



CHAPTER - I

India Under British rule

English merchants set their feet on the soil of our country, won the battle of Plassey in 1757 defeating Nawab Siraj-ud-doulla, the last independent ruler of Bengal, due to treachery of his army chief Mirjafar, other commanders Yar Latif Khan & Rai Durlav, who, along with Jagat Sheths and Umichand joined a conspiracy with the British Commander Robert Clive to dethrone Siraj. After winning the battle the British installed Mirjafar as Nawab of Bengal. When he fell out with them, he was removed and his son-in-law Mir Kasim (1760-63) was installed. He made a last-minute attempt to restore his independent rule, but was defeated in the battle of Buxar and with this ended the last chance of arresting British domination.

In 1767 a dual system of Government was established in which the Nawabs ruled on behalf of the British. All of them were mere puppets in British hands. This enabled British East India Company to extend their sphere of influence and finally to bring the whole country under their subjugation for nearly two hundred years, allowing, however, some princely native states as tributaries in the hands of puppet kings or Nawabs under surveillance of British Residents in the respective States.

How it was that a flock of foreign merchants, rather fortune seekers, finally could rule such a vast stretch of land like Indian sub-continent with a huge population endowed with a rich cultural heritage that gave birth to the world's one of the most ancient civilizations! The reason, of course, is not far to seek. Presence of thousands of princely states, big and small, Rajas and zaminders, with divergent views and interests, engaged in an atmosphere of disbelief and conspiracies and petty interests, conflicts and clashes always posed a great barrier

to the concept of oneness and common interest for the country as a whole. "As a matter of fact, there was hardly any tangible evidence of the existence of a feeling of true nationalism, based on the unity of the whole of India and asserting its claim for an independent State, before the advent of Swami Vivekananda." ('Economic Transformation of India' - Sabyasachi Bhattacharya in Cultural Heritage of India Vol.VIII).

The most essential ingredients for a sense of nationalism to emerge is a common approach in economic, political and cultural ideas and principles that bind the society together; but these concepts were completely absent in those days. As a result nation, national, nationhood, nationalism etc were unheard of and non-existent in the minds of the people of our country. These concepts are of rather modern origin and they came to spread with western education during the British regime amongst the educated segments in the country. In a sense it may be a blessing in disguise, as it paved the way of modern education in science, philosophy and other branches of knowledge to take roots in our country, but the cost was too enormous for the countrymen considering the untold hardships and sufferings faced by the peasants, artisans and common men due to breakdown of the existing economic order being replaced by the repressive colonial system.

However, when the so called advanced sections of the people were pleased and obsessed with the bounties of the British rulers, peasants and tribal communities of our country took a contradictory position and waged revolts against their policies of misrule and exploitation, which had caused havoc to their normally peaceful life. It may be of interest for all of us to remember some of those sporadic and spontaneous uprisings – in different parts of the country – during expansion of British rule after the Battle of Plassey in 1757.

Only after fifteen years since the merchants set their foot-prints there was an uprising by the Sannyasi-Fakirs in 1772. Close on the heels followed stirrings by the Chuars – 1773, Khasis – 1783, Bhils – 1818-19, Kolis – 1824, Ramosis – 1826-29, Khonds – 1830-59, Peasant revolt near Barasat in Bengal led by Titu Mir under the shelter of a fort built of bamboos – 1831, Kols – 1831-32, Gadkaris – 1844, Poligars – 1846, Santals – 1855-56, Indigo peasants – 1858 and so on.

Inhuman exploitation of the Indigo cultivators was powerfully exposed by Harish Chandra Chatterjee in his journal *The Hindoo Patriot*, in the writings of Akshoy Kumar Dutta in *Tattobodhini Patrika* and in Dinabandhu Mitra's drama *Nildarpan* which was translated in English to enlighten the English intelligentsia and influential persons about the tragic conditions of the indigo cultivators. "The Indigo agitation was a mass upheaval unprecedented in the history of the country." ('Growth of Political Consciousness and Agitation' in India' – Sukumar Bhattacharyya, *ibid*). It was so massive and got such wide publicity also in England that the British Government was forced to appoint an Indigo Commission and rein in the repressive indigo traders.

But the irony is that even after long one hundred years of colonial rule, even when the Sepoy mutiny was stirring convulsions in the country, in the same year i.e. in September, 1857 "...Narayan Raghunathji, a Maratha intellectual, observed in course of a lecture delivered at the United Students Association, Bombay, that before the establishment of Pax Britannica, 'confusion, disorder, tyranny, plunders and murders were common as blackberries... There is no government in the world so favourable to all kinds of liberty, civil, political, social and religious as the British'." ('Political Ideas and Movements in the 19th Century' – Bimanbehari Majumdar,

ibid). And there always were a good number of people, – moneyed, intellectuals, educated and socially influential, who held and advocated such view.

By that time, of course, aspirations for liberalism and reforms in favour of our countrymen were spreading their wings amongst the major advanced sections of the society.

Raja Rammohun Roy (1772-1833) was the precursor amongst the intelligentsia who laid the foundation of constitutional agitation in India. He was a great social reformer, versatile in a number of classical languages, well versed in English. He could freely associate himself in the company of the British in India and England as well. He had understanding of the basics of economics and jurisprudence. He was really a far advanced and enlightened man amongst his contemporaries. He was quite liberal. He was burdened with sorrow at the failure of the revolution in Naples in 1821 and was very much jubilant over the success of the Spanish American Revolution of 1823 and the July Revolution in France in 1830. He was equally elated at the passing of the First Reform Act of 1832 in England. It is really astonishing that he was a keen observer of international developments and reacted unhesitant on them. "His powerful advocacy of the freedom of the Press made him the pioneer of liberalism in India". (*Refibid*)

His effort in the abolition of Sati made him immortal as a social reformer. He also took keen interest in the spread of education.

Pandit Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was another luminary who took great initiative in opening schools and colleges for spread of education including female education. He will also be remembered for his indomitable courage to take on the

conservative Hindu orthodoxy and get the Widow Marriage Act passed despite the latter's vehement opposition, ridicule and even threat of life.

Henry Vivian Derozio and his students comprising Young Bengal group deserves mention for their crusade against superstitious beliefs and for cultivating progressive ideas and knowledge in true national spirit.

A concept in the making on nation, national etc.

Debendranath Tagore, father of Rabindranath, was presumably the pioneer in promoting the National Association on 14 September, 1851. It survived for only one-and-a-half months and merged itself in the British Indian Association which was formed on 29 October of the same year. Came out a few British liberal minds also to promote and uphold aspirations of Indians in a limited sense of the term. Mary Carpenter was one amongst such to form National Indian Association at Bristol in September, 1870. Although the name of the organization floated carried the name 'National Indian Association' there was nothing Indian or National in it, as it was planted and promoted by the whites on the soil of England.

Around the same time Nawab Amir Ali Khan formed National Mohammedan Association in Calcutta, but it was also hollow in substance emitting high aspiration in the name. The greatest of the Indian associations that tried to make inroads amongst urban population at large was the Indian National Congress, founded in 1885. But even before its decade long existence "its claim to that title was questioned in 1893 in a series of articles published anonymously in the *Indu Prakas*, written by Sri Aurobindo, at that time serving in the State of Baroda. Later on he went so far as to describe the Congress as the "Indian Unnational Congress."

Almost the same virulent criticism was echoed by K. Sundararaman, a distinguished professor in the Madras Educational Service and one of the founder members of the Congress – "Though it calls itself national, its methods are not truly such...The only object of Indian Congressmen and their English allies is to make what they consider a necessary reformation in the existing methods and machinery of Government. ('The National Movement in India'). Sri Sundararaman was neither soft nor hard but being an enlightened educationist he simply tried to bring the shortcomings of the Congress from an academic point of view in order that those might be taken proper care of and acted accordingly. He fell under the magnetic spell of Swami Vivekananda and became a staunch adherent of his dynamic activities. The Congress by that time was slowly but decisively tending to be divided between liberals who preferred to bring out whatever possible through appeals and prayers and those termed as hardliners who advocated to shun the path of the liberals and preferred direct confrontation with the rulers

Swami Vivekananda was the man who imbibed a sense of the nation poignantly in his belief, preaching and activities. Though he never took direct part in politics he was undoubtedly 'a patriot of patriots'. He is regarded as a great apostle of Indian nationalism. His 'soul stirring' speeches and his phenomenal success at Chicago Congress of Religions in 1893 'became a source of inspiration to young nationalists'. As well observed by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Swamiji who 'laid the foundation for true nationalism in India by preaching the gospel of the harmony of religions' may be regarded as the spiritual father of the modern nationalist movement'. Swamiji's captivating message to the nation was: "Freedom, O Freedom! Freedom, O Freedom!" is the song of the soul". 'Arise, awake,

and stop not till the goal is reached' – he thus called upon his countrymen. He writes in his captivating language - 'A common danger, or sometimes a common cause of hatred and love, is the bond that binds people together...If hatred against others is the negative part of nationalism, love for one's own people is its positive principle'. For the sake of attaining the highest goal that is freedom of the country he saw no contradiction between hatred and love but those were two means to achieve the same object in two divergent ways only. What a statesman-like pragmatic concept to have ever been preached by a great visionary who has predominantly been known as a Hindu monk! Such of his unique advocacy went a long way in preparing the solid ground for the realistic approach to national movement in the 20th century. By freedom he meant both political as well as spiritual freedom, he mingled them together. On the question of governing the country his view was to be one in which the people were to play the role of active participants. With a clear prophetic vision he declared in Madras on 14 February, 1897 : "For the next fifty years this alone shall be our keynote - this, our great Mother India. Let all other vain gods disappear for the time from our minds." And the country became free exactly after fifty years in 1947.

Indian National Congress. The INC was founded, by members of the occultist movement Theosophical Society – Allan Octavian Hume, Dadabhai Naoroji, Dinshaw Wacha, Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee, Monomohun Ghose, Mahadev Govind Ranade and William Wedderburn. Annie Besant opined that 17 members of the Theosophical Society from its Convention held in Madras in 1884 planned to form the INC. However, opinions differ. But there is no differing opinion that the main brain behind foundation of the Congress was the English ICS Allan Octavian Hume. As regards his objective behind formation of the Congress Hume said that he came to

learn from authoritative sources that a conspiracy was being hatched to revolt against the British raj and that he was very much anxious that the intellectuals of the country did not join the move. So the idea of founding the Congress emerged in order that the platform could be used as the 'safety valve' to diffuse revolutionary activities and restrain the intellectuals from joining the same. The first session of the INC was held at Bombay on December 25, 1885 and attended by 72 representatives. Till then there was no provision or procedure to induct people as 'delegates' or 'representatives', whoever individual attended was taken to be a representative. W.C. Bonnerjee became its first President. The Congress, however, made a great impact on the independence movement of the country in spite of many twists and turns, divisions and diversions, policies and programmes.

But we also come to know of a number of political associations preceding the INC —

On November 12, 1837 the **Landholders' Society** came into being. Presumably this is the first political association in the country. The inaugural meeting of the Society was held in the premises of the Hindu College, Calcutta. It was 'the pioneer of freedom in this country' said Raja Rajendralal Mitra - 'it gave the people the first lesson in the art of fighting constitutionally for their rights and taught them manfully to assert their claims and give expression to their opinions.'

In April, 1843 was formed **Bengal British Society**. So far as its reach and periphery is concerned it was a larger body than the Landholders Society. However, both the Societies joined together to merge into a new entity – **British Indian Association**, established on October 29, 1851. Immediately after formation the Association took active interest in spreading its activities and form associations in different parts of the

country. It started writing to personalities and contacting them. Response became positive. Similar associations like **Madras Native Association, Bombay Association** etc came up. Poona also did not lag behind. However, the Madras Native Association could not survive for long. It ceased to exist in 1883, and in October, 1884 it was replaced by **Madras Mahajan Sabha**. Bombay Association also met with the same fate. It became moribund in early '80's and was replaced by the **Bombay Presidency Association** on January 31, 1885.

Poona Sarvajanik Sabha which was founded on April 2, 1870 played a very praiseworthy role in the political and cultural life of the intellectuals in the country. In April, 1878 the Sabha brought out a regular quarterly journal endowed with articles by eminent personalities like M G Ranade, G K Gokhale, V G Joshi and others. "The Sabha was captured by Bal Gangadhar Tilak and his followers in 1895" ('Political Ideas and Movements in the 19th Century' – Bimanbehari Majumdar, from Cultural Heritage of India) but it was banned by the British rulers in 1897.

In 1875 **Indian League** was organized by renowned journalist Sisir Kumar Ghose of the Amrita Bazar Patrika, Kali Charan Banerjee and a few others but it also survived for a very short period.

Indian Association was born on July 26, 1876 and it played a very important role in the polity of intellectuals. It was established by Surendranath Banerjee, Ananda Mohan Bose, Sivanath Sastri and others. A number of branches of this organization were set up in the districts of Bengal and also outside – Bihar, Oudh, North East Frontier and the Punjab. First ever all India conference held by this organization in December, 1883 under the banner **Indian National Conference** and presided over by Ramtanu Lahiri may well be regarded as

the 'precursor of the Indian National Congress.' The occasion aroused much enthusiasm resulting in attendance of nearly 100 persons, whereas 72 self-styled delegates attended the first session of the INC in 1885.

A Few Towering Personalities

Urge for separate Muslim identity also grew up in the nineteenth century. **Sir Syed Ahmad Khan** (1817-98) played a dominant role in the **Muslim regeneration movement** in the country by founding a school at Aligarh, later developed it into the Muhammadan Anglo Oriental College in 1877. This college was finally transformed into the Aligarh Muslim University which served as the 'nursery of Muslim elite and politicians'.

"The earliest of political thinkers in western India was **Gopal Hari Deshmukh**, popularly known as the **Lokhitwadi** (1823-92). He contributed a series of articles to the Marathi weekly journal Prabhakara between 1848 and 1850" (Ibid). But revolutionary ideals spread their wings and made inroads only in the 20th century. And the credit may well be attributed to the immortal novelist **Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay**. The seed of the movement was sown in the 19th century itself by the man in his novel Anandamath which was published in 1882. He naturally deserves an honoured place in the rank of the foremost political thinkers in the country.

V B Gokhale assumed the name of **Visnu Bawa Brahmachari** (1825-71) and was much popular by that name. He was one of the most original thinkers in the 19th century, though a Utopian. He upheld the precepts of Vedic civilization for removing the ills peoples and States in the world were suffering from. Although most of his thinking is considered impractical yet he is regarded as the pioneer in propagating Utopian ideas in the country.

Swami Dayanand (1824-83) has been acknowledged as the most virile and influential political thinker of western India. His ideas and preaching of liberation and nationalism were most successfully carried through the heart of the country, especially the rural India.

Mahadev Govind Ranade was also a political stalwart and is regarded as having imbibed Mahatma Gandhi with the four features of his work and activities - 'decentralization of political authority, emphasis on building up the moral character, removal of untouchability and the encouragement of indigenous industries' (ibid).

Partition of Bengal 1905

Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05 and Russian revolution of 1905 against the Tsarist regime supplied valuable inputs to growth of extremist movement in the country. Partition of Bengal came on the heels of the two international developments in 1905. It was a sinister design by the British raj to divide and rule to arrest the growing nationalism in the province. The partition was the brainchild of Viceroy Lord Curzon. It was quite apparent that he did it in such a way as to create Hindu-Muslim disunity to weaken the growing nationalist movement. People of Bengal in particular and also different parts of the country in general swelled into powerful reaction. Bipin Chandra Pal characteristically observed - "If anything could prove the utter futility of our so-called method of constitutional political agitation, the history of the agitation against the proposal of partition of Bengal has done it." Rabindranath Tagore played a pioneering role to enthuse people by his immortal and inspiring compositions, came on the streets, disseminated message of communal harmony by introducing 'Rakhibandhan' celebration and roused people to air their vent against the rulers unitedly. Ezra Pound made a commendable

remark - "Tagore has sung Bengal into a nation". As an impact of the agitation the idea and importance of introducing 'national education' also gained momentum. This led to the formation of National Council of Education in 1906 with a view to developing an educational system 'on national lines and under national management'. British education system aimed at producing hands for doing clerical jobs to sub serve interests of the masters was so condemned that even the University of Calcutta was labeled as 'Goldighir Golamkhana' i.e. 'slave house of round square', presently known as College Square.

Swadeshi Movement was also started to pressurise the Government. The strategy involved was boycott of British goods and promoting indigenous products. It continued upto 1911. The chief architects of the movement were Aurobindo Ghosh, Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and Chidambaram Pillai. It was the most successful of the pre-Gandhian movements and as a strategy, became a key focus of Mahatma Gandhi when he was involved in the national movement later. He described it as the soul of Swaraj (self rule), though he was loyal to the British crown during the actual movement in Bengal in 1905-11.

"The three-pronged policy of the British government - repression, to 'rally the moderates' and 'Divide and Rule' failed to curb the growth of militant nationalism" ('Growth of Political Consciousness and Agitation in India' - Sukumar Bhattacharjee from Cultural Heritage of India). Under the impact of the movement the Government was forced to annul the partition of Bengal in 1911, but the Capital was transferred from Calcutta to Delhi and the seeds of communal disunity which had been sown in by Curzon's manouvre continued to plague the Indian freedom movement till it resulted in Partition of the whole

country with Bengal for the second time in August 1947 as the cost of attaining Independence.

In observance of mammoth indignation of the people at large against the British raj evidenced through their blatant defiance of tortures and arrests and all sorts of tyrannical measures to defend and justify the misdeed of partition, Gokhale became highly appreciative of the people of Bengal. He made his proverbial remark in his presidential address at the Benaras session of the Congress in 1905 - 'What Bengal thinks to-day, the rest of India thinks tomorrow.'

The Moderate-extremist, parallely divided, was reunited at the Lucknow session of the Congress in 1916. And soon started a new era that saw emergence of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi as the tallest leader of the Congress for almost three decades from 1920's to late 1940's.

The East India Company was meticulous in playing a twin role from 1765 onwards. It assumed semi-monopolist position by acting as merchant capital on the one hand and governance on the other. Armed with this position its objective became evident in procuring agricultural goods e.g., cotton etc. from the producers and handicrafts from the artisans as cheap as possible, all for export and amassing wealth. Adam Smith, having keenly observed and critically analyzing the feature made this caustic remark in his 'The Wealth of Nations' in 1776: "The government of an exclusive company of merchants is perhaps the worst of all governments for any country whatever."

Even then it cannot be denied that basics of modernization spread in the country through network of railways, modern technology and machineries for textile mills and steel factories for speedy production and movement of merchandise in different and remote areas. And all these led to emergence of

a new class of Indian entrepreneurs in spite of the fact that British policies were directed to discourage it. It is also equally true that the target of the British in its early phase was to destroy our traditional industries, impose increasing burden of taxation on agriculture, draining wealth to England (the 'drain' theory was first espoused by Raja Rammohun Roy), denying tariff protection to indigenous industries etc. The rulers had to go for modernization in a very limited way, and that too looking to their commercial and political interest

'**The Permanent (Zemindari) Settlement of 1793**' was a compromise between the objectives of low cost collection and stabilization of revenue at as high a level as possible. This settlement was applicable in Bengal, Bihar and parts of Uttar Pradesh. This apart, two other land tenure systems known as 'Ryotwari' became operative in southern and western India and 'Mahalwari' in northern and central India. The revenue system and commercialization of agriculture gave rise to spurious money lenders in increasing number. Production of food crops virtually became stagnant though there was marginal increase of non food commercial crops. This pushed downwards per capita availability of food grains and this gradual diminishing trend became much noticeable from the very beginning of 20th century till departure of the British from the country.

Interest of the agrarian society was disturbed much. The number of landless agricultural labourers showed an alarmingly increasing trend thereby jeopardizing the foundation of rural economy. "In the last decade of the 19th century less than one-fifth of the agricultural population was landless. In the first three censuses of the 20th century the proportion became one-fourth. And by 1931, 38 per cent were said to be landless." The plight of share croppers and owners of small holdings

was neither better. Thus there appeared a new army of agricultural proletariat in the country. This feature was experienced in European countries also with industrialization. Actually modernization gave birth to increasing number of landless agricultural labourers. But they were taken adequate care and absorbed in the industries because of growing demand in the advanced countries. But there was, unfortunately, no such situation in our country because of attitude and policy of the rulers. Growth and promotion of industries was much restrained. Paradoxically also whatever income was generated from agricultural sector was found quite inadequate to generate demand of industrial goods whereby new hands could find their jobs. So the way growth of industrialization was noticed in Western countries remained quite absent in the colonial country.

There was none to make investment in industry to increase the capital stock or to upgrade the technology to increase productivity 'because trading capital does not need it and the producer cannot make investments. This scheme of things contains one of the explanations of the longstanding stagnation in technology and productivity characterizing colonial India'. But then the rulers were in desperate search for 'native intermediaries' for its Agency Houses for procurement of the export goods and occasionally also for ready cash. Thus Indian business communities that came forward were the Hindus, Jains and Bohra merchants of the Gujarat coast, the Khatri and Lohnas of the Punjab and Sind, the Marwaris from Rajasthan, the Moplahs and Syrian Christians of Kerala, the Nattukottai Chettis and Komatis of Tamil and Andhra regions, the Vaniks of Bengal etc.

Conflict of interest also became much evident – the interests of the rulers and those of the subjects that ignited major

Nationalist action programme like call for boycott of foreign goods during the Swadesi movement in Bengal in the first decade of the 20th century and the charka and khadi programmes of Mahatma Gandhi in the second and third decades of the past century. Two lines of movement - transfer of power through ahimsa and satyagraha embodiment of which was Mahatma Gandhi and seizure of power and independence by armed struggle by leaders like Netaji, Bhagat Singh and scores of other revolutionaries and groups were adopted. Series of movements of both sorts lashed the country one after another particularly in the 30's and 40's - seizure of Chitagunj armoury, struggle of the INA under Netaji, Naval Mutiny etc that hastened the final departure of the British rulers.

During the British rule our country became worst victim of a large number of famines that exposes the rulers' nonchalant and indifferent attitude towards multitudes of subject people. Bengal was a victim of a devastating famine from 1769-1773 due to policy failure during the rule of Warren Hastings in late 18th Century in which 10 million people died, reducing Bengal population by one-third. Thereafter throughout the 19th century and also in the 20th during the British regime such horrific famines became a matter of great anxiety among people: famines that broke out in northern India – 1800-04, 1837-38, 1860-61, 1868-70, 1877-78, 1896-97 and 1899-1900; in western India – 1800-04, 1812-13, 1824-25, 1833-34, 1866-67 and 1876-78; in eastern India – 1873-74, 1888-89, and 1896-97; in southern India – 1806-07, 1824-25, 1833-34, 1866-67 and 1876-78. These were officially recorded as 'major famines'. 'Smaller famines' do not find mention here. The dreadful magnitude may well be imagined. The famines of 1876-78 and 1896-97 cost 4.3 and 5.15 million lives respectively! And Bengal famine of 1943 which was more an artificial creation was a haunting experience for millions of people.

The Wall Street crash of 1929 affected India severely. 'A League of Nations enquiry revealed that the decline in wholesale prices in India in 1929-33 was sharper than the decline registered in indices for the UK, the USA, Germany and Japan.' On the outbreak of Second World War in September 1939 commodity prices heaved upwards and this trend continued throughout the war period except for a slight dip in 1940-41. The first spurt was on account of 'speculative hoarding'.

Index number of Wholesale Prices in India (Base : week ended 19 Aug, 1939=100)

| Year | Agricultural Commodities | Manufactured Articles | General Index |
|---------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| 1939-40 | 127.5 | 131.5 | 125.6 |
| 1940-41 | 108.6 | 119.8 | 114.8 |
| 1941-42 | 124.2 | 154.5 | 137.0 |
| 1942-43 | 166.2 | 190.4 | 171.0 |
| 1943-44 | 268.7 | 251.7 | 236.5 |
| 1944-45 | 265.4 | 258.3 | 244.2 |
| 1945-46 | 272.6 | 240.0 | 244.9 |
| 1946-47 | 313.8 | 259.1 | 275.4 |

One noteworthy piece of legislation of 1930's was the 'Payment of Wages Act 1936' to prevent delay in the payment of wages. However, no attempt was made to introduce minimum wages regulations. In the 1930's Indian trade union movement took a radical turn and went from strength to strength – between 1929-30 and 1940-41 the total number of registered unions increased about six times while total membership more than doubled itself. The great workers' strikes of 1920-21 and 1924-25 against wage cuts affected factories in the Bombay province mainly, but in the 1930's workers

became largely organized in the other industrial centres; the number of industrial disputes in 1937-38 were 778 involving loss of over 18 million working days, reflects increasing industrial unrest all over India.

Real wages also dropped during World War II and immediately thereafter. 'It is significant that in 1943 when industrial profits reached a peak real wages touched the lowest point: throughout the period trends in the movement of real wages were almost contrary to those in industrial profits.'