

# संशोधक

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इतिहासाचार्य वि. का.राजवाडे संशोधन मंडळ, धुळे





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या संस्थेचे त्रैमासिक  
**॥ संशोधक ॥**

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## Contribution of Revolutionary Movements

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### Abstract :

India got independence on 15 August 1947 after approximately 200 years of British rule. Many great personalities from various provinces of British India dedicated their whole life for an independent nation.

But not all of these freedom fighters followed the same ideology. Some believed to make India independent by non-violent protests and in a peaceful way by negotiations. On the other hand, some believed that India can be freed from British rule only by revolutionary movements. Several Revolutionary groups started emerging in the whole Indian subcontinent in the early twentieth century, but after 1936 there was a significant decline in these revolutionary movements.

We will see how this ideology of revolution emerged and what impact did their had on the Independence struggle.

### Research Methodology -

The research methodology adopted for this research study is doctrinal research also known as secondary research. All the data is collected from various sources like Books, Research articles and other Online sources.

### Objectives -

- 1) To study the emergence of various revolutionary associations in India.
- 2) To study some famous revolutionary activities and their impact in independence movement.

### The emergence of revolutionary ideals across the subcontinent :-

There were many external as well as internal factors that led to a sense of nationalism in the hearts of youth in India at a large scale in the early twentieth century. One of these factors was the deterioration of Indian economy due to many unfair economic policies of the government which favored the industrialized market of Britain. This was the true nature of colonization.

The majority of youth in the country were not impressed with the congress's approach of freedom struggle after the failure of widespread movements like swadeshi and boycott movement. Also, there were restrictions on protests and similar activities which left no choice for people to express their dissatisfaction. By their supreme sacrifice, these young revolutionaries were able to attract the masses.

Many revolutionary movements across the globe like Irish and Italian Nationalist movements inspired Indian youth. Some were also inspired by communist ideology and thought of the upliftment of lower class of the society I.e. [social reconstruct of the society].

These revolutionaries believed in overthrowing the British government through mass movements, and striking terror in the hearts of Britishers by assassinating British officials. Many secret societies came into existence in 1900s. They mainly had two objectives first was conducting organized dacoities to gather funds for the purchase of weapons and finance their activities. The second was assassination of oppressive government officials.

### Various revolutionary societies across India and outside India :-

Initially Bengal, Punjab, Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and Bihar were the emerging centers for revolutionary associations. Here are some major organizations which were established in different states.

### BENGAL :

If we talk particularly about Bengal, in the year 1905 Bengal Province was divided into two halves on a religious basis. This triggered widespread protests and also gave rise to the Swadeshi movement and at the same time stimulated radical nationalist sentiments in the Bengali community.

In the year 1902, Anushilan Samiti was formed by Satish Chandra Babu this group had three





different societies working under it. Many members of Anushilan samiti held high posts in congress also many actively participated in swadeshi and boycott movement. This group participated in many revolutionary operations like Kakori train robbery and Chittagong Armoury raid in the 1930s.

Many members of the Samiti were also the founding members of Hindustan Socialist Republic Association in United Province. Jugantar was yet another secret society in Bengal similar to Anushilan Samiti. Jugantar was active in the manufacturing of explosives and frequent dacoities.

### **Maharashtra :**

Maharashtra is often quoted as the birthplace of revolutionary movement in India. The first political murder was committed in Maharashtra by Damodar Chafekar and Bal Krishna Chafekar on 22nd June 1897. They assassinated the Plague Commissioner of Poona.

In the year 1904 Abhinav Bharat Secret Society was founded in Nasik by Vinayak Sawarkar and Ganesh Sawarkar. It was formerly known as Mitra Mela, this group attracted hundreds of revolutionaries and had many branches across the country. This society was also responsible for the assassination of William Curzon-Wyllie who was the political aide-de-camp to the Secretary of State for India. After few months A.M.T. Jackson, the District Magistrate of Nasik was also assassinated and this later came to known as "Nasik conspiracy case".

### **Uttar Pradesh :**

In 1920, Non-Cooperation Movement was suspended by Mahatma Gandhi after the infamous Chauri Chaura incident. This demoralized a majority of youth in United Province and therefore they choose a much violent approach to overthrow the imperial power.

The Hindustan Republican Association was formed in the year 1923. Its name was later changed to 'The Hindustan Socialist Republic Association'[HSRA]. It was founded by Ram Prasad Bismil and had many prominent

revolutionaries as its members like Chandrashekhar Azad, Sukhdev Thapar, Sachindra Nath Sanyal and Bhagat Singh. HSRA was inspired by socialist ideology and sought to make India a Federal Republican state. This group had carried out many revolutionary activities like Central Assembly Bomb Case and assassinations of a Police Officer.

### **Secret Societies Abroad :**

As we know in the year 1858, Queen Victoria declared that throughout the Empire Indian people would enjoy equal privileges irrespective of their colour, creed or race. This resulted in Significant population growth of Indians in several European countries as well especially in the first half of twentieth century. Many Indians also got admitted in foreign universities for higher studies and this young population closely examined the developments in the national freedom struggle. This young population was influenced by revolutionary ideals and soon started establishing secret societies on foreign soil.

#### **a) India House -**

India House was a mansion in North London which was initially a student hostel. It was founded by Shyamji Krishna Varma in 1905 who was a former Diwan in many Princely States in India. India House soon became a hotbed for the propagation of nationalist ideology among the youth. This association also gave scholarships to students to pursue higher education in UK. The first Indian Marxist Journal "Indian Socialist" was also associated with India House. This English Weekly was later banned by The British Raj. Madan Lal Dhingra a member of India House was responsible for the assassination of Curzon Wyllie a British Police Officer. India House also played a key role in the Hindu German Conspiracy during the First World War. Many prominent Indian Revolutionaries like Vinayak Sawarkar were the members of India House.

#### **b) Ghadar Party -**

Ghadar Party was formed in 1913 in the United States but had large support base in Canada, East Africa and many Asian Countries. Ghadar Party





was responsible for smuggling of Arms to soldiers in British Army in India for a Revolt. This soldier mutiny was later known as Ghadar Mutiny. In 1914-1917 Party also worked in collaboration with Germany and Ottoman Empire against the British Raj. Ghadar Party had a remarkable impact on Indian Revolutionary movement as its work inspired many prominent figures like Bhagat Singh.

We saw that Secret societies were being formed not only in the subcontinent but also in various parts of the globe and a sense of Radical Nationalism was attracting many. Now let's see some Notable Revolutionary Activities in the History.

**Some Notable Events of Indian Revolutionary Movement :-**

**Assassination of Rand by Chapekar Brothers (1897) :**

This was the First Political Assassination of a British Official after The Sepoy Mutiny. Damodar Chapekar and Balkrishna Chapekar murdered Plague Commissioner of Poona W.C. Rand.

During the Plague Epidemic of 1896 Government took harsh measures to control the spread of disease but ended up hurting the sentiments of people. Soldiers were allowed to enter houses and examining residents. During this many officers allegedly vandalized religious symbols which resulted in anger in public. Therefore Chapekar Brothers decided to assassinate the official who was responsible for this. Chapekar Brothers were then Tried and Hanged in 1899.

**Alipore Bomb Conspiracy (1908) :**

In the year 1908 D.H. Kingford was the British Chief Magistrate of Muzaffarpur. He was targeted in a Bomb attack on 30 April 1908. The task was given to Khudiram Bose and Prafulla Chaki but they mistakenly killed two innocent women outside Magistrate's Residence. Later Prafulla Chaki committed suicide and Khudiram Bose was arrested and given a Death Penalty.

Anushilan Samiti was also actively involved in plotting the assassination plan. Therefore around 30 other members of samiti were also tried which included Aurobindo Ghosh and his brother Barin Ghosh.

**Howrah Gang Case (1910) :**

Shamsul Alam was a Police official and Intelligence Officer in Bengal Police who was murdered on 24 Jan 1910 in Calcutta. He disclosed undercover Bengali Revolutionary network especially of Anushilan Samiti. This helped the police to solve previous cases of robberies and murders committed by Samiti's members.

This resulted in arrests and trails of around 47 Bengali Revolutionaries affiliated to Anushilan Samiti.

**Delhi Lahore Conspiracy Case (1912) :**

On 23 Dec 1912 an attempt was made to assassinate the then Viceroy of India, Lord Hardinge. A handmade bomb was thrown in the carriage placed on the elephant where the Viceroy was sitting.

However, in this attack Viceroy narrowly survived but an Indian servant behind him died. Rash Behari Bose and Sachindra Sanyal led the assassination. After the incident the British Intelligence heavily cracked down on many Revolutionary groups.

**Kakori Train Robbery (1925) :**

Kakori train robbery was an armed robbery of a train which was heading towards Lucknow from Shahjahanpur. In the train was the cash belonging to the government treasure which was to be deposited in Lucknow. It was a well-planned operation of Hindustan Republican Association led by Ramprasad Bismil and 10 other revolutionaries. They stopped the train on 9 Aug 1925 before reaching its destination and looted the cash in the safe before fleeing the spot.

Later around 29 people were tried in Lucknow and eventually 4 of them were given death sentence. Chandrashekar Azad was also found linked to the robbery but he escaped the arrest till his death in an encounter in 1931. This was a major setback to the Hindustan Republican Association as there was a leadership void.

**Central Assembly Bombing (1929) :**

On 8th April 1929 revolutionary Bhagat Singh and Batukeshwar Dutt threw a low intensity bomb in the Central Assembly. Both of them started raising the slogans of "Inquilab Zindabad" and "Down the





Imperialism. In the bomb explosion there was no loss of life but the hall was filled with smoke.

Bhagat Singh was the mastermind of the plan. Their intention behind the bombing was not to kill or injure anyone but they wanted to "make the deaf hear". Singh was inspired by Auguste Vaillant's way of bombing French Chamber of Deputies in 1893. Although after the attack both Bhagat Singh and B.K. Dutt didn't even try to escape in contrast they willingly got arrested. After their trials both of them were sentenced "transportation for life" but meanwhile, the murder case of officer John Saunders was also linked with Bhagat Singh.

Therefore, on 23 March 1931 Bhagat Singh along with Sukhdev Thapar and Rajguru were executed.

### Chittagong Armoury Raid (1930) :

Chittagong was a port city in Bengal Presidency of British India. On 18 April 1930 around 65 revolutionaries raided Chittagong police Armoury and then were able to cut telephone wires in order to cut the contact between Calcutta and Chittagong. However, they were not able to locate Arms and Ammunition. Indian Flag was also hoisted outside the Police Armoury by the revolutionaries and Surya Sen who led the operation. Before the arrival of troops revolutionaries fled the city and found a safe place to hide in the nearby hills. But many of them were either arrested or killed in encounters afterwards. Government took intense action on those who were involved in the raid. Surya Sen was then sentenced to death and hanged in 1934.

After 1935 Revolutionary Activities throughout the subcontinent were almost ceased. But, in the year 1940 Udham Singh assassinated Michael O'Dwyer in London. Michael O'Dwyer the then Lieutenant Governor of Punjab was said to be majorly responsible for Jallianwala Bagh Massacre.

### Downfall of Indian Revolutionary Movement

Revolutionary groups across India gained significant popularity and attracted many youngsters but eventually failed to achieve its objectives. There were several reasons for the failure of these groups.

The foremost reason was absence of a central

organization to coordinate revolutionary activities across India. If such an organization was there then the energy of youth could have been articulated in much more efficient way. Also, many of the revolutionaries belonged to Urban belt but majority of population was in rural India. Therefore, the lack of participation of rural youth was a setback to the movement.

Another reason was the arms and funds which Germans were supposed to deliver did not reach India due to Germany's deteriorating condition in World War II.

Also, these movements lacked the support of congress and other political leaders and at the same time Gandhian Ideology gained much more support.

### Impact of Revolutionary Movements on Indian Freedom Struggle -

Despite failing their ultimate objective of freeing India via armed revolt these revolutionary groups were successful in overthrowing the fear of authority from the minds of people and strike terror in the hearts of Oppressors. These groups changed the mindsets of masses and a whole new wave of energy was flowing throughout the Nation.

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