

INTRODUCTION TO SOUTH ASIA



SOUTH-ASIA AN INTRODUCTION

SOCIETY AND POLICY IN SOUTH-ASIA



ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENT

CONFLICT & CO-OPERATION IN SOUTH-ASIA

INTRODUCTION TO SOUTH ASIA

**School of Social Sciences
Indira Gandhi National Open University**

EXPERT COMMITTEE

Prof. D. Gopal (Chairman) Faculty of Political Science Head, Centre for Gandhi and Peace Studies School of Social Sciences IGNOU, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi	Prof. A.P. Vijapur Dept. of Political Science Aligarh Muslim University. Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh	Prof. Jagpal Singh Faculty of Political Science School of Social Sciences IGNOU, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi
Prof. Abdul Nafey (Rtd.) Centre for American, Latin American and Canadian Studies, SIS, JNU, New Delhi	Prof. P. Sahadevan Centre for South Asian Studies, SIS, JNU, New Delhi	Prof. S.V. Reddy Faculty of Political Science School of Social Sciences IGNOU, Maidan Garhi, New Delhi
Prof. R.S. Yadav (Rtd.) Dept. of Political Science Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Haryana	Prof. Anurag Joshi Faculty of Political Science School of Social Sciences IGNOU, Maidan Garhi,, New Delhi	

COURSE COORDINATOR

Prof. Satish Kumar, Faculty of Political Science & Chair and Head Centre for Gandhi and Peace Studies

Editor(s): Prof. Abdul Nafey, JNU, New Delhi & Prof. Satish Kumar, SOSS, IGNOU, New Delhi

(Unit Vetting, Formatting & Updating): Dr. Maheep, Academic Associate, SOSS, IGNOU, New Delhi

PRINT PRODUCTION

Ms. Poonam Chadha
Section Officer, SOSS, IGNOU,
New Delhi

SECRETARIAL ASSISTANCE

Mr. Vijender
Personal Assistant, SOSS, IGNOU,
New Delhi

March, 2022

© Indira Gandhi National Open University, 2022

ISBN : _____

All right reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced in any form, by mimeograph or any other means, without permission in writing from the Indira Gandhi National Open University.

Further information on Indira Gandhi National Open University courses may be obtained from the University's office at Maidan Garhi, New Delhi-110068 or visit University's Website <http://www.ignou.ac.in>

Printed and Published on behalf of the Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi by Registrar, MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi.

Typesetting & Printed by: M/s Educational Stores, S-5 Bulandshahar Road Industrial Area, Site-1, Ghaziabad (UP)-201009

COURSE PREPARATION TEAM

Block		Unit Writer
BLOCK 1 South Asia: An Introduction		
Unit 1	South Asia as Region	Prof. Rahul Tripathi, Department of Political Science Goa University, Goa
Unit 2	Struggle for Independence and Nationalism in South Asia	Dr. Maheep, Consultant, Centre for Gandhi and Peace Studies, School of Social Sciences, IGNOU, New Delhi
BLOCK 2 Society and Polity in South Asia		
Unit 3	Diversity and Pluralism in South Asia	Dr. Rajendra Kumar Pandey, Department of Political Science, Chaudhary Charan Singh University, Meerut, U.P.
Unit 4	Political Structures and Processes in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh	Dr. Saurabh, Centre for South Asian Studies, SIS Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
Unit 5	Political Structures and Processes in Sri Lanka and the Maldives	Dr. N. Manoharan, Associate Professor, Department of International Studies, Political Science and History CHRIST University, Bengaluru
Unit 6	Political Structures and Processes in Afghanistan, Bhutan and Nepal	Ambassador Ashok Sajjanhar, 146 IFS Villas Plot No. 1, Pocket P-6, Builder's Area, Greater Noida
BLOCK 3 Issues in Development		
Unit 7	Human Development and Regional Imbalances in South Asia	Prof. Manish, Dean, School of International Studies Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar
Unit 8	Migration and Development	Prof. Pawan Kumar Sharma, Head, Department of Political Science, CCS University, Meerut Dr. Divya Rani Asst. Professor Dept. of Political Science BHU, Varanasi, U.P.
Unit 9	Environment and Development	Dr. Rajesh Kumar, Associate Professor, Dept. of Political Science, Chairperson, School of Social Sciences Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar, Punjab Dr. Sudheer Singh Verma Asst. Professor Dept South and Central Asian Studies, SIS Central University of Punjab Bathinda, Punjab
BLOCK 4 Conflict and Cooperation in South Asia		
Unit 10	Armed Conflicts in South Asia	Prof. Sanjay Jha, Dean, School of International Studies, Central University of Gujarat, Gandhi Nagar, Gujarat
Unit 11	Territorial Disputes	Dr. Sujit Thakur, Assistant Professor, Dayal Singh College, New Delhi
Unit 12	Waters Disputes and Water Sharing	Dr. Uttam Sinha, Senior Fellow, IDSA
Unit 13	Civil Society in South Asia	Dr. Vineeta Bhatt, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Gargi College, University of Delhi
Unit 14	SAARC	Dr. Saurabh, Centre for South Asian Studies, SIS Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067
Unit 15	Dynamics of South Asian Security	Dr. N. Manoharan, Associate Professor, Department of International Studies, Political Science and History CHRIST University, Bengaluru-560029

COURSE CONTENTS

		Page No.
BLOCK 1: South Asia: An Introduction		
Unit 01	South Asia as a Region	7
Unit 02	Struggle for Independence and Nationalism in South Asia	19
BLOCK-2: Society and Polity in South Asia		
Unit 03	Diversity and Pluralism in South Asia	20
Unit 04	Political Structures and Processes in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh	34
Unit 05	Political Structures and Processes in Sri Lanka and the Maldives	49
Unit 06	Political Structures and Processes in Afghanistan, Bhutan and Nepal	64
BLOCK 3: Issues in Development		
Unit 07	Human Development and Regional Imbalances in South Asia	79
Unit 08	Migration and Development	94
Unit 09	Environment and Development	106
BLOCK-4: Conflict and Cooperation in South Asia		
Unit 10	Armed Conflicts in South Asia	122
Unit 11	Territorial Disputes	145
Unit 12	Waters Disputes and Water Sharing	159
Unit 13	Civil Society in South Asia	176
Unit 14	SAARC	201
Unit 15	Dynamics of South Asian Security	213

UNIT 1: SOUTH ASIA AS A REGION

Structure

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Geography of South Asia
- 1.3 History of South Asia
- 1.4 Politics in South Asia
 - 1.4.1 Form of government
 - 1.4.2 Political Parties
 - 1.4.3 Political Processes
 - 1.4.4 Intra Regional Politics
- 1.5 South Asia in Global Geopolitics
 - 1.5.1 South Asia during the Cold War years
 - 1.5.2 South Asia and the Global War on Terror
 - 1.5.3 South Asia and China
- 1.6 Economic Development and Cooperation in South Asia
 - 1.6.1 Human development in South Asia
 - 1.6.2 Economic Growth in South Asia
 - 1.6.3 Regional cooperation
- 1.7 Lets Sum up
- 1.8 References
- 1.9 Answers to Check your Progress Exercises

1.0 OBJECTIVES

The present unit seeks to introduce South Asia as a region through its multiple characteristics and features. Understanding South Asia as a region is important for the students to learn its internal and external situation, particularly in relation to other regions. After completing this unit, you would be able to

- Explain what is meant by the term region and sub-region; and how South Asia fits in either of these categories
- Understand South Asia from a geographical perspective, particularly its size, demography, borders
- Know how the idea of South Asia as a region evolved from a strategic point of view
- Understand the region from political, economic and strategic perspective.
- Look at some parallel formulations to construct the idea of South Asia as a region.
- Explain the status of South Asia in terms of its Human Development Indices and the prospects for economic growth in future.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Asia as a region, exemplifies the classical definition of what constitutes a region. As per the conventional interpretation, a region refers to a landmass consisting of several nation states, which are bound together by a common or contiguous geography, connected through historical and civilizational linkages, overlapping linguistic and cultural identity and institutionalized form of a regional cooperation mechanism. Such a region has the capacity to show itself as distinct from other regions and does not preclude the existence of sub-regions within.

Not only has South Asia had contiguous and common geographical characteristics that have shaped its internal and external political geography, overlapping of different ethnic, linguistic and cultural identities have made modern South Asia what it is. Constituted of countries including Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan, while the region is weak in its institutionalized cooperative linkages, the nations by and large stand at similar levels of human development and economic growth indicators.

While earlier the region was known more as 'Indian subcontinent' in the colonial context or 'Southern Asia' implying region to the south of Asia, it got its current usage at a much later date. The term 'South Asia' in terms of its academic genesis lies in area study departments developed in the west (primarily US) to study Indic thought and culture as well as connotation by the US state department of regions based on their strategic calculations. However now, the term is routinely used as a sub-regional entity in multilateral institutions (IMF, World Bank, WTO, UN etc.) and got further formalized with the creation of South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

1.2 GEOGRAPHY OF SOUTH ASIA

South Asia is one of the most populous regions in the world, with its population of 1.88 billion constituting nearly one fourth of the world's total population. This population is regionally dispersed in terms of its ethnic, linguistic and religious features across the entire subcontinent. The geographical spread of the region too is quite dispersed and distinct across with the northern belt characterized by the Himalayan belt, and the Southern peninsula characterized by the Deccan plateau with the Indo-Gangetic and desert plain interspersed in between. These three features intersect the political boundaries between the states of South Asia, thereby making them part of the same geological template. Besides, the island states (Sri Lanka and Maldives) and landlocked states (Afghanistan, Nepal and Bhutan) have their own unique sets of geographical features which impinge on their interaction with the outside world.

Common geography and contiguous boundary often create problems of political nature which have often plagued inter-state relations in South Asia. For example cross boundary river water sharing between India and Pakistan (Indus river) and India –Bangladesh (Ganges river) at one point created frictions which were subsequently resolved through negotiated and

consensus through Indus Waters Treaty (1960) and Ganges Water Sharing treaty (1996). Common/open borders between India and other countries often have been a source of illegal migration and trafficking apart from providing a conduit for terrorism/insurgency from across the state. Demarcation of maritime borders too has been problematic with disputes such as India- Sri Lanka Dispute over Palk Straits and India Bangladesh maritime dispute in Bay of Bengal Area.

Asymmetry of size within South Asia is another feature which states have to contend with as India occupies nearly three fourth of the landmass, seventy percent of the population and equal percentage of the resources. Despite the inherent diversity and disparity, commonalities of geography in the region impacts all countries in an equal measure and therefore pushes the need for the nations to frame collaborative strategies to counter challenges like climate change, cyclones, floods and earthquakes.

1.3 HISTORY OF SOUTH ASIA

Modern South Asia is an outcome of the political and administrative structures that got created during the British colonial rule. However the region cannot be entirely disconnected with the ancient and medieval influences that have had a bearing on its distinct identity, culture and religion. Being home to the Indus Valley civilization, one of the oldest civilizations in the world, the region also saw the influences of Aryan Vedic period, emergence of Buddhism, impact of the Islamic rule, followed by the British colonialism as significant factors in shaping its present political identity.

The Indus valley civilization, considered to be a bronze age civilization inhabited the north western region of South Asia from 2600 BC to 1900 BC, centred around the basins of Indus river in what now constitutes modern Pakistan. The civilization was known for its urban planning, drainage system, brick houses, metallurgy and handicrafts. Among the major sites of the Indus Valley civilization were Harappa and Mohan Jo Daro. Some of the recent scientific (genetic) studies have concluded that single largest genetic contributor to the people living in South Asia today is people from the population of which the Indus Valley Civilization individual was a part.

The Vedic period, coincides with the later Bronze Age spread from north western part of the subcontinent to the Indo Gangetic plain during 1500 BC to 500 BC and saw the composition of Vedas, the Hindu scriptural texts which gave an insight into the society, polity and practice prevalent during the times. The period coincided with a more settled agricultural life of the inhabitants across new cities and states with distinct social stratification across 'varnas'. The later Vedic period led to emergence of 'Sramanic' movement— which were non-Vedic movements - like Buddhism and Jainism, which espoused renunciation, asceticism and enlightenment. From its initial expanse in the Northwestern part of the subcontinent, subsequently Buddhism spread to Ceylon and South East Asia and China, creating its own region-specific characteristics and philosophies in the process.

The arrival of the Islam in the subcontinent, initially through the invading armies of Arabs, Turks and Mongols and later its political consolidation under the Mughal rule created a politico-religious order superimposed

on the sub-continental plane, which gave South Asia its contemporary multicultural identity. South Asia's ethnic and linguistic mosaic got shaped and influenced by these countervailing influences, which were not always accommodative, but often an outcome of wars and conflicts. Subsequently, the British Colonial rule, lasting for more than two hundred years, on one hand created the basis of administrative and legal identity of modern South Asia, at the same time emergence of the nationalist movement and the subsequent partition of the subcontinent based on communal lines created a post colonial fissure that continues to plague the region till date. The major flashpoints in South Asian politics in the post colonial period, including India-Pakistan strife, Bangladesh Liberation, Sinhala-Tamil strife in Sri Lanka, insurgency in the North East, all are in some way or the other an outcome of the kind of politics that got played out during the colonial period and its legacy, which the post colonial states in South Asia could not effectively address. The same will be elaborated in the next section.

1.4 POLITICS IN SOUTH ASIA

Politics in South Asia in the post colonial period has expressed some common yet distinct features. The commonality has often been seen in terms of the Westminster style of Parliamentary system that most of the countries have at different points of time followed and the nature of party system and political mobilization. The distinctiveness has been more in terms of the political processes of managing religious, caste, ethnic and linguistic diversities and how at times centralization of power and authority has been attempted to contain this diversity leading to volatile politics in the region. While in the recent years, electoral democracy and democratic politics has shown an apparent maturing in South Asia, the undercurrent of authoritarian politics undermining the same always remains. The thematic frames under which politics in South Asia can be studied include the following:

1.4.1 Form of Government

Being influenced to a great extent by the colonial history, most countries in South Asia opted for following a Westminster model of Parliamentary Democracy with bicameral legislature, following adoption of new constitutions in their respective countries after independence. Some countries on the other hand followed the quasi -Presidential system, with there being direct elections for the President, who in turn acts as executive head of the state as well as the government. Further to this, there were stages when some South Asian countries also experimented with Constitutional monarchy later replaced with parliamentary system. Some of the countries also have had a long periods of military rule; or where military remained a significant political actor in politics.

India has followed the Parliamentary system of government with federal characteristics, there being well defined distribution of powers between the centre and the states. The Upper house of the Parliament is known as Rajya Sabha, the 'Council of States' and the Lower house as the Lok Sabha. The Prime Minister and his cabinet are accountable to the Parliament, with the President being the Head of State.

Pakistan too has a parliamentary system with bicameral legislature, the Senate as the upper house and the National Assembly as the lower house. While in the initial years, Pakistan had a semi-Presidential form of government, coinciding with increasing role of military in government, the powers of the President were curtailed via 18th amendment in 2010.

Bangladesh has a unicameral legislature called Jatiya Sansad, from which Prime Minister and his/her cabinet are appointed by the President. The electoral constituencies in Bangladesh are decided on the basis of Districts with specific populations.

The Federal Parliament of Nepal too is having a bicameral legislature with the House of Representatives having direct elections from constituencies across its seven provinces and National Assembly consisting of members elected by Electoral College from the provinces. The office of the President was created in 2008 after monarchy was abolished in Nepal and the same acts as the head of the state. Prime Minister is head of the government and must enjoy the confidence of the majority of the members of the House of Representative to remain in office.

Sri Lanka has a system of a semi Executive Presidency, adopted after the 1978 Constitution, where he/she is the powerful head of the state as well as the government and the prime minister acts as his/her deputy. While earlier Sri Lanka had a bicameral legislature, in 1972 it was made unicameral with the abolition of senate with the National State Assembly or the current Parliament being the only house now.

Maldives is having a Presidential form of government with a unicameral legislature, with the President being in complete control of the state and the government. From a unicameral system, Bhutan became a bicameral system in 2007, with the National Council as the upper house and the National Assembly as the lower house. As a Constitutional Monarch, the king appoints the Prime minister and his cabinet. Thus South Asian countries have experimented with diverse forms of governments, often adapting and modifying based on political circumstances of the day.

1.4.2.1 Political Parties

Political Parties in South Asia too have shown certain common characteristics and features in terms of their evolution and performance. In terms of their origin, several of the political parties have associated themselves with proto-nationalism, implying a nationalist identity or yearning before the state or the nation comes into existence. The Indian National Congress in India, Awami League in Bangladesh and the Ceylon National Congress, which later paved the way for United National Party in Sri Lanka, were all instances of such party evolution. As democratic deepening took place in the post colonial period, many of the countries saw a multiparty system, based on political ideology, identity and ethnicity. Pakistan's People's Party, Sri Lanka Freedom Party, Nepali Congress etc were formed, primarily on account of their disillusionment with the ruling party/dispensation and the apparent left-of-the-centre/socialist ideological thinking at least in their initial phases. The Bharatiya Janata Party, the leading political party in India today has been an offshoot of the erstwhile Bhartiya Jan Sangh and the Janata Party coalition, has focused on cultural nationalism like

the Bangladesh Nationalist Party with its right-of-the-centre, nationalist agenda. Alongside there are several political parties based on regional, sub-regional aspirations across the nations, making it truly a multiparty system.

1.4.3 Political Processes

Looking deeply into the working of political processes in South Asian countries, one sees a convergent pattern across most political parties. First, dynastic politics remains a recurrent feature in many political parties across South Asia. The Nehru -Gandhi family in India, the Bhutto-Sharif family in Pakistan, Kumaratunga-Rajapaksa family in Sri Lanka and the erstwhile Koirala family in Nepal are some examples of how many political parties in the region have been influenced by dynastic considerations. The name of the family is seen as instilling memories of struggle, liberation and sacrifice in the violent political history of the subcontinent and therefore a key poll plank. However, voters have also given due recognition to the performance of political parties at times and the dynastic plank has not succeeded. The other factor shaping party politics has been a growing trend in religion and identity based politics across South Asia, where polarization and targeting of individuals/communities based on their identity/opinion has seen an increase. Though South Asia was never immune to identity politics, as targeting of religious minorities, communal riots, politics of regionalism etc was always evident, there has been a growing institutionalization of the same in the recent years.

1.4.4 Intra-regional politics

The political dynamics as mentioned above though have been intrinsic to the individual countries, their implication for intra-regional politics too have been significantly evident. As mentioned earlier, identities based on ethnicity, language, religion percolate much beyond the borders which were mostly a colonial construction. Any of such identity conflict **within** a country has had the potential to spillover **outside** the country, particularly the neighbourhood. India has often become a common denominator in such conflicts, thereby affecting its foreign relations with the countries concerned. The genocide and refugee crisis in East Pakistan in 1971 and India's subsequent role in Bangladesh Liberation, the Sinhala-Tamil conflict in Sri Lanka and India's unsuccessful mediation efforts, Nepal's inner political turmoil during struggle against monarchy and question of Indian origin Madeshis, all have been issues where the regional ramifications of domestic politics in these countries have been visible and outcomes have not always been satisfactory. There has been a view that given such a scenario, India, rather than getting itself involved in the politics of the region, should instead focus on strengthening its linkages beyond the region. It is pertinent to mention at the same time that China's role in the region from a geopolitical context has increased all the more in the recent years, not always to the comfort of the countries concerned.

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer

ii) Check your answer with the answer given at the end of the Unit

Check Your Progress 1.

- 1) Which are the different forms of governments practiced in the South Asian region?
.....
.....
.....
- 2) Explain some of the major features of political parties in South Asia.
.....
.....
.....

1.5 SOUTH ASIA IN GLOBAL GEOPOLITICS

South Asia’s location and position in the Asian geopolitical landscape has imparted it a unique space in global geopolitics which needs to be understood both from a historical as well as contemporary perspective. As mentioned earlier, the region was very much framed as a strategic construct imparting it a distinct role in the global geo-strategizing. While it retained that position during the Cold War years, even after the collapse of the Soviet Union and in the more recent years marking uncertainty in global and regional geopolitics, its significance is becoming apparent.

1.5.1 South Asia during the Cold War years

While the early Cold War year rivalry between Soviet Union and the United States intersected the deep divide between India and Pakistan on almost similar lines during the later years it became more intensified and directly started shaping politics between the two countries. While India adopted a policy of Non Alignment from the 1960s, its ideological proximity was evident with the Soviet Union given its 1971 Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Security. Pakistan on the other hand, by joining the South East Asian Treaty Organization and Central Treaty Organization in the 1950s made its intentions clear. Despite the fact that both the countries became members of Non Aligned Movement (NAM) later, it did nothing to shift or alter their respective affinity to the two major powers. The fact that this dichotomy became all the more evident during the 1971 war showed that Cold war shadow in the subcontinent was likely to remain. It saw a further manifestation with the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan (on which India did not take a public position) and Pakistan becoming a proxy in facilitating the American CIA support to the Afghan Mujahidin against the Soviets.

1.5.2 South Asia and the Global War on Terror

The other significant phase came in the 1990s, following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and a significant chunk of the terror infrastructure from Pakistan now being directed against India through cross border terrorism, which had already seen a rise since 1980s. South Asia came to be regarded as a global flashpoint after the two countries conducted nuclear tests in 1998, raising the specter of a nuclear confrontation between the two rivals. The 2001, 9/11 attacks in the United States further brought US back into the

picture as Pakistan again became a key ally, as a frontline state in the war on 'global terror'. While India-Pak relations continued to deteriorate during the subsequent years, despite occasional signs of a potential thaw, the region failed to pick up on some good starts on cooperation initiatives that had been undertaken under the SAARC umbrella. The fact that radical Islamist groups further deepened in Pakistan, Bangladesh, apart from holding their ground in Afghanistan remained a matter of concern for India.

1.5.3 South Asia and China

China is another factor why importance of South Asia in regional and global geopolitics is likely to remain. Being in the immediate vicinity of South Asian neighbourhood, China's geographical presence can certainly not be denied. However, China has been gradually converting this into a geopolitical advantage by making it part of its Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and initiating a number of big ticket infrastructure projects like Hambantota Port in Sri Lanka, Gwadar port in Pakistan and Mongla port in Bangladesh in addition to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and road and rail projects in Nepal are indications that it has already made a deep entry into South Asia, overcoming its geographical disadvantages vis-à-vis India. While on one hand India would continue with a limited engagement with China, it would at the same time contemplate using its presence in the Quadrilateral Dialogue framework, with US, Japan and Australia being part, to checkmate Chinese influence. Nevertheless, China's shadow over South Asian geopolitics, particularly given its cozy relationship with Pakistan cannot be ignored.

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answer

ii) Check your answer with the answer given at the end of the Unit

Check your Progress 2

1. Examine how South Asia was impacted during Cold War years.

.....

.....

.....

2. Explain the present position of South Asia with reference to regional and global geopolitics

.....

.....

.....

1.6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION IN SOUTH ASIA

South Asia is known to be a test case from economic development perspective, with the region facing enormous challenges of human development, reflecting on its poverty, education, health and therefore quality of life of majority of its people. Quality of human life is central to the overall economic wellbeing of a society, nation and the region and South Asia is no exception to this. At the same time, one sees within South

Asia, possibilities of economic growth and positive demographic dividend if the growth spread is even across regions and sectors. Unfortunately for South Asia the regional economic cooperation project too has faltered in its ability to gain any momentum whatsoever in addressing many of the economic problems and opportunities in a collective manner.

1.6.1 Human Development in South Asia

On the basis of their UN's Human Development Ranking among a total of around 190 countries, most of the countries stand at the lower quarter, including Nepal (142), Bangladesh (133), Bhutan (129), India (131), Pakistan (154), with the exception of Sri Lanka (72). Besides, the UNDP's multidimensional poverty index, MPI which looks at deprivations experienced by people at various levels including education, health and standard of living for 2021 for 109 countries points out that nearly half of the world's total poor, around 532 million, are from South Asia alone. These deprivations are known to get exacerbated across gender, ethnicity and caste. The fact that South Asia constitutes nearly one fourth of the world's total population makes the problem of multidimensional poverty all the more challenging, which needs concerted policy interventions. The situation is compounded by deep intra-regional inequalities and disparities that exist within the urban and rural areas at times.

1.6.2 Economic Growth in South Asia

While human development indicators in South Asia have generally shown a consistent state of concern, in the more recent years, the rate of economic growth has shown some positive indicators if looked at from a long term perspective. In the 1990s, when most of the South Asian economies opened up to a variety of economic reform initiatives, the rate of growth was around 5 percent across the region. In the years following 2000, just before the 2008 financial crisis, the rate of growth had reached a healthy 7 to 8 percent across the countries. This indicated that the structural change and productive workforce had combined together to create growth opportunities in South Asia which were earlier missing. It also led to a significant reduction in poverty across the region, though not its complete elimination. More recently too, as the global and regional economy comes to terms with post COVID situation, the World Bank has projected the region to grow by 7.1 percent in 2021-22, even though, it may remain fragile. The expectation is this growth will be led by digitization and service led sector. However this also underscores the need for systemic attention to the agricultural sector on which the bulk of population is still dependent, and the labour sector much of which still is in the unorganized sphere and has faced the maximum brunt during the pandemic crisis.

1.6.3 Regional Cooperation

In the midst of the above economic challenges and prospects, regional cooperation could have become a major instrument that ought to have carried the developmental story of South Asia in a collective, mutually beneficial framework with most of the countries facing similar problems. The region did make a good start with the creation of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 1985. The progress in the initial decades

was gradual yet focused with emphasis on areas like poverty alleviation, trade liberalization etc. SAARC countries also attempted forming common positions on fora like World Trade Organization on matters of agriculture, textiles and patents. Though political issues were to be kept out of deliberations, SAARC still managed with bits of political friction manifesting on SAARC platforms, but not derailing the entire process. However during the last five years, complete breakdown of communication between India and Pakistan has stalled the process to such an extent that questions are being raised about the viability of the SAARC process itself. Alternatives like bilateral approach or sub regional approach to regional cooperation are being suggested to circumvent the stasis that the regional grouping faces today. Moreover, India's growing inclination towards trans-regional partnerships rather than its immediate neighbourhood appears to be putting its 'neighbourhood first' policy on a back-foot. In the ideal sense of the term, both are coterminous with each other and a calibrated neighbourhood policy can create the basis for a more enlightened trans-regional policy and the two should not be seen as mutually exclusive.

Note:

- i. Use the space given below for your answer
- ii. Check your answer with the answer given at the end of the Unit

Check your Progress 3

1. Examine some of the major economic features of the South Asian subcontinent.

.....

.....

.....

2. Why has the pace of regional cooperation not picked up in South Asia?

.....

.....

.....

1.7 LETS SUM UP

South Asia is one of the most diverse yet congruent regions in the world based on its history, geography, culture and the nature of its political trajectory shaped by its post colonial evolution. The commonalities have seeped beyond political borders and in an ideal situation they ought to have become the basis for integrating the region. Moreover the region faces a lot of common challenges relating to population, poverty and deprivation which further makes the region the right candidate to be considered as part of a regional community. However the manner in which politics with and between the countries unfolded subsequent to the end of the colonial rule, the legacy of politics of religion, identity and ethnicity took precedence and politics deepened rather than contained the differences that erupted therein. The external geopolitics played out by Cold War players had no less role in

furthering these schisms that South Asia continues to face. One does see an opportunity emerging in the form of resilience of the South Asian economies and the ability of its people to withstand human and natural adversities. The onus shall lie on the governments in South Asia to keep these human sensitivities in mind in the making and implementation of these policies for a better South Asia.

1.8 REFERENCES

Oberst, Robert C. et.al. (2014) *Government and Politics in South Asia*, New York, Routledge

Chapman, Graham P. (2009) *The Geopolitics of South Asia*, Singapore, Ashgate

Gottlob, Michael. (2003) *Historical Thinking in South Asia*, New Delhi, Oxford

Jalal, Ayesha and Sugata Bose. (2003) *Modern South Asia: History, Culture, Political Economy*. New Delhi, Oxford

Kukreja, Veena and M P Singh. (2003) *Democracy, Development and Discontent in South Asia*, New Delhi Sage

UNDP (2020) *Human Development Report, The Next Frontier: Human Development and the Anthropocene*, New Delhi, Oxford

UNDP (2021) and Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, *Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)*, *Unmasking Disparities by Ethnicity, Caste and Gender*, http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2021_mpi_report_en.pdf

1.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check your progress 1

1. South Asia has experimented with various forms of government including Parliamentary, Presidential, Quasi Presidential, Monarchy and Constitutional Monarchy and each of these have adapted to the political circumstances that have existed at the time. For example, India has a bicameral Parliamentary system based on federal principles and Sri Lanka has a Presidential system with more Unitary features.
2. Political parties in South Asia have had some distinctive features such as proto nationalism, importance of dynastic politics, multi-party system based on ideological diversity and political mobilization based on ethnic, religious and cultural symbols. The outcome of these political contestations have been manifest not only within the countries, but have also had a transnational spillover as well. India has often been a common factor in such inter- state political conflicts.

Check your progress 2

1. During Cold War the rivalry between India and Pakistan parallely reflected the tensions between United States and Soviet Union respectively making the region a flash point for Cold War competition.

Besides the two countries used the super powers to accomplish their respective national interests.

2. In the contemporary context South Asia can be seen as domain where China and United States are seeking to gain foothold. China by extending its Belt and Road Initiative in South Asian countries and United States trying to contain it by making India part of the QUAD.

Check your progress 3

1. South Asia stands at a very critical phase of its human development with most of the countries lying in the bottom quarter of the Human Development Index. At the same time the region has been witness to a reasonably good rate of economic growth which has lasted the global financial crisis and the recent pandemic. A lot will therefore depend on the ability of policy makers to make best use of the opportunities provided by economic growth to improve human development. This can be done by adopting policies which provide equal opportunities and are inclusive. Otherwise growth will only be associated with greater inequalities.
2. Regional cooperation has not picked up in South Asia primarily because the two major countries India and Pakistan have not been able to reconcile their differences. As a result cooperation has not moved beyond some elementary steps, thereby leading to alternative suggestions to the same. Given the uncertainty in global political economy, South Asia needs to come closer to each other to face emerging challenges collectively.

UNIT 2: STRUGGLE FOR INDEPENDENCE AND NATIONALISM IN SOUTH ASIA

Structure

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Nationalism in South Asia
- 2.3 Freedom Struggle in South Asia
 - 2.3.1 India
 - 2.3.2 Pakistan 1.3.3 Bangladesh
 - 2.3.4 SriLanka
 - 2.3.5 Nepal
 - 2.3.6 Bhutan
 - 2.3.7 Maldives
- 2.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.5 Some Useful Books
- 2.6 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

2.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit seeks to acquaint you with the idea of nation and nationalism in South Asia and the struggle for independence from colonial rule launched in different countries of the region. After going through this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the rise of national consciousness in different countries of South Asia;
- Describe the issues involved in the freedom movement; and
- Identify the different strategies for liberation adopted in the region.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

South Asia has a continuous history of seven thousand years. It has a composite culture developed through a historical process wherein the emphasis has been on unity in diversity.

South Asia has been the victim of repeated foreign aggression. The richness of the region perhaps attracted the aggressors from far and wide. In the successive waves of invasions since the ancient times, the Aryans, the Greeks, the Shakas, the Huns, the Turko-Afgans, the Mughals and others came to the region. In the modern period, the Europeans viz. Portuguese, Dutch, French and the British came to South Asia, though it was the British who finally established their hold in the region. The British invasion was qualitatively different from the earlier ones. Whereas the earlier invaders came, settled down here and got completely assimilated with the indigenous

people, the British integrated the region into their empire and ruled it from London. The region was linked with the industrially advanced international market in order to exploit its natural resources. South Asian economy and society became subordinated to the imperialist political economy and social development. The region was transformed into a market for the British machine made goods, a source of raw material and foodstuffs, and an important field of capital investment. The entire structure of economic relations between Europe and the South Asia involving trade, finance and technology continuously developed the colonial dependence and underdevelopment of the latter. This new politico-economic system of subordination, called as colonialism, resulted in the emergence of Europe as a leading capitalist region while the colonies were reduced to backward and underdeveloped regions of the world. In course of time, the economic and political domination led to numerous conflicts and contradictions which ultimately resulted in the growth of nationalism and movements for independence from colonial rule.

2.2 NATIONALISM IN SOUTH ASIA

Broadly, there were three patterns of colonial governance in the region. Whereas the British Indian Empire embraced the area which covered: the present independent republics of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh, Sri Lanka was governed as a 'Crown colony'. The smaller nations of Nepal, Bhutan and the Maldives were not British colonies, but were 'protectorates', that is, in return for surrendering their autonomy over their external relations, their independent existence was protected by the British. Given that nationalism in South Asia emerged as a reaction against colonial exploitation and subjugation, the regions which were under the direct control of the colonial administration witnessed strong anti-colonial and nationalist movements

The rise and growth of nationalism in South Asia was a reaction against colonial exploitation and subjugation. The new form of nationalism that became the basis of the new states in South Asia derived much of its ideology and political theory from the West but was adapted to particular circumstances and experiences. The basis of this new nationalism was an instinctive and xenophobic hatred for imperialism and symbols of imperialism. It was a simple hatred against those who had occupied their land by force, exploited their riches by force, crushed their government, and enslaved their people. Nationalism also became a creative force which aimed at building a nation based upon the principles of liberty, independence, economic justice and nationality. It not only united the people, but also inspired them to contribute their share in the national reconstruction. The lead in this regard was given by India which produced one of the biggest mass movements in the world. The movement not only succeeded in freeing it from colonial yoke, but also left a historically developed, well thought out programme for free India. The example of India inspired other colonies such as Sri Lanka and gave rise to political consciousness in countries like Nepal, Bhutan, and the Maldives.

2.3 FREEDOM STRUGGLE IN SOUTH ASIA

2.3.1 India

The rise and growth of nationalism in India was the product of the interaction of numerous objective and subjective forces which emerged in the historical process during the British colonial rule. While colonialism resulted in the economic exploitation of India and the destruction of its agriculture and handicrafts, it also led to the political and administrative unification of India. This factor combined with the introduction of modern transport, new education, press etc. resulted in the rise of national consciousness. Since nationalism in India developed under the aegis of British imperialism (which remained foreign till its expulsion), a lot of hurdles were created in its development and consolidation.

The Indian national movement passed through various phases and with each passing phase, its social base broadened, its objective became clearer and its forms of expression varied. The first phase of the national movement began in 1885 with the formation of the Indian National Congress (INC) and lasted roughly up to 1905. During this phase, the leadership of the movement was in the hands of liberal leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji, G.K. Gokhale, M.G. Ranade, S.N. Banerjee, Ferozeshah Mehta etc. At this stage, the objective of the movement was not freedom but political, administrative and economic reforms. At political level, the demand was to reform the central and local legislative councils so as to secure more powers for the Indian representatives (which resulted in the passing of Indian Councils Act, 1892). At the administrative level, the most important demand was to Indianise the higher grades of administrative services through a simultaneous ICS examination in England and India. At economic level, the demand was for the industrialisation of the country and promotion of Indian industries. The methods adopted to achieve these aims were clearly determined by liberal ideology. Constitutional agitation, effective argument and fervent appeal to the democratic consciousness and traditions of the British were the accepted methods of struggle. Gradualism and constitutionalism were the key concepts. They believed that the main purpose was to educate the masses, heighten national consciousness and create a consensus on political issues.

During this phase, the national movement had a narrow base, the masses could not be attracted to it. Its influence was limited to urban educated class. The Muslims by and large preferred to accept the leadership of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan. In 1906, when the Muslim League was established, the Muslim community was affected by its communal character and tended to stay away from the national movement.

Meanwhile, discontent against the British increased because of the highhanded measures of Lord Curzon who not only passed a number of laws such as the Indian Universities Act and the Calcutta Corporation Act curtailing the powers of the Indians but also partitioned Bengal, ostensibly for administrative convenience but politically to create a division between the Hindu dominant West Bengal and Muslim dominated East Bengal. Large number of nationalists became disillusioned with the ideology

and methods of the moderate leaders. With the rise of leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Aurobindo Ghosh, Lajpat Ilai and Bipin Chandra Pal, the national movement entered a new phase, the Extremist or militant phase. The extremist leaders practiced a new political philosophy and methods of struggle. Their programmes included boycott of foreign goods, breaking of all relations with the British Government, founding of national institutions for education, and propagation of swadeshi. The boycott movement launched by the nationalists was aggressively anti-British. It included not only the boycott of British goods but also renunciation of the government titles and posts and boycott of councils and schools. By providing a stimulus to cottage industries, it also became an instrument for the economic regeneration of the country. The extremists emphasized that there was an inherent clash between the Indian and the British interests and that the national movement was a direct result of this clash. The political propaganda of the militant nationalists instilled national pride, self-respect and self-confidence in the people. It also broadened the base of the national movement associating with it the lower middle class, students and youth. But the movement resurrected Hindu ideas and invoked Hindu symbols which weaned its secular character. This is perhaps why the movement could not prevent a large mass of the Muslims from accepting the communal ideology of the Muslim League.

A new phase in the Indian national movement began with the entry of Mahatma Gandhi. During the World War I, the political activities were at a low ebb. But after the war, there was great unrest among the people because of the fall in agricultural prices, increasing poverty of the middle classes, debt due to war, price rise, profiteering etc. The British government rewarded the Indian people with Government of India Act, 1919 that increased the participation of Indian people in the administration. But the Act did not come to the expectation of the Indian leaders. In these circumstances, the British severely restricted the civil liberties in India by enacting the Rowlatt Acts in 1919.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, who had returned from South Africa in 1914, initiated the struggle against the British rule by organising a series of non-violent acts of resistance against the Rowlatt Acts of 1919. The following year, Gandhi reorganised the Congress, transforming it from an annual gathering of national leaders to a mass movement, with membership fees and requirements set to allow even the poorest of the Indian to join. In August 1920 he launched a full scale non-cooperation movement on the twin issues of: i) rectifying the wrongs of the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, and the ii) khilafat movement. The non-cooperation movement through non-violence and Satyagrah revolutionized the nature of the national movement. It was transformed into a mass movement. It had three-tier programme: boycott of the national assembly, courts and foreign cloth. Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das, Patel, Rajendra Prasad and many others left the courts, students left schools and teachers resigned from schools and colleges. The movement was not limited to boycott, it offered a positive programmes like opening of national educational institutions and the establishment of cottage and handloom industries. However, Gandhi ended the non-cooperation movement in 1922 when the movement turned violent at Chauri Chauri.

A special feature of the non-cooperation movement was Hindu-Muslim unity. But after the withdrawal of the movement, there were Hindu-Muslim riots throughout India. Both the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha took belligerent stands.

The national movement got a new lease of life in 1928 when the British government announced the appointment of Simon Commission to study the next steps of democratic reforms in India. The Congress boycotted the commission on the ground that Indians were not represented in the Commission. It began to formulate a parallel constitution having the consent of the major communities. A committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Motilal Nehru to prepare a consensus report. The Committee prepared an All Parties Constitution based on self-governing dominion. The report also recognised titles in private and personal property. The socialists criticized the scheme for abandoning the goal of independence. But most importantly, the report did not enjoy the support of Jinnah and the Muslim League which felt that the Muslim interests have not been protected. Since the All Party Convention did not accede to the demands of the League, Jinnah parted company with the Congress.

Meanwhile, the younger leadership of INC represented by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose was not satisfied with the dominion status and called for complete independence. On 31 December, 1929, Congress, under the presidentship of Motilal Nehru passed a resolution for Purna Swaraj, that is, complete independence. The Civil Disobedience Movement began on 6 April 1930 by breaking the salt law. Gandhi prepared a comprehensive plan for this movement. He wanted every village to fetch or manufacture contraband salt, women to picket liquor shops, opium dens and shops of foreign cloth dealers; the young and old to spin khadi and burn foreign cloth, the Hindus to eschew untouchability, students to leave government school and government servants to resign their jobs. The government responded by issuing a number of ordinances, banning the Congress and all its branches, closing down newspapers and printing presses and arresting as many as 90,000 people. Negotiations that followed resulted in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact by which all the political prisoners were released and Gandhi agreed to be sole representative of the Congress at the Round Table Conference in London. Gandhi placed the views of the Congress on the federal scheme for India, problems of minorities, the army etc. He opposed the communal division. But due to differences among the various Indian groups at the conference, viz. Congress, Hindu Mahasabha, Muslim League, Sikhs, native princes etc., no agreement could be reached and Gandhi came back from the conference empty handed. In the meantime, the British government announced the Communal Award that not only gave separate electorate to Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, but also to the depressed classes. Gandhi who was in jail started a fast unto death. This resulted in the signing of Poona Pact that reserved seats for the depressed classes instead of separate electorate.

The constitutional reforms finally took shape in the form of the Government of India Act of 1935. The Act provided for the establishment of autonomous legislative bodies in the provinces of British India, the creation of a federal form of government incorporating the provinces and princely states, and the protection of Muslim minorities. The 1935 Act opened a new chapter in the

Indian constitutional development. Although the Act did not come up to the expectation of the political parties; all the parties decided to fight elections for the provincial assemblies in 1937. The Congress won absolute majority in five provinces out of seven and a near majority in Bombay. On the other hand, the Muslim League could not form a government in any province and its idea of coalition government in U.P. and Bombay with Congress was rejected by the later. This further alienated Jinnah. He began to think in terms of Muslims not as a minority but as a separate nationality. In March 1940, Jinnah propounded the 'two nation' theory and the Muslim League passed its famous resolution demanding a separate Muslim state constituting the geographically contiguous regions on the western and eastern zones of India.

When the World War II broke out, the British declared war on India's behalf without consulting Indian leaders. The Congress provincial ministries resigned in protest. In 1942, the Congress demanded that British should immediately quit India and passed the famous 'Quit India' resolution. But before the movement for this could be launched, all the leaders, including Gandhi were arrested and the movement became leaderless and took a violent turn. There were strikes, agitations and demonstrations in all parts of India. Police stations, post offices and railway stations were attacked, communication wires were cut and railway lines destroyed. This phase showed that, if need be, the Indian people could take to violence to end British imperialism.

Meanwhile, while the Congress leaders were in jail, Jinnah got a free hand to strengthen the support base of the Muslim League. The League soon became the chief spokesman of the Muslims. After 1943, the only question that remained was how the power could be transferred to India. After the War ended in April 1945, there were fresh elections in Britain and the new Labour government had to face a number of national and international problems. War had weakened the economy of Britain. America and Russia which had emerged as super powers were in favour of freeing the colonies. Moreover, Britain found it difficult to maintain a colony like India which had witnessed mass movements and the revolt of the Indian National Army. In March 1946, the British government sent a Cabinet Mission to India. After long and detailed discussions with different political parties and organizations, the Mission rejected the Muslim League's demand to partition the country and made its proposals for an Indian federation and the setting up of a constituent assembly. The proposals were accepted both by the Congress and the League though reluctantly. 1st September 1946, an interim government was formed under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru. The Muslim League also joined the government but decided not to participate in the making of a new constitution. On 20 February 1947, the British Prime Minister announced his government's decision to quit India before June 1948. Lord Mountbatten was to be sent to India to make arrangements for the transfer of power. In the meantime, the bickerings within the interim government were threatening the breakdown of the administration. The hostility between the two communities had acquired frightening proportions. Jinnah was adamant that the Muslims would not agree short of a sovereign state. As such partition of India and establishment

of Pakistan was inevitable. Mountbatten's formula was that the country would be divided but also Punjab and Bengal so that the limited Pakistan that emerged would meet both the Congress and the League positions to some extent. The formula for partition and independence was accepted by all the major political parties in India and was given final shape by the British Parliament through Indian Independence Act 1947. The act provided for the creation of two independent dominions India and Pakistan, provided for the partition of Bengal and Punjab and gave the constituent assemblies of both the countries the power to frame their own constitutions. Thus, on 15 August 1947 India attained independence.

2.3.2 Pakistan

The origin and the struggle for Pakistan lie in the communal politics of pre-independent India. One of the major developments during the national movement was the rise and growth of communalism. According to Bipin Chandra, communalism consists of three stages: i) the communal ideology starts when persons or groups believe that people of the same religion have common socio-economic interests, ii) the second stage is reached when a person or a group believes that different religion based communities have their own special interests, though these interests can be reconciled and Struggle for Independence and Nationalism in South Asia accommodated, iii) the stage is reached when the religious differences converted into secular differences and are seen as incompatible with each other. It is at this stage that the idea of separate nation gets established. In the context of India till 1930, communal ideology of reconciliation and accommodation was prevalent but during 1940s, it reached its extremist form of a separate nation resulting in the partition of the country.

Communalism started acquiring something like an all India dimension in the late 19th century. The reform movements launched by Muslim elite at this stage aimed at spreading English education and was basically intended to prepare the Muslims for the job market. They hardly tried to enlighten the community with modern ideas. The sectarian approach of the reform movement created the ground for the emergence and development of Muslim communal parties and politics. The British responded positively to these developments and did everything to encourage separatist tendencies among the Muslims. The British colonial officials gave their blessings to the Muslim League which was formed as an all India party in December 1906.

From its inception it had been a conservative party with strong communal bias. Its leadership consisted of persons known for their loyalty to the British. It raised the demand for separate electorates and safeguards for Muslims in government service. It used communal politics and ideology to mobilise the people and keep them away from the growing national movement.

When the partition of Bengal was annulled in 1912, the Muslim League was dismayed and disappointed with the British and began advocating self government for India within the British Empire. In 1916, it signed the Lucknow pact with the INC, whereby the Congress approved the institution of separate electorate and both parties declared their intention to work toward the dominion status for India. The Hindu-Muslim unity was at its

peak during the non-cooperation movement. The pact ended in 1922 with the calling off of the non-cooperation movement. The following years saw the rise of Hindu-Muslim communalism expressing itself in number of riots in different parts of the country.

Prospects of Hindu Muslim unity became bright when all parties boycotted the Simon Commission and decided to formulate an all-parties constitution. Since the demands put forth by the leader of the Muslim League, Mohammad Ali Jinnah were not met at the Conference, he virtually parted ways with the Congress. Consequently, all the Muslim groups joined hands and put forth a single document known as Jinnah's 14 Point Programme which became the basis for any further discussion for the future of India. During the Round Table Conferences, no decision could be reached because of the uncompromising attitude of the League. To add fuel to the fire, the British government through the Communal Award accepted almost all that was demanded in Jinnah's 14 Point programme.

From 1930 onwards, a section of the Muslim intelligentsia began to think in terms of a separate independent Muslim state in India. Mohammad Iqbal presiding over 1930 session of the Muslim League said 'I would like to see the Punjab, north-western Frontier provinces, Sindh, Baluchistan amalgamated into a single state'. At the Round Table Conference, a group of Muslim students in England led by Rahmat Ali proposed a Muslim state PAKISTAN (taking the first letter of four provinces and the end of the last province). Despite the yearnings for a separate Muslim state, the League pursued a policy of cooperation with the Congress and favoured a loose federal relationship among provinces within a united India. However, after the 1937 elections, in which the League had fared badly winning only 108 seats out of 485 seats reserved for Muslims, the League evolved into a strong anti-Congress party. As it went about consolidating support among the Muslims, the idea of living together as a single nation began to be replaced by the politics of hatred, fear and separation. The interests of Hindus and Muslims diverged. In March 1940, the League propounded the two-nation theory and passed a resolution 'Struggle for Independence and demanding the creation of independent states' for Muslims in the north-western and South Asia eastern parts of India.

Though the resolution was not taken seriously at that time but as months passed there was a rapid change. By 1943 it became an article of faith and a matter of life and death for the Muslims. The ambitious politicians, legislators and administrators saw ample opportunities for power in the new state. The professional class of lawyers, doctors, teachers, entrepreneurs and industrialists saw much scope for their activities. To the Muslims peasants of Bengal and Punjab, Pakistan was presented as the end of exploitation by Hindu zamindars and banias.

The League fought the 1945-46 election on the ground that 'a vote for the League and Pakistan was a vote for Islam'. Winning 440 of the 495 seats reserved for Muslims, the League established itself as the dominant party among the Muslims. Jinnah declared that there could be no compromise on the issue of Pakistan. The Cabinet Mission plan rejected the formation of Pakistan and called for the establishment of an interim government. Initially,

the League did not join the government, but later joined it, declaring at the same time that it will not participate in the drafting of the constitution. In August, Jinnah had called for 'Direction Action' for the creation of Pakistan. The following months witnessed the worst ever communal riots between the two communities starting from Bengal, Bihar and United Provinces reaching Delhi and culminating in Punjab. Mountbatten who had been sent to India for the transfer of power felt that immediate action was necessary and this action could only be political. The discussions held between Mountbatten and the Indian National Congress on the one hand and between Mountbatten and Jinnah on the other created an outline of the scheme for the partition of India. This was embodied in an Indian Independence Act 1947 which defined the territories of the two dominions adjustable and fixation of the final boundaries after the Award of the Boundary Commission, partition of Bengal and Punjab and secession of Sylhet from Assam. Thus the communal divide ultimately led to the political divide and the creation of Pakistan.

2.3.3 Bangladesh

Bangladesh was part of Pakistan which was created on the demand that the Muslims are a nation and therefore must have a separate homeland and a state of their own. After Pakistan's creation, however, Bengalis came to develop an increasing sense of distinctiveness which prevented the development of a single national community. It was this estrangement that culminated in the secessionist movement as a result of which Bangladesh ceased to be its constituent part.

The first significant event that was a landmark in the development of Bengali nationalism in Pakistan was the decision of the ruling government of Pakistan to introduce Urdu as the national language of Pakistan in disregard of Bengali wishes. Bengalis saw it as an attempt at cultural intrusion. Different strata of population came out to protest this decision. Police action to disperse demonstrating students leading to the death of some individuals intensified Bengali hostility towards West Pakistan. The language movement sparked the first nationalistic sentiment that got reinforced by the economic and political treatment meted to the Bengal by the dominant western Pakistan government. This demand later got turned into provincial autonomy. Legally, the Bengalis were citizens of Pakistan but economically the relationship between West Pakistan and East Pakistan was an exploitative one. East Pakistan's foreign exchange earnings were diverted to the West to develop its economy while the East was left lagging behind. There was some industrialisation, but its benefits were reaped by West Pakistan, because the owners were mostly from West Pakistan. Politically, East Pakistan had a subordinate position in the state structure of Pakistan. With West Pakistan becoming the seat of central government, the Muslim League did not allow the emergence of Bengali

Instead, it sought to manage East Pakistan affairs through a combination of non-Bengali Nawabs and Muslim traders of erstwhile Bengal. The position became worse because both in the bureaucracy and in the armed forces the eastern wing of Pakistan had no significant participation. As a result, the Bengali leadership was given much less than its due in top decision making structure. The overwhelming domination of West Pakistan

in government, bureaucracy and armed forces allowed them to manipulate and dominate East Pakistan.

The most significant impact of the language movement was on the 1954 general elections held under limited franchise. The Awami Muslim League that had emerged under the leadership of Bhashani in 1949 and other Bengali parties came together to form a United Front. They demanded, among others, autonomy for East Pakistan and adoption of Bengali as one of the state languages. They decisively defeated the Muslim League in East Pakistan. However, the Muslim League dismissed the United Front government within six months and imposed military rule in the name of Governor's rule. With the establishment of military dictatorship under Gen Ayub Khan in 1959, the first phase of the struggle of people of East Pakistan ended.

The military dictatorship of Ayub Khan was really aimed at preventing the middle classes or the vernacular elite from coming to power. Politicians with a mass base were disqualified and the domination of the armed forces over the military-bureaucratic complex backed by the industrial and trading bourgeoisie was ensured. The rapid polarization that followed reflected the cumulative impact of the growing political, economic and cultural differences between the two wings. This found expression in the Six-Point Programme announced by the leader of the Awami League, Mujibur Rahman, in 1966. He demanded that the government be federal and parliamentary in nature, its members to be elected by universal adult suffrage with legislative representation on the basis of population; that the federal government have principal responsibility for foreign affairs and defence only; that each wing have its own currency and separate fiscal accounts; that taxation be done at the provincial level; that each federal unit having control over its own earning of foreign exchange; and that each unit could raise its own militia or paramilitary forces. This was virtually a demand for a confederation. The struggle for linguistic nationalism, autonomy, a balanced economic growth and democracy had now merged.

The third phase of the struggle was the elections of 1970, the first general elections conducted since independence. The Awami League not only swept the provincial assembly polls but also succeeded in securing a majority in the national assembly because of the larger population of the eastern wing. In such circumstances the promised constituent assembly would have inevitably legitimised Mujib's six-point programme. Hence the convening of the national assembly was postponed by the ruling military elite and an alliance was forged with the opposition i.e. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in West Pakistan. Mujib launched a mass civil disobedience movement hoping to negotiate with Yahya Khan from the position of authority but the Pakistani ruling class used the negotiations to buy time to prepare for the military assault calculated to intimidate the Bengalis in submission.

When the military assault on Bengali nationalists began on 25th March, the civil disobedience and the non-cooperation movement turned into armed struggle. The brutal military action accompanied by torture, rape and murder of intellectuals destroyed the last vestiges of Pakistani nationhood in the people of Bangladesh. The heavy civilian casualties led to an unprecedented

migration of Bengali people to India. What should rightfully have been an internal affair of Pakistan, thus became a major problem of India. India provided sanctuary and training facilities to the freedom fighters. Besides, it mounted a massive diplomatic offensive to bring to the notice of the world the genocide in Bangladesh and its liberation struggle. Finally, Pakistan spelt its own doom by declaring war on India on 3rd December. The armed struggle ended on 16th December 1971 when the Pakistani army surrendered to the joint command of the Bangladesh Liberation Army and the Indian army in Dacca. Bangladesh emerged as a sovereign independent nation.

2.3.4 Sri Lanka

The political history of Ceylon, which later came to be known as Sri Lanka, can be traced back to the 3rd century B.C. During the early years, the island was divided into smaller principalities. Dutthagamini, a Sinhala prince from Rohana, attempted to unify the island but complete unification remained a distant hope for a long time. Beginning from the 3rd century BC, Ceylon experienced periodical invasions from South India and in the 11th century the north-western region became a province of the Chola kingdom. In the 12th century, the Sinhala king Parakramabahu I unified the whole country. But after his death, the country plunged into disorder and chaos which attracted the invaders from South India. It was these invasions which culminated in the formation of a Tamil kingdom in the Jaffna peninsula in the north of the island. When the Portuguese arrived in late 16th century, Ceylon was divided into three independent kingdoms: two Sinhalese, one based at Kotte with control over the south and east of the island, and the other at Kandy ruling the central highlands; and one Tamil kingdom controlling north and east. This gave them ample opportunities to intervene in Ceylonese politics and raise their settlements in the coastal region. In the mid 17th century, they were replaced by Dutch traders who were supported by the Sinhalese. The Dutch ruled the coastal Ceylon for over hundred years when much of the interior remained independent under the Kandyan kings. The British displaced the Dutch in 1796. In 1802, they abolished the separate Tamil state and made it into a 'crown colony'. In 1815, taking advantage of internal dissensions within the Kandya kingdom, the British succeeded in overthrowing the Nayakkar dynasty. It guaranteed Kandayans their privileges and rights and the preservation of customary laws, institutions, and religion. Though Kandy was administered separately, the trend towards reducing the status of its aristocrats and bhikkhus was unmistakable; this led to a popular rebellion against British control in 1818. This Great Rebellion was crushed and the Kandya province was integrated with the rest of the country.

Becoming the effective rulers of the whole of Ceylon, British colonialists quickly began a reform process. They relieved the native officials of judicial authority, paid salaries in cash, and relaxed the traditional system of compulsory labour called the *rajakariya* system. Restrictions on European ownership of land were also lifted. Agriculture was encouraged. The Colebrooke Cameron Commission systematised these early changes through the Charter of Justice of 1833. The British adopted a unitary administrative and judicial system for the whole island. They reduced the autocratic powers of the governor and setup Executive and Legislative Councils to

share powers in the task of government. English was made the language of the government and the medium of instruction in schools .

In the economic sphere, the British abolished all state monopolies, did away with rajakariya system, and promoted free trade. They encouraged plantation agriculture by selling Crown land cheaply. As a result, production of cinnamon, pepper, sugarcane, cotton and coffee flourished. The labour on the coffee plantations was predominantly immigrant Indians. In the later half of the 19 th century, commercial crops like tea, rubber, and coconut plantation became the catalyst of modernization of the Ceylonese economy.

It should however be noted that the capitalist enterprise was restricted to urban areas and areas under plantation. The rest of the country continued under subsistence agriculture, using traditional methods, though the isolation of the villages was broken somewhat by roads and railways.

National consciousness and the origin of modern nationalism in Ceylon can be traced back to the religious revivalism, which was a reaction to the Christian missionary enterprise. In the later half of the 19 t h century, revivalist movements in Buddhism and Hinduism sought to modernise their institutions and to defend themselves against the Christianity by establishing schools to impart Western education unmixed with

Christianity. This consciousness gradually spread to the political arena. A number of regional and communal associations that had come up in the educationally advanced parts of the country began to demand political reforms within the colonial constitution. They asked for Ceylonese participation in the executive branch, a wider territorial representation in legislature, and the adoption of elective principle in place of nomination . The colonial administration ignored these demands as they were not coordinated or vociferous. The constitutional reforms of 1910 retained the old structure with an appointed executive and a legislative branch with an appointed majority. The elective principle was recognised to a limited extent by establishing ' educated Ceylonese ' electorate to elect one member to the Legislative Council. Other Ceylonese members were to be nominated on communal basis.

Forces of nationalism gathered momentum during the World War I. The growth of national political consciousness was aided by the political repression that follow ed the civil disturbances in 1915. When the British arrested prominent Sinhalese leaders during what was then a minor communal riot, leaders of all communities came to oppose the move . It became the first political agitation on the islam d. Feeling the need for a common platform to voice a nationalistic view point, the Sinhalese and Tamil organisations came together to form the Ceylon National Congress in 1919. The Congress demanded control of the budget, elected majority in the legislature and practical control of the executive branch.

The British government , already under pressure because of the decline in the growth of world trade after World War I, a rise in prices of imported goods including foodstuffs and heightened working class activity, promulgated a new constitution in 1920 . It provided for an elected majority in the legislature, an increase in the number of territorially elected members, and the election of communal representatives. Thus, a representative government came into

being in Ceylon. The executive, however, remained under the governor and the official Executive Council.

Following these reforms, there was the breakdown of the Sinhalese and Tamil harmony of interests. While the Sinhalese leaders wanted to do away with communal representation and make territorial representation universal, minorities desired to retain communal representation to secure power for their communities. In this context, the Tamils began to regard themselves as minority community. With the increase in dissension and mutual suspicion between the Sinhalese and Tamils, the minorities broke away from the Congress to form their own organisations.

A new constitution framed in 1931 gave Ceylonese leaders opportunities to exercise political power and to gain governmental experience with a view to achieving eventual self-government. It provided for a State Council which combined legislative and executive functions. In addition to being a legislative council with an overwhelming majority of territorially elected members, the State Council was divided into seven committees (each headed by a minister or chairman) for executive work. Perhaps the most significant feature of this constitution was that by granting universal franchise, it brought all Ceylonese into the political process.

The growing national movement in India and the introduction of adult franchise further augmented the national movement in Sri Lanka. Movements for social welfare increased. Working class movement got impetus with the foundation of the Marxist political party. The introduction of universal suffrage also led to the resurgence of religious nationalism i.e. nationalism intertwined with Buddhist resurgence and its associated cultural heritage. This was given expression by S.W.R.D. Bhandaranaike through his Sinhala Maha Sabha. The universal suffrage also compelled the constitutionalist leadership during the second State Council (1936-47) to become more positive towards social and economic facets of the resurgence of nationalism, particularly in the fields of health, education and food subsidies.

In response to the radical agitations, the British government appointed Soulbury Commission in 1944 to examine the constitutional problems. The Commission internal self-government, with defence and external affairs under the British control. Ceylonese radical elements, however, pressed for complete independence. Meanwhile India's independence became a reality. In the context of the new situation, Great Britain was forced to transfer complete power on 4th February 1948 to the representatives of people elected as per the provisions of the new constitution in the general elections held in 1947.

The transfer of power in Sri Lanka was a smooth and peaceful, a reflection of the moderate tone of the dominant strand in the country's national movement. There was no bitterness or division at the time of independence as in the case of India. It made the whole process rather bland. Independence was granted from above and lacked the active spirit of nationalism.

Check Your Progress I

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.

ii) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

- 1) What was the political philosophy and methods adopted by the Extremist leaders in India?

.....

.....

.....

- 2) What were the main grievances of the Bengalis in East Pakistan?

.....

.....

.....

- 3) When and on what issue did the Sinhalese and Tamils develop differences?

.....

.....

.....

2.3.5 Nepal

For much of its early history, Nepal was divided into a number of independent principalities. In the mid 18th century, Prithvinaraian Shah, the chief of the Gurkha principality unified the whole of Nepal and founded the Shah dynasty. The present borders of Nepal came into being after the war with the British rulers in 1814. Nepal lost considerable amount of territory to British India, but it gained British recognition of its sovereignty. Even though Nepal was never occupied by the British, it was rarely in a position to assert its complete independence. When India became independent, Nepal too declared its independent status.

Since minor heirs succeeded Prithvinaraian, the prime ministers began to wield immense political power. This resulted in intrigues, conspiracies, killings and counter killings and instability. This situation continued until the mid-19th century, when Jang Bahadur Rana eliminated all rival political factions and reduced the king to a titular head. The Shah ruler, who was secluded in the palace grounds, was asked to issue a sansad (royal decree) granting Jung Bahadur absolute authority in civil and military administration and foreign relations. This sansad which also bestowed the office of prime minister upon the Ranas in perpetuity provided the legal basis for the rule of the Rana family in the country.

Since the power of the Rana prime ministers was ultimately illegitimate, resting on the abdication of responsibilities by the king and his virtual incarceration, the Rana rule became autocratic and reactionary in order to prevent any challenge to their authority. In the process, they succeeded in isolating Nepal from many of the changes happening throughout the world and even in nearby India.

Nepal, however, did not remain in complete isolation. The reform movements in India and the rise of national movement under Indian National Congress

deeply influenced the middle classes. The Rana regime's suppression of the modernist aspirations of the educated classes gave birth to an anti-Rana movement. Nepali exiles and those who had come to India for education set up associations which aimed at building a popular movement in Nepal and replace the Rana system by a democratic order. In the 1930s, some of these organisations, such as the Nepali Nagrik Adhika Samithi, Prachanda Ghorka, Praja Parishad, etc. formed by Nepali people living in exile in India, demanded immediate political reforms in Nepal and an end to the rule of the Ranas. This precipitated internal disturbances in Nepal. These developments in Nepal coincided with preparations for British withdrawal from the subcontinent. It may be noted that the Rana system had been supported and sustained by the British rulers in India who saw in Ranas, a useful and subservient ally. The atmosphere within the country was also not in favour of the Ranas. The king was aligned with the anti-Rana forces for obvious reasons. Moreover, the Ranas themselves had internal contradictions owing to various categories of expanding and amorphous lineage in the family. Accordingly, many of the Ranas in the lower status of the family hierarchy and lineage (born of less pure marriage) had either directly joined the anti-Rana movement or were indirectly opposing the ruling coterie as they had no stakes in the degenerated system. There were also sharp differences of ideology and tactics among the Rana rulers on how to deal with the forces of change. In such circumstances, the then Rana prime minister, Padma Shamsher thought of accommodation with the leaders of the democratic movement. This change in attitude paved a way for political reforms and constitutional developments in Nepal.

In 1948, Rana Mohan Shamsher promulgated the first written constitution of Nepal. It provided fundamental rights to the people and revived the traditional panchayat system without disturbing the traditional powers of the Ranas. When the Rana prime minister outlawed the Nepali National Congress and showed no interest in implementing the new constitution, anti-Rana forces came together to form the Nepal Democratic Congress in Calcutta in August 1948. This group advocated the overthrow of the Ranas by any means, including armed insurrection. It tried to ferment army coups in January 1949 and January 1950 but failed. When the Rana government arrested B.P. Koirala and other organizers in October 1948 and subjected regime opponents to harsh conditions and even torture in jail, its democratic opponents turned against it again.

The break for the nationalists came in 1950 when King Tribhuvan and his family sought asylum in India. Several anti-Rana organisations then joined together under the banner of the Nepali Congress, launched an armed struggle against the Rana regime. The Nepali Congress set up a provisional government at the border town of Birganj after its forces had captured much of the Terai from the Ranas. At this stage, India, which had just recognised the Rana regime in Nepal and concluded the Treaty of Peace and Friendship in 1950, decided to intervene to find a amicable way out. India mediated with the three segments of the Nepali politics in the crisis situation, the Ranas, the popular leaders and the King to work out a settlement. India's approach was that Nepal should follow a middle path where in the traditional elite should be preserved at the same time some

progress should be made towards democracy. The agreement concluded in New Delhi in February 1951 envisaged a coalition government of the Ranas and the Nepali Congress as well as restoration of the status and power of the monarchy. An interim ministry headed by Mohan Shamsheer with five Ranas and five Nepali Congress Party members was sworn in February 1951 after the King returned to Kathmandu. The King issued a royal order revoking all the hereditary powers and privileges of the Rana family. Thus, the regime that had lasted for 104 years collapsed in 104 days.

2.3.6 Bhutan

Bhutan was divided into several small principalities until 17th century. In the eastern Bhutan a ruling house was founded by the descendants of a Tibetan prince who had migrated in 9th century A.D. The western region was divided into several estates, controlled by different Buddhist monastic schools. The prince, Abbot-Shabdrung Ngawang Namgya I, arrived in Bhutan from Tibet as refugee in 1616. With the help of existing monasteries belonging to his school of Buddhism, he launched a struggle to unify Bhutan. In this struggle, Shabdrung defeated the rival schools and also repulsed successive invasions from Tibet and united the country. But after his death, Bhutan was in turmoil once again. Out of this turmoil emerged Ugyen Wangchuk who restored order and peace in Bhutan and founded the present hereditary ruling house in 1907.

When the Bengal Presidency was established by Britain in the later half of the 18th century, its borders touched the Bhutanese territory. This resulted in periodic skirmishes between the British and the Bhutanese. It finally led to the full scale Anglo-Bhutanese war in 1864-65 which settled the border. Thereafter, the British influence in Bhutan gradually increased at the expense of China and Tibet. In 1910, despite Chinese protests, Ugyen Wangchuk signed a treaty with the British rulers of India in which he "agreed to be guided by the advice of the British government in regard to its external affairs". In return, the British government pledged not to interfere in the internal affairs of Bhutan.

The following year the king attended the famous Delhi Durbar and he knew and accepted the fact that none but feudatory chieftains of India were to participate in the Durbar. The British, however, did not regard Bhutan as an Indian State and did not adopt policies normally applied to native princes, such as recognising and regulating succession, intervening in case of threats to the state or gross misrule.

When India was on the verge of independence, the Bhutanese government was apprehensive that the new Indian government was likely to interfere in the internal affairs of Bhutan and as a counter balance wanted to have some relations with the British government in London. However, when the Bhutanese delegation went to New Delhi to negotiate a Standstill Treaty with the new Indian government, it was impressed by the sincerity of the new Indian regime. The Bhutan government and the Political Officer in Sikkim signed the Indo-Bhutan Treaty of 1949 at Darjeeling in August 1949. The Treaty clearly established Bhutan as a sovereign power. India undertook not to interfere in the internal administration of Bhutan while Bhutan agreed to be guided by the advice of India in its external relations. In

case of dispute arising in applying the Treaty, constitution of an Arbitration Council with an Indian, a Bhutanese representative and the chairman to be nominated by Bhutan among the Federal High Court judges from India was also envisaged. These stipulations have worked to the satisfaction of both the contracting parties.

2.37 Maldives

The early history of the Maldives is obscure. The early settlers here were probably from southern India. Indo-European speakers followed them from Sri Lanka in the fourth and fifth centuries BC. In the 1st century AD, sailors from East Africa and Arab countries came to the islands. The Maldivian ethnic identity is therefore a blend of these cultures, reinforced by religion and language.

Originally Buddhists, Maldivians were converted to Sunni Islam in the mid-12th century. Since then the Maldives has been governed as an Islamic sultanate for most of its history. It came under the feudatory subjection of the king of Cannanore in coastal India. For the first time in its history, the Maldives came under direct control of foreign power, when the Portuguese occupied the northern islands in 1553. Within 15 years the Portuguese were driven out by the people led by warrior-patriot, Mohammad Bodu Takuru. The Sultan later concluded a treaty with Portuguese which restricted their independence and Maldives was forced to send a fixed annual tribute to the Portuguese in Ceylon.

When the Dutch and later the British established their hold on Ceylon, the Sultan of Maldives continued the practice of sending an annual tribute to the European Governors in Ceylon, a practice that continued till the first half of 20th century. The Europeans left alone the local government and internal affairs of the Maldives.

Knowing the strategic importance of the islands as well as to protect trade conducted by British subjects, in 1887, the Governor of Ceylon signed an agreement with the Sultan. By this agreement, Great Britain formally recognized Maldives as its protectorate. According to the terms of the agreement, the responsibility of recognizing and installing the sultan and the control of the country's defence and foreign relations were vested in Great Britain. In return, the islanders were left free to decide internal affairs.

Maldives continued to be ruled under a succession of sultans. The sultans were hereditary until 1932 when an attempt was made to make the sultanate elective, thereby limiting the absolute powers of sultans. Maldives remained a British crown protectorate until 1953 when the sultanate was suspended and the First Republic was declared under the presidency of Muhammad Amin Didi. The sultanate was however, restored the following year. Political developments in the Maldives since then have been largely influenced by the British military presence in the islands.

In 1956, Britain obtained permission to re-establish its wartime airfield on Gan islands and a radio station on Hitaddu Island. Maldives granted the British a 100-year lease on Gan that required them to pay £2,000 a year. Before the agreement could be ratified, the new Prime Minister, Ibrahim Nasir, called for a review of the agreement in the interest of shortening the

lease and increasing the annual payment. But in 1959, Nasir was challenged by a local secessionist movement in the southern atolls that benefited economically from the British presence on Gan: He allowed Britain to continue to use both the Gan and the Hitaddu facilities for a thirty-year period, with the payment of £750,000 over the period of 1960 to 1965 for the purpose of Maldives' economic development.

On July 26, 1965, Maldives gained independence under an agreement signed with Britain. The British government retained the use of the Gan and Hitaddu facilities. In March 1968 the sultanate was abolished by a national referendum. Maldives became a republic in November 1968 under the presidency of Ibrahim Nasir.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: i) Use the space given below for your answers.

ii) Check your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) What factors contributed to the demise of the Rana system in Nepal?

.....
.....
.....

2) is regarded as the founder of modern Bhutan.

3) Maldives attained independence on

2.4 LET US SUM UP

As is evident from above, nationalism and the struggle for independence in the South Asian region were the direct result of the colonialism and imperialism of the western nations. The lead in this direction was given by India that not only led the most powerful liberation movement spanning over a period of more than sixty years but also influenced directly and indirectly other countries of the region.

Although, the struggle for freedom was anti imperialistic, yet the proto national loyalties - religious , ethnic or otherwise- among the people proved an obstacle rather than a contribution to the national consciousness and national unity. This was readily mobilized by the imperial masters against the nationalists by encouraging communalism. The net result was the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan. Communalism in the resultant partition of India and the creation of Pakistan were the outgrowth of the complexities of the national movement. Basically communalism was the disguised expression of the struggle between the vested interests belonging to different faiths that gave a communal form to that struggle. The communal question had no religious issue. It was a question of struggle between various sections of the professional classes belonging to different faiths.

The cultural and geographical separation between West Pakistan and East Pakistan, combined with differences in social, economic and political factors, set the stage for a second wave of nationalism that resulted in the creation of Bangladesh. It was a struggle for nationalism of a 'nation within a nation'. The idea of two-nations theory i.e. Hindus and Muslims form

separate nationalities proved wrong.

In Sri Lanka, the freedom struggle evolved in a peaceful, gradual and constitutional manner. In striking contrasts to other parts of South Asia, Sri Lanka in 1948 was an oasis of stability, peace and order. The transfer of power was smooth and peaceful, a reflection of the moderate tone of the dominant strand in the country is nationalist movement, there was hardly any bitterness or division .

In the case of Ne pal, the problem was internal i.e. a power struggle between the royal family and the reactionary and autocratic Rana system. The anti-Rana democratic movement began after the World War I, it intensified following the independence of Indian in 19 47. The Nepali Congress launched a powerful movement against the Rana rule in 1950 . India gave a tacit support to the movement that in the course of time turned into a violent armed struggle and paved the way for a constitutional monarchy in February 1951.

In Bhutan, the British interest was very much limited. Till independence of India, the relations between Bhutan and British Government remained cordial. At no stage Britain thought of interfering in the internal affairs of Bhutan except controlling its foreign relations . This tradition was continued by independent India by the 1949 treaty between India and Bhutan.

In the case of Maldives, no Western colonial power directly ruled the Maldives except the Portuguese who managed to gain control over it for a short period. Between 1887 and 1965 it remained a protectorate of Great Britain; In the internal matters and the conduct of domestic politics, the Maldives remained largely unhindered. And though at the constitutional level, certain changes were brought about they did not affect the pace or the pattern of social structures except in a formal sense.

2.5 SOME USEFUL BOOKS

Chandra, Bipin . (1989) Indi's Struggel for Jnclep EJndenc.e, Delhi Sarkar, Sumit. (1983) Modern Jncliq 1885-47. Delhi

Vermani, R.C. (2000) Colonialism and Nationalism in India, Delhi, Das, Mitra. (1981) From Nation to Nation. Minerva Associates, Calcutta

Banerjee, Subrata (198_1) Bangladesh. New Delhi,

K.M. DeSil va, K.M. (1977) Sri Lanka -A Survey, London.

Phandn is, Urmial. (1985) Maldives - Winds of Change in an Atoll State. New Delhi. Sinha, A.C. (200 I) Himalyan Kingdom of Bhutan. Delhi

1.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) The Extremist were aggressively anti-British and aimed at economic regeneration of the country. Their programmes included boycott of foreign goods, breaking of all relations with the British Government, founding of national institutions for education, and propagation of swadeshi. Their political philosophy instilled national pride, self

respect and self-confidence in the people. They also broadened the basis of the national movement also closing the lower middle class, students and youth with it.

- 2) Nationalistic sentiment among Bengalis was aroused by the decision of the Pakistani government to introduce Urdu as the official language. The economic and political treatment meted to the Bengal is by the dominant western Pakistan government also strengthened Bengali identity. Economically the relationship between West Pakistan and East Pakistan was an exploitative one. Politically, East Pakistan had a subordinate position in the state structure of Pakistan. Both in the political and administrative spheres, Bengalis felt left out.
- 3) Political differences between the Sinhalese and Tamils came to surface in the 1920s. The constitutional reforms of 1920, subsequently modified in 1924 provided for communal representation. The Sinhalese leaders wanted to do away with communal representation and make territorial representation universal. Tamils, who began to regard themselves as minorities wanted to retain communal representation to secure power for their communities.

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Basically, since the power of the Rana prime ministers was illegitimate, Rana rule was autocratic and reactionary. The suppression of modern democratic aspirations gave rise to anti-Rana movement. In the 1940s, the Rana rulers lost the support of the British following their withdrawal from India. Rana rule was further weakened when some of Rana family members of lower rank joined forces with anti-Rana movement. The final blow to the Rana rule came when the king showed readiness to assume his sovereign responsibilities.
- 2) Ugyen Wangchuk
- 3) 26th July, 1965