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## Abstract

Indian Nationalist Movement is known to be the greatest freedom movement against the colonial power in world History. However, the younger generations tend to forget their immense contributions to free India which they have today. India was never free since the Aryan invasion and was under the British colonial rule for around 200 years until her independence in 1947. Before the colonization, the Indians were divided based on their castes, creed, regions, religions, etc. Until the arrival of the British in the soil of India, national consciousness did not emerge among the Indians. They were fighting against each other to expand their territory and for their interest. However, with the advent of the B.E.I.C. and colonizing the Indian Territory, the B.E.I.C. became the tools for the Indian nationalism. Due to the social, political and economic condition under the rule of British, the people struggle against the British to regain their national identity. In one way, the British colonization was a curse for the Indians. However, on the other hand, it became a way of uniting the Indians for creating India as a Nation.

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*Index terms*— beic, british, imperialist, india/indians, nationalist/nationalism, and colonization

## 1 Introduction

In fact, before the advent of British East India Company<sup>1</sup> 1 From here onwards British East India Company will be referred as B.E.I.C

In India, a nationalist consciousness was not evolved among the Indians. The nation as a whole was socially and politically not united, the north and the south were not going along in their love for the country.

Division flourished among the people in caste, creed, races, regions, and religions which were the barriers in national unity. However, with the colonization of India by the B.E.I.C. and creates the middle class through the western education, this educated Indians started taking interest in public affairs as they realized the need for national unity to be free from the oppressive of the B.E.I.C. Perhaps, the Revolt of 1857 contributes a major role in awakening the masses in various part of the country though there were several movements even before the Revolt for free India. Their movements were limited to a small area or small groups of the Indian people with less effect (S. George Campbell 1897, 314). Moreover, even the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 was not an organized force. But the year 1857 represents the watershed from where new forces were generated which culminated in the rise of the organized national movement under the leadership of Indian National Congress (L.N. ??garwal 1969, 249). Thus, the colonization of B.E.I.C. helps in the growths of nationalism directly or indirectly among the Indian people. The study will acknowledge the immense contributions of all the nationalists, while some go only with the selected nationalist for free India.

### II. The British Imperialism and the Rise of Nationalism in India

It was during the industrial revolution of the 16th and 17th centuries, which is also known as the early imperialist, the Europeans begin exploring to other parts of the continents for trade and commercial purpose. They came to South Asia particularly to India in the early 1600s. At the beginning of their arrival in the soil of India, the B.E.I.C. were under the control of the Mughal Empire. And the British East India Company which was founded by a rich aristocrat and made the company shareholders. Although technically independent from

## 2 III. INFLUENCE OF WESTERN EDUCATION, CIVILIZATION, AND MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

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45 the British Crown, the East India Company became the primary agent for British imperialism throughout Asia.  
46 The East India Company raised its private army and therefore by the year 1707, England and Scotland come  
47 together to form what it is known now as Great Britain. And the Battle of Plassey fought in 1757 between the  
48 B.E.I.C. and the native Bengal Raja, in which the French East India Company was supporting the Bengalis. In  
49 this battle, the B.E.I.C. under the leader of Robert Clive won the battle and started controlling a larger part of  
50 India. Thus, the arriving of the B.E.I.C. colonization upon the Indian territories begins. Initially, the B.E.I.C.  
51 was interested in India for its immense potential trade and profit. They were occupied with the exportation,  
52 exchange, and sale of items like tea, opium, silk, and different assets. And the end of the 18th century and the  
53 beginning of the 19th century was known as the age of the imperialist. In short, the Industrial Revolution made  
54 British interest in India to become more profit oriented.

55 The British took control of India in 1763, after defeating the French in the Seven Years' War (1756-1763).  
56 The British East India Company ruled over India with an iron hand, which is of a dictatorship. By 1850, the  
57 B.E.I.C. control almost the entire parts of India that give rise to the discontentment among the Indians. In 1857  
58 the first Indian revolt against the British rule led by Indian soldiers serving in the British army called sepoys  
59 led to an uprising known as the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. After suppressing the rebellion, the British government  
60 made India a part of its empire in 1858 and started controlling the land and the people (The Age of Imperialism  
61 (1870-1914), 149).

62 The B.E.I.C introduces different kinds of revenue, economic, political policies and socio-religious reforms in  
63 India to set up their domination over Indians. They put an end to the old social order of the Indian, which was  
64 imperialist in its nature of reform. On the other hand, it was the British imperialism that gave birth to the idea  
65 of unification among the Indian which enables them to think as one nation. The unification led in identifying the  
66 main objective behind the B.E.I.C and how to be free from the British rule. According to Prof. Moon, "British  
67 imperialism in India gave her a political unity under a third party in spite of the many discordant elements in  
68 Indian Society" (N. Nayapalan 2001, 276.). Perhaps, the Revolt of 1857 contributes a major role in uniting the  
69 people for a nationalist movement in various part of the country though there were several organizations even  
70 before the Revolt, which were confined to a small area or small groups of the Indian people (S. George Campbell,  
71 1897, 314.).

72 "The Nationalism at the time of Mutiny of 1857 was not an organized force. But the year 1857 represents the  
73 watershed from where new forces was generated, which culminated in the rise of the organized national movement  
74 under the leadership of the Indian National Congress" (L.N. Agarwal, 1969, 249). Thus, the idea of fighting  
75 back against the colonizer for free India was born among the Indians.

## 2 III. Influence of Western Education, Civilization, and Means of Communication

78 The British supremacy in India brought Indian into intimate contact with the European countries. Some Indian  
79 who went there for higher education or jobs, experience the free governance and liberalism, that the Indian  
80 could learn from Europe about nationalism and liberalism. Perhaps, it creates a thought of free India among  
81 the educated class. Educated Indians like Surendra Nath Banerji and Lajpat Rai who tour around Europe were  
82 greatly inspired by the nationalist's movement (B.L. Grover & Alka Mehta 2008, 295). "They studied, admire  
83 and emulate the contemporary nationalist movements of Rousseau, Paine, John Stuart Mill, and Garibaldi and  
84 Irish nationalist leaders, which later became their political heroes" (Bipin Chandra 1971, 200). The influence of  
85 western nationalist movement plays a vital role in awakening the Indian in developing the idea of nationalism.  
86 Though the factor behind introducing of western education by the British was to create an educated Indian mass  
87 who would faithfully work and serve the British Empire. However, a gradual change occurs among the Educated  
88 Indians and thus, it becomes the pioneer in the socio-economic, political and religious reformations. Alongside the  
89 Reformation, the book prescribes in new schools and colleges tended to give the students a new political and  
90 economic outlook. Consequently, this helps the educated Indian in forming a common view, feelings, aspiration,  
91 and ideals for free India. Thus, this education helps in shaping the leaders among the Indian masses for the need  
92 of nationalist movement to free India from the British rule.

93 Lord Dalhousie made huge contributions towards the development of India by introducing railways, telegraph  
94 and postal system. The British imperialist also constructs roads for their interest and profit. The coming of  
95 good communication was effectively helpful in creating the feeling of oneness and nationalism in the whole sub-  
96 continent, which were under the oppression of the British. Edwin Arnold wrote, 'Railways may do for India what  
97 dynasties have never done-what the genius of Akbar the Magnificent could not affect by the government, nor the  
98 cruelty of Tipu Sultan by violence, they have made India a nation' (B.L. Grover & Alka Mehta, 293). Indeed, the  
99 coming of development in India facilitated the growth and developed the feeling of nationalism more effective.  
100 Moreover, the development of the postal system and electric telegraph made a speedy transmission of a message  
101 which enables the people to communicate effectively. As a result, it makes it easy to spread more information  
102 among the Indian nationalists from far and near about the conduct of British colonies in various part  
103 XIX Issue I Version I 16 ( D )

104 of the country. It enables the Indian leaders to carry on their national propaganda in every look and corner  
105 of the country. Without the means of communication and transport, the revolt movement would have been

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106 unthinkable(RadheyShyamChaurasia2002, 331). This communication promotes mutual contact not only among  
107 the leaders but also among the Indian masses.

108 IV. The Contributions of the Scholars, the Social and Religious Reformers

109 On the process of revolution, many Indians has fallen so low that they have lost their confidence in their  
110 capacity for self-government, mainly due to the inner conflict between the Muslims and the Hindus. Moreover,  
111 many British officials constantly include in their writing that, Indians had never been able to rule themselves  
112 in the past, the Hindu and Muslim had always fought one another, the Indians were destined to be ruled by a  
113 foreigner, and the religions and social life of the Indian were degraded and uncivilized,which make them unfit  
114 for democracy or self-government. However, the Europeans scholars like, Max Mueller, Monier Williams, Roth,  
115 Sassoon, and Indian scholarslike R.D-Banerjee, R.G. Bhandarkar, Mahan Mahopadhyaya Hara Prasad Astir, Ball  
116 Gangadhar Tikal, R.L. Mitra and later Swami Vivekananda, etc. rediscovered India's past glory. Therefore,this  
117 encouraged the people of India who felt that they were the ancestors of grand monarchs of this country and ruled  
118 by foreigners, which need no longer be continued resulting in flaring up the fire of nationalism(N. Jayapalan, 269).  
119 Specifically, "the excavation conducted by archaeologists like Marshall and Cunningham created a new picture of  
120 India's past glory and greatness no less impressive than that of ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome"(B.L.  
121 Grover & Alka Mehta, 295). The discovery of the past glory inhales pride of being Indian among the people and  
122 flare up the mind of the educated Indian that inspires them with patriotism and nationalism.

123 Religion plays a vital part in India since the time immemorial. After the British rule, many Christian  
124 Missionaries started winning the hearts of the non-Christian to embraced Christianity and educated them. This  
125 resulted in the birth of nationalist feelings among the people as Christianity claims superiority over the other  
126 existing religions and destroy the culture of the India people. Therefore, to save Hinduism from the teaching of  
127 Christianity, the Indians started several religious movements to reform the evil practices, which prevails within  
128 Hinduism so that the growth of Christianity would stop. Some of the prominent socioreligious movements are;  
129 The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission, and the Theosophical Society.

130 This religious reformation movement was launched by Raja Rammohan Roy, Swami Dayananda Saraswati,  
131 Vivekananda, Slew Ahmad Khan, Annie Besant, etc. Thus, the socio-religious movement during the 18th and  
132 19th century prepared the ground for national unity. As early as 1903 Mr. Besant made a political vowed that  
133 "Indian must be governed by Indian feeling, Indian traditions, Indian thoughts, and Indian ideas,"2 V.

### 134 3 Development of Indian Press and Literature

135 which really wake up the Indian for the free India movement. These reformers championed the causes of human  
136 equality, individual liberty, the abolition of social disparity and so on. "In the religious sphere, the reform  
137 movements combat religious superstition, attacked idolatry, polytheism, and hereditary priesthood. And in  
138 the social sphere, this movement attacked the caste system, the idea of untouchability, and other social and  
139 legal inequities"(B.L. Grover & Alka Mehta, 295).With the contributions of the Scholars and religious reformers  
140 created a reformation in the minds of Indians and awoke them from centuries of thralldom and made a significant  
141 contribution in promoting the feeling of nationalism.

142 Though the press was introduced by the Europeans in India for their gain, it becomes an effective instrument  
143 through which the nationalist-minded Indian spread the message of patriotism and modern economic, social  
144 and political ideas that created consciousness among the Indian(Bipin Chandra,201). The Indian press both  
145 English and Vernacular language injected a strong motivation process of political awareness(B.L. Grover & Alka  
146 Mehta, 294).In spite of numerous restrictions imposed upon the press and publications by the British, the Indian  
147 journalism strides to publish their propaganda of nationalism to the maximum. In 1877, there were about  
148 169 newspapers published in vernacular languages, and their circulation reached the neighbourhood of 100,000  
149 Indians(B.L. Grover & Alka Mehta 2008, 295). To quotes it from William Digby, "in 1875 there were 374  
150 vernacular and Anglo-vernacular newspapers in circulation, as against 147 English papers, out of which 102 were  
151 published in Bengal, 86 in Bombay , 65 in North-western province (Utter Pradesh), 58 in Madras and 63 in  
152 Punjab, Sind, the Central Provinces (Madhya Pradesh) and Rajasthan combine".3 2 Quoted by West Geoffrey,  
153 the life of Annie Besant, London, 1929, p. 221. 3 William Digby, Calcutta Review Vol. LXV, 1879, p. 362.  
154 The growth of the readers of the newspaper increases the growth of people in the political spheres and for  
155 nationalism. Roper Lethbridge pointed out that; "if a single copy reaches a village or even a large collection of  
156 villages, its contents will soon become known to nearly every man residing in the neighborhood"(McCully T,  
157 B., 325). Thus, the press and its publications successfully spread the information about the British Imperialist  
158 policy and help to spread the growth of nationalism among the Indians. It is to be noted that, the India press  
159 play a greater role in mobilizing public opinion, organizing political movements, fighting our public controversy  
160 and promoting Indian nationalism(B.L. Grover & Alka Mehta, 295). National literature too plays a prominent  
161 role in arousing national consciousness in the form of novels, essay, and patriotic poetry. "Ban Kim Chandra  
162 Chatterjee and Rabindranath Tagore in Bengali, Lakshmi NathBezbarua in Assamese; Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar  
163 in Marathi, Subramanya Bharati in Tamil; BharatenduHanshchandra in Hindi; and Altaf Husain Hali in Urdu  
164 were some of the prominent writers of the period,"(Bipin Chandra, 201)Who won the hearts of many for the  
165 freedom movement. Thus, the Indian press and literature become the mirror of Indian nationalism and a primary  
166 medium of educating the public as a whole.

## 4 VI.

### 5 Economic Exploitations and Political Unification

Before the coming of the B.E.I.C, India was very rich in raw materials and in its barter financial system, which was sufficient to meet their own needs. However, with the arrivals of the British, all these were lost as the British think only to develop their own country i.e., England by looting India. During the 19th century (industrial revolution) England was in a high need for raw materials for production and a market all over the places for selling their goods. Perhaps, the invasion of India by the British India was exploited in two ways; provide raw materials to the factories in England, in which the raw materials come back as a finished product and sold in India which the people brought with a high price. Thus, India has the worst experience from the British rule which is known as economic exploitation. Meanwhile, Dadabhai Naoroji founded a theory known as 'Drain of Wealth' which he reported about the secret behind the British in the sphere of the India economy. And R.C. Dutt blamed the British policies for economic ills in his book "Economic History of India". This economic exploitation awakens the mass to revolt against the British rule. In this regard, A.O. Hume also "remarked that the extreme poverty of the Indian people was directly and distinctly traceable to a fundamental defect in the British rule".<sup>4</sup>

"Indian nationalists also developed the 'theory of increasing poverty in India' and attributed it to Britain's anti-India economic policies. They tagged poverty and foreign rule, which developed the psychology of hatred for foreign rule and products and the love for Swadeshi goods and Swadeshi rule" (B.L. Grover & Alka Mehta, 296). Thus, this stimulates the heart of the people and developed the spirit of nationalism.

On the other hand, in the pre-British era, India was divided into numerous feudal states, and they struggle to extend their boundaries among themselves. "The Marathas, the Jats, the Sikhs, and the Muslims had broken up the country into categories of states, each having its own political and territorial existence" (M.M. Ahluwalia, 721). However, the introduction of the British administration, common laws, and Judicial Structure, ultimately help in the unification of the Indians. Perhaps, this also creates awareness among the Indians that this vast land belongs to them. Under the British colonization, most parts of India were put together into one political setup, which helps in developing the spirit of 'oneness' and nationhood among the Indians. Of course, the British gradually introduce a uniform and modern system of government throughout the country and thus unified it administratively.

## 6 VII.

### 7 The Illbert Bill Controversy and the Atrocities of Lord Lytton

In 1883, Lord Ripon as a viceroy tried to introduce and pass the Illbert Bills which permitted the Indian judges to hear the Europeans cases. This Bill was presented by the Law member P.C. Illbert and "tried to authorize the Indian judges to hear cases against the British subject and officers" (Radhey Shyam Chaurasia, 333). These create a huge discontentment towards the European nation, and the Europeans start to protest for the withdrawal of Bill, in which behavior of the European was quite shameful which lead to unrest among the Indian. Thus, the British viceroy was forced to withdraw the Bill. Regarding this, the reaction attitude of the British colonizer made relies upon the educated Indian about the necessity of forming their political organization (Radhey Shyam Chaurasia, 333). Surendra Nath Banerjee has rightly remarked, "No self-respecting Indian could sit idle under the fierce light of that revelation. It was a call to high patriotic duty to those who understood its significance. Therefore naturally, the feeling of heartedness towards the British was born in each educated Indian group of people" (Radhey Shyam Chaurasia, 333). Perhaps, Illbert Bill, the law members of the Viceroy's council, sought to abolish racial inequality by bringing Englishmen under the jurisdiction of Indian magistrate of session judges, (Sailendra Nath Sen, 238) by removing the existing law that even Indian members of the Indian Civil Service were not authorized to hear the cases of the Europeans in the courts. However, the British pour out abuse on Indians, their culture and the ways of life. They declare that even the most highly educated among the Indian were unfit to try a common European (Bipin Chandra, 202). Some of them even organized a conspiracy to kidnap the Viceroy and deport him to England. However, the government of India submitted themselves under the British and amended the Bill to meet their criticism that gives rise to the feeling of more conscious about their degradation towards foreign rule. Thus, the Indian organize the all-Indian campaign in favor of the Bill and meet their demands accepted by the government they need to be united and organize themselves on a national scale. Surendra Nath Banerjee claimed that it strengthens the forces that were speeding up the birth of the Indian National Congress. Reverend Henry Whitehead writes: "The response to the agitation of the Europeans against the Illbert Bill was the National Congress" (Sailendra Nath Sen, 238).

However, during the time of Lord Lytton, in the year 1876-78 a severe famine broke out and 'the worst affected were Madras, Bombay, Mysore, Hyderabad and some parts of Central India and Punjab' (B.L. Grover & Alka Mehta, 211). According to Romesh Dutt, he estimated that five million people perished in a single year.<sup>5</sup> VIII.

## 8 Challenges for the Present Generations

Amid of all this suffering, he celebrated a ceremony at Delhi Durbar when Queen Victoria assumed the title Kaiser-e Hind (the Empress of India). He also imposed a heavy tax on the people of India and spent a large amount of money in the Afghan war, which resulted in the ill feeling of the masses towards the Britisher. He also

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226 reduces the minimum age from 21 to 19 years for employment in Civil Service and "the Vernacular Act of 1876  
227 was passed imposing a restriction upon the press"(RadheyShyamChaurasia, 333). This Bill and the atrocities  
228 led to discontentment of the Indian people and lighten upvarious political organizations in the country to oppose  
229 the act/behavior of the government in the country and led to the feeling of nationalism among the Indians.

230 Though India gain her freedom from the British rule. Several challenges continue to be among the Indian  
231 people. This are as listed below:

232 It can be seen that, India has suffered a lot, but past is a past and we can't change it. Let's work hard to  
233 bring back our past glory and stand as united against all the social evils that is now started ruling our country  
234 like fundamentalism, communal hatred, injustice and corruption.

235 The present generations should always remember that, the freedom which they enjoy today is all because of  
236 the sacrifice done by the Indian Masses who struggle for freedom Indian form the British yoke and not to go  
237 along with a particular group of people either to a particular person.

238 The present generation should realize it was not a party movement which made to achieve the free India rathe  
239 it was a Mass movement where every look and corner of Indian people participate. So, each and every Indian  
240 Citizen must be given equalrespect.

241 The younger generation should not be afraid in focusing on their aims/goals, just as the Indian Nationalist  
242 did. As the Indian Nationalist did not have fears, and they were not led astray from their aims/goals. They live  
243 and died for one sole reason i.e. free India.

244 One lesson from the freedom movement leaders is that, there is strength in Unity. India the 2nd largest  
245 population, there is nothing too big if we want to fix it or achieve if everyone contributes, be it clean India or  
246 development.

247 To stand up for what is right. Not to be just a spectator and waiting for some person to stand up. Each and  
248 every individual has the power to do. They younger generation must have commitment and sustain action in  
249 order to make a change as the Indian Nationalist did.

## 250 9 IX.

## 251 10 Conclusion

252 India was a diverse land without unity until the arrival of the British East India Company. They did not have  
253 the sense of making unity or a nation and were confined to their community or geographical areas. They were  
254 governed by theirfeudal system and fight one another to expand their own territory. But with the advent of  
255 the B.E.I.C. and their colonization of India, a political unification came into being among the Indians as the  
256 British rules were mended to be followed to all the provinces that were under its territories. The suppressive  
257 and ill-treatment of the B.E.I.C. arose a radical feeling among the Indians and united them as one nation. The  
258 development of western education in India was an eye opener for the free Indian movement. It gives birth to the  
259 feelings for the need of the India mass to attain freedom to have back theirland. As a result, different scholar  
260 started writing about the richness of the India past glory which awakens the mind of the Indian masses in the  
261 freedom struggle.

262 Moreover, India was a main exporter for textile earlier in the 18th century, but by the middle of the 19th  
263 century, it had lost all of its export market and much of its domestic market(David Clingingsmith & Jeffery G.  
264 Williamson,Issued in June 2004).However, the colonization under the British made thelocal industries suffered a  
265 massive decline, and India underwent secular de-industrialization as a consequence. The British export the raw  
266 materials from India with a low price and the finished products in Britain were exported back again to India  
267 with a high price, which really affected the Indian economy and waked up people to rose against the British  
268 ruled. On the other hand, heavy import tax was put on Indian products to restrict their entry into the British  
269 market, when there was a free trade policy for the transactions of the raw materials or British goods in India.  
270 Thus, this resulted in ruining of the Indian indigenous industries as the demands of the British goods expanded,  
271 which consequently gave birth to the ill feeling of promoting a national feeling among the Indians.

272 After all, the racial discrimination of the British towards Indians was one of the driving forces to unite and  
273 fight against the British imperialism. They projected themselves as superior to Indian in every aspect of life and  
274 thought that the Indians were inferior at all cost. This feeling of superiority created the need for freedom among  
275 the Indians. Moreover, the Indian was never given a privilege for a higher job even though they are qualified,  
276 capable, and intelligence. Though being educated, the Indian people were openly insulted and sometimes even  
277 assaulted in public(Bipin ??handra, ??02).Discriminated based on their color is also one of the main reasons  
278 that resulted in the awakening of the Indian masses for free India. "They were kept out of exclusive European  
279 clubs and were often not permitted to travel in the same compartment in a train with the European passengers.  
280 This made them conscious of national humiliation and led them to think of themselves as one people when facing  
281 Englishmen"(Bipin ??handra, ??02). Unlike the other foreign conqueror, the British did not mix socially with  
282 the Indian though they were in a high official post in the government offices, due to the feeling of racial superiority  
283 and treat Indian with arrogance. Thus, Indian feels the urgent need of free India from the British ruled, as a

## 10 CONCLUSION

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284 result, each and every individual come together despite of their differences in caste, creed, religions, etc. and join  
285 hands together for the free India. <sup>1</sup> <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Misra, J.P. "A. O. Hume's Leadership of the Indian National Congress." Proceedings of the Indian History Congress 32 (1970): 102. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/44138512>.

<sup>2</sup>RomeshDutt, The Economic History of India, Vol. III, 1960, P.319.

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