

UNIT 1

INDIA: LAND AND THE PEOPLE

1.1. Introduction

In area, India is the world's seventh largest country. It is bordered on the east by Bangladesh and Myanmar; on the west by Pakistan; and by Nepal, China (including Tibet), and Bhutan on the north. The state of Jammu and Kashmir in the extreme north, which is claimed by India, has long been the subject of hostile boundary disputes among India, Pakistan, and China. In this unit we discuss the land regions, climate, natural resources and the ethnic groups found in India.

1.2. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the unit, you should be able to

- state the land regions of India
- describe the rivers and coastal waters of India
- describe the climate of India
- state the natural resources found in India

1.3. Land Regions

India has three main land divisions: The Himalaya mountain system in the north; the Gangetic Plain of the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra rivers; and the peninsula of southern India.

1.3.1. **The Himalayas.** The great mountain walls of the Himalayas stretches for some 1,500 miles (2,400 kilometres) across northern and north-eastern India. The Himalayas consist of three parallel ranges--the Great Himalayas, the Lesser Himalayas, and the Outer Himalayas. At their western end stands another lofty mountain range, the Karakoram.

- The Great Himalayas and Karakoram have an average elevation of more than 20,000 feet (6,100 meters) and contain the highest mountains in the world, including K2 (or Mt. Godwin Austen), the world's second highest mountain peak. It is situated in the Karakoram, in a part of Kashmir controlled by Pakistan. At 28,250 feet (8,611 meters), K2 ranks second only to Mt. Everest, which lies on the border between Tibet and Nepal. The world's third highest peak, Kanchenjunga, on the border between the Indian state of Sikkim and Nepal, rises to 28,169 feet (8,586 meters).
- The mountains of the Lesser Himalayas, though smaller, also reach considerable heights. They are crossed by numerous large valleys, some of which are fertile and of great scenic beauty. Indians who can do so visit hill stations (mountain resorts) here, such as Simla and Darjeeling, to escape the intense summer heat of the plains.

The low foothills of the Outer Himalayas lie between the Lesser Himalayas and the Gangetic Plain.

1.3.2. **The Gangetic Plain.** The lowlands of the Gangetic Plain, also known as northern plains, stretch in a wide arc across India. This is the country's most productive and densely populated region. All three of the great rivers that water these lowlands--the Indus, the Ganges, and the Brahmaputra--are fed by the permanent snows and glaciers of the Himalayas.

1.3.3. **Peninsular India.** Southern India consists of a vast wedge-shaped peninsula covered mostly by a plateau called the Deccan. The plateau is separated from the Gangetic Plain by many hills varying in height and is bounded on the east and west by two low mountain ranges--the Eastern Ghats and the Western Ghats. The average elevation of the Eastern Ghats is about 2,000 feet (610 meters), although in some places the mountains rise to almost three times that height. The Western Ghats are more rugged, with elevations of 3,000 to 5,000 feet (900 to 1,500 meters).

- The north-western part of the Deccan is covered by vast lava flows from ancient volcanoes. Successive lava flows created what is known as the Deccan Traps, which look like giant staircases. They are actually weathered step-like, flat-topped hills, and they are a major scenic feature of the region.
- The west coast of the peninsula is a land of small fishing villages, coconut palms, and spice gardens. In the hills a few miles inland are coffee, tea, and rubber plantations.

1.4. Rivers and Coastal Waters

- Much of India is surrounded by major bodies of water--the Arabian Sea to the west, the Indian Ocean to the south, and the Bay of Bengal to the east.
- The name "India" is derived from the Indus River, one of the great rivers of Asia. The greater part of the Indus basin now lies in Pakistan.
- To Hindus, the Ganges is the most sacred of India's rivers. Its headwaters rise in the Great Himalayas, near the peak of Nanda Devi. The Ganges enters the plain through a gorge (opening) in the Outer Himalayas in the state of Uttar Pradesh. It flows due east, turns south, and with the Brahmaputra River flows through the nation of Bangladesh, finally emptying into the Bay of Bengal.
- The Brahmaputra River sweeps around the eastern end of the Himalayas through a deep gorge. It flows through a region of tea gardens and rice fields in the state of Assam. From Assam it flows south into Bangladesh and then empties into the Bay of Bengal.

The Narmada, and Godavari rivers cross the Deccan plateau. Like the Ganges, the Narmada, and Godavari are sacred rivers of India. The Dakshina Ganga (or Ganges of the South) is the second most sacred river of India. It has been harnessed for irrigation and hydroelectric power and supplies power to many areas in the state of Karnataka. The banks of the Narmada are lined with Hindu shrines and temples.

1.5. Climate

- To understand the climate of India, one must understand the monsoon wind system. In winter, when the landmass is cooler than the surrounding water, the prevailing winds of the monsoon move from the subcontinent toward the ocean. These land winds are generally dry, and therefore no rain falls over most of India in winter. In summer, when the landmass is warmer than the surrounding water, the monsoon winds move deep into the subcontinent from the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea. The season of the summer monsoon brings a great deal of rain. The summer monsoon usually starts about the middle or end of June, with very heavy rain and violent thunder and lightning. Throughout the period between June and September, the southwest winds of the summer monsoon bring rain to most parts of India. The northwest winds of the winter monsoon bring rain only to the south-eastern coast.
- Temperatures vary widely from north to south. In January the days are generally warm and the nights cold. The average January temperature is less than 55°F (13°C) in the Punjab in north-western India and about 75°F (24°C) in the state of Tamil Nadu. April and May, when the sun is directly overhead, are the hottest months. The average temperature for May is more than 100°F (38°C) in north-western India and over 85°F (29°C) in the Ganges delta in east central India.
- The amount of rainfall also varies greatly from region to region. It ranges from less than 10 inches (250 millimetres) a year in parts of the very dry northwest to over 450 inches (11,430 millimetres) at Cherrapunji in Assam in the northeast. Cherrapunji is one of the wettest spots on Earth.
- Years when rainfall is unusual may be disastrous for the people of India. It can result in drought in one region and floods in another, with the loss of lives and the destruction of crops and property.

1.6. Natural Resources

- India is rich in natural resources, particularly minerals. Its deposits of iron ore and coal are among the largest in the world. Most of India's iron ore is mined in the states of Bihar and Orissa. Its coal reserves, found mainly in West Bengal and Bihar, provide

much of India's industrial energy needs. Petroleum is also being produced in increasing amounts, both inland and in offshore waters.

- Indian mines produce large quantities of mica, manganese, copper, bauxite (aluminium ore), chromite (chromium ore), ilmenite (titanium ore), zinc, and other minerals essential to modern industry. Gold and silver are mined in Karnataka state. India also produces diamonds, emeralds, and other gems.
- India's rivers provide the water resources for irrigation and hydroelectric power development. Underground waters are also an important source of water for agriculture. Forests cover over one-fifth of the country and are another valuable natural resource, producing timber and helping prevent the erosion (washing away) of soil.

1.7.The Ethnic groups of India

- India is a diverse multiethnic country that is home to thousands of small ethnic and tribal groups. That complexity developed from a lengthy and involved process of migration and intermarriage. The great urban culture of the Indus civilization, a society of the Indus River valley that is thought to have been Dravidian-speaking, thrived from roughly 2500 to 1700 BCE. An early Aryan civilization—dominated by peoples with linguistic affinities to peoples in Iran and Europe—came to occupy northwestern and then north-central India over the period from roughly 2000 to 1500 BCE and subsequently spread southwestward and eastward at the expense of other indigenous groups. Despite the emergence of caste restrictions, that process was attended by intermarriage between groups that probably has continued to the present day, despite considerable opposition from peoples whose own distinctive civilizations had also evolved in early historical times. Among the documented invasions that added significantly to the Indian ethnic mix are those of Persians, Scythians, Arabs, Mongols, Turks, and Afghans. The last and politically most successful of the great invasions—namely, that from Europe—vastly altered Indian culture but had relatively little impact on India's ethnic composition.
- Broadly speaking, the peoples of north-central and northwestern India tend to have ethnic affinities with European and Indo-European peoples from southern Europe, the Caucasus region, and Southwest and Central Asia. In northeastern India, West Bengal (to a lesser degree), the higher reaches of the western Himalayan region, and Ladakh (in Jammu and Kashmir state), much of the population more closely resembles peoples to the north and east—notably Tibetans and Burmans. Many aboriginal (“tribal”) peoples in the Chota Nagpur Plateau (northeastern peninsular India) have affinities to such groups as the Mon, who have long been established in mainland Southeast Asia. Much less numerous are southern groups who appear to be descended, at least in part, either from peoples of East African origin (some of whom settled in historical times on India's western coast) or from a population commonly designated as Negrito, now represented by numerous small and

widely dispersed peoples from the Andaman Islands, the Philippines, New Guinea, and other areas.

1.8. Activity 1

1. State the land regions of India and describe the rivers and coastal waters of India
2. Describe the climatic conditions of India
3. State the major natural resources found in India
4. Discuss the major ethnic groups that are found in India

Summary

In this unit we have discussed India has three main land divisions: The Himalaya mountain system in the north; the Gangetic Plain of the Indus, Ganges, and Brahmaputra rivers; and the peninsula of southern India. We have also learnt that, much of India is surrounded by major bodies of water--the Arabian Sea to the west, the Indian Ocean to the south, and the Bay of Bengal to the east. Also discussed in this unit is that, to understand the climate of India, one must understand the monsoon wind system. In winter, when the landmass is cooler than the surrounding water, the prevailing winds of the monsoon move from the subcontinent toward the ocean. India is rich in natural resources, particularly minerals. India's rivers provide the water resources for irrigation and hydroelectric power development. Further in this unit, discussed are India's ethnic groups. India is a diverse multiethnic country that is home to thousands of small ethnic and tribal groups.

UNIT 2

THE EMERGENCE OF TRADITIONS: HINDUISM, JANISM AND BUDDHISM IN INDIA

2.1. Introduction

To stimulate comparative and global thinking in the context of changing socio-religious trends, this unit discusses the evolution of Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism in the historical context of the evolution of religious and philosophical traditions in the world. This is to help understand why India represents a core Asian tradition as well as one of the oldest strands in the fabric of world civilization.

2.2. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the unit, you should be able to

- state the origins and popularisation of Hinduism in India
- explain the origins and meaning of Jainism in India
- describe the origins of Buddhism in India.

2.3. Hinduism

- One notable difference between Hinduism and other major religions is that it doesn't have a clear founder or starting point; rather, it grew and spread—possibly as early as 5500 BCE—in the Indian subcontinent and changed over time based on Indian culture and economics.
- During the Maurya and Gupta empires, the Indian culture and way of life were deeply influenced by Hinduism. Hinduism reinforced a strict social hierarchy called a **caste system** that made it nearly impossible for people to move outside of their social station. Emperors during the Gupta empire used Hinduism as a unifying religion and focused on Hinduism as a means for personal salvation.
- Followers of Hinduism may worship multiple different gods, although it's not a polytheistic religion because all these gods are believed to be manifestations of the one Brahman.
- Agni, Indra, Shiva, Vishnu, and Ganesha are just a few examples of Hindu gods that different sects have regarded as the most important gods at various times. Shiva is sometimes associated with the destruction process, and Vishnu is seen as a creator who uses the remains of Shiva's destruction to regenerate what has been destroyed.

2.3.1. Background on social systems in India

- In the Indian empires from 600 BCE to 600 CE, emperors maintained and further developed social systems that had been in place for a long time. The **Aryans**, nomadic herders from Central Asia who had migrated into the Indian subcontinent by 1500 BCE, had already established a caste system with four main groups of people: brahmins, or priests; kshatriyas, or warriors and aristocrats; vaishyas, or peasants and merchants; and shudras, or serfs.
- This separation of people by class and job gained an even bigger foothold within Hinduism: according to Hindu myth, the god Purusha was assembled from the four castes, with the Brahmins at the head and the Shudras at the feet. It was believed that shudras had been born into their caste because they committed bad deeds in a previous life, or **incarnation**. The Hindu ideal of **karma** suggested that people who behaved well could be born into a higher caste.

2.3.2. Popularization of Hinduism

- Hinduism originally started as a tradition from within the brahmin class, making it difficult for people of lower castes to access, but it gradually grew more popular. Sometime around 1500 to 500 BCE, two epic poems called the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana* were created and eventually written down in the early centuries of the Common Era. These poems laid out information about Hindu values and gods—Vishnu, for example—through dramatic stories of love and war. When these stories were written down, they spread more quickly and easily throughout India. Another text, the *Bhagavad Gita*, was a poem that highlighted Hindu values and the possibility of salvation for people who lived those values. The *Bhagavad Gita* helped popularize Hinduism among lower castes because it asserted that people could achieve salvation by performing their caste duties.
- During the Gupta Empire—from about 320 to 550 CE—emperors used Hinduism as a unifying religion and helped popularize it by promoting educational systems that included Hindu teachings; they also gave land to brahmins. The Gupta emperors helped make Hinduism the most popular religion on the Indian subcontinent.

2.4. Jainism

- Jainism dates to the 6th century B.C.E. in India. The religion derives its name from the *jinās* ("conquerors"), a title given to twenty-four great teachers (*tirthankaras* or "ford-makers"), through whom their faith was revealed. Mahavira, the last of the *tirthankaras*, is considered the founder of Jainism. The ultimate goal of Jainism is the liberation of the self (*jīva*) from rebirth, which is attained through the elimination of accumulated karma (the consequences of previous actions). This occurs through both the disciplined

cultivation of knowledge and control of bodily passions. When the passions have been utterly conquered and all karma has been removed, one becomes a Jina ("conqueror"), and is no longer subject to rebirth.

- Jainism conceives of a multi-layered universe containing both heavens and hells. Movement through these levels of the universe requires adherence to the Jainism doctrines emphasizing a peaceful and disciplined life. These principles include non-violence in all parts of life (verbal, physical, and mental), speaking truth, sexual monogamy, and the detachment from material things. As part of the disciplined and non-violent lifestyle, Jains typically are strict vegetarians and often adhere to a quite arduous practice of non-violence, which restricts the sorts of occupations they may follow (no farming, for instance, since insects are inadvertently harmed in plowing). Jainism's ethical system is based on the idea that right faith, knowledge, and conduct must be cultivated simultaneously.

2.5. Buddhism

- *Siddhartha Gautama*, the founder of Buddhism who later became known as "the *Buddha*," lived during the 5th century B.C. Gautama was born into a wealthy family as a prince in present-day Nepal. Although he had an easy life, *Gautama* was moved by suffering in the world.
- He decided to give up his lavish lifestyle and endure poverty. When this didn't fulfill him, he promoted the idea of the "*Middle Way*," which means existing between two extremes. Thus, he sought a life without social indulgences but also without deprivation.
- After six years of searching, Buddhists believe *Gautama* found enlightenment while meditating under a Bodhi tree. He spent the rest of his life teaching others about how to achieve this spiritual state.

2.5.1. The spread of Buddhist influence

- When *Gautama* passed away around 483 B.C., his followers began to organize a religious movement. *Buddha's* teachings became the foundation for what would develop into Buddhism. In the 3rd century B.C., *Ashoka the Great*, the *Mauryan Indian Emperor*, made Buddhism the state religion of India. Buddhist monasteries were built, and missionary work was encouraged.
- Over the next few centuries, Buddhism began to spread beyond India. The thoughts and philosophies of Buddhists became diverse, with some followers interpreting ideas differently than others.

- In the sixth century, the Huns invaded India and destroyed hundreds of Buddhist monasteries, but the intruders were eventually driven out of the country.
- Islam began to spread quickly in the region during the Middle Ages, forcing Buddhism into the background.

2.6. Activity 2

1. State the origins and popularisation of Hinduism in India
2. Give an account of the meaning and origins of Jainism in India
3. Describe the origins and spread of Buddhist religion in India.

Summary

- To stimulate an understanding and comparative global thinking in the context of changing socio-religious trends, this unit discussed the evolution of major religious beliefs in India - Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism. Hinduism religions doesn't have a clear founder or starting point but grew and spread—possibly as early as 5500 BC—in the Indian subcontinent and changed over time based on Indian culture and economics. Jainism dates to the 6th century B.C.E. in India. The religion derives its name from the *jinās* ("conquerors"), a title given to twenty-four great teachers (*tirthankaras* or "ford-makers"), through whom their faith was revealed. *Siddhartha Gautama*, the founder of Buddhism who later became known as "the *Buddha*," lived during the 5th century B.C. When Gautama passed away around 483 B.C., his followers began to organize a religious movement. Buddha's teachings became the foundation for what would develop into Buddhism.

UNIT 3

INDIA AND THE ARAB WORLD

3.1. Introduction

The rise and growth of Islam has been regarded as one of the most important events of world history. Islam grew up in the desert of Arabia and its first converts, the Arabs, made it a powerful force in the politics of Asia. Afterwards, the Persians took up the cause of Islam and strengthened it and, then, the Turks extended it towards both the West and the East and made it one of the foremost religions of the world. Prophet Muhammad (570-632 A.D.), the founder of Islam, propagated Islam, both by peace and war, and therefore, Islam was propagated by his followers both by propaganda and force from its very beginning. In this unit we discuss, the condition of India at the time of Arab invasion, the causes of the invasion, the invasion, the causes of the success of the Arabs, the Arabs in Sindh after Muhammad, the effects of the Arab invasion and the Arabs and the Turks in Hindu-Afghanistan.

3.2. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the unit, you should be able to

- discuss the condition of India at the time of Arab invasion and the causes of the invasion
- describe the invasion and the causes of the success of the Arabs
- discuss the Arabs situation in Sindh after Muhammad and the effects of the Arab invasion
- discuss the Arabs and the Turks situation in Hindu-Afghanistan

3.3. The Condition of India at the Time of Arab Invasion

- Politically, India was divided into rival states. However, the division of India was not its primary weakness. India is a sub-continent and it was not possible to keep it under one rule at that time. Besides, even after its division, there had been quite a few extensive kingdoms at that time which were powerful enough to meet the challenge of foreign aggressors. The weakness of India was not its division into many states but constant fighting among them for power and glory.
- At that time, Afghanistan was ruled by Hindu kings. Politically and culturally it had been a part of India since the period of the mighty Mauryas. Afterwards it was divided into two kingdoms, viz., the kingdoms of Jabul and Kabul. The kingdom of Kabul extended up to the borders of Kashmir in the north-east and touched the borders of Persia in the west.
- The kingdom of Jabul was between the territories of Baluchistan and the kingdom of Kabul. Being situated in the northwest of India, these kingdoms had to meet the challenge of the Muslims first. However, the Hindu rulers of these kingdoms succeeded in maintaining their independence till the end of ninth century A.D. Kashmir was also an independent state.

- It became a powerful state during the reign of Lalitaditya (725-755 A.D.) who even succeeded in defeating Yaso Varman, the powerful Pratihara ruler of Kannauj. Yaso Varman was also a powerful ruler of north India whose empire extended from east Punjab in the west to Bengal in the east and from the Himalayas in the north to the banks of the river Narmada in the south.
- The Pala dynasty ruled over Bengal. Thus, there were powerful states in north India at that time. The same way, the Vakatakas, the Pallavas, the Pandyas and the Cholas had strong kingdoms in the South. Even Sindh was an extensive kingdom whose boundary touched the border of Kashmir in the North, the state of Kannauj in the east and the Arabian Sea in the South.
- Baluchistan was also a part of its territories. Sindh was ruled by Dahar, a brahmana by caste. His family had captured the throne of Sindh quite recently and Dahar himself had captured the throne after a contest against his cousin.
- Thus, he got little time to consolidate his position when the invasion of the Arabs took place. Besides, his policy remained somewhat oppressive towards the Sudras from whom his family had snatched away the throne of Sindh and also towards the Jats of Sindh.
- Thus, Sindh suffered from internal dissensions and unstable rule and thus, was comparatively a weak state of India at that time. But beyond the border of Sindh there were powerful kingdoms in India, both in the North and the South, which though fought among themselves, were yet powerful enough to resist foreign invaders.
- The Indian society was divided into castes and sub-castes and generally inter-dining and intercaste marriages were not permitted. Yet, the caste system had not grown very much rigid. Intercaste marriages, change of caste and absorption of foreigners among Hindus was possible. Women did not enjoy equal rights with men, yet they occupied a respectable place in society.
- There was no Purdah system. Women received education, participated in social and religious functions and even in administration and had the right to choose their husbands. However, while a man could marry several women, the women enjoyed no such right. Besides, the practice of Sati was getting popular among the ruling class. The people observed high morality and the common people led a simple life.
- Education was also widely prevalent and besides religious education all other subjects of study were also taught to the students. Nalanda, Vallabhi, Kashi, Kanchi etc. were the great centres of learning at that time. Hinduism was the most popular religion, though Buddhism was also fairly widespread.

- Economically, India was prosperous. Agriculture, trade and commerce, handicrafts and industries were all in a progressive stage which had brought all- round prosperity to India. Of course, the major share of this prosperity was enjoyed by the rich minority class, yet, the common people did not suffer economic hardships.
- Thus, politically, economically and culturally India did not suffer from any weakness at the time of the invasion of the Arabs. Yet, the rivalry and constant fighting of different rulers among themselves, indifference to improvement of their arms and fighting skill as compared to foreigners and lack of emotional unity for the country as a whole were the weaknesses which were slowly coming up and, when these were not attended to properly, it weakened India in the coming centuries and, finally, led to her defeat and disgrace by foreigners.

3.4.The Causes of the Invasion

- The Arabs had contacts with India prior to their attack on Sindh. They used to come for trade, particularly, in the south-west coast of India. Afterwards, with the growth of their military power their ambition also grew and they desired to capture territories in India. Their first attack took place in 636 A.D. when they tried to capture Thana near Bombay.
- The attempt did not succeed. Afterwards, they made frequent attempts to get some foothold in India through both sea and land. But mostly, they desired to capture the north-west territories in the border of Sindh, particularly Makarana. After a few unsuccessful attempts, the Arabs, ultimately succeeded in capturing Makarana (modern Baluchistan) in the beginning of the eighth century A.D. which paved the way for the conquest of Sindh.
- The one cause of the attack of the Arabs was their religious zeal. The propagation of Islam by force and conquest had been the aim of all the Khalifas. The attack on Sindh was also a part of that policy. Secondly, the Khalifas were not only heads of Islamic faith but also heads of the Islamic state.
- Therefore, like all powerful rulers they also desired to extend their empire. The attack on Sindh was also a part of their expansionist policy. Thirdly, the Arabs, having trade relations with India, knew that India was a rich country. Therefore, the lure of wealth through conquest was also one of the reasons of their attack on Sindh. However, the immediate cause of their attack was the activity of sea-pirates of Sindh who looted certain Arab ships.
- Historians have expressed different opinions regarding this incident. Sir Wolseley Haig has observed that the king of Ceylon sent to Hajjaj, the Muslim governor of Iraq, some Muslim women whose fathers had died and therefore, there was nobody to look after them. But the ship in which they were sailing was captured by pirates of Debal, a sea-port of Sindh.

- Some other scholars have expressed the view that the pirates looted the presents and carried off women who were offered by the king of Ceylon to the Khalifa. Some others have said that the king of Ceylon had embraced Islam and he had sent some women and other presents to the Khalifa and those presents were looted by sea-pirates.
- There is no conclusive evidence to prove that the king of Ceylon had embraced Islam but it is accepted by all historians that certain women, whosoever they might be, and some articles sent by the king of Ceylon to Hajjaj were captured by the sea-pirates of Sindh. Hajjaj demanded from Dahar, the then ruler of Sindh, to set free those women or to pay compensation.
- Dahar refused to do anything and replied that he had no control over those sea-pirates who had captured those women. Hajjaj felt very angry, decided to conquer Sindh and sought permission for the attack from Khalifa Walid, which was granted somewhat reluctantly.

3.5.The Invasion

- The first attack under Ubaidullah failed. He was defeated and killed. Another army sent under Budail met the same fate. Then Hajjaj made elaborate preparations for the attack on Sindh and sent a powerful army under the command of his nephew and son-in-law, Muhammad-bin-Qasim, in 711 A.D. Muhammad proceeded towards Sindh through Makarana and first conquered Debal where he received fresh reinforcement sent by Hajjaj through the sea.
- Then he conquered Nerun, Siwistan and a few other strongholds. By then Dahar offered no resistance to the Arabs. He left his fate and the fate of Sindh to be decided by one pitched battle against the Arabs. Ultimately, he came out of the fort of Brahamanabad and proceeded towards Raor to face the enemy. The Hindus and the Arabs remained facing each other for a few days without any battle.
- The battle took place on 20 June, 712 A.D. Dahar fought gallantly but just when the Muslim army was on the verge of collapse, his elephant, who got wounded, rushed away from the battlefield which created panic and confusion in the Hindu army. Still Dahar returned to the battlefield, fought with desperate courage and ultimately fell fighting in the midst of his enemies.
- The fort of Raor was then defended by the widowed queen of Dahar. But when the provisions of the fort failed, the women performed Jauhar and the men came out of the fort to fight till death. The fort was, ultimately, captured by the Arabs. Jaisingha, the son of Dahar, offered resistance to the Arabs at the fort of Brahamanabad but had to leave it to the Arabs.

- Here Muhammad captured the entire treasury of Dahar and also one of his queens, Ladi, and her daughters. Suryadevi and Parmaldevi. He himself married Ladi and sent her virgin daughters to the Khalifa as presents. The Arabs also captured Alor and a few other forts which completed their conquest of Sindh. In 713 A.D., Muhammad proceeded to attack Multan.
- After a few serious engagements with the enemies, he reached Multan and besieged the fort. The people offered resistance for two months but, then, a traitor pointed out to Muhammad the source of water-supply to the town. Muhammad cut it off and Multan was forced to surrender. Muhammad got a vast quantity of gold in Multan and therefore, named it the city of gold. Multan, however, was the last city which was conquered by Muhammad.
- Muhammad, the conqueror of Sindh, could not live long after his successful campaigns. He met a tragic end. According to Chahnama, Suryadevi and Parmaldevi, daughters of Dahar, who were sent as presents to the Khalifa, accused Muhammad of having outraged them and of keeping them in his harem for three days before sending them to the Khalifa. The Khalifa was enraged and ordered that Muhammad should be brought before him after sewing him in the skin of an ox.
- Muhammad obeyed the orders of the Khalifa and sewed himself in the skin of an ox and died. However, the daughters of Dahar afterwards accepted that their charge against Muhammad was false and therefore, they too were killed by the orders of the Khalifa. Mir Masum has also accepted this story of Chahnama. But modern historians have refused to accept this story. They claim that the cause of the downfall of Muhammad was political.
- According to them, Khalifa Walid was succeeded by his brother, Sulaiman, in 715 A.D. Khalifa Sulaiman and his governor of Iraq were enemies of Hajjaj. But then, Hajjaj had died by that time. So, their wrath fell on his son-in-law, Muhammad, who was recalled from India and put to death along with several other adherents of Hajjaj.

3.6.The Causes of the Success of the Arabs

- The Arabs succeeded in conquering Sindh and Multan due to several reasons. Primarily, the internal weaknesses of Sindh were responsible for its fall. Sindh was a weak state of India. It was thinly populated; its economic resources were meagre and it was not strong militarily. There were sharp social divisions in Sindh.
- Besides, the usual distinctions of Hindu society of being higher and lower castes, the rule of Brahmana kings had been oppressive towards war-like people like Jats and Meds which alienated them from their rulers. Sindh, of course, was not poor and it had good foreign trade. Yet, it was not so prosperous as to provide the means to develop itself into a strong state militarily.

- The family of Dahar had captured the throne quite recently and neither his family nor he had succeeded in providing a stable, strong and popular government in Sindh. His provincial governors were virtually semi-independent and quite a large section of the populace was not loyal to him, particularly, the Buddhists and the trading class who did not cooperate with him.
- Therefore, Dahar could not utilise complete resources of Sindh against the Arabs. Sindh was located at the extreme west corner of India and therefore, other Indian rulers remained indifferent to its fate. The Arabs possessed superior arms, cavalry, military tactics and were inspired by religious zeal as well. As compared to them, the Hindus lacked not only the military resources but also emotional unity.
- The Hindus failed to develop that sense of unity even on the basis of their religion and culture which could inspire them to fight the Arabs with emotional zeal to protect their country. Therefore, their ideal remained limited and their conflict with the Arabs remained only a struggle against an aggressor to save their kingdom.
- Dahar committed many tactical mistakes from the very beginning. He could not foresee the danger of the Arab invasion, once they had conquered Makarana. He remained totally inactive when Muhammad was conquering Debal, Nerun and other places at lower Sindh. It was a fatal mistake on his part that he left his fate to be decided by a single, pitched battle against the Arabs.
- He failed to divide the strength of his enemy which he could do if he had chosen to attack him from different directions and at different places, and he did not exploit the difficulties of Muhammad in his favour when sickness prevailed in the Arab camp before the battle of Raor. Of course, Dahar was a brave and courageous fighter and he fought gallantly but it was absolutely wrong on his part to risk his life in the battle as a common soldier.
- Muhammad was certainly a more capable commander than him and that was fairly responsible for the success of the Arabs. The Arabs could get traitors also from the Indian side.
- At the battle of Raor, one Indian suggested to Muhammad some ways and means to bring down the morale of the Indian army; Nerun was surrendered to the Arabs without fighting; the Jats supported the Arabs after the battle of Sesam; and a traitor showed to the Arabs the source of water-supply to the fort of Multan.
- The treachery from the Indian side certainly helped in the success of the Arabs. Besides, the superior commandship of Muhammad, the religious zeal of the Arabs and their better arms and military tactics were certainly responsible for their success.

3.7. The Arabs in Sindh after Muhammad

- The Arabs failed to penetrate further into India. When the Abbasids replaced Umayyads as Khalifas, the Arabs in Sindh were divided and they fought against each other. Ultimately, the powers of the Khalifas weakened and they failed to keep control over their distant provinces.
- The same happened with Sindh which became free from the control of the Khalifas in 871 A.D. But the Arabs failed to unite themselves. Their kingdom of Sindh was divided into two parts, viz., lower and upper Sindh. Thus, there remained two Arab kingdoms in Sindh till the invasion of Sultan Mahmud.
- The Arabs failed not only in keeping their kingdom in Sindh intact but also to administer it well. Their administration in Sindh was like a military Jagir. The Arabs simply collected taxes and maintained their position with the force of arms. However, as their number was limited, they took help from the local people in administering Sindh and refrained from interfering in the local administration.
- The administration of the Arabs brought forward only one novelty. Islam divided all non-Muslims into two parts. The one set of people were called Zimmis (like Christian and Jews) who shared the knowledge of true religion, viz., Islam and therefore, were allowed to live under the protection of an Islamic ruler after payment of a religious tax called the Jaziya.
- The other set of people who engaged themselves in image-worship were called the Kafirs. The Kafirs were not allowed to live in an Islamic state and therefore, had to choose between the two alternatives, viz., conversion or death. The Hindus came under the category of the Kafirs. When Muhammad conquered Sindh, he found it absolutely impossible to convert all Hindus to Islam or put them to death.
- Therefore, he accepted Hindus as Zimmis and sought the permission of Hajjaj for the same, which was granted. The Turks, who followed the Arabs in India afterwards, thus, could find a ready-made solution and the Hindus were allowed to live in an Islamic state after the payment of Jaziya. This was a novelty in the history of Islam, as comments Sir William Muir. The conquest of Sindh, thus, began a new age in the policy of Islam.

3.8. The Effects of the Arab Invasion:

- Colonel Tod, the famous historian of the history of Rajasthan, described that the invasion of the Arabs had a tremendous effect and the entire north India was terrorised by it. Now, no historian accepts his view. It had a very limited effect on the politics of India. Lane-Poole writes, "It was simply an episode in the history of India." Wolseley

Haig also writes. “It was a mere episode in the history of India and affected only a small portion of the fringe of that vast country.”

- The Arabs did not break the military strength of India and therefore, did not pave the way for the conquest of India by Islam. They simply drew closer the contacts of Indians with the Arabs and the Islamic world. Besides, they were the first who established the rule of Islam in India and converted Hindus to Islam in quite large numbers.
- The Arabs did not impress Indians culturally. Instead, they themselves were influenced by the culture of India. The Arabs learnt much from fine arts, astrology, science of medicines and literature of India. They employed Hindu artists and architects to construct their buildings. They also learnt from Buddhist and Hindu philosophy, literature and religious ideals.
- The Sanskrit texts, the Brahma Siddhanta and the Khanda-Khadhyak were translated into Arabic language during the period of Khalifa Al-Mansur. The Arabs learnt the philosophy of Sanyas and Tapa from the Indians.
- The Arabs also gained the knowledge of numerical and profited from the science of medicine of Indians. Dr A.L. Srivastava has expressed the view that not only the Arabs but Europeans also drew advantage from the knowledge of the Indians in the eighth and ninth centuries A.D. because of their contacts with them through the Arabs.
- Thus, though the Arabs came to India as conquerors they failed to influence Indian politics and culture in any way. Instead they themselves and through them the western world also drew advantage in many fields by coming in contact with the Indians, which also justifies the view that by that time the Indian people and their culture had not lost their vigour and were in a position to contribute constructively to the culture and knowledge of the world.

3.9.The Arabs and the Turks in Hindu-Afghanistan:

At that time there were two Hindu kingdoms in Afghanistan. One was the kingdom of Kabul and the other that of Jabul. These Hindu kingdoms also had to face the challenge of the rising power of Islam. The Arabs conquered Iran by 643 A.D. and, since then, the boundaries of their empire touched the boundaries of these two kingdoms.

The Arabs tried to penetrate into Afghanistan and made repeated attempts for it. But, for nearly two centuries, these Hindu-kingdoms successfully met their challenges and the Arabs could succeed only partially. The Arabs first succeeded in capturing Siestan but then their progress was checked for the next fifty years.

Then Hajjaj, the governor of Iraq, attempted to conquer these kingdoms as he had attempted to conquer Sindh. But his attempts and all the attempts of the Arabs after him failed. Even their possession of Siestan proved to be instable.

Thus, the Hindu kingdoms of Afghanistan did not yield to the Arabs and did not permit them to enter India directly through Afghanistan for a long time. The kingdoms existed till 870 A.D., when finally, they were conquered by the Turks. Thus, the Hindus successfully checked the rising power of Islam on its frontiers for nearly 225 years, which has been accepted as a creditable account of their power.

3.10. Activity 3

1. Discuss the condition of India at the time of Arab invasion and the causes of the invasion
2. Describe the invasion and the causes of the success of the Arabs
3. Discuss the Arabs situation in Sindh after Muhammad and the effects of the Arab invasion
4. Discuss the Arabs and the Turks situation in Hindu-Afghanistan

Summary

In this unit we have discussed India and the Arab World has been discussed. We have looked at the condition of India at the time of Arab invasion, the causes of the invasion, the invasion, the causes of the success of the Arabs, the Arabs in Sindh after Muhammad, the effects of the Arab invasion and the Arabs and the Turks in Hindu-Afghanistan. At the time of the Arab invasion, India was politically divided into rival states. However, the division of India was not its primary weakness. India is a sub-continent and it was not possible to keep it under one rule at that time. The Arabs used to come for trade, particularly, in the south-west coast of India. Afterwards, with the growth of their military power their ambition also grew and they desired to capture territories in India. The major cause of the of the Arabs move into India was their religious zeal to spread to Islam faith.

UNIT 4

BRITISH IMPERIALISM IN INDIA

4.1. Introduction

Imperialism is a term that relates to when one country extends its political, economic or cultural authority over another country or region. This process involves the dominant country taking over the other through direct invasion and political control or by gaining authority over the economy of the other country. British Imperialism in India is an important topic in world history. It is related to the Age of Imperialism and the expansion of the British Empire. In this unit we discuss the early history of India before the arrival of the British, early European interests in India, the Mughal Empire of India, the British Raj and the economic importance of India to the British.

4.2. Learning outcomes

By the end of the unit, you should be able to

- explain the early history of India before the arrival of the British
- state the early European interests in India,
- describe the Mughal Empire of India,
- discuss the British Raj and the economic importance of India to the British and the effects of the British Raj on the Indian economy

4.3. The early history of India before the arrival of the British

According to modern historians, human beings first arrived in the Indian subcontinent about 50,000 to 70,000 years ago. These ancient people lived in the region and developed civilizations with farming and settlements by about 7,000 BCE. For example, there is evidence from this time period of the domestication of crops (wheat and barley) and animals (goats, sheep and cattle). In fact, the people in the region (which today is modern Pakistan and northern India) developed into what eventually became the Indus Valley Civilization. This is one of the most prominent of the Old-World civilizations, and considered similar to Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia. Following this, India went through a series of major changes, as power shifted between many different kingdoms and empires over the centuries.

4.4. Early European interests in India

- Europeans had expressed an economic interest in India for a long period of time due to the transportation and trade of goods along ancient trade routes such as the Silk Road. It is perhaps one of the earliest and largest trade networks in human history, and played a vital role to many different civilizations throughout Eurasia from approximately 120 BCE to 1450 CE. At its height, the Silk Road stretched from Japan and China in the east to the Mediterranean area including Italy in the west, which was a span of over 4000 miles. Along

the way, it travelled through many different regions including: India, Persia, the Middle East, Africa and Eastern Europe. Merchants and traders in the East transported to Europe, goods such as: silks, glass-based products, paper, spices, apples, oranges, and other foods items. On the other hand, other goods moved to the east (towards India), such as: grapes, cotton, gold, silver, wool, etc. As such, Europeans had a long history of trade with the Far East (including India) and sought ways to continue this trade.

- The first European to carry out a sea route to India was Vasco da Gama in 1498. As sea travel improved, Europeans began seeking a quicker route to the Far East, and Portugal was the first country to begin major explorations along the western coast of Africa during the timeframe of the Age of Exploration. The Age of Exploration, or Age of Discovery, began in the early 15th century and continued until the end of the 17th century, and involved European explorers using their navigational skills to travel the world. In general, the Age of Exploration occurred was mostly carried out by the countries of Portugal, Spain, France and England. Vasco da Gama was one of the most significant explorers from this time period and sailed for Portugal. He is famous for being the first European to arrive by sea in India. For instance, he sailed with a series of ships and travelled south from Portugal, around the cape of Africa until finally arriving Calicut, India on May 20th 1498.
- The arrival of Vasco Da Gama in India was significant as it pushed other European nations to seek alternate routes to the Far East, and boosted the economic interest of Europe in India. This is important as it ties into the eventual British Imperialism over India. For instance, after Vasco da Gama's arrival in India British, French, Portuguese and Dutch merchants soon established trade routes.

4.5. Mughal Empire of India

- The next significant time period that relates to the British imperialism of India is the Early Modern Period when India was controlled by the Mughal Empire. The Mughal Empire existed approximately from 1526 until 1857 and at its height included most of the territory in modern India, parts of Pakistan and parts of Bangladesh. This makes it one of the largest empires in the history of Southeast Asia.
- The Mughal Empire of India was supposedly created in 1526 by a warrior chief from northern India (modern Uzbekistan) named Babur. The Mughal Empire had a rocky beginning and battled often with competing kingdoms and empires as it spread south and towards the main area of modern India. For example, Akbar, who ruled over the Mughal Empire from 1556 until 1605, was responsible for expanding the empire and developing a central administration. During these years, the Mughal Empire developed a strong economy throughout central India and even began trading with European trading companies that had begun to arrive on the shores of India, such as the British East India Company.

- Mughal emperors in the early 1700s continued the expansion of the empire throughout India. For example, during the reign of Aurangzeb (who was the Mughal Emperor from 1658 to 1707), India developed one of the strongest economies on the entire planet. Emperor Aurangzeb also expanded the territory of the Mughal Empire to include most of South Asia. For example, at its height in 1700, the Mughal Empire ruled over approximately 158 million people, which was 23% of the total human population at that time.
- When Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb died in 1707, he was succeeded by his son Bahadur Shah I. However, his reign over the Mughal Empire was short-lived, as he died in 1712. After his death, the chaos in the empire grew as power changed hands between several different emperors over the next few years. This lack of political leadership and authority helped to further weaken the Mughal Empire and lessen its grip over its vast territory in South Asia.
- The decline of the Mughal Empire continued under the reign of Mughal Emperor Muhammad Shah who ruled from 1719 until 1748. During this time, the empire lost large sections of land to competing kingdoms such as the Maratha Empire.
- Finally, European nations recognized their opportunity with the weakening of the Mughal Empire and began their own campaigns of imperialism in India. This ended the control of Mughal Empire in India, as it saw power shift towards the British Empire. In the late 1700s and early 1800s, the British East India Company began to exert its influence over the Mughal Empire and its territory. For instance, the British East India Company took control of the former Mughal province of Bengal-Bihar in 1793. This was significant because, Britain (along with other European nations) had taken an increased interest in India for the economic advantages that it could provide.

4.6. The British East India Company

- As stated above, the British East India Company played a significant role in the in the history of India and British imperialism in India. The British East India Company was first established on December 31st, 1600 as a company that aimed at promoting British trade in the Far East, which included India, China and Japan. The company was created by a group of over 200 English merchants that petitioned Queen Elizabeth I, who was then the monarch of England. As a result, the Queen issued the group a Royal Charter, which essentially gave the British East India Company a monopoly on all trade in the Far East. When the company was formed it was determined that it would be administered by a single governor and a team of 24 directors.
- Sir James Lancaster led the first voyage undertaken by the newly created British East India Company. In 1601, Lancaster sailed in a ship called the Red Dragon and made his way to the Far East by way of the route around the Cape of Good Hope in Africa. The British East India Company carried out several more voyages following

Lancaster's initial one in 1601. These subsequent voyages focused on growing the economic interest of the company. For instance, the British East India Company sent a voyage to the Far East every year between 1606 and 1615.

- It is important to note that the British East India Company was not the only European economic interest in the Far East at the time. For example, the Dutch East India Company was also operating in the region at the time and was initially more successful than the British East India Company, especially in relation to the spice trade. Beyond that, the British also competed with Portuguese and French merchant ships. This economic competition is important because it eventually drove the British East India Company away from the spice trade and caused them to focus more with trade on mainland India.
- The British East India Company benefited greatly from the trading rights in India and soon expanded to new markets and territories in the region. In fact, the company was able to outpace the growth of their rivals. For instance, by 1647, the British East India Company had established 23 factories in India, including locations in Bengal, Madras and Bombay. At this point in history, the main resources sought by the British East India Company were cotton, silk, dye, saltpetre, and tea. Each was a valuable resource to the British and relatively rare back in England.
- In order to aid in its expansion throughout India, the British East India Company began to establish its own private armies. For instance, a common practise by the European nations in India was to recruit and employ Indian men into their own armies. These Indian soldiers who fought for European companies were referred to as 'sepoys'. The British, French and Portuguese also recruited sepoy soldiers to fight on their behalf in India. The sepoy soldiers were trained in the latest European military standard. The term 'sepoy' was used in the Mughal Empire of India before the arrival of European, in reference to infantrymen in the army. The British East India Company carried out the practise of recruiting sepoy soldiers regularly and amassed a large army of Indian soldiers. This was vitally important to the expansion of the British East India Company in the 18th century and allowed it to gain control over huge sections of the Indian subcontinent, which expanded its wealth and influence.
- By 1720, approximately 15% of all imports into England came from India and the British East India Company was responsible for almost all of this trade. As the 18th century progressed, the British East India Company used its extensive wealth and influence to recruit ever more ships and sepoy soldiers. For instance, in 1750 the company had only about 3,000 soldiers, but by 1778 it had over 67,000. It used this army to fight battles to further its expansion into India from the areas it controlled in Bengal, Madras and Bombay. In fact, by the mid-1700s, the company faced less resistance from European competitors and more from local Indian rulers. This eventually led to a major conflict for the British East India Company in 1757 called the Battle of Plassey.

- The Battle of Plassey was a major conflict between the British East India Company and Muslim rulers (Nawab) in Bengal. The Nawab were also supported by the French who had their own economic interest in the region. Robert Clive led soldiers for the British East India Company during the Battle of Plassey. Clive was an official of the company and was a central figure in relation to the militaristic growth and power of the company in mainland India in the mid-1700s. For example, he is credited with expanding the military capabilities of the British East India Company in the region around Bengal. Clive led the company to victory over the Nawab and its French Allies on June 23rd, 1757. The victory in the Battle of Plassey was important for the British East India Company because it gave it a foothold in Bengal that it used to expand throughout the rest of India.
- Throughout the late 1700s, the British East India Company expanded its control over large sections of eastern India from its main base in Bengal. For example, by the mid-1800s, the company had come to control all of the Indian subcontinent and ruled over the country through direct administration. This transformed the British East India Company from having a focus on trade to directly ruling and controlling India as a possession. It did this by expanding its military strength in the region. In fact, by 1857, the British East India Company had several armies that totaled as much as 267,000 soldiers.
- However, the power of the British East India Company in India ended in 1857 with the outbreak of the Sepoy Rebellion. Also called the ‘Sepoy Mutiny’, it saw Indian sepoy soldiers for the British East India Company from north and central India, rebel against the company. This rebellion first began on May 10th, 1857 and lasted until November 1st, 1858. While the Sepoy Rebellion began with sepoy soldiers, it quickly spread to include local rulers and peoples throughout India. The fighting between the two sides (Indians and British East India Company) was fierce and led to many deaths and atrocities, including the massacre of civilians. While exact numbers are hard to pinpoint, historians estimate that as many as 6,000 Europeans died in the conflict. Furthermore, some estimates put the death toll of Indians as high as 800,000. It is important to note that these figures include death from warfare, famine and the spread of disease that were related to the Sepoy Rebellion. In the end, the Sepoy Rebellion was pushed back by the British East Indian Company and formally ended on November 1st, 1858.
- The Sepoy Rebellion was a significant event in the history of the British East India Company and British Imperialism in India. This is because, following the events of the Sepoy Rebellion in 1857 and 1858, the British East India Company officially lost its control over the Indian subcontinent. For example, the British Parliament passed the Government of India Act on August 2nd, 1858, which effectively ended the company and transferred all of its powers in India to the British Monarchy. This transition saw

Britain take over direct control of India as a colony and led to the period known as the 'British Raj'.

4.7. British Raj

- The term 'British Raj' refers to the time period in which Britain ruled over India as a colony of the British Empire. This is generally considered to have occurred from 1858 until 1947. As stated above, the British government did not take over India until 1858 when it assumed control from the British East India Company. The British East India Company was dissolved in 1858 following the Sepoy Rebellion, which was an uprising of Indian soldiers and citizens against the British East India Company. When this dissolution occurred, the British government took over administrative power in India and began to rule the country as a colony of the British Empire. In fact, the word 'raj' translates to 'rule' in the languages of northern India.
- At its height, the British Raj controlled almost all of modern India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. Furthermore, under direct British control, India was divided into approximate thirteen different provinces that were controlled through British administrative officers. British India was ruled over by the British in a very formal structure. For instance, Queen Victoria of Britain also became the 'Empress of India' on May 1st, 1876. However, this title was symbolic as the British Monarchy took little or no direct control in India, and the real power was held by the British Parliament in London, England. However, the British also appointed a Viceroy in India that ruled over the affairs of the country from Calcutta. This person acted on behalf of the British Monarchy and controlled British interests in the region, while also helping to administer a unified policy for the country.

4.8. The economic importance of India to the British and effects of the British Raj on the Indian economy.

4.8.1. The economic importance of India to the British

India was an important part of the British Empire in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In fact, India was often considered to be Britain's most important colony from an economic standpoint and as a result was referred to as the '*Jewel in the Crown*'. The economic importance of India to Britain is heavily related to the emergence of the Industrial Revolution in England. In fact, the factories in England that emerged during the Industrial Revolution came to play an important role in British imperialism in India. This is because India served two important functions for Industrial England:

- First, Britain viewed India as a source of raw materials that could be used to fuel the factories in England. At the time, India economy was largely centered around agriculture, which would then be exported to England. The most common of these agricultural resources included: jute, cotton, sugar, tea, coffee and wheat.

- Second, India proved to be an important market for the goods that were developed in British factories. As a result, the British benefitted from selling of goods to the people of India.

4.8.2. The effects of the British Raj on the Indian economy.

Britain's economic interference in India during the time of the British Raj is a heavily debated topic:

- Some argue that the British helped to develop the country of India, which benefitted it by the end of the British Raj. For example, some historians have argued that Britain helped India transform to a more modern economy, following the stagnant policies of the Mughal Empire. Specifically, Britain developed many canals, roads and railways across India. In fact, during the time of the British Raj, India developed the fourth largest rail network on the planet with the help of British engineering. This infrastructure benefitted India in that it allowed the country better transportation networks that ultimately helped it transport goods and people across the country.
- Whereas, others argue that British economic policies in India were repressive and benefitted the British Empire over the people of India. For instance, Britain promoted the export of many of India's natural resources, especially to industrial England. The British benefitted from this system because the Indian resources fueled the factory system present in England during the time of the Industrial Revolution. In fact, the British passed laws in India at the time that forced Indian citizens to produce crops for use in English factories instead of producing food crops. This is controversial, because India was stricken by several severe famines at the time, that some suggest could have been lessened with different economic policies. In fact, it is estimated that as many as 55 million Indians died from famine during the years of British rule in India. For example, the Great Famine, which is said to have occurred from 1876 to 1878, led to the death of 6 to 10 million people. As such, these criticisms of British imperialism in India led to a growth in Indian nationalism and a call for independence from British control.

4.9. Activity 4

1. Explain the early history of India before the arrival of the British
2. State the early European interests in India,
3. Describe the Mughal Empire of India,
4. Discuss the British Raj and the economic importance of India to the British and the effects of the British Raj on the Indian economy

Summary

In this unit we have discussed British Imperialism in India an important topic in world history as it relates to the Age of Imperialism and the expansion of the British Empire. In this unit we have also learnt about the early history of India before the arrival of the British. Europeans had expressed an economic interest in India for a long period of time due to the transportation and trade of goods along ancient trade routes such as the Silk Road. The next significant time period that relates to the British imperialism of India is the Early Modern Period when India was controlled by the Mughal Empire. The British East India Company played a significant role in the history of India and British imperialism. Further discussed in this unit is the British Raj, economic importance of India to the British and the effects of the British Raj on the Indian economy.

UNIT 5

NATIONALISM AND INDEPENDENCE: INDIA AND PAKISTAN

5.1. Introduction

Independence for India was not a gift from the British. It was the hard-won struggle and sacrifice. By mid-1945 independence could not be far away. Sadly, the progress towards independence turned out to be far more difficult than had been expected. The problems were so complex that the country ended having to be divided into two states – India and Pakistan. In this unit we discuss the Indian National Congress in the struggle for independence in India, the role played by Mahatma Gandhi, Indian independence and partition and the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.

5.2. Learning outcomes

By the end of the unit, you should be able to

- discuss the Indian National Congress in the struggle for independence in India
- explain the role played by Mahatma Gandhi in the struggle for independence in India
- discuss Indian independence and partition
- explain the reasons for the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.

5.3. The Indian National Congress and the struggle for independence in India

- The Indian National Congress was founded on December 23rd, 1885 in Bombay, India. In general, the Indian National Congress emerged out of a growing sense of Indian nationalism in the late 1800s. At the time, the British (first the British East India Company and later the British Government) had controlled India for almost two centuries. However, during the second half of the 1800s, a large group of educated Indians began to express nationalistic feelings centered around Indian independence. As such, this Indian Independence Movement led to the eventual creation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. The initial goal of the Indian National Congress was to promote Indian nationalism and give a voice to the independence movement that was aimed at British imperialism in India.
- In fact, the early actions of the Indian National Congress focused on promoting self-government for Indian people. The concept of self-government in India is referred to as '*swaraj*'. The term *swaraj* became particularly important to Mahatma Gandhi in the 20th century, as he and the Indian National Congress tried to achieve independence for India from British imperial rule.

- In the early 20th, century the Indian National Congress began to face a crisis of sorts, in that some of the members expressed more radical leanings while others remained relatively moderate. The more radical members opposed any involvement of the British in India and wanted to work immediately to gain independence for India. Whereas, the moderates in the Indian National Congress sought to reform the role that Britain played by working with the British. The Swadeshi Movement also emerged around this time in India.
- The Swadeshi Movement was a significant strategy used by Indian nationalists in the late 1800s and early 1900s to reduce British control over India. In general, it involved Indians producing their own goods (or consuming domestically made goods) and rejecting foreign goods.
- Indian nationalism grew further throughout the early 20th century, especially with the outbreak of World War I in 1914. While the First World War was primarily a European conflict, the colonies of the major European powers also came to play a role in the fighting. For instance, it is estimated that as many as 1.3 million Indian soldiers and workers participated in the war effort on the side of the British.
- Furthermore, Indian soldiers participated in conflicts throughout Europe, the Middle East and northern Africa. This helped to strengthen Indian nationalism, as it led to a sense of patriotism among people across India. In fact, supporters of the Indian Independence Movement began to argue that India's role in World War I should gain it some aspects of self-government. This idea continued to grow in popularity, especially with the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India in 1915.

5.4. The role played by Mahatma Gandhi in the struggle for independence in India

- *Mahatma Gandhi* is one of the most important figures in India's history and played a vital role in both the Indian Independence Movement and Indian National Congress. Gandhi was born on October 2nd, 1869 in the city of Porbandar in western British India. His name at birth was *Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*. The name 'Mahatma' was given to him later in life and literally translates to 'Great Soul', which is a reference to the role he played in helping India gain its independence from Britain.
- As stated above, the *Indian Independence Movement* expanded in 1915 when Mahatma Gandhi returned to India following his time in South Africa. Before arriving in India in 1915, Gandhi had helped lead an Indian nationalist movement in South Africa, in which he argued for more rights and better treatment of Indians there. He used this experience in South Africa to carry out similar actions in India. In fact, Gandhi became the leader of the *Indian National Congress* in 1920, and quickly began to organize and carry out protests calling for an end to British imperialism in India.

- Gandhi's concept of independence is often referred to as '*swaraj*'. In general, the term *swaraj* means *self-government* or *self-rule* and refers to the idea that Gandhi (along with other members of the Indian Independence Movement) wanted India to gain its independence from British imperial rule. He did this through several different ways, but Gandhi is most famous for his *non-cooperation* movement based on *civil disobedience*. In general, *civil disobedience* is when individuals refuse to follow the orders or laws of a society that they feel are unjust or discriminatory.
- Gandhi believed that India could gain its independence and achieve *swaraj* if it stopped cooperating with British laws, thus forcing the British to adapt to the Indian people instead of the other way around. He argued that the best way for Indian to obtain self-government (*swaraj*) was through a *non-cooperation* movement in which the Indian people refused to follow British laws.
- Gandhi's non-cooperation campaign focused on protesting Britain's economic and political control over India. He argued that in order for Indians to force Britain out of India, the people of India had to practise civil disobedience through non-violence. As such, he advocated techniques such as *hunger strikes* and other forms of protest that did not involve the Indian people responding with violence.
- One of the ways that Gandhi promoted the idea of economic non-cooperation was through the concept of '*swadeshi*'. In general, it involved Indians producing their own goods (or consuming domestically made goods) and rejecting foreign goods. At the time, Britain benefitted economically by selling goods to India from their factories in England. This arrangement deprived India from developing its own economy and sent large amounts of wealth back to England. As a result, members of the *Indian National Congress* (including Gandhi) began to express the importance of *swadeshi*.
- Another example of Gandhi's economic non-cooperation was the famous *Salt March*. This event took place from March 12th to April 6th in 1930 and saw Gandhi lead a non-violent protest against British laws related to salt harvesting in India. More specifically, the British effectively had total control over the harvesting of salt in India due to the 1882 Salt Act. Because of this act, Indians were forced to pay taxes on salt and could face harsh criminal punishments if they didn't follow the law. This law angered many in the Indian National Congress because salt had been freely available to Indians for centuries, especially for those who lived along the coastlines of India. As a result, Gandhi and other members of the Indian National Congress decided to carry out a non-violent protest of the law by carrying out a salt march. The goal of the salt march was to openly disobey the British law and gain momentum for the Indian Independence Movement that was being supported by both Gandhi and the Indian National Congress.
- In total, the *Salt March* that *Gandhi* led, lasted for 24 days in the spring of 1930. It saw Gandhi, along with about 80 other volunteers, march approximately 240 miles (384 km) from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi in western India. Many others joined Gandhi and the volunteers along the route until finally, when they arrived in Dandi on April

6th, there were thousands of participants in the Salt March. When the group arrived at the coast on April 6th, Gandhi broke the British laws by collecting salt. Millions of Indians began to break the salt laws in the days and weeks after the Salt March. Some collected their own salt, while others purchased it illegally. The British responded harshly by imprisoning over 60,000 people in the month after Gandhi carried out the Salt March.

- Gandhi resigned from the Indian National Congress in 1934 in hopes that it would help the political organization grow. He remained active in Indian politics and endorsed candidates for the Indian National Congress that promoted his belief in non-violent civil disobedience.
- The outbreak of World War II in Europe had a significant impact on British imperialism in India. For instance, Gandhi argued against Indians participating in the conflict because he did not agree with Indians fighting and dying to protect British democratic rights, especially when the British did not respect India's calls for self-rule. However, this did not stop over 2.5 million Indians from volunteering for service in the war. Gandhi did not relent, and as the war progressed into the 1940s, he called for more non-violent acts of civil disobedience against the British. In fact, this most recent movement was referred to as the 'Quit India' movement. Again, British officials had him arrested. However, they released him in 1944 due to his failing health and advanced age (Gandhi was 75 years old).

5.5. Indian independence and partition

In 1945, Muslims were about 25 percent of India's population. They were scattered across the sub-continent and were a majority of the population in India's *Bengal* and *Punjab* regions. India was a land of peoples of different ethnicity and fourteen official languages, with different dialects. The Muslims also varied in language and ethnicity, and they differed in economic class – from a wealthy few to merchants and urban and rural poor.

5.5.1. Why was the Partition of India necessary?

- **Religious hostility between Hindus and Muslims** – This was the main problem. Hindus made up about two-thirds of the 400 million population and the rest were mostly Muslims. After their victories in 1937 elections when they eight of the eleven states, the *Hindu National Congress Party* unwisely called on the *Muslim League* to merge with Congress. This alarmed the Muslim League, who were afraid that an independent India would be dominated by the Hindus. The Muslim leader M.A. Jinnah demanded a separate *Muslim State of Pakistan* and adopted as his slogan '*Pakistan or Perish*'.
- **Compromise attempts failed** -Attempts to draw up a compromise solution acceptable to both Hindus and Muslims failed. The British proposed a federal scheme in which the central government would have only limited powers, while those of the provincial governments

would be much greater. This would enable provinces with a Muslim majority to control their own affairs and there would be no need for a separate state. Both sides accepted the idea in principle but failed to agree on the details.

- **Violence broke out in August 1946** – This began when the Viceroy (the King's representative in India), *Lord Wavell* invited the Congress leader Jawaharlal Nehru to form an interim government, still hoping that details could be worked out later. Nehru formed a cabinet which included two Muslims but Jinnah was convinced that the Hindus could not be trusted to treat the Muslims fairly. He called for a day of 'Direct Action' in support of separate Pakistan. Fierce rioting followed in Calcutta, where 5000 people were killed and it soon spread to Bengal where Muslims set about slaughtering Hindus. As Hindus retaliated, the country seemed on the verge of civil war.
- **Mountbatten decides on partition** – The British government realising that they lacked the military strength to control the situation, announced in early 1947 *that they would leave India no later than June 1948*. The idea was to try to shock the Indians into adopting a more responsible attitude. *Lord Louis Mountbatten* was sent as a new Viceroy and he soon decided that partition was the only way to avoid civil war. He realised that there would be probably bloodshed whatever solution was tried but felt that partition would produce less violence than if Britain tried to insist on the Muslims remaining part of India. Within a short time, Mountbatten had worked out a plan for dividing the country up and for the British withdrawal. This was accepted by Nehru and Jinnah although *M.K. Gandhi*, known as the *Mahatma* (Great Soul), the other slightly respected Congress leader who believed in non-violence was still hoping for a united India. Afraid that delay would cause more violence, Mountbatten brought the date for British withdrawal forward to August 1947.

5.5.2. How was partition carried out?

The Indian Independence Act was rushed through the British parliament (August 1947), separating the Muslim majority areas in the north-west and north-east from the rest of India to become to become the independent state of Pakistan. The new Pakistan unfortunately consisted of two separate areas over a thousand miles apart. Independence Day for both India and Pakistan was 15 August 1947. Problems followed immediately:

- *It had been necessary to split the provinces of the Punjab and Bengal, which had mixed Hindu/Muslim populations*. This meant that millions of people found themselves on the wrong side of the new frontiers – Muslims in India and Hindus in Pakistan.
- *Afraid of being attacked, millions of people headed for the frontiers*, Muslims trying to get into Pakistan and Hindus into India. Clashes occurred which developed into near-hysterical mob violence especially in the Punjab where about 250 000 people were murdered. Violence was not quite so spread in Bengal where Gandhi, still preaching non-violence and toleration, managed to calm the situation.

- *Violence began to die down before the end of 1947, but in January 1948 Gandhi was short dead by a Hindu fanatic who detested his tolerance towards Muslims. It was a tragic end to a disastrous set of circumstances, but the shock somehow seemed to bring people to their senses, so that the new governments of India and Pakistan could begin to think about their other problems. From the British point of view, the government could claim that although so many deaths were regrettable, the granting of independence to India and Pakistan was an act of far-sighted statesmanship. Attlee, the British Prime Minister at the time argued, with some justification, that Britain could not be blamed for the violence. This was due, he said, ‘to the failure of the Indians to agree among themselves’. V.P. Menon, a distinguished Indian political observer, believed that Britain’s decision to leave India ‘not only touched the hearts and stirred the emotions of India...it earned for Britain universal respect and good will’.*
- *In the long run Pakistan did not work well as a divided state and in 1971 East Pakistan broke away and became the independent state of Bangladesh.*

5.6. The Kashmir conflict: How did it start?

SINCE 1947, INDIA and Pakistan have been locked in conflict over Kashmir, a majority-Muslim region in the northernmost part of India. The mountainous, 86,000-square-mile territory was once a princely state. Now, it is claimed by both India and Pakistan. The roots of the conflict lie in the countries’ shared colonial past:

- From the 17th to the 20th century, Britain ruled most of the Indian subcontinent, first indirectly through the British East India Company, then from 1858 directly through the British crown. Over time, Britain’s power over its colony weakened, and *a growing nationalist movement* threatened the crown’s slipping rule. Though it feared civil war between India’s Hindu majority and Muslim minority, Britain faced increasing pressure to grant independence to its colony. After World War II, Parliament decided British rule in India should end by 1948.
- Britain had historically had *separate electorates for Muslim citizens* and reserved some political seats specifically for Muslims; that not only hemmed Muslims into a minority status, but fueled a growing Muslim separatist movement. *Mohammad Ali Jinnah*, a politician who headed up India’s Muslim League, began demanding a separate nation for India’s Muslim population. “It is high time that the British Government applied their mind definitely to the division of India and the establishment of Pakistan and Hindustan, which means freedom for both,” *Jinnah said in 1945.*
- As religious riots broke out across British India, *leaving tens of thousands dead*, British and Indian leaders began to seriously consider a partition of the subcontinent based on religion. On August 14, 1947, the independent, Muslim-majority nation of Pakistan was formed. The Hindu-majority independent nation of India followed the next day. Under the

hasty terms of partition, more than 550 princely states within colonial India that were not directly governed by Britain could decide to join either new nation or remain independent.

- At the time, the princely state of *Jammu and Kashmir*, which had a majority Muslim population, was governed by *Maharaja Hari Singh*, a Hindu. Unlike most of the princely states which aligned themselves with one nation or the other, Singh wanted independence for Kashmir. To avert pressure to join either new nation, the *Maharaja signed a standstill agreement with Pakistan* that allowed citizens of Kashmir to continue trade and travel with the new country. India did not sign a similar standstill agreement with the princely state.
- As partition-related violence raged across the two new nations, the government of Pakistan pressured Kashmir to join it. Pro-Pakistani *rebels, funded by Pakistan, took over much of western Kashmir*, and in September 1947, Pashtun tribesmen *streamed over the border from Pakistan into Kashmir*. Singh asked for India's help in staving off the invasion, but India responded that, in order to gain military assistance, Kashmir would have to accede to India, thus becoming part of the new country.
- *Singh* agreed and signed the *Instrument of Accession*, the document that aligned Kashmir with the Dominion of India, in October 1947. Kashmir was later given special status within the Indian constitution—a status which guaranteed that Kashmir would have independence over everything but communications, foreign affairs, and defense. This *special status was revoked* by the Indian government in August 2019.
- The *Maharaja's* fateful decision to align Kashmir with India ushered in decades of conflict in the contested region, including two wars and a longstanding insurgency.

5.7. Activity 5

1. Discuss the role that was played by the Indian National Congress in the struggle for independence in India
2. Giving specific examples show the significance of Mahatma Gandhi in the struggle for independence in India
3. Explain why India was partitioned into India and Pakistan at the attainment of independence in 1947.
4. Give an account of the reasons for the dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir.

Summary

In this unit we have discussed that the Indian National Congress emerged out of a growing sense of Indian nationalism in the late 1800s. We have also learnt that *Mahatma Gandhi* is one of the most important figures in India's history and played a vital role in both the Indian Independence Movement and Indian National Congress. Because of Religious hostility between Hindus and Muslims, India was partitioned into India and Pakistan at the attainment

of independence in 1947. Also discussed in this unit is the fact that the roots of the on-going conflict between India and Pakistan over Kashmir lie in the countries' shared colonial past.

UNIT 6

INDIA AND THE WORLD TODAY

6.1. Introduction

In this lesson we will look at India's place in the modern world. India is a country on the rise economically, but must tackle important issues like climate change and navigate complicated strategic partnerships in order to establish its place as a power in the world.

6.2. Learning outcomes

By the end of the unit, you should be able to

- describe India as a country on the rise economically
- discuss India and the important issues like climate change
- Show the role that India is playing on the complicated strategic partnerships in order to establish its place as a power in the world.

6.3. India a country on the rise economically

- When you think of India you might think of the ancient Indus Valley civilizations and Hinduism, but you also may think about the massive IT industry and a fast-growing economy. If we look at India's place in the modern world, we see a major South Asian power on the rise dealing with some major issues.
- India has the second largest population in the world with over 1.2 billion people. Although many of its people are educated professionals, about 21% of India's people live below the poverty line. This is a time of great optimism in India. Most Indians rate their Prime Minister Narendra Modi very highly, and about 68% of Indians believe that India plays a more significant role in the world today than it did ten years ago. However, people in the U.S. and Europe don't see India as quite the power player on the world stage that Indians do. India has asked for a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council, but the UN decided to put off its decision and address the matter later.
- As India becomes more of a world power, it must tackle some important human rights issues. Shocking cases of sexual assault, rape, and murders of women are common in India. Along with gender violence, there are still many barriers to women succeeding in Indian society. Although many more women are becoming educated, many poor girls are forced into marriage at an early age. The failure to protect women's rights is a major stain on India's reputation.

6.3.1. The Indian economy

- India has a two trillion-dollar economy; one of the biggest in the world. It is also one of the **BRICS**. The BRICS are a group of countries with the biggest economic growth potential. The countries are Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. India is also a member of many international financial institutions like the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund, and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank.
- Just a little less than half of the people work in agriculture, but services like Information Technology (IT) are its biggest source of growth. Because of India's large educated and English-speaking population, they have been able to attract IT business to the country. Still, critics of globalization have pointed out that India's poor have been exploited and international corporations have taken advantage by paying them slave wages.

6.4. India and Climate Change

- The problem of climate change is a major concern for all countries, but especially India. In the push to be build a stronger, more industrialized economy, India now produces about 4.5% of the world's greenhouse gasses. By some measures, air pollution might be worse for the average Indian than the average Chinese person, and plays a part in half a million deaths each year. Approximately 47% of Indians are would be willing to see the economy slow down if it would decrease air pollution. With a massive population, dwindling natural resources could spell disaster for India.
- Most Indians see climate change as a massive problem for India, and it has become a global example for the fight against climate change. India just ratified the *Paris Climate Change Agreement*, the biggest piece of international climate change policy ever created. India has pledged to produce 40% of its electricity with non-fossil fuel energy by the year 2030.
- However, as Indians become more prosperous, they want the same comforts as any of us like cars and air conditioning, and those things do a lot of damage to the environment as it is. If India's massive population starts using cars and air conditioning the same amount as we do in the U.S. the effect could be catastrophic. So, India's commitment to cutting fossil fuel use is important, and a good example to other countries to start taking climate change seriously.

6.5. India - Strategic Partners and Enemies

- In 1949, India's first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru, said, 'India is too big a country herself to be bound to any country, however big it may be'. During the Cold War, it seemed like every country had to choose between the U.S. or the Soviet Union, but Nehru argued that countries like India had the right to stay out of the whole mess. He led the **Non-aligned Movement** or NAM. After the Cold War ended, India had to find a new way forward. After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, India has been a major partner in the war on terror, but has also maintained a very close relationship with Russia. Russia is India's main weapons supplier, but things have gotten a little touchy in the last couple of years because Russia is getting cozier with Pakistan.

- Pakistan continues to be one of India's main worries. The two countries have fought on and off for decades, and terrorist attacks from Pakistani groups continue to plague India. One of the deadliest was in 2008 in Mumbai when 166 people were murdered. For years, the Indian response has been to take a deep breath and not engage, as both Pakistan and India have nuclear weapons. However, India has started performing what they call 'surgical strikes' across the de facto international border.

- India is also a member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation(SAARC), and since the end of the Cold War has followed a **Look East** and more recently, **Act East** policy. After the Soviet Union fell, India understood that it needed to strengthen its ties to its Asian neighbors to the east. Still, India is wary of China because of their violation of the **Panchsheel Treaty**, which was an agreement to co-exist peacefully, when it started a war in 1962.

6.6. Activity 6

1. Give a description of India as a country on the rise economically
2. Discuss the role that India is playing on the important issues of climate change
3. Show the role that India is playing on the complicated strategic partnerships in order to establish its place as a power in the world.

Summary

India is a country on the rise with the world's second largest population, and is one of the fastest growing economies. It also has a massive population living under the poverty line, and must also do more to protect women's rights. It is a growing power, but has not been granted a seat on the UN Security Council. India is one of the *BRICS*, and belongs to many international

financial institutions. India's action on climate change is vital and an important example for the rest of the world. During the Cold War, India led the *Non-Aligned Movement*, but now it has become a partner with the U.S. on the war on terror. It also maintains a close relationship with Russia, and a tense relationship with Pakistan. Since the Cold War ended, India has followed a *Look East* and *Act East* policy.

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