CORE VI: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA
(Candidates admitted from 2025 onwards)**

PERIYAR UNIVERSITY

CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION (CDOE)

M.A Sociology 2025 admission onwards

CORE VI

Social Movements in India

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SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

Subject Code	Subject Name	Category	L	T	P	O	Credits	Inst. Hours	Marks		
									CIA	External	Total
24UPSOC1C06	Social Movements in India	Core - VI	Y	-	-	-	4	5	25	75	100
Learning Objectives											
CO1	The course is designed to enumerate the importance of social movement and social change among students.										
CO2	The course will explain the diverse movements that occur in Indian society.										
CO3	The course employs the process of religious reform social movement on Indian society.										
CO4	The course will compare and contrast the different backward class movement that occurred in Indian society										
CO5	The course will critically assess the functions of women's movements on women empowerment										
UNIT	Details							No. of Hours	Learning Objectives		
I	Introduction; Meaning- Nature and Characteristics of Social Movements- Life cycle of social movement - Types of social movement – Meaning of Pressure Group – New Social Movement: Meaning and Characteristics.							12	CO1		
II	Types and Theories of Social Movements: Revolutionary - Regressive- Reform and Expressive movements. Theories: Relative Deprivation- Structural Strain- Marxist- Post Marxist – Resource Mobilization and Contemporary debate.							12	CO2		
III	Reform Movements in India: Brahmo Samaj - Arya Samaj – DK Movement – SNDP Movement – Naxalbarri Movement - Satyashodhak.							12	CO3		
IV	Empowerment Movement: Tribal Movements: The Santhal Insurrection and The Bodo Movement- Dalit Movements: Dalit Sangarsh Samiti and Mahar Dalit Movement Peasant Movement: The Bardoli Movement and Tebaga							12	CO4		

	Movement.-Non -Brahmin Movement -Self-Respect Movement.		
V	New Social Movements: Women's Movements- Environmental movements- Anti-corruption movements- New Farmer's Movement.	12	CO5
Total		60	

Course Outcomes		
Course Outcomes	On completion of this course, students will / can;	
CO1	Enable to basic understand the nature, functions, cause and types of social movements for social transformations.	PO1, PO4
CO2	Identify the different to learn about the types and theories of social movements in India.	PO1, PO6
CO3	Evaluate the impacts of various reform movements in the Indian society.	PO5, PO8
CO4	Be able to recognize the various empowerment movements to uplift Indian society.	PO4, PO6
CO5	Evaluate the diverse women movements in India and the function of women’s organization on the progress of women.	PO3, PO5
References Books (Latest Editions)		
1	Singh K.S (Ed) Tribal Movements in India Vol. I Manohar, New Delhi 1982.	
2	Rao M.S.A., Social Movements and Social Transformation, Manohar, New Delhi1979.	
3	Bateile, Andre. The Backward Classes: The New Social Order, OUP, New Delhi 1983.	
4	Oommen T.K.: Nation, Civil Society and Social Movements, Sage, Delhi, 2004	
5	Social Movements in India - A Review of Literature by Ghanshyam Shah, 2004	
Text Books		
1	Social Movements - Concepts, Experiences and Concerns by Biswajit Ghosh, 2020	
2	Social Movements - The Structure of Collective Mobilization by Paul Almeida, 2019	
3	Understanding Social Movements by Greg Martin, 2015	
4	Social Movements and Protest by Gemma Edwards, 2014	

5	The Social Movements Reader - Cases and Concepts by James M. Jasper, Jeff Goodwin, 2014	
Web Resources		
1	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZvajDwWZo34	
2	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6UVZHDK5t5g	
3	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ub8y5N1gHM4	
4	https://blog.ipleaders.in/social-movements-modern-india/	
5	https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCHB7YP7bku94AYkzR51U_rQ/videos	
Methods of Evaluation		
Internal Evaluation	Continuous Internal Assessment Test	25 Marks
	Assignments	
	Seminars	
	Attendance and Class Participation	
External Evaluation	End Semester Examination	75 Marks
	Total	100 Marks
Methods of Assessment		
Recall (K1)	Simple definitions, MCQ, Recall steps, Concept definitions	
Understand/ Comprehend (K2)	MCQ, True/False, Short essays, Concept explanations, short summary or overview	
Application (K3)	Suggest idea/concept with examples, suggest formulae, solve problems, Observe, Explain	
Analyze (K4)	Problem-solving questions, finish a procedure in many steps, Differentiate between various ideas, Map knowledge	
Evaluate (K5)	Longer essay/ Evaluation essay, Critique or justify with pros and cons	
Create (K6)	Check knowledge in specific or offbeat situations, Discussion, Debating or Presentations	

Mapping with Programme Outcomes:

	PO 1	PO 2	PO 3	PO 4	PO 5	PO 6	PO 7	PO 8	PO 9	PO 10
CO 1	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
CO 2	2	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	3	3
CO 3	3	2	3	1	3	3	2	3	2	3
CO 4	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3
CO 5	3	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	3

CO-PO-PSO Mapping

	PO 1	PO 2	PO 3	PO 4	PO 5	PSO 1	PSO 2	PSO 3	PSO 4	PSO 5
CO 1	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3

CO 2	3	3	3	2	3	3	1	3	3	3
CO 3	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	2	2	3
CO 4	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	1	3
CO 5	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	2	3

S-Strong (3) M-Medium (2) L-Low (1)

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

Unit-I - INTRODUCTION

Objective

The unit is designed to enumerate the importance of social movement and its types social movements among students.

Introduction

Social movements have been a fundamental aspect of societal evolution, playing a crucial role in shaping political, economic, and cultural landscapes. They emerge when groups of individuals, often marginalized or dissatisfied with the existing social order, come together to advocate for change. Throughout history, social movements have addressed various issues, such as civil rights, labor rights, environmental concerns, and gender equality. These movements serve as a reflection of society's aspirations, struggles, and demands for justice and equality.

Social movements are dynamic and can range from small local initiatives to large-scale global protests. They are driven by a shared sense of identity, collective grievances, and a vision for change. In many cases, social movements have led to significant policy reforms and transformations in social norms, making them an essential component of democratic societies.

Meaning

A social movement is a collective effort by a large group of people to bring about or resist social, political, or economic change. These movements are typically organized and sustained over a period and often arise in response to perceived injustices, inequalities, or unaddressed societal issues. They can take various forms,

such as peaceful protests, civil disobedience, lobbying, or even revolutionary actions.

Social movements are distinct from spontaneous protests or riots in that they are usually structured and have defined goals, strategies, and leadership. They provide a platform for individuals to voice their concerns, demand action, and influence policy changes. Over time, social movements have played a critical role in promoting democracy, human rights, and social justice worldwide.

Nature of Social Movements-

The nature of social movements is diverse, as they emerge in response to various social, political, and economic conditions. They can be:

- **Dynamic and Evolving:**

Social movements are not static; they change and adapt over time based on external factors such as government responses, media attention, and public participation.

- **Collective in Nature:**

Unlike individual actions, social movements involve a large group of people working together toward a shared objective. This collective effort provides strength and legitimacy to the cause.

- **Goal-Oriented:**

Every social movement has specific objectives, whether it be policy change, awareness creation, or complete societal transformation. Some movements seek short-term reforms, while others strive for long-term changes in societal structures.

- **Structured or Unstructured:**

Some social movements have formal organizations and leadership structures, while others operate more informally through grassroots participation and decentralized leadership.

- **Peaceful or Confrontational:**

While some movements employ peaceful methods such as petitions, negotiations, and peaceful protests, others may resort to more confrontational strategies like civil disobedience or direct action.

- **Influenced by Ideologies:**

Social movements often emerge from specific ideological backgrounds, including liberalism, socialism, feminism, or environmentalism, shaping their demands and methods of action.

- **Interaction with Institutions:**

Social movements often interact with political institutions, governments, and media to achieve their goals. Some gain institutional recognition and evolve into political parties or advocacy groups.

- **Resistance and Opposition:**

Social movements typically face resistance from existing power structures, including governments, corporations, or conservative societal groups that benefit from maintaining the status quo.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Understanding the nature of social movements helps in analyzing their effectiveness, challenges, and long-term impact on society. These movements play a crucial role in democratizing political systems, amplifying marginalized voices, and pushing for reforms that shape societal progress.

- **Collective Action:**

Social movements involve collective participation from large groups of people united by a common cause. For example, the Civil Rights Movement in the United States saw the participation of millions fighting against racial segregation and discrimination.

- **Shared Ideology:**

Participants of a movement share common beliefs and aspirations. For instance, the Feminist Movement is based on the ideology of gender equality and women's empowerment.

- **Sustained Effort:**

Social movements do not achieve their goals overnight; they evolve and persist over time. The LGBTQ+ Rights Movement has been ongoing for decades, striving for equal rights, legal recognition, and social acceptance.

- **Organized Leadership:**

Effective leadership is often key to mobilizing people and strategizing actions. For example, Mahatma Gandhi's leadership in the Indian Independence Movement played a crucial role in uniting people against British colonial rule.

- **Opposition or Resistance:**

Social movements often face resistance from institutions or groups benefiting from the status quo. The Anti-Apartheid Movement in South Africa faced severe repression from the government before it eventually led to the abolition of racial segregation.

- **Use of Different Strategies:**

Social movements employ various strategies, including protests, strikes, demonstrations, lobbying, and advocacy campaigns. The Climate Change Movement, led by organizations like Extinction Rebellion and Fridays for Future, uses protests and global awareness campaigns to demand action on environmental policies.

- **Legal and Political Influence:**

Many social movements aim to bring about legal or policy changes. The Civil Rights Movement led to the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Let Sum Up:

Social movements are organized collective efforts by large groups of people aiming to bring about or resist social, political, or economic change. They emerge from shared grievances, ideologies, and a desire for justice and equality.

Key Features:

- **Collective Action:** Involves large groups working for a common cause.
- **Shared Ideology:** Participants are guided by common beliefs (e.g., feminism, environmentalism).

- **Goal-Oriented:** Movements may aim for reforms, awareness, or total change.
- **Structured or Unstructured:** May have formal leadership or be grassroots-based.
- **Dynamic Nature:** Movements evolve with time and circumstances.
- **Peaceful or Confrontational:** Methods range from nonviolence to civil disobedience.
- **Sustained Effort:** Change takes time; movements often last for years.
- **Legal & Political Influence:** Aim to influence laws and policies.
- **Resistance from Power Structures:** Often face opposition from governments or institutions.

Examples:

- **Civil Rights Movement** – Fought racial discrimination in the USA.
- **Feminist Movement** – Advocated gender equality.
- **Anti-Apartheid Movement** – Opposed racial segregation in South Africa.
- **Climate Change Movement** – Urges action against environmental degradation.
- **LGBTQ+ Rights Movement** – Seeks legal and social equality.

Check Your Progress:

1. Define a social movement. How is it different from a protest or a riot?
2. List any three characteristics of social movements. Explain with examples.
3. How do ideologies influence social movements? Give two examples.

4. Explain the importance of leadership in a social movement.
5. Mention two peaceful and two confrontational strategies used in social movements.
6. Why do social movements face resistance? Who usually opposes them?
7. Explain how social movements influence law and policy with an example.
8. Describe the dynamic nature of social movements. Why is adaptability important?

LIFE CYCLE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Emergence

At this stage, social grievances accumulate, and people start recognizing a common problem but have yet to organize formally. The initial phase is characterized by the absence of clear leadership and formal structure. Example: The early environmental movement in the 1960s emerged in response to increasing pollution but lacked centralized leadership.

Coalescence

The movement gains momentum, formalizes leadership, and begins to organize protests, campaigns, or advocacy efforts. Strategies such as public demonstrations, petitions, and media engagement are employed. Example: The Black Lives Matter movement gained global attention after a series of incidents of police brutality, leading to coordinated protests worldwide.

Institutionalization

The movement develops structured organizations, may gain political recognition, and achieves its goals partially or fully. At this stage, organizations may emerge to sustain advocacy efforts. Example: The labor movement led to the formation of labor unions and policies that improved working conditions and wages.

Decline

Movements may decline due to success, repression, co-optation, or failure to sustain interest and participation. Example: The Occupy Wall Street movement lost momentum due to a lack of structured leadership and clear objectives, leading to its decline.

Let Sum up

Social movements typically progress through four stages: Emergence, Coalescence, Institutionalization, and Decline. In the Emergence stage, social grievances begin to surface, but the movement lacks formal organization or leadership. For example, the early environmental movement in the 1960s emerged in response to pollution but was not yet organized. During Coalescence, the movement gains momentum, leadership is established, and strategies like protests and media campaigns are used, as seen with the Black Lives Matter movement. In the Institutionalization phase, the movement becomes more structured, may gain political recognition, and achieves its goals. For example, labor unions emerged from the labor movement, securing better working conditions. Finally, in the Decline stage, the movement loses steam due to success, repression, or loss of interest, like the decline of the Occupy Wall Street movement.

Check Your Progress:

1. What are the key features of the Coalescence stage of a social movement?
2. How can a social movement decline, and what example illustrates this?

TYPES SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Social movements can be classified under various typologies depending on such factors like aim of the movement, organisation, means adopted to achieve the aims, value strength and so on. Some of the types are:

i) Migratory movements:

When a large number of people migrate due to discontent and or due to the shared hope for a better future in some other land, we talk of migratory movements. For instance the mass exodus of men to Gulf countries specially from the state of Kerala is an example of a migratory social movement. Similarly the mass migration of people from Bangladesh to India during troubled times is another instance of a migratory movement.

ii) Reform movements:

This type of a movement constitutes a collective attempt to change some parts of a society without completely transforming it. A reform movement accepts the basic pattern of the social order of that society and orients itself around an ideal. It makes use of those institutions such as the press, the government, the school, the church and so on to support its programme. Reform movements usually, rise on behalf of some distressed or exploited group. Reform movements are almost impossible in an authoritarian society. Such movements are mainly possible in democratic societies where people tolerate criticism. For example, the socio-religious reform movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in India aimed to remove social practices like sati, denial of education to women, ban on widow remarriage, ill treatment of widows, child marriage, caste disabilities and so on.

iii) Revolutionary movements:

Such a movement seeks to overthrow the existing system and replace it with a totally different one. Revolutionary movements aim at reconstructing the entire social order. They challenge the existing norms and propose a new scheme of

values. The examples that immediately come to one's mind are the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution which resorted to overthrow the existing socio-political order prevailing in France and Russia respectively.

iv) Resistance or Reactionary movements:

These arise among people who are dissatisfied with certain aspects of change. The movement seeks to recapture or reinstate old values. For example the Islamic Fundamentalist movement and the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh (RSS) can be classified under the heading reactionary or resistance movements. Within every society, at different points of time we can have general movements or specific movements. All these types of movement generally have a programme of protest and action, establishment of a power relationship favourable to the movement and promotion of membership gratification.

Let Sum Up:

Social movements can be classified into various types based on their goals, methods, organization, and values. Each type reflects the purpose and direction of the movement. Migratory movements involve mass movement of people seeking better opportunities or escaping hardships, such as the migration from Kerala to Gulf countries. Reform movements aim to improve or correct certain aspects of society without altering its overall structure—like the socio-religious reforms in India during the 19th and 20th centuries. Revolutionary movements strive for radical change by completely replacing existing systems, as seen in the French and Russian Revolutions. Resistance or Reactionary movements attempt to restore traditional values in response to modern changes, like the Islamic Fundamentalist movement or the RSS. These movements often involve collective action, advocacy, and attempts to influence social structures in ways aligned with their beliefs and goals.

Check Your Progress:

1. What is a migratory social movement? Give one example.

2. How do reform movements differ from revolutionary movements?
3. Why are reform movements more likely to occur in democratic societies?
4. Explain any two differences between reform and revolutionary movements.

PRESSURE GROUPS

Meaning of Pressure Group

In democratic politics, pressure groups are organisations which attempt to influence the government. The International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences describes the groups as representing the interest of the sections into which a society is divided. With advanced specialisation groups will be more numerous and specialised. Such groups represent interest of various sections of society viz., farmers, labourers, government employees, businessmen, professional people and even students. Pressure groups are also known as interest groups.

A **pressure group** is an organized group of people who share common interests and seek to influence government policies, decisions, or public opinion without directly seeking political power. These groups operate through lobbying, protests, campaigns, or media influence to advocate for their causes.

Characteristics of Pressure Groups:

1. **Non-political in nature –**

They do not contest elections but try to influence those in power.

2. **Specific focus**

They concentrate on particular issues like labor rights, environmental protection, or business interests.

3. **Use of influence**

They rely on persuasion, lobbying, protests, and media campaigns.

4. Voluntary participation

Members join based on shared interests.

Examples of Pressure Groups:

1. **Trade Unions** – Example: The **All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC)** in India fights for workers' rights.
2. **Environmental Groups** – Example: **Greenpeace** campaigns for environmental protection.
3. **Business Associations** – Example: **Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI)** influences economic policies.
4. **Student Organizations** – Example: **National Students' Union of India (NSUI)** advocates for student rights.
5. **Farmer Groups** – Example: **Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU)** pressures the government for agricultural reforms.

Pressure groups play a crucial role in democracy by ensuring that diverse voices are heard and policies consider different societal needs.

Let Sum Up:

Pressure groups, also called **interest groups**, are organized groups of people who share common interests and aim to influence government policies, decisions, or public opinion **without directly contesting elections**. They play a vital role in democratic systems by representing the concerns of specific sections of society—like farmers, workers, students, or businesspeople.

They function through **lobbying, protests, media campaigns**, and public advocacy. With increasing specialization in society, pressure groups have become more **numerous and focused**.

Key Characteristics:

1. **Non-political in nature** – They do not aim to gain political power or contest elections.

2. **Issue-specific focus** – They concentrate on particular causes or interests.
3. **Methods of influence** – They use persuasion, lobbying, media, and protest.
4. **Voluntary participation** – Members join based on shared goals or needs.

Examples of Pressure Groups:

- **Trade Unions:** *AITUC* (workers' rights)
- **Environmental Groups:** *Greenpeace* (climate and nature)
- **Business Groups:** *FICCI* (business and economic interests)
- **Student Groups:** *NSUI* (student welfare)
- **Farmer Groups:** *BKU* (agriculture-related issues)

Check Your Progress:

1. What is a pressure group? How is it different from a political party?
2. Mention any two characteristics of pressure groups.
3. Give two examples of pressure groups and the interests they represent.
4. Why are pressure groups important in a democracy?
5. What are the main methods used by pressure groups to influence the government?

NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENT

Meaning and Characteristics.

New Social Movements (NSMs) refer to a category of social movements that emerged mainly from the 1960s onwards. Unlike traditional movements, which focused on economic and class-based struggles (e.g., labor unions and socialist

movements), NSMs focus on issues related to identity, culture, human rights, and environmental concerns.

These movements are not solely about economic or political power but aim to bring social and cultural change by influencing public opinion, policies, and global awareness.

Characteristics of New Social Movements (NSMs)

1. Focus on Social and Cultural Issues (Beyond Economic Concerns)

- Unlike old movements (e.g., labor unions demanding wages), NSMs focus on issues like **environment, gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights, human rights, and peace movements**.
- Example: **The Feminist Movement** fights for gender equality rather than economic class struggles.

2. Decentralized and Non-Hierarchical Structure

- NSMs **lack a centralized leadership** and function through **networks, alliances, and grassroots activism**.
- They are often **organized informally** through volunteers and NGOs rather than rigid political parties.
- Example: **Extinction Rebellion (XR)** operates as a decentralized group fighting against climate change.

3. Use of Media and Technology for Mobilization

- NSMs rely heavily on **social media, online petitions, and digital activism** to reach global audiences.

- Unlike traditional protests, NSMs use **internet-based campaigns to spread awareness quickly**.
- Example: **#MeToo Movement** spread through Twitter and other platforms to highlight sexual harassment.

4. Identity Politics and Inclusion

- NSMs are often linked to **identity-based struggles** such as LGBTQ+ rights, indigenous rights, and racial justice.
- They emphasize **individual and group identity**, demanding recognition and respect in society.
- Example: **Black Lives Matter (BLM)** is an NSM that fights against racial discrimination and police brutality.

5. Global in Nature (Not Confined to One Nation)

- NSMs **transcend national boundaries**, engaging in issues that affect people worldwide.
- They often work through international NGOs, coalitions, and digital platforms.
- Example: **The Global Climate Strikes**, led by Greta Thunberg, involve youth from multiple countries.

6. Non-Violent and Symbolic Protests

- NSMs generally rely on **peaceful protests, art, performance activism, and symbolic gestures** rather than violent methods.
- Example: **The Chipko Movement** in India used **tree-hugging protests** to prevent deforestation.

7. Autonomy from Political Parties

- While traditional movements were often linked to political parties or trade unions, NSMs are **independent and focus on advocacy** rather than electoral politics.
- Example: **Greenpeace** is an environmental NSM that does not align with any political party

Examples of New Social Movements (NSMs)

Movement	Focus Area	Key Features
Feminist Movement	Gender Equality	Advocates for women's rights, reproductive rights, and equal pay
LGBTQ+ Rights Movement	LGBTQ+ Equality	Legal recognition of same-sex marriage, transgender rights
Black Lives Matter (BLM)	Racial Justice	Fights police brutality and racial discrimination
MeToo Movement	Sexual Harassment Awareness	Encourages survivors to speak out
Environmental Movements	Climate Change, Sustainability	Movements like Greenpeace, Fridays for Future (Greta Thunberg)
Anti-Globalization Movement	Economic and Social Justice	Criticizes corporate control, promotes fair trade

Let Sum Up:

Pressure groups are organized groups of people who share common interests and aim to influence government policies and public opinion without seeking political power themselves. They function through lobbying, protests, media campaigns, and public awareness drives to advocate for specific causes. These groups represent various sections of society, including workers, students, farmers, environmentalists, and business communities. Unlike political parties, pressure groups do not contest elections but try to influence decision-makers. Their presence strengthens democracy by ensuring that diverse voices and interests are considered in policy-making.

Check Your Progress:

1. What is the main purpose of a pressure group in a democracy?
2. How do pressure groups differ from political parties?
3. Give one example of a pressure group and mention the interest it represents.

Unit Summary

This unit explored the key concepts of social movements and pressure groups, their characteristics, life cycle, types, and impact on society.

A social movement is a collective effort by a group of people to bring about or resist social, political, or economic change. These movements often arise due to perceived injustices, inequalities, or the need for reforms.

1. Social Movements are collective efforts aimed at bringing social, political, or economic change. They have distinct stages (Emergence, Coalescence, Institutionalization, and Decline) and vary in type, such as revolutionary, reform, resistance, and expressive movements.

2. Pressure Groups are organized groups that seek to influence government policies without contesting elections. They play a crucial role in democracy by advocating for various causes, such as labor rights, environmental protection, and corporate regulation.
3. New Social Movements (NSMs) differ from traditional movements as they focus on identity-based issues, human rights, and cultural change rather than economic class struggles. They utilize digital activism, decentralized structures, and global outreach to achieve their objectives.
4. The role of media, technology, peaceful protests, and grassroots activism in modern movements is increasingly significant, making social movements more accessible and impactful.

Social movements and pressure groups are essential forces of change in any society. While social movements seek broad societal transformation, pressure groups focus on policy-level influence. New Social Movements, in particular, reflect the evolving nature of activism in the digital age, emphasizing global issues such as climate change, human rights, and gender equality. Understanding these movements helps us recognize the power of collective action in shaping a just and equitable society.

Glossary

Activism – Efforts to promote, impede, or direct social, political, or environmental change.

Advocacy – Public support for a particular cause or policy.

Collective Action – Joint efforts by a group of people to achieve a common goal.

Civil Rights Movement – A reform movement aimed at ending racial discrimination and securing equal rights.

Digital Activism – The use of online platforms (social media, petitions) to raise awareness and mobilize people.

Decentralization – A movement or organization operating without a rigid hierarchy or central authority.

Environmental Movement – A social movement focused on protecting the environment and addressing climate change.

Grassroots Movement – A movement that starts at the local level and grows into a larger social movement.

Human Rights Movements – Movements advocating for fundamental human rights, such as freedom of speech and equality.

Identity Politics – Political activities based on social identity, such as gender, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

Life Cycle of Social Movements – The stages a social movement goes through: emergence, coalescence, institutionalization, and decline.

Mass Mobilization – Large-scale public participation in protests or campaigns.

MeToo Movement – A social movement against sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

New Social Movements (NSMs) – Social movements that focus on identity, human rights, and cultural issues rather than economic struggles.

Pressure Group – An organization that seeks to influence government policies without seeking political office.

Petition – A formal request signed by many people to bring attention to a cause.

Reform Movement – A movement seeking gradual improvements in society rather than radical changes.

Revolutionary Movement – A movement aiming to completely overthrow and replace an existing system.

Resistance Movement – A movement opposing specific social or political changes.

Social Movement – A collective effort to bring about or resist social, economic, or political change.

Symbolic Protest – The use of symbols, art, or cultural expressions to convey a movement's message.

Trade Unions – Organizations that represent workers' rights and interests.

Tactical Protest – The strategic use of demonstrations, strikes, and boycotts to achieve movement goals.

Women's Rights Movement – A movement advocating for gender equality, women's empowerment, and reproductive rights.

Self – Assessment Questions

1. Define a **social movement** and explain its significance in society.
2. What are the **main characteristics** of a social movement? Provide examples.
3. How do social movements differ from political parties?
4. Explain the **role of collective action** in social movements.
5. Identify and explain the **four stages** of a social movement.
6. What happens during the **coalescence stage** of a social movement?
7. Why do some social movements decline or fail?
8. Give an example of a social movement that successfully completed its life cycle.
9. Differentiate between **revolutionary** and **reform movements** with examples.
10. What is a **resistance movement**, and how does it impact society?
11. How do **expressive movements** differ from political movements?
12. Provide an example of each type of social movement.
13. Define a **pressure group** and explain its role in democracy.
14. How do pressure groups influence government policies?
15. Differentiate between **pressure groups and social movements**.
17. What are **New Social Movements (NSMs)**? How do they differ from traditional movements?
18. Explain three key characteristics of NSMs.
19. How do **digital media and social networks** help NSMs?
20. Give an example of a **New Social Movement** and explain its impact.

Activities / Exercises / Case Studies

Activity 1: Identify a Social Movement

- Choose a social movement (e.g., Civil Rights Movement, Environmental Movement).
- Research its goal, leadership, methods, and impact.
- Present your findings in a short report or presentation.

Activity 2: Role Play – Pressure Groups in Action

- Form small groups and act as a pressure group advocating for a social issue (e.g., education reform, environmental protection).
- One group acts as government officials, while the other group tries to influence policies using lobbying, petitions, or media campaigns.
- Discuss the effectiveness of different pressure tactics.

Activity 3: Case Study Analysis – New Social Movements

- Select a recent NSM (e.g., Black Lives Matter, MeToo, Fridays for Future).
- Analyze its origin, objectives, key events, and influence on society.
- Write a short essay or conduct a group discussion.

Activity 4: Debate – Are Pressure Groups Necessary?

- Divide students into two teams: one supporting pressure groups, the other opposing them.
- Each team presents arguments for or against the role of pressure groups in democracy.
- A panel or instructor moderates the discussion.

Activity 5: Newspaper Analysis – Social Movements Today

- Collect recent newspaper articles about social movements or pressure groups.
- Identify their demands, methods, and success/failure.
- Present your analysis in class.

Case Studies

Case Study 1: The Chipko Movement (1973)

- Discuss how rural villagers in India used non-violent resistance (tree-hugging) to protect forests.
- How did the movement influence environmental policies in India?

Case Study 2: The MeToo Movement (2017-Present)

- Analyze how the MeToo movement spread globally through social media activism.
- What impact did it have on workplace policies and gender equality laws?

Case Study 3: Green Peace and Environmental Activism

- Examine how Greenpeace, a pressure group, influenced global policies on climate change.
- What tactics did it use to raise awareness?

Case Study 4: The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA)

- Analyze the NBA movement's role in protesting large dam construction in India.
- What were the successes and failures of the movement?

Answers for check your progress

1. Define a social movement. How is it different from a protest or a riot?

A social movement is a collective effort by a group of people to bring about or resist social, political, or economic change. Unlike protests or riots, social movements are usually organized, have clear goals, and are sustained over time. Protests are spontaneous demonstrations, often focused on a specific issue, whereas riots are violent, uncontrolled uprisings that typically lack clear leadership or direction.

2. List any three characteristics of social movements. Explain with examples.

1. Collective in Nature – Social movements involve large groups of people working toward a common goal.
 - *Example:* The Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. was driven by a collective effort to end racial segregation.
2. Goal-Oriented – Every social movement has specific objectives, either short-term reforms or long-term societal changes.
 - *Example:* The feminist movement aims for gender equality and women's empowerment.
3. Dynamic and Evolving – Social movements change and adapt based on external factors such as political responses or media attention.
 - *Example:* The LGBTQ+ rights movement has evolved over decades, with a broader focus now on marriage equality and anti-discrimination laws.

3. How do ideologies influence social movements? Give two examples.

Ideologies provide the guiding framework and vision for social movements, shaping their objectives, methods, and strategies.

- Example 1: The environmental movement is largely influenced by environmentalism, advocating for sustainable practices and climate change action.
- Example 2: The feminist movement is driven by feminist ideologies that seek gender equality and the elimination of gender-based oppression.

4. Explain the importance of leadership in a social movement.

Leadership in a social movement is crucial because it helps organize and direct efforts, maintain focus on the movement's goals, and inspire and mobilize supporters. Effective leadership ensures that resources are used efficiently, provides

strategic direction, and can negotiate with political institutions or other stakeholders to bring about change.

- *Example:* Mahatma Gandhi's leadership in the Indian independence movement was instrumental in uniting people across the country and steering non-violent protests against British colonial rule.

5. Mention two peaceful and two confrontational strategies used in social movements.

- Peaceful Strategies:
 1. Petitions – Formal written requests to the government or institutions asking for change.
 2. Peaceful Protests – Public demonstrations where participants express their cause without using violence.
- Confrontational Strategies:
 1. Civil Disobedience – Non-violent acts of lawbreaking to protest unjust laws (e.g., sit-ins, blocking roads).
 2. Strikes – Workers cease to work as a form of protest against their employers or the government.

6. Why do social movements face resistance? Who usually opposes them?

Social movements often face resistance because they challenge the status quo and threaten existing power structures. Those who benefit from the current system, such as governments, corporations, or conservative groups, are likely to oppose movements. They may use tactics such as repression, legal action, or media campaigns to discredit the movement.

- *Example:* The Anti-Apartheid Movement in South Africa faced resistance from the apartheid government, which used force to suppress protests.

7. Explain how social movements influence law and policy with an example.

Social movements can influence laws and policies by raising public awareness, lobbying government officials, and putting pressure on legislators to enact change.

- Example: The Civil Rights Movement in the U.S. led to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

8. Describe the dynamic nature of social movements. Why is adaptability important?

Social movements are dynamic because they evolve over time, adapting to changing social, political, and economic conditions. Movements must be flexible in their tactics, leadership, and strategies to respond to government opposition, media coverage, or shifting public opinion. Adaptability is essential because it ensures the movement remains relevant and effective in achieving its goals.

- *Example:* The Climate Change Movement has evolved from focusing on scientific awareness to pushing for specific policy changes and global agreements like the Paris Agreement.

9. What are the key features of the Coalescence stage of a social movement?

In the Coalescence stage, the movement gains momentum, establishes formal leadership, and organizes protests, campaigns, or advocacy efforts. The movement's strategies include public demonstrations, petitions, and media engagement to raise awareness and mobilize support.

10. How can a social movement decline, and what example illustrates this?

A social movement can decline due to success (when goals are achieved), repression (when authorities suppress it), co-optation (when its goals are absorbed by other groups), or a loss of public interest. An example is the Occupy Wall Street

movement, which declined due to lack of structured leadership and unclear objectives.

11. What is a migratory social movement? Give one example.

A migratory social movement occurs when a large group of people move from one place to another due to dissatisfaction with their current situation or a shared hope for a better future.

Example: The mass migration of people from Kerala to Gulf countries in search of better employment opportunities is an example of a migratory movement.

12. How do reform movements differ from revolutionary movements?

Reform movements aim to bring about partial changes to a society without completely overhauling the existing system. They seek improvements in specific areas, such as rights or policies.

In contrast, revolutionary movements seek to completely overthrow the existing social, political, or economic system and replace it with a new one.

13. Why are reform movements more likely to occur in democratic societies?

Reform movements are more likely to occur in democratic societies because such societies allow freedom of expression, tolerate criticism, and provide avenues for public engagement, like the press, courts, and elections. This environment makes it easier for reform movements to gain traction and influence public policy.

14. Explain any two differences between reform and revolutionary movements.

- **Objective:** Reform movements seek gradual change within the existing system, while revolutionary movements aim to completely dismantle and replace the current system.
- **Methodology:** Reform movements typically use legal, peaceful, and institutional methods such as petitions and lobbying, whereas revolutionary movements may use violent or radical tactics to bring about systemic change.

15 What is the main purpose of a pressure group in a democracy?

The main purpose of a pressure group in a democracy is to influence government policies, decisions, or public opinion without directly seeking political power. They aim to advocate for specific interests or causes, such as labor rights, environmental protection, or business interests, by using lobbying, protests, or media campaigns.

15. How do pressure groups differ from political parties?

Pressure groups focus on influencing specific policies or issues and do not aim to contest elections or hold political office. Political parties, on the other hand, seek to gain political power by contesting elections and forming governments. Pressure groups work from the outside, while political parties seek power through formal political processes.

16. Give one example of a pressure group and mention the interest it represents.

Example: Greenpeace is a pressure group that represents the interest of environmental protection, advocating for policies and actions to combat climate change, protect wildlife, and promote sustainability.

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Suggested Readings-

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UNIT-II

TYPES AND THEORIES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Unit Objectives

The unit will explain the diverse movements and theories that occur in Indian society.

Types and Theories of Social Movements:

Social movements are organized efforts by groups of individuals to promote or resist change in society. They play a crucial role in shaping cultural, political, and economic landscapes. Understanding the various types of social movements and the theories that explain their emergence and development provides valuable insights into how collective action drives societal transformation.

Social movements are collective efforts by groups of people to promote or resist social, political, or cultural change. They emerge as responses to perceived injustices, inequalities, or aspirations for a better society. Social movements can vary widely in their goals, strategies, and scope, but they all seek to bring about change through collective action.

Sociologists classify social movements into different types based on their objectives, target audience, and the scale of change they seek. One of the most widely accepted classifications was introduced by sociologist **David F. Aberle**, who identified four major types of social movements based on whether they seek to change individuals or society and whether they aim for partial or radical transformation.

These include:

1. **Alternative Social Movements** – These movements aim for limited changes in individual behavior or attitudes. They do not seek to transform the entire social structure but rather focus on specific issues affecting individuals. For example, campaigns promoting healthy eating or environmental awareness belong to this category.
2. **Redemptive Social Movements** – These movements seek profound personal transformation in individuals, often through religious or spiritual means. They advocate for a complete change in a person's life and identity, such as movements encouraging people to adopt a new faith or lifestyle.
3. **Reformative Social Movements** – These movements target society as a whole but advocate for partial change rather than radical transformation. They work within existing systems to bring about reforms, such as movements fighting for civil rights, gender equality, or environmental protection.
4. **Revolutionary Social Movements** – These movements seek total and fundamental change in society, often aiming to overthrow existing social, political, or economic structures. Examples include independence movements and large-scale uprisings that challenge authoritarian regimes.

Other scholars have expanded this classification, identifying additional types of social movements such as **resistance movements** (which oppose social change), **expressive movements** (which focus on cultural or personal expression), and **global movements** (which address transnational issues like climate change or human rights).

Understanding these different types of social movements helps us analyze how societies evolve, how power structures are challenged, and how collective action shapes historical and contemporary change.

Let sum up

Social movements are organized collective efforts that aim to bring about or resist change in society, often emerging in response to perceived injustices or inequalities. Sociologist David F. Aberle classified social movements into four main types based on their goals and the scope of change they seek. These include:

1. **Alternative Social Movements**, which focus on limited changes in individual behavior (e.g., promoting healthy eating).
2. **Redemptive Social Movements**, which aim for profound personal transformation, often through religious or spiritual means.
3. **Reformative Social Movements**, which seek partial societal changes without overturning the system, such as civil rights or environmental movements.
4. **Revolutionary Social Movements**, which call for total and radical societal transformation, like independence movements or uprisings against authoritarian regimes. Additionally, other types such as **resistance**, **expressive**, and **global movements** address more specific or transnational concerns, further expanding the understanding of how collective action shapes social change.

Check Your Progress:

1. What are the four major types of social movements identified by David F. Aberle?
2. How do **reformative** social movements differ from **revolutionary** social movements?
3. What are **alternative social movements**, and what is their focus?

REVOLUTIONARY SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

History and Origin of Revolutionary Movements

Revolutionary movements have existed throughout history as collective efforts to overthrow or radically change existing social, political, and economic structures. These movements arise when groups within society experience extreme dissatisfaction with the status quo and seek fundamental transformation. Unlike reformative movements, which work within the existing system to bring gradual change, revolutionary movements aim to dismantle and replace the system entirely.

Origins of Revolutionary Movements

Revolutionary movements have their roots in various social, political, and economic grievances. Some key factors that lead to their emergence include:

1. **Oppression and Inequality** – When a section of society faces severe injustice, whether political, economic, or social, revolutionary movements often emerge to challenge authority.
2. **Political Instability** – When governments become weak, corrupt, or fail to address public concerns, revolutionary ideologies gain traction.
3. **Economic Hardship** – Economic crises, unemployment, and exploitation often fuel dissatisfaction, pushing people toward revolutionary action.
4. **Intellectual and Ideological Shifts** – Philosophies such as Marxism, socialism, and anarchism have historically influenced revolutionary movements by providing alternative visions of governance and society.

Historical Development of Revolutionary Movements

1. **Ancient and Medieval Revolutions**
 - One of the earliest recorded revolutionary uprisings was the **Spartacus Rebellion** (73–71 BCE), in which enslaved people in Rome, led by Spartacus, fought against the Roman Republic.

- The **Peasants' Revolt of 1381** in England was a popular uprising against oppressive taxation and feudal labor systems.

2. Early Modern Revolutionary Movements (17th–18th Century)

- The **English Civil War (1642–1651)** saw the overthrow of monarchy and the establishment of a brief republic under Oliver Cromwell.
- The **American Revolution (1775–1783)** was a radical movement against British colonial rule, leading to the formation of the United States.
- The **French Revolution (1789–1799)** was one of the most influential revolutionary movements in history, overthrowing the monarchy and advocating for liberty, equality, and fraternity.

3. 19th Century Revolutions

- The **Haitian Revolution (1791–1804)** was the first successful slave revolt that led to the establishment of an independent Black-led republic.
- The **Latin American Wars of Independence (1810–1830s)** saw countries like Venezuela, Argentina, and Mexico break free from Spanish colonial rule.
- The **Communist and Socialist Movements** gained momentum, particularly after the publication of *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in 1848.

4. 20th Century Revolutions

- The **Russian Revolution (1917)** led to the overthrow of the Tsar and the establishment of a communist state under Lenin and the Bolsheviks.
- The **Chinese Communist Revolution (1949)** resulted in the rise of Mao Zedong and the establishment of the People's Republic of China.
- The **Cuban Revolution (1959)**, led by Fidel Castro and Che Guevara, overthrew the U.S.-backed Batista regime, replacing it with a socialist government.

5. Post-Colonial and Contemporary Revolutionary Movements

- The **Vietnamese Revolution (1945–1975)** led to the unification of Vietnam under communist rule after decades of resistance against colonial and foreign powers.
- The **Iranian Revolution (1979)** replaced the monarchy with an Islamic republic.
- The **Arab Spring (2010–2012)** saw mass protests across the Middle East and North Africa, toppling dictators in countries like Tunisia and Egypt.

Revolutionary movements have been a driving force in shaping societies throughout history. While some have led to greater equality and progress, others have resulted in prolonged conflicts and authoritarian regimes. Understanding the origins and history of these movements helps us analyze the factors that drive large-scale societal change.

Characteristics of Revolutionary Movements

Revolutionary movements are organized efforts aimed at bringing radical political, social, or economic change, often through direct action, including armed struggle. In the context of India's freedom struggle, revolutionary movements emerged as a response to British oppression and were characterized by several key features:

1. Strong Nationalistic Sentiments

- Revolutionaries were driven by intense patriotism and a deep desire for independence.
- They considered British rule oppressive and sought complete self-rule (Swaraj).

2. Use of Armed Resistance

- Unlike moderate leaders who relied on petitions and dialogues, revolutionaries often believed in using force to overthrow the colonial government.
- Actions included assassinations of British officials, bombings, and attacks on government institutions (e.g., Kakori Conspiracy, Chittagong Armoury Raid).

3. Secret Societies and Underground Networks

- Revolutionary groups operated in secrecy to avoid British surveillance and suppression.
- Examples: Anushilan Samiti, Jugantar, Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA).

4. Influence of International Movements

- Inspired by revolutionary activities worldwide, including the French Revolution, Irish struggle, and Russian Bolshevik Revolution.
- Many leaders, like Bhagat Singh, incorporated socialist and communist ideologies into their revolutionary vision.

5. Role of Youth and Students

- A significant number of revolutionaries were young, often college students who were radicalized by British brutality.
- Many sacrificed their education and careers for the cause (e.g., Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad).

6. Ideological Diversity

- Some groups followed purely nationalist ideologies (e.g., Savarkar's Abhinav Bharat).
- Others leaned towards socialism and communism (e.g., Bhagat Singh and the HSRA).

7. Rejection of Moderate and Petition-Based Approaches

- Revolutionary leaders opposed the methods of the Indian National Congress (INC) moderates who sought constitutional reforms.

- They believed in direct action rather than negotiations.

8. Impact on Mass Movements

- Though revolutionaries were a minority, their actions inspired mass protests and intensified anti-British sentiments.
- The British government, fearing mass uprisings, eventually made political concessions.

9. Harsh British Repression and Martyrdom

- The British government responded with brutal crackdowns, mass arrests, and executions.
- Many revolutionaries were martyred, inspiring further resistance (e.g., execution of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru, and Sukhdev).

10. Legacy and Influence on Future Movements

- Inspired post-independence socialist and leftist movements in India.
- Their struggle laid the foundation for India's future leadership and political policies.

Revolutionary movements in India were characterized by courage, sacrifice, and a relentless fight for independence. Though they did not achieve direct military victories, they played a crucial role in destabilizing British rule and inspiring future generations. Their legacy continues to be celebrated in India's history.

Revolutionary Movements in India and Their Impact on Society

Revolutionary movements in India played a crucial role in the country's struggle for independence. These movements, led by groups and individuals who believed in armed resistance against British rule, inspired generations of Indians to fight for freedom. Their impact extended beyond political freedom, influencing societal structures, national consciousness, and future struggles for justice.

Major Revolutionary Movements in India

1. The First War of Independence (1857)

- Also known as the Sepoy Mutiny or Revolt of 1857, it was the first major armed uprising against British rule.
- Leaders: Rani Lakshmibai, Tantia Tope, Nana Saheb, Bahadur Shah Zafar.
- Impact: Although it was crushed, it awakened nationalist sentiments and led to the direct rule of India by the British Crown.

2. Anushilan Samiti and Jugantar (Early 1900s)

- Secret revolutionary societies in Bengal that promoted armed struggle against the British.
- Key Figures: Aurobindo Ghosh, Barindra Ghosh.
- Impact: Created awareness about militant nationalism and encouraged youth participation.

3. India House and Ghadar Movement (Early 1900s)

- The India House in London, founded by Shyamji Krishna Varma, and the Ghadar Movement in the US and Canada, aimed at overthrowing British rule.
- Leaders: Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, Lala Har Dayal, Kartar Singh Sarabha.
- Impact: Inspired overseas Indians to take part in India's independence movement.

4. Hindustan Republican Association (HRA) & Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) (1920s-30s)

- These organizations sought to establish a socialist republic through revolutionary activities.
- Leaders: Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad, Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan.
- Impact: Popularized revolutionary nationalism and inspired the youth.

5. Kakori Conspiracy (1925)

- A train robbery organized by the HRA to fund revolutionary activities.

- Leaders: Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaqulla Khan, Rajendra Lahiri.
- Impact: British repression increased, but the revolutionaries became national heroes.

6. Chittagong Armoury Raid (1930)

- A raid on the Chittagong armoury led by Surya Sen to seize arms and overthrow British rule.
- Leaders: Surya Sen, Kalpana Dutt, Pritilata Waddedar.
- Impact: Inspired future generations despite being crushed.

7. Quit India Movement and Naval Mutiny (1942, 1946)

- Though primarily a mass movement, Quit India had armed resistance elements. The Royal Indian Navy Mutiny in 1946 shook British confidence.
- Impact: Played a role in hastening British withdrawal.

Impact of Revolutionary Movements on Society

1. Awakening of Nationalism

- Inspired millions of Indians, especially the youth, to join the freedom struggle.
- Created a sense of unity among diverse communities against colonial rule.

2. Rise of Political Consciousness

- Led to widespread political awareness about rights and independence.
- Encouraged the formation of nationalist parties and movements.

3. Influence on Gandhian and Non-Violent Movements

- While Gandhi opposed violence, revolutionary actions pressured the British and complemented non-violent protests.
- The fear of violent uprisings pushed the British towards negotiations.

4. Shift in British Policies

- Led to harsher repressive laws but also forced reforms like the Government of India Act, 1935.
- The British started considering Indian self-rule seriously.

5. Impact on post-Independence India

- Inspired socialist and communist movements in independent India.
- Several revolutionary leaders became influential in shaping India's post-independence policies.

Revolutionary movements in India were instrumental in challenging British rule, inspiring mass resistance, and accelerating the freedom struggle. Their legacy continues to shape India's national identity and democratic values.

Let Sum Up:

Revolutionary movements have played a significant role in shaping societies by challenging and seeking to radically transform political, social, and economic structures. These movements arise when groups within society face extreme dissatisfaction with the existing system. Unlike reform movements, which work within the established framework, revolutionary movements aim to dismantle and replace the system entirely.

The origins of revolutionary movements are often rooted in oppression, inequality, political instability, economic hardship, and intellectual shifts. Historical examples of such movements include the Spartacus Rebellion, the French Revolution, and the Russian Revolution. Revolutionary movements can involve armed resistance, the formation of secret societies, and influence from global revolutionary ideologies like Marxism. These movements are also marked by the strong role of youth and students, the rejection of moderate approaches, and the use of direct action.

In India, revolutionary movements played a vital role in the struggle for independence. Major movements include the First War of Independence (1857), Anushilan Samiti, Jugantar, the Ghadar Movement, and the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). These movements, driven by nationalism, armed resistance, and secrecy, inspired generations of Indians to fight for freedom. Despite facing severe British repression, these movements fueled the nationalist sentiment, leading to the eventual independence of India.

The impact of revolutionary movements in India was profound. They awakened nationalism, promoted political consciousness, and influenced both Gandhian non-violent movements and violent uprisings. Revolutionary actions forced the British government to reconsider its policies, leading to eventual reforms and the push for Indian self-rule. These movements continue to influence post-independence India, shaping the country's political and social landscape.

Check Your Progress:

1. What are the key factors that lead to the emergence of revolutionary movements?
2. How did the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution influence revolutionary movements worldwide?
3. What role did youth and students play in the revolutionary movements in India?
4. How did revolutionary movements in India impact the national consciousness and political awareness?
5. What was the significance of armed resistance in India's revolutionary movements?

REGRESSIVE SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Introduction

Regressive social movements are those that aim to resist change, revert to a previous social order, or maintain traditional values and systems. Unlike progressive movements that seek reform and advancement, regressive movements often arise in response to modernization, globalization, or perceived threats to cultural or religious identities.

Characteristics of Regressive Social Movements

1. Opposition to Change

- These movements resist social, political, or economic changes and seek to maintain or restore traditional structures.
- Example: Movements opposing gender equality, caste reforms, or secularism.

2. Emphasis on Tradition and Cultural Purity

- They advocate for preserving historical norms, customs, or religious practices.
- Example: Movements against Western influences in dress, education, or lifestyle.

3. Reactionary in Nature

- Often arise as a reaction to progressive policies or reforms that challenge established hierarchies.
- Example: Resistance to women's empowerment movements or reservations for marginalized communities.

4. Strong Ideological and Religious Base

- These movements often derive their strength from religious, caste-based, or nationalist ideologies.
- Example: Opposition to secularism in favor of religious dominance in governance.

5. Resistance to Social Equality

- Many regressive movements support systems that reinforce social stratification, such as caste or patriarchy.
- Example: Movements against inter-caste marriages or women's rights in inheritance laws.

6. Use of Social and Political Influence

- Often supported by conservative political or religious groups that aim to retain their control over society.

- Example: Political opposition to LGBTQ+ rights or educational reforms.

Examples of Regressive Social Movements in India

1. Opposition to Caste-Based Reservations

- Certain groups have resisted affirmative action policies that provide educational and employment opportunities to marginalized communities.
- They argue for merit-based systems, often ignoring historical oppression.

2. Movements Against Women's Rights

- Resistance to laws promoting gender equality, such as the abolition of triple talaq or the criminalization of marital rape.
- Groups defending patriarchal norms continue to resist reforms in inheritance and property rights.

3. Religious Fundamentalism

- Movements that seek to impose religious laws over constitutional rights, such as those opposing secular policies in education and governance.
- Example: Opposition to uniform civil code (UCC) by groups fearing loss of religious autonomy.

4. Moral Policing Movements

- Groups enforcing conservative social norms, such as dress codes for women, restrictions on public expressions of love (e.g., Valentine's Day bans), and censorship of films and literature.
- Example: Attacks on couples during Valentine's Day by radical groups.

5. Opposition to Westernization and Modernization

- Movements against Western cultural influence in lifestyle, education, and work culture.

- Example: Protests against English-language education or modern entertainment industries.

Impact of Regressive Social Movements

1. Hindrance to Social Progress

- Delays or reverses reforms aimed at gender equality, caste equality, and human rights.

2. Increased Social Divisions

- Creates conflict between progressive and conservative sections of society, leading to polarization.

3. Suppression of Individual Rights

- Restricts personal freedom, particularly for women, LGBTQ+ individuals, and marginalized groups.

4. Political and Legal Challenges

- Forces governments to balance between appeasing conservative groups and enforcing progressive reforms.

Regressive social movements often arise from fears of losing cultural identity or social status. While they represent concerns of certain sections of society, they can hinder progress and equality. A balanced approach, ensuring respect for tradition while embracing necessary reforms, is essential for an inclusive and progressive society.

Let sum up

Regressive social movements aim to resist change and maintain traditional values, often emerging in response to modernization, globalization, or perceived threats to cultural or religious identities. These movements oppose social, political, or economic reforms, emphasizing the preservation of historical norms and practices. They are reactionary, often arising in response to progressive policies or reforms, and frequently draw strength from religious, caste-based, or nationalist ideologies. Examples of regressive movements in India include opposition to caste-based

reservations, women's rights, religious fundamentalism, moral policing, and resistance to Westernization. The impact of these movements includes hindering social progress, increasing social divisions, suppressing individual rights, and creating political and legal challenges for governments. While regressive movements reflect the concerns of certain groups, they can impede necessary reforms and equality, necessitating a balanced approach to societal change.

Check Your Progress:

1. What are the key characteristics of regressive social movements?
2. How do regressive social movements impact social progress and equality?
3. What are some examples of regressive social movements in India, and what issues do they oppose?

Reform and Expressive Movements

Social movements play a crucial role in shaping societies by advocating change, resisting oppression, and addressing inequalities. Among them, reform movements seek gradual change within an existing system, while expressive movements focus on personal and cultural transformation rather than structural change. Both types have had significant impacts on Indian society.

Definition

Reform movements aim to bring social, political, or economic improvements within the existing framework of society, rather than overthrowing it. These movements seek gradual change through legal, political, and social means.

Characteristics of Reform Movements

Reform movements aim to bring gradual and positive changes within the existing social, political, or economic system without overthrowing it. These

movements work towards eliminating social injustices, improving living conditions, and promoting equality. Below are the key characteristics of reform movements:

1. Work Within the Existing System

- Reform movements do not seek to completely dismantle the system but rather improve it from within.
- They work through legal means, policy changes, and public awareness.
- Example: Raja Ram Mohan Roy's Brahmo Samaj, which worked within the British legal framework to abolish Sati.

2. Aim for Gradual and Lawful Change

- Unlike revolutionary movements, reform movements focus on step-by-step progress rather than abrupt change.
- They often advocate for legislative reforms and social campaigns.
- Example: Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's Widow Remarriage Movement, which led to the Hindu Widow Remarriage Act of 1856.

3. Focus on Specific Social Issues

- Reform movements typically address specific problems rather than seeking an overall transformation of society.
- **Example:**
 - Women's Rights Movement focused on education, widow remarriage, and gender equality.
 - Dalit Movement worked against untouchability and caste-based discrimination.

4. Led by Intellectuals and Reformers

- Reform movements are usually initiated by **educated elites, thinkers, and activists** who recognize societal problems and push for change.
- Example: **Swami Dayanand Saraswati's Arya Samaj**, which promoted Vedic reforms and opposed caste-based discrimination.

5. Use of Public Awareness and Advocacy

- Reform movements rely on social awareness, education, and activism to spread their message.
- Newspapers, books, pamphlets, and speeches play a key role in mobilization.

- Example: Jyotirao Phule's Satyashodhak Samaj, which focused on educating lower castes about their rights.

6. Non-Violent Approach

- Most reform movements in India have been peaceful and non-violent, using dialogue and legal measures rather than armed conflict.
- Example: Mahatma Gandhi's Harijan Movement, which sought to uplift Dalits through non-violent means.

7. Often Face Resistance from Traditionalists

- Reform movements frequently encounter opposition from conservative and orthodox groups who resist change.
- Example: The Abolition of Sati faced strong resistance from traditional Hindu groups, but was ultimately banned in 1829.

8. Long-Term Social and Legal Impact

- Reform movements often lead to permanent changes in laws and societal attitudes.
- Example: The Dalit Movement led to constitutional provisions like the Abolition of Untouchability (Article 17) in the Indian Constitution.

Reform movements are essential drivers of social progress. By working within the existing system, advocating peaceful change, and focusing on specific social issues, these movements have reshaped Indian society, leading to significant improvements in gender equality, caste reforms, and human rights.

Examples of Reform Movements in India

1. Brahmo Samaj (Founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, 1828)

- Fought against social evils like Sati, child marriage, and caste discrimination.
- Advocated for women's education and widow remarriage.

2. Arya Samaj (Founded by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, 1875)

- Opposed idol worship and promoted Vedic teachings.
- Campaigned for caste reforms and women's rights.

3. Prarthana Samaj (M.G. Ranade, 1867)

- Promoted social equality, women's rights, and inter-caste marriages.

4. Self-Respect Movement (Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, 1925)

- Opposed Brahminical dominance and fought for caste equality in Tamil Nadu.
- Advocated for rationalism and women's rights.

5. Dalit Movement (B.R. Ambedkar, 20th Century)

- Fought against untouchability and caste-based discrimination.
- Led to the constitutional abolition of untouchability.

6. Chipko Movement (1973)

- Aimed at forest conservation and sustainable development.
- Empowered local communities, especially women, to protect the environment.

Impact of Reform Movements

- Led to legal and constitutional reforms (e.g., abolition of Sati, Hindu Widow Remarriage Act).
- Improved social conditions for marginalized groups.
- Strengthened democratic and human rights values.

Expressive Movements

Definition

Expressive movements focus on personal transformation, spiritual or cultural revival, and self-expression rather than political or economic reforms. They often emerge in response to social crises or dissatisfaction with mainstream life.

Characteristics of Expressive Movements

Expressive movements are social movements that focus on individual and collective self-expression, cultural identity, and emotional transformation rather than direct political or economic change. These movements often arise in response to social dissatisfaction, cultural suppression, or a need for identity and emotional fulfillment.

Key Characteristics of Expressive Movements**1. Focus on Personal and Collective Identity**

- Unlike revolutionary or reform movements, expressive movements do not aim to change government policies or social structures.
- Instead, they focus on shaping personal beliefs, emotions, and cultural expressions.
- **Example:** The Hippie Movement (1960s–70s) in the U.S. promoted peace, love, and an alternative lifestyle, rejecting mainstream consumer culture.

2. Emotional and Psychological Fulfillment

- These movements often provide a sense of belonging and emotional release to their followers.
- They use rituals, symbols, art, music, and spirituality to connect people emotionally.
- **Example:** The New Age Movement, which emerged in the 20th century, combined spirituality, meditation, and holistic healing to promote self-fulfillment.

3. Cultural and Religious Revivalism

- Expressive movements revive traditional cultural or religious practices to assert identity.
- They often emerge among marginalized groups seeking cultural recognition and pride.
- **Example:** The Rastafari Movement in Jamaica (1930s) emphasized Afrocentric identity, reggae music, and spiritual beliefs.

4. Alternative Lifestyles and Countercultures

- Expressive movements challenge mainstream cultural norms and promote alternative ways of living.
- These may include changes in fashion, music, diet, relationships, and spirituality.
- **Example:** The Goth Subculture, emerging in the 1980s, expressed itself through dark fashion, gothic rock music, and a rejection of materialism.

5. Symbolism and Rituals

- Expressive movements rely on symbols, dress codes, art, dance, music, and performances to convey their message.
- Example: The Sufi Movement expresses devotion through whirling dervishes, poetry (e.g., Rumi's works), and mystical music.

7. No Direct Political Agenda

- Unlike reform or revolutionary movements, expressive movements do not seek to overthrow governments or pass laws.
- Their goal is spiritual, artistic, or emotional transformation.
- **Example:** The **Bohemian Movement** of the 19th century promoted **artistic freedom and self-expression** rather than political activism.

Expressive movements play a crucial role in shaping cultural identity, emotional well-being, and artistic creativity. While they may not aim for direct social or political change, they challenge dominant ideologies and create new spaces for self-expression.

Examples of Expressive Movements in India

1. Bhakti Movement (Medieval Period, 12th-17th Century)

- Saints like Kabir, Mirabai, and Guru Nanak preached devotion and personal connection with God.
- Opposed caste-based discrimination and ritualism.

2. Sufi Movement (Medieval Period)

- Focused on love, tolerance, and mysticism in Islam.
- Bridged gaps between Hindus and Muslims through spiritual teachings.

3. Hippie Movement in India (1960s-70s)

- Inspired by Western counterculture, many Westerners and Indians turned to meditation, yoga, and spirituality.
- Contributed to India's global image as a spiritual hub.

4. Spiritual Movements (20th & 21st Century)

- Organizations like ISKCON (Hare Krishna movement) and Art of Living (Sri Sri Ravi Shankar) promote self-awareness and mindfulness.
- Focus on stress relief, mental well-being, and holistic living.

5. Neo-Buddhist Movement (B.R. Ambedkar, 1956)

- Encouraged Dalits to convert to Buddhism to escape caste oppression.
- Combined social activism with spiritual transformation.

Impact of Expressive Movements

- Promoted religious and cultural harmony.
- Encouraged self-awareness, spiritual awakening, and mental well-being.
- Influenced global perceptions of Indian spirituality and philosophy.

Both **reform movements** and **expressive movements** have played crucial roles in Indian society. While reform movements have worked towards legal and social transformations, expressive movements have focused on personal and cultural revival. Together, they have contributed to India's rich and evolving social fabric.

Let Sum Up:

Reform and expressive movements have had significant impacts on Indian society by addressing social issues and shaping cultural identities. Reform movements aim for gradual, lawful change within existing systems to improve society, often focusing on specific issues like gender equality, caste discrimination, and social justice. These movements, such as the Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, and Dalit Movement, have led to legal reforms and social progress. On the other hand, expressive movements focus on personal, cultural, and emotional transformation, offering an alternative to mainstream societal norms. These movements, like the Bhakti Movement and the Sufi Movement, emphasize identity, spirituality, and artistic

expression, contributing to cultural revival and emotional fulfillment. Together, these movements have helped shape India's evolving social and cultural landscape.

Check Your Progress:

1. What are the key characteristics of reform movements?
2. How do expressive movements differ from reform movements?
3. Can you give examples of reform movements in India and the issues they addressed?
4. What role did expressive movements like the Bhakti and Sufi Movements play in Indian society?
5. How have expressive movements contributed to India's global image as a spiritual hub?

Theories

Relative Deprivation Theory

Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT) explains how individuals or groups experience discontent and frustration when they perceive a gap between their expected standard of living or rights and their actual situation. Unlike absolute deprivation (which refers to extreme poverty or oppression), relative deprivation is based on comparisons—people feel deprived when they believe they deserve more but see others in better positions.

Key Idea: People do not rebel simply because they are poor or oppressed but because they feel relatively worse off compared to others or their past expectations.

Core Concepts of Relative Deprivation Theory

1. Perceived Discrepancy Between Expectations and Reality

- People compare their current status with what they believe they deserve or what others have.
- If they feel **unfairly disadvantaged**, they may experience **frustration and resentment**.

✦ Example:

- A middle-class worker might not be in absolute poverty but may feel deprived if their wages stagnate while corporate executives get huge bonuses.

2. Different Types of Relative Deprivation

Aspirational Deprivation – When people's **expectations rise** but reality does not match.

- **Example:** College graduates in developing countries expect well-paying jobs but face unemployment, leading to frustration.
-

Decremental Deprivation – When people lose previously enjoyed rights or status.

- **Example: South African Apartheid protests**
Black South Africans, after years of suppression, demanded equal rights when they saw other races enjoying privileges.

Progressive Deprivation (J-Curve Theory) – When conditions improve for a while but suddenly decline, leading to unrest.

- **Example: French Revolution (1789)**
Economic reforms initially improved conditions, but when food prices rose again, it led to mass anger and revolution.

3. Psychological and Social Effects of Relative Deprivation

Frustration and Aggression – People who feel deprived often experience anger and resentment, which can lead to protests or violence.

✦ **Strengthened Group Identity** – A shared sense of deprivation unites people, making collective action more likely.

✦ **Increased Political Unrest** – When governments ignore grievances, dissatisfaction can turn into social movements or revolutions.

4. Relative Deprivation and Social Movements

Relative deprivation is one of the main causes of social movements, protests, and revolutions.

Example 1: The Civil Rights Movement (1950s–1960s, USA)

- African Americans were legally free but still faced racial discrimination, unequal wages, and lack of political representation.
- The perception that white Americans had better opportunities led to protests and the Civil Rights Act (1964).

Example 2: The Arab Spring (2010–2012)

- Many young, educated people in the Middle East saw corruption and unemployment despite their qualifications.
- Their expectations of a better future were crushed, leading to mass protests and the overthrow of governments in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya.

5. Relative Deprivation vs. Absolute Deprivation

Factor	Relative Deprivation	Absolute Deprivation
Definition	Feeling deprived compared to others or past expectations.	Severe lack of basic necessities like food, shelter, and healthcare.
Cause	Perception of inequality, social comparisons.	Extreme poverty, famine, lack of resources.
Example	Middle-class workers protesting wage inequality.	Starving populations in war zones.
Likely Outcome	Social movements, revolutions, protests.	Humanitarian crisis, survival struggles.

Relative Deprivation Theory is essential in understanding why people protest, form movements, or even rebel. It highlights that dissatisfaction does not arise solely from poverty but from the perceived unfairness of social and economic conditions. This theory has been used to explain movements from the French Revolution to modern civil rights struggles and political protests worldwide.

Relative Deprivation Theory and Social Movements

Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT) explains why people or groups mobilize to demand change. It suggests that social movements arise when people feel they are unfairly deprived compared to others or their past expectations. Unlike absolute poverty, which focuses on survival needs, relative deprivation is based on perceived inequality—people feel frustrated when they see others in a better position or when their expected rights are denied.

Relative Deprivation and Social Movements

1. Perception of Injustice and Unfair Treatment

- Social movements emerge when people believe they are treated unfairly compared to other groups or societies.
- This perception of injustice creates frustration, which fuels demands for change.

Example: The Civil Rights Movement (1950s–1960s, USA)

- African Americans were legally free but faced racial discrimination, lower wages, and lack of voting rights.
- Seeing white Americans enjoying better opportunities created a sense of relative deprivation, leading to protests and legal reforms.

2. Rising Expectations and the J-Curve Theory

- When people experience a period of economic or social improvement, they expect progress to continue.
- If conditions suddenly decline or stagnate, frustration increases, leading to unrest.

Example: The French Revolution (1789)

- The middle class (bourgeoisie) in France gained wealth but had no political power compared to the aristocracy.

- When economic crises hit, they felt deprived of their rising expectations, sparking a revolution demanding equality.

3. Strengthened Group Identity and Mobilization

- When individuals share a common feeling of deprivation, they form collective identities and organize protests.
- Social media, political leaders, and activists can amplify this sense of injustice and encourage people to take action.

Example: Arab Spring (2010–2012)

- Many young, educated citizens in the Middle East faced **high unemployment and political corruption**.
- Seeing the **wealthy elite prosper** while they struggled fueled protests that led to **government overthrows** in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya.

4. Frustration Leading to Protest and Conflict

- Frustration from deprivation can lead to peaceful protests, violent uprisings, or even revolutions.
- If authorities ignore grievances, movements can escalate into riots or armed resistance.

◆ Example: Black Lives Matter (BLM) Movement (2013–present, USA)

- The movement began after repeated cases of police brutality against African Americans.
- People felt law enforcement was biased against them, creating a demand for racial justice and police reform.

Relative Deprivation Theory vs. Other Social Movement Theories

Theory	Focus	Example
Relative Deprivation Theory	Perceived inequality and unfair treatment lead to social movements.	Civil Rights Movement, Arab Spring
Resource Mobilization	Movements succeed based on access to resources like money, media, and	Women's Suffrage Movement

Theory	Focus	Example
Theory	leadership.	
Political Process Theory	Social movements emerge when political conditions are favorable.	Indian Independence Movement
New Social Movement Theory	Focuses on identity-based movements (e.g., environmental, LGBTQ+ rights).	LGBTQ+ Rights Movement

Let Sum Up:

Relative Deprivation Theory (RDT) explains how individuals or groups feel discontented when they perceive a gap between what they expect or believe they deserve and their actual situation, especially when comparing themselves to others. Unlike absolute deprivation, which involves lacking basic necessities, relative deprivation focuses on perceived inequality. This sense of unfairness can lead to frustration, strengthened group identity, and collective action like protests or revolutions. RDT helps explain historical and modern social movements such as the Civil Rights Movement, Arab Spring, and Black Lives Matter, where people demanded change due to perceived injustice. However, not everyone who feels deprived joins such movements, as factors like leadership, resources, and political opportunities also play key roles in mobilization.

Check Your Progress:

1. What is the key difference between *relative deprivation* and *absolute deprivation*?
2. How does the J-Curve Theory relate to Relative Deprivation? Give an example.
3. Why doesn't everyone who feels relatively deprived join a social movement?

STRUCTURAL STRAIN

Structural Strain Theory was proposed by sociologist Robert K. Merton in 1938 as part of his work on social structure and anomie. The theory suggests that society sets culturally approved goals and socially acceptable means for achieving

them. When individuals or groups are unable to meet these goals due to a lack of access to the accepted means, it results in strain or pressure, potentially leading to deviant behavior or social unrest.

Key Features of Structural Strain Theory:

1. Culturally Approved Goals:

- Societies have established goals that are culturally valued. These goals typically include financial success, social mobility, or achieving a particular status.
- Example: In many Western societies, economic success is considered a major goal, often represented by owning property, having a successful career, or accumulating wealth.

2. Legitimate Means to Achieve Goals:

- Societies also provide established, legitimate means for individuals to achieve these goals, such as education, employment, and participation in formal economic activities.
- Example: The expectation to attend school, earn a degree, and secure a job to attain financial success is a common means.

3. Strain and Anomie:

- Strain occurs when there is a disconnect between culturally approved goals and the available means to achieve them. This can cause individuals to feel anomie (normlessness), frustration, or stress.
- Anomie refers to the breakdown or confusion in the norms and values of society, which can occur when the structure of society does not provide clear ways to achieve societal goals.

4. Deviant Responses to Strain:

- Merton identified five possible responses individuals might have to the strain of not achieving cultural goals through legitimate means:
 - **Conformity:** Adhering to both the goals and the means, even if success is unlikely.
 - **Innovation:** Accepting the goals but using illegitimate or unconventional means (e.g., crime) to achieve them.

- **Ritualism:** Abandoning the pursuit of goals but rigidly adhering to the means.
- **Retreatism:** Rejecting both the goals and the means, often retreating into drug use or alcoholism.
- **Rebellion:** Rejecting both established goals and means, seeking to replace them with new societal norms.

5. Social Structure and Inequality:

- Structural strain theory also highlights that societal inequalities in access to the means of achieving goals (such as economic disparity, racial discrimination, or lack of educational opportunities) can intensify strain for marginalized groups, making deviance more likely.

Implications of Structural Strain Theory:

1. Deviant Behavior:

- The theory suggests that when people cannot achieve societal goals through legitimate means, they might resort to deviance or criminal behavior. This provides a framework for understanding why some individuals or groups engage in crime or deviance.

2. Inequality and Social Disorganization:

- Structural strain often disproportionately affects those who are marginalized, such as lower socio-economic groups, minorities, or people with limited access to education or employment opportunities. These groups experience more strain and are more likely to adopt deviant strategies.
- Strain theory emphasizes the role of social inequality in the emergence of deviant behavior.

3. Policy Implications:

- The theory suggests that addressing social inequality and providing better access to legitimate means (like education, employment, or healthcare) can reduce strain and, by extension, reduce deviant behavior and crime.

4. Crime Prevention:

- Strain theory informs crime prevention strategies by highlighting the need for societal reform. Programs that provide individuals with better access to legitimate means of achieving success (e.g., job training, education, or social welfare programs) may reduce the likelihood of deviance.

Examples of Structural Strain Theory:

1. The American Dream:

- Merton's theory was inspired by his observation of the American Dream—the belief that anyone, regardless of their background, could achieve success through hard work. However, Merton argued that not everyone has equal access to the means to achieve this dream, leading to strain.
- **Example:** In urban poverty-stricken areas, individuals may still desire financial success but lack access to quality education, jobs, or resources. As a result, some may resort to illegal activities like drug dealing or theft to achieve the material success they desire.

2. The 1992 Los Angeles Riots:

- The riots were partly a response to systemic inequality and lack of access to economic opportunities, particularly in African-American and Latino communities. The frustration and anger, stemming from long-standing inequality, represented a form of structural strain.
- **Example:** Residents of these communities may have felt that they could not achieve their social and economic goals through legitimate means (like education or employment), which contributed to deviant behavior during the riots.

3. Youth Gangs:

- Many youth gangs are formed in response to strain in lower-income, marginalized communities where individuals face a lack of opportunities for success through traditional means. Gang membership can provide an alternative route to achieving success, such as financial rewards, social status, or a sense of belonging.

- **Example:** In cities where there are high levels of poverty and unemployment, young people might join gangs, accepting the "goal" of success (money, power, respect) but using illegal means (drug trafficking, robbery, etc.) to attain it.

Let sum up:

Structural Strain Theory, developed by **Robert K. Merton (1938)**, explains how societal pressure and unequal access to resources can lead to **deviant behavior** or **social unrest**. The theory argues that when people are unable to achieve culturally approved goals (like wealth or status) through legitimate means (like education or jobs), they experience **strain**. This strain can push individuals toward alternative or deviant paths.

Key Features:

- Societies promote **shared goals** (e.g., success) and **legitimate means** to reach them.
- **Strain** arises when access to these means is unequal.
- People respond to strain in different ways: **conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism, or rebellion**.
- Social inequality intensifies strain, especially for **marginalized communities**.

Implications:

- Helps explain **why deviance and crime occur**, especially among disadvantaged groups.
- Encourages **policy interventions** like education, job access, and welfare to reduce strain.
- Influences **crime prevention strategies** by addressing root causes of deviant behavior.

Examples:

1. **The American Dream** – Desire for wealth without equal opportunities leads to crime in poor communities.
2. **1992 LA Riots** – Widespread inequality and frustration sparked violent unrest.
3. **Youth Gangs** – Form in response to limited legal routes to success in marginalized areas.

Check Your Progress:

1. What are the five modes of individual adaptation to structural strain, as identified by Merton?
2. How does structural strain theory explain the formation of youth gangs in urban areas?
3. In what ways can policy changes help reduce the effects of structural strain in society?

MARXIST THEORY AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Marxist theory, based on the ideas of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, focuses on class struggle as the engine of social change. It argues that society is divided into classes—the bourgeoisie (owners of the means of production) and the proletariat (working class)—and that social movements arise when the oppressed classes become aware of their exploitation and seek to change the existing system.

Key Concepts in Marxist Theory Related to Social Movements:

1. Class Struggle as the Root of Social Movements

- Social change occurs through the conflict between the ruling and oppressed classes.
- Marxists see social movements as expressions of this **class struggle**, where the oppressed seek to overthrow capitalist exploitation.

Example: The **Russian Revolution (1917)** was driven by the working class and peasants who revolted against the aristocracy and capitalist class, leading to the establishment of a socialist state.

2. False Consciousness vs. Class Consciousness

- **False consciousness:** When the working class is unaware of its exploitation and accepts the dominant ideology.
- **Class consciousness:** When workers become aware of their common interests and organize for collective action.

- Social movements emerge as workers **gain class consciousness** and unite for systemic change.

Example: The rise of **labour unions** during the Industrial Revolution helped workers develop class consciousness, leading to movements for better wages, conditions, and rights.

3. Base and Superstructure

- The **economic base** (means and relations of production) shapes the **superstructure** (laws, politics, culture).
- Social movements, according to Marxists, aim to **transform the base**, which will, in turn, change the superstructure.

Example: The **anti-globalization movement** challenges capitalist structures like the WTO and IMF that enforce global inequality and economic imperialism.

4. Revolutionary Change

- Marxist theory views **revolution**, not reform, as the ultimate goal of social movements.
- The aim is not just to improve the system but to **overthrow capitalism** and establish a classless, communist society.

Example: The **Naxalite Movement** in India, especially in tribal and rural areas, seeks to dismantle feudal and capitalist structures, aiming for land redistribution and social justice through armed struggle.

5. Critique of Reformist Movements

- Marxists often critique **reformist movements** that seek change within the capitalist system rather than challenging the system itself.
- They believe such movements may **stabilize capitalism** instead of dismantling it.

Example: Some Marxist thinkers criticize liberal feminist movements that aim for equal opportunity within capitalism, instead of addressing the system's exploitative roots.

Implications of Marxist Theory on Social Movements:

- Emphasizes **economic inequality and power** as central to understanding movements.

- Encourages **collective action** by the working class to challenge and overthrow the system.
- Influences radical and revolutionary movements that target **structural transformation**, not just policy change.

Examples of Social Movements Explained through a Marxist Lens:

Movement	Marxist Interpretation
Naxalite Movement (India)	A class struggle of landless peasants against landlords and state-backed capitalism.
Labour Movements (Global)	Workers uniting to challenge capitalist exploitation and demand better wages and rights.
Occupy Wall Street (USA, 2011)	Protest against the top 1%, capitalism, and corporate control of the economy.
Peasant Uprisings	Revolts against feudal or capitalist systems denying land, resources, and rights.
Socialist/Communist Revolutions	Seek to replace capitalist governments with proletarian (working-class) rule.

Let us Sum Up

Marxist theory explains social movements as the result of **class struggle** between the **oppressed proletariat** (working class) and the **ruling bourgeoisie** (owners of production). Movements arise when the working class becomes aware of its **exploitation** and develops **class consciousness**, challenging the capitalist system that maintains inequality.

The theory emphasizes that **true social change** comes not from reforms within the system, but through **revolutionary transformation** of the **economic base**, which will reshape the legal, political, and cultural structures (superstructure).

Marxists often critique reformist or liberal movements for stabilizing capitalism instead of dismantling it. Historical and contemporary examples such as the **Russian Revolution**, **labour movements**, the **Naxalite movement**, and **Occupy Wall Street** reflect this theory in action.

Check Your Progress:

1. How does Marxist theory explain the emergence and goals of social movements?
2. What is the difference between false consciousness and class consciousness, and how does this impact collective action?
3. Why do Marxists critique reformist movements, and how do they distinguish between reform and revolution?

POST MARXIST THEORIES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Definition:

Post-Marxism refers to theoretical developments that emerged in the late 20th century as a critique or evolution of classical Marxist theory. While it retains a focus on power and inequality, Post-Marxism broadens the analysis beyond class struggle, emphasizing discourse, identity, culture, and multiple sources of domination (not just economic).

Post-Marxist thinkers such as Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe argue that social movements today are not always rooted in class but are often driven by plural identities—such as gender, race, sexuality, ethnicity, environment, and human rights.

Key Features of Post-Marxist Theory in Relation to Social Movements:

1. Rejection of Class Reductionism

- Classical Marxism prioritizes economic class; post-Marxists reject the idea that class is the sole driver of social change.

- Instead, they highlight **intersectionality** and **multiple oppressions** (e.g., patriarchy, racism, colonialism).

Example: The **Black Lives Matter** movement combines concerns about race, police violence, class inequality, and systemic oppression—not just economic class.

2. Discourse and Identity Politics

- Post-Marxists argue that **language, symbols, and discourse** shape how people see themselves and their struggles.
- Social movements are formed around **identity**, culture, and meaning-making, not just material interests.

Example: The **LGBTQ+ rights movement** focuses on recognition, cultural visibility, and identity affirmation as well as legal and economic justice.

3. Decentralized and Horizontal Movements

- Movements are less hierarchical and more **networked, fluid, and non-traditional** in structure.
- They often resist aligning with political parties or rigid ideologies.

Example: The **Occupy Wall Street** movement emphasized horizontal decision-making and leaderless organization, reflecting post-Marxist influence.

4. Articulation and Hegemony (Laclau & Mouffe)

- Social movements create meaning through **articulation**—linking different struggles under a common narrative.
- Power lies in forming a **hegemonic bloc** that unites diverse groups.

Example: The **Global Justice Movement** unites environmentalists, labor groups, Indigenous rights activists, and anti-corporate activists against neoliberal globalization.

Examples of Post-Marxist Social Movements

Movement	Post-Marxist Interpretation
Black Lives Matter	A movement rooted in race, identity, police violence, and intersectionality—not just class.
LGBTQ+ Rights	Identity-based mobilization for visibility, cultural change, and

Movement	Post-Marxist Interpretation
Movements	legal recognition.
Climate Justice Movements	Movements that connect environmentalism with Indigenous rights, anti-colonialism, and justice.
MeToo Movement	Gender-based activism that highlights power dynamics, patriarchy, and social narratives.

Implications of Post-Marxist Theory:

- Expands the analysis of social movements beyond economics.
- Emphasizes culture, discourse, and identity.
- Recognizes the diversity of struggles in modern societies.
- Highlights how power operates through ideology, norms, and representation—not just material conditions.

Post-Marxist theory emerged in the late 20th century as a response to the perceived limitations of classical Marxism, particularly its emphasis on economic determinism and class struggle as the sole driving force of history. Post-Marxists argue that while economic inequality remains important, it is not the only axis of oppression or source of resistance. Instead, power and domination operate across various dimensions—such as **gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, environmental issues, and cultural identity**—which are just as central to understanding contemporary social struggles.

One of the foundational ideas of post-Marxism comes from **Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe**, who in their influential work *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (1985), argued for a “radical democracy” that moves beyond class essentialism. They suggested that **political identities are not fixed** but are **constructed through discourse**—the way people talk about, represent, and interpret the world. In this sense, **language and meaning-making become tools of power**, and social movements are understood as sites of struggle over how reality is framed and

understood. Rather than focusing solely on economic exploitation, post-Marxists emphasize **symbolic and cultural forms of domination** and resistance.

A key innovation in post-Marxist theory is the concept of **articulation**—the process of linking diverse demands and identities into a “**chain of equivalence**” that can form a unified political front. For instance, a movement may bring together Indigenous rights, climate activism, feminism, and anti-capitalist critiques into a shared struggle against neoliberalism. This approach differs from classical Marxism, which often sought unity under a single class identity (the proletariat). Post-Marxism values **pluralism and difference**, recognizing that people are shaped by multiple intersecting identities, and that resistance must be flexible and inclusive.

Post-Marxist social movements tend to be **decentralized, network-based, and non-hierarchical**, reflecting a shift from traditional political parties to grassroots and digital mobilizations. They also critique the idea that **revolutionary change must come from seizing state power**, instead focusing on **shifting cultural norms, discourses, and social practices**. For example, movements like **Occupy Wall Street**, **Black Lives Matter**, and **Extinction Rebellion** are often cited as expressions of post-Marxist politics because they challenge dominant systems of meaning and inequality without necessarily following the blueprint of class revolution.

In summary, Post-Marxist theory offers a more **flexible, culturally-aware, and identity-inclusive** lens to understand social movements in the 21st century. It maintains a critical stance toward capitalism and power but recognizes that the sources of oppression—and resistance—are diverse and complex, shaped by both material and symbolic dimensions.

Let Sum up:

Post-Marxist theory evolved in the late 20th century as a critique of classical Marxism. While it retains concern for power and inequality, it expands the analysis beyond economic class to include race, gender, culture, environment, and identity. Thinkers like Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe argued that social movements are

no longer solely rooted in class struggle but emerge through diverse identities and discourses.

A key element of post-Marxism is the focus on discourse and identity politics, where meaning-making and cultural narratives shape social realities. The concept of articulation is central—movements build solidarity by linking different struggles (e.g., race, gender, environment) into a “chain of equivalence.” These movements are often decentralized, non-hierarchical, and prioritize horizontal organization over centralized leadership.

Examples include Black Lives Matter, LGBTQ+ rights, Climate Justice, and the MeToo Movement, all of which challenge power structures through the lens of identity and representation, not just material conditions. Post-Marxists emphasize that transformation happens not only through revolution or state power but through changing discourse, norms, and everyday practices.

This theory has had a profound impact on how we understand contemporary social movements—as diverse, intersectional, and culturally engaged struggles rather than purely economic or class-based revolts.

Check Your Progress:

1. How does Post-Marxist theory differ from classical Marxism in its understanding of social movements?
2. What role does discourse and identity play in shaping resistance and collective action according to Post-Marxist thinkers?
3. How do contemporary movements like Black Lives Matter or Climate Justice reflect Post-Marxist principles such as articulation and horizontal organization?

RESOURCE MOBILIZATION AND CONTEMPORARY DEBATE

Definition:

Resource Mobilization Theory emerged in the 1970s as a response to earlier sociological approaches that viewed social movements mainly as emotional or

irrational responses to strain or grievances. RMT instead argues that social movements are rational, organized efforts that rely on the effective acquisition and use of resources to achieve their goals.

Key Assumptions and Features of Resource Mobilization Theory

1. Rationality of Participants

- **Assumption: Individuals who join social movements are rational actors.**
- **People make calculated decisions based on cost-benefit analysis.**
- **Unlike earlier theories that saw social movements as emotional or irrational, RMT treats movement participation as planned and strategic.**

***Example:** A worker might join a labor strike not out of pure anger, but because they see a realistic chance of improved wages or job security.*

2. Importance of Resources

- **Core Idea: Success of a movement largely depends on the availability and management of resources, such as:**
 - **Financial support (funding, donations)**
 - **Human resources (volunteers, activists, leaders)**
 - **Material assets (printing presses, transportation, venues)**
 - **Organizational skills and communication tools**
- **Access to institutional allies or media is also seen as a resource.**

***Example:** The Civil Rights Movement leveraged black churches, legal institutions, and media coverage to mobilize national support.*

3. Role of Formal Organizations and Leadership

- **Movements require structured organizations to coordinate action, maintain focus, and manage resources.**
- **Charismatic and strategic leadership helps in recruiting members, gaining legitimacy, and maintaining coherence.**
- **Movements often evolve into or are supported by Social Movement Organizations (SMOs), which are more stable and bureaucratic.**

- *Example:* The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) was a formal SMO within the Civil Rights Movement.

4. Networks and Alliances

- Movements succeed better when they tap into existing networks, such as:
 - Religious groups
 - Student associations
 - Labor unions
 - NGOs or political parties
- RMT emphasizes the interconnectedness of groups and how these alliances can amplify influence.

Example: The anti-apartheid movement in South Africa gained global strength by aligning with international human rights groups.

5. Political Opportunities and Constraints

- Although not exclusive to RMT, many theorists integrate ideas from Political Process Theory, which argues that:
 - Movements arise when there are openings in the political system, such as shifts in elite power or changes in public policy.
 - Political repression or support can dramatically affect a movement's momentum.
- *Example:* The fall of authoritarian regimes (e.g., in Eastern Europe in 1989) created political openings for pro-democracy movements.

6. Professionalization of Movements

- Modern movements often include paid staff, consultants, and legal experts.
- Campaigns are increasingly planned like businesses, with strategic goals, marketing, fundraising campaigns, etc.
- *Example:* Modern environmental groups like Greenpeace and WWF run highly professionalized campaigns with global reach.

7. Goal-Oriented Behavior

- RMT assumes movements are goal-oriented—they are formed with specific demands or objectives.

- This includes policy change, legal reform, raising awareness, or institutional restructuring.
- Movements use strategies and tactics (e.g., lobbying, protests, petitions) to achieve these goals.

Summary:

Feature	Description	Example
Rationality	Participants are strategic and thoughtful	Workers joining a strike for better pay
Resource Dependency	Success depends on resource mobilization	Funding, media access, volunteers
Organization & Leadership	Movements need structure and leaders	SCLC in Civil Rights Movement
Networks & Alliances	Strong ties with other organizations help	International support for anti-apartheid
Political Opportunities	Movements respond to shifts in the political landscape	Democracy protests after regime changes
Professionalization	Many movements operate like NGOs or businesses	WWF's global climate campaigns
Goal-Oriented	Clear objectives guide action	Legal recognition, policy reform

Examples:

1. Civil Rights Movement (USA):

- Organizations like the NAACP and SCLC had strong leadership (e.g., Martin Luther King Jr.), legal strategies, funding, and media outreach.
- Mobilized churches, students, and lawyers to fight segregation laws.

2. Fridays for Future (Climate Movement):

- Global student-led climate action movement started by Greta Thunberg.
- Uses digital platforms, social media, global coordination, and decentralized leadership to mobilize support.

3. Women's March (2017):

- Mobilized millions globally using online organizing, celebrity endorsements, and local grassroots networks.

Contemporary Debates in Social Movement Theory:

While RMT brought clarity and structure to the study of movements, newer perspectives have emerged that **critique and expand** on it.

Key Contemporary Debates:

1. Beyond Rationality:

- Critics argue RMT downplays **emotions, culture, and identity**, which are vital to understanding participation.
- Movements are not just rational organizations—they are also emotional, symbolic, and expressive.

2. Role of Identity and Discourse:

- Post-Marxist and New Social Movement theories stress that movements are shaped by **identity politics, symbolic representation**, and **discourse**, not just material resources.

3. Digital Mobilization:

- The rise of social media challenges RMT's focus on formal organization. Many contemporary movements (e.g., #MeToo, Arab Spring) emerge **without central leadership** or traditional structures.

4. Globalization and Transnational Activism:

- Movements today often cross borders and respond to global systems (e.g., climate change, capitalism, colonialism), requiring new tools of analysis beyond traditional resource-based models.

Let Sum Up:

Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT)

Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT) emerged in the 1970s as a response to earlier views that saw social movements as irrational or emotional responses to grievances. RMT argues that social movements are organized, rational efforts that rely on the acquisition and effective use of resources. The success of a movement depends on its ability to mobilize **financial, human, and material resources**, as well as to form **alliances** and **networks**.

Key Features of RMT:

1. **Rationality of Participants:** Movements are seen as the result of strategic decision-making by rational actors.
2. **Importance of Resources:** Success depends on mobilizing resources like funding, volunteers, and organizational skills.
3. **Role of Organizations and Leadership:** Strong, structured organizations with clear leadership are critical.
4. **Networks and Alliances:** Movements grow stronger through alliances with other groups (e.g., political parties, religious organizations).
5. **Political Opportunities and Constraints:** Movements respond to political changes and openings in the system.
6. **Professionalization of Movements:** Many modern movements are highly professionalized, often resembling NGOs or businesses.
7. **Goal-Oriented Behavior:** Movements are focused on achieving specific objectives, such as policy change or social reform.

Examples:

- **Civil Rights Movement (USA):** Utilized organizational resources like churches and legal strategies.
- **Fridays for Future:** A youth-led climate movement using digital platforms for mobilization.
- **Women's March (2017):** Leveraged online organizing, celebrity endorsements, and local grassroots support.

Contemporary Debates:

- Critics argue that RMT overlooks the **emotional, cultural, and identity-driven** aspects of movements.
- New theories emphasize **identity politics** and **discourse** as central to understanding contemporary movements.
- **Digital mobilization** and **global activism** challenge traditional notions of resource-based movement organization.

Check your Progress:

1. How does Resource Mobilization Theory differ from earlier sociological theories on social movements, and why is resource acquisition seen as critical for a movement's success?
2. What role do networks and alliances play in the success of social movements according to Resource Mobilization Theory? Can you think of a recent movement that benefited from such networks?
3. How does RMT address the rationality of participants in social movements, and why is this concept important for understanding how movements achieve their goals?

Unit Summary

Types of Social Movements:

1. Revolutionary Movements:

- **Definition:** Revolutionary movements aim to completely overthrow and replace the existing political, social, or economic order. They seek to change the entire system, often through radical means.

- **Example:** The **Russian Revolution (1917)** was a revolutionary movement where the working class overthrew the tsarist regime and replaced it with a communist state.
- **Key Feature:** Overthrow of the existing state and power structures.

2. Regressive Movements:

- **Definition:** Also known as reactionary movements, these aim to reverse social, political, or economic changes and return to a previous state of affairs. These movements resist progress and prefer the status quo or past social arrangements.
- **Example:** The **Ku Klux Klan (KKK)** in the USA during the 20th century, seeking to maintain racial segregation and white supremacy.
- **Key Feature:** Opposition to progressive changes, often in response to societal shifts like civil rights movements.

3. Reform Movements:

- **Definition:** Reform movements seek gradual change within the existing political or social framework, addressing specific issues such as inequality, civil rights, or environmental protection without attempting to completely dismantle the current system.
- **Example:** The **Civil Rights Movement** in the United States, which sought to reform segregation laws and ensure equal rights for African Americans.
- **Key Feature:** Non-revolutionary change, often through legal, political, or policy reforms.

4. Expressive Movements:

- **Definition:** These movements focus on personal or cultural transformation rather than political or economic change. They aim to express identity, values, or emotions rather than directly changing societal structures.
- **Example: The Hippie Movement** of the 1960s, which sought to express a new countercultural identity, focusing on peace, love, and rejection of materialism.
- **Key Feature:** Focus on personal expression and cultural change, rather than institutional reform or revolution.

Theories of Social Movements:

1. Relative Deprivation Theory:

- **Definition:** This theory posits that social movements arise when individuals or groups perceive a discrepancy between their expectations and their actual living conditions. The sense of deprivation and injustice can motivate collective action.
- **Example:** The **French Revolution** (1789) emerged partly from the resentment of the lower classes who felt deprived compared to the aristocracy.
- **Key Feature:** The feeling of deprivation when people compare themselves to others.

2. Structural Strain Theory:

- **Definition:** Proposed by Neil Smelser, this theory suggests that social movements arise when society experiences structural strains, such as economic instability, political upheaval, or social disorganization, that disrupt the status quo.

- **Example:** The **Protestant Reformation** in Europe, where religious strain and the rise of individualism challenged the established Catholic Church.
- **Key Feature:** Structural issues that create dissatisfaction, leading to collective action.

3. Marxist Theory:

- **Definition:** According to Karl Marx, social movements are driven by class struggle. The proletariat (working class) rises against the bourgeoisie (capitalist class) to end exploitation and establish a classless society. Marxists view social movements as expressions of this conflict.
- **Example:** The **Russian Revolution (1917)** and **The Naxalite Movement** in India are examples of Marxist-influenced revolutionary movements.
- **Key Feature:** Class struggle as the central driver of social change.

4. Post-Marxist Theory:

- **Definition:** Post-Marxism critiques traditional Marxist theory by incorporating issues of identity, culture, and discourse. It emphasizes that modern social movements are not solely about class but are influenced by multiple sources of oppression, such as race, gender, and ethnicity.
- **Example:** **Black Lives Matter**, **LGBTQ+ Rights Movements**, and **Global Justice Movements** emphasize identity-based struggles.
- **Key Feature:** Recognition of diverse forms of domination beyond just economic class.

5. Resource Mobilization Theory:

- **Definition:** This theory emphasizes the strategic, organized, and rational aspects of social movements. It argues that the success of a movement is contingent upon its ability to mobilize and manage resources like funding, leadership, media access, and organizational capacity.
- **Example:** The **Civil Rights Movement** in the USA utilized resources like churches, media, and legal networks to achieve its goals.
- **Key Feature:** Resource acquisition and organizational capacity as key to the success of movements.

Contemporary Debates in Social Movements:

- **Beyond Rationality:** Critics of RMT argue that the theory overlooks the emotional and symbolic aspects of movements, which can also drive participation and action.
- **Identity and Discourse:** Post-Marxist and New Social Movement theories highlight that movements are increasingly driven by identity-based politics, cultural symbols, and discourses, not just material resources.
- **Digital Mobilization:** Social media and digital platforms have revolutionized movement organization, allowing decentralized movements (e.g., #MeToo, Arab Spring) to gain momentum without centralized leadership.
- **Globalization and Transnational Activism:** Movements are increasingly transnational, challenging global capitalism, climate change, and human rights issues on a global scale, which demands new theories of analysis.

Glossary

Revolutionary Movements:

- **Definition:** Movements that seek to completely overthrow the existing political, social, or economic order and replace it with a new system.
- **Example:** The **Russian Revolution** (1917) was an attempt to overthrow the tsarist regime and establish a socialist state.

Regressive Movements:

- **Definition:** Movements that aim to reverse social, political, or economic changes and return to a previous state or order. These movements resist progressive changes.
- **Example:** The **Ku Klux Klan (KKK)** in the USA sought to maintain racial segregation and white supremacy.

Reform Movements:

- **Definition:** Movements that seek to change specific aspects of society within the existing political framework without attempting to completely dismantle the system.
- **Example:** The **Civil Rights Movement** in the USA sought to reform segregation laws and ensure equal rights for African Americans.

Expressive Movements:

- **Definition:** Movements that focus on cultural transformation and personal or group expression rather than direct political or economic change.

- **Example:** The **Hippie Movement** of the 1960s focused on countercultural ideals such as peace, love, and environmental awareness.

Relative Deprivation Theory:

- **Definition:** A theory that social movements arise when individuals or groups perceive a gap between their expectations and their actual living conditions, creating a sense of deprivation and injustice.
- **Example:** The **French Revolution** arose partly because the lower classes felt deprived compared to the aristocracy.

Structural Strain Theory:

- **Definition:** A theory suggesting that social movements arise when there are structural strains in society, such as economic instability, social disorganization, or political upheaval.
- **Example:** The **Protestant Reformation** was partly a response to the religious and social strains of the time.

Marxist Theory:

- **Definition:** A theory that views social movements as driven by class struggle, where the oppressed (proletariat) rise up against the ruling capitalist class (bourgeoisie) to change the system.
- **Example:** The **Russian Revolution** and the **Naxalite Movement** in India are influenced by Marxist principles of class conflict and revolution.

Post-Marxist Theory:

- **Definition:** A theory that critiques classical Marxism by incorporating issues of identity, culture, and discourse. It emphasizes that modern movements are shaped by multiple axes of oppression (race, gender, sexuality) and not just economic class.
- **Example:** **Black Lives Matter** and **LGBTQ+ Rights Movements** are examples of post-Marxist movements focused on identity-based struggles.

Resource Mobilization Theory (RMT):

- **Definition:** A theory that argues the success of social movements depends on their ability to acquire and effectively use resources such as funding, human capital, media, and organizational capacity.
- **Example:** The **Civil Rights Movement** in the USA used resources like legal networks, media, and churches to mobilize support and bring about social change.

Beyond Rationality:

- **Definition:** A critique of Resource Mobilization Theory, suggesting that social movements are not only rational and strategic but also shaped by emotional, cultural, and symbolic factors that drive participation and action.

Identity Politics:

- **Definition:** A focus on movements that are centered around the assertion and recognition of group identities (e.g., gender, race, sexuality). These movements challenge systemic oppression and marginalization based on identity categories.

Digital Mobilization:

- **Definition:** The use of digital platforms, particularly social media, to mobilize people, spread messages, and organize protests. Movements such as **#MeToo** and the **Arab Spring** exemplify this form of mobilization.
- **Hegemony:** A concept, particularly in Post-Marxist theory, introduced by Antonio Gramsci, which refers to the dominance of one group over others, not just through force but through ideology and cultural practices.
- **Articulation:** In Post-Marxist theory, articulation refers to the process of linking different social struggles (e.g., race, gender, class) together to form a unified political front.
- **Class Consciousness:** A Marxist concept referring to the awareness of one's social class and its interests, which motivates collective action against exploitation.
- **False Consciousness:** A Marxist concept referring to when the working class is unaware of their exploitation and accepts the dominant ideology imposed by the ruling class.

Types of Social Movements (continued):**Revolutionary vs. Reformist Movements:**

- **Revolutionary Movements:** Movements aiming to completely change or overthrow the political system (e.g., **Russian Revolution**).
- **Reformist Movements:** Movements seeking specific changes within the existing system (e.g., **Women's Suffrage Movement**).**Example:** **The LGBTQ+ Rights Movement** uses framing to challenge traditional definitions of gender and sexuality, promoting acceptance and equality.

New Social Movements Theory (NSM):

- **Definition:** A theory that focuses on movements arising from issues that are not purely economic or political, but cultural, social, and identity-related. These movements prioritize individual rights, identity, and lifestyle over traditional class struggles.
- **Example:** **The Feminist Movement**, which emphasizes gender equality, and the **Environmental Movement**, which focuses on sustainable living and environmental protection.

Cultural Theory of Social Movements:

- **Definition:** This theory argues that cultural elements, including identity, collective memory, and ideology, play a central role in the formation and success of social movements. Movements are seen as a way to challenge the dominant cultural narratives and promote new ones.
- **Example:** **The Civil Rights Movement** in the U.S. challenged the prevailing racist cultural norms, promoting a new narrative of equality and justice.
- **Political Opportunity Structures:** Refers to the openness or closeness of the political system to collective action, such as the presence of allies within the state, the degree of political repression, or the timing of a movement in relation to political events.
- **Social Movement Organizations (SMOs):** Formal organizations that help organize, fund, and lead social movements. They help mobilize resources, set goals, and formulate strategies for achieving movement objectives.
- **Mass Mobilization:** Refers to the process of gathering large numbers of people to participate in a social movement, often through rallies, protests, or demonstrations.

- **Solidarity:** A term used to describe the unity and collective identity that binds members of a social movement together, often in the face of opposition.
- **Cultural Hegemony:** A concept from **Gramsci**, which refers to the dominance of one social group's cultural practices and values over others, influencing public consciousness in ways that justify the existing social order.
- **# Hashtag Activism:**
 - **Definition:** The use of social media hashtags to draw attention to social, political, or cultural issues and organize digital campaigns for social change.
 - **Example:** **#MeToo** and **#BlackLivesMatter** are examples of hashtag activism, allowing widespread awareness and mobilization around gender-based violence and racial injustice.

Global Social Movements:

- **Definition:** Movements that transcend national borders, addressing global issues such as climate change, human rights, global capitalism, and poverty.
- **Example:** **Global Justice Movement** which involves labor unions, environmentalists, and human rights groups that oppose neoliberal economic policies and the domination of global financial institutions.

Digital Activism:

- **Definition:** Activism that primarily takes place on digital platforms such as social media, websites, and online petitions, often allowing movements to operate without physical boundaries.
- **Example:** The **Arab Spring** (2010-2012) mobilized protests through digital platforms like Facebook and Twitter, challenging authoritarian regimes in the Middle East.

Antagonistic Movements:

- **Definition:** Movements that arise in opposition to a perceived dominant or oppressive force, often creating a stark "us vs. them" framework.
- **Example: Anti-GMO Movements**, which oppose genetically modified organisms and the power of large biotechnology companies in agriculture.

Intersectionality:

- **Definition:** A framework for understanding how different social identities (e.g., race, gender, sexuality, class) intersect and affect the experiences of discrimination or privilege. Movements that embrace intersectionality recognize the multiple dimensions of oppression and fight for equality across these intersections.
- **Example:** The **Black Feminist Movement** focuses on the overlapping struggles of racism and sexism, advocating for the rights of Black women specifically.

Self- Assessment Questions

1. Define and differentiate between the four main types of social movements: Revolutionary, Regressive, Reform, and Expressive. Provide examples of each.
2. How does the goal of a revolutionary movement differ from that of a reform movement? Explain with examples.
3. In what ways do regressive movements seek to maintain the status quo, and what impact do they have on social change?
4. How do expressive movements focus on individual identity and personal transformation? Provide an example to support your explanation.

5. Explain the concept of Relative Deprivation Theory. How does this theory relate to the formation of social movements?
6. What is Structural Strain Theory, and how does it explain the emergence of social movements? Give an example of a movement that aligns with this theory.
7. Summarize the key points of Marxist theory in relation to social movements. How do Marxists view the role of class struggle in movements?
8. What are the main critiques of Resource Mobilization Theory? Do you think the theory fully captures the complexities of modern movements?
9. How does the concept of 'political opportunities' influence the success of a social movement, according to the Resource Mobilization Theory?
11. Explain how Post-Marxist theory incorporates identity politics into the analysis of social movements. Why is this a shift from traditional Marxist perspectives?
12. What role does framing play in the success of social movements, according to Resource Mobilization Theory and other contemporary theories?
13. Do you agree with the critique that Resource Mobilization Theory overemphasizes rationality and neglects emotions, culture, and identity in social movements? Explain your reasoning.
14. In the context of contemporary social movements, how has digital mobilization (such as social media activism) affected the application of Resource Mobilization Theory?
15. Compare and contrast the theories of Relative Deprivation and Structural Strain in explaining the origins of social movements. Which theory do you find more convincing and why?

16. Using the theories discussed, analyze the Black Lives Matter movement. Which theories (e.g., Relative Deprivation, Resource Mobilization, Post-Marxist) can best explain the emergence and success of this movement?
17. How might the success of modern environmental movements like Fridays for Future be explained using Resource Mobilization Theory and Post-Marxism?
18. Reflect on the role of leadership in social movements. How do both formal organizations and grassroots movements impact the direction and success of a movement, according to Resource Mobilization Theory?
19. Do you think social movements are more likely to succeed when they focus on specific policy reforms or when they aim for revolutionary changes? Discuss your viewpoint with relevant theories.

Activities/ Exercise/Case Studies

Activity 1: Case Study Analysis of a Contemporary Social Movement

Objective: Analyze a contemporary social movement through the lens of multiple social movement theories (Relative Deprivation, Structural Strain, Marxist, Post-Marxist, and Resource Mobilization).

Instructions:

1. **Select a Contemporary Social Movement** (e.g., Black Lives Matter, Fridays for Future, LGBTQ+ rights movements, #MeToo, or the Hong Kong Protests).
2. **Research the movement** to gather background information, goals, key figures, timeline of events, and major successes or challenges faced.
3. **Use the theories** to analyze the movement:

Answers for check your Progress

1. What are the four major types of social movements identified by David F. Aberle?
 - David F. Aberle identified four major types of social movements:
 1. Alternative Movements: These aim to change individuals' behaviors or lifestyles without seeking to change the broader societal structure. For example, movements focused on smoking cessation or healthy eating.
 2. Redemptive Movements: These seek a more profound change in individuals' lives or behaviors, often on a spiritual level. A typical example is religious or conversion movements.
 3. Reformative Movements: These seek to change specific aspects of society, such as laws or social practices, without trying to overthrow the entire system. For example, the Civil Rights Movement or women's suffrage.
 4. Revolutionary Movements: These movements aim to fundamentally alter the political and social order, seeking to overthrow existing systems. Examples include the Bolshevik Revolution or the American Revolution.
2. How do reformative social movements differ from revolutionary social movements?
 - Reformative social movements aim to make specific changes within the existing political and social systems without attempting to overthrow them entirely. They work within the established framework to bring about gradual, incremental changes. For example, the environmental movement, which advocates for environmental protection laws, is reformative.

- Revolutionary social movements, on the other hand, seek to completely overthrow and replace existing political, economic, and social systems. They aim for radical change and may involve violent or dramatic efforts to dismantle current power structures. An example is the Russian Revolution of 1917, which sought to replace the Tsarist regime with a socialist government.
3. What are alternative social movements, and what is their focus?
- Alternative social movements focus on bringing about individual-level changes rather than societal-wide changes. Their goal is to influence people's behaviors, beliefs, and lifestyles rather than changing laws or political systems. These movements typically advocate for personal transformation and emphasize making different choices or adopting new lifestyles. An example of an alternative social movement could be the anti-smoking campaign, which encourages individuals to stop smoking for health reasons, without trying to alter the broader political system.
4. What are the key factors that lead to the emergence of revolutionary movements?
- Social injustice, political oppression, economic inequality, and mass dissatisfaction.
5. How did the French Revolution and the Russian Revolution influence revolutionary movements worldwide?
- They inspired global ideas of equality, socialism, and resistance against authoritarian rule.
6. What role did youth and students play in the revolutionary movements in India?
- They led protests, joined revolutionary groups, and were key in spreading nationalist ideas.
7. How did revolutionary movements in India impact national consciousness and political awareness?
- They awakened patriotic feelings and increased public participation in the freedom struggle.

8. What was the significance of armed resistance in India's revolutionary movements?
It challenged colonial authority and worked alongside non-violent methods to demand independence.
9. What are the key characteristics of regressive social movements?
Desire to preserve traditional values, resist change, and oppose modernization or reform.
10. How do regressive social movements impact social progress and equality?
They hinder reforms, reinforce discrimination, and delay societal development.
11. What are some examples of regressive social movements in India, and what issues do they oppose?
Movements against caste-based reservations or women's rights, opposing progressive policies.
12. What are the key characteristics of reform movements?
Aim for gradual legal or institutional change within the existing system.
13. How do expressive movements differ from reform movements? Expressive movements focus on spiritual or emotional transformation, not structural reform.
14. Can you give examples of reform movements in India and the issues they addressed?
Brahmo Samaj (Sati abolition), Arya Samaj (women's education), Dalit rights movements.
15. What role did expressive movements like the Bhakti and Sufi Movements play in Indian society?
They promoted unity, spiritual equality, and broke down barriers of caste and religion.

16. How have expressive movements contributed to India's global image as a spiritual hub?

By showcasing India's rich traditions of mysticism, peace, and spiritual diversity.

17. What are the five modes of individual adaptation to structural strain, as identified by Merton?

Conformity, Innovation, Ritualism, Retreatism, Rebellion.

18. How does structural strain theory explain the formation of youth gangs in urban areas?

Gangs form when legitimate paths to success are blocked, leading to alternative means.

19. In what ways can policy changes help reduce the effects of structural strain in society?

By improving access to education, employment, and social equity.

20. How does Marxist theory explain the emergence and goals of social movements?

Movements arise from class struggles to overthrow capitalist exploitation.

21. What is the difference between false consciousness and class consciousness, and how does this impact collective action?

False: Lack of awareness of exploitation; Class: Awareness leads to united struggle.

22. Why do Marxists critique reformist movements, and how do they distinguish between reform and revolution?

Reforms maintain the system; revolution seeks to radically transform it.

23. How does Post-Marxist theory differ from classical Marxism in its understanding of social movements?

Focuses on identity, culture, and discourse instead of only class conflict.

24. What role does discourse and identity play in shaping resistance and collective action according to Post-Marxist thinkers?
Language and identity form the basis of solidarity and resistance.
25. How do contemporary movements like Black Lives Matter or Climate Justice reflect Post-Marxist principles such as articulation and horizontal organization?
They unite multiple causes without a central leader, using inclusive and symbolic messaging.
26. How does Resource Mobilization Theory differ from earlier sociological theories on social movements, and why is resource acquisition seen as critical for a movement's success?
RMT sees movements as rational and organized; success depends on securing money, leaders, and networks.
27. What role do networks and alliances play in the success of social movements according to Resource Mobilization Theory? Can you think of a recent movement that benefited from such networks?
Networks expand reach and legitimacy. Example: #MeToo used global digital networks.
28. How does RMT address the rationality of participants in social movements, and why is this concept important for understanding how movements achieve their goals?
Participants calculate benefits; this explains their strategic involvement in movements.
29. What is the key difference between *relative deprivation* and *absolute deprivation*?
Relative deprivation is the feeling of being deprived when comparing oneself to others or past expectations, even if basic needs are met. Absolute deprivation refers to the lack of basic necessities like food, shelter, and

healthcare.

30. How does the J-Curve Theory relate to Relative Deprivation? Give an example.

The J-Curve Theory suggests that when people experience improvement followed by sudden decline, frustration increases, leading to unrest. Example: During the French Revolution, conditions initially improved but later worsened, sparking mass protests and revolution.

31. Why doesn't everyone who feels relatively deprived join a social movement?

Not everyone participates because some adapt to their conditions, structural barriers (like fear or lack of resources) may prevent mobilization, and successful movements usually need leadership and strategy, not just frustration.

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UNIT-III – REFORM MOVEMENTS IN INDIA

Unit Objectives

This unit employs the process of religious reform social movement on Indian society.

Sections

Introduction

Several contemporary groups, collectively termed Hindu reform movements, strive to introduce regeneration and reform in Hinduism. Although these movements vary individually in their specific philosophies they generally stress the spiritual, secular, logical and scientific aspects of the Vedic traditions, creating a form that is egalitarian that does not discriminate Jāti (caste or sub caste), gender, or race. Thus, most modern Hindu reform movements advocate a return to the ancient, egalitarian forms of Hinduism, and view the aspects of modern Hinduism, such as social discrimination and the caste system, as being corrupt results from colonialism and foreign influence. Modern Hindu reform movements emerged in the 19th century India with the impact of the West on the East and the interaction between Christianity and Hinduism, and as a challenge and response to this impact and the inter-religious encounter.

Scope of the Study

“Reform movements” in India grew out of the exigencies of modern social challenges resulting out of the East-West encounter and compels us to look at religion critically and scientifically. Among the reformers and reforms there rests a confusion leaving not a conclusion. That prompts to further research, reflection and studies. It has real scope as long as it is oriented to the incessant search for the truth in consonance with the India’s perennial quest for satya since time immemorial. The present study explores the three major religious reform movements that have influenced the contemporary Indian people whatever caste, creed or religion they

adhere to. A gleaning on the gurus and god-men who influence today's India on the religious, social and political scenario offers wide scope for research and reflection and is highly relevant amidst secularism

Let Sum Up:

Modern Hindu reform movements arose primarily in 19th-century India as a response to colonial influence and the cultural encounter between Eastern and Western philosophies. These movements emphasize the egalitarian and rational elements of the Vedic tradition, rejecting caste, gender, and racial discrimination. They seek to restore a purer, more inclusive form of Hinduism while responding to modern social challenges with critical and scientific reasoning. The study of these movements—particularly through influential religious leaders and god-men—remains significant for understanding contemporary religious, social, and political dynamics in India, especially in the context of secularism and the ongoing search for spiritual truth (satya).

Check your Progress:

1. What were the key factors that led to the emergence of Hindu reform movements in 19th-century India?
2. How do modern Hindu reform movements challenge the traditional caste and gender hierarchies in Hinduism?

MODERN REFORM MOVEMENTS: THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

India and the West: Cultural Interaction As far as historically traceable, the Nordic Aryans initiated the first major foreign invasion in India. Presumably they must have come in through the northwest frontier in about 1500 B.C. According to the archaeological discoveries, in Mohenjo Daro and Harappa, India had at that time

already developed a high standard of living with urban style of life and amenities. The religious features of the Indus civilization are considered to be “the ancestor of modern Hinduism”.

Already in 326 B.C., Alexander the Great entered India and subjugated Punjab and the kingdoms of Indus valley. From 622 A.D. the Arabs controlled the trade. They were masters of the sea on the west coast, and had control over the maritime route from the Persian Gulf to India and also to China. “Up to the end of the fifteenth century A.D. the Indian contact with the West was confined only to coasting trade on the western side of India”. Today modern India represents all the major races of the world – Negrito, Austroloid, Mongoloid, Caucasoid, the dominant ones being Dravidian and Aryan. All these people and races who entered India never conquered it wholly. They either merged with the dominant culture or disappeared, thereby making India a synthetic admixture of races and cultures.

Impact of the West

In 1498, Vasco da Gama sailed to India in his Cape de Bonne Esperance and landed at Calicut in south India. With his arrival, India's contact with the West took new dimensions. Many travelers and Christian missionaries followed him, whose narratives about India provide valuable documents which provide us with details about the 15th century India. In 1602 the Dutch founded the Dutch East Indian Company and established bases on the East coast of India and undertook 16 sails between 1595 to 1601 to the East.

As a result of the intermingling with various races, people and cultures, India represents today a heterogeneous social complex. Though the British came primarily to trade with India and make it a colonial empire, their involvement contributed to improve the moral and intellectual condition of Indians. Above all their system of education in India paved the way for an intensive encounter of India with the West. William Bentick, the Governor General of India (1828-1835) introduced into schools and colleges the western model of education and offered scope for the intellectual and social uplift of India. The Western system of education and the rationalistic

thought of the 19th century Europe provoked Indian intellectuals to be critical of their beliefs, traditions and social situations. Thus the renaissance in the 19th century India sprang from two sources. Firstly, western education and philosophy which were now introduced in the Indian colleges with its rationalistic and democratic ideals gave the Indians a broader and more liberal outlook. Secondly the discovery of the indigenous treasure of wisdom and Indian spirituality gave the Indian youth an impetus to make serious studies of their own scriptures. They studied Sanskrit literature and found out the great discrepancy between the spirit and practice of the time. These gave the Indians a new impulse to assert themselves and to bring religion and society back to their pristine purity.

Oriental Renaissance

The works of the Orientalists contributed to the renaissance of Hinduism in the 19th century. The most notable among them were Anquetil du Peron, Jones William, Charles Wilkins and Henry Colebrooke. They studied Sanskrit scriptures and began to translate them into English. Here lies the beginning of the so-called 'Oriental Renaissance'. Sir William Jones, renowned for his linguistic talents (he knew about 28 languages) attempted a serious exploration of Indian scriptures and translated Hitopadesha, a collection of fables and stories of an ideal society. He translated Kalidas's drama "Sakuntala" which became so popular in England that many compared it with Shakespeare's works.

Another remarkable achievement of Jones was laying the foundation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784. It fostered studies on Indian culture and religion. Jones was followed by Colebrooke who later became known as the "greatest of the Orientalists". He discovered the wealth of the Asiatic civilization and promoted the study of its culture. He discovered the wide gap between the caste system in practice and its theories found in the scriptures. He was the first to analyze the contents of the Vedas and to present them systematically. Above all he discovered the fact that the Vedas teach the unity of God. In 1840, he edited the "Essays". H.H. Wilson wrote his "Religious Sects" in 1828 and on Vishnu Purana in 1840. Max Müller spent as long as thirty years on translating the Vedic hymns, especially the

Rigveda. “The History of Sanskrit literature” and “The Sacred Books of the East” are the valuable contributions which he made to the Oriental Studies.

Christianity and Hinduism: Religious Interaction

The early Christianity in India found itself integrated in the society and developed as “indigenous religion”. However there was no significant encounter in depth between Hinduism and Christianity, but they lived in peaceful co-existence. On May 17th 1964, a new Secretariat was created with the purpose to do “all that would dissipate prejudice and ignorance among Christians and would establish fruitful contact with the members of all other religions”. A decree was promulgated with the exhortation to live “prudently and lovingly through dialogue and collaboration with the followers of other religions and in witness of Christian faith and life acknowledge, preserve and promote the spiritual and moral goods found among these men, as well as the values in their societies and cultures”.

Inter-religious Impact

Missionary Encounter in the 19th century

The Church in India acquired new dimensions with the arrival of the Missionaries from the West. It was Vasco da Gama who sailed to India and opened the way for European Missionaries. Roberto de Nobili (1577-1656) initiated a new approach to evangelization of India and adapted the so-called “accommodation principle”. His theology took the dimension of the concept of Christ as guru. His apologetic method was aimed at refuting, but never condemning the values of Hinduism. Christian missionary activities also contributed to the intellectual awakening of India in the 19th century. William Carey, who arrived on 11th November 1793 in Calcutta initiated a meritorious work. Along with Ward and Joshua Marshmann known as the “Serampore Trio” he opened a centre at Serampore, in Bengal, for Christian and Western cultural exchange. This provided a further opportunity for an East-West encounter. Aware of the valuable services of the Missionaries, the Government made the best of the Missions “as a civilizing ally” which contributed positively for the Indian renaissance.

A 'western impact' and an 'Indian response' could be traced in the nascent India. Hindu religion and society introduced a number of reforms and adaptations. Brahma Samaj, Arya Samaj and Ramakrishna Mission were the notable religious reform movements of the Modern India.

Let Sum Up:

The cultural interaction between India and the West began with ancient invasions and continued through trade, colonization, and missionary efforts. The Aryan invasion, followed by Alexander's conquest and later Arab maritime dominance, set the stage for intercultural exchanges. However, significant Western influence began with Vasco da Gama's arrival in 1498. The British, through their education system and rationalist thought, sparked an Indian renaissance in the 19th century that merged Indian spirituality with Western ideals. Orientalists like Sir William Jones and Max Müller translated ancient Indian texts, contributing to the "Oriental Renaissance" and deepening Western appreciation for Hindu philosophy. Christian missionaries, such as Roberto de Nobili and William Carey, promoted educational and religious dialogue, which further encouraged Indian introspection and reform. Movements like Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, and the Ramakrishna Mission emerged as responses, blending traditional values with modern ideals, thus shaping modern Indian religious and social consciousness.

Check your Progress:

1. What were the two main sources of the 19th-century Indian renaissance?
2. How did Orientalists like Sir William Jones contribute to the revival of Indian traditions?

BRAHMA SAMAJ: THE UNIVERSALISTIC REFORM MOVEMENT**Rammohun Roy, the Father of Modern India**

Raja Rammohun Roy (1774 - 1833) was born in an orthodox Brahmin family in Bengal. He married in his early childhood and that too thrice before he reached the age of nine. His polygamous life must have made him later a strong opponent of child marriage and polygamy. His studies in Patna, the then centre of Islamic scholarship led him to the democratic ideals of Islam and the logical element of Arabic thought especially the rationalistic schools of Mutazilas. His studies on Islam made him strongly denounce idolatry and superstitions. In 1804 he published his “Tuhfatul Muwahhiddin” (a gift to the Monotheists) which is a treatise on the theology of nature. He observed that the belief in the One God is not only natural but also common to people of all creeds.

Brahma Samaj and its Impact on India’s Awakening

The Brahma Samaj (One-God society) founded by Raja Rammohun Roy in 1828 was to be a place of common worship. According to the Trust Deed “no minister or reciter should retain any mark of caste or sectarian distinction” in the Samaj, it should rather foster unity and brotherliness. It was the first modern religious reform movement which interpreted the Hindu scriptures and traditions to establish the universality of Hinduism and Brahma Samaj as the convergence of religions.

Social and Religious Reforms

Rammohun discovered that social reforms in Hinduism are possible only through reforming religion. He said: “..it is, I think necessary that some change should take place in their religion, at least for the sake of their political advantage and social comfort”. He saw in idolatry the root of many social evils which destroyed the “texture of the society” and led to heinous practices like self-immolation, killing of

friends and relatives under the pretext of performing religious rites. Rammohun condemned also polytheism. In order to vindicate that the true spirit of Hinduism is monotheism, he published the “Translation of the Abridgement of the Vedanta, “A Defense of Hindu Theism” and “A Second Defense of the Monotheistic System of the Vedas”. He was convinced that the worship of God must be in spirit consistent with the true dictates of Hindu Sastras and according to the purest principles of morality.

One of Remount’s great contributions in the field of social reforms was the abolition of sati- the custom of burning of widows alive. He argued that no sastras have ever sanctioned sati. He criticized it as “deliberate female murder” and a perversion of Hinduism. Consequently he collected funds for a society for the relief of the destitute widows to liberate them. Rammohun defended also the right of women and condemned the polygamy of the Brahmins. He knew that a proper education is essential to bring self-awareness in the people and restore justice and equality. With the support of David hare, he opened a Hindu college in Calcutta in 1817. He fostered English education as profitable for intellectual re-awakening of the people and stressed the importance of a more liberal and enlightened system of instruction embracing mathematics, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, Anatomy with other useful sciences.

Further developments of the Movement

With the foundation of Brahma Samaj, for the first time in India a place for public cult was established to spread the faith in One God which caused a breach with the traditional Hinduism, but reformed it and gave it a new and universal trait. Brahma Samaj was an Indian theistic Church open to all irrespective of caste, creed and culture. As “One - God Society” it propagated the belief in One God, denounced all forms of idolatry and polytheism. It introduced religious and social reforms that promoted unity and tolerance among various religious denominations. After the death Rammohun Roy Debendranath Tagore and then Keshub Chunder Sen took up the leadership of the Samaj. Keshub Chunder was an inspiring lecturer, writer and leader who discovered and promoted the harmony of religions. Today the Samaj is known as ‘Sadharan Brahama Samaj’

Let sum Up:

Raja Rammohun Roy (1774–1833), known as the *Father of Modern India*, was a pioneering social and religious reformer born into an orthodox Brahmin family in Bengal. Influenced by Islamic rationalism and Western thought, he strongly opposed idolatry, superstition, child marriage, and polygamy. In 1804, he authored *Tuhfatul Muwahhiddin*, advocating monotheism and religious unity. In 1828, he founded the **Brahma Samaj**, a platform for monotheistic worship without caste or sectarian divisions. Roy believed social reform in India could only be achieved through religious reform, and worked to align Hinduism with rational, ethical, and spiritual principles. His efforts led to the abolition of sati and the promotion of women's rights, education, and English learning. The Brahma Samaj, later led by Debendranath Tagore and Keshub Chunder Sen, continued to promote the unity of all religions, social reform, and equality, and exists today as *Sadharan Brahma Samaj*.

Check Your Progress

1. What was the impact of the West on the Modern reform movement in India?
2. Mention the contributions made by Raja Rammohun Roy in the social sphere.
3. What was the impact of the West on the Modern reform movement in India?
4. Mention the contributions made by Raja Rammohun Roy in the social sphere.

ARYA SAMAJ: THE NATIONALISTIC MOVEMENT

Arya Samaj, “Society of Arians”, literally “society of the Noble”, was a typical Hindu reform movement founded by Dayanada Saraswati in 1875. Dayananda Saraswati (1825-1888) was one of the most radical religious reformers of modern India who initiated a number of reform movements with the slogan “Back to the Vedas”. His original name was Moola Sankar Tiwari, born in 1824 in Gujarath. Born and brought up in an orthodox Brahmin family he was disgusted with the idolatry,

caste and child marriage and abandoned his home in 1845. In 1860 found a guru Swami Virjanand Saraswati who was very strict and well versed in the Vedas. Moola Sankar underwent rigorous training under him, who gave him the name Dayanand. At the end of the training as Dayananda wanted to give him the gurudakshina, (tuition fee, a gift) Virajananda refused it and extracted a promise from him that he would devote his whole life for the revival of Vedic Hinduism.

Dayananda's "Back to the Vedas"

Dayananda was a sannyasi who believed in the infallibility of the Vedas and cherished a very peculiar interpretation of the Vedas. He not only upheld the absolutism of the Vedas but also propound the philosophy of dynamic realism. The Vedas contain according to him the seeds of all sciences and knowledge. His book "Satyarth Prakash" (Light of Truth) contains his major ideas, interpretation of the Vedas and other religions.

His Vedic exposition mostly derived from the Rig-Veda reflects the vision and mission of Dayananda's religious and social reform programme. He was averse to Gurukulas and the traditional idol worship (murthipuja) and asked the students to do sandhya (a meditative prayer chanting mantras from the vedas). They had also to participate in the agnihotra (fire sacrifice) practice twice a day. He allowed also the non Brahmins to study the Sanskrit texts. The authority of the Vedas remained supreme which should pave way for the social regeneration of Hindu society.

Dayananda undertook a tour across the country, condemned the caste system, idolatry, and child marriages. His theology welcomed the advances of sciences and technology. To him, the Vedas as the source book contained the seeds of science and technology. He initiated a number of reform programmes starting with a Vedic school in contradistinction to other public schools at that time in order to propagate and impart the Vedic values and religion to youth. He emphasized the theory of karma and samsara and extolled the ideals of brahmacharya and sanyasa. Unlike the universalistic outlook of Raja Rammohun Roy he was critical of other religions especially Islam and Christianity as his major work Satyarth Prakash

indicates. The whole world must accept Vedism! The Hindutwa movement, inspired by him, accepts as Dharma whatever is in full conformity with the Vedic infallibility and his ideology. Some of his major works are Bharnivaran, Sanskarvidhi, Ratnamala, Vedabhasya. The Paropakarini Sabha located in the Indian city of Ajmer was founded by the Swami himself to publish his works and Vedic texts.

Founding of Arya Samaj

Together with the slogan “Back to the Vedas” he advocated the doctrine of Karma and reincarnation, and emphasized the ideals of brahmacharya (chastity) and sanyasa (renunciation). His voluminous work Satyarth Prakash laid the basic rules in the establishment and later growth of the organization of the Arya Samaj in 1875. It was a revolutionary social movement showing the falsehood of other religions and the purity and scientific background of the Vedas. Arya Samaj condemned idol-worship, animal sacrifices, pilgrimages, caste system, child marriage etc. and claimed to be a universalistic church.

The five principles of daily practice are:

Brahmayajna (studies of Veda and meditation)

Devayajna (fire sacrifice in which ghee and other incense are burned)

Social Service (offering food to the wandering monks and the needy)

Gayatri mantra recitation, purificatory rites before meditation

Sacrifice according to the Vedic rituals

Arya Samaj set up schools and missionary organizations, in and outside India. The Samaj began to spread fast, and has today branches all over the world.

Faith and Principles of the Arya Samaj

The doctrines of the Samaj are summed up in Ten Principles:

- God is the primary cause of all true science and of all that can be known through it.

- God is Existent, Intelligent and Blissful. He is Formless, Almighty, Just, Merciful, Unborn, Infinite, Unchallengeable, Beginningless, Incomparable, the Support and Lord of all, Omniscient, Imperishable, Immortal, Fearless, Eternal, Holy and the Maker of the universe. To Him alone worship is due.
- The Vedas are scriptures of true knowledge. It is the duty of all Aryas to read them, hear them being read and recite them to others. • All persons should be ready to accept the truth and give up untruth.
- All action should be performed in conformity with Dharma, that is, after due consideration of the right and wrong.
- The primary aim of the Arya Samaj is to do good for all, that is, promote physical, spiritual and social well-being.
- All people should be treated with love, fairness and due regard for their merit. • One should aim at dispelling ignorance and promoting knowledge.
- One should not only be content with one's own welfare, but should look for it in the welfare for others also.
- One should regard oneself under restriction to follow altruistic rulings of society, while all should be free in following the rules of individual welfare.

Dayananda denounced the Puranas, even the Brahmins and Upanishads as being of minor importance. His aim was to establish a Hindu missionary movement to bring all the Hindus back to the one fold under the banner of Veda. However he upheld the theories of kama and samsara, popularized the swaraj (autonomy) for Bharat. Though it was successful among the orthodox Hindus, it lacked the tolerance towards alien religions and cultures and a universal vision and is criticized as a militant movement.

Let Sum Up:

Dayananda Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj in 1875, was a radical reformer who promoted the slogan "Back to the Vedas." He believed that the Vedas contained all the knowledge required for social and religious regeneration. Born in 1824 in Gujarat, he rejected idol worship, the caste system, and child marriage. His

work *Satyartha Prakash* laid the foundation for Arya Samaj, emphasizing the importance of the Vedas as the supreme source of knowledge, condemning polytheism, and advocating for social reforms like brahmacharya and sanyasa. Dayananda also initiated the establishment of schools and missionary organizations to spread his Vedic ideals. His movement, while successful among orthodox Hindus, lacked tolerance for other religions and was seen as militant due to its exclusive focus on Vedic teachings.

Check your Progress:

1. What were the core principles and practices promoted by Dayananda Saraswati through the Arya Samaj?
2. How did Dayananda Saraswati's approach to reform differ from that of Raja Rammohun Roy?

DRAVIDIAN MOVEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Dravidian movement in British India started with the formation of the Justice Party on 20 November 1916 in Victoria Memorial Hall in Madras by T. M. Nair and P. Theagaraya Chetty as a result of a series of non-Brahmin conferences and meetings in the presidency. Communal division between Brahmins and non-Brahmins began in the presidency during the late-19th and early-20th century, mainly due to caste prejudices and disproportionate Brahminical representation in government jobs. The Justice Party's foundation marked the culmination of several efforts to establish an organisation to represent the non-Brahmins in Madras Presidency. The background of this movement was known as Brahmin or Non-Brahmin Divide. The Brahmins in Madras Presidency enjoyed a higher

position in India's social hierarchy. By the 1850s, Telugu and Tamil Brahmins comprising only 3.2% of the population began to increase their political power by filling most of the jobs which were open to Indian men at that time. They dominated the administrative services and the newly created urban professions in the 19th and early 20th century. The higher literacy and English language proficiency among Brahmins were instrumental in this ascendancy. The political, social, and economical divide between Brahmins and non-Brahmins became more

apparent in the beginning of the 20th century. This breach was further exaggerated by Annie Besant and her Home Rule for India movement. The following table shows the distribution of selected jobs among different caste groups in 1912 in Madras Presidency.

The dominance of Brahmins was also evident in the membership of the Madras Legislative Council. During 1910–20, eight out of the nine official members (appointed by the Governor of Madras) were Brahmins. Apart from the appointed members, Brahmins also formed the majority of the members elected to the council from the district boards and municipalities. During this period the Madras Province Congress Committee (regional branch of the Indian National Congress) was also dominated by Brahmins. Of the 11 major newspapers and magazines in the presidency, two (The Madras Mail and Madras Times) were run by Europeans sympathetic to the crown, three were evangelical non-political periodicals, four (The Hindu, Indian Review, Swadesamithran and Andhra Pathrika) were published by Brahmins while New India, run by Annie Besant was sympathetic to the Brahmins. This dominance was denounced by the non-Brahmin leaders in the form of pamphlets and open letters written to the Madras Governor. The earliest examples of such pamphlets are the ones authored by the pseudonymous author calling himself "fair play" in 1895. By the second decade of the 20th century, the Brahmins of the presidency were themselves divided into three factions. These were the Mylapore faction comprising Chetpet Iyers & Vembakkam Iyengars, the Egmore faction led by the editor of The Hindu, Kansturi Ranga Iyengar & the Salem nationalists led by C.

Rajagopalachari, A fourth non-brahmin faction rose to compete with them and became the Justice Party.

Foundation of Dravidian Movement

The vast Indian subcontinent, in its 5,000 years of history, has nourished the growth of a great civilization, vitalized through cross-cultural contact, and characterized by the diversities of cultural and racial differences, caste, religion and language. The major division of India is between the Aryan North and the Dravidian South. The Dravidian peoples today, represented linguistically, dominate south India below an irregular line starting south of Goa on the western coast, running roughly northeast to skirt the eastern side of Berar, and then about east-southeast to the Bay of Bengal—an area corresponding to the present states of Madras, Kerala, Mysore and Andhra. The South, having only lightly been touched by the influence of Islam during the period of Mogul Rule in the North and representing today a bastion of traditional Hinduism, is within the wider context of the Great Tradition of Indian civilization, culturally distinct from the areas to the north. These two basic cultural regions are divided, not only by language, but by the food eaten, the style of dress and the general pattern of life. Indeed, a south Indian visiting Delhi, for example, may feel the differences so acutely that he will look upon the North as 'foreign'. The people of each region look upon the other with suspicion and often contempt, giving rigidity to the differences which do exist, and folk sayings and stories give attributes of region, character. The North Indian sharpens his sword while the South Indian sharpens his wits.

The differences between the North and South are real, yet much of the antipathy that has arisen between the two regions is more the product of historical myth than of reality. European historians and philologists such as Sir John Marshall and Robert Caldwell, have in their research and hypotheses provided the foundations for regional historical myths, which hark back to the days of former power and glory. The Dravidian nationalists, particularly the Tamils, have reconstructed a history from scanty sources and conjecture which recalls an antiquity

dating from the Indus civilization to the powerful Tamil kingdoms of the South, out of which blossomed 2,000 years ago the richness of Tamil literature.

In 1873, Jyotirao Phule of Poona, a man of the Mali caste and of relatively little education, founded the Satyashodhak Samaj, with the purpose of asserting the worth and dignity of man irrespective of caste. The movement was not strictly anti-Brahman, but it emphasized the social tyranny of the caste system and fought for its abolition. The organization never gained power or success, but it was the beginning of a series of similar movements throughout south India. Dr C. Natesa Mudaliar in 1914, then a medical student in Madras, founded 'The Dravidian Home', a hostel for non-Brahman students. Mudaliar had found that non-Brahmans were unable to find hostel accommodations in Madras because of caste barriers. The Home functioned for only two years, but during that time, Mudaliar began the Dravidian Association, with the purpose of advancing non-Brahman political power through 'Dravidian Uplift. The Rajah of Panagal was elected president of the Association, Dr T.M. Nair, vice-president, and Mudaliar, secretary. The organization sought to safeguard the political, social and economic interests of the Dravidian people. Its declared aspiration was the establishment of a Dravidian State under the British Raj—a government of, by, and for the non-Brahman.

The real impetus to the Dravidian movement did not come until the formation of the South Indian Liberal Federation, popularly known as the Justice Party. The Dravidian Association had not effectively gained the loyalty of non-Brahman politicians, the two most prominent of whom were Dr T.M. Nair and Sir P. Theagaroya Chetty. Chetty, an industrialist who had been a member of the Madras Corporation and was its first non-official president, was at complete loggerheads with Nair." Mudaliar attempted to bring about a rapprochement between the two leaders, and in November 1916, Chetty and Nair came together with other leaders of the non-Brahman community to consider what measure might be adopted to check the increasing political power of the Brahman caste. It was resolved that an association of non- Brahman Hindus be formed under the name of the South Indian Peoples' Association. Endowed with an original capital of 100,000 rupees primarily from

zamindars, the Association would voice the grievances of the non-Brahman through English and vernacular journals. In pursuance of these aims, a printing press was purchased and the first issue of Justice, the official organ, appeared on 26 February 1917. It was soon followed by a Tamil daily, Dravidian, and later by a Telugu paper, Andhraprakaskka.

Soon after the formation of the South Indian Peoples' Association, in December 1916, Chetty, as secretary of the Association, issued *The Non-Brahmin Manifesto; surveying the conditions of the non-Brahman community and pointing out the directions for advancement. The non-Brahmans of Madras Presidency (excluding the SCs) outnumbered the Brahmans 22 to 1, and the Untouchables alone outnumbered them 5 to 1. The Brahmans, however, because of education, religious authority, economic power, political influence and social prestige, stood as an exclusive elite in juxtaposition to the illiterate masses who constituted more than 95 per cent of the society. The Manifesto discussed the overwhelming preponderance of Brahmans in public services and governmental bodies, and it recognized that the virtual monopoly of political power was due to the educational advancement of the Brahman community. Old established traditions, the position of the Brahmans as the highest and most sacred of the Hindu castes, the nature of their ancient calling, and the steady inculcation of the belief, both by written texts and oral teachings, that they are so many divinely ordained intermediaries without whose active intervention and blessing the soul cannot obtain salvation, and their consequent freedom from manual toil—all these helped them to adapt themselves easily to the new conditions under British Rule, as under previous epochs, in larger numbers and far more successfully than the other castes and communities.

DRAVIDIAN UPSURGE

In the Tamil land, the second half of the nineteenth century witnessed sporadic yet determined attempts by lowered castes to articulate their deprivation and humiliation, and also a sense of longing to belong to their original Dravidian culture. Here, it was easy to give linguistic, ethnic, and indigenous identity to the non-brahmans who had a language with non- Sanskrit origin, recognised as

Dravidian. Their oppressive present and distorted past were attributed to the alien invasion of brahmans, descendants of the Aryan conquerors. Such reinterpretations of the past were buttressed by the situation that obtained in the region, strengthening the suspicion that the south India's brahmans were still conspiring to suppress the Dravidian people and their culture.

Here, the non-brahmans adopted their indigenous and autonomous Tamil literary traditions in a battle for social and political equality. Emphasising the pre-Sanskrit and non- Aryan Dravidian heritage of the south, several Tamil Sangam's were formed in cities like Madurai and Madras. The revival of interest in ancient Tamil classics spurred the publication of many journals which attacked the alien and oppressive brahmanic culture. The Dravidar Kazhagam of 1882 raised and debated the ideological matrix of Dravidianism. At the turn of the new century, the stage was set for emergence of a powerful non-Brahman movement in the region.

Iyothee Thass and Justic Party

Iyothee Thass (1845-1914), a dalit by birth and a Buddhist by conviction, was an outstanding figure in the socio-cultural awakening which preceded the spectacular rise of a non-brahman movement in the Tamil land. More important, they prefigured and, to an extent, overlapped with an emergent Dravidianism which provided a wholly new historiographical. tradition. Directed against the Aryan version of history, this latter came to articulate a historical sensibility that was assertive in its Tamilness and scornful of what it considered the Aryan element in India's culture. It is not well-known that Iyothee Thass was the pioneer of what is now known as neo-Buddhism in India. Based in Madras, he founded the South Indian Buddhist Association which by 1910 had many branches in India and abroad.

Tamil Buddhism was constructed on the matrix of castelessness since the Aryan-brahmanic introduction of caste system in a casteless region was perceived as the crucial factor that led to 'discriminatory distinction in public life, both secular as well as sacred. What was remarkable about Tamil Buddhism, according to Aloysius, was its ability to evolve and articulate the concerns of the marginalised and caste-

oppressed into a universal vision of emancipation for all. Led by a host of civic leaders and social critics like Iyothee Thass, the southern people began a battle for the recovery of their past as well as establishment of their rights in the present.

The intellectual ferment thus generated unleashed forces that led to the emergence of a powerful political non-brahmanism in the then Madras Presidency consisting of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra and Malabar Kerala. The South Indian Liberal Federation, commonly known as the Justice Party, was formed in 1916, on an anti-Congress, anti-brahmanical plank with the objective of radical redistribution of socio-political power. Thyagaraya Chetty and T M. Nair played a pivotal role in the 'shudra movement' by issuing in December 1916 the Non-Brahman Manifesto against the overwhelming preponderance of brahmans in the fields of education, public service, and politics. Brahman domination in the public sphere was clearly reflected in statistics. While 80 per cent of the brahman populace was literate, barely four per cent of non-brahman people had learnt the alphabet, let alone derived the benefits of higher education. Demanding democratic representation for non-brahman castes in the fields of education, administration and legislation, Justice leaders lashed out at the brahman-dominated Congress nationalism, and claimed that the non-brahman movement cherished very different ideas about Indian nation-building and national representation. To the non-brahmans, the progress could not mean the 'development along modern lines of any particular class or section. Significantly, the Justices suggested four lines of action for putting, democratic principles into practice.

First, non-brahmans were to educate themselves in large numbers. Second, they were to work for their and the country's economic development. Third, they were to come together and work to ensure proportional representation for all communities in administration and in the legislative bodies. Last, they were to make efforts, through their unified interaction, to build a casteless fraternity of people that abided by modern values and ethos. In 1920, the Justice Party won a remarkable victory in the elections to run a diarchic government in the Madras Presidency. On assuming Office, it passed a Government Order on 16 September 1921 directing an

increase in the proportion of posts in government offices held by non-brahmans. This was the expansion of the 1851 Standing Order (No. 128, Clause 2) of the Revenue Board of Madras instructing all district collectors to be careful to see that subordinate appointments in their districts were not monopolised by a few influential families. Standing Order 128 was the first recorded attempt to remove the upper caste monopolisation of government jobs.

During its tenure the Justice Party also brought in progressive legislation pertaining to intermarriage, franchise for the common man, abolition of the devadasi system, throwing open temples to depressed classes, regulating temple administration and bringing it under the control of the state, and educational facilities and reduction of fees for weaker sections. Above all, it did a splendid job in promoting primary education, women's education and a more viable technical, industrial and agricultural education. For instance, by 1925, in about 18 out of 25 municipalities, free and compulsory school education was introduced. The Education Act of 1920 was amended with a view to offset high drop-out rate and keep poor children in school.

The Justice's legislation regarding social and educational reforms was bold and imaginative, though their implementation left much to be desired. One reason was an acute financial crunch, aggravated by the fact that, though elected, the government under dyarchy could not resolve on problems of finance. Secondly, the brahman-dominated bureaucracy was prejudiced against the implementation of any pro-people legislation. The status quoist officials tried their best to sabotage the measures which they thought did not augur well for their privileges. More important, the Justice Party's own inability to link its progressive legislation to an ideological and social struggle against discrimination rendered its transformatory agenda more rhetoric than reality. Not only did it fail to build a credible ideological alternative to brahmanism, some of its leaders also exhibited an elitist orientation, which prevented them from taking the movement to the grassroots. The hegemonic forces proved to be too strong for its reformist measures. The task of mass mobilisation for a radical anti-brahmanism was left to social revolutionaries like Periyar.

E.V. Ramasami Periyar (1879-1973), And The Self-Respect Movement

Erode Venkatappa Ramasamy Naicker better known as Periyar, a title meaning 'great man' that was conferred on him by the people during his heroic struggle, was a relentless critic and campaigner against the, brahmanic culture and ideology. His extraordinary life and career put in bold relief the problematic history of Congress politics and nationalism. Periyar had joined the Congress in 1919, rose quickly to become a prominent figure in the Tamil Nadu Congress, and then became disillusioned with what he saw as its hypocritical politics. He left the 'brahmanic Congress' to organise a 'Self-Respect movement' for Dravidian people which represented not only the radical phase of the non-Brahman movement but also a response to the 'politics of piety' as espoused by Gandhi. The Self-Respect League that he formed in 1926 bore a striking similarity in its objectives to that of Phule's Satyashodhak Samaj, calling for the annihilation of caste, opposing brahmanical hegemony, and championing the liberation of subjugated classes and women. A trenchant critic of caste hierarchy, ritualism and idolatry, Periyar like Phule and Ambedkar conflated Hinduism with casteism and Brahmanism; and lambasted Hindu laws and institutions as inhuman instruments of 'Brahmanic', 'male' and 'Aryan' exploitation. His militant, mass-oriented movement attacked the Congress nationalism as the political front of brahmanical ideology that put aside vital issues such as power, difference, and discrimination within the country.

The Self-Respect movement was fundamentally opposed to the holy alliance of religion, caste and nationalism, an alliance which it understood as embodying a social and political order that was inherently inegalitarian. Periyar was highly critical of the way the brahmins continued to conflate ritual scruple with national principle', and deeply felt the slights brahmins routinely handed out to non-brahmins in the emerging public spheres of Madras and elsewhere. The most crucial episode in his early public life was his clash with the Congress leadership over the question of separate dining for brahmin and non-brahmin students in a Congress-sponsored residential school (gurukulam) near Madras. It was a galling and eye-opening experience for Periyar that the school, set up with the aim of imparting traditional

religious education in the larger context of a commitment to social service and patriotism, was practising untouchability by arranging separate dining for non-brahman boys.

The general position of the Congress nationalists and Gandhi was supportive of this practice under the pretext of maintaining traditional harmony. Periyar unsuccessfully tried to reason with the 'nationalists' that 'the gurukulam must stand for an ideal for Indian nationalism and there should be no invidious distinction between man and man. Periyar unmasked Congress hypocrisy again in 1928, when the Justice Party-supported a candidate of the Swarajya Party name, S. Muthiah Mudaliar who was independent minister in the Madras Presidency & made cabinet issued a government order giving adequate representation to all the communities. The Congress leaders, furious at this divisive move taken at the behest of the British, were challenged by Periyar non-brahmans would be ready to forgo the benefits of the Government Ordinance if brahmins came forward to give up all caste and community distinctions in society. As expected, the self-righteous Brahmin nationalists did not respond. Periyar's poser exposed them thoroughly. The government Ordinance was finalised and passed on 27 December 1929, paving the way for the present reservation policy.

Let Sum Up:

The Dravidian Movement in British India began formally with the formation of the Justice Party on 20 November 1916 in Madras by T. M. Nair and P. Theagaraya Chetty, emerging from non-Brahmin conferences that challenged Brahmin dominance in administration, education, and politics within the Madras Presidency.

The Brahmins, though a small percentage of the population, held a disproportionately large share of jobs and political power due to higher literacy and English proficiency. This created a sharp divide between Brahmins and non-Brahmins, leading to a surge in non-Brahmin consciousness and mobilization. The dominance was also reflected in newspapers, legislative councils, and Congress committees.

This socio-political inequality led to the foundation of the Justice Party, also called the South Indian Liberal Federation, to represent and uplift the non-Brahmin communities. The movement was part of a broader North-South cultural divide, where the South, culturally and linguistically distinct, began asserting its Dravidian identity.

Figures like Iyothee Thass, a Dalit and neo-Buddhist, laid the early ideological foundation, while Periyar E.V. Ramasamy later spearheaded the Self-Respect Movement, which radicalized the call for social justice, castelessness, and anti-Brahminism.

Check Your Progress:

- 1.What led to the formation of the Justice Party in 1916?
- 2.Who was Iyothee Thass, and what was his contribution to the Dravidian movement?
- 3.What were some key reforms introduced by the Justice Party after coming to power in 1920?

SNDP MOVEMENT

- 4.What was the main goal of Periyar's Self-Respect Movement?

. The Shree Narayan Guru Dharma Paripalana (SNDP) Movement was an example of a regional movement that arose from the conflict between the lower and upper castes. Sree Narayana Guru Swamy (1856–1928) founded it among the Ezhavas of Kerala, a backward caste of toddy-tappers who were considered untouchables and were denied education and entry into temples. During the pre-independence period, a number of backward class movements arose. The backward classes banded together against the Brahmanas in particular, believing that they monopolized much of the socio-economic benefits, leaving the agricultural intermediate castes and communities in the lurch.

Evolution of SNDP Movement

- The Ezhavas were Kerala's most populous caste, accounting for 26% of the total population.
- On Sivaratri in 1888, Narayana Guru, himself of the Ezhava caste, took a stone from the Neyyar river and installed it as a Sivalinga at Aruvippuram.
- It was meant to demonstrate that the consecration of an idol was not limited to the upper castes.
- With this, he launched a revolution that resulted in the abolition of many discriminations in Kerala's society.
- As a disciple of Narayana Guru, the movement (Aruvippuram Movement) drew the famous poet Kumaran Asan.
- The Aruvippuram Kshetra Yogam was founded in 1889, with the intention of growing into a large organisation to assist the Ezhavas in their material and spiritual advancement.
- The Aruvippuram Sree Narayana Guru Dharma Paripalana Yogam was established in 1903 under the Indian Companies Act, with Narayana Guru serving as its permanent chairman and Kumaran Asan serving as its general secretary.
- Dr. Palpu's efforts in the formation of the SNDP must be recognized.
- He had begun the fight for social justice through movements such as the Ezhava Memorial and the Malayali Memorial, among others.

Shree Narayan Guru Swami

- He was born in Chempazhanthy on August 22, 1856, to Madan Asan and Kuttiyamma (a village near Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala).
- He was a member of the Ezhavas Community and was known as 'Avarna.'

- Since he was a child, he has cherished solitude and spent a lot of time in deep meditation. He went to local temples to worship and wrote devotional songs and hymns.
- Narayan Guru himself created a Shivalinga at Aruvippuram atop Siviratri in 1888, using a stone from the Neyyar river.
- He triggered a revolution in Kerala that resulted in the removal of many sorts of bigotry as a result of this.
- "One Caste, One Religion, One God for All," he coined the now-famous slogan. "Oru Jathi, Oru Matham, Oru Daivan, Manushyanu"
- He preached equality, but he did not feel that inequities should be used to carry out conversions and thereby produce social upheaval.
- Animal sacrifices of any kind were abhorrent to him.
- Under the Indian Companies Act, the Shree Guru Narayan Dharma Paripalana Yogam was established in 1903. He was appointed as the chairman.
- The Ezhavas' right to attend public schools, access to government services, temple admission, road access, and political representation were all addressed by the SNDP.

Objectives of SNDP Movement

- To oppose the predominance of Brahmanas and other upper castes in general
- To enhance the position of the backward castes in the caste hierarchy by copying upper-caste lifestyles, such as higher education and distinguished occupations.
- 'Ethnic' awareness and politicization were generally established as a result of these activities among diverse caste groupings.

Reforms

Reforms under SNDP Movement

Educational Reforms

- The first task is to help the Ezhava Community, a depressed Kerala community.
- Narayana Guru (Asan) established a number of schools and institutions around Kerala in order to provide widespread education to society.

Religious Reforms

- Sri Narayana Guru constructed a number of temples and streamlined the worship, marriage, and death ceremonies.
- He wished to assist his neighbors in both secular and spiritual things.
- He traveled around Kerala for 15 years, assisting community members in developing self-confidence, social awareness, and a clean environment.

Sri Narayana Guru instituted three religious reforms:

- To begin, he consecrated higher Gods in place of inferior Gods and appointed priests from his own group of devout sanyasis.
- Second, he advised his disciples to construct additional temples in a simple and cost-effective manner.
- Third, he made a significant modification in his mission of establishing new temples. He never forced his followers to worship idols.
 - For example, instead of an idol, he consecrated "Sivalikha," a massive brass oil lamp (Kammukha Kshetham in Thrissur in 1920) with the phrase "Let there be light."

- He consecrated a plain stone with the inscription "Truth, Charity, Love, and Mercy" in another shrine at Murukkunpuzha.

Establishment of 3 types of the temple:

- There are temples where poojas, or regular worship, are performed, as well as festivals.
- There are temples with idols, but no poojas or festivals are held.
- There are temples that are devoid of idols and images. It is self-evident that he consecrated many types of temples to meet the people's various emotional and spiritual requirements.

Social Reforms of SNDP Yogam

- Emphasis on Education and Sanskritization - Using two methods, contemporary education and Sanskritization, in about 30 years, Sri Narayana Guru was able to change the Ezhavas from an untouchable population in Kerala to a background caste community.
- In collaboration with the Nair Service Society (NSS), he began temple admission programs.
- He urged his community members to abandon costly practices such as "mock marriage" (Thalikattu Sampradhayam), puberty celebration for girls (Thirukkuli), and Puaikuli, a festival commemorating pregnancy after marriage.
- He was against the consumption of alcoholic beverages.
- Jati Mimasa is the essence of his art (A critique of caste).
- Admission to public schools.
- Recruitment to government services.
- Road access and temple entry.

Let Sum Up:

The SNDP Movement was a significant regional social reform movement in Kerala led by Sree Narayana Guru (1856–1928), who belonged to the Ezhava community, a marginalized caste considered untouchable. The movement aimed to challenge caste-based discrimination, especially the dominance of Brahmins in society.

◆ Key Highlights:

- In 1888, Sree Narayana Guru consecrated a Sivalinga at Aruvippuram, symbolizing that spiritual authority did not belong to upper castes alone.
- This act led to the foundation of the Aruvippuram Kshetra Yogam, which evolved into the SNDP Yogam in 1903, with the help of Dr. Palpu and Kumaran Asan.
- Guru's motto, "One Caste, One Religion, One God for All," reflected his vision of social equality.

◆ Objectives:

- Fight Brahminical dominance.
- Improve the social status of backward communities like the Ezhavas.
- Ensure access to education, public services, and temples for all castes.

◆ Major Reforms:

- Educational: Opened schools to empower the Ezhavas.
- Religious: Built temples, simplified rituals, and even used symbols like lamps and stones instead of idols.
- Social: Fought alcoholism, wasteful customs, and promoted gender reforms.

◆ Impact:

- Transformed the Ezhavas from an untouchable group to a politically and socially assertive community.

- Helped reshape Kerala's society through inclusive reforms and inspired other caste-based reform movements.

Check Your Progress:

1. Who founded the SNDP Movement and what was its primary aim?
2. What was the significance of the Aruvippuram Sivalinga installation in 1888?
3. What were the key reforms introduced by the SNDP Movement?
4. Explain the slogan "One Caste, One Religion, One God for All" and its relevance.

NAXALBARI MOVEMENT

The term "Naxal" comes from the village of Naxalbari in the West Bengal district of Darjeeling, where the movement began in 1967 under the leadership of Charu Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal. It refers to the use of violence by various communist guerrilla groups to destabilize the state. It quickly fell out of favor in its home state of West Bengal, but the outfit's underground operations continued.

Naxalites are far-left radical communists who derive their political ideology from Chinese revolutionary leader Mao Zedong's teachings. Since the early 1970s, they've been operating in various parts of the country.

Various areas of the country have been severely impacted at various times due to overt violence perpetrated by Naxalite groups operating in those areas.

Naxalism, according to former Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, is the country's most serious threat to internal security today. The threat has been present for a long time, with many ups and downs.

PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND OF NAXALISM/MAOISM

Throughout history, violence against the ruling elite has been perpetrated primarily by the peasant class, motivated by leftist ideologies. Marx and Engels' writings provided the ideological foundation for these violent movements. This ideology is known as Marxism or Communism.

- Lenin and Mao Zedong later backed this up. Leftist ideologies believe that in an elitist/capitalist society, all existing social relations and state structures are exploitative by nature, and that only a revolutionary change through violent means can end this exploitation. Marxism advocates a violent class struggle to expel capitalist bourgeois elements.
- Maoism is a doctrine that teaches the use of armed insurgency, mass mobilisation, and strategic alliances to seize state power. This was dubbed the "Protracted Peoples War" by Mao.
- According to Maoist insurgency doctrine, the 'bearing of arms is non-negotiable' because Maoist ideology glorifies violence. The industrial-rural divide is a major division exploited by capitalism, according to Maoism. Maoism also refers to the egalitarianism that prevailed during Mao's time, as opposed to free-market ideology.
- The political orientation of Maoism emphasises the vast majority of people's "revolutionary struggle against the exploiting classes and their state structures." Its military strategies have included guerilla war tactics aimed at encircling cities from the countryside, as well as a strong focus on political transformation through mass participation of the lower classes.
- The Maoists' slogan is "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun." They use guerilla warfare to mobilise large segments of the rural population to revolt against established institutions.
- Unlike political mass movements in border areas with violent underpinnings, Naxalites do not seek to secede from the Indian Union in order to establish a

sovereign independent state of their own; rather, they seek to capture political power through armed struggle in order to install a so-called "people's government."

EVOLUTION OF NAXALISM IN INDIA

Naxalism's spread and growth in India can be divided into three phases or stages. The three stages are:

FIRST STAGE

- The Naxalite movement began in Darjeeling district, West Bengal, in May 1967 in the three police station areas of Naxalbari, Khoribari, and Phansidewa. In 1969, the CPI Marxist–Leninist (ML) party, based on Maoist ideology, was founded.
- The Naxalite movement quickly spread across the country, particularly in West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, and Andhra Pradesh.
- Peasants and adivasis, or tribals, were their main supporters, who often faced discrimination and exploitation from state authorities.
- Several young unemployed and unemployed students were also drawn to the Naxal ideology. The peak period of violent activities by Naxalites was from 1970 to mid- 1971. In 1971, a joint police-army operation in the worst-affected areas of West Bengal, Bihar, and Odisha resulted in the arrest and death of nearly all of the movement's top leaders.
- Charu Majumdar was apprehended and died in police custody in 1972. Approximately 40,000 cadres were imprisoned during the emergency in 1975, dealing a severe blow to the movement.

SECOND STAGE

- Following the Emergency, the movement resurfaced in a more violent form. As part of its "protracted war" strategy, it continued to expand its base.

- From West Bengal to Bihar to Odisha, as well as Andhra Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, their base grew. In 1980, the CPI (ML) was renamed the People's War Group (PWG), which was based in Andhra Pradesh and had a large number of police casualties.
- The Andhra Government banned PWG in 1992, but it continued to operate. Simultaneously, in Bihar, the Maoist Communist Centre of India (MCCI) grew in strength and launched large-scale attacks on landlords and other upper caste groups. The naxal movement continued to spread across the country at a steady rate.

THIRD STAGE

- The problem became more serious after the Peoples War Group (PWG) and the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC) merged in September 2004, resulting in the formation of the Communist Party of India (CPI) (Maoist). Today's left-wing extremist movement is a complex web that spans multiple countries.
- According to the Ministry of Home Affairs, ultra-left extremism is currently afflicting 88 districts in the ten states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Uttar Pradesh, Telengana, and West Bengal, forming an almost continuous Naxal corridor.
- The CPI (Maoist), along with all of its formations and front organizations, has been listed on the Schedule of Terrorist Organizations under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act of 1967, and is responsible for the majority of incidents of violence and killing of civilians and security forces.
- Since the formation of the CPI (Maoist), there has been an increase in Naxal violence, to the point where the Prime Minister had to declare Naxalism the single most serious internal security threat facing India in 2006.

The Naxalites, estimated to number 10,000, have posed a threat to the country's security forces and a roadblock to development in the vast mineral-rich region of eastern India known as the "Red Corridor." It runs through Jharkhand,

Chhattisgarh, and Odisha in a narrow but continuous strip. Naxal influence was seen spreading from 'Tirupati to Pashupati' during the peak of the Maoist movement in Nepal.

- Extremist violence has increased and spread over the last decade, claiming a large number of lives in the countries affected. The majority of the affected areas are forest areas populated primarily by tribal peoples. The Dandakaranya Region, which includes parts of Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh, contains the majority of these areas.
- In the Dandakaranya region, the CPI (Maoist) has deployed some battalions. Local Panchayat leaders are frequently forced to resign, and Maoist Jan Adalat meetings are held on a regular basis. In these areas, they have maintained a parallel government and judiciary. However, violence alone cannot be used to gauge Maoist expansion.
- In terms of indoctrination and consolidation, Maoists are also growing. They are also attempting to spread their ideology in the 'Golden Corridor,' which runs from Pune to Ahmedabad and is dominated by the Bheel and Gond tribes. They are attempting to profit from new areas, various social groups, and marginalised groups such as Dalits and minorities by actively participating in their grievances against the government. Maoists have also established themselves in western Odisha, Upper Assam, and Arunachal Pradesh.
- Given the incidents of violence and the casualties that have resulted, the movement's capacity to challenge the state has greatly increased. The most serious incident occurred in April 2010 in Dantewada, Chhattisgarh, when they ambushed a whole CRPF Company and killed 76 CRPF armed personnel, demonstrating the extent of their strategic planning, skills, and armament.
- In 2013, the left-wing extremist movement made international headlines when it killed 27 people in the Sukma District of Chhattisgarh, including some high-ranking politicians.

- With the exception of a brief period in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the left extremist movement has been largely agrarian in that it seeks to exploit rural discontent and mis-governance to achieve its goals.

The following are some of the major characteristics of the left extremist movement:

- It has emerged as the greatest internal security threat.
- By mobilising dispossessed and marginalised groups, it has gained people's trust and grown in strength, particularly in forest and tribal areas.
- It creates conditions that prevent the government from functioning and actively seeks to disrupt development activities in order to achieve its goal of wresting control.
- It instills fear in law-abiding citizens.
- While its characteristics are present in the activities of all terrorist organizations, left extremism has had a significant impact on the country's conflict scenario due to its wider geographic reach.
- The Naxalites' goal is to undermine the state's legitimacy and build a mass base that is acceptable to a certain extent. The ultimate goal is to use violence to gain political power and establish what they call "The India People's Democratic Federal Republic."
- The Naxalites primarily target the police and their facilities. They also target specific types of infrastructure, such as rail and road transportation, as well as power transmission, and they obstruct development projects, such as critical road construction.
- Naxalite activity is also manifesting itself through various civil society and front organizations on issues such as SEZ policy, land reforms, land acquisition,

displacement, and so on, with the goal of broadening their mass base and gaining intellectual elite support.

Let Sum Up:

Origin and Ideology

- The term "Naxal" originates from *Naxalbari*, a village in West Bengal, where the movement began in 1967 under *Charu Majumdar* and *Kanu Sanyal*.
- Rooted in *Maoist* and *Marxist* ideology, Naxalism advocates armed struggle to overthrow exploitative capitalist systems and establish a "people's government."
- Maoism emphasizes *armed insurgency*, *mass mobilization*, and a *protracted people's war* strategy to capture state power.

Philosophical Background

- Ideologically inspired by *Karl Marx*, *Lenin*, and *Mao Zedong*.
- Believes that existing social and political structures inherently exploit the masses and must be replaced through violent revolution.
- Famous Maoist slogan: "*Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.*"

Evolution of Naxalism in Three Stages

1. First Stage (1967–1975)

- Originated in West Bengal and spread to Odisha, Bihar, and Andhra Pradesh.
- Backed by peasants and tribals facing state neglect.
- Movement weakened after a major crackdown and the death of Charu Majumdar in 1972.

2. Second Stage (Post-Emergency to 2004)

- Re-emerged more violently.

- Groups like *People's War Group (PWG)* and *Maoist Communist Centre (MCC)* gained ground in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.
- Increased attacks on state forces and landlords.

3. Third Stage (2004–Present)

- PWG and MCC merged to form *CPI (Maoist)* in 2004.
- Spread across 88 districts in 10 states—known as the **Red Corridor**.
- The group is listed as a **terrorist organization** under India's Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA).
- Prime Minister Manmohan Singh called it India's most serious internal security threat.

Current Threats and Tactics

- Concentrated in forested, tribal areas like *Dandakaranya* (Chhattisgarh, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh).
- They run parallel governments and courts in some areas.
- Use guerrilla tactics, mass mobilization, and disrupt development to maintain control.
- Not secessionist—aim to overthrow the Indian state, not break away from it.
- Key attacks:
 - **Dantewada, 2010:** 76 CRPF personnel killed.
 - **Sukma, 2013:** 27 people killed, including politicians.

Major Characteristics

- Mobilizes **tribals, Dalits, and marginalized groups** by exploiting grievances.
- Obstructs development projects and infrastructure.
- Spreads influence through civil society, student bodies, and NGOs.
- Ultimate aim: Establish a *People's Democratic Federal Republic* through armed revolution.

Check Your Progress:

1. What is the origin of the term "Naxalism"?
2. What are the philosophical foundations of Naxalism?
3. How has Naxalism evolved in India?
4. What is the government's response to Naxalism?

SATYASHODHAK

Satyashodhak means "seeker of truth." This term became historically significant when the Indian social reformer **Jyotirao Phule** founded the **Satyashodhak Samaj** (Society of Truth Seekers) in 1873 in Maharashtra. The movement was born out of Phule's deep concern for the social injustices prevailing in Indian society, especially the rigid caste system, the oppression of the so-called "lower castes," and the condition of women. Phule believed that true religion was one that upheld justice, equality, and morality, not rituals and blind traditions. Hence, he encouraged people to seek the truth for themselves through reason and experience, instead of blindly following what was passed down by dominant groups like the Brahmins.

The Satyashodhak Samaj was unique in many ways. It was one of the earliest organized movements in India that directly challenged **Brahminical dominance** in religion and social life. Phule believed that Brahmin priests had used religion to exploit the lower castes and keep them uneducated and powerless. Through the Samaj, he promoted the idea that everyone, regardless of caste, had the right to dignity, education, and self-respect. He rejected the idea that one needed a priest to conduct marriages, funerals, or other ceremonies, and instead advocated for simple, ritual-free events that were based on mutual consent and equality. This was a bold move in a time when the caste system was deeply entrenched in Indian society.

Another powerful aspect of the movement was its commitment to **women's rights and education**. Phule, along with his wife **Savitribai Phule**, opened schools

for girls and children from Dalit (then called 'untouchable') backgrounds. Savitribai became the first female teacher in India and faced tremendous opposition and even violence for teaching girls. Yet, the Phules continued their work with determination, believing that education was the key to liberation. They also set up homes for widows and promoted widow remarriage, something that was considered taboo at the time.

The Satyashodhak Samaj played a crucial role in shaping the social reform movement in India. Its emphasis on rational thinking, equality, and justice laid the foundation for later reformers like **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, who also challenged the caste system and fought for Dalit rights. The ideas of the Samaj also influenced the **Non-Brahmin Movement** in Maharashtra and the **Self-Respect Movement** led by Periyar in Tamil Nadu. Even today, the legacy of the Satyashodhak Samaj is alive in the ongoing struggles for social justice and equality in India.

Let Sum Up:

The term "Satyashodhak" means "seeker of truth," and became historically significant when Indian social reformer Jyotirao Phule founded the *Satyashodhak Samaj* (Society of Truth Seekers) in 1873 in Maharashtra. This movement emerged from Phule's concern for the social injustices prevalent in India, especially the rigid caste system, the oppression of the "lower castes," and the exploitation of women. Phule's philosophy emphasized that true religion was one that upheld justice, equality, and morality, and not mere rituals or blind traditions.

The *Satyashodhak Samaj* was one of the earliest organized movements in India to challenge Brahminical dominance in religion and social life. Phule criticized the Brahmin priests for using religion to oppress the lower castes and keep them uneducated. The Samaj promoted equality, education, and self-respect for all, regardless of caste. It also rejected the need for a priest to conduct ceremonies and advocated for simple, ritual-free events based on mutual consent.

A crucial aspect of the movement was its focus on women's rights and education. Phule, along with his wife Savitribai, opened schools for girls and children from Dalit backgrounds. Savitribai Phule became the first female teacher in India, despite facing significant opposition. The couple also set up homes for widows and promoted widow remarriage, defying social norms of the time.

The *Satyashodhak Samaj* was instrumental in shaping India's social reform movements and laid the groundwork for later reformers like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who continued to challenge the caste system and fight for Dalit rights. The Samaj's ideas also influenced the Non-Brahmin Movement in Maharashtra and the Self-Respect Movement led by Periyar in Tamil Nadu. The legacy of the *Satyashodhak Samaj* remains a source of inspiration in the ongoing fight for social justice and equality in India.

Check Your Progress:

1. What were the key goals of the Satyashodhak Samaj founded by Jyotirao Phule?
2. How did Jyotirao Phule and his wife, Savitribai Phule, contribute to the advancement of women's rights in India?

Unit Summary

1. Brahmo Samaj (Founded in 1828):

The **Brahmo Samaj** was founded by **Raja Ram Mohan Roy** in 1828 with the goal of reforming Hindu society by promoting monotheism and abolishing practices like Sati, idol worship, and child marriage. The movement sought to harmonize Hinduism with modern scientific and rational thought. It emphasized equality, social justice, and the rejection of superstitions. The Brahmo Samaj played a key role in the social and religious reform movement in India, advocating for women's rights, education, and social reforms.

2. Arya Samaj (Founded in 1875):

Swami Dayanand Saraswati founded the **Arya Samaj** in 1875, emphasizing the importance of the Vedas and rejecting practices like idol worship, caste discrimination, and child marriage. The Arya Samaj promoted the idea of a reformed Hindu society based on the principles of justice, equality, and monotheism. The movement also advocated for social reforms such as women's education, widow remarriage, and the rights of the lower castes. The Arya Samaj had a significant impact on social reforms in India, influencing the rise of modern Hinduism.

3. DK (Dravidian Movement):

The **Dravidian Movement (DK)**, led by **Periyar E. V. Ramasamy**, arose in Tamil Nadu in the early 20th century, aiming to challenge the dominance of Brahminism and promote the rights of non-Brahmin communities, particularly the Dravidians. The movement focused on the elimination of the caste system, advocated for women's rights, and rejected Hindu religious orthodoxy. Periyar's slogan "There is no God" emphasized his rationalist and atheist views. The Dravidian movement laid the foundation for the political and social changes in Tamil Nadu and helped foster a sense of self-respect among marginalized communities.

4. SNDP (Shree Narayana Dharma Paripalana) Movement (Founded in 1903):

The **SNDP Movement** was founded by **Sree Narayana Guru** to uplift the backward Ezhava community in Kerala. The movement focused on social reform, equality, and the removal of caste-based discrimination. Guru's famous slogan "One Caste, One Religion, One God for All" promoted unity and social justice. The movement established educational institutions, reformed religious practices, and advocated for the rights of the lower castes. The SNDP played a pivotal role in Kerala's social transformation and inspired future movements led by figures like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

5. Naxalbari Movement (Founded in 1967):

The **Naxalbari Movement** began in **West Bengal** in 1967 under the leadership of **Charu Majumdar** and **Kanu Sanyal**. It was a Maoist-inspired movement that called for a violent revolution to overthrow the existing social and political structures, particularly targeting the exploitation of peasants, tribals, and lower castes. The movement advocated for a "protracted people's war" and the use of guerrilla tactics to overthrow the state. The Naxalite ideology was rooted in Marxism and Maoism, and the movement spread to several states, including Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh, posing a serious threat to internal security in India.

6. Satyashodhak Samaj (Founded in 1873):

The **Satyashodhak Samaj** was founded by **Jyotirao Phule** in 1873 in Maharashtra with the aim of eradicating social injustices, particularly caste-based discrimination and the oppression of women. The movement promoted the idea of "truth-seeking," emphasizing the importance of reason and experience over blind tradition. Phule rejected the Brahminical dominance in religion and advocated for the right of everyone, regardless of caste, to education and dignity. The Samaj played a crucial role in promoting women's education, widow remarriage, and the abolition of caste-based rituals. Phule's work laid the foundation for future social reform movements, including those led by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.

These movements, each unique in its own way, contributed significantly to the social, religious, and political landscape of India, challenging caste-based discrimination, advocating for social justice, and promoting equality for marginalized communities.

Glossary

- **Reform:** Change or improvement in existing practices or institutions, particularly in religion and society.

- **Rammohan Roy:** The founder of Brahmo Samaj, considered the "Father of the Indian Renaissance." He advocated for social reforms and the abolition of social evils.
- **Monotheism:** The belief in a single God. Brahmo Samaj emphasized the worship of one God and rejected idol worship and polytheism.
- **Sati (or Suttee):** A historical practice in India where a widow self-immolated on her husband's funeral pyre. Rammohan Roy campaigned for its abolition.
- **Rationalism:** The practice of using reason and logic as the primary sources of knowledge and truth, emphasized by Brahmo Samaj in religious matters.
- **Dayanand Saraswati:** The founder of Arya Samaj, who promoted the importance of Vedic teachings and the rejection of idol worship.
- **Vedas:** The ancient scriptures of Hinduism, which Dayanand Saraswati believed should be the sole guide for religious and social life.
- **Shuddhi Movement:** The movement initiated by Arya Samaj to reconvert individuals to Hinduism from other religions and to promote social reform.
- **Caste Abolition:** The goal of Arya Samaj to dismantle caste discrimination and promote equality, especially by encouraging education and social integration.
- **Suddhi Movement:** Arya Samaj's attempt to purify and reconvert people who had been converted to other religions back to Hinduism.
- **Periyar E.V. Ramasamy:** The leader of the Dravidian Movement, which sought to challenge Brahminical dominance and promote the rights of non-Brahmin communities in Tamil Nadu.
- **Rationalism:** The DK Movement promoted a rationalist approach, rejecting superstition, religious dogma, and caste-based discrimination.

- **Atheism:** Periyar was a strong advocate for atheism, asserting that people should not follow any religion blindly and should use reason to understand the world.
- **Dravida Nadu:** The idea of a separate state for the Dravidian people, which was promoted as a part of the Dravidian Movement.
- **Self-Respect Movement:** A key part of the Dravidian Movement that encouraged people, especially from lower castes, to assert their dignity and self-respect against caste oppression.
- **Sree Narayana Guru:** A social reformer who played a key role in the SNDP Movement, advocating for social equality and education, especially for the lower castes in Kerala.
- **Ezhavas:** A lower-caste community in Kerala, whom Sree Narayana Guru worked to uplift through education and social reforms.
- **One Caste, One Religion, One God for All:** The slogan of the SNDP Movement, emphasizing unity and equality for all people, irrespective of caste or religion.
- **Social Reforms:** The SNDP focused on uplifting lower castes, promoting education, and fighting untouchability, along with emphasizing religious and social equality.
- **Maoism:** The ideology based on the teachings of Chinese leader Mao Zedong, which advocates for a violent revolution to overthrow the existing political order and establish a socialist state.
- **Charu Majumdar:** The leader of the Naxalbari Movement, who sought to launch a revolution based on Marxist-Leninist and Maoist ideologies.

- **People's War:** A strategy promoted by Maoists, which emphasizes a protracted struggle involving guerrilla warfare to encircle cities from rural areas.
- **Naxalites:** Members of the Communist Party of India (Maoist), originally known as the Naxalbari Movement, which has led to violent insurgencies in India.
- **Red Corridor:** A term used to describe the regions of India, particularly in the eastern states like Chhattisgarh, Odisha, and Jharkhand, where Naxalites are active.
- **Jyotirao Phule:** The founder of the Satyashodhak Samaj, who campaigned against caste discrimination, the exploitation of lower castes, and for the upliftment of women and Dalits.
- **Savitribai Phule:** Jyotirao Phule's wife, who became the first female teacher in India and worked alongside her husband in promoting girls' education and challenging social norms.
- **Caste System:** A social hierarchy in India that classifies people into rigid categories based on their birth, which the Satyashodhak Samaj sought to dismantle.
- **Social Justice:** A key goal of the Satyashodhak Samaj, advocating for the dignity, rights, and education of the marginalized and lower castes in society.
- **Widow Remarriage:** An important cause promoted by the Satyashodhak Samaj, which encouraged the remarriage of widows, challenging the prevailing social norms of the time.

Self- Assessment Questions

- What were the primary objectives of the Brahmo Samaj, and how did it seek to reform Hindu society?

- Who was the founder of the Brahmo Samaj, and what were the key contributions of this movement to social and religious reforms in India?
- How did the Brahmo Samaj influence the abolition of practices like Sati and child marriage?
- In what ways did the Brahmo Samaj promote equality and social justice in India?
- Who founded the Arya Samaj, and what were its core principles regarding the Vedas and religious practices?
- How did the Arya Samaj challenge caste discrimination and promote social reforms in India?
- What role did the Arya Samaj play in the promotion of women's education and widow remarriage?
- How did Dayanand Saraswati's ideas on monotheism influence the socio-political landscape of India?
- Who was the leader of the Dravidian Movement (DMK), and what were the key goals of the movement?
- How did the DMK Movement challenge Brahminical dominance and promote the rights of non-Brahmin communities in Tamil Nadu?
- What impact did the DMK Movement have on the political landscape in Tamil Nadu, particularly with regard to the rise of the Dravida Kazhagam (DMK) party?
- Discuss the role of rationalism and atheism in the DMK Movement and how it influenced social and religious reforms in Tamil Nadu.
- What was the primary aim of the SNDP Movement, and how did Sree Narayana Guru contribute to social reform in Kerala?

- How did the SNDP Movement promote unity among the lower castes and challenge caste discrimination in Kerala?
- Explain the significance of the slogan "One Caste, One Religion, One God for All" in the context of the SNDP Movement.
- How did the SNDP Movement impact the social and educational reforms in Kerala?
- What were the main ideologies behind the Naxalbari Movement, and how did it challenge the existing social and political structures in India?
- Who were the key leaders of the Naxalbari Movement, and what were their goals in terms of revolution and social change?
- How did the Naxalbari Movement spread across different parts of India, and what impact did it have on the political landscape?
- What were the major consequences of the Naxalite insurgency on India's security and development?
- Who founded the Satyashodhak Samaj, and what was its main goal in challenging the caste system in India?
- How did Jyotirao Phule and Savitribai Phule contribute to the advancement of women's rights and education through the Satyashodhak Samaj?
- In what ways did the Satyashodhak Samaj influence later social reformers like Dr. B.R. Ambedkar?
- Discuss the significance of Phule's rejection of Brahminical dominance and his call for social justice and equality for all castes.

Activities/ Exercise/Case Studies:

Self-Learning Case Studies

1. Case Study on Raja Ram Mohan Roy and the Brahmo Samaj:

- Objective: To understand the role of individual leaders in reform movements.
- Instructions:
 - Write a case study on Raja Ram Mohan Roy's leadership in the Brahmo Samaj, focusing on:
 - His role in challenging social and religious practices (like Sati and caste discrimination).
 - His contributions to modernizing Indian society.
 - Discuss how his ideas influenced other social reformers and how his legacy continues to shape contemporary India.

2. Case Study on the Role of Women in Social Reform Movements:

- Objective: To explore the involvement of women in social reform.
- Instructions:
 - Write a case study on the contributions of Savitribai Phule in the Satyashodhak Samaj.
 - Discuss her role in women's education and the challenges she faced as a pioneer in the education of girls from marginalized communities.
 - Analyze how her work has influenced gender equality movements in India today.

3. Case Study on Periyar and the DK Movement:

- Objective: To understand the political and social ramifications of anti-Brahminism in India.
- Instructions:
 - Write a case study on Periyar's role in the DK Movement and his advocacy for rationalism and social justice.
 - Discuss his efforts in promoting Dravidian identity and social reform, and the lasting impact on Tamil Nadu politics and identity.
 - Evaluate the movement's role in shaping contemporary social and political discourse in South India.

4. Case Study on Naxalbari and the Growth of Maoism:

- Objective: To explore the Naxalbari movement's influence on leftist radicalism in India.
- Instructions:
 - Write a case study on the Naxalbari movement, focusing on the origins of Maoist ideology in India and the subsequent Naxalite insurgency.
 - Discuss the socio-economic conditions that gave rise to the movement and its radical approach to social change.
 - Analyze the ongoing legacy of the Naxalbari movement in the form of Maoist insurgencies in India.

5. Case Study on the SNDP Movement and the Ezhava Community:

- Objective: To understand the empowerment of marginalized communities through reform movements.

- Instructions:
 - Write a case study on Sree Narayana Guru and the SNDP movement, focusing on the upliftment of the Ezhava community in Kerala.
 - Discuss the movement's role in challenging the caste system, promoting education, and advocating for equality.
 - Examine the current status of the Ezhava community and the influence of the SNDP movement on modern Kerala.

Answers for check your Progress

1. What were the key factors that led to the emergence of Hindu reform movements in 19th-century India?

The emergence of Hindu reform movements in 19th-century India was driven by the impact of Western education, rationalist and scientific thinking, Christian missionary critiques, and the rediscovery of India's spiritual heritage through Sanskrit texts. These influences inspired Indian intellectuals to challenge social evils like caste discrimination, sati, and child marriage, and to reform Hinduism in line with egalitarian and humanistic ideals.

2. How do modern Hindu reform movements challenge the traditional caste and gender hierarchies in Hinduism?

Modern Hindu reform movements reject caste-based discrimination and gender inequality by promoting values like equality, spiritual unity, and social justice. They emphasize the original Vedic ideals of universalism and inclusivity, and advocate for the education and empowerment of women and marginalized communities, opposing practices that uphold social hierarchy.

3. **What were the two main sources of the 19th-century Indian renaissance?**

The renaissance was fueled by (1) Western education and rational thought, and (2) rediscovery of India's spiritual heritage through Sanskrit literature.

4. **How did Orientalists like Sir William Jones contribute to the revival of Indian traditions?**

They translated classical Sanskrit texts into English, revealed the depth of Indian philosophy, and inspired Indian intellectuals to re-evaluate their own culture and scriptures.

5. **What was the impact of the West on the Modern reform movement in India?**

The West had a profound impact on modern reform movements in India, especially during the 19th century. Western education, rationalism, and democratic ideals introduced by British colonial rule encouraged Indian intellectuals to critically examine their own religious and social traditions. Missionary activities, translations of Sanskrit texts by Orientalists, and institutions like the Asiatic Society contributed to a rediscovery of India's spiritual heritage. This led to a cultural awakening and the rise of reform movements such as the **Brahma Samaj**, **Arya Samaj**, and **Ramakrishna Mission**, which sought to modernize Hinduism and eliminate social evils like caste discrimination, sati, and child marriage.

6. **Mention the contributions made by Raja Rammohun Roy in the social sphere.**

Raja Rammohun Roy made significant contributions in the social sphere, including:

- **Abolition of Sati:** He campaigned vigorously against the practice of sati (widow burning), leading to its ban in 1829.
- **Women's Rights:** He advocated for women's education, condemned polygamy, and supported widow remarriage.

- **Religious Reform:** He denounced idolatry and promoted monotheism through the **Brahma Samaj**, encouraging interfaith harmony and spiritual unity.
- **Education:** He supported English education and the inclusion of modern sciences like mathematics and chemistry, helping establish institutions like the Hindu College in Calcutta.
- **Promotion of Rationalism:** Through works like *Tuhfatul Muwahhiddin*, he promoted reason, morality, and universal values across religious traditions.

7. What were the core principles and practices promoted by Dayananda Saraswati through the Arya Samaj?

Dayananda Saraswati promoted the core principles of Vedic revivalism through the Arya Samaj. His slogan "Back to the Vedas" emphasized the importance of the Vedas as the ultimate source of knowledge and truth. He condemned idol worship, the caste system, child marriage, and polytheism, advocating for the purity of Vedic teachings. The Arya Samaj's practices included:

- **Brahmayajna:** Study and meditation on the Vedas.
- **Devayajna:** Fire sacrifices using ghee and incense.
- **Social Service:** Providing for the needy and monks.
- **Gayatri mantra:** Recitation and purificatory rites before meditation. The organization established schools, missionary centers, and promoted the ideals of karma, reincarnation, brahmacharya (chastity), and sanyasa (renunciation).

8. How did Dayananda Saraswati's approach to reform differ from that of Raja Rammohun Roy?

Dayananda Saraswati's approach to reform was more radical and Vedic-centric compared to Raja Rammohun Roy's broader, more inclusive approach. While

both reformers sought to modernize Hinduism, Dayananda emphasized a return strictly to the Vedas and was critical of other religions, especially Islam and Christianity, as evidenced by his major work *Satyartha Prakash*. He rejected idol worship, the caste system, and child marriages, but his vision for Hinduism was more exclusive, aiming to unify Hindus under the Vedic fold. In contrast, Raja Rammohun Roy's Brahma Samaj advocated for religious unity and was more open to interfaith dialogue, promoting a universalist vision of Hinduism that was not limited to Vedic orthodoxy.

9. What led to the formation of the Justice Party in 1916?

The Justice Party was formed due to the growing resentment among non-Brahmins over Brahmin domination in education, government jobs, and politics in the Madras Presidency. It was established by T.M. Nair and P. Theagaraya Chetty to represent non-Brahmin interests and fight caste-based discrimination.

10. Who was Iyothee Thass, and what was his contribution to the Dravidian movement?

Iyothee Thass was a Dalit intellectual and social reformer who promoted Tamil Buddhism as a casteless alternative to Brahmanical Hinduism. He founded the South Indian Buddhist Association and played a key role in the early ideological foundation of the Dravidian movement by challenging Aryan-Brahman dominance.

11. What were some key reforms introduced by the Justice Party after coming to power in 1920?

The Justice Party implemented several reforms such as increasing non-Brahmin representation in government jobs, passing laws for inter-caste marriage, abolishing the devadasi system, promoting primary and women's education, and improving educational access for weaker sections.

12. What was the main goal of Periyar's Self-Respect Movement?

Periyar's Self-Respect Movement aimed to eliminate caste discrimination, promote rationalism, oppose Brahmanical dominance, and ensure equality for women and lower castes. It was a radical continuation of the non-Brahmin movement advocating for a just and egalitarian society.

13. Who founded the SNDP Movement and what was its primary aim?

The SNDP (Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana) Movement was founded by Sree Narayana Guru in 1903. Its primary aim was to fight caste-based discrimination, especially against the Ezhava community, and to promote social equality, education, and temple entry rights for all castes.

14. What was the significance of the Aruvippuram Sivalinga installation in 1888?

In 1888, Sree Narayana Guru installed a Sivalinga at Aruvippuram using a stone from a river, which symbolized that spiritual and religious authority was not exclusive to the upper castes. It was a bold move challenging Brahminical dominance and marked the beginning of the SNDP movement.

15. What were the key reforms introduced by the SNDP Movement?

The SNDP Movement brought reforms in three main areas:

- **Educational reforms:** Established schools to uplift the Ezhava community.
- **Religious reforms:** Built temples, simplified rituals, and encouraged spiritual practices without idol worship.
- **Social reforms:** Opposed alcoholism and wasteful customs, promoted equality, and worked for **temple entry, road access, and political rights** for backward castes.

16. Explain the slogan “One Caste, One Religion, One God for All” and its relevance.

Sree Narayana Guru's slogan “**One Caste, One Religion, One God for All**” (Malayalam: *Oru Jathi, Oru Matham, Oru Daivam, Manushyanu*) promoted **universal brotherhood** and **equality**, rejecting caste divisions and religious discrimination. It became the **central philosophy** of the SNDP Movement and influenced future social reforms in Kerala.

17. What is the origin of the term "Naxalism"?

The term "Naxalism" originates from the village of Naxalbari in West Bengal's Darjeeling district, where the movement began in 1967 under the leadership of Charu Majumdar and Kanu Sanyal. The movement was characterized by the use of violence by communist guerrilla groups aiming to destabilize the state. Although it initially gained traction in West Bengal, the movement's underground operations continued across India.

18. What are the philosophical foundations of Naxalism?

Naxalism is rooted in Marxist-Leninist ideology, emphasizing the need for a violent class struggle to overthrow capitalist structures. Mao Zedong's teachings further influenced the movement, advocating for a "Protracted People's War" involving armed insurgency, mass mobilization, and strategic alliances to seize state power. The slogan "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun" encapsulates this approach.

19. How has Naxalism evolved in India?

Naxalism in India has evolved through three stages:

- **First Stage (1967–1970s):** Initiated in Naxalbari, the movement spread to states like West Bengal, Odisha, Bihar, and Andhra Pradesh, gaining support from peasants, tribals, and students. It faced significant repression, leading to the arrest and death of key leaders.
- **Second Stage (1980s–1990s):** The movement resurfaced with groups like the People's War Group (PWG) and the Maoist Communist Centre (MCC),

expanding their base and intensifying activities, including ambushes and attacks on landlords.

- **Third Stage (2004–present):** The merger of PWG and MCC formed the Communist Party of India (Maoist), leading to increased violence and the establishment of a "Red Corridor" across central and eastern India. The government has labeled the group a terrorist organization under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act.

20. What is the government's response to Naxalism?

The Indian government has adopted a dual approach to address Naxalism:

- **Security Measures:** Operations like "Operation Steeplechase" and the establishment of special task forces have been implemented to counter insurgent activities. In February 2025, a significant operation in Chhattisgarh resulted in the elimination of 31 Naxalites.
- **Development Initiatives:** Recognizing that development is key to countering insurgency, the government has sanctioned over 10,000 projects in Maoist-affected areas, focusing on infrastructure, education, and financial inclusion.

21. What were the key goals of the Satyashodhak Samaj founded by Jyotirao Phule?

The key goals of the Satyashodhak Samaj were to challenge the Brahminical dominance in religion and social life, promote equality and justice, and eradicate the caste system. The Samaj aimed to empower the lower castes and women by advocating for their rights to education, dignity, and self-respect. It also promoted the idea that people should seek the truth through reason and experience, rejecting blind rituals and traditions. Additionally, the movement emphasized that ceremonies such as marriages and funerals should be conducted without the need for a priest, based on mutual consent and equality.

22. How did Jyotirao Phule and his wife, Savitribai Phule, contribute to the advancement of women's rights in India?

Jyotirao Phule and his wife, Savitribai Phule, made significant contributions to women's rights in India by promoting education and advocating for the welfare of women. They opened schools for girls and children from Dalit backgrounds, despite facing severe opposition. Savitribai Phule became India's first female teacher and worked tirelessly to educate girls. They also set up homes for widows and encouraged widow remarriage, challenging social norms that oppressed women. Their efforts were groundbreaking and played a crucial role in the social reform movement in India.

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UNIT-IV- EMPOWERMENT MOVEMENT

Unit Objectives

The unit will compare and contrast the different backward class movement that occurred in Indian society

Sections

Definition of Empowerment Movement

The Empowerment Movement refers to organized efforts—social, political, and educational—that aim to enable marginalized individuals and communities to gain control over their lives and participate fully in society. The core idea is to give people the power, authority, confidence, and opportunity to make decisions, influence policies, and overcome discrimination or exclusion. Empowerment is not just about assistance or welfare—it is about rights, dignity, and self-reliance.

Characteristics of the Empowerment Movement

The Empowerment Movement is characterized by a focus on equity, participation, and inclusion. It emphasizes the removal of social, economic, and political barriers that prevent certain groups—especially women, Dalits, tribal communities, and the poor—from accessing opportunities. One key feature is the push for education and awareness, which are seen as tools to awaken self-worth and challenge oppressive systems. Another important aspect is collective action—people organizing together in unions, associations, or movements to demand their rights. The movement also highlights the importance of policy changes, such as laws protecting human rights, equal wages, and political reservations for underrepresented groups.

Historical Context of the Empowerment Movement in India

In India, the roots of the empowerment movement go back to the 19th century social reform efforts by leaders like Jyotirao Phule, Savitribai Phule, and later Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, who strongly advocated for the rights of the so-called lower castes, women, and oppressed communities. Ambedkar's leadership was instrumental in framing the Indian Constitution, which guarantees equality, justice, and fundamental rights for all citizens. The Dalit movement, women's movement, and tribal movements in India are all branches of the larger empowerment struggle.

During the post-independence period, the government introduced affirmative action policies such as reservations in education and employment, and special schemes for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and women. In the 1970s and 1980s, feminist movements and grassroots rural campaigns like SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) pushed for economic and social empowerment. In recent decades, empowerment has been linked to global goals like the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 5 (Gender Equality) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments (1992) also played a key role by reserving seats for women and SC/STs in local governance, giving them a voice in decision-making.

TRIBAL MOVEMENTS

Tribal movements in India represent the collective struggles of indigenous or Adivasi communities who have historically faced social, economic, and political marginalization. These movements emerged as a response to exploitation, displacement, denial of rights, and cultural suppression. India is home to over 700 tribal groups, officially recognized as Scheduled Tribes (STs) under the Constitution. Despite constitutional protections and welfare programs, many tribal communities continue to face challenges related to land alienation, forest rights, poverty, and lack of access to education and healthcare. Tribal movements have taken shape across India to assert identity, rights, autonomy, and dignity.

Definition of Tribal Movements

A tribal movement can be defined as a socio-political mobilization of tribal communities aimed at resisting injustice, asserting their traditional rights, or demanding political autonomy, land ownership, and cultural preservation. These movements are usually grassroots in nature and often arise due to external threats such as forced displacement, industrialization, and forest laws that restrict tribal access to their ancestral lands. Tribal movements may be reformist, revolutionary, or autonomist, depending on their goals and methods.

Characteristics of Tribal Movements

Tribal movements in India are marked by several distinct features. First, they are deeply rooted in the community's connection with land and nature—tribal identity is closely tied to territory. These movements are often leader-driven but retain strong community participation, especially through traditional forms of decision-making like village councils. Another characteristic is the demand for self-governance or autonomy, especially under provisions like the Fifth and Sixth Schedules of the Indian Constitution. Cultural revivalism is also common, where tribal groups seek to protect their languages, traditions, and rituals from assimilation into mainstream society. Importantly, many tribal movements are peaceful, but some have involved armed struggle, especially when state responses have been oppressive.

Historical Context of Tribal Movements in India

The history of tribal resistance in India dates back to the colonial period. During British rule, many tribes lost their land to landlords and moneylenders due to exploitative revenue systems. The earliest tribal uprisings included the Santhal Rebellion (1855–56) in present-day Jharkhand and the Birsa Munda Ulgulan Movement (1899–1900), which called for tribal rights and an end to British oppression. In the post-independence period, tribal discontent continued due to large-scale development projects like dams, mining, and forest conservation laws, which displaced thousands of Adivasi families without adequate rehabilitation. The Chipko Movement and the Narmada Bachao Andolan had major tribal participation.

More recent movements include the Pathalgadi Movement in Jharkhand and the Dongria Kondh's resistance to mining in Odisha. Constitutional provisions like the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA) 1996 and the Forest Rights Act 2006 were significant achievements of these long-standing struggles.

Let Sum Up:

Empowerment Movement

- **Definition:** Organized efforts to give marginalized groups (like women, Dalits, tribals) the power and opportunity to control their lives and influence society.
- **Characteristics:** Focus on inclusion, rights, education, collective action, legal reforms (like reservations and wage equality).
- **Historical Context:**
 - Pioneers: Jyotirao & Savitribai Phule, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar.
 - Post-independence: Policies for SCs/STs, women.
 - Key moments: SEWA, 73rd & 74th Amendments (1992), SDGs (esp. SDG 5 & 10).

Tribal Movements

- **Definition:** Collective tribal action against injustice, displacement, and cultural loss, seeking autonomy, land, and rights.
- **Characteristics:** Community-based, linked to land and nature, sometimes autonomist, cultural preservation, occasional armed resistance.
- **Historical Context:**

Colonial era: Santhal Rebellion (1855), Birsa Munda's Ulgulan (1899).

Post-independence: Resistance against displacement (e.g., Narmada Bachao Andolan), legal victories like PESA (1996), Forest Rights Act (2006).

Modern examples: Pathalgadi (Jharkhand), Dongria Kondh (Odisha).

Check Your Progress:

1. Who were some early leaders of the Empowerment Movement in India, and what were their key contributions?
2. What are two key legal outcomes of tribal movements in India?
3. Name two major post-independence tribal movements and their causes.

THE SANTHAL INSURRECTION

History and Origin of the Santhal Insurrection

The Santhal Insurrection, also known as the Santhal Rebellion, took place in 1855–56 in the Rajmahal Hills of present-day Jharkhand (then part of Bengal Presidency). It was one of the earliest tribal uprisings against British colonial rule and feudal exploitation. The Santhals are an indigenous tribal group who traditionally lived in harmony with the forest, practicing agriculture and a self-governed way of life. But with the expansion of British colonialism in the 18th and 19th centuries, their land was increasingly encroached upon by British revenue policies, zamindars (landlords), and moneylenders, leading to widespread exploitation and displacement.

The rebellion began in June 1855, when two Santhal brothers, Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu, along with leaders like Chand and Bhairav, mobilized over 10,000 Santhals and raised arms to overthrow the oppressive systems. The rebellion spread across parts of present-day Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, and Odisha.

Characteristics of the Santhal Insurrection

The Santhal rebellion was characterized by its mass participation, with both men and women actively involved in resisting oppression. It was organized and led by tribal leadership, especially Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu, who emerged as powerful figures symbolizing resistance. The movement was both political and spiritual—the Santhals believed they were divinely inspired to free themselves from oppression. Their unity was rooted in tribal solidarity, traditional institutions, and deep cultural identity. The rebellion involved attacking colonial outposts, symbols of zamindari power, and moneylenders who were viewed as exploiters.

Despite being poorly armed, the Santhals used traditional weapons and guerrilla tactics. It was not just a spontaneous riot—it was a well-coordinated

movement with specific grievances and clear leadership, reflecting deep resentment against economic and social injustices.

Purpose and Functions of the Santhal Rebellion

The main purpose of the Santhal Insurrection was to liberate their land and lives from the grip of British administrators, exploitative landlords, and moneylenders. The Santhals wanted to restore their right to land, dignity, and self-rule. They declared a form of self-government, rejecting British authority and establishing their own judicial and administrative setup, where disputes were settled through tribal customs.

The rebellion functioned as a social awakening for the Santhals, promoting solidarity, resistance, and assertion of identity. It was not only an economic revolt but also a cultural and political statement, rejecting foreign domination and restoring indigenous governance and justice.

Impact of the Santhal Insurrection in India

Although the rebellion was brutally suppressed by the British army in 1856—with thousands of Santhals killed or imprisoned—it had a lasting impact on India's tribal and colonial history. It exposed the failure of British land policies and the exploitative nature of the zamindari system. As a result, the British were forced to review their governance of tribal regions.

One significant administrative outcome was the creation of a separate district—Santhal Parganas—in 1855, to better manage tribal affairs and prevent such uprisings in the future. The rebellion also laid the foundation for future tribal resistance movements and inspired other leaders like Birsa Munda.

In modern India, the Santhal Rebellion is celebrated as a symbol of indigenous resistance, and leaders like Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu are honored as freedom fighters. Their legacy continues in the form of statues, educational institutions, and public holidays in their name in states like Jharkhand and West Bengal.

Legal Implications of the Santhal Insurrection

The Santhal Rebellion exposed serious flaws in the British land revenue and legal systems, particularly in how they treated tribal communities. The Santhals had been suffering under the zamindari system, introduced by the British, where landlords and moneylenders seized tribal lands through debt traps, fraudulent contracts, and legal manipulation. After the insurrection, the British authorities were alarmed by the scale and intensity of tribal unrest, and they realized that applying uniform legal and revenue systems across India was not suitable for tribal societies, which had their own customs, governance, and land ownership traditions.

As a result, the British created the Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act (1876), one of the most direct legal outcomes of the rebellion. This Act was designed to protect tribal land rights by prohibiting the transfer of tribal land to non-tribals, unless approved by the government. It aimed to safeguard the Santhals from further exploitation by moneylenders and landlords. The law recognized the customary tribal ownership of land and allowed for dispute resolution through traditional village panchayats, rather than British courts, which the Santhals distrusted.

Another important legal step was the creation of a separate administrative district—Santhal Parganas—in 1855 under Act XXXVII of 1855. This was a legal recognition of the need for special governance in tribal areas, different from the rest of Bengal Presidency. The region was given a degree of autonomy in legal and administrative matters, and tribal customs were considered in judicial decisions.

In the larger context, the Santhal Insurrection paved the way for later legal protections for tribal communities in India. The principles seen here—such as protecting tribal land from alienation and recognizing traditional governance—were reflected much later in modern Indian laws, such as the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) and the Forest Rights Act, 2006. These laws carry forward the legacy of respecting tribal identity and legal autonomy.

Let Sum Up:

History and Origin

- The Santhal Insurrection (1855–56) was a major tribal revolt in the Rajmahal Hills (now Jharkhand), led by Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu, and others like Chand and Bhairav.
- The Santhals rebelled against British colonial rule, zamindari exploitation, and moneylenders who took over their lands.
- Over 10,000 Santhals joined the uprising, spreading across Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, and Odisha.

Characteristics

- Mass participation, including women.
- Strong tribal unity, spiritual motivation, and use of traditional weapons.
- Leadership was rooted in tribal identity and customs, and the rebellion was well-organized, not random violence.

Purpose and Functions

- Aim: To free themselves from British rule and economic oppression, reclaim land, and restore tribal governance.
- Declared self-rule, settled disputes through tribal customs, and promoted cultural and political resistance.

Impact

- Though crushed in 1856, it exposed flaws in British policies.
- Led to the creation of Santhal Parganas district (1855) and inspired future tribal movements, including Birsa Munda's.

- Today, Santhal leaders are remembered as freedom fighters, especially in Jharkhand and Bengal.

Legal Implications

- Highlighted the unsuitability of British land and legal systems in tribal areas.
- Resulted in the Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act (1876): Protected tribal land from outsiders and respected tribal customs.
- Act XXXVII of 1855 created a separate administrative unit, giving legal autonomy to tribal areas.
- Set a precedent for later tribal laws like PESA (1996) and Forest Rights Act (2006).

Check Your Progress:

1. What triggered the Santhal Insurrection, and who were its main leaders?
2. What was unique about the organization and participation in the Santhal rebellion?
3. What legal act was passed to protect Santhal land rights after the rebellion?
4. How did the Santhal rebellion influence modern tribal rights in India?

THE BODO MOVEMENT

Introduction and Historical Background of the Bodo Movement

The Bodo Movement is a socio-political and ethnic movement led by the Bodo community, one of the largest indigenous tribes of Assam in Northeast India. The movement arose from long-standing issues of identity, marginalization, underdevelopment, and cultural suppression. The Bodos have a distinct language, script, and cultural heritage, but they felt ignored by both the state and central

governments, especially after the independence of India in 1947. The demand for a separate Bodo state, often referred to as “Bodoland,” emerged in the late 20th century as a response to fears of cultural extinction, political invisibility, and economic backwardness.

Origin and Purpose of the Bodo Movement

The roots of the Bodo Movement go back to the early 20th century, when educated Bodo leaders like Kameswar Brahma advocated for socio-cultural reform and preservation of the Bodo identity. However, the formal political movement began in 1967–68, with the formation of the Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA), which initially demanded a separate state called “Udayachal” for all plains tribes of Assam.

Later, the movement became exclusively Bodo-centric, particularly after the formation of the All-Bodo Students' Union (ABSU) in 1967, which under the leadership of Upendranath Brahma (in the 1980s), demanded a separate state of Bodoland under the Indian Constitution. The purpose was to ensure political autonomy, protection of land rights, linguistic recognition, and economic development for the Bodo people.

Characteristics of the Bodo Movement

The Bodo Movement has gone through both peaceful and violent phases. It is characterized by strong ethnic nationalism, the assertion of linguistic and cultural identity, and grassroots mobilization involving students, intellectuals, and common people. During the late 1980s and 1990s, the movement turned militant, with the emergence of armed groups like the Bodo Security Force (BdSF), later renamed the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB), which sought to achieve Bodoland through armed struggle.

The movement also involved mass protests, economic blockades, hunger strikes, and political negotiations. While initially demanding full statehood, the Bodo leadership later agreed to accept autonomy within Assam through the creation of autonomous councils.

PHASES OF BODO MOVEMENT

Cultural Phase (1930s–1960s): Focused on preserving Bodo language and culture.

1. Political Phase (1967–1987): Led by PTCA and ABSU; demand for separate state begins.
2. Militant Phase (1987–2003): Rise of armed groups like NDFB; violent clashes and unrest.
3. Negotiation and Peace Agreements (2003–2020): Series of accords signed with the Indian government, creating autonomous administrative structures and ending militancy.

1. Cultural Phase (1930s–1960s)

This was the foundational stage of the Bodo Movement. During this phase, the focus was on preserving and promoting Bodo identity, culture, language, and traditions, which were at risk due to increasing assimilation into Assamese society and the dominance of Assamese language in administration and education.

- Key contributors like Kameswar Brahma and Kalicharan Brahma worked to reform Bodo society, including promoting education, reduction of superstitions, and spread of Brahmo religion.
- Organizations such as the Bodo Sahitya Sabha (established in 1952) worked towards developing the Bodo language, getting it recognized in schools and later as a medium of instruction.
- The movement was peaceful and non-political, but it laid the foundation for a strong ethnic consciousness that would influence later political demands.

Political Phase (1967–1987)

This phase marked the political awakening of the Bodo people, where demands shifted from cultural recognition to territorial and administrative autonomy.

- The Plains Tribal Council of Assam (PTCA) was formed in 1967, demanding a separate state called “Udayachal” for all the plain tribes of Assam, including Bodos. This was the first organized political demand for autonomy.
- However, as internal divisions grew within PTCA, the All Bodo Students’ Union (ABSU) emerged as a distinctly Bodo-centric organization.
- Under the leadership of Upendranath Brahma, ABSU launched a movement in 1987 demanding a separate state of Bodoland within the Indian Union.
- This phase was marked by mass protests, rallies, bandhs (strikes), and civil disobedience campaigns.
- ABSU adopted the slogan: “Divide Assam 50-50”, indicating the seriousness of their statehood demand.

3. Militant Phase (1987–2003)

As peaceful political means seemed ineffective, this period saw the rise of armed struggle and militant outfits within the Bodo movement.

- The Bodo Security Force (BdSF) was formed in 1986, later renamed the National Democratic Front of Bodoland (NDFB) in 1994. It sought to achieve a sovereign Bodoland through armed struggle.
- Another group, the Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT), formed in the late 1990s, demanded autonomy within India rather than secession.
- This period witnessed ethnic clashes, violence, displacement of non-Bodos, and tensions with other communities like the Santhals and Muslims.

- The region suffered from economic disruption and militarization, drawing national attention to the failure of governance in tribal areas.

4. Negotiation and Autonomy Phase (2003–Present)

Recognizing the intensity of the conflict, the Indian government-initiated peace talks with Bodo groups, leading to a series of political settlements.

- In 2003, the Government of India signed a tripartite agreement with the BLT and the Assam government, resulting in the creation of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) under the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution. This gave Bodos a degree of legislative, executive, and financial autonomy.
- The BTC governed over four districts: Kokrajhar, Baksa, Chirang, and Udalguri, collectively known as the Bodoland Territorial Area Districts (BTAD).
- In 2020, a new Bodo Accord was signed, involving all NDFB factions and civil society groups. It:
 - Ended militancy,
 - Promised more developmental funds and jobs,
 - Restructured BTC with better governance,
 - Offered protection of Bodo language, culture, and identity.

The 2020 accord was hailed as a model of peaceful resolution, and many former militants surrendered and were rehabilitated into society. Since then, Bodo politics has moved towards electoral participation and development.

Phases

S.No	Phase	Years	Focus	Key Features
1	Cultural Phase	1930s–1960s	Cultural and linguistic identity	Educational reform, language promotion
2	Political	1967–	Political and	PTCA, ABSU, demand for

S.No	Phase	Years	Focus	Key Features
	Phase	1987	territorial autonomy	Bodoland
3	Militant Phase	1987–2003	Armed struggle and violence	NDFB, BLT, ethnic clashes
4	Negotiation Phase	2003–Present	Peace, autonomy, and governance	BTC, Bodo Accord 2020, democratic participation

Legal Outcomes and Governance Structures

The Bodo Movement led to several important legal and political outcomes:

- Bodoland Autonomous Council (BAC), 1993: Created under a memorandum of settlement, but lacked constitutional protection.
- Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), 2003: Established under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution, granting significant legislative, executive, and financial powers to the Bodo leadership. This was a result of the Bodo Accord signed between the Indian Government and Bodo Liberation Tigers (BLT).
- Bodo Peace Accord, 2020: A historic agreement signed between the Government of India, Assam government, and various Bodo groups, including NDFB factions. It promised more autonomy to BTC, increased development funds, protection of Bodo identity, and the rehabilitation of militants into society.

Impact of the Bodo Movement in India

The Bodo Movement significantly impacted ethnic politics, autonomy discourse, and tribal rights in India. It inspired other tribal and ethnic groups in the Northeast to demand similar structures of autonomy. The movement also brought national attention to indigenous identity and regional inequality. While it led to violence and displacement during militant phases, the eventual peace processes and

development projects in Bodoland region have paved the way for stability and growth.

Today, Kokrajhar, the capital of BTC, has become a political and cultural hub for Bodo people. The movement also contributed to the recognition of the Bodo language, which was included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India in 2003, giving it official status.

Let Sum Up:

- **Introduction & Background:** The Bodo Movement is led by the Bodo tribe of Assam, aiming to protect their distinct cultural, linguistic, and political identity. It emerged due to marginalization and lack of development after India's independence.
- **Origins & Purpose:** Starting in the early 20th century with cultural reform, it turned political in 1967–68 with the PTCA and later became Bodo-centric under ABSU, demanding Bodoland for autonomy, land rights, and recognition.
- **Phases of the Movement:**
 1. Cultural Phase (1930s–60s) – Focused on language, education, and social reform.
 2. Political Phase (1967–87) – Political demands emerged via PTCA and ABSU under Upendranath Brahma.
 3. Militant Phase (1987–2003) – Rise of armed groups like NDFB and BLT, ethnic clashes, violence.
 4. Negotiation Phase (2003–Present) – Peace accords, formation of BTC, 2020 Bodo Accord brought stability, development, and end of militancy.
- **Legal Outcomes:**
 - BAC (1993): Lacked constitutional backing.

- BTC (2003): Formed under Sixth Schedule, gave administrative autonomy over BTAD districts.
- 2020 Accord: Strengthened BTC, ensured cultural protection, and reintegrated militants.
- **Impact:**
 - Raised tribal and ethnic autonomy issues in India.
 - Brought development and stability to the Bodoland region.
 - Bodo language included in the Eighth Schedule (2003).
 - Kokrajhar emerged as a major cultural and political center for Bodos.

Check Your Progress:

1. What were the key reasons behind the Bodo Movement?
2. Who played a crucial role in the political phase of the Bodo Movement and what slogan was popularized?
3. What was the major legal achievement of the 2003 Bodo Accord?
4. How did the 2020 Bodo Accord impact the region and its people?

DALIT MOVEMENTS

The Dalit Movement in India refers to the collective struggle of the Dalits (formerly called 'Untouchables') to fight caste-based discrimination, social exclusion, economic oppression, and denial of basic human rights. The term "Dalit," meaning "oppressed" or "broken," symbolizes a socio-political identity for those who were historically placed at the bottom of the Hindu caste hierarchy and denied access to education, temple entry, land ownership, and other civil rights.

The roots of Dalit movements can be traced back to the colonial period, when modern education, Christian missionary work, and British legal reforms began to challenge caste norms. However, the real momentum came during the 19th and 20th

centuries, with Dalit leaders like Jyotirao Phule, B.R. Ambedkar, Periyar, and others leading organized movements for social justice, political rights, and self-respect.

Definition and Characteristics of Dalit Movements

Dalit movements can be defined as social, cultural, and political efforts by Dalit communities to eradicate caste oppression and demand equal rights, dignity, and inclusion in Indian society.

Some key characteristics of Dalit movements include:

- Anti-caste ideology: Challenging the Varna system and Brahmanical dominance.
- Assertion of identity: Use of the term “Dalit” to unite all oppressed castes under a common identity.
- Educational and legal activism: Campaigns for access to schools, universities, jobs, and the legal system.
- Religious conversion: Movements such as Ambedkar’s mass conversion to Buddhism in 1956, rejecting Hinduism as the foundation of caste.
- Political mobilization: Formation of political parties like Republican Party of India (RPI) and later, Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) to gain power through democratic means.
- Cultural assertion: Literature, art, and theatre by Dalits challenged dominant narratives and expressed their lived experiences.

MAJOR PHASES OF DALIT MOVEMENT

Social Reform Phase (19th century): Led by reformers like Jyotirao Phule (Satyashodhak Samaj), this phase questioned caste-based rituals, Brahmin supremacy, and promoted education for Dalits.

1. Ambedkarite Phase (1920s–1950s): Led by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, this was the most transformative phase. Ambedkar campaigned for reservations, temple entry rights, political representation, and the annihilation of caste. He was the chief architect of the Indian Constitution, which legally abolished untouchability and ensured equal rights.
2. Post-Independence Phase (1950s–1990s): After the death of Ambedkar, the movement continued through Dalit Panthers (1972, Maharashtra), a radical group inspired by the American Black Panthers. They used literature, protests, and political criticism to fight caste atrocities.
3. Contemporary Dalit Movements (1990s–Present): Focused on assertive identity politics, especially through parties like the BSP led by Kanshi Ram and later Mayawati. Dalit youth and intellectuals use social media, literature, and grassroots activism to address issues like caste violence, manual scavenging, and exclusion in higher education and public services.

Impact of the Dalit Movement

The Dalit movement has had a profound impact on Indian society:

- Legal gains: Constitutional protections like Article 17 (abolition of untouchability), reservation policies in education, jobs, and legislatures.
- Political representation: Emergence of Dalit leadership at state and national levels.
- Cultural awakening: Dalit literature (Dalit Sahitya) has become a powerful tool of resistance and self-expression.
- Awareness and solidarity: Dalit movements inspired Adivasi, minority, and backward class struggles across India.

Despite these gains, caste-based discrimination, atrocities, and social exclusion still persist, especially in rural India, indicating the need for continued activism and legal enforcement.

DALIT SANGARSH SAMITI

Dalit Sangharsh Samiti: Introduction and Historical Background

The Dalit Sangharsh Samiti (DSS), also known as the Dalit Struggle Committee, is a grassroots-level social and political movement that emerged in the Indian state of Karnataka in the mid-1970s. It was formed as a response to the continued caste-based oppression, economic exploitation, atrocities against Dalits, and denial of land rights and dignity. The DSS was heavily influenced by the ideology of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and inspired by the rise of the Dalit Panthers in Maharashtra. The movement's aim was to fight for social justice, self-respect, political awareness, and constitutional rights for Dalits, particularly in rural Karnataka where caste hierarchies remained deeply entrenched.

Evolution and Background of Dalit Sangharsh Samiti (DSS)

The Dalit Sangharsh Samiti (DSS) began around 1974–75 in Karnataka, during a time when the Dalit Panthers movement in Maharashtra had triggered a wave of assertive Dalit activism across India. Karnataka, with its deep history of caste violence and land inequality, became fertile ground for a similar uprising. Dalits in the state were largely landless laborers, often working under bonded or near-bonded conditions, subjected to untouchability practices, and vulnerable to caste atrocities, particularly in the rural south and northern districts like Kolar, Chitradurga, and Raichur.

The DSS was a non-party, grassroots social movement, though many of its members later joined political fronts. It emphasized that the struggle of Dalits was not just for reform but for total transformation of the social order. This made it a powerful, often confrontational force in Karnataka's sociopolitical sphere.

Purpose and Objectives

The main goal of the DSS was to organize Dalits and other marginalized communities to assert their rights, demand dignity, and challenge the dominance of upper castes in both rural and urban Karnataka. It also worked towards ensuring access to land ownership, education, employment, abolition of untouchability, and eradication of manual scavenging. Unlike some purely political outfits, the DSS adopted both activism and cultural assertion, including street theatre, literature, and poetry to spread awareness and mobilize the masses.

Structure and Organization

Though loosely structured at the grassroots level, the DSS had coordinated state-level leadership, including:

- Village units that organized campaigns, awareness meetings, and quick responses to atrocities.
- District committees that monitored land redistribution, manual scavenging, and police violence.
- State-level conventions where strategies were planned, and leadership was elected.

Literary and Cultural Contributions

One of the most powerful aspects of DSS was its literary renaissance—it gave rise to Dalita Kavya (Dalit Poetry) in Kannada, which became a voice of pain, protest, and hope.

Famous writers and poets like:

- K.B. Siddaiah
- Devanur Mahadeva
- Aravind Malagatti
- Siddalingaiah

...created a counter-literature to Brahmanical dominance in Kannada literary spaces.

These works were raw, emotional, and filled with personal and political resistance.

It wasn't a formal NGO or political party but functioned more like a mass movement, often joining hands with left-leaning and socialist groups on common issues like land reforms and labor rights.

Key Features and Activities

- The DSS was known for mass mobilization of Dalits, particularly through rallies, padayatras (marches), and protests.
- It exposed atrocities against Dalits, often confronting the police and state machinery when victims were denied justice.
- One of the major focuses was the struggle for land rights — advocating that Dalits be granted ownership of government or “Gomala” (pasture) land they had been cultivating.
- The DSS also addressed issues like minimum wages, bonded labor, and discrimination in schools and government offices.
- The movement gave rise to a vibrant Dalit literary and cultural expression in Kannada, contributing to what is now called Dalit Sahitya.

Leadership and Ideological Influence

The DSS was not a single organization but a movement with various factions and leaders united under the Ambedkarite framework. Prominent among its leaders was Prof. B. Krishnappa, who was an academic and activist, as well as K.B. Siddaiah, a powerful voice in Dalit poetry and ideology. These leaders played a central role in linking intellectual work with grassroots activism. The DSS followed the Ambedkarite path of legal rights and dignity, but also took influence from Marxist and socialist movements, especially in terms of economic justice and class struggle.

Impact and Legacy

The DSS had a transformative impact on Dalit politics and social consciousness in Karnataka. It brought the issue of Dalit landlessness and violence into public discourse, pressured the state government to enforce land reforms, and helped Dalit candidates rise in local and state politics. Many activists who started in DSS later joined mainstream parties or civil rights organizations. The cultural contributions of the DSS—especially in poetry, theatre, and folk forms—left a lasting legacy in Kannada literature and the broader Dalit movement in South India.

Social Impact and Political Influence

- The DSS radicalized an entire generation of Dalit youth in Karnataka, many of whom became educators, poets, journalists, and civil rights lawyers.
- Several leaders later joined mainstream parties like Janata Dal or BSP, carrying their activist background into the political sphere.
- It succeeded in bringing Dalit issues into public discourse, influencing policy decisions at the state level, such as better implementation of land reforms, educational reservations, and welfare programs.

MAHAR DALIT MOVEMENT

The Mahar Dalit Movement is one of the earliest and most significant caste-based socio-political movements in India. It originated in Maharashtra and was led predominantly by the Mahar community, a major Dalit group in the region that had long suffered from untouchability, social exclusion, and caste-based violence. Traditionally employed in menial and demeaning roles such as village watchmen, leather workers, and corpse handlers, the Mahars were denied dignity and basic human rights under the Brahmanical caste order. The movement took shape in the

early 20th century, but its roots can be traced to the 19th century, when the British colonial government began recruiting Mahars into the army and administrative jobs, offering them limited social mobility. However, it was under the transformative leadership of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, himself born into a Mahar family, that the community became the epicenter of Dalit resistance across India.

Ambedkar's engagement with the Mahar community began in the 1920s and culminated in the formation of a conscious, organized Dalit political identity. One of the most symbolic events was the Mahad Satyagraha of 1927, where Ambedkar led thousands of Dalits, mostly Mahars, to drink water from a public tank in Mahad, challenging the caste-based restriction on access to public resources. This act of defiance was more than a civil protest — it was a declaration of equality and a refusal to accept the label of 'untouchability'. Another major milestone was the burning of the Manusmriti during the same period, where Ambedkar and his followers publicly rejected the scriptural basis of caste discrimination.

The movement gained momentum as Mahars became the vanguard of the Dalit struggle, supporting Ambedkar's demand for separate electorates for Depressed Classes, his resignation from Hinduism, and eventually the mass conversion to Buddhism in 1956, which began with over five lakh Mahars converting alongside Ambedkar in Nagpur. The conversion was a revolutionary act of spiritual and social self-liberation, rejecting Hindu caste hierarchy and embracing a faith based on equality and rationality. Through education, legal awareness, and political mobilization, the Mahars carved out a powerful identity and inspired other Dalit communities to assert their rights.

The legacy of the Mahar Movement is profound. It not only challenged the ideological foundations of caste but also laid the groundwork for constitutional rights, affirmative action, and the broader Dalit movement in India. Today, Mahars are among the most socially and politically advanced Dalit groups in India, particularly in Maharashtra, with strong representation in civil services, education, literature, and activism. Their struggle reflects the core ideals of the Ambedkarite movement— self-respect, justice, and annihilation of caste.

Historical Context of the Mahar Dalit Movement

The historical roots of the Mahar Dalit Movement lie in the deep-seated caste hierarchy of Indian society, particularly in colonial Maharashtra, where the Mahar community was subjected to extreme social exclusion and discrimination. Traditionally forced into degrading occupations, Mahars were not allowed to enter temples, draw water from public wells, or live within village boundaries. However, the British colonial administration, unlike the previous Brahmanical order, employed Mahars in the army, postal services, and lower administrative positions, offering them a glimpse of dignity and mobility in the 19th century. This exposure to modern institutions planted the early seeds of self-awareness among the community.

The turning point came with the rise of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a highly educated leader born into a Mahar family, who returned from abroad with a vision to abolish caste and ensure legal and political equality. His leadership in the 1920s transformed this social awakening into a mass movement, focusing on civil rights, education, and religious transformation. Events like the Poona Pact (1932), where Ambedkar negotiated political representation for Dalits, and the formation of the Scheduled Castes Federation, reflected how the Mahar struggle expanded into a national Dalit political platform. The historical context of the movement is thus rooted in both colonial modernity and Ambedkarite ideology, combining local resistance with national significance in the broader fight for social justice in India.

Features of the Mahar Dalit Movement

The Mahar Dalit Movement was marked by several distinctive features that made it a pioneering struggle for social justice in India. At its core, the movement emphasized self-respect, social equality, and human dignity for the Dalit community, particularly the Mahars, who were historically labeled as "untouchables." A key feature was its conscious rejection of the caste system and Brahmanical authority, especially seen in acts like the burning of the Manusmriti under the leadership of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. The movement was deeply rooted in the principles of education and legal empowerment, with Ambedkar urging Dalits to "educate, agitate, and organize."

The Mahars led non-violent civil resistance campaigns such as the Mahad Satyagraha (1927) to claim the right to access public water tanks and the Kalaram Temple Entry Movement (1930), challenging caste-based segregation in religious spaces. Another defining feature was the mass conversion to Buddhism in 1956, where over 5 lakh Mahars renounced Hinduism, seeking a new identity rooted in equality and rationality. The movement also emphasized political participation, contributing significantly to the inclusion of reservation policies and constitutional rights for Scheduled Castes in independent India. The Mahars, through this movement, not only reclaimed their identity but also emerged as leaders of the larger Dalit movement across the country.

Impacts of the Mahar Dalit Movement

The Mahar Dalit Movement had a profound and far-reaching impact on Indian society, particularly in the areas of social justice, caste politics, education, religion, and constitutional reform. As one of the earliest organized Dalit movements, it played a pioneering role in shaping Dalit consciousness, helping the marginalized Mahar community assert their dignity, rights, and equal status in a deeply caste-ridden society. The most visible impact was the emergence of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as a national leader who used the Mahar community as the base for a larger Dalit political identity, which transcended regional boundaries. Through mass mobilizations such as the Mahad Satyagraha (1927) and Kalaram Temple Entry movement (1930), the Mahar-led agitation directly challenged the social taboos of untouchability and forced the upper-caste-dominated Hindu society to confront its own discriminatory practices. The conversion of Mahars to Buddhism in 1956, inspired by Ambedkar, marked a revolutionary religious and social shift — liberating Dalits from the oppressive Hindu caste hierarchy and giving them a new collective identity based on equality, reason, and compassion.

Politically, the movement led to the recognition of Dalits as a distinct political group, resulting in reservations in education, employment, and legislative bodies, as embedded in the Indian Constitution. The Scheduled Caste (SC) category was institutionalized partly due to the organized efforts of the Mahar community. Socially,

the movement contributed to a cultural renaissance among Dalits in Maharashtra, giving rise to Dalit literature, Ambedkarite poetry, and folk traditions that reshaped Marathi identity. The Mahars, once treated as "untouchables," emerged as leaders in education, civil service, law, and activism, inspiring similar movements among other Dalit communities across India. In the long term, the Mahar Dalit Movement laid the foundation for modern Dalit movements, such as the Dalit Panthers in the 1970s and the Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in North India. Its legacy continues to influence Dalit assertion, resistance to caste oppression, and the ongoing demand for social equality and justice in contemporary India.

Legal Implications of the Mahar Dalit Movement in India

The Mahar Dalit Movement had profound legal implications that reshaped India's approach to social justice, equality, and minority rights, especially during the transition from colonial rule to independence. One of the most significant legal outcomes of the movement was its direct influence on the framing of the Indian Constitution, as Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a leader of the Mahar community and the architect of the Constitution, ensured that the rights of the oppressed and marginalized castes were safeguarded through legal mechanisms. Through his efforts and the pressure exerted by the organized Mahar movement, the Scheduled Castes (SCs) — which included Mahars — were formally recognized as historically disadvantaged groups, deserving of affirmative action in areas like education, employment, and political representation.

The Constitution of India (1950) guaranteed equality before the law (Article 14) and prohibited untouchability in any form under Article 17, a direct legal response to the lived experiences of Mahars and other Dalit communities. Article 15(4) further enabled the state to make special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes, which became the basis for the reservation system. Additionally, Article 46 of the Directive Principles directed the state to promote the educational and economic interests of Scheduled Castes and protect them from social injustice.

Following this, several important legal instruments were enacted to criminalize caste-based discrimination, most notably the Protection of Civil Rights Act (1955) and later, the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act (1989). These laws gave Dalits, including Mahars, the legal authority to report and prosecute acts of discrimination, violence, and social exclusion. The movement also influenced the Poona Pact of 1932, which replaced separate electorates with reserved seats for Dalits in legislative bodies — a major turning point in the legal recognition of Dalit political identity.

In summary, the legal implications of the Mahar Dalit Movement were transformative. It led to the institutionalization of Dalit rights in India's legal framework, the creation of a system of legal redress for caste injustices, and the foundation of India's affirmative action policies. The movement ensured that social equality was not just a moral goal but a legal guarantee, permanently altering the course of Indian democracy and justice.

Let Sum Up:

- **Definition and Objective:** The Dalit Movement is a collective struggle by historically oppressed castes (Dalits) against caste-based discrimination, aiming for dignity, equality, and justice.
- **Key Characteristics:**
 - Anti-caste ideology challenging Brahmanical dominance.
 - Assertion of the “Dalit” identity.
 - Legal and educational activism.
 - Religious conversions (notably to Buddhism).
 - Political mobilization via parties like RPI and BSP.
 - Cultural assertion through literature and art.
- **Phases of the Movement:**
 1. Social Reform Phase (19th century) – Led by Phule; focused on anti-Brahminism and education.

2. Ambedkarite Phase (1920s–50s) – Focused on legal rights, political representation, temple entry, and annihilation of caste.
3. Post-Independence Phase (1950s–90s) – Rise of Dalit Panthers; cultural and protest-led activism.
4. Contemporary Phase (1990s–present) – Youth-led activism, social media, and political assertion via BSP.

- Impact:
 - Constitutional protection (e.g., Article 17).
 - Rise of Dalit leaders and identity politics.
 - Influence on other marginalized groups.
 - Persistent caste discrimination in rural areas.
- Dalit Sangharsh Samiti (DSS):
 - Founded in Karnataka (1970s); grassroots Ambedkarite movement.
 - Focus on land rights, education, and cultural resistance.
 - Known for Dalit poetry, protests, and confronting state violence.
- Mahar Dalit Movement:
 - Led by Ambedkar; centered in Maharashtra.
 - Key events: Mahad Satyagraha, Manusmriti burning, temple entry campaigns.
 - Mass conversion to Buddhism (1956) as a rejection of caste.
 - Legal impacts: Constitution-making, reservation system, and anti-discrimination laws.
 - Long-lasting legacy in literature, politics, and Dalit identity.

Check Your Progress:

1. What is the core aim of the Dalit Movement in India?
2. Name two major contributions of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to the Dalit Movement.
3. What was the significance of the Mahad Satyagraha (1927)?
4. What was a unique feature of the Dalit Sangharsh Samiti in Karnataka?

5. What legal reforms were influenced by the Mahar Dalit Movement?

PEASANT MOVEMENT

Peasant movements in India have been a vital part of the country's social and political history, representing the struggles of farmers and agricultural laborers against exploitation, land alienation, unjust taxation, feudal landlords, and colonial policies. Since India is historically an agrarian society, with a majority of its population dependent on agriculture, the peasant class has often found itself at the center of economic injustice and political marginalization. These movements reflect not only economic grievances but also a broader quest for social justice, land ownership, dignity, and autonomy. From colonial uprisings like the Indigo Revolt (1859–60) and Champaran Satyagraha (1917) to post-independence agitations like the Telangana Rebellion (1946–51) and the recent Farmers' Protest (2020–21), peasant movements have continually shaped India's political landscape and influenced both policy and reform.

Definition of Peasant Movements

A peasant movement refers to an organized collective action by farmers or rural agricultural communities aimed at resisting forms of economic exploitation, social oppression, or political neglect. These movements may take the form of revolts, protests, or long-term resistance and typically address issues such as high rents, forced labor, landlessness, bonded labor, lack of irrigation, or exploitative intermediaries. They can be spontaneous or ideologically driven and may align with broader national movements such as anti-colonial struggles, socialist ideologies, or land reform campaigns.

Historical Contexts of Peasant Movements in India

During British Colonial Rule

Under the British, India witnessed structural changes in land revenue and ownership systems, such as the Zamindari system, Ryotwari, and Mahalwari, which led to increased burdens on the peasantry. Landlords and colonial officers often extracted excessive taxes irrespective of crop failures, leading to large-scale famines and rural indebtedness.

- **Early Movements:**

- The Indigo Revolt (1859–60) in Bengal saw peasants protesting against being forced to grow indigo under exploitative conditions.
- The Deccan Riots (1875) in Maharashtra targeted moneylenders who seized lands through manipulative loans.

- **Gandhian Era:**

- Champaran Satyagraha (1917) was Gandhi's first mass movement in India, mobilizing Bihar's indigo farmers against British planters.
- The Kheda (1918) and Bardoli (1928) movements in Gujarat focused on tax reduction during crop failures.

Post-Independence Era

Although India gained freedom in 1947, agrarian reforms were uneven, and many issues such as landlessness, caste oppression, and rural poverty persisted.

- Telangana Rebellion (1946–51): A Communist-led armed struggle in Andhra Pradesh, it demanded the abolition of feudal landlordism.
- Naxalite Movement (1967 onwards): Emerged in Naxalbari, West Bengal, and advocated violent revolution against landlordism and state structures. It

spread to several tribal and rural areas and continues as a radical leftist insurgency in parts of India.

- **Shetkari Sanghatana (1970s–80s):** Led by Sharad Joshi in Maharashtra, it focused on market-based policies and fair prices for agricultural produce, rejecting subsidies and state control.
- **Farmers' Protest (2020–21):** One of the largest modern movements, it was led by farmers—mainly from Punjab, Haryana, and western UP—demanding the repeal of three central farm laws perceived to harm small farmers and promote corporatization.

Impacts of Peasant Movements in India

Peasant movements have had significant social, political, and economic impacts in shaping modern India.

1. **Land Reforms:** Many early movements directly led to abolition of zamindari systems, land ceiling laws, and distribution of surplus land to the landless, though implementation varied across states.
2. **Political Mobilization:** Peasant activism gave rise to regional and national political parties like the Kisan Sabha, Communist Party of India (Marxist), and later farmer-oriented parties in states like Punjab and Maharashtra.
3. **Economic Justice:** Movements like Shetkari Sanghatana and the Farmers' Protest brought minimum support price (MSP), procurement, and credit issues into mainstream policy debates.
4. **Legal Reforms:** Protests led to changes in laws—e.g., repeal of the three farm laws in 2021, Debt Relief Acts, and land rights for tribal farmers through the Forest Rights Act (2006).

5. Social Awareness: Peasant struggles raised awareness of rural poverty, caste discrimination, and ecological issues, influencing academic and civil society narratives.

THE BARDOLI MOVEMENT

The Bardoli Movement, also known as the Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928, was a major episode in India's nationalist struggle against British colonial rule. It was a non-violent peasant revolt that took place in the Bardoli taluka of the Surat district in Gujarat. The movement was sparked when the British colonial government raised land revenue by 22%, despite the fact that local farmers had suffered from a poor harvest and economic hardship. The peasants appealed for relief, but when their grievances were ignored, they launched a civil disobedience movement under the leadership of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. This movement gained nationwide attention and proved to be a powerful example of Satyagraha—a non-violent method of protest inspired by Mahatma Gandhi. The success of the Bardoli Satyagraha led to the reversal of the tax hike and the restoration of confiscated lands, and it elevated Vallabhbhai Patel to national prominence, earning him the title “Sardar” (leader). The Bardoli Movement thus marked a critical point in the Indian freedom struggle by uniting the rural population in organized, peaceful resistance against unjust governance.

The Bardoli Satyagraha can be defined as a non-violent civil disobedience movement led by peasants in 1928 to protest against the unjust increase in land revenue imposed by the British colonial government. It is a classic example of a Gandhian mass movement rooted in truth, unity, and non-violence, aiming to secure economic justice and political dignity for Indian farmers.

Characteristics of the Bardoli Movement

The Bardoli Movement of 1928, led by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, was characterized by its disciplined, non-violent resistance and deep mass mobilization. One of the most defining features of the movement was its adherence to Gandhian principles of Satyagraha—a peaceful form of civil disobedience. Despite intense provocation, including property confiscations, fines, and arrests, the peasants did not resort to violence. The movement's organization and leadership were exemplary; Patel divided the Bardoli taluka into zones and appointed volunteer leaders to ensure smooth communication and unity. Each village operated as a unit of resistance, following strict instructions on how to respond to British actions.

Another key characteristic was the broad-based participation of the rural population, including men, women, and marginalized groups. Women played a critical role—not just in domestic support but also in public resistance, spreading messages and resisting British agents. The protest also featured social boycott mechanisms—villagers who paid the raised taxes or helped the British were ostracized, creating strong social discipline. Additionally, the movement inspired a moral and cultural awakening; patriotic songs and speeches were used to build collective identity and pride.

The movement's success in getting the British government to roll back the increased land revenue and return confiscated property was a powerful example of effective non-violent struggle. This outcome was widely reported in nationalist publications and gained admiration across India, further strengthening the national freedom struggle.

Historical Context of the Bardoli Movement

The Bardoli Movement of 1928 must be understood within the larger backdrop of colonial economic exploitation and peasant resistance in India during the 1920s. After World War I, India suffered from severe inflation, famine, and epidemic outbreaks, leading to a sharp decline in agricultural productivity and rural income. Despite these hardships, the British colonial government continued to demand high

land revenue from Indian peasants. In Bardoli taluka, located in the Surat district of Gujarat, the situation reached a critical point when the Bombay Presidency government raised the land revenue by 22% in 1927, ignoring the deteriorating economic conditions caused by floods, droughts, and crop failures. This unjust hike, imposed without proper field survey or consultation with the peasantry, was seen as a direct attack on the economic survival of the farming community.

Adding to this crisis, the Indian National Congress was in a phase of regrouping and reorganizing after the withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1922. The leadership was exploring localized struggles that could revive political momentum. Bardoli, with its politically aware and organized peasantry, became a strategic site for such mobilization. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, already a respected lawyer and nationalist, was requested by the farmers to lead the agitation. He accepted the responsibility after conducting a survey of the situation and initiated a well-planned, disciplined Satyagraha, firmly rooted in Gandhian non-violence.

This movement came at a time when peasant revolts were growing across India—such as the Kisan Sabhas in Uttar Pradesh and tribal uprisings in central India—highlighting a new phase in India's freedom struggle where agrarian distress was being directly linked to the nationalist cause. The Bardoli Satyagraha set an important precedent for future movements by demonstrating that rural India could be politically mobilized, disciplined, and effective in resisting colonial policies without violence.

Legal Implications of the Bardoli Movement

The Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928, though fundamentally a civil resistance movement, had significant legal implications both during and after its course. The movement directly challenged the colonial legal framework governing land revenue in British India. The British authorities had imposed a 22% increase in land revenue in Bardoli without any legal justification based on agricultural output or economic feasibility, which violated even the principles of their own Land Revenue Code under

the Bombay Land Revenue Act, 1879. This gave the peasants a legal and moral ground to resist.

As the movement gained momentum, the colonial government used legal instruments to suppress it—they issued notices of land attachment, confiscated movable and immovable property, and initiated auction proceedings under the Civil Procedure Code and the Revenue Recovery Acts. Several peasants faced eviction orders, and volunteers were arrested for "obstruction of revenue collection" under Section 186 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC). However, what made Bardoli unique was the legal literacy and discipline of the protestors—under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's guidance, they resisted without breaking the law, maintaining the image of moral and legal legitimacy.

The most profound legal implication was that the movement forced the colonial government to appoint the Broomfield Commission, which eventually found the revenue hike unjustified. Based on its recommendations, the government was compelled to legally withdraw the enhanced tax and return the confiscated property. This not only validated the protest legally but also set a precedent for judicial review of administrative decisions under public pressure. Furthermore, it highlighted how civil disobedience, if conducted lawfully and peacefully, could lead to tangible legal reforms even under a colonial regime.

In the broader context, the Bardoli Satyagraha strengthened the argument within the Indian National Congress that legal-political resistance—through satyagraha and organized non-violence—was a viable method to challenge unjust colonial laws. It laid the groundwork for legal-political strategies in future movements like the Salt Satyagraha (1930) and the Quit India Movement (1942).

Impacts of Bardoli Movement:

The Bardoli Movement of 1928 left a profound and lasting impact on the Indian freedom struggle, both at the grassroots level and in national politics. It proved that a well-organized, non-violent peasant movement could not only resist colonial economic oppression but also force the British administration to retreat. The

most immediate impact was the complete reversal of the increased land revenue assessment in Bardoli taluka by the Maxwell-Broomfield Commission, and the return of confiscated lands, homes, and cattle to the protesting farmers. This success significantly boosted morale among Indian peasants, especially in Gujarat, and inspired similar agrarian protests across British India in places like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and Bengal.

On a political level, the movement cemented the reputation of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as a national leader. It was after Bardoli that he was given the title “Sardar” (meaning leader or chief), signifying his emerging stature in the Indian National Congress and the freedom movement. The movement also revived nationalist energies at a time when India was recovering from the withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement (1922) and heading towards the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930). Bardoli thus became a template for Satyagraha-based campaigns, showing how a local issue could be transformed into a powerful tool of national resistance.

Another major impact was the political awakening of rural masses, particularly the peasantry and women, who played active roles in maintaining discipline, spreading information, and resisting colonial officials. The movement also challenged the colonial legal system, demonstrating that unjust laws could be resisted through mass civil disobedience. It contributed to the growing legitimacy of the Indian National Congress as a body capable of representing and organizing the grievances of rural India.

In the long term, Bardoli contributed to shaping India’s democratic culture, highlighting values like non-violence, decentralized leadership, and social unity, which later influenced the framing of the Constitution and post-independence agrarian reforms.

Let Sum Up:

Peasant movements in India have been central to the country's social and political history, representing the struggles of farmers against exploitation, land alienation, and colonial policies. These movements, ranging from colonial uprisings like the Indigo Revolt to post-independence agitations like the Telangana Rebellion and the Farmers' Protest, reflect a broader quest for social justice, land ownership, dignity, and autonomy.

Peasant Movements Overview: A peasant movement is an organized collective action by farmers aimed at resisting economic exploitation, social oppression, or political neglect. These movements often address issues such as high rents, landlessness, bonded labor, and lack of irrigation, and may align with broader national causes.

Historical Context:

1. During British Colonial Rule:

- Early movements like the Indigo Revolt (1859–60) and Deccan Riots (1875) were sparked by exploitation.
- The Gandhian era saw movements like Champaran (1917) and Bardoli (1928), where peasants protested against unfair taxes and exploitation.

2. Post-Independence:

- The Telangana Rebellion (1946–51) and Naxalite Movement (1967) were driven by demands for land reforms and opposition to feudalism.
- The Shetkari Sanghatana (1970s–80s) and the 2020–21 Farmers' Protest emphasized fair prices and the repeal of policies detrimental to farmers.

Impacts:

Peasant movements have influenced land reforms, political mobilization, economic justice, and legal reforms. They led to the abolition of the zamindari system, changes in land distribution, and the introduction of policies like the Minimum Support Price (MSP). They also raised awareness about rural poverty, caste discrimination, and environmental issues.

Bardoli Movement (1928):

The Bardoli Satyagraha was a non-violent protest against a 22% land revenue increase imposed by the British, despite poor harvests. Under Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel's leadership, the peasants organized a disciplined resistance, resulting in the reversal of the tax hike and the return of confiscated lands. This movement, a key moment in the Indian freedom struggle, showcased the power of Gandhian non-violence and mass mobilization, elevating Patel as a national leader.

Key Characteristics of the Bardoli Movement:

- **Non-Violent Resistance:** The movement adhered to Gandhian principles, with disciplined protests and social boycotts.
- **Mass Participation:** Peasants, including women and marginalized groups, played an active role.
- **Legal Impact:** The movement led to the Broomfield Commission, which deemed the tax hike unjust and led to its reversal.

Impacts of the Bardoli Movement:

The movement not only reversed the land revenue increase but also boosted rural political consciousness, especially among peasants and women. It strengthened the legitimacy of the Indian National Congress and influenced later nationalist movements. The success of Bardoli became a model for non-violent resistance and played a role in shaping post-independence agrarian reforms.

Check Your Progress:

1. What was the primary aim of peasant movements in India?
2. How did the Bardoli Movement of 1928 impact the Indian freedom struggle?
3. What were the major factors that led to the emergence of peasant movements during British rule?
4. What were the impacts of the Bardoli Movement on India's political landscape?
5. How did the legal implications of the Bardoli Satyagraha contribute to its success?

TEBAGA MOVEMENT

The Tebhaga Movement was a significant peasant uprising that took place in Bengal (now West Bengal) in 1946–47, just before India's independence. It was led by sharecroppers (called *bargadars*), who cultivated land owned by jotedars (landlords). Traditionally, these sharecroppers had to give half (50%) of their produce to the landlords as rent. The Tebhaga Movement demanded that the sharecroppers should retain two-thirds (*tebhaga*) of the produce and give only one-third to the landlords, since they bore the primary burden of cultivation, including labor and costs.

The movement was initiated and supported by the All India Kisan Sabha, the peasant front of the Communist Party of India (CPI). It gained massive support from rural peasants, especially in districts like Dinajpur, 24 Parganas, and Midnapore. The movement was marked by militant rural resistance, confiscation of landlords' grain stocks, and the creation of village-level committees to implement the two-thirds demand. Though it was brutally suppressed by the colonial state and its police, it laid the foundation for future land reforms in West Bengal, especially after the CPI(M) came to power in the late 20th century.

Historical Context of the Tebhaga Movement

The Tebhaga Movement emerged in the complex socio-economic and political landscape of Bengal during the 1940s, a period marked by intense rural distress, famine, and growing political consciousness among peasants. Under the colonial agrarian system in Bengal, the land was primarily controlled by jotedars (landlords), while a large number of sharecroppers or bargadars cultivated the land. According to the prevailing custom, these sharecroppers had to give half of the harvested crop to the landlords, despite bearing a major share of the labour and even part of the inputs. This exploitative system bred deep resentment and hardship, especially during the Bengal Famine of 1943, which killed millions and exposed the vulnerability of rural cultivators under colonial policies.

The rising rural discontent found organized expression through the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS), which had been growing in influence since the 1930s. The Communist Party of India (CPI), working through AIKS, began mobilizing peasants around the slogan of "Tebhaga" (two-thirds) – a demand for reducing the landlords' share of produce from 50% to one-third. This demand was partly based on the Bengal Land Revenue Commission Report (Floud Commission, 1940), which had recommended that sharecroppers be entitled to a larger share of the produce. The end of World War II, the Quit India Movement's aftermath, and the growing weakness of British power created a favorable moment for militant rural action.

By 1946, Bengal was also experiencing heightened political turbulence—with the weakening of British administrative control, communal tensions rising, and the impending Partition of India. Against this backdrop, the Tebhaga Movement erupted as a bold assertion of peasant rights, especially in regions like North Bengal (Dinajpur, Jalpaiguri) and South Bengal (24 Parganas, Medinipur). Though the movement was met with brutal repression from landlords and police forces, it succeeded in politicizing and organizing the rural poor, laying the foundation for post-independence land reform efforts in West Bengal.

Features of Tebhaga Movement:

The Tebhaga Movement of 1946–47 was one of the most significant agrarian uprisings in colonial India, especially in Bengal. Its most striking feature was its demand for economic justice, specifically that sharecroppers (bargadars) should retain two-thirds (tebhaga) of the produce they cultivated, instead of the customary half, while the landlords (jotedars) would get only one-third. This demand marked a radical shift in the agrarian power structure, directly challenging the exploitative tenancy system that had prevailed under British rule. Another key feature of the movement was its mass character—it involved hundreds of thousands of poor peasants, particularly in districts like Dinajpur, Medinipur, 24 Parganas, and Jalpaiguri.

The movement was organized and led by the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS), the peasant wing of the Communist Party of India (CPI). Unlike earlier sporadic revolts, the Tebhaga movement was well-structured, with local committees formed to seize grain, guard fields, and prevent landlords from forcibly collecting harvests. It also promoted village-level collective action, with both men and women participating actively—women often played key roles as couriers, protestors, and organizers. The slogans of the movement, such as "*Langal jar, jomi tar*" (He who ploughs the land should own it), reflected a socialist vision of land redistribution.

Militancy and direct action were prominent features. Peasants harvested crops without the landlord's permission, set up parallel governance in some areas, and physically resisted eviction and police raids. Though the movement was brutally repressed by colonial police and loyalist landlords—leading to many deaths and arrests—it succeeded in creating a long-term awareness of peasant rights and land reform. The struggle also laid the groundwork for future agrarian reforms in West Bengal, especially after independence, when tenancy and land redistribution laws were introduced under leftist governments.

Functions of the Tebhaga Movement

The Tebhaga Movement, though primarily an agrarian struggle, functioned on multiple levels—economic, social, political, and organizational. Its foremost function was to challenge the exploitative landlord-tenant system in Bengal by mobilizing sharecroppers (bargadars) to demand a larger share (two-thirds or *tebhaga*) of the crop, as they were the ones primarily investing labor and effort. This economic resistance was organized through mass mobilization, coordinated grain collection, and the prevention of illegal seizures by landlords or their agents. Sharecroppers, with support from the All India Kisan Sabha and Communist Party of India, formed local committees or sangram samitis in villages, which played a central role in implementing decisions democratically and organizing collective resistance.

Another key function of the Tebhaga Movement was political consciousness-building among rural peasants. It encouraged awareness of land rights, tenancy laws, and the unjust nature of colonial agrarian policies. It also empowered women and marginalized communities, as they were brought into the fold of organized activism—many women acted as protectors of the grain stocks, informants, and even agitators. The movement fostered unity among various castes and communities, focusing on economic solidarity instead of social division, which was revolutionary in a rural context.

The movement also served the function of testing and strengthening peasant leadership, with many emerging local leaders gaining trust and recognition through their work in the field. It became a platform for developing grassroots democratic practices, such as open meetings, shared decision-making, and equal participation. Finally, the Tebhaga Movement functioned as a blueprint for future agrarian reform—its slogans, organizational models, and demands directly influenced post-independence land reform policies in West Bengal, particularly under Left Front governments after the 1970s.

Impacts of the Tebhaga Movement in India

The Tebhaga Movement of 1946–47 left a profound and lasting impact on the trajectory of agrarian politics and land reforms in India, especially in West Bengal. While the immediate demand of the sharecroppers—to retain two-thirds (*tebhaga*) of their produce—was not fully met during the British era, the movement successfully galvanized rural resistance and changed the relationship between peasants and landlords. For the first time in colonial Bengal, poor sharecroppers rose in large, organized numbers to demand their economic rights, directly challenging the jotedars (landholders) and the colonial agrarian structure.

One of the most significant impacts was the political mobilization of the rural poor, especially landless laborers and marginal farmers, who became a force in shaping the post-independence land reform agenda. The movement led to greater peasant consciousness, paving the way for future Communist and Leftist leadership in West Bengal. In fact, many leaders and cadres of the Communist Party of India (CPI) and later CPI(M) rose to prominence through their participation in the movement. This eventually influenced the Operation Barga program launched in the late 1970s by the Left Front government, which formally recognized the rights of sharecroppers to two-thirds of the produce—realizing, decades later, the original demands of the Tebhaga Movement.

Socially, the movement fostered a sense of unity among rural communities, often bridging caste and gender divides. Women played a vital role, marking the beginning of their visibility in agrarian activism in India. The participation of women in organizing grain stocks, picketing, and resisting police action became a model for inclusive peasant movements in the future. Politically, it served as a precursor to broader struggles against feudalism and inequality and inspired agrarian movements in regions like Telangana, Bihar, and Kerala.

Although suppressed by the colonial government through arrests, violence, and legal intimidation, the Tebhaga Movement remained a moral and ideological success, demonstrating the power of grassroots peasant action in a colonized

society. It also provided a critical case study for scholars and reformers, influencing tenancy legislation not only in Bengal but also informing debates on agrarian justice across India.

Legal Implications of the Tebhaga Movement

The Tebhaga Movement of 1946–47 had significant legal implications for India's agrarian laws and tenancy rights, particularly in West Bengal. Although the movement was brutally suppressed by the colonial administration before any immediate legal reforms could be enacted, it set the stage for post-independence legislation aimed at protecting the rights of sharecroppers (*bargadars*). The most direct legal outcome was the incorporation of the movement's key demand—the reduction of the landlord's share from one-half to one-third of the produce—into land reform policies enacted by the West Bengal government in later decades.

A major long-term legal impact came with the West Bengal Bargadars Act of 1950, which sought to regulate the relationship between landowners and sharecroppers. It granted legal recognition to the rights of bargadars, though enforcement remained weak due to political opposition and local power dynamics. The most definitive legal consequence of the Tebhaga Movement, however, was the Operation Barga initiative launched in 1978 by the Left Front government of West Bengal. This program led to the legal registration of sharecroppers, protecting them from eviction and guaranteeing them two-thirds of the produce if they provided inputs like seeds and fertilizers.

The Tebhaga Movement also exposed the gaps in colonial tenancy legislation, such as the Bengal Tenancy Act of 1885, which offered little protection to sharecroppers. The movement spurred debates on the inadequacy of colonial agrarian laws and the need for land redistribution and tenancy reform in independent India. It further influenced legal discourse in the First and Second Five-Year Plans, which emphasized land reform as essential to socio-economic development.

From a judicial standpoint, the movement marked a shift in how agrarian justice was conceived—not merely as a matter of contracts or land ownership, but as

a constitutional and social obligation to ensure equity. The principles behind Tebhaga helped shape later judicial interpretations of land rights under Articles 39(b) and 46 of the Indian Constitution, which direct the state to distribute material resources to serve the common good and promote the interests of economically weaker sections.

Let Sum Up:

The Tebhaga Movement (1946–47) was an agrarian uprising in Bengal led by sharecroppers (bargadars) demanding that they retain two-thirds (tebhaga) of the harvest, rather than the traditional half given to landlords (jotedars). It was supported by the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS), the Communist Party's peasant wing, and gained widespread support in areas like Dinajpur, 24 Parganas, and Midnapore. The movement involved direct resistance against landlords and colonial police, with peasants forming village committees to seize grain and resist eviction. Though brutally suppressed by the British, it mobilized rural peasants and laid the foundation for future land reforms.

The movement's key impacts included the political mobilization of peasants, empowerment of marginalized groups (especially women), and a shift in agrarian politics. It influenced post-independence land reforms in West Bengal, particularly through the West Bengal Bargadars Act (1950) and Operation Barga (1978), which legally recognized the rights of sharecroppers to two-thirds of the produce. The Tebhaga Movement highlighted the failures of colonial tenancy laws and contributed to the development of a more equitable land reform policy, shaping the future of agrarian justice in India.

Check your Progress:

1. What was the primary demand of the Tebhaga Movement?
2. What was the role of the All-India Kisan Sabha in the Tebhaga Movement?
3. How did the Tebhaga Movement influence land reforms in West Bengal?

NON-BRAHMIN MOVEMENT

The Non-Brahmin Movement was a powerful socio-political reform movement that emerged in South India during the early 20th century, particularly in the Madras Presidency, as a response to the dominance of Brahmins in education, administration, and political life. At the time, Brahmins, who formed a small minority of the population, held a disproportionate share of government jobs, university positions, and legislative roles, due largely to their early access to English education and close alignment with colonial administrators. This imbalance created growing resentment among the non-Brahmin castes, who began organizing themselves to demand equal opportunities and representation in governance. The movement was fundamentally aimed at dismantling caste hierarchies, promoting social justice, and ensuring the upliftment of socially and educationally backward communities.

The movement found its organizational expression in the formation of the Justice Party in 1916, led by pioneers such as Dr. T.M. Nair, P. Theagaraya Chetty, and later by E.V. Ramasamy Periyar, who would go on to found the Self-Respect Movement. The Justice Party advocated for reservation in education and employment, a secular government, and social reform laws, marking the beginning of affirmative action in India. The Non-Brahmin Movement also laid the foundation for later Dravidian political ideologies that emphasized regional identity, linguistic pride, and anti-caste politics.

Though initially confined to South India, the ideas of the Non-Brahmin Movement influenced broader anti-caste and backward class mobilizations across India. It was a key moment in the formation of modern Indian democracy, as it challenged the entrenched structures of Brahminical social dominance and pushed for equitable distribution of power and representation for marginalized communities.

Features of the Non-Brahmin Movement

The Non-Brahmin Movement was marked by several distinctive features that set it apart as a pioneering force in Indian social reform and identity politics, especially in South India during British colonial rule. One of its core features was its emphasis on anti-caste and anti-Brahmin hegemony, particularly in public administration, education, and politics. While not anti-Brahmin in a communal sense, the movement challenged the monopolization of power and privilege by Brahmins, who despite being a small fraction of the population, held key positions in colonial bureaucracy and academic institutions.

Another defining feature was the demand for proportional representation, which evolved into the concept of reservations for non-Brahmin castes in education and government jobs. This was among the first organized efforts in India to institutionalize affirmative action based on caste-based social disadvantage, paving the way for modern reservation policies. The movement was also characterized by its political institutionalization through the Justice Party, which functioned as the political wing of non-Brahmin consciousness, contesting elections and influencing policy within the Madras Presidency from the 1920s onward.

Culturally, the movement supported rationalism, secularism, and social reform. Leaders like Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, who later became the face of the Self-Respect Movement, promoted inter-caste marriages, women's rights, and the rejection of orthodox rituals. This showed the movement's deep commitment to social equality, not just political representation. Additionally, the movement's emphasis on regional identity and language pride, especially in Tamil Nadu, reflected its resistance to both North Indian dominance and Sanskritized traditions. It promoted Tamil language and Dravidian cultural heritage, which would later evolve into full-fledged Dravidian nationalism.

Finally, the movement's broad base—comprising various non-Brahmin castes, especially middle and backward castes like Vellalars, Chettiars, and Nadars—demonstrated the possibility of inter-caste unity among oppressed social groups. It provided a template for identity-based mobilization, making it a precursor to later backward class and Dalit movements across India.

Functions of the Non-Brahmin Movement

The Non-Brahmin Movement served multiple crucial socio-political and cultural functions in colonial South India, particularly within the Madras Presidency. At its core, the movement functioned as a collective assertion of social and political rights by the marginalized non-Brahmin communities, who had long been excluded from spheres of power and privilege. One of its primary functions was to advocate for proportional representation in government services, education, and political institutions. This was seen as essential to rectify the disproportionate dominance of Brahmins, who despite their minority status, held a majority of elite posts due to their early access to English education and proximity to British administrators.

To achieve its goals, the movement institutionalized its presence through the formation of the Justice Party in 1916, which became its political wing. This party contested elections, introduced legislation, and influenced policy, functioning as a formal channel through which non-Brahmin voices entered colonial governance structures. One of the landmark contributions of the Justice Party-led government was the introduction of the first communal Government Order (G.O. No. 613, 1921), which legally implemented reservations in government jobs for non-Brahmin communities — a pioneering move in Indian affirmative action history.

The movement also functioned as a platform for social reform. It encouraged rational thinking, opposition to caste hierarchies, and the promotion of secular values. Under the ideological influence of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy, who joined the movement in the 1920s, it began to function more radically — supporting inter-caste marriages, gender equality, atheism, and the abolition of religious orthodoxy. These reforms not only challenged Brahminical dominance but also transformed the cultural fabric of Tamil society.

Another major function of the Non-Brahmin Movement was to revive and promote regional and linguistic identity, particularly Tamil pride. By encouraging the use of Tamil in administration and education, and resisting the imposition of Sanskrit

and Hindi, the movement laid the foundation for Dravidian nationalism and language-based politics in Tamil Nadu.

Additionally, the movement functioned as an early example of caste-based unity, bringing together various backward castes, middle castes, and even some Dalit groups under a common banner of social upliftment. This broad coalition-making was essential to challenging centuries of caste-based oppression, and it inspired later social justice movements throughout India.

Impacts of the Non-Brahmin Movement in India

The Non-Brahmin Movement had a transformative and long-lasting impact on Indian society, politics, and governance, particularly in South India. One of its most significant contributions was the institutionalization of caste-based reservations, beginning with the Madras Presidency's Government Order No. 613 in 1921, which reserved a proportion of government jobs and educational seats for non-Brahmin communities. This policy was a precursor to India's modern affirmative action system and demonstrated a radical shift from merit-based exclusion to social justice-based inclusion.

Another major impact was the reconfiguration of political power. Through the Justice Party, the movement successfully challenged Brahminical dominance in the colonial administration. By securing electoral victories and governing the Madras Presidency for over a decade, the Justice Party established a precedent for lower caste participation in governance, thus altering the caste-based power structure in Indian politics. This directly influenced the formation of Dravidian political movements, such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK), which would go on to dominate Tamil Nadu politics and champion secularism, social justice, and regional identity.

Culturally, the Non-Brahmin Movement catalyzed a wave of social reform. It opposed caste oppression, promoted rationalism, women's rights, and anti-superstition ideologies, especially under the leadership of Periyar E.V. Ramasamy. The movement fostered self-respect among the oppressed classes and encouraged

inter-caste marriages, thereby attacking the core structures of varna-based hierarchy. These reforms had enduring effects on Tamil society, where caste-based rituals and priesthood gradually lost their monopoly.

The movement also had a profound impact on regional identity formation. It celebrated Tamil language, literature, and Dravidian heritage, resisting the imposition of Sanskrit and Hindi. This led to the rise of Tamil nationalism and strengthened the regional pride of non-Brahmin communities. Furthermore, it inspired similar movements in other parts of India, like Mandal politics in North India, which later gained momentum during the 1980s and 1990s.

Importantly, the Non-Brahmin Movement laid the groundwork for caste consciousness and identity-based mobilization in modern India. It helped weaken the cultural dominance of upper-caste norms and provided a voice to millions who had been excluded from mainstream politics and public life. Its legacy continues today through reservation policies, social justice discourse, and the continued relevance of regional and caste-based political parties.

Legal Implications of the Non-Brahmin Movement

The Non-Brahmin Movement had several far-reaching legal implications, most notably in laying the foundation for caste-based affirmative action and social justice policies within the Indian legal and administrative framework. One of the earliest and most groundbreaking legal results of the movement was the issuance of Government Order (G.O.) No. 613 in 1921 by the Justice Party-led government of the Madras Presidency. This government order legally mandated reservations in public employment for non-Brahmin castes, making it the first formal legal recognition of caste-based reservations in India. It set a precedent for positive discrimination, aiming to uplift socially and educationally backward communities by ensuring representation in government services.

This action sparked a legal and constitutional dialogue around equality vs. equity, which would resurface decades later during the drafting of the Indian Constitution. The idea of protective discrimination, introduced by the Non-Brahmin

Movement, was a precursor to the constitutional provisions for reservations found in Articles 15(4) and 16(4) of the Indian Constitution. These articles empower the state to make special provisions for the advancement of socially and educationally backward classes, Scheduled Castes, and Scheduled Tribes — principles that were inspired by early legal innovations in the Madras Presidency.

Furthermore, the movement influenced the Government of India Act of 1935, which introduced reserved seats for minorities and backward classes in legislative councils. Although broader in scope, this too reflected the pressure created by regional social justice movements like the Non-Brahmin Movement. It also compelled the British colonial government to recognize that universal application of “merit” was inherently discriminatory in a caste-based society.

In the post-independence period, the legacy of the Non-Brahmin Movement played a key role in shaping reservation policies and legal commissions. The Kalelkar Commission (1953) and later the Mandal Commission (1980) built upon the framework laid by this movement. The Mandal verdict (Indra Sawhney v. Union of India, 1992), where the Supreme Court upheld 27% reservation for OBCs, explicitly referenced the historical struggle for backward class representation — a lineage that traces back to the Non-Brahmin mobilizations.

Lastly, the movement helped de-legitimize the legal and religious authority of caste orthodoxy, influencing later Hindu Code Bills, anti-untouchability laws, and temple entry legislations, which sought to challenge Brahminical social structures that had legal sanction under customary Hindu law.

Let Sum Up:

The Non-Brahmin Movement emerged in early 20th century South India, especially in the Madras Presidency, as a response to the overrepresentation of Brahmins in education, administration, and politics. It aimed to ensure equal opportunities for non-Brahmin communities by dismantling caste hierarchies and promoting social justice. The formation of the Justice Party in 1916 marked the

political beginning of the movement, demanding proportional representation, secular governance, and affirmative action. Leaders like T.M. Nair, P. Theagaraya Chetty, and E.V. Ramasamy Periyar led campaigns against Brahmin dominance and for rationalist and egalitarian values.

The movement's functions included securing caste-based reservations, promoting rationalism, and advancing Tamil linguistic and regional pride. Its impacts were profound: it introduced India's first reservation laws (G.O. No. 613, 1921), reshaped South Indian politics, empowered backward communities, and laid the groundwork for Dravidian parties like the DMK. The legal implications of the movement influenced the Indian Constitution's Articles 15(4) and 16(4), and were reflected in later initiatives like the Mandal Commission. The movement also weakened caste-based legal norms and inspired reforms such as temple entry laws and anti-untouchability legislation.

Check your Progress:

1. What was the main goal of the Non-Brahmin Movement?
2. How did the Justice Party contribute to the Non-Brahmin Movement?
3. What were the legal implications of the Non-Brahmin Movement?

SELF RESPECT MOVEMENT

The Self-Respect Movement was a radical and transformative social reform movement initiated in the 1920s in Tamil Nadu by E.V. Ramasamy, popularly known as Periyar. Its primary aim was to dismantle caste hierarchy, eliminate Brahminical dominance, and promote the dignity, equality, and rational thinking of non-Brahmin and marginalized communities, especially the Dravidian population. The movement emerged as a natural extension of the Non-Brahmin Movement, but it went further by rejecting religious orthodoxy, gender inequality, and superstitions, and by encouraging self-respect, individual liberty, and critical thinking.

Founded in 1925, after Periyar's disillusionment with the Indian National Congress due to its reluctance to address caste discrimination and Brahminical dominance, the Self-Respect Movement called for social justice and the annihilation of caste. It advocated inter-caste marriages, women's rights, atheism, and the rejection of rituals and priestly authority. Its ideological base was built on rationalism and anti-caste philosophy, influenced in part by the ideas of Buddha, Iyothey Thass, and western humanism.

One of the most significant features of the movement was its campaign to break the monopoly of Brahmins in rituals and religious functions, arguing that no individual needed a Brahmin priest to conduct weddings, funerals, or naming ceremonies. This led to the promotion of Self-Respect marriages — legally recognized later — which were conducted without religious rites and emphasized equality and consent. The movement also fiercely opposed the imposition of Hindi in Tamil Nadu, thus giving rise to Tamil linguistic pride and laying the foundation for Dravidian political ideology.

In the broader national context, the Self-Respect Movement stands out as one of the most consistent and uncompromising anti-caste movements in Indian history. It eventually became the ideological backbone of political parties like the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and later the AIADMK, which transformed Tamil Nadu's political landscape.

Historical Context of the Self-Respect Movement

The Self-Respect Movement, founded by E.V. Ramasamy (Periyar) in 1925, emerged from a rich and complex historical backdrop in colonial South India, especially in the Madras Presidency, where caste-based discrimination and Brahminical dominance were deeply entrenched in the political, educational, and religious spheres.

In the early 20th century, Indian society was marked by extreme caste-based hierarchy. The Brahmins, who made up a small percentage of the population, held a disproportionate share of administrative jobs, education, and social influence,

especially under British rule. Non-Brahmins, who were numerically larger, faced systematic exclusion. The Non-Brahmin Movement, led by the Justice Party from around 1916, arose in response to this imbalance, advocating for reservations and better representation of non-Brahmins in government jobs and education. This set the stage for a deeper and more radical movement.

By the 1920s, Periyar, who had worked briefly with the Indian National Congress, became disillusioned with its lack of commitment to caste abolition and its domination by upper-caste leaders. After attending the Kashi Hindu Maha Sabha in 1925 and witnessing Brahminical orthodoxy in practice, he was deeply disturbed by the religious justifications for caste oppression. This led him to found the Self-Respect Movement, aimed at completely rejecting caste discrimination, religious rituals, and social inequality.

The movement was also inspired by global rationalist and humanist ideas, which Periyar encountered during his travels to Europe, especially in Soviet Russia, where he saw models of equality and secularism. His vision was not only to uplift the non-Brahmin population but to create a society based on self-respect, equality, atheism, and rational thought, particularly empowering women and Dalits, who were doubly oppressed.

The historical context also includes the rise of the Dravidian consciousness — a sense of separate cultural, linguistic, and racial identity from the Aryan (north Indian) Brahminical culture. This led to the idea of a “Dravidar Nadu” (Dravidian nation), which was advocated as a response to perceived north Indian cultural imperialism, especially during the anti-Hindi imposition agitations.

Thus, the Self-Respect Movement was a culmination of socio-political grievances, anti-caste ideology, and a desire to reclaim dignity and autonomy for the oppressed communities in Tamil Nadu, especially the non-Brahmins, Dalits, and women.

Features of the Self-Respect Movement

The Self-Respect Movement, initiated by Periyar E.V. Ramasamy in 1925, was marked by radical social reform aimed at eradicating caste hierarchy, promoting gender equality, and encouraging rational thinking in Tamil society. One of its defining features was its anti-Brahminical stance, which sought to break the monopoly of Brahmins in religious, educational, and administrative spheres. The movement was not just about political representation, but about social liberation, particularly for non-Brahmins, Dalits, and women.

A major feature was the emphasis on Self-Respect Marriages, which were conducted without priests or religious rituals. These marriages symbolized the rejection of caste-based restrictions and religious authority, and were later legalized in Tamil Nadu. Another strong feature was the movement's promotion of atheism and rationalism, encouraging individuals to question superstition, blind faith, and scriptures that upheld inequality.

The Self-Respect Movement was also notable for its feminist orientation. Periyar advocated for women's rights, including property rights, freedom of choice in marriage, and equal access to education. The movement saw women not as passive beneficiaries but as active participants in the fight for dignity and justice.

In essence, the movement was non-violent, educational, and ideological, using tools such as public speeches, magazines, theater, and pamphlets to spread its message. It laid the foundation for the rise of the Dravidian political ideology and parties like the DMK and AIADMK.

Functions of the Self-Respect Movement

The primary function of the Self-Respect Movement was to create a social environment where individuals from marginalized communities could live with dignity and autonomy, free from the oppressive structures of caste and patriarchy. This was done through awareness campaigns, public events, and social advocacy that directly challenged religious orthodoxy and caste privilege.

One of its significant functions was educational reform. The movement ran schools and encouraged the scientific education of both boys and girls, often emphasizing rational thought over religious instruction. Through the Self-Respect propaganda conferences and publications like *Kudi Arasu* (edited by Periyar), the movement disseminated anti-caste and rationalist ideas to the masses.

Another critical function was its reform of marriage and family systems. By promoting inter-caste and self-respect marriages, the movement attacked the cultural core of caste-based oppression. It also encouraged widow remarriage, condemned the devadasi system, and supported birth control, which was radical at the time.

The movement functioned as a mass mobilizer, bringing together like-minded people across Tamil Nadu under a shared identity of Dravidian pride. It also played a crucial role in the anti-Hindi agitation, linking language with self-respect and identity. These functions collectively shifted the focus of reform from elite discourse to grassroots empowerment.

Impacts of the Self-Respect Movement in India

The Self-Respect Movement, founded by Periyar E.V. Ramasamy in 1925, had deep and far-reaching effects on Indian society, particularly in Tamil Nadu. One of the most transformative impacts was the challenging and weakening of caste-based hierarchies, especially Brahminical dominance in public life, education, and religion. The movement gave voice to the non-Brahmin, Dalit, and backward communities, empowering them to demand social equality, political representation, and cultural dignity.

A major achievement was the legal recognition of Self-Respect Marriages. These marriages were performed without Brahmin priests or religious rituals and were later legalized in Tamil Nadu under the Special Marriages Act (Amendment) of 1968, giving formal support to a non-religious and caste-free union of individuals. This reflected the movement's success in bringing progressive social change into law.

The movement was also pivotal in promoting women's rights. Periyar's insistence on equal inheritance rights, education, birth control, and remarriage for widows helped break patriarchal norms and encouraged women's participation in the public sphere. This had a lasting effect on the status of women in Tamil society.

In politics, the Self-Respect Movement paved the ideological foundation for the Dravidian movement, which led to the rise of powerful political parties such as the Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) and later the AIADMK. These parties ruled Tamil Nadu for decades and implemented progressive policies like caste-based reservations, state-sponsored education, and language-based cultural pride.

Furthermore, the movement played a crucial role in the anti-Hindi agitations of the 1930s and 1960s, which led to the retention of Tamil as the official language in the state and the prevention of Hindi imposition. This protected regional identity and linguistic rights, and still resonates in Tamil Nadu's political culture.

Culturally, the movement redefined Tamil identity by reviving Dravidian pride, rejecting religious orthodoxy, and encouraging rationalist literature, theater, and debate. It created a more inclusive and secular social framework where individuals were valued based on equality rather than religious or caste backgrounds.

Legal Implications of the Self-Respect Movement

The Self-Respect Movement, initiated by Periyar E.V. Ramasamy in 1925, brought significant legal and constitutional changes in Indian society, particularly in Tamil Nadu, through its radical social reform agenda. The movement challenged entrenched caste hierarchies, gender inequality, and religious orthodoxy—not only through ideology and activism but by pushing for legal recognition and reforms that dismantled these structures.

One of the most notable legal outcomes was the recognition of Self-Respect Marriages. Traditionally, marriages were sanctioned by religious rituals and often officiated by Brahmin priests, reinforcing caste and patriarchal structures. The Self-Respect Movement introduced non-religious marriages, conducted without priests or Sanskrit mantras, based purely on mutual consent and equality. These were initially outside the law, but with political influence from Dravidian parties rooted in the movement, the Tamil Nadu legislature passed an amendment in 1967 to the Hindu Marriage Act, recognizing Self-Respect Marriages as legally valid—even when not conducted according to religious customs. Later, under the Special Marriage Act, these marriages gained broader legal acceptance across India.

Another major legal impact was in the area of caste-based reservations. The movement's ideological foundation directly influenced the Justice Party and later the DMK, which came to power in Tamil Nadu. These governments implemented and expanded reservation policies in education and employment for Backward Classes (BC), Most Backward Classes (MBC), and Scheduled Castes (SC). These policies, while rooted in earlier demands, were formalized in law and policy, setting a precedent for affirmative action across India.

The movement also called for gender equality and women's rights, pushing legal reform in property rights, education access, and reproductive rights. Periyar was one of the earliest Indian reformers to support birth control and widow remarriage, which contributed to later laws and welfare schemes for women in Tamil Nadu. Over time, these ideas influenced state-level policies promoting women's education, maternal healthcare, and employment opportunities.

In the linguistic domain, the Self-Respect Movement played a pivotal role in opposing the imposition of Hindi. The Anti-Hindi agitations of 1937 and 1965, led by movement supporters, resulted in no compulsory Hindi education in Tamil Nadu. Though not a direct legal statute of the movement itself, it influenced language policy through legislation and administrative orders, helping preserve Tamil as the medium of education and administration.

Let Sum Up:

The Self-Respect Movement, launched by E.V. Ramasamy (Periyar) in 1925 in Tamil Nadu, was a radical social reform movement that aimed to dismantle caste hierarchy, oppose Brahminical dominance, and promote rationalism, gender equality, and self-respect, especially among non-Brahmins and marginalized communities.

Historical Context:

- Emerged as a continuation of the Non-Brahmin Movement and the Justice Party's efforts.
- Periyar's disenchantment with the Indian National Congress and Brahmin orthodoxy led him to start the movement.
- Inspired by global rationalist ideas and Dravidian identity, rejecting North Indian/Aryan cultural impositions.

Key Features:

- Strong anti-caste and anti-Brahmin stance.
- Promoted Self-Respect Marriages without religious rituals or priests.
- Advocated atheism, rational thinking, women's rights, and inter-caste equality.
- Used education, public speeches, literature, and theater to spread awareness.

Functions:

- Challenged religious orthodoxy and caste privilege.
- Promoted scientific education, birth control, widow remarriage, and inter-caste unions.
- Mobilized people under Dravidian pride and opposed Hindi imposition.

Impacts:

- Legally recognized Self-Respect Marriages (Hindu Marriage Act Amendment, 1967).
- Strengthened women's rights and Dalit empowerment.
- Led to the rise of Dravidian political parties like DMK and AIADMK.
- Influenced reservation policies, language rights, and social justice laws in Tamil Nadu.
- Created a secular, inclusive identity rooted in Tamil and Dravidian culture.

Legal Contributions:

- Validated non-religious marriages under law.
- Contributed to legal reforms for reservations, women's rights, and language policies.

Check Your Progress:

1. What were the main objectives of the Self-Respect Movement?
2. What were Self-Respect Marriages, and why were they significant?
3. How did the Self-Respect Movement influence politics and society in Tamil Nadu?

Unit Summary:

The Empowerment Movements in India emerged as responses to social injustice, economic exploitation, caste oppression, and political marginalization. These movements aimed to uplift oppressed communities such as Tribals, Dalits, Peasants, and Non-Brahmins, promoting equality, dignity, and self-respect.

1. Tribal Movements**a. The Santhal Insurrection (1855-56):**

Led by Sidhu and Kanhu, the Santhal rebellion was against the oppressive British colonial rule, moneylenders, and zamindars. It was one of the earliest tribal uprisings that sought to protect tribal land, culture, and autonomy.

b. The Bodo Movement (1980s onwards):

This movement was led by the Bodo community in Assam, demanding a separate state called Bodoland. It was driven by issues of ethnic identity, language, underdevelopment, and political marginalization.

2. Dalit Movements**a. Dalit Sangharsh Samiti (DSS):**

Founded in Karnataka in the 1970s, this was a radical Dalit rights group fighting

against caste discrimination, untouchability, and landlessness. It used protests and education to mobilize Dalits for their rights.

b. Mahar Dalit Movement:

Focused on the most oppressed within the Dalits in Bihar, especially the Maha-Dalits, this movement sought educational, economic, and social upliftment, backed by special government welfare schemes.

3. Peasant Movements

a. Bardoli Movement (1928):

Led by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, this was a non-violent protest against increased land revenue in Gujarat. The unity and resistance of peasants made the British roll back the tax hike.

b. Tebhaga Movement (1946-47):

A powerful movement in Bengal, where sharecroppers (bargadars) demanded two-thirds of the produce instead of one-half. It was led by Kisan Sabha and marked a strong peasant assertion for land rights.

4. Non-Brahmin Movement

Initiated in Madras Presidency in the early 1900s, the movement opposed Brahmin dominance in administration and education. The Justice Party was its political wing, promoting reservations, education, and opportunities for non-Brahmins, thus laying the base for later Dravidian movements.

5. Self-Respect Movement

Founded by E.V. Ramasamy (Periyar) in 1925, this movement aimed to abolish caste, end Brahminical control, promote gender equality, rationalism, and atheism. It introduced Self-Respect Marriages and inspired the Dravidian political ideology seen in parties like DMK and AIADMK.

These empowerment movements reflect India's long journey toward social justice, equality, and dignity for the marginalized. Whether through reform, resistance, or political participation, these movements redefined the relationship between people and power.

Glossary:

- **Santhal Insurrection:** A tribal uprising (1855–56) led by Sidhu and Kanhu against British rule, zamindars, and moneylenders who exploited the Santhal community in present-day Jharkhand.
- **Bodo Movement:** A movement by the Bodo tribe in Assam demanding a separate state (Bodoland) to protect their language, culture, and political rights.
- **Dalit Sangharsh Samiti (DSS):** A radical Dalit organization started in Karnataka (1970s) that aimed to fight caste discrimination, promote education, and demand land rights for Dalits.
- **Mahar Dalit Movement:** A movement in Bihar focused on the most marginalized Dalits called Maha Dalits, seeking special welfare, education, and social upliftment.
- **Bardoli Movement:** A non-violent tax resistance movement in Gujarat (1928) led by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel against unjust land revenue hike imposed by the British.
- **Tebhaga Movement:** A peasant uprising (1946–47) in Bengal where sharecroppers demanded two-thirds of the harvest instead of half. Led by the All India Kisan Sabha.
- **Non-Brahmin Movement:** A social and political movement in the Madras Presidency that challenged Brahmin domination and pushed for reservation, education, and government jobs for non-Brahmin communities. Linked to the Justice Party.

- **Self-Respect Movement:** Founded by Periyar E.V. Ramasamy in 1925, it promoted rationalism, gender equality, atheism, and anti-caste values. It encouraged Self-Respect Marriages and laid the foundation for Dravidian politics.
- **Self-Respect Marriages:** Marriages conducted without religious rituals or priests, focusing on equality, mutual consent, and rejection of caste.

Self- Assessment Questions:

1. What were the main causes behind the Santhal Insurrection of 1855?
2. Mention any two demands of the Bodo Movement.
3. Who were the founders of the Dalit Sangharsh Samiti, and what was its main goal?
4. Why is the Mahar Dalit Movement significant in Bihar's social history?
5. What role did Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel play in the Bardoli Satyagraha?
6. What was the main demand of the Tebhaga Movement?
7. How did the Non-Brahmin Movement challenge caste-based dominance in South India?
8. What were the core principles of the Self-Respect Movement started by Periyar?
9. Compare and contrast the Bardoli Movement and the Tebhaga Movement in terms of their causes, leadership, and outcomes.
10. Explain how the Self-Respect Movement influenced later political developments in Tamil Nadu.
11. Discuss the significance of Dalit Movements like DSS and the Mahar Dalit Movement in challenging caste oppression.

12. Examine the historical background and impact of the Santhal Insurrection on tribal rights.

Activities/ Exercise/Case Studies:

Compare and Contrast Table

Objective: Deepen understanding of similarities and differences.

Instructions:

Create a table like this:

Movement	Region	Leader(s)	Main Issues	Methods	Outcomes
Santhal Insurrection	Jharkhand	Sidhu, Kanhu	Exploitation by moneylenders, land alienation	Armed rebellion	British suppression
Self-Respect Movement	Tamil Nadu	Periyar	Caste discrimination, gender inequality	Rationalism, speeches, marriage reform	Legal change, DMK rise

(You can fill in the rest with other movements.)

Case Studies:

Case Study 1: Bardoli Satyagraha

Questions:

- What made Bardoli Satyagraha a turning point in peasant movements?
- How did women contribute to this struggle?
- How did it influence future Gandhian movements?

Case Study 2: Self-Respect Marriages

Questions:

- How did these marriages challenge caste and religious norms?
- What legal and social challenges did they face?
- How do they reflect Periyar's ideology?

Case Study 3: Bodo Movement and Identity Politics

Questions:

- What were the Bodos demanding and why?
- How did the movement shift from violence to negotiation?
- What does it reveal about ethnic identity and the Indian state?

Answers for check your Progress:

1. Who were some early leaders of the Empowerment Movement in India, and what were their key contributions?

Jyotirao Phule and Savitribai Phule worked on caste and gender issues in the 19th century. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was pivotal in framing the Constitution and advocating for Dalit rights.

2 What are two key legal outcomes of tribal movements in India?

The Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) and the Forest Rights Act, 2006 are two major legislative wins ensuring tribal self-governance and forest rights.

3.Name two major post-independence tribal movements and their causes.

The Narmada Bachao Andolan (against dam-induced displacement) and the Dongria Kondh movement (against mining in Odisha) were both responses to development projects threatening tribal lands.

4. What triggered the Santhal Insurrection, and who were its main leaders?

The rebellion was triggered by British colonial exploitation, zamindari oppression, and moneylender abuse. The main leaders were Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu, along with Chand and Bhairav.

5. What was unique about the organization and participation in the Santhal rebellion?

It involved mass participation, including women, and was led by tribal leaders with a strong sense of unity, cultural identity, and spiritual motivation.

6. What legal act was passed to protect Santhal land rights after the rebellion?

The Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act (1876) prohibited land transfers to non-tribals and recognized tribal customs and self-governance.

7. How did the Santhal rebellion influence modern tribal rights in India?

It laid the foundation for recognizing tribal autonomy, inspiring laws like PESA (1996) and the Forest Rights Act (2006) that protect tribal land and governance systems.

8. What were the key reasons behind the Bodo Movement?

The Bodo Movement arose due to issues of cultural marginalization, political neglect, underdevelopment, and fear of losing identity after Indian independence.

9. Who played a crucial role in the political phase of the Bodo Movement and what slogan was popularized?

Upendranath Brahma led ABSU in the political phase; the slogan “Divide Assam 50-50” was used to demand Bodoland.

10. What was the major legal achievement of the 2003 Bodo Accord?

It led to the formation of the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) under the Sixth Schedule, giving legislative and executive autonomy to Bodo areas.

11. How did the 2020 Bodo Accord impact the region and its people?

It ended militancy, improved governance in BTC, provided developmental funds, protected Bodo identity, and rehabilitated ex-militants.

12. What is the core aim of the Dalit Movement in India?

To fight caste-based oppression and demand equal rights, dignity, and social inclusion for Dalits.

13. Name two major contributions of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to the Dalit Movement.

He led the fight for temple entry and political representation, and drafted the Indian Constitution which abolished untouchability.

14. What was the significance of the Mahad Satyagraha (1927)?

It was a protest led by Ambedkar where Dalits asserted their right to access public water, symbolizing equality and resistance to caste barriers.

15. What was a unique feature of the Dalit Sangharsh Samiti in Karnataka?

It blended grassroots activism with cultural assertion, especially through Dalit poetry and theatre in Kannada.

16. What legal reforms were influenced by the Mahar Dalit Movement?

Abolition of untouchability (Article 17), reservation policies, Protection of Civil Rights Act (1955), and the SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act (1989).

17.What was the primary aim of peasant movements in India?

The primary aim of peasant movements in India was to resist exploitation, land alienation, unjust taxation, and feudal landlordism. These movements sought economic justice, land ownership, dignity, and autonomy for farmers and agricultural laborers.

18. How did the Bardoli Movement of 1928 impact the Indian freedom struggle?

The Bardoli Movement, led by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, successfully opposed a 22% land revenue hike imposed by the British. The movement's success not only reversed the tax hike but also raised rural political consciousness, inspired similar protests, and elevated Patel as a national leader. It became a model for Gandhian non-violent resistance and strengthened the Indian freedom struggle.

19.What were the major factors that led to the emergence of peasant movements during British rule?

Peasant movements during British rule were triggered by the colonial economic policies, including the exploitative land revenue systems like Zamindari, Ryotwari, and Mahalwari. These policies increased peasant burdens, leading to large-scale famines, indebtedness, and land alienation. Movements such as the Indigo Revolt and Champaran Satyagraha were direct responses to these injustices.

20.What were the impacts of the Bardoli Movement on India's political landscape?

The Bardoli Movement significantly impacted India's political landscape by enhancing the political mobilization of rural populations. It strengthened the Indian National Congress and validated the use of Gandhian methods like non-violent resistance. The movement also led to the rise of Vallabhbhai Patel as a prominent leader, earning him the title "Sardar."

21.How did the legal implications of the Bardoli Satyagraha contribute to its success?

The legal implications of the Bardoli Satyagraha were critical to its success. The British government's 22% land revenue hike was deemed unjust, even by their own

legal standards. The movement forced the colonial government to appoint the Broomfield Commission, which recommended the reversal of the tax hike. This demonstrated how non-violent civil disobedience could challenge and change colonial laws.

22.What was the primary demand of the Tebhaga Movement?

The primary demand of the Tebhaga Movement was that sharecroppers (bargadars) should retain two-thirds (tebhaga) of the produce they cultivated, instead of giving half to landlords (jotedars). This demand aimed to reduce the exploitative landlord-tenant system that prevailed in Bengal under British rule.

23.What was the role of the All India Kisan Sabha in the Tebhaga Movement?

The All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS), the peasant front of the Communist Party of India (CPI), played a crucial role in organizing and leading the Tebhaga Movement. It mobilized peasants, formed local committees, and supported the direct action against landlords and colonial authorities, fostering political awareness among rural communities.

24.How did the Tebhaga Movement influence land reforms in West Bengal?

The Tebhaga Movement laid the groundwork for post-independence land reforms in West Bengal, particularly through initiatives like the West Bengal Bargadars Act (1950) and Operation Barga (1978). These reforms recognized the rights of sharecroppers to retain two-thirds of the produce, addressing the original demands of the movement and significantly transforming the agrarian landscape in the state.

25. What was the main goal of the Non-Brahmin Movement?

The main goal was to challenge Brahminical dominance in administration, education, and politics, and to ensure proportional representation and social justice for non-Brahmin communities through reforms and reservations.

26.How did the Justice Party contribute to the Non-Brahmin Movement?

The Justice Party acted as the political arm of the movement, introducing key

reforms like G.O. No. 613 (1921), which implemented caste-based reservations — a major step in institutionalizing affirmative action in India.

27. What were the legal implications of the Non-Brahmin Movement?

It laid the foundation for affirmative action policies in India, influencing Articles 15(4) and 16(4) of the Constitution, and played a role in later legal developments like the Mandal Commission and the Indra Sawhney case (1992), which upheld OBC reservations.

28. What were the main objectives of the Self-Respect Movement?

The main objectives of the Self-Respect Movement were to abolish the caste system, end Brahminical dominance, promote rational thinking and atheism, ensure gender equality, and uphold the dignity and self-respect of non-Brahmin and marginalized communities, especially in Tamil Nadu.

29. What were Self-Respect Marriages, and why were they significant?

Self-Respect Marriages were non-religious ceremonies conducted without priests or religious rituals, based purely on mutual consent and equality. They symbolized the rejection of caste and religious orthodoxy. These marriages were later legalized in Tamil Nadu in 1967, marking a major social and legal reform.

30. How did the Self-Respect Movement influence politics and society in Tamil Nadu?

The movement laid the foundation for Dravidian political parties like the DMK and AIADMK, which implemented social justice policies, caste-based reservations, and promoted Tamil language and identity. It also empowered Dalits and women, transforming Tamil society into a more inclusive and progressive space.

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Suggested Readings

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- **Amartya Sen** – *Development as Freedom* (Oxford University Press): Insight into empowerment from a capabilities perspective.
- **Walter Fernandes** – *Tribal Struggles for Land and Identity in Northeast India*: Important for Bodo and other northeast movements.
- **Christoph von Fürer-Haimendorf** – *Tribes of India: The Struggle for Survival* (Oxford University Press): Rich ethnographic detail.

- **Anand Teltumbde** – *Dalits: Past, Present and Future* (Routledge India, 2016): Analytical approach to contemporary Dalit issues.
- **Rohith Vemula's Writings and Speeches**: For current relevance in the Dalit discourse.
- **Rao, Anupama (ed.)** – *Gender & Caste: Issues in Contemporary Indian Feminism* (Kali for Women, 2003): Brings intersectional focus.
- **Ranajit Guha** – *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (Duke University Press): Theoretical lens on peasant resistance.
- **Eric Hobsbawm** – *Bandits* (Penguin): While not India-specific, offers insights into rural rebellion and resistance.
- **A.R. Venkatachalapathy** – *In Those Days There Was No Coffee: Writings in Cultural History* (Yoda Press): Cultural context of Self-Respect Movement.
- **G. Aloysius** – *Nationalism Without a Nation in India* (Oxford University Press): Focus on non-Brahmin assertions and subaltern nationalism.
- **T.K. Oommen** – *Protest and Change: Studies in Social Movements* (Sage Publications): Broad sociological understanding.
- **M.S.A. Rao (ed.)** – *Social Movements in India* (Vol I & II, Manohar): Comprehensive case-based coverage.
- **Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen** – *An Uncertain Glory: India and its Contradictions* (Penguin): Policy implications of inequality and exclusion.

UNIT-V- NEW SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Unit Objectives

The course will critically assess the functions of women's movements on women empowerment Sections

Introduction

New Social Movements (NSMs) refer to a wave of collective actions that emerged predominantly after the 1960s in both Western and non-Western societies, including India. Unlike traditional movements, which primarily focused on class struggle and economic redistribution (such as workers' or peasant movements), NSMs are concerned with identity, human rights, and cultural issues. These movements challenge forms of oppression not necessarily rooted in economic class, but in caste, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, environment, and civil liberties.

In India, the rise of NSMs has marked a significant shift in the way social mobilizations are organized and perceived. Movements for environmental justice (like the Chipko and Narmada Bachao Andolan), women's rights, Dalit rights, Adivasi (tribal) autonomy, LGBTQ+ rights, and human rights activism are key examples of NSMs. These movements often emphasize participatory democracy, grassroots organizing, and non-hierarchical leadership, in contrast to the top-down structure of earlier political movements.

NSMs are also characterized by their use of symbolic action, media outreach, and transnational solidarity. They frequently collaborate with non-governmental organizations (NGOs), civil society groups, and international institutions, making them dynamic agents of both local and global social change. Importantly, NSMs seek to transform societal values and consciousness rather than simply demand material concessions.

Historical Contexts of New Social Movements

The emergence of New Social Movements (NSMs) is deeply rooted in the social, political, and cultural transformations that began in the mid-20th century,

particularly after World War II. In the West, the 1960s marked a turning point, as traditional class-based politics gave way to identity-driven and issue-based activism. This period witnessed student movements, civil rights struggles, feminist uprisings, anti-war protests, and environmental consciousness, especially in the U.S. and Europe. These movements emphasized non-material concerns such as human rights, ecological sustainability, gender justice, cultural autonomy, and personal freedom—moving beyond the industrial-era focus on economic inequality alone.

The term “New Social Movements” was introduced by theorists like Alain Touraine, Jürgen Habermas, and Ronald Inglehart, who argued that these movements were rooted in post-industrial societies, shaped by changing values like self-expression, participatory democracy, and quality of life.

In India, the historical context is significantly different but shares some overlapping features. The post-independence era saw rapid industrialization and state-led development, which often neglected marginalized groups—such as tribals, Dalits, women, and farmers. While India inherited a rich tradition of mass mobilization from the freedom struggle, by the 1970s and 1980s, many social groups began organizing outside the frameworks of mainstream political parties, forming autonomous movements that responded to specific grievances. This period saw the rise of movements like:

- Chipko Movement (1973) – against deforestation in the Himalayas
- Dalit Panthers (1972) – fighting caste-based oppression
- Narmada Bachao Andolan (1985) – opposing displacement by mega-dam projects
- Women’s Movement (post-1970s) – demanding gender equality and legal rights
- Civil liberties and human rights movements, especially after the Emergency (1975–1977)

These NSMs in India reflected a deep dissatisfaction with the state's failure to deliver justice, and were influenced by both local experiences of oppression and global discourses of rights and dignity. They marked a shift from hierarchical, centralized

mobilizations to grassroots, democratic, and participatory movements, often involving NGOs, students, academics, and affected communities.

Thus, the historical context of NSMs globally stems from a reaction to the limitations of industrial capitalism and authoritarian governance, while in India, they arose from the failures of postcolonial state policies to address inequality, environmental degradation, and identity-based discrimination.

Impacts of New Social Movements in India

New Social Movements (NSMs) have significantly reshaped Indian society, politics, and development policy by bringing marginalized voices to the forefront and challenging dominant structures of power. Unlike traditional class-based movements, NSMs in India—such as the Chipko Movement, Narmada Bachao Andolan, Dalit Panthers, women's rights movements, and tribal rights campaigns—focused on identity, dignity, ecology, gender justice, and participatory democracy. One of their primary impacts has been the expansion of the democratic space in India. These movements empowered communities like Dalits, Adivasis, women, farmers, and the urban poor to articulate their grievances and demand social justice outside of electoral politics.

Environmental movements such as the Chipko Movement (1973) and Narmada Bachao Andolan (1985) led to national awareness and the formulation of environmental protection laws and policies, such as the Forest Rights Act (2006) and stricter Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) norms. The women's movement in India contributed to important legal reforms, including laws against domestic violence (Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005), dowry prohibition, and sexual harassment in the workplace (Vishaka Guidelines, 1997). These legal advances were often the result of consistent pressure from women's groups and human rights activists.

Similarly, Dalit movements—particularly those influenced by Ambedkarite ideology and the Dalit Panthers—intensified debates around caste-based discrimination, leading to stronger enforcement of reservation policies and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989.

Movements for tribal rights and land reforms also compelled the state to recognize the customary rights of indigenous people over forest lands.

On a broader level, NSMs promoted the idea of civil society as an active player in governance, pushing for transparency, accountability, and people-centered development. They helped institutionalize Public Interest Litigation (PIL) as a tool for justice and encouraged greater public participation in development debates. However, some critics argue that these movements also faced limitations in scalability and long-term political influence, as many remained issue-specific and fragmented.

Despite these challenges, NSMs have undeniably shaped India's social consciousness, legal frameworks, and public policy, moving the country closer to a more inclusive democracy that listens to voices from below.

Let Sum Up:

New Social Movements (NSMs) emerged mainly after the 1960s, focusing on identity, rights, and cultural issues rather than just economic class. These movements challenged oppression based on caste, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, environment, and civil liberties.

In India, NSMs marked a shift from centralized, class-based movements to grassroots, democratic activism. Examples include:

- Chipko Movement (1973) – environmental protection
- Dalit Panthers (1972) – anti-caste struggle
- Narmada Bachao Andolan (1985) – displacement and development concerns
- Women's movements – gender rights and legal reforms
- Civil liberties movements – post-Emergency rights activism

They emphasized participatory democracy, symbolic action, media engagement, and transnational solidarity. The historical context in India reflects a response to the failures of postcolonial development and social inequality.

Impacts of NSMs in India

- Empowered marginalized groups like Dalits, Adivasis, women, and the urban poor
- Influenced major laws and policies:

- Forest Rights Act (2006)
- Domestic Violence Act (2005)
- Vishaka Guidelines (1997)
- SC/ST Prevention of Atrocities Act (1989)
- Encouraged civil society participation and Public Interest Litigation (PIL)
- Promoted inclusive democracy, transparency, and accountability in governance

Despite some limitations—such as being issue-specific and fragmented—NSMs have played a vital role in reshaping Indian democracy and public policy.

Check your Progress:

1. What distinguishes New Social Movements (NSMs) from traditional social movements?
2. Mention any three major New Social Movements in India and their focus areas.
3. What are the key impacts of NSMs on Indian society and governance?

WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS

Introduction to Women's Movement in India

The Women's Movement in India refers to a broad-based and diverse set of social and political campaigns aimed at addressing gender-based inequalities and advocating for women's rights, dignity, and empowerment. These movements emerged in response to deep-rooted patriarchal structures and socio-cultural practices that marginalized women across economic, caste, class, and religious divisions. The history of women's mobilization in India dates back to the 19th century social reform movements, where reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and Jyotirao Phule fought against inhumane practices such as sati, child marriage, and denial of education to women. However, the modern women's movement gained momentum during the freedom struggle, when women participated actively in mass movements led by Mahatma Gandhi and others, symbolizing both political and social emancipation.

After independence, the movement took on a new, autonomous character in the 1970s, especially following the publication of the landmark report "Towards Equality" (1974) by the Committee on the Status of Women in India. This marked a turning point, revealing the stark realities of women's declining socio-economic status despite constitutional promises of equality. Since then, the women's movement has evolved to address issues like domestic violence, dowry deaths, sexual harassment, political representation, reproductive rights, and intersectional discrimination. It has played a key role in shaping progressive legislation, influencing policy, and transforming public discourse around gender justice.

The women's movement in India is not monolithic; it comprises urban feminist groups, rural collectives, Dalit women's organizations, tribal women's struggles, Muslim women's rights campaigns, and LGBTQ+ inclusive movements, making it one of the most vibrant and dynamic movements globally. While it has achieved notable legal and social gains, it continues to adapt to new challenges posed by neoliberalism, communalism, and digital misogyny, reinforcing its relevance in India's evolving socio-political landscape.

Women's Movements in India

The women's movement in India has been a powerful force for social change, advocating for gender justice, legal reforms, economic rights, and empowerment of women across class, caste, and community lines. Its history can be traced back to the 19th century social reform era, when reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and Jyotirao Phule campaigned against sati, child marriage, and for widow remarriage and women's education. However, the movement evolved significantly post-independence, becoming more organized, autonomous, and assertive, especially after the 1970s.

In the post-1975 period, following the release of the Committee on the Status of Women in India (CSWI) Report titled "*Towards Equality*", the second phase of the women's movement gained momentum. This report highlighted the declining status of women in India despite constitutional guarantees and led to the rise of grassroots mobilizations and feminist activism. Movements such as the Anti-Dowry Movement,

protests against rape (like the 1979–80 Mathura rape case), and campaigns for better working conditions brought women's issues into the public discourse.

These movements played a critical role in shaping gender-sensitive legislation such as:

- The Dowry Prohibition Act (1961)
- The Equal Remuneration Act (1976)
- The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005)
- Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act (2013)

Women's movements in India are also notable for being diverse and decentralized. They range from urban feminist groups in metros to rural women's collectives fighting for land rights, forest access, education, and employment under schemes like Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Mahila Samakhya. Dalit and Adivasi women have organized their own movements to challenge both patriarchy and caste-based discrimination. This has added important intersectional dimensions to feminist discourse in India.

Moreover, the women's movement has had a strong legal and judicial impact, promoting Public Interest Litigation (PIL) and influencing policy debates at national and international levels. It also contributed significantly to India's engagement with global frameworks like the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).

Impacts of Women's Movements in India

The Women's Movements in India have had profound and far-reaching impacts on Indian society, politics, legal reforms, and gender consciousness. These movements played a central role in challenging patriarchal norms, advocating for equal rights, and redefining the role of women in both public and private spheres. One of the most tangible outcomes has been the enactment of progressive legislation. For instance, public protests and advocacy following the Mathura rape case (1979) led to amendments in rape laws through the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1983, making custodial rape a punishable offence. Similarly, the Dowry

Prohibition Act (1961) gained traction due to anti-dowry movements, especially during the 1980s, leading to stricter enforcement and the incorporation of Section 498A in the Indian Penal Code.

The Domestic Violence Act (2005) and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act (2013) were direct results of years of sustained campaigning by feminist groups and NGOs, such as the Vishaka group, which won a landmark case that led to the Vishaka Guidelines in 1997. In addition to legal reforms, women's movements significantly influenced government policy by highlighting issues of female literacy, maternal health, child marriage, and representation in local governance. This led to initiatives like the

National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001) and the reservation of one-third of seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions (73rd Amendment, 1992)—a transformative move that gave millions of rural women a voice in governance.

Women's movements also created social and cultural awareness by questioning regressive traditions and promoting alternative narratives through media, literature, and education. They fostered intersectionality in feminist discourse by addressing the specific needs of Dalit, tribal, Muslim, and LGBTQ+ women, thereby democratizing feminism in India. Economically, the movements encouraged women's participation in the workforce, promoted Self-Help Groups (SHGs), and facilitated the rise of women-led cooperatives and microenterprises.

Importantly, these movements strengthened civil society and democratic practices by encouraging public engagement, advocacy, and legal literacy among women. However, despite these advances, challenges such as violence against women, unequal pay, and underrepresentation in politics persist, showing that while the movement has achieved significant gains, the struggle for full equality continues.

Let Sum Up:

The Women's Movement in India is a diverse and long-standing campaign for gender equality, rights, and empowerment. It began during the 19th century reform

era, with pioneers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, and Jyotirao Phule advocating against practices like sati and child marriage, and for women's education and widow remarriage.

The modern movement gained strength during the freedom struggle, with women's active participation, and became more autonomous in the 1970s after the release of the "Towards Equality" report (1974), which exposed the gap between constitutional promises and the ground reality for women.

Key issues addressed by the movement include:

- Dowry, domestic violence, rape, sexual harassment
- Reproductive rights, political representation, and intersectional discrimination

Major Achievements:

- Legal reforms:
 - Dowry Prohibition Act (1961)
 - Equal Remuneration Act (1976)
 - Domestic Violence Act (2005)
 - Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act (2013)
 - Vishaka Guidelines (1997)
- Policy impacts:
 - National Policy for Empowerment of Women (2001)
 - 33% reservation for women in Panchayati Raj (73rd Amendment, 1992)
- Social transformation:
 - Challenged patriarchal norms
 - Raised awareness through media and education
 - Empowered marginalized women (Dalit, tribal, Muslim, LGBTQ+)
- Economic contributions:
 - Promoted women's cooperatives, SHGs, and microenterprises
 - Encouraged women's workforce participation

Despite these achievements, issues like gender violence, unequal pay, and political underrepresentation persist, showing the ongoing need for activism. The movement remains vibrant and adaptive, facing new challenges such as neoliberalism, communalism, and digital misogyny.

Check Your Progress:

1. What was the significance of the “Towards Equality” report (1974) in the women’s movement in India?
2. Mention three major laws influenced by the Women’s Movement in India and their purposes.
3. How did the Women’s Movement in India address the needs of marginalized women?

ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENTS

Environmental movements are organized efforts aimed at the protection and preservation of the natural environment from degradation caused by human activities such as deforestation, industrialization, pollution, and unsustainable resource exploitation. In the Indian context, these movements have often emerged as grassroots responses to developmental projects that threatened local ecosystems and displaced communities, particularly in tribal and rural areas. They represent not just ecological concerns but also social, cultural, and economic issues, as many communities depend directly on forests, rivers, and land for their survival.

One of the most iconic environmental movements in India is the Chipko Movement (1973), where villagers in Uttarakhand hugged trees to prevent their felling by contractors. Other significant movements include the Silent Valley Movement in Kerala, which resisted the construction of a dam in a biodiversity-rich rainforest, and the Narmada Bachao Andolan, which opposed the large-scale displacement caused by the Sardar Sarovar Dam. These movements have played a crucial role in shaping environmental policy, raising awareness, and influencing legislation such as the Forest Rights Act (2006) and Environmental Protection Act (1986).

Introduction to Environmental Movements in India

Environmental movements in India are collective efforts by individuals, communities, and organizations aimed at protecting the environment, preserving natural resources, and advocating for sustainable development. These movements have emerged as a response to unchecked industrialization, deforestation, displacement of indigenous communities, and environmental degradation caused by developmental policies. They are deeply rooted in India's socio-cultural, ecological, and economic context, often intertwining with livelihood issues, indigenous rights, and social justice.

One of the earliest and most iconic of these was the Chipko Movement (1973) in Uttarakhand, where villagers—particularly women—hugged trees to prevent deforestation.

This movement not only marked a turning point in India's ecological awareness but also inspired similar grassroots mobilizations across the country. Following this, movements like the Silent Valley Movement in Kerala (1970s), which opposed the construction of a dam in a biodiversity-rich rainforest, and the Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) led by Medha Patkar, highlighted the negative impacts of large-scale dam projects on ecosystems and displaced communities.

Unlike traditional conservation campaigns led by the state, these grassroots movements have been people-centered, emphasizing the connection between environmental protection and community survival, particularly among tribal and rural populations. They also challenge the dominant narrative of "development" that disregards ecological costs and community consent.

In modern times, Indian environmental activism has expanded to include issues such as urban pollution, waste management, climate change, mining protests, and opposition to nuclear and thermal power plants. These movements have had significant influence in shaping public policies, contributing to legislation like the Forest Rights Act (2006) and strengthening Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) norms.

CHIPKO MOVEMENT

The Chipko Movement was a non-violent environmental movement that began in the early 1970s in the Garhwal region of Uttarakhand (then part of Uttar Pradesh). The word “*Chipko*” means “*to hug*” in Hindi, which reflects the primary strategy of the movement—villagers, especially women, hugged trees to prevent them from being cut down by commercial loggers. This grassroots uprising was a direct response to the government’s policy of granting large-scale logging permits to private companies without considering the rights and needs of local communities.

The movement was initially sparked in 1973 in the village of Mandal when the Forest Department denied local villagers permission to fell ash trees for making agricultural tools, but granted a sports goods company the right to cut thousands of trees in the same area. Chandi Prasad Bhatt, a Gandhian social worker and environmentalist, played a key role in mobilizing villagers. The movement gained national and international attention when women in the village of Reni, led by Gaura Devi, embraced the trees to stop logging in 1974, while the men were away. This peaceful but powerful protest symbolized the deep connection between rural communities and their forests.

The Chipko Movement was not just about trees—it was also a movement for forest rights, rural self-reliance, and ecological sustainability. It highlighted how deforestation led to soil erosion, water scarcity, landslides, and a decline in agricultural productivity, affecting the livelihoods of mountain communities. The movement criticized the state's top-down approach to development that excluded the voices of those most affected.

One of the prominent leaders of the movement was Sunderlal Bahuguna, who later took the movement beyond Uttarakhand. His slogan “Ecology is permanent economy” emphasized that long-term ecological well-being is more important than short-term commercial profits. His appeal to then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi contributed to the 1980 ban on tree-felling in the Himalayan region for 15 years.

NARMADA BACHO ANDOLAN

The Narmada Bachao Andolan (Save Narmada Movement) is one of India's most well-known environmental and social justice movements. It began in the mid-1980s as a grassroots resistance against the construction of large dams on the Narmada River, particularly the Sardar Sarovar Dam in Gujarat, which was part of the larger Narmada Valley Development Project (NVDP) involving 3,000+ dams across Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Gujarat. While the government promoted these dams as essential for irrigation, drinking water, and electricity, the movement arose from deep concerns about massive displacement, environmental destruction, and violation of tribal and human rights.

Led by prominent activists like Medha Patkar, Baba Amte, and supported by environmentalists such as Arundhati Roy, the NBA became a powerful voice for tribal people (Adivasis), farmers, and laborers who faced eviction without proper rehabilitation. The movement challenged not only the economic model of large dams but also questioned top-down development policies that ignored the lives and livelihoods of marginalized communities.

The NBA adopted non-violent protest methods inspired by Gandhian philosophy—hunger strikes, marches, legal battles, and international advocacy. The activists argued that big dams caused more harm than benefit, including loss of biodiversity, submergence of villages and forests, and the violation of the rights of communities protected under the Indian Constitution and environmental laws. One of their biggest legal victories was in 1994, when the Supreme Court halted construction temporarily, asking for environmental impact studies and proper rehabilitation.

Although the court later allowed the construction to continue in phases, the movement succeeded in achieving national and global attention, pressuring the World Bank to withdraw funding for the Sardar Sarovar Dam in 1993, citing

inadequate rehabilitation and ecological damage. This was a historic moment, making the NBA a symbol of people's resistance to unjust development.

More than just an anti-dam protest, the Narmada Bachao Andolan evolved into a larger struggle for ecological sustainability, tribal rights, and participatory democracy. It raised critical questions about who development is for, and at what cost, and it inspired many similar struggles across India related to displacement and environmental degradation.

Impacts of Environmental Movements in India

Environmental movements in India have had significant social, legal, ecological, and political impacts, transforming the way the environment is perceived and protected in the country. One of the most vital impacts has been the increased public awareness and participation in environmental issues. Movements such as the Chipko Movement (1973) and the Silent Valley Movement (1970s) helped bring environmental degradation into mainstream consciousness and inspired both local communities and urban environmentalists to mobilize for ecological causes. These movements established the idea that conservation is deeply linked to social justice, particularly for rural, tribal, and marginalized communities whose lives are entwined with natural resources.

A major institutional impact of these movements has been the development and strengthening of environmental laws and policies in India. The public pressure generated by movements like Narmada Bachao Andolan and anti-mining protests in Odisha and Jharkhand led to the tightening of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) rules, and gave momentum to legal measures such as the Environmental Protection Act (1986), Forest Conservation Act (1980), and the Forest Rights Act (2006). These legislations have not only provided legal recognition to community rights over forests and biodiversity but also empowered local people to challenge destructive developmental projects.

Furthermore, these movements have influenced judicial activism in India. The Supreme Court and various High Courts, through Public Interest Litigations (PILs), have issued landmark judgments upholding environmental principles such as the

“Polluter Pays”, “Precautionary Principle”, and the “Right to a Clean and Healthy Environment” as part of the fundamental right to life under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution. These principles have been strengthened by activism from groups like the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) and individuals like Medha Patkar and Sunderlal Bahuguna.

At the community level, these movements have encouraged sustainable practices, reforestation, water conservation, and the revival of traditional knowledge systems. They have also helped in resisting the displacement of indigenous populations, securing land rights, and ensuring more inclusive models of development. Importantly, they have promoted the idea that development must be sustainable and equitable, not just economically profitable.

Let Sum Up:

Environmental movements in India are grassroots campaigns aimed at protecting nature and promoting sustainable development. These movements arise in response to issues like deforestation, industrialization, pollution, and the displacement of indigenous communities due to large-scale development projects.

Key early movements include:

- Chipko Movement (1973): Villagers, especially women, hugged trees in Uttarakhand to stop deforestation. Led by activists like Chandi Prasad Bhatt and Sunderlal Bahuguna, it emphasized forest rights, rural livelihoods, and ecological sustainability.
- Silent Valley Movement: Opposed a hydroelectric project in Kerala's biodiversity-rich rainforest.
- Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA): Protested against large dams like the Sardar Sarovar Dam that displaced thousands. Led by Medha Patkar and Baba Amte, the movement combined environmental activism with demands for tribal and human rights.

These movements influenced critical laws such as:

- Forest Rights Act (2006)
- Environmental Protection Act (1986)
- Strengthening of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) norms.

They also spurred judicial activism, where courts recognized the Right to a Clean Environment under Article 21 of the Constitution.

Beyond legal outcomes, these movements raised awareness about the link between ecology and social justice, promoting community-led conservation, sustainable practices, and a shift in the development narrative toward inclusive and environmentally sound models.

Check Your Progress:

1. What was the main objective of the Chipko Movement, and how did it influence environmental activism in India?
2. What are some significant environmental laws influenced by environmental movements in India?
3. How did the Narmada Bachao Andolan challenge the traditional model of development in India?

ANTI-CORRUPTION MOVEMENTS

Anti-Corruption Movements – Introduction

Anti-corruption movements are public campaigns and collective efforts aimed at exposing, challenging, and reducing corruption in governance, public administration, and the private sector. In India, corruption has been a persistent issue that undermines democracy, weakens institutions, and affects the delivery of basic services. Over the years, public anger against corruption has given rise to several powerful movements, driven by civil society, media, and ordinary citizens demanding transparency, accountability, and reforms.

One of the most significant anti-corruption movements in recent Indian history was the India Against Corruption (IAC) movement in 2011, led by Anna Hazare, along with prominent activists like Arvind Kejriwal, Kiran Bedi, and others. This movement gained nationwide support through peaceful protests and mass mobilization, with the central demand being the establishment of a strong Lokpal

(ombudsman) to investigate corruption cases independently. Inspired by Gandhian principles of non-violence and civil disobedience, Anna Hazare's hunger strike at Delhi's Ramlila Maidan drew millions of supporters, both on the ground and through social media.

The movement brought corruption to the center of national political discourse and put immense pressure on the Indian Parliament, leading to the eventual passing of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act in 2013. Although the movement lost momentum after internal differences and political shifts, it marked a turning point in how ordinary citizens engage with issues of public accountability. The IAC movement also laid the groundwork for new political alternatives like the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), founded by Arvind Kejriwal, which emerged directly from the anti-corruption crusade.

Anti-corruption efforts in India have also taken the form of Right to Information (RTI) activism, judicial interventions, media exposés, and citizen-led monitoring of public projects. Together, these movements reflect the growing awareness and intolerance of corruption, especially among the youth, and represent the ongoing struggle to build a more transparent and responsive system of governance in India.

Impacts of Anti-Corruption Movements in India

Anti-corruption movements in India—especially the 2011 India Against Corruption (IAC) campaign—have had deep and lasting effects on the country's political, social, and legal landscapes. These movements brought the issue of corruption from behind closed doors into the public domain, making it a central concern of citizens and governments alike.

1. Increased Public Awareness and Civic Engagement

One of the most significant impacts was the mass awakening among Indian citizens, particularly the youth and urban middle class. The widespread participation in protests, social media activism, and support for public interest litigation showed a rising intolerance toward corruption. These movements fostered civic engagement and empowered citizens to question those in power, which was earlier uncommon at such a scale.

2. Legislative and Policy Changes

The pressure created by anti-corruption movements led to important legislative reforms, the most notable being the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act (2013). This act aimed to establish independent anti-corruption ombudsmen at the central and state levels to investigate public officials. Though its implementation faced delays and criticisms, it was a direct outcome of public agitation.

Movements also strengthened the Right to Information (RTI) Act, which became a critical tool for exposing corruption. The widespread use of RTI after these movements showed how people began actively using legal instruments to hold officials accountable.

3. Emergence of New Political Alternatives

The India Against Corruption movement gave birth to a new political force—the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP)—founded by activist Arvind Kejriwal. AAP capitalized on the anti-corruption sentiment and won the Delhi state elections with a promise of clean governance. This demonstrated how social movements could transform into electoral change, bringing alternative politics to the forefront.

4. Judicial Interventions and Accountability

Anti-corruption activism also prompted the judiciary to take a more proactive role. Landmark judgments related to public accountability, transparency in political funding, and criminalization of politics were either triggered or influenced by the public sentiment built around these movements. Courts began demanding stricter compliance with ethical standards in public office.

5. Cultural and Institutional Shifts

On a deeper level, these movements changed the political discourse in India. Corruption became a core issue in elections, public debates, and media narratives. Government institutions became more cautious, and some adopted e-governance, digitization, and transparency portals to curb discretionary powers and reduce corruption.

However, critics argue that while the movements led to symbolic and partial reforms, systemic corruption still persists, especially at local levels. The challenge remains in implementing laws effectively and protecting whistleblowers.

India Against Corruption Movement (2011)

One of the most impactful anti-corruption movements in India was the India Against Corruption (IAC) Movement launched in 2011. Spearheaded by social activist Anna Hazare, the movement became a nationwide protest demanding the establishment of a strong and independent Lokpal (ombudsman) to investigate corruption cases involving public officials and politicians.

The immediate trigger for the movement was widespread public outrage over a series of major scams, such as the 2G Spectrum Scam and the Commonwealth Games Scam, which exposed massive misuse of public funds. Anna Hazare, inspired by Gandhian principles of non-violence, began a hunger strike at Jantar Mantar in Delhi, which drew massive crowds, both physically and via online platforms.

Backed by notable figures like Arvind Kejriwal, Kiran Bedi, Prashant Bhushan, and Swami Agnivesh, the movement turned into a mass civil society uprising. It forced the Parliament to debate and eventually pass the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, which aimed to set up an anti-corruption ombudsman institution at the national and state levels.

Though the movement later saw internal splits, it had a lasting legacy. It led to the creation of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) by Arvind Kejriwal, which contested and won the Delhi Assembly elections on an anti-corruption platform.

Legal Implications of the India Against Corruption (IAC) Movement (2011)

The IAC movement, led by Anna Hazare, was not just a public protest—it was a turning point that exerted considerable pressure on the Indian legislature and judiciary to address corruption through formal legal reforms. One of the most direct outcomes was the enactment of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013, but its implications extended well beyond that.

1. The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013

The most prominent legal outcome of the IAC movement was the passing of this law. It created an institutional framework to **investigate complaints against public functionaries**, including the Prime Minister, Ministers, and MPs, under certain safeguards.

- **Lokpal**: An independent anti-corruption ombudsman at the national level.
- **Lokayuktas**: State-level equivalents.
- The Act came into force on **January 16, 2014**.
- Though the implementation was delayed, it signified a **historic legal response** to public demands.

2. Strengthening of the RTI (Right to Information) Regime

While the RTI Act was passed in 2005, the IAC movement greatly amplified its use as a **citizen-led legal tool** for uncovering corruption. The movement promoted RTI activism as a form of legal empowerment, and more people filed applications to hold public officials accountable.

- It encouraged transparency in government spending, tenders, public schemes, etc.
- Led to pressure for proactive disclosures under **Section 4 of the RTI Act**.

3. Judicial Scrutiny and Activism

In the wake of the movement:

- Courts took **suo motu cognizance** of corruption issues more seriously.
- The **Supreme Court and High Courts** monitored high-profile cases like the 2G Spectrum Scam and Coalgate.
- Several **Public Interest Litigations (PILs)** were filed as legal fallout from the public awareness generated.

4. Reforms in Electoral and Political Funding

Although reforms remain incomplete, the movement prompted:

- Demands for **greater transparency in election funding**.
- Increased pressure on candidates to disclose assets and criminal records under the Representation of the People Act, 1951.
- Discussions on state funding of elections and regulation of political party expenditures.

5. Anti-Corruption and Whistleblower Protection Legislation

The IAC movement catalyzed public debate on **whistleblower safety**:

- **Whistle Blowers Protection Act, 2014** was passed to safeguard individuals exposing corruption in public offices.

- However, critics argue it remains weak due to delays in operationalization and lack of adequate protection clauses.

6. Legal Limitations Exposed

- The IAC also exposed **gaps in the Indian legal framework** related to corruption—such as weak implementation, political interference in probes, and inadequate safeguards for activists.
- Several civil society leaders argued that **laws alone are insufficient** without political will and citizen participation.

Let Sum Up:

Anti-corruption movements in India are collective efforts by citizens, activists, and civil society groups to fight against corruption in government and public institutions. One of the most impactful movements was the India Against Corruption (IAC) movement in 2011, led by Anna Hazare, which demanded the creation of a strong Lokpal (ombudsman) to investigate corruption cases.

The movement gained massive public support through peaceful protests and hunger strikes, especially at Ramlila Maidan in Delhi. Supported by activists like Arvind Kejriwal and Kiran Bedi, it pressured the government to pass the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act in 2013. Although the movement later lost momentum, it led to the formation of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), showing how activism can lead to political change.

These movements also boosted the use of the Right to Information (RTI), encouraged judicial interventions, and led to new laws like the Whistle Blowers Protection Act (2014). They increased public awareness and civic participation, especially among youth, and brought corruption into the mainstream political debate. However, challenges like weak law enforcement and continued local-level corruption remain.

Check Your Progress:

1. What was the main demand of the India Against Corruption (IAC) movement in 2011?
2. Who were the key leaders of the 2011 anti-corruption movement in India?
3. What were two major outcomes of the IAC movement?

NEW FARMERS MOVEMENT

New Farmer's Movement – Introduction

The New Farmer's Movement in India refers to a wave of agrarian activism that emerged prominently during the late 1970s and 1980s, focusing on issues beyond traditional land ownership concerns. Unlike earlier peasant movements that primarily addressed land reforms, the New Farmer's Movement was centered around agricultural pricing policies, input subsidies, market access, and state intervention in rural development. It represented the rising discontent of middle and upper-tier farmers, especially from agriculturally advanced states like Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Karnataka.

One of the early and influential figures of this movement was Sharad Joshi, who founded the Shetkari Sanghatana in Maharashtra in 1979. The movement demanded fair prices for agricultural produce, reduced taxation on farmers, and freedom from exploitative market structures. It opposed excessive state control over agricultural trade and sought a more liberalized and farmer-centric market policy.

The movement was marked by peaceful protests, road blockades, and mass mobilization, often using non-party, issue-based platforms. It reflected a new class of politically aware, economically aspirational farmers, who were frustrated with the rising input costs, government apathy, and neglect of rural infrastructure.

What set the New Farmer's Movement apart was its non-Marxist and non-violent approach, often employing Gandhian methods of resistance but rejecting

state socialism. It also paved the way for farmers' organizations to influence national policy debates on agriculture, Minimum Support Prices (MSP), and subsidies.

New Farmer's Movement in India – An Overview

The New Farmer's Movement in India emerged prominently in the late 1970s and 1980s as a response to the deepening agrarian crisis in the country. It was primarily led by middle and rich farmers from agriculturally advanced states like Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. Unlike earlier agrarian movements, which were often centered around land redistribution and tenancy rights, this new wave focused on fair prices, market reforms, rural credit, agricultural subsidies, and freedom from government controls on farm produce.

The movement gained momentum through the formation of several powerful farmer organizations, the most notable being:

- Shetkari Sanghatana (Maharashtra) led by Sharad Joshi,
- Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) in north India under Mahendra Singh Tikait, and
- Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) led by M.D. Nanjundaswamy.

These movements were non-political and decentralized, often rejecting affiliations with traditional political parties or Marxist ideology. They were characterized by non-violent mass mobilizations, road blockades, rail roko agitations, and sit-ins at administrative offices. A key demand across all fronts was remunerative pricing for agricultural products, especially in the context of rising input costs and unfair market competition.

Importantly, these movements also challenged the urban-industrial bias in India's economic planning, where the state was seen to be favoring urban consumers and industries through price controls, while neglecting the interests of the rural farming sector. Farmers sought greater market liberalization, reduction of state interference, and control over their own produce.

While not revolutionary in the classic Marxist sense, the New Farmer's Movement was deeply transformative. It laid the foundation for rural political consciousness, questioned the dominance of bureaucratic and technocratic agricultural policies, and eventually influenced debates around agricultural reforms, food policy, and trade liberalization—issues that remain relevant to this day, especially in light of the 2020–21 Farmers' Protests.

Impacts of the New Farmers' Movement in India

The New Farmers' Movement, which gained prominence in the late 1970s and 1980s, had far-reaching effects on Indian agriculture, rural politics, and public policy. Although non-revolutionary in nature, the movement empowered farmers, reshaped agricultural discourse, and highlighted the growing distress in rural India.

1. Policy Influence and Reforms

One of the most significant impacts was its pressure on the Indian government to reform agricultural policies. Farmer organizations like Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU) and Shetkari Sanghatana demanded remunerative prices, timely procurement, and reduction in input costs, which compelled the state to revise Minimum Support Price (MSP) mechanisms and enhance subsidies on fertilizers and electricity.

- Government increased procurement of wheat and rice at better prices.
- Focus shifted to rural credit, insurance, and infrastructure development.

2. Strengthening of Rural Political Consciousness

The movement created a politically aware rural class, especially among middle and upper-caste peasant groups like Jats in Haryana and Punjab, Marathas in Maharashtra, and Vokkaligas in Karnataka. These communities began to organize autonomously, challenging the urban bias in governance and asserting their rights.

- It led to the mobilization of farmers outside party politics, using issue-based campaigns.

- Farmers began to view themselves as economic stakeholders, not just passive beneficiaries of state schemes.

3. Decentralized and Non-Party Mobilization

The movement was unique in rejecting affiliation with mainstream political parties. It introduced a new form of civil society protest, where localized, leader-driven organizations demanded direct negotiation with the state.

- It showcased non-violent, democratic protest models, inspired by Gandhian methods.
- Encouraged regional farmer unions to work independently, strengthening grassroots activism.

4. Economic Awareness and Market Advocacy

Organizations like Shetkari Sanghatana advocated for **liberalized markets**, **freedom to export**, and **removal of state restrictions** on pricing and movement of agricultural goods. This was a departure from older, socialist-rooted peasant movements.

- Highlighted the **burden of urban consumer subsidies** on farmers.
- Farmers demanded market autonomy, which later shaped **WTO-related agricultural trade debates**.

5. Catalyst for Future Movements

The New Farmers' Movement laid the groundwork for later agrarian protests, including the **2020–2021 Farmers' Protest** against the three farm laws. The

strategies and demands of the older movements continued to echo in modern-day farmer agitations.

Let us Sum Up:

The New Farmer's Movement emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s in India, primarily led by middle and rich farmers from agriculturally advanced states like Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu. Unlike earlier peasant movements that focused on land reforms, this movement demanded fair prices for crops, market liberalization, reduced input costs, and freedom from excessive state control.

Key leaders included Sharad Joshi (Shetkari Sanghatana), Mahendra Singh Tikait (BKU), and M.D. Nanjundaswamy (KRRS). These farmer groups organized non-violent protests, road blockades, and sit-ins without political party affiliations, often drawing from Gandhian methods.

The movement:

- Pressured the government to increase Minimum Support Prices (MSP) and improve rural infrastructure.
- Raised rural political awareness, especially among dominant peasant castes.
- Advocated for market freedom, challenging the urban-industrial bias in economic planning.
- Influenced future farmer movements, including the 2020–21 protests against farm laws.

Overall, it redefined rural activism in India, bringing farmers into national policy debates and shaping the discourse on agricultural reforms and trade.

Check Your Progress:

1. What were the primary demands of the New Farmer's Movement in India?

2. How did the New Farmer's Movement influence rural political consciousness in India?

Unit Summary:

This unit explores the significant New Social Movements (NSMs) that have emerged in India, focusing on key areas such as Women's Movements, Environmental Movements, Anti-corruption Movements, and the New Farmer's Movement. These movements have reshaped India's social, political, and economic landscape, advocating for rights, reforms, and changes in governance and public policy.

1. Women's Movements:

The Women's Movement in India has been a significant force for advocating gender equality and women's rights. It has historically focused on issues such as empowerment, education, violence against women, legal rights, and economic independence. Over the years, women's movements have mobilized through protests, public awareness campaigns, and legal reforms. Notable milestones include the struggle for reproductive rights, equal pay, protection from domestic violence, and greater political representation. These movements have been pivotal in challenging traditional gender roles and promoting a more equitable society.

2. Environmental Movements:

Environmental movements in India have gained momentum in response to rapid industrialization, deforestation, and the exploitation of natural resources. Key movements like the Chipko Movement (1973) and the Narmada Bachao Andolan (1985) have highlighted the importance of sustainable development, conservation, and the rights of marginalized communities affected by environmental degradation. These movements have led to greater awareness of ecological protection, climate change, water conservation, and land rights. They have influenced national policies, such as forest conservation laws and environmental protection regulations, and have

emphasized the need for a balance between development and ecological preservation.

3. Anti-Corruption Movements:

The Anti-Corruption Movement in India, notably the India Against Corruption (IAC) movement of 2011, gained widespread attention under the leadership of Anna Hazare. The movement advocated for a strong Lokpal (ombudsman) to investigate corruption within government and public offices. It mobilized millions of citizens through peaceful protests, demanding transparency, accountability, and legislative reforms. The IAC movement led to the passage of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act (2013) and strengthened the Right to Information (RTI) Act. The movement also sparked the formation of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP), which has since influenced Indian politics. Despite challenges, the movement continues to inspire public participation in anti-corruption efforts.

4. New Farmer's Movement:

The New Farmer's Movement in India emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s, with a focus on the economic distress faced by farmers. Unlike traditional movements focused on land reforms, the New Farmer's Movement primarily addressed issues like fair pricing, market reforms, subsidies, and state intervention in agriculture. The movement was led by prominent organizations such as the Shetkari Sanghatana (Maharashtra), the Bharatiya Kisan Union (BKU), and the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS). These movements demanded remunerative prices for agricultural products, a reduction in government control over farm produce, and an improvement in rural infrastructure. The movement strengthened the rural political consciousness, leading to future farmer protests, including the 2020–2021 Farmers' Protest. The New Farmer's Movement laid the groundwork for debates on agricultural reforms, food policy, and trade liberalization.

Key Themes:

- **Collective Mobilization:** Each of these movements demonstrates the power of citizen-led initiatives in advocating for social, political, and economic changes.
- **Policy Reforms:** These movements have had significant influences on legislation and government policies, from gender rights to environmental conservation, anti-corruption laws, and agricultural reforms.
- **Non-violent Protest:** Many of these movements, particularly the India Against Corruption and New Farmer's Movements, employed peaceful protests inspired by Gandhian principles, showing the influence of non-violent resistance in modern-day activism.
- **Grassroots Empowerment:** These movements have encouraged grassroots activism, empowering individuals and communities to challenge dominant social and political systems.

The New Social Movements in India, ranging from Women's Movements to Environmental, Anti-corruption, and New Farmer's Movements, reflect a dynamic transformation in Indian society. They highlight the growing awareness among citizens about their rights and the need for a more just, transparent, and inclusive society. These movements continue to shape India's future, influencing public discourse, policy reforms, and the engagement of citizens in the democratic process.

Glossary:

1. **Anti-Corruption Movement:** A collective effort aimed at combating corruption within public administration and governance. The India Against Corruption movement (2011) is a significant example, advocating for transparency, accountability, and a strong Lokpal (ombudsman) to investigate corruption.
2. **Aam Aadmi Party (AAP):** A political party in India formed in 2012 by leaders of the India Against Corruption movement, particularly Arvind Kejriwal. The party's platform centers around clean governance and anti-corruption reforms.

3. Chipko Movement: A forest conservation movement that began in 1973 in Uttarakhand, India, where people, primarily women, embraced trees to prevent their felling. It raised awareness about the importance of protecting forests.
4. Environmental Movements: Collective actions aimed at advocating for the protection of the environment and addressing issues like pollution, deforestation, and climate change. Examples include the Chipko Movement and the Narmada Bachao Andolan.
5. Farmers' Movement: A social and political movement focusing on issues such as fair agricultural pricing, subsidies, land rights, and rural development. The New Farmer's Movement in the late 1970s and 1980s brought attention to the economic distress of farmers.
6. Gandhian Principles: Ideas and methods based on the philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi, emphasizing non-violence, truth, and civil disobedience. Many social movements in India have drawn inspiration from these principles, including the Women's and Farmers' Movements.
7. India Against Corruption (IAC): A national movement initiated by social activist Anna Hazare in 2011 to demand a strong anti-corruption law (Lokpal). The movement led to significant political engagement and public participation in anti-corruption efforts.
8. Lokpal: An independent ombudsman designed to investigate corruption in the public sector. The India Against Corruption movement demanded the establishment of the Lokpal, and the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act was passed in 2013 to create this institution.
9. Minimum Support Price (MSP): A price set by the government at which it purchases crops from farmers to protect them from falling prices. The New Farmer's Movement advocated for better MSPs to ensure fair prices for agricultural products.

10. Narmada Bachao Andolan: A movement led by social activist Medha Patkar in the 1980s against the construction of large dams on the Narmada River, which were expected to displace thousands of people and cause environmental damage.
11. Non-violent Resistance: A form of protest that avoids the use of physical violence. It has been a central strategy in many of India's social movements, including those led by Mahatma Gandhi and more modern movements such as the India Against Corruption movement.
12. Public Interest Litigation (PIL): A legal mechanism used in India to seek judicial intervention in matters affecting the public interest. It became popular after the India Against Corruption movement and is used to challenge government actions or inactions.
13. Right to Information (RTI): A law that allows citizens to access information from the government. It was significantly strengthened following the India Against Corruption movement and has been used as a tool to expose corruption.
14. Shetkari Sanghatana: A farmers' organization founded by Sharad Joshi in Maharashtra in 1979. It was part of the New Farmer's Movement, advocating for fair prices for agricultural produce and freedom from excessive government control.
15. Subsidies: Financial assistance provided by the government to help reduce the cost of agricultural inputs (such as fertilizers, seeds, and irrigation) or to maintain the price of agricultural products. The New Farmer's Movement pushed for better and more efficient subsidies.
16. Urban-Industrial Bias: A term used to describe the disproportionate focus of Indian economic policies on urban and industrial development, often at the expense of rural areas and agriculture. This bias was challenged by the New Farmer's Movement.

17. Women's Movements: Collective efforts aimed at securing women's rights and gender equality. These movements address issues such as violence against women, reproductive rights, equal pay, and political representation. Key examples include campaigns for the right to education and the prevention of domestic violence.
18. Whistleblower Protection Act: A law aimed at protecting individuals who expose corruption or illegal activities within public or private organizations. The Act was influenced by the debates following the India Against Corruption movement.
19. Narmada Bachao Andolan: A prominent environmental movement in India against the construction of the Narmada Valley dams, which threatened to displace large populations and disrupt ecosystems. It aimed to protect the rights of affected communities and promote sustainable development.
20. Civil Society: The collective name for organizations and movements outside of government and business that aim to improve society. Many of the movements discussed in this unit are examples of civil society activism.

Self- Assessment Questions:

1. Define the concept of "New Social Movements" and explain how they differ from traditional social movements.
2. Discuss the main goals and outcomes of the India Against Corruption movement of 2011. What were the legal and political changes brought about by this movement?
3. What role did women play in the Chipko Movement, and how did the movement contribute to environmental awareness in India?
4. Explain the objectives and key features of the New Farmer's Movement in India. How did it differ from earlier agrarian movements?

5. What is the significance of the Right to Information (RTI) Act in the context of the anti-corruption movement in India? Provide examples of how RTI has been used to expose corruption.
6. Compare and contrast the approaches of Gandhian movements with those of modern social movements, particularly the India Against Corruption movement and the New Farmer's Movement.
7. What are the major criticisms of the New Farmer's Movement, especially regarding its long-term impacts on Indian agriculture and rural development?
8. Identify and describe at least two major environmental movements in India. How did they challenge governmental policies and influence environmental protection in the country?
9. Discuss how civil society movements, such as the Shetkari Sanghatana and the Bharatiya Kisan Union, have influenced agricultural policy and the economic status of farmers in India.
10. What is the role of public protests and civil disobedience in social movements like the Chipko Movement, the India Against Corruption movement, and the Narmada Bachao Andolan?
11. What legal reforms were influenced by the India Against Corruption movement, particularly in terms of transparency and public accountability?
12. Explain the term "urban-industrial bias" and its impact on India's rural communities. How did the New Farmer's Movement challenge this bias?
13. How do non-violent resistance and decentralized, non-party mobilization play a role in modern social movements in India? Provide examples from the Women's and Environmental movements.
14. Discuss the concept of "remunerative pricing" and its importance in the context of agricultural reforms advocated by the New Farmer's Movement.
15. What challenges remain in the implementation of laws like the Lokpal Act, and what are the continuing struggles against corruption in India?
16. Assess the long-term impact of the New Farmer's Movement on India's rural political consciousness. How did it shift the focus of rural populations towards more active political participation?

17. What is the relationship between grassroots activism and political change in the context of the New Farmer's Movement and the India Against Corruption movement?
18. Examine the cultural shifts caused by the Women's Movements in India. How have these movements influenced changes in societal norms and the legal system?
19. What are the key demands of modern farmer protests in India, particularly in relation to the three farm laws passed in 2020? How do these demands connect to earlier movements like the New Farmer's Movement?
20. What are the challenges faced by modern social movements in India, especially in terms of government resistance, media portrayal, and public engagement?

Activities/ Exercise/Case Studies

Case Studies

1. Case Study: The Chipko Movement (1970s)
 - Objective: To understand the environmental activism of the Chipko Movement and its success in protecting forests.
 - Instructions: Read about the origins of the Chipko Movement and its strategies (e.g., hugging trees to prevent logging). Research its impact on forestry policies in India and the global environmental movement. Reflect on how Gandhian principles of non-violence were employed in this movement.
 - Guiding Questions:
 - How did the Chipko Movement challenge traditional notions of development?
 - What were the long-term impacts of the movement on environmental policies in India?

- How can the principles of the Chipko Movement be applied to modern environmental activism?

- Expected Outcome: This case study will give you insight into the intersection of environmental justice and grassroots mobilization.

2. Case Study: The Anti-Corruption Movement (India Against Corruption)

- Objective: To analyze the success and shortcomings of the India Against Corruption (IAC) movement.
- Instructions: Research the IAC movement, focusing on key leaders like Anna Hazare, the role of social media, and the movement's demands for the establishment of the Lokpal. Examine the impact it had on public policy, particularly the passage of the Lokpal Act.
- Guiding Questions:
 - How did the IAC movement influence Indian political discourse?
 - What were the strengths and weaknesses of the movement's approach?
 - To what extent did the Lokpal Act address the demands of the movement?
- Expected Outcome: This case study will provide a critical evaluation of one of India's most significant anti-corruption movements and its impact on governance.

3. Case Study: The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA)

- Objective: To understand the socio-political dynamics and legal implications of the Narmada Bachao Andolan, an environmental movement in India.

- Instructions: Investigate the Narmada Bachao Andolan, focusing on the challenges posed by large-scale development projects like the Sardar Sarovar Dam. Analyze how the movement mobilized local communities and the role of leaders like Medha Patkar. Explore its legal and environmental implications.
- Guiding Questions:
 - What were the main goals of the Narmada Bachao Andolan?
 - How did the movement address the concerns of displaced communities?
 - What were the environmental and social impacts of the Sardar Sarovar Dam?
- Expected Outcome: This case study will help you understand the role of social movements in advocating for displaced communities and the environment.

4. Case Study: The Women's Movement and the Nirbhaya Case

- Objective: To analyze the impact of the Nirbhaya case and subsequent protests on India's women's rights movement.
- Instructions: Study the Nirbhaya case and the nationwide protests that followed. Evaluate the role of social movements in shaping public opinion and influencing legal reforms related to women's safety.
- Guiding Questions:
 - How did the Nirbhaya case catalyze the women's rights movement in India?
 - What changes were made in the legal framework post the Nirbhaya protests?

- To what extent have these changes been effective in improving women's safety?
- Expected Outcome: This case study will help you understand the power of social movements in influencing legal reforms and social attitudes regarding women's rights.

Answers for check your Progress:

1. What distinguishes New Social Movements (NSMs) from traditional social movements?

NSMs focus on identity, rights, and cultural issues—such as caste, gender, environment, and civil liberties—rather than just economic class struggle. They emphasize grassroots participation, symbolic action, and non-hierarchical leadership, unlike the top-down and class-based approach of traditional movements.

2. Mention any three major New Social Movements in India and their focus areas.

1. **Chipko Movement (1973)** – Protest against deforestation and environmental degradation.
2. **Dalit Panthers (1972)** – Fight against caste-based discrimination and untouchability.
3. **Narmada Bachao Andolan (1985)** – Opposition to displacement caused by dam projects and demand for rehabilitation.

3. What are the key impacts of NSMs on Indian society and governance?

NSMs have empowered marginalized groups, influenced major laws (like the Forest Rights Act and Domestic Violence Act), promoted civil society participation, and introduced tools like PIL for justice. They expanded democratic space and helped make governance more transparent and inclusive.

4. What was the significance of the “Towards Equality” report (1974) in the women's movement in India?

The "Towards Equality" report revealed the worsening socio-economic condition of women in India despite constitutional guarantees of equality. It marked the beginning of a more autonomous and organized phase of the women's

movement in the 1970s, sparking widespread feminist activism and grassroots mobilization.

5. Mention three major laws influenced by the Women's Movement in India and their purposes.

1. **Dowry Prohibition Act (1961):** Aimed to curb the dowry system and related violence.
2. **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005):** Provides legal protection to women from domestic abuse.
3. **Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act (2013):** Ensures safe and harassment-free work environments for women.

6. How did the Women's Movement in India address the needs of marginalized women?

The movement promoted **intersectional feminism**, recognizing and addressing the specific struggles of **Dalit, tribal, Muslim, and LGBTQ+ women**. It supported rural women's collectives, self-help groups (SHGs), and land rights struggles, helping democratize and diversify the feminist discourse in India.

7. What was the main objective of the Chipko Movement, and how did it influence environmental activism in India?

The Chipko Movement (1973) aimed to stop deforestation in the Garhwal region by having villagers, especially women, hug trees to prevent them from being cut down. It highlighted the link between forest conservation and rural livelihoods, emphasizing ecological sustainability. The movement became a symbol of grassroots environmental activism and inspired similar campaigns across India.

8. What are some significant environmental laws influenced by environmental movements in India?

Environmental movements led to the creation and strengthening of several laws, including:

- **Environmental Protection Act (1986)**
- **Forest Rights Act (2006)**
- **Forest Conservation Act (1980)** They also pushed for stricter Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) norms and helped embed the **Right to a Clean Environment** under Article 21 of the Constitution.

9. How did the Narmada Bachao Andolan challenge the traditional model of development in India?

The Narmada Bachao Andolan (NBA) opposed large dams like the Sardar Sarovar Dam due to the displacement of tribal and rural communities and ecological destruction. It questioned the top-down approach to development that ignored social costs, advocating for sustainable and inclusive growth. The movement also led to national and international attention, including the World Bank withdrawing its funding from the project in 1993.

10. What was the main demand of the India Against Corruption (IAC) movement in 2011?

The main demand of the IAC movement was the creation of a strong and independent **Lokpal (ombudsman)** to investigate cases of corruption involving public officials.

11. Who were the key leaders of the 2011 anti-corruption movement in India?

The key leaders were Anna Hazare, Arvind Kejriwal, Kiran Bedi, and other activists who led peaceful protests and hunger strikes to raise awareness against corruption.

12. What were two major outcomes of the IAC movement?

Two major outcomes were:

1. The passing of the Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act (2013).
2. The formation of the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) by Arvind Kejriwal, which entered politics on an anti-corruption platform.

13. What were the primary demands of the New Farmer's Movement in India?

The primary demands of the New Farmer's Movement included fair prices for agricultural produce, reduced input costs, market liberalization, and freedom from excessive government control over farm produce. The movement also called for improvements in rural credit, subsidies on fertilizers and electricity, and better procurement mechanisms for crops.

14. How did the New Farmer's Movement influence rural political consciousness in India?

The New Farmer's Movement played a significant role in raising rural political awareness, particularly among middle and upper-caste peasant communities like Jats, Marathas, and Vokkaligas. It empowered farmers to view themselves as economic stakeholders, leading to autonomous organization and non-party mobilization. This movement shifted the focus of farmers from being passive beneficiaries of state policies to active participants in policy discussions, influencing future agricultural reforms and movements.

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Suggested Readings:

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