

(The Birth and Growth of Nationalism in India)

Indian nationalism developed as a concept during the Indian independence movement fought against the Colonial British Raj.

Several factors contributed to the emergence of Indian nationalism which can be analysed as follows -

1- British Imperialism - The British imperialism was the most important factor, which contributed to the rise of nationalism in India. The British came to India in hopes to use their land and products as profit. In doing so, they started to exploit Indians economically, that was derived by their ill-motive. Such exploitation turned gradually barbaric and unethical that led a strong sense of nationalism among Indians.

2- Influence of the Western Civilisation - The foundation of British rule in India made closer relations with the Western world possible. Thus, the contact with the European countries influenced the Indians immensely. The nineteenth century Europe was dominated by the ideas of nationalism and liberalism. The Indians came to learn too these ideologies from British and they imbibed the ideas of nationalism and liberalism from Germany, Italy, Greece and Belgium. Western thinkers like Burke, Bentham, Mill, Spencer, Rousseau and Voltaire also inspired and encouraged the ideas of independence among Indians.

3 - Development of means of transport and communication

The introduction of telegraphs and railways in 1852 and 1853 respectively gave India swift means of transport and communication. The modern means of communication and transport shattered the age-old isolation of Indian villages and the people of remote part had the opportunity of coming closer to each other. The new social and economic link removed their orthodox ways and made them conscious of their social disabilities. Thus, improvements in the means of transport and communication also quickened the pace of nationalistic movement in India.

4- The contribution of social and religious reforms-

Religious and social reformers, namely Raja Rammohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Debendra Nath Tagore, Swami Dayananda Saraswati, Vivekananda and others had left a tremendous influence on the people of India. They also were responsible for the Countrymen to treasure the ideals of freedom and liberty.

5- Racial discrimination and denial of basic human rights - British in general assumed themselves superior to Indians. They asserted that British rule was must for Indians to make them civilised. Indians even denied by the basic human rights. Even in Courts of Law they faced severe discrimination unlike other Europeans.

Some other factors also played vital role in Indian Nationalism follows -

- Role of English language and western education
- Emergence of modern press
- Return of glorious Indian past
- Impact of International events