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MODERN INDIAN HISTORY SHORT NOTES

What's Inside?

- ✓ Indices & Reports
- ✓ Data Points & Case Studies
- ✓ Landmark Judgements
- ✓ Best Practices & Committees Recommendations
- ✓ International Events & Govt Measures
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Modern Indian History - Short Notes (Session 1)

Motivations for European Exploration

- Fall of Constantinople (1453)
- Demand for spices and wealth
- Religious zeal and missionary motives
- Technological advancements in navigation

Portuguese Arrival in India

- Vasco da Gama (1497)
- Pedro Álvares Cabral (1500)
- Francisco De Almeida (1505) – 'Blue Water' policy
- Alfonso de Albuquerque (1509–1515)
- Nino da Cunha (1529–1538)

Impact on Indian Society and Economy

- Monopoly in spice trade
- Goa developed as a trading hub
- Influence on art, architecture, language, religion

Downfall of Portuguese Power

- Rise of Dutch and British competition
- Decline in naval supremacy
- Internal administrative decline

Dutch East India Company (VOC)

- Established in 1602
- Settlements: Pulicat (1610), Surat (1616), Nagapattinam (1658)
- Corporate commercial structure
- Limited military engagement; Southeast Asia focused

British East India Company

- Charter granted in 1600
- Key locations: Surat (1613), Madras (1639), Bombay (1668), Calcutta (1690s)
- Fortification and strategic alliances

French East India Company

- Founded by King Louis XIV in 1664
 - Trade in spices and textiles
 - Major base: Pondicherry (1674)
 - Governor-General: Joseph François Dupleix (1742)
 - Allied with Indian rulers
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Carnatic Wars

- **First (1746–48):** Linked to War of Austrian Succession; Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle
 - **Second (1749–54):** Dupleix failed to consolidate power; Treaty of Pondicherry
 - **Third (1757–63):** Linked to Seven Years' War; Treaty of Paris ended French ambitions
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Prominent Regional States

- Bengal: Murshid Quli Khan
- Awadh: Asaf-ud-Daula
- Punjab: Maharaja Ranjit Singh
- Hyderabad: Nizam-ul-Mulk
- Mysore: Wodeyar Dynasty
- Travancore: Marthanda Varma
- Marathas: Shivaji

Environment in Bengal

- Strategic and wealthy province
- Siraj-ud-Daula
- British in Calcutta (1690); Fort William
- Battle of Calcutta; Black Hole incident
- Clive conspired with Mir Jafar; Plassey victory (23 June 1757)

Battle of Plassey (1757)

- British control established in Bengal
- Robert Clive: Governor (1758–60)
- Economic exploitation; free trade in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa

Battle of Buxar (1764)

- Opponents: Mir Qasim, Shuja-ud-Daula, Shah Alam II
 - British (Major Hector Munroe) victorious
 - Treaty of Allahabad (1765): Diwani rights granted
 - British became de facto rulers
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Dual Government in Bengal (1765–72)

- Nawab as nominal ruler; British control finances
 - Ended in 1772 by Warren Hastings due to inefficiency and unrest
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Anglo-Mysore Wars (1767–1799)

1. **1st War:** Haider Ali vs British + allies – Treaty of Madras
2. **2nd War:** Haider Ali/Tipu vs British – Treaty of Mangalore
3. **3rd War:** Tipu vs British + allies – Treaty of Seringapatam
4. **4th War:** Tipu killed; Mysore annexed; Wodeyars restored

Outcomes

- Decline of Mysore
 - British dominance in South India
 - Rise of Subsidiary Alliance System
-

Anglo-Maratha Wars (1775–1818)

1. **1st War:** Raghunath Rao backed; Treaty of Salbai
2. **2nd War:** British defeated Scindia & Bhonsle – Treaties of Deogaon & Surji-Anjangaon
3. **3rd War:** Peshwa Baji Rao II rebelled; Maratha Confederacy crushed

Impact

- End of Maratha power
 - British control of Deccan, Gujarat, Malwa
-

Anglo-Sikh Wars

- **1st War (1845–46)**: Post-Ranjit Singh; Treaty of Lahore
- **2nd War (1848–49)**: Sikh revolt; Punjab annexed

Impact

- End of Sikh sovereignty
 - Strategic British expansion
-

Subsidiary Alliance System (1798)

- Introduced by Lord Wellesley
- Indian states forced to:
 - Accept British military presence
 - Avoid foreign alliances
 - Become virtual puppets of British rule

Doctrine of Lapse (1848–1856)

- Introduced by Lord Dalhousie
- Annexation of states with no male heir
- Undermined traditional Indian succession

Impact of Both Policies

- Loss of Indian sovereignty
 - Rise of resentment among rulers
 - Expansion of British territory
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British Land Revenue Systems

- **Permanent Settlement:** Bengal; Zamindars as landlords (Cornwallis)
- **Ryotwari System:** Madras, Bombay; Direct tax from ryots (Munro)
- **Mahalwari System:** North India; revenue via mahals (Bird, Mackenzie)

Impact on Rural Society

- Exploitation & indebtedness
 - Absentee landlordism
 - Collapse of village institutions
 - Agrarian distress
-

Drain of Wealth Theory

- Proposed by Dadabhai Naoroji
- In "Poverty and Un-British Rule in India"
- British extracted Indian wealth without reinvestment

Mechanisms

- Taxation
- One-way trade
- Home charges
- Deindustrialization

Modern Indian History - Short Notes (Session 2)

British Economic Policies and Land Revenue Systems

- Focused primarily on **revenue extraction** and colonial fiscal interests.
- **Permanent Settlement (Bengal)**: Introduced by Lord Cornwallis; made zamindars the landowners with fixed revenue. Led to **landlordism** and neglect of peasantry.
- **Ryotwari System (Madras, Bombay)**: Revenue collected directly from farmers (ryots). Introduced by Munro. Created a **heavy tax burden**.
- **Mahalwari System (North India)**: Revenue via villages (mahals). Periodically revised. Introduced by Mackenzie and Bird.

Impact on Peasants:

- Exploitation and **indebtedness**.
 - Rise of absentee landlords.
 - Collapse of traditional village systems.
 - **Agrarian distress** and rural poverty.
-

Drain of Wealth Theory

- Propounded by **Dadabhai Naoroji** in “Poverty and Un-British Rule in India”.
 - Argued that **India’s wealth was being transferred to Britain** without fair return.
 - Mechanisms included:
 - Heavy revenue demands
 - One-way trade and deindustrialization
 - **Home charges** and lack of reinvestment
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Early British Legislations and Political Control

- **Regulating Act, 1773**: First step in British Parliamentary control. Established Governor-General of Bengal and Supreme Court in Calcutta.
- **Pitt’s India Act, 1784**: Created dual control—Board of Control (British government) and Company directors.
- **Charter Acts (1813–1853)**:

- 1813: Ended trade monopoly; allowed missionary activity.
 - 1833: Centralized power, attempted merit-based civil services.
 - 1853: Competitive exams, separation of powers, expanded legislative councils.
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Revolt of 1857

- **Causes:** Sepoy discontent, religious fears, low pay, annexation of Awadh, and general grievances.
- **Nature:** Political and cultural resistance, not just a sepoy mutiny.
- **Spread:** Primarily North and Central India.
- **Failure:** Poor coordination, lack of leadership and resources, no pan-India support.

Consequences:

- End of Company rule. **Government of India Act, 1858:** Crown took direct control.
 - Governor-General became **Viceroy**.
 - Rise of **authoritarian and centralized governance**.
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Growth of Nationalism and Rise of INC

- Factors: **Western education**, economic exploitation, **Indian Renaissance**, urban middle class, and global influences.
 - **Pre-Congress Associations:** Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, Indian Association (Bengal).
 - **Indian National Congress (1885):** Founded by A.O. Hume (Safety Valve Theory).
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Moderates and Extremists

- **Moderates (1885–1905):** Believed in petitions, dialogue, and reforms. Leaders: Dadabhai Naoroji, Gokhale.
 - Contributions: Economic critique, awareness building, civil rights advocacy.
 - Limitations: Narrow base, failed to mobilize masses.
 - **Extremists (1905–1909):** Assertive nationalism, passive resistance, vernacular mobilization. Leaders: Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai.
 - Trigger: **Partition of Bengal (1905)** by Lord Curzon.
-

Swadeshi and Boycott Movement (1905–1911)

- Mass boycott of British goods, promotion of **indigenous industries**.
- Cultural and economic mobilization.
- Led to repression, arrests, and split in Congress (**Surat Split, 1907**).

Partition annulled in 1911 due to rising revolutionary violence.

Revolutionary Activities (1907–1917)

- Influenced by global trends and disillusionment with moderates.
- Activities included swadeshi dacoities, assassination attempts, and bomb plots.
- Key Groups: Anushilan Samiti, Abhinav Bharat, India House (London).
- Key Events:
 - Khudiram Bose (1908)
 - Chapekar Brothers (1897)
 - Berlin Committee (WWI era)

Decline: Harsh laws, Defence of India Act (1915), rise of Gandhi and non-violence.

Morley-Minto Reforms (1909)

- Background: Simla Deputation (1906), Muslim League's formation.
 - Provisions:
 - Increased Indian membership in councils
 - **Separate electorates for Muslims** (first legal communal divide)
-

Home Rule Movement (1916)

- Led by Tilak and Annie Besant.
- Demand for **self-government** within the empire.
- Focused on political education and mass awakening.
- Decline: Communal tensions, ineffective leadership, Montagu-Chelmsford reforms.

Lucknow Pact (1916):

- Reunion of moderates and extremists

- Congress-League unity: Common demand for self-rule; separate electorates accepted.
-

Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms & Govt of India Act, 1919

- **Montagu's August Declaration (1917)**: Commitment to self-governance.
- **GOI Act, 1919**:
 - Introduced **dyarchy** at the provincial level (reserved vs. transferred subjects)
 - Expanded franchise and bicameral legislature at the center
 - Separate electorates continued

Drawbacks: Limited powers, flawed division of responsibilities, retained control by British executives.

Emergence of Gandhi and Early Satyagrahas

- Gandhi returned from South Africa in 1915 after developing **satyagraha** as a non-violent resistance technique.
- **Champaran (1917)**: First civil disobedience over indigo plantation (Tinkathia system).
- **Ahmedabad Mill Strike (1918)**: Gandhi's first hunger strike.
- **Kheda (1918)**: Farmers protested tax despite crop failure.

Impact:

- Gained **mass support**, national prominence.
 - Gandhi seen as a moral and political leader.
-

Rowlatt Act and Jallianwala Bagh (1919)

- **Rowlatt Act**: Allowed detention without trial; suppressed civil liberties.
- Gandhi launched a **nationwide hartal**.
- **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre (Amritsar)**: General Dyer's firing on peaceful protestors.

Aftermath:

- Deepened public resentment.
- Gandhi renounced titles; **martial law** imposed in Punjab.
- Marked a turning point in the national movement.

Modern Indian History - Short Notes (Session 3)

Khilafat and Non-Cooperation Movement

- **Background:** India witnessed economic hardships, political repression under the Rowlatt Act, and mass outrage over the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre (1919). Globally, the defeat of Turkey affected Muslim sentiments. These events led to greater Hindu-Muslim unity and the launch of mass movements.
- **Khilafat Committee** was formed in 1919 by the Ali Brothers to protect the Caliphate of Turkey.
- **Mahatma Gandhi** merged the **Non-Cooperation Movement** with the Khilafat cause to unite Hindus and Muslims.
- **Main Tactics:** Boycott of British goods, law courts, schools, and government services; promotion of Khadi and swadeshi institutions.
- **Impact:** Rise of leaders like Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das, and Sardar Patel. Establishment of national schools and colleges.

Chauri Chaura Incident (1922)

- A violent incident in February 1922 led to the death of 22 policemen at the hands of protestors.
- Gandhi, adhering to non-violence, immediately called off the movement, leading to disillusionment among many.

Congress-Khilafat Swarajya Party vs No-Changers

- **Swarajists:** Led by C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru, and Ajmal Khan. They advocated entering legislative councils to fight colonial rule from within.
- **No-Changers:** Leaders like C. Rajagopalachari, Vallabhbhai Patel, and Rajendra Prasad focused on constructive work like promoting Khadi, village industries, education, and social reform.
- **Gaya Session (1922):** Attempt to prevent a split; compromise led to temporary unity.

Swarajist Achievements

- Defeated the Public Safety Bill (1928).

- Vithalbhai Patel became the first Indian President of the Central Legislative Assembly (1925).
 - Exposed the limitations of the Montford Reforms but faced coordination issues.
-

Socialist and Revolutionary Trends (1920s)

- Influenced by the **Russian Revolution**, socialist ideas and worker mobilization gained traction.
- **CPI (1920)** formed; **AITUC (1920)** launched to protect workers.
- **May Day** celebrated for the first time in 1923.
- Socialist literature and revolutionary novels like Pather Dabi, Bandi Jiwan inspired the youth.

Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)

- Formed in 1924 by Ramprasad Bismil and others to establish a democratic republic.
- Famous for the **Kakori Train Robbery (1925)**; many members were caught and hanged.

HSRA (1928)

- Led by Bhagat Singh, Azad, and others. Adopted socialist principles and collective leadership.
- **Key Acts:** Assassination of Saunders, Assembly Bombing (1929) protesting repressive bills.

Revolution in Bengal

- Led by **Surya Sen** – Chittagong Armoury Raid (1930).
 - Women revolutionaries like Pritilata Waddedar and Kalpana Dutt played key roles.
-

Simon Commission and Nehru Report (1928)

- **Simon Commission** (1927): Sent by British to suggest reforms, but boycotted as it had no Indian members.
- Recommended end of dyarchy, continued communal electorates, and creation of an Indian federation.
- **Nehru Report** (1928): Drafted by Motilal Nehru. Demanded **Dominion Status**, fundamental rights, and rejected separate electorates.

Jinnah's Fourteen Points (1929)

- In response to Nehru Report. Demanded separate electorates, religious freedom, and Muslim representation in all spheres.
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1929–1931: Purna Swaraj and Civil Disobedience

- **Irwin Declaration** (Oct 1929): Vague promise of Dominion Status.
- **Lahore Congress Session** (Dec 1929): Purna Swaraj declared under Nehru's presidency.
- **January 26, 1930** observed as India's first Independence Day.
- **Gandhi's 11 Demands**: Included issues like salt tax, land revenue, rupee exchange rate.
- **Dandi March** (March–April 1930): Symbolic act of civil disobedience against salt tax.

Round Table Conferences

1. **First RTC (1930)**: Congress absent. Minorities and princely states participated.
 2. **Gandhi-Irwin Pact (1931)**: Peace formula; Gandhi agreed to attend 2nd RTC.
 3. **Karachi Session (1931)**: Passed Fundamental Rights and Economic Program resolutions.
 4. **Second RTC (1931)**: No consensus. Gandhi returned disappointed.
 5. **Communal Award (1932)**: Separate electorates for Dalits introduced.
 6. **Poona Pact (1932)**: Compromise between Gandhi and Ambedkar – reserved seats instead of separate electorates.
 7. **Third RTC (1932)**: Led to the **Government of India Act, 1935**.
-

Government of India Act, 1935

- Proposed an **All India Federation**.
- Introduced **Provincial Autonomy**, but Governors retained overriding powers.
- **Separate Electorates** extended further.
- Dyarchy ended in provinces but introduced at the center.
- Congress criticized it for limited franchise and central control.

1937 Elections

- Congress contested and formed ministries in 7 out of 11 provinces.
 - Work included repeal of emergency laws, press freedom, and tackling communal riots.
-

WWII and Nationalist Response

- **Wardha CWC Meeting (1939)**: Congress offered conditional support; demanded full independence.
- **Viceroy Linlithgow** refused to commit. Congress ministries resigned in protest.

Lahore Resolution (1940)

- Muslim League called for a separate nation – **Two-Nation Theory**.
-

Cripps Mission (1942)

- Proposed Dominion Status and a **Constituent Assembly**.
- Offered provinces the right to opt out.
- Gandhi rejected it: called it a "**post-dated cheque**".

Quit India Movement (1942)

- Launched on **August 8, 1942**.
 - Mass arrests followed. Led to underground activities and formation of **parallel governments** in Ballia, Tamluk, and Satara.
-

INA and Subhas Chandra Bose

- **INA Phase 1**: Led by Mohan Singh with Japanese aid.
- **Phase 2**: Bose revived INA in 1943; formed the **Provisional Government of Free India** in Singapore.
- **Imphal Campaign (1944)**: Failed militarily but inspired nationalist fervor.

INA Trials (1945–46)

- Public outrage and protests led to release of many soldiers.

RIN Mutiny (1946)

- Sailors protested racial discrimination and poor service conditions.
-

Cabinet Mission Plan (1946)

- Proposed a united India with **groupings of provinces**.
- Congress accepted, but Jinnah rejected after Nehru's remarks.

Direct Action Day (Aug 16, 1946)

- Muslim League launched a protest; led to massive communal riots in Bengal.

Interim Government (1946)

- Headed by Nehru. League joined reluctantly in October 1946.
-

Towards Independence

- **Attlee's Declaration (Feb 1947):** British to quit India by **June 1948**.
- **Mountbatten Plan (June 3, 1947):**
 - India to be partitioned into **two dominions**.
 - Referendums in NWFP and Sylhet; boundary commissions for Punjab and Bengal.
- **Indian Independence Act (July 1947):**
 - Legalized partition.
 - Ended British control.
 - Power transferred to India and Pakistan.