

In talking about the Independence struggle of India, it would be a grave omission if no reference is made to Subhas Chandra Bose. Originally, he was employed in the Indian Postal Service. He resigned from that institution and became a member of the Indian National Congress. However, Chandra Bose did not agree with its ideas. Therefore, he built the Radical Progressive Group and began to organise a secret army to fight against the British. When the British came to know about it, he had no way but to leave the country. He went to Malaya and Burma which were then under the Japanese and organised an army. Although he was successful in attacking Manipur and Sheswerpur areas and capturing an extent of about 10,000 square miles, he was finally defeated by the British. Later, he died in an air crash.

The labour party which had promised to grant independence to India came to power in 1946 and it sent a cabinet delegation to solve the Indian problem. The conference held in Simla to bring about some consensus between the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League failed and the cabinet delegation presented their proposals. It rejected the proposal to set up Pakistan. It suggested to unite all states under the British and the princes and to build a united India, with a central government and regional states with self rule. Defence, foreign affairs and revenue were to be the subjects under the central government.

An interim government was necessary to implement these arrangements. Parties were invited to form such a government and the invitation made to the Muslim League to accept ministries in this government was rejected by it. This situation led to race riots throughout India. Prime Minister Attlee had declared that the question must be settled before June 1948. He sent Lord Mountbatten as the Viceroy of India and he presented his solution. He declared that the stubborn attitude of Jinnah would lead to a partition of India. Accordingly, India was divided and it became independent on 15.8.1947 and Pakistan was born in 1947. The new constitution of India came into force on 26.01.1950 and from then on India gradually became a powerful Democratic Republic.

Exercises

01. Write short notes on the following persons:
 - a) Surendranath Banerjee
 - b) Lala Lapat Ray
 - c) Mahatma Gandhi
 - d) Mohmed Ali Jinnah
02. Write short notes on the following events:
 - a) Jaliyanwala Bag Tragedy
 - b) Round table conference
 - c) Division of Bengal
 - d) Dundee March
03. Explain what was meant by 'Quit India' movement.
04. Write brief introductions about: Moderates, Cripps Mission, Civil Disobedience movement, Division of India.

Japan

After studying the Indian national movement, now your attention is directed at the story of the transformation of Japan into a modern state.

Japan under the Tokugawa Shogunate

The time of conflicts during the feudal era of Japan came to an end by the beginning of the 16th century. The series of feudal wars that lasted for hundred years were won by three heroes who appeared within one generation. Although their activities are replete with bloodshed, ruthlessness and treachery, it must be stated that they rendered a great service for the progress of Japan.

- * **Nobunaga** Captured the region of Kyoto and chased away its ruler. Destroyed Buddhist temples and murdered thousands of Buddhist Bhikkhus, women and children. He died on the battlefield in 1583 A.D. It is Nobunaga who laid the foundation to unite Japan and to build peace and stability in the country.

- * **Hideyoshi** He was the Commander General of Nobunaga and is considered to be the greatest historical figure in Japan. He was a very clever commanding officer with a very high degree of intelligence and ability to take correct decisions. He is the only person who had risen from the lowest rank in the army to its highest position.

- * **Tokugawa Iya Shu** He was at one time, a hereditary slave of Nobunaga. He defeated all rebels and became the ruler of Japan in 1603 A.D. He is the person who actually reaped the fruits of the efforts made by the two previous rulers.

During the Tokugawa period(1603-1867A.D.), Japan's feudal institutions were regularised and transformed into units that could help the central government. Iya shu selected the city of Edo (now Tokyo) as the centre of his administration, constructed a massive fort for defence purposes and started a countrywide secret police to protect the strong central government. Through them he obtained information about anti government activities, and in this manner, the Shoguns established a powerful strong political framework that lasted for over about 2 1/2 centuries.

The Japanese government still functioned on the basis of a dual system i.e., the royal family and the council of Kyoto aristocrats. Power was concentrated in the hands of Tokugawa Shoguns Vat Edo. They indicated to the people that they ruled with the consent of gods. They also tried to spread the belief that on account of the purity of the rulers, they cannot be harmed in any way.

During the early part of the Shogun rule, the Portuguese and the Spaniards maintained a significant trade relationship with Japan. The Dutch joined this trade in the 17th century, followed by the British later. The Japanese recieved the European nations with much respect because there were many things they could learn from the foreigners.

Expansion of Missionary Activities under Tokugawa

The European traders were followed by missionaries. However, the Japanese were not very enthusiastic about receiving them. Due to the strong commitment of Portuguese Jesuits and Spanish Franciscans, Japanese people of all strata of society embraced Roman Catholicism. When about 300,000 persons living around the trade centres of southern and western Japan embraced Roman Catholicism, Shoguns thought of banning Christianity. The Shoguns were of the opinion that the foreign religion could harm their culture and accelerate the tendency towards the division of the country into two. As a first step, the Shoguns advised the Japanese converts. The missionaries objected to this and continued with religious propaganda. Hence, the Shoguns took strong measures against the missionaries and killed many of them. In the mean time, the Christian converts rose against the government. The Shoguns annihilated the rebels and completely erased the Christian doctrine from Japan.

The Relations between the Europeans and Japan during the Tokugawa Era

After the ruthless suppression of the Christians, the Shoguns took steps to ban all Europeans from Japan. Considering that the Dutch were not politically harmful, they were given the right to send one ship per year to a Japanese harbour. The Shoguns made use of this opportunity to show their power to the Europeans. In addition, the Japanese were debarred from foreign travel. Violators of the ban were subjected to heavy punishments. Even the construction of very large ships capable of sailing beyond the limits of the sea of Japan was prohibited. However, relations with China were maintained as before. Because of these policies of the Shoguns, Japan became virtually an isolated country.

The Development in Japan during the Tokugawa Period

The age of Tokugawa provided a long term peace for Japan and it helped to regularise the administration.

The Tokugawa administration never acted in a manner that could be harmful to economic development. At the beginning of the 18th century, the population of Japan stood at about 30 million. Overall position of the country was prosperous. Industries and internal trade witnessed a continuous growth. The road system spread to all parts of the country along the water ways. The fast exchange of goods and agricultural products led to a growth of the capitalist system. The activities of merchants such as daily announcements on the price of rice and the supply of credit for commercial purposes remind us of the modern practices of the share market. Towns grew up in the centre of the country and by the end of the 18th century, Tokyo was the largest city in the world.

The Society under Tokugawa

The society in Japan under Tokugawa administration had to face a wide range of changes . The Samurai's under the feudal system in Japan occupied a social status similar to that of the knights in Europe. The Daimyos were the military personnel who supplied services to the Samurais. Tokugawa Shogunate belonged to a family of Daimyos and ever since he became the ruler in Japan, the status of Samurais was deteriorated. The Samurais who were in a highest status were fallen into a lower status and the Daimyos who were in a lower status became the rulers led to revolutionary social changes in Japan.

The Status of Samurais under Tokugawa

Economic growth was tied up with the political authority of Tokugawa having a very strong power, which led to a deterioration of the status of the Samurais. They were military experts, but they did not get an opportunity even to practise their trade because the Shoguns themselves settled disputes to a very large extent. There were no foreign wars and the Samurais had no opportunity to come forward. Therefore they became honourable parasites, but many of them showed their abilities and strength. Very often, they were appointed to perform administrative functions.

The traders who were at the lowest strata of the social pyramid collected wealth and established organisations comparable to the old guilds and turned into a class that could influence the entire economy. They were representatives of the nature of the fast changing urban middle class.

The Farmers under Tokugawa

Until recently, historians believed that the peasants faced hardships under the rule of the Shoguns. However, as proved by research carried on this aspect, labour of the peasant class was something essential for the officials of the higher classes. Yet, there were periods when the peasants were oppressed. The peasantry was necessary for the prosperity of the country. Since they were debarred from carrying arms, peasants were exempted from military service. After Tokugawa Iye shu came to power, there was a continued period of peace.

Agriculture and Industries under Tokugawa

- * Under the Shoguns, agriculture progressed as never before.
- * The extent of land under cultivation doubled;
- * New crops were introduced and the wide spread use of fertiliser and farm equipment led to a very rapid increase in the field.
- * In parallel with agriculture, rural industries also witnessed a significant development.
- * Silk and cotton textiles, salt, tobacco, and sugar can be considered as the main rural industries that witnessed a rapid progress during this time.

The Japanese society also underwent a significant change based on the chief cities that came into being namely, Ido (Tokyo), Osaka, Kyoto etc. The affluent urban class spent money for cultural development.

The End of the Shogunate

The era of the Shoguns came to an end in 1867 A.D. after which Japan underwent a number of revolutionary changes. It is rather difficult to assess the historical importance of the Tokugawa Shogunate. The internal administration of the Shoguns was a traditional one, a period when the hierarchy system was strictly adhered to. The fact that a major portion of Japan was under the exclusive control of the Shoguns can be considered as the important feature of this period. Similarly, the existence of a long period of peace and security was also a special feature. Although the society was divided into classes, it was not very rigid, and the society was homogeneous to a large extent. During this period of time, education underwent a rapid change and 45% of the males and 15% of females were literate.

The foundation for the transformation of Japan into a modern state was laid during the time of the Shoguns and some historians consider it to be the golden age of Japan.

Transformation of Japan into a Modern State

From the beginning of the 17th century, the Shoguns had very carefully maintained the isolationist policy of Japan. This was a period when the western nations were busily engaged in the expansion of their trading activities in the Eastern lands. All attempts made by the European nations to open up Japan up to the middle of the 19th century ended in failure. At last, America came forward to solve this problem. By this time, America appeared to have brought a substantial portion of the far Eastern trade under its control. From about 1800 A.D., American ships were sailing to China across the sea of Japan. With the advent of the steam ships, port facilities became necessary to obtain fuel, water and food etc. for these ships.

The Establishment of Trade Relations with Western Nations

In July 1853, the Commodore Perry's fleet of steam ships entered the bay of Tokyo. The government at Washington had instructed him to make the following requests:

- a) Provide protection to the disabled American ships and their crew.
- b) Provision of fuel, water and food for merchant ships.
- c) Repairing of ships.
- d) Permission to engage in trade.

Although these requests were presented to the Japanese rulers, nothing happened until the arrival of the American Consul General Harris Townsend. He did not have an armed fleet like Perry. Very tactfully, he pointed out the following facts:

- * China's refusal to permit the western nations to engage in trading activities with that country led to the invasion of China by several European countries including Britain.
- * Absence of peace in China.
- * Permission to trade would make it possible to conduct commercial activities in peace.

According to the agreement arrived at with Japan by Harris Townsend, he was given trading facilities in several harbours, in Japan. After the treaty, diplomatic relations also were established between the two countries.

The first result of the opening of the doors of Japan to the outside world was the giving up of power by the Shoguns. Since it was necessary to reorganise the government on modern concepts, the exit of the Shoguns can be considered as a very important historical event. The area under the control of the Daimyo comprised four regions and, Choshu, Satsuma, Hishen and Tosa were the leaders of these regions.

These Daimyos were anxiously waiting for the end of the Shogunate age. They maintained that the real ruler should be the emperor at Kyoto. They considered the Europeans as barbarians and declared that they should be expelled from Japan. However, Harris Townsend had signed the treaty with the emperor. In 1863, some of the soldiers of Samurai Satsuma murdered an Englishman. As a tit for tat the British navy bombed the capital of Satsuma. Several days later, fleets of the British, French, Dutch and the Americans held a war exercise at a place named Shimonoseki. Because of these developments, the leaders of the four areas of authority gave up their hostile attitude towards foreigners.

Meiji Restoration

In 1867 A.D. Shoguns handed over all their powers to the emperor at Kyoto. Although they expected the position of army commander to be given to them, it also did not materialise. The Tokugawa family that had the control of Japan for 700 years was completely down graded. Emperor's centre of control was shifted from Kyoto to Tokyo (Ido). This process is known by the term 'Meiji Restoration'.

At the time of the Meiji restoration, the emperor Mutsuhito was a 15 year old boy. The skill he displayed in the reorganisation of Japanese organisations was absolutely remarkable. His period of rule (1868-1912 A.D.) is known as Enlightened Age of 'Meiji'.

In 1871 A.D. the emperor abolished the feudal system. According to him the feudal institutions were obstacles in the way towards the development of a commercial economic system.

If Japan had an honest desire to rise as a nation, feudal institutions were of no use. Instead, a set of institutions should be created in keeping with the requirements of a fast modernising country. In the progress towards a commercial economy, feudal institutions became an impregnable barrier. All nobles of the feudal system were expected to give up all their privileges. The officials who were attached to feudal institutions were recruited to newly established institutions.

Fast development in political, social, economic and intellectual aspects that took place during the Meiji reforms period can be considered as a revolution. The fast growth witnessed during the Meiji period is not the result of a public agitation or a revolt from the bottom. The revolution was controlled by the highest person in the land. During the time of the Tokugawa Shogunate, the country was united by strong action. Likewise, during the period of Meiji reforms, people of the country displaying due obedience to their leadership watched with patience how Japan was transforming itself into a modern state.

After capturing power, the Meiji leaders made a deep study of the constitutions of western countries. After that, they decided that a constitutional monarchy should be established in Japan too. Next, the time scheduled for the preparation of the constitution was announced. A constitution drafted by a body of selected persons was declared by the emperor in 1889 A.D. This was very much similar to the German imperial constitution of 1871 A.D.

The New Constitution Prepared under the “Meiji” Administration

- * The constitution established a bi-cameral Parliament known as the ‘Diet’. It consisted of two chambers: a House of Lords and a House of Commons.
- * Ordinary legislative activities were under the House of Commons (the House of Representatives).
- * In financial matters, the Diet had only limited powers.
- * The constitution contained articles on fundamental rights incorporated into it.
- * Only the land owning rich people had the franchise. They comprised only about 1% of the population.
- * The emperor was in command of the threefold armed forces while all foreign relations also were directed by him. He had the power to reject the Acts passed by the Parliament.
- * The emperor’s approval was needed for the bills passed by the Parliament to become law. He had the power to reject the acts passed by the parliament.
- * The ministers were responsible to the Emperor and not to the parliament.
- * The ministers in charge of the army and the air force maintained relations with the emperor.

A very special feature of the constitution was the prevalence of a few left over elements from the Japanese tradition in the constitution. They were ideas tied up with the Philosophy of Confucius.

- * Man is unequal by nature. The lower person must obey the higher.
- * Government implemented by man is better than that is implemented by law.
- * The society is more important than the individual.
- * What is important for the state is the patriarchal society.

According to the constitution, elections conducted to select the members for the House of Representatives were based on political parties. In 1881, the first political party, the Liberal Party came into being. It was founded by Itagaki Samurai, the ruler of Thosa region. Political parties are necessary to strengthen the representative system of government. In 1882, Okuma, who was the count in the region known as Hisen established the 'Progressive' party. Political parties in Japan were based on personalities rather than principles. Therefore, they did not last long.

The establishment of a constitutional government was a fulfilment of one of the aims of the Meiji rulers. One other objective was to establish a powerful army and a navy. Therefore, steps were taken to establish a navy on the British and an army on the German pattern.

Economic Policy of the Meiji Rulers

The changes that took place in the economy during the Meiji period are far more astounding than political changes. While Japan was an agricultural nation during the period of Tokugawa, it became a leading commercial nation during the Meiji period. The capitalistic economic system underwent a gradual expansion. The new rulers paid special attention to industrialisation while steps were taken to set up a communication system based on modern technology. Attempts were made to establish and produce systems such as railways, telecommunication

networks, telephones, docks, ships and heavy equipment. The private sector also came forward to participate in these activities. For Security purposes, railways and communications were kept under government control.

You may have heard about ‘Mitsui’ cement and ‘Mitsubishi’ motor cars. These two giant companies were started during the Meiji period. Both these companies were founded by the Samurais. Mitsui company was started by Mitsui while the Mitsubishi company was founded by a person related to the Sansuma Samurai.

A very special feature of the industrial development of Japan was that inspite of high speed in production it was based on a very large number of small factories. The speed of production was such that within one generation (20 years) Japan was capable of producing a massive surplus. It was necessary to have foreign markets to develop the national economy and also to transfer modern technology from the west.

By 1930, the labour force of Japan was about 6 million., and 75% of them worked in factories employing less than 100 persons. In certain factories there were only five persons.

The expansion of Japan

The expansion of Japan into east Asia was another objective of the expansion. They expected to annex Asian territories to Japan. By this time Korea was the poorest state in Asia. Administration was extremely corrupt. Neglect had made the farmers helpless. Japan was interested in Korea because of its economic and strategic importance. The coastal areas to the north of Korea had been captured by the Russians. Under the excuse of putting down a rebellion that had broken out in Korea, both China and Japan invaded Korea, leading to the out break of Sino-Japanese war in 1895.

At the war, China was defeated by Japan. In Asia, Japan followed a policy of conquest. Japan maintained that China should accept the independence of Korea and pay the expenses incurred in the war it should also give up claims to Formosa, Pesquador islands, and Southern Manchuria Accordingly, Japan was successful in estabishing its power in Korea over and above China.

The Russian Japanese War

In retaliation to the Russian attack on Korea, Japan attacked Russia in 1904. Japan defeated the Russian army and the navy and annexed the southern half of Sachalin islands. Russia had occupied several provinces in Korea and after the Sino- Japanese war, Russia attacked Korea. After the Sino- Japanese war, countries such as Russia, France and Germany told Japan to leave the southern part of Manchuria (Liyatung peninsula). They maintained that the presence of a foreign army in that area would be a threat to the Peking administration.

As soon as Japan left Manchuria, China entered into a treaty with Russia. It also entrusted the security of Manchuria to Russia. Practically speaking, this led to an expansion of Russian influence not only to the southern portion of Manchuria but also to the whole of it. Although Japan tried to arrive at some understanding about Korea and Manchuria, it failed due to the indifferent attitude of the Czar. The Japanese were aware of the dangers in going to war with Russia, but since it had entered into a treaty with Great Britain, it could depend on the support of the most powerful navy of the world.

In the Russian Japanese war, U.S.A. and Great Britain took the side of Japan. This led to the defeat of Russia at the hands of Japan. The war came to an end with the peace treaty signed at Portsmouth harbour in New Hampshire under the guidance of the American President Roosevelt. Because of this victory of Japan, a new balance of power came into force in the Far East. The Bolshevik Revolution shook Russia and the economic resources of Japan were spent for the war. The balance of power was not stable and the activities of the big powers paved the way to the first World War.

After the Russo-Japanese war, Japan attempted to rebuild the strength it had lost. At the same time, Japan began to establish diplomatic relations with other countries. In 1907 A.D. she entered into a secret pact with Russia and tried to partition Manchuria between them. In 1910 A.D. Japan captured Korea. With the outbreak of the first World War, Japan got an opportunity to expand her power. The Japanese captured the areas in China that had been formerly occupied by Germany and the Pacific islands. In addition, Japan earned a massive income by the sale of military equipment to countries in Asia and Africa, which in turn led to a high speed development of the Japanese economy.