

Lecture-26



The Moderate phase of Politics

Indian nationalism arose in the latter half of the 19th century as a result of various factors like western education, socio-religious reforms, British policies and so on. In 1885, the Indian National Congress was formed which played a significant role in India's freedom movement.

The time period from 1885 to 1905 can be called the 'Moderate Phase'. The leaders of this phase are called moderates.

The Indian National Congress (INC)

- Formed in 1885 by Allan Octavian Hume, a retired British civil servant.
- Other founding members include Dadabhai Naoroji (Born on September 4, 1825) and Dinshaw Wacha.
- The first session was held in Bombay under the presidency of Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee in 1885.
- The first session was attended by 72 delegates from across the country.
- Viceroy of India at the time was Lord Dufferin who gave his permission to Hume for the first session.
- The Congress was formed with the intention of discussing problems faced by the people of the country irrespective of caste, creed, religion or language.
- It was basically a movement of the upper and middle class, western-educated Indians in its moderate phase.
- The second session of the Congress was held in Calcutta in 1886 followed by the third in Madras in 1887.

Moderate phase (1885 – 1905)

- The moderate phase of the Congress (or the national movement) was dominated by the 'moderates'.
- They were people who believed in British justice and were loyal to them.

Prominent moderate leaders

Dadabhai Naoroji

- Known as the ‘Grand old man of India.’
- He became the first Indian to become a member of the House of Commons in Britain.
- Authored ‘Poverty and Un-British Rule in India’ which focused on the economic drain of India because of British policies. This led to an enquiry on the matter.

Womesh Chandra Bonnerjee

- The first president of the INC.
- Lawyer by profession. First Indian to act as Standing Counsel.

G Subramania Aiyer

- Founded ‘The Hindu’ newspaper where he criticised British imperialism.
- Also founded Tamil newspaper ‘Swadesamitran’.
- Co-founded the Madras Mahajana Sabha.

Gopal Krishna Gokhale

- Regarded as Mahatma Gandhi’s political guru.
- Founded the Servants of India Society.

Sir Surendranath Banerjee

- Also called ‘Rashtraguru’ and ‘Indian Burke’.
- Founded the Indian National Association which later merged with the INC.
- Cleared the Indian Civil Service but was discharged due to racial discrimination.
- Founded newspaper ‘The Bengalee’.

Other moderate leaders included Rash Behari Ghosh, R C Dutt, M G Ranade, Pherozeshah Mehta, P R Naidu, Madan Mohan Malaviya, P. Ananda Charlu, and William Wedderburn.

Aims and demands of the moderates

- Education of the masses and organising public opinion, make people aware of their rights.
- Indian representation in the Executive Council and in the Indian Council in London.

- Reform of the legislative councils.
- Separation of the executive from the judiciary.
- Decreased land revenue tax and ending peasant oppression.
- After 1892, raised the slogan, “No taxation without representation.”
- Reduced spending on the army.
- Abolishing salt tax and duty on sugar.
- Holding the ICS exam in India along with England to allow more Indians the opportunity to take part in the administration.
- Freedom of speech and expression.
- Freedom to form associations.
- Development of modern capitalist industries in India.
- End of economic drain of India by the British.
- Repealing the Arms Act of 1878.
- Increasing spending on education of Indians.

Methods of the moderates

- They believed in peaceful and constitutional methods to demand and fulfil those demands.
- Used petitions, meetings, resolutions, pamphlets, memoranda and delegations to voice their demands.
- Their method has been called 3P – Prayers, Petition and Protest.
- Had complete faith in the British justice system.
- Confined to the educated classes only. Did not try to employ the masses.
- They aimed only at getting political rights and self-government under British dominion.

MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS:

1. In which session of Indian National Congress passes the resolution for Poorna Swaraj or complete independence?

- A. Madras
- B. Calcutta
- C. Lahore
- D. Delhi

Ans: C

2. In which Session of the Indian National Congress the National Song *Vande Mataram* was sung for the first time?

- A. Madras Session of 1887
- B. Allahabad session of 1888
- C. Surat Session of 1907
- D. Calcutta session of 1896

Ans: D

3. Who was the president of Indian National Congress when the song *Vande Mataram* was first sung at the 12th session of the Indian National Congress?

- A. Badruddin Tyabji
- B. Rahimtulla M Sayani
- C. Raahsbehari Ghosh
- D. Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar

Ans: B

4. In which session of the Indian National Congress the National Anthem, *Jana Gana Mana* was sung for the first time?

- A. Badruddin Tyabji
- B. Rahimtulla M Sayani
- C. Rashbehari Ghosh
- D. Pandit Bishan Narayan Dar

Ans: D

5. Who was the president of Indian National Congress Session that was held in Jaipur after Independence?

- A. Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru

B. Acharya JB Kriplani

C. Dr. Pattabhi Sitaramayya

D. Sarojini Naidu

Ans: C