

**Early Revolutionary Movements in India**

- Due to the **Bengal Partition** and the **Swadeshi Movement** in the early 20th century, Bengal emerged as the primary centre of political activities.
- Knowing the true nature of British rule, and inspired by many events inside and outside of India, the younger generation of nationalists became frustrated with the methods of Congress and formed their own secret societies like **Anushilan Samiti** and **Jugantar**.
- They recruited and trained many young men to adopt violent methods of individual actions.

**Factors Responsible for the Early Revolutionary Movements in India:**

- The first phase can be attributed to several key factors that fueled the growth of early revolutionary activities. These includes:

**Anger against British Repression:**

- They understood that the **true nature of British rule** was exploitation and that India would not advance economically unless British imperialism was replaced by self-rule.
- Poor handling of the **famines** that devastated India from 1896 to 1900 fueled this anger.
- The exploitative nature of colonial rule was further manifested by **Lord Curzon's policies**.
- The repression of Indians during the **Swadeshi movement** also angered the nationalists.
- **International Influences:** Global events, such as the defeat of Italy by Ethiopia in 1896 and the defeat of Russia by Japan in 1905, shattered the propaganda of European invincibility.

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- **Dissatisfaction with Moderates:** The nationalists were more influenced by the Extremists of **Congress** and were dissatisfied with the **Moderates'** methods and achievements.
- **Impatience with Extremists:** Although inspired by the extremists, the nationalists were growing impatient with the inability of the extremists to get immediate concessions from the British and achieve full-scale mass mobilisation.

### Ideology and Methodology of the Early Revolutionary Movements:

- The ideology of early revolutionary activities in India was characterised by a blend of nationalism, anti-colonialism, and radicalism.
- The actions, writings, and speeches of the revolutionaries during this time period demonstrate romanticism and emotionalism.
- **Objectives:**
  - To strike terror among the British officials,
  - To remove the fear and inertia of the people,
  - To arouse nationalist consciousness among Indians.
- **Methods:**
  - Individual heroic actions such as organising **assassinations** of unpopular **officials** as well as **traitors** and informers among the revolutionaries themselves.
  - Conducting **swadeshi dacoities** to raise funds for revolutionary activities and
  - Organising **revolutionary conspiracies** (during the World War I) with the expectation of assistance from **Britain's enemies**.

### Early Revolutionary Movements in India:

#### Anushilan Samiti:

- **Year:** 1902
- **Area:** Kolkata
- **Founder:** Satish Chandra Basu after encouragement from Sister Nivedita and Swami Shradananda.
- He named it after Bankimchandra's play Anushilan-Tattva, or theory of discipline
- Pramathanath Mitra was its main patron.
- The Banaras branch (Young Men's Association) and the Patna branch of the Samiti were founded in 1908 and 1913 respectively, by Sachin Sanyal.
- During the Swadeshi movement, many youths joined the Samiti.
- It was backed by extremist leaders such as Bipin Chandra Pal and Brahmabandhab Upadhyaya.
- **Activities:** Members carried out several dacoities, bomb explosions, and assassinations of key British employees.

#### Abhinav Bharat Mandir (Young India Society):

- **Year:** 1904
- **Founder:** Vinayak Savarkar and Ganesh Damodar Savarkar.
- Based on Giuseppe Mazzini's organisation, Young Italy.
- Started as "Mitra Mela" and in 1904, later it was renamed Abhinav Bharat.
- Vinayak Savarkar wrote Mazzini Charitra (a translation of the Italian revolutionary Mazzini's writings).

#### Yugantar group:

- **Year:** 1906
- The Yugantar group was a secret revolutionary group based in Kolkata.
- **Founder:** Aurobindo Ghosh, Barindra Ghosh, Raja Subodh Malik and Bupendranath Datta.

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- **Aim:** To collect war weaponry like arms and explosives and manufacture bombs.
- **Jugantar journal:** Anushilan's inner circle (Barindra Kumar Ghosh, Bhupendranath Dutta) launched the weekly Yugantar.

**Muzaffarpur Conspiracy Case:**

- **Year:** 1908
- Also known as the Manicktolla bomb intrigue or Alipore Bomb Conspiracy Case.
- In Muzaffarpur (Bihar), Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki threw a bomb on the carriage of Douglas Kingsford, resulting in the death of two women.
- Prafulla Chaki committed suicide and Khudiram Bose was tried along with his accomplices, Mrityunjay Chakraborty and Kishorimohan Bandopadhyay.

**Assassination of Lieutenant Colonel William Curzon-Wylie:**

- **Year:** 1909
- **Place:** In the meeting of Indian students at the Imperial Institute in London.
- Madanlal Dhingra, inspired by Veer Savarkar's revolutionary ideas, murdered Lieutenant Colonel William Curzon-Wylie.
- Dhingra was arrested and later tried.

**Nasik Conspiracy:**

- **Year:** 1909
- Jackson was appointed as Nashik's District Magistrate.
- Anant Laxman Kanhere assassinated him during the Sangeet Sharda screening at Vijayanand Theater.
- It was discovered that Vinayak Savarkar had sent 20 Browning pistols to India, one of which was used in the murder of Jackson.
- Savarkar was charged with Jackson's murder and sentenced to life imprisonment at Cellular Jail of Andaman in 1910.

### Howrah Gang Case:

- **Year:** 1910
- Also known as the Howrah-Shibpur Conspiracy case.
- **Leader:** Jatindranath Mukherjee.
- 47 Bengali Indian nationalists of the Anushilan Samiti were captured for the homicide of Inspector Shamsul Alam who was investigating the progressive exercises of the Samiti.
- Jatindranath Mukherjee and Narendranath Bhattacharjee were condemned to one-year detention.

### Delhi-Lahore Conspiracy case:

- **Year:** 1912
- **Leader:** Rashbehari Bose
- Basant Kumar Biswas, Avadh Behari, Master Amir Chand, and Bal Mukund were among the revolutionaries who had planned the Viceroy Lord Hardinge's murder in 1912.
- On December 23, 1912, Lord Hardinge was in Delhi for the installation of Delhi as India's capital.
- The revolutionaries (Bose with Sachin Sanyal) threw a bomb at him as he was riding an elephant through Chandni Chowk.
- Hardinge managed to escape unharmed, but the revolutionaries were apprehended in February 1914, about a year later.
- Rashbehari Bose escaped the conviction, while Charan Das received life imprisonment.

### Revolutionary Movements Abroad:

- Early revolutionary movements abroad involved Indian nationalists and activists rallying beyond India's borders to **garner international support, build awareness, and create solidarity** with the struggle for independence from British rule.

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- These efforts aimed to unite the Indian diaspora and like-minded individuals globally.

**Indian Home Rule Society:**

- Year: 1905
- Founded by Shyamaji Krishna Varma, and later, the organisation's leadership was taken over by V. D. Savarkar in 1907.
- The Society promoted passive resistance and nonviolent self-rule.
- The Indian Sociologist: Krishna Varma's journal, was a mouthpiece of the society.
- India House: It was founded as a hostel for Indian students and became a centre for Indian revolutionaries in Europe.
- After the murder of Sir Curzon Wylie in 1909, House was disbanded.
- The Indian Home Rule Society met weekly at India House, passing resolutions condemning arrests in India and advocating for India's total independence.

**Ghadar Party:**

- Year: 1913
- The Ghadar revolutionaries were mostly drawn from the Punjabi immigrants who settled on North America's West Coast in 1904.
- Lala Hardyal took the leadership of the immigrant Indian community, and the Hindi Association in Portland was formed to meet the need for a centralised organisation in May 1913, which later changed its name to the Hindustan Ghadar Party.
- At the first meeting of the Association, Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna was elected President, Lala Har Dayal as General Secretary. Others in attendance included Bhai Parmanand and Harnam Singh 'Tundilat'.
- **Newspaper:** Ghadar (Urdu and Gurumukhi)
- The newspaper was called Hindustan Ghadar, and a weekly compilation of poetry and songs called Ghadar ki Goonj was also published.

### Komagata Maru Incident:

- The incident involved the Japanese steamship Komagata Maru, on which a group of Indian citizens attempted to emigrate to Canada in 1914 but were denied entry.
- When they reached Kolkata, Police attempted to arrest them, following which a riot ensued, and the subsequent police firing led to the death of 22 people.
- Only 24 of them were admitted to Canada, but the remaining 352 passengers were not allowed to disembark, and the ship was forced to return to India.

### Later Revolutionary Movements:

- **After the World War I**, the younger generations of nationalists initially joined with the mass movement of Swaraj led by Gandhiji.
- But his methods and sudden withdrawal of the NCM frustrated these nationalists, and led them to start a new phase of revolutionary activities, ideologically based on socialist ideas with a secular outlook.
- **Two broad strands of revolutionary activities developed in this phase: One in Punjab, U.P., Bihar and Central Provinces and the other in Bengal.** Both strands came under the influence of new social and ideological forces such as **socialism** and **Marxism**.

### Factors Responsible for the Rise of later Revolutionary Movements:

There were several factors for the resurgence of such activities in the 1920s, some of which are given below:

- **Influence of international events:** The early 20th century witnessed several global revolutionary movements, such as the **Russian Revolution in 1917** and the **Irish struggle** for independence.
  - The revolutionaries were significantly influenced by new ideas focusing on Marxism, socialism, and the proletariat.

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- **The influence of radical literature:** The period saw the proliferation of radical literature, particularly through underground publications and pamphlets.
  - Journals such as **Atmasakti, Sarathi, and Bijoli** published memoirs and articles extolling the self-sacrifice of revolutionaries.
- **Socio-Ideological factors:**
  - **Growth of socialist ideas and groups all over India:** The Bolshevik revolution in the 1920s significantly influenced India's political landscape, drawing young leaders and intellectuals. **For example,** Communist movement in the 1920s.
  - **Rise of a militant trade union movement:** The trade union movement in the later years of the 1920s was metamorphosing into militant ideology, which was also a factor for evolutionary activities in these years.
- **Discontent with the withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement:** The sudden withdrawal of the **Non-Cooperation Movement** by **Mahatma Gandhi** created confusion as well as discontent amongst the younger generation of nationalists, which were urged by Gandhi earlier to join their movement.
- **Non-agreement with the congress ideologies:** The objective of revolutionary activists was to achieve total independence instead of congress' ideas of swaraj which was not clearly defined.
  - They embraced the violent revolutionary path, believing in "**ends justify means**" instead of Gandhi's "**means justify ends.**"

**Revolutionary Movements in Punjab, UP, Bihar and Central Provinces:**

- There was a rise in the new class of trade union workers after the First World War.

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- The revolutionaries saw the revolutionary potentialities of the new class and desired to harness it into the **nationalist revolution**.
- With this objective, the revolutionaries of the **U.P. and Punjab** set in motion an organisation called the **Hindustan Republican Association** in 1924.

### Hindustan Republican Association:

- Founded in 1924
- Founded by Ramprasad Bismil, Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee, and Sachin Sanyal in Kanpur.
- **Ideology and program:** Its intention was to organise an armed revolution in order to destabilise the colonial government.
- In its place, establish the Federal Republic of the United States of India, based on the principle of adult franchise.
- Later renamed as the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) in 1928 under the leadership of Bhagat Singh.
- The leadership of the new organisation was collective, and its goal was socialism.
- **Influence:** Bhagavad Gita, Anandmath, Aurobindo, Vivekananda, militant nationalists, Russian, French, and Irish revolutions.
- The main impetus for the formation of the party was Mahatma Gandhi's decision to call off the non-cooperation movement in 1922 as a result of the Chauri Chaura incident. (The Bolshevik revolution, as evident in its ideology).

### Kakori Conspiracy Case:

- **Year:** 1925
- One of the major actions of HRA was the Kakori Train dacoity Case.
- The HRA believed in armed action against the imperialist government; they planned this ruse to generate money, which they desperately needed.

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- On August 9, 1925, a group of HRA activists, including Ram Prasad Bismil, Ashfaq Ullah Khan, Chandrashekhar Azad, Manmathnath Gupta, Rajen Lahiri and Thakur Raj Singh, stopped a train at Kakori near Lucknow and stole government's treasure from the guard's coach.
- Most of the revolutionaries were arrested and tried in the famous Kakori Conspiracy Case.

**Lahore Conspiracy Case (Saunders's Murder):**

- Bhagat Singh and Shivaram Rajguru killed Police officer John Saunders on December 17, 1927.
- Sukhdev Thapar and Chandrashekhar Azad assisted them in this act.
- Their original target was James Scott, who had ordered his men to lathi-charge protesters, resulting in the death of Lala Lajpat Rai.
- After the preliminary, each of the three was condemned and executed by hanging in March 1931, and this case is known as the Lahore conspiracy case.

**Central Legislative Assembly Bomb Case:**

- **Year:** April 1929
- Batukeshwar Dutt, along with Bhagat Singh, threw bombs in the central assembly to protest the Trade Disputes Bill and Public Safety Bill – introduced by the British government to curtail working-class politics in India.
- They intended to be arrested and use the trial court as a propaganda forum to familiarise the masses with their movement and ideology.
- The court ruled in favour of a life sentence, citing the malicious and unlawful intent of the explosions.
- Bhagat Singh was arrested again in connection with the murder of a British cop, JP Saunders.
- This case was known as the Lahore Conspiracy Case.

### Revolutionary Movements in Bengal:

- In the early 1930s, Bengal became the centre of violent armed struggle, despite not having any proper organisation.
- These unrests ultimately met with brutal British repression.

### Chittagong Armory Raid:

- Surya Sen led the Chittagong armoury attack on April 18, 1930. In 1930, the Indian Republican Army established the Chittagong branch.
- Other revolutionaries were Ganesh Ghosh, Lokenath Bal, Ananta Singh, Pritilata Waddedar, Kalpana Dutta, Ambika Chakraborty, and Subodh Roy.
- Sen planned to capture British arsenals in Chittagong, distributing weapons to fellow revolutionaries.
- They seized the police armoury, disrupted communication, and halted a train. But they failed to find ammunition.
- Surya Sen was arrested and executed alongside Tarkeshwar Dostidar, who had devised a plan to free him from prison.