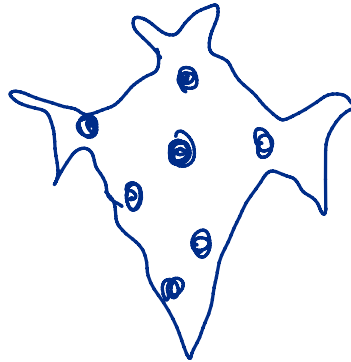


# The Impact of Revolt of 1857

09 January 2024 20:02

## • Indian Mutiny / Sepoy Mutiny .

- Lack of coordination .
- Division among rebels .
- Military Superiority of the Britishers .
- Loyalty of Some Indian States .
- Lack of Mass Support .
- Limited Resources and Support
- 



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## View of Historians .

## Impact of the Revolt of 1857

1. End of the East India Company's Rule.

The Gov. of India Act 1858.

2. Policy Reforms.

3. Indian Nationalism.

4. Changes in Military Policies.

5. Social and Religious Reforms.

6. Economic Changes.

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### Ilbert Bill Controversy

late. 19th century

Sir Cowdrey Ilbert (Law Member of the  
Viceroy's Council, 1883).



Amended in 1884.

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Komagata Maru. 2 1914.

↳ Japanese steamship.

+ Sikh immigrants.

1914.

Vancouver, Canada. 376 passengers

Immigration Restrictions -

- Continuous Journey Regulation of 1908.

→ Denied Entry

→ Legal Battles.

↳ Gurdit Singh.

↳ businessman.

↳ political activist.

→ Forced Return to India.

July. 1914.

→ Tragedy in India.

Budge Budge (kolkata) Sept.

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'Safety Valve' Controversy  
↳ 19<sup>th</sup>  
century  
↳ debate.

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Political Associations in Bengal.

- Bangabhasha Prakashika Sangha .
  - Landholder's Society / Zamindari Association
  - Bengal British India Society 1843 .
  - The first Committee of British Indian Association . (1851) .
  - Indian Society — Anand Mohan Bose .
  - India League — Sisir Kumar Ghosh .
  - Indian Association — Anand Mohan Bose  
Swendranath Banerjee .
- 

Formation of INC. 1885

↳ 72 delegates . . (Bombay) .

Founding Father of the Congress -- Allan  
Octavian Hume.

8<sup>th</sup> Dec 1885, Tejpal Sanskrit Pathshala,  
Bombay.

Presidentship of WC Bonnerjee.

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**The Revolt of 1857**, also known as the Indian Mutiny or Sepoy Mutiny, was a significant uprising against British rule in India. Several factors contributed to the failure of the revolt:

1. **\*Lack of Coordination:** The rebellion lacked a centralized leadership and coordination. It was a series of localized uprisings that occurred in different regions with no unified command. This lack of coordination weakened the overall strength of the rebellion.
2. **\*Divisions among Rebels:** The rebels were not homogenous; there were divisions along religious, regional, and caste lines. This lack of unity among the Indian soldiers and civilians hindered their

2. **\*Divisions among Rebels:\*** The rebels were not homogenous; there were divisions along religious, regional, and caste lines. This lack of unity among the Indian soldiers and civilians hindered their ability to present a united front against the British.

3. **\*Military Superiority of the British:\*** The British had a well-organized and disciplined military force, which was technologically superior to the Indian forces. The British military also had better training, tactics, and communication systems. This gave them a significant advantage during the conflict.

4. **\*Loyalty of Some Indian States:\*** Some Indian princely states remained loyal to the British, either due to treaties, perceived benefits of British rule, or fear of retaliation. This further fragmented the rebellion and limited its scope.

5. **\*Lack of Mass Support:\*** The revolt did not gain widespread support among the Indian population. Many Indians, especially in urban areas, did not actively participate in the rebellion, either due to apathy or fear of reprisals.

6. **\*Limited Resources and Supplies:\*** The rebels faced challenges in terms of resources, ammunition, and provisions. The British, on the other hand, had a well-established supply chain and access to reinforcements from Britain.

7. **\*British Diplomacy and Political Strategy:\*** The British employed effective diplomatic and political strategies to isolate and suppress the rebellion. They were successful in garnering support from some Indian rulers and using divide-and-rule tactics.

8. **\*Repression and Brutality:\*** The British responded to the rebellion with extreme brutality, crushing resistance with force and executing widespread reprisals. This harsh response weakened the morale of the rebels and discouraged further support for the uprising.

9. **\*Siege of Delhi:\*** The British were able to retake control of Delhi in September 1857, a significant symbolic victory that had a demoralizing effect on the rebels. The fall of Delhi marked a turning point in the course of the rebellion.

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While the Revolt of 1857 did not achieve its immediate goal of overthrowing British rule, it played a crucial role in shaping the Indian independence movement in the subsequent decades. The events of 1857 had a lasting impact on the political landscape of India, leading to changes in governance and administration.

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**The views of historians** on the nature of the Revolt of 1857 have evolved over time, and different scholars have offered varied interpretations. Historiography on the event has seen shifts in perspectives, and the understanding of the revolt has been influenced by factors such as nationalist sentiments, post-colonial perspectives, and access to new sources. Here are some of the key views that historians have put forth:

1. **\*Nationalist Perspective:\***

- Some Indian nationalist historians have portrayed the Revolt of 1857 as the "First War of Independence" or the "First War of Indian Independence." They emphasize the widespread nature of the uprising and argue that it was a united and conscious effort by Indians to throw off British colonial rule.

2. **\*Economic Grievances:\***

- Some historians focus on economic factors as the primary cause of the revolt. They argue that the introduction of new land revenue policies, taxation, and economic exploitation by the British East India Company played a crucial role in sparking the rebellion.

3. **\*Religious and Cultural Factors:\***

- Certain scholars highlight the religious and cultural dimensions of the revolt. The introduction of new cartridges greased with animal fat, which offended both Hindu and Muslim soldiers, is often cited as a triggering factor. Additionally, concerns about the preservation of religious and cultural practices were seen as a driving force behind the rebellion.

4. **\*Social and Caste Dynamics:\***

- Some historians analyze the revolt through the lens of social and caste dynamics. They argue that certain groups within Indian society, feeling marginalized or threatened by British policies, actively participated in the uprising to protect their social and economic interests.

5. **\*Regional and Local Perspectives:\***

5. **\*Regional and Local Perspectives:\***

- Many historians emphasize the localized and regional nature of the revolt. They argue that grievances varied across different regions, and the rebellion was often driven by local factors rather than a unified national cause.

6. **\*Military Mutiny:\***

- Some historians view the events of 1857 primarily as a military mutiny. They highlight the role of the sepoys (Indian soldiers in the British East India Company's army) in initiating the rebellion, often driven by immediate concerns such as the cartridge issue and the perceived undermining of their traditional privileges.

7. **\*Symbolic Uprising:\***

- Some scholars see the revolt as a symbolic uprising that, even though it failed in its immediate objectives, had a profound impact on shaping the future course of the Indian independence movement. The events of 1857 are considered a catalyst for later nationalist movements.

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**The Revolt of 1857 had a profound impact on India**, both in the short term and in the longer historical context. While the rebellion itself was quelled by the British, its consequences were far-reaching and contributed to significant changes in the political, social, and economic landscape of India. Here are some of the key impacts of the Revolt of 1857:

1. **\*End of the East India Company's Rule:\***

- The British government took over direct control of India from the East India Company in the aftermath of the revolt. The Government of India Act 1858 was enacted, transferring the governance of India to the British Crown. India became a formal part of the British Empire.

2. **\*Policy Reforms:\***

- The revolt prompted the British government to reevaluate and reform some of its policies in India. The Doctrine of Lapse, which allowed the British to annex territories if the ruler did not have a natural heir, was abolished. The British also became more sensitive to cultural and religious sentiments in their administration.

3. **\*Indian Nationalism:\***

- The events of 1857 are often considered a precursor to the Indian nationalist movement. The rebellion sowed the seeds of Indian nationalism as people from various regions and communities participated in a common cause against British rule. The idea of a united India began to take root.

#### 4. \*Changes in Military Policies:\*

- The British reorganized their military in India, reducing the proportion of Indian soldiers (sepoys) in favor of European troops. The loyalty of the Indian military was now considered a matter of great concern to the British, leading to changes in recruitment policies and the treatment of Indian soldiers.

#### 5. \*Social and Religious Reforms:\*

- The revolt highlighted the importance of addressing social and religious issues in India. The British government and missionaries began to focus on social and religious reforms, including efforts to improve education, abolish certain practices, and promote social harmony.

#### 6. \*Economic Changes:\*

- The revolt brought attention to economic grievances, leading to some changes in economic policies. The British government aimed to balance revenue collection and reduce the economic burden on Indian peasants. However, the overall economic structure remained exploitative.

#### 7. \*Impact on Princely States:\*

- The loyalty or disloyalty of various princely states during the revolt influenced subsequent British policies toward them. States that had remained loyal to the British were rewarded, while those that rebelled faced punitive measures and, in some cases, direct annexation.

#### 8. \*Cultural and Educational Impact:\*

- The revolt had an impact on cultural consciousness, inspiring literature, art, and music that celebrated the resistance against colonial rule. The need for education and awareness also gained importance, contributing to the later development of Indian education and intellectual pursuits.

#### 9. \*Secular and Communal Tensions:\*

- The revolt revealed communal tensions, especially with regard to the use of cartridges greased with animal fat. This event contributed to increased religious and communal consciousness, setting the stage for future communal tensions and conflicts.

#### 10. \*Legacy in Nationalist Movements:\*



- The Revolt of 1857 left a lasting legacy in the Indian nationalist movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The leaders of subsequent independence movements often looked back at the revolt as a symbol of resistance against foreign rule.

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**The Ilbert Bill controversy** was a significant episode in British India during the late 19th century, reflecting the tensions and conflicts surrounding issues of race, social hierarchy, and governance. The controversy was centered around the Ilbert Bill, introduced by Sir Courtenay Ilbert, the Law Member of the Viceroy's Council, in 1883.

The Ilbert Bill aimed to amend the Criminal Procedure Code to allow Indian judges and magistrates to preside over cases involving European British subjects in India. Prior to the proposed changes, only European judges could try cases involving European defendants, while Indian judges had jurisdiction over cases involving Indian defendants.

Key points of the Ilbert Bill included:

1. **\*Extension of Jurisdiction:\*** The primary objective of the Ilbert Bill was to extend the jurisdiction of Indian judges to try cases involving Europeans. This was seen as a move toward a more egalitarian legal system and an attempt to address the racial discrimination inherent in the existing legal framework.
2. **\*Provisions for Opting Out:\*** The bill included provisions allowing European defendants to opt for trial by a jury composed entirely of European jurors if they felt prejudiced by having an Indian judge or magistrate.

However, the Ilbert Bill generated strong opposition from the European community in India, particularly the Anglo-Indian community, which consisted of British residents in India. They vehemently opposed the idea of Indian judges having jurisdiction over cases involving Europeans, viewing it as a threat to their perceived racial superiority and a breach of their privileges.

The controversy brought to the forefront deep-seated racial prejudices and social hierarchies prevalent during the colonial era. The opposition was led by European settlers who were concerned about losing their perceived privileges and dominance in the legal and social spheres.

Ultimately, under pressure from the European community and facing significant opposition, the Ilbert Bill was amended in 1884. The compromise version retained the provisions allowing Indian

judges to try cases involving Europeans but included a clause allowing European defendants to request a jury composed entirely of Europeans.

While the Ilbert Bill controversy did not lead to a complete overhaul of the discriminatory legal practices in British India, it highlighted the racial tensions and inequalities within the colonial society. The compromise reflected the challenges faced by those advocating for a more inclusive and just legal system in the context of deeply entrenched colonial attitudes. The episode also contributed to a growing awareness of the need for social and legal reforms in British India.

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The Komagata Maru incident was a significant event in Canadian history that occurred in 1914, highlighting issues of immigration, racism, and discriminatory policies. The incident involved the Komagata Maru, a Japanese steamship, and a group of Sikh immigrants from British India who sought to challenge Canada's restrictive immigration laws.

Key details of the Komagata Maru incident include:

1. **\*Arrival of the Komagata Maru:\*** In May 1914, the Komagata Maru arrived in the port of Vancouver, Canada, carrying 376 passengers, mostly Sikhs from Punjab, India. They were intending to immigrate to Canada in search of better economic opportunities.
2. **\*Immigration Restrictions:\*** At the time, Canada had stringent immigration laws that were explicitly designed to limit the entry of people from certain regions, including India. The Continuous Journey Regulation of 1908 required immigrants to arrive in Canada via a continuous journey from their country of origin or citizenship without stopping in another country. This regulation disproportionately affected immigrants from South Asia, as there were no direct ships from India to Canada.
3. **\*Denied Entry:\*** Upon arrival, the passengers of the Komagata Maru were denied entry into Canada due to the Continuous Journey Regulation. The Canadian immigration authorities, influenced by anti-Asian sentiments and racism, held the ship in the Vancouver harbor.
4. **\*Legal Battles:\*** The passengers, led by Gurdit Singh, a prominent Sikh businessman, and political activist, challenged their exclusion in Canadian courts. However, the legal battles were unsuccessful, and the passengers were not allowed to disembark.

5. \*Forced Return to India:\* After a two-month standoff, during which the passengers endured difficult conditions aboard the ship, the Canadian government ordered the Komagata Maru to return to India. The ship left Vancouver on July 23, 1914, escorted by a Canadian naval vessel.

6. \*Tragedy in India:\* Upon the ship's return to India, it faced further complications. British authorities in India viewed the passengers as political agitators and potential troublemakers. A clash occurred in the Budge Budge area near Kolkata on September 29, 1914, resulting in the deaths of at least 20 passengers.

The Komagata Maru incident is often remembered as a stark example of the discriminatory immigration policies and racial prejudices prevalent in Canada during the early 20th century. It underscored the challenges faced by immigrants from Asia and the impact of such policies on their lives. In later years, the Komagata Maru incident has been acknowledged as an injustice, and efforts have been made to recognize and address the historical wrongs associated with this episode.

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The Safety Valve Controversy refers to a historical debate among historians regarding the existence and significance of a concept known as the "safety valve" in the context of American economic and social history during the 19th century. The controversy revolves around the question of whether the availability of western lands served as a safety valve, easing social and economic tensions in the East by providing an outlet for surplus population.

Key points related to the Safety Valve Controversy include:

1. \*The Thesis:\* Historian Frederick Jackson Turner, in his influential essay "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," presented the idea of the safety valve in 1893. Turner argued that the existence of a continually advancing frontier in the West had acted as a safety valve for the social and economic pressures in the East. The availability of cheap and abundant land in the West, according to Turner, allowed individuals facing economic hardship or social discontent in the East to migrate westward, thereby relieving societal tensions.

2. \*Critics of the Safety Valve Theory:\* Over time, historians and scholars began to question the validity of Turner's safety valve theory. Critics argued that the concept oversimplified complex social and economic dynamics and neglected other factors contributing to westward migration. They contended that the West was not an unlimited and unrestricted safety valve that automatically absorbed surplus population without causing conflicts or challenges.

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3. **\*Alternative Explanations:\*** Opponents of the safety valve theory proposed alternative explanations for westward migration, such as economic opportunities, technological advancements,

and improvements in transportation. They emphasized that individuals and families moved west for various reasons, including the desire for landownership, economic opportunities, and the pursuit of new lives, rather than simply as an escape valve for social tensions.

4. **\*Social and Economic Realities:\*** Critics also argued that the safety valve theory downplayed the social and economic challenges faced by those who migrated westward. Instead of viewing westward migration as a safety valve that easily resolved issues in the East, scholars began to explore the complexities of settling in the West, including the hardships, conflicts with Native Americans, and struggles for survival.

5. **\*Reevaluation of Turner's Thesis:\*** While the safety valve theory has been challenged, Frederick Jackson Turner's broader thesis about the importance of the frontier in shaping American identity and institutions remains influential. Scholars continue to study the impact of westward expansion on American history, recognizing both the opportunities it provided and the challenges it presented.

In summary, the Safety Valve Controversy revolves around the interpretation of the role of westward expansion in American history. While the safety valve theory has faced criticism, the broader discussion on the significance of the frontier and its impact on American development continues to be an important topic in historical scholarship.

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### **Emergence of Nationalism in India**

Consciousness of a common nation began to be clearly stated by the political associations formed after 1850, especially those that came into being in the 1870s and 1880s. Most of these were led by English-educated professionals such as lawyers.

### **Causes and Rise of Nationalism**

Different causes that led to the rise of nationalism in India are as follows:

Differences in Interests of Indians and Britishers -

## Differences in Interests of Indians and Britishers -

- The root problem of British rule was its selfish interest which was totally different from Indian people. They ruled over India and always prioritised their interests over Indian welfare. Indians realised that their interests were being sacrificed over British manufacturers.

- Educated Indians were also dissatisfied with acquired knowledge about economic and political exploits by the British.

- The ruin of Indian economic conditions was also due to this very fact, India was dumped with cheaply made products from machines that destroyed Indian handicrafts. And at the same place nothing was done in respect of industrialisation in India.

- Heavy tariffs, taxation, and transport policies didn't help Indian capitalists, who were competing against industries favoured by the British.

## Administrative and Economic Unification

- The sentiments of the nation grew among people after 1857 as India was unified and sense of nationalism emerged during the 19th and 20th centuries.
- The British gradually introduced a uniform system and modern system of government throughout the country and in this way unified it administratively.
- Introduction of telegraph, railways and unified postal system had also brought different areas of India together and increased mutual contacts among Indians, particularly among the leaders.

## Growth of the Press, Newspapers and Literature

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- Many newspapers with nationalist thoughts emerged during the second half of the 19th century. Ideas of self-government, democracy, and industries were brought in popular mass discussion by the press and newspapers. It also brought people living in different parts of the country together, and helped them exchange their views.

Lord Lytton's Reactionary Policies

- The highly expensive Second Afghan War, which was financed out of Indian revenues, the abolition of import duties on British textile and the Arms Act of 1878, which was an attempt to disarm the Indian people, created widespread discontent against the British empire.
  
- Another anti Indian move of Lytton's regime was the lowering the age limit (from 21 to 19) for appearing in the Indian Civil Service Examination that was held only in London. Against this, Indian Association started a massive agitation under the leadership of Surendranath Banerjee and Lal Mohan Ghosh.
  
- The Grand Darbar was organised by Lord Lytton in 1877 at Delhi to proclaim the assumption of imperial title by Queen Victoria, when the country was in the severe grip of famine. These acts and policies of Lord Lytton accelerated the development of Indian nationalism. Surendranath Banerjee said about Lytton's Viceroyalty, "In the evolution of political progress bad rulers are often a blessing in disguise."

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#### Political Associations in Bengal

- Bangabhasha Prakasika Sabha (Associates of Raja Rammohan Roy, 1836). It is said to be the first organised political association of India. It was mainly founded to safeguard the interests of the landlords.

- Landholder's Society or Zamindari Association In 1838, it was formed by Dwarkanath Tagore to protect the rights of landlords.

Bengal British India Society It was founded in Calcutta in 1843 politically inclined public association to be formed in the British India. Unlike the Zamindari Association, the Bengal British India Society

was an organisation dominated by a section of Bengali intellectuals bashing Western education and awareness.

- The First Committee of British Indian Association Consisted of Rajendra Lal Mitra, Harish Chandra Mukherjee, Ram Gopal Ghosh, Radha Kant Dev, George Thompson, in 1851. It was founded by merging Landholders Society and the Bengal British India Society. It sent a petition to the Parliament praying for expansion of legislature and giving it more popular character, separation of judicial from executive functions, reduction in the salaries of higher officers, abolition of salt duty and stamp duties etc.

- The result was the provision of additional six members to the Governor-General's Council for legislative purposes by Indian Council Act, 1861. During the years following the Revolt of 1857, the British Indian Association was the most important political body in India and its organ, the Hindu Patriot was the most influential newspaper in the country.

- East India Association Founded by Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India in 1866. The aim of the East India Association was popularisation of Indian grievances so as to influence British Public Opinion.

- Indian Society was founded by Anand Mohan Bose, in 1872.

- India League Sisir Kumar Ghosh, founded the India League with the aim to instill the feeling of

- India League Sisir Kumar Ghosh, founded the India League with the aim to instill the feeling of Nationalism in common people. He was also the founder editor of Amrita Bazar Patrika, 1875.

- Indian Association Anand Mohan Bose and Surendranath Banerjee founded it in 1876. The Indian Association formed the centre of an All India Movement by providing the leadership for agitation on issues such as the age limit for the Indian Civil Service Examination and the Ilbert Bill Agitation.

#### Formation of Indian National Congress (INC), 1885

The Indian National Congress (INC) was formed when 72 delegates from all the presidencies and provinces of India met in Bombay, in December 1885.

Allan Octavian Hume, a retired British official in India, called as 'Founding Father of the Congress' played a leading role in the formation of the INC.

He established contact with some of the most important Indian leaders all over the country and received their cooperation in forming the Congress.

The First Session of Indian National Congress was held on 8th December, 1885 at Tejpal Sanskrit Pathshala, Bombay under the Presidentship of WC Banerjee.

#### **Aims and Objectives of the Congress**

The aims and objectives of the Congress were as follows: To foster solidarity and friendship amongst the people of India. To eradicate all the prevailing caste, creed, race or province related prejudices from the country.

To strengthen the feelings of national unity.

- To consider the opinions of educated classes on the issues related to the problems of society.

To formulate guidelines for future plan of action in the public interest.

To found a democratic and nationalist movement.

To politicise and politically educate people.



To politicise and politically educate people.

To establish headquarters for movement.

To propagate and develop an anti-colonial nationalist ideology.

To formulate the common economic and political programmes.