

Separation of Bihar from Bengal

Introduction

- Due to western education, the intellectual class also emerged in Bihar, due to which they were awakened to their rights. He realized that only after the formation of a separate Bihar province, the social, economic and political condition of the people of Bihar can change.
- First of all, in the year 1876 AD, in a magazine named 'Murdh-e-Sulaiman' published from Munger, Bihar separate movement was talked about under the title 'Bihar for Biharis'. In this letter it was demanded that Biharis should be appointed in place of Bengalis in government jobs in Bihar.

Main reason

- January 22, 1877, the Urdu paper 'Kasid' strongly advocated the separation of Bihar from Bengal. In this letter, it was said that the association of Bengal and Bihar is incompatible, because the traditions, customs and behavior of both are different. While Bengalis are getting benefited from this, the condition of Biharis is getting worse.
- The 'Separate Bihar Movement' became more intense in the year 1893 AD. The real pioneers of this movement were Sachchidanand Singha and Mahesh Naran. Some other prominent people included- Nand Kishore Lal, Krishna Sahai, Deepnarayan Singh, Ali Imam and Maulana Mazharul Haq etc.
- Mahesh Naran provided a solid base to the 'Bihar Separate Movement' through 'Kayastha Gazett'. At the same time, he exposed the backwardness of Biharis.
- Due to the efforts of Deepnarayan Singh, the second session of the Provincial Congress was held in Bihar.

Background

- Shah Alam II handed over the Diwani rights of Bengal, Bihar and Odisha to the East India Company after the 'Battle of Buxar' (year 1764 AD). At this time, more attention was being paid to Bengal than Bihar, for which there were many administrative reasons.
- After the great 'Revolution' of 1857, there was a renaissance among the people of Bengal and there was a wide intellectual development in them. The intellectuals of Bengal began to take a critical view of the British rule and gradually nationalism emerged. The British colonial government did not consider it favorable and efforts were made to weaken and limit them. With the aim of weakening Bengal, the people of Bihar were openly supported by the British officials.
- Lieutenant Governor Campbell said that unless the people of Bihar are provided with livelihood opportunities, then Bihar cannot develop. He advocated the creation of a separate Bihar.
- The Anglo-Indian newspapers deliberately promoted the issue of Bengal-Bihar, as well as the hatred and antagonism of the Bengalis in the minds of the people of Bihar against the Englishmen.

Colonial policies

- The British colonial government encouraged Muslim and Kayastha organizations in Bihar, in these organizations 'Sadar Anjuman-e-Hind' founded by Mushi Pyarelal and 'Scientific Society' founded by Iman Ali were the main ones.

- ❑ Sachchidanand Sinha, Mahesh Narayan and other leaders demanded the formation of fully autonomous local government in Bihar.
- ❑ By the last decade of the 19th century, Bengal had become a refuge for nationalists, extremists and revolutionaries. This was a matter of grave concern to the British colonial government. At the same time, he wanted to partition Bengal at the earliest with the aim of weakening the extremists and revolutionaries.
- ❑ Sachchidanand Sinha and Mahesh Narayan, keeping in mind the favorable situation, handed over a reminder to Lieutenant Governor Charles Elliot and Alexander Mackenzie for the creation of a separate Bihar, but no special attention was paid to it.
- ❑ It may be recalled that in the year 1905, Lord Curzon announced the partition of Bengal. Administrative convenience was cited as the main reason behind this decision to divide Bengal into West and East Bengal, but in the real sense it was aimed at weakening the national movement in Bengal and dividing this province into Hindu-dominated and Muslim dominated units on communal lines. This division was opposed nationwide. He was in favour of a separate Bihar province from Bengal and not the partition of Bengal. Sachchidanand Singh and Mahesh Narayan have also mentioned this in their book "Partition of Bengal; separation of Bihar".

Demand of Bihar

- ❑ The year 1906, Bihari Student Conference was organized in Patna by Rajendra Prasad. Mazharul Haq, Ali Imam and Haban Iman also demanded creation of a separate Bihar.
- ❑ The year 1908, the first session of the Bihar Regional Conference was organized in Patna. In this session, Mohammad Fakhruddin proposed to separate Bihar from Bengal and organize it into a new province, which was unanimously accepted.
- ❑ the year 1909, the second session of Bihar Regional Conference was organized in Bhagalpur, in which there was a strong demand for the separation of Bihar.
- ❑ Mahesh Narayan's magazine 'Bihari' used to publish issues related to the interests of the people of Bihar, as a result of which, the 'Separate Bihar Movement' gained a lot of strength.
- ❑ The year 1910 AD, Sachchidanand Singha was elected a member of the Central Legislative Council on behalf of the Bangla Legislative Council and Mazharul Haq was elected as the representative of the Muslims in the Legislative Council and Ali Iman was made the law member of the Governor General's Executive Council. All these people put immense pressure on the British rule for a separate Bihar.

Time of separation of Bihar

- ❑ However, by the year 1911, the 'Bang-Bhang Movement' had almost weakened. The colonial government wanted to annul the partition of Bengal and wanted to partition Bengal afresh keeping Bihar in mind. While Sir Ali Imam succeeded in convincing the Governor General that the partition of Bengal was not practical. So it should be returned immediately. Instead, it would be practical to separate Bihar and Orissa from the Bengal province and give it the status of an independent province.
- ❑ December 12, 1911 AD, on the arrival of Emperor George V of England in India, a royal court was organized in Delhi. On this occasion, the Governor General Lord Hardinge announced the cancellation of the partition of Bengal and the formation of a newly received 'Bihar' by joining Bihar and Odisha. Also, Charles Bailey was appointed the first lieutenant governor of this new province.

- ❑ Thus, on 1 April 1912 AD, both Bihar and Orissa regions were duly inaugurated , while Bihar province was formed on 22 March 1912 AD. On this basis, 'Bihar Day' is celebrated on 22nd march.
- ❑ Again on April 1, 1936, Orissa (Odisha) separated from Bihar and became a new province and the rest of the area was made Bihar. The last bifurcation of the state of Bihar took place on 15 November 2000, when Jharkhand was separated from Bihar.

Champran Satyagraha

India's first organised act of civil disobedience was the Champaran Satyagraha in 1917. The East Champaran district and the West Champaran district make up the historic Champaran district in Bihar, India. In 1914 and 1916, farmers in this area rose up in protest against the British because of the restrictions placed on indigo planting. Similar circumstances existed in Bengal earlier, but after a significant revolt in 1859–1861, the peasants there gained their independence from the indigo planters.

Champaran Satyagraha – Background

- ❑ In the Bihar state's Champaran area, tens of thousands of landless serfs, indentured workers, and subsistence farmers were compelled to produce indigo and other cash crops rather than food crops. The European planters had forced the peasants to grow indigo on 3/20 of the total land area (called tinkathia system).
- ❑ Before the peasants could convert to other crops at the end of the nineteenth century when German synthetic dyes replaced indigo, European planters sought exorbitant rents and illegitimate dues from the peasants in order to maximise their profits. Furthermore, the peasants were forced to sell their produce at European-determined prices.
- ❑ These goods were purchased from farmers at a very low cost.
- ❑ The ruthless militias of the landlords oppressed them, and they received meagre compensation, which left them in abject poverty.
- ❑ The British government placed a high tax on them and persisted on raising the rate despite the fact that they were suffering from a severe famine.
- ❑ As the situation grew intolerable without food and money, peasants in Champaran revolted against the government by cultivating indigo plants in 1914 (at Pipra) and 1916. (Turkaulia).

Objective of the Movement

- ❑ Through the ages, peasants in India produced and processed indigo, which was a recognised crop. European indigo planters first emerged in Bengal after the Brits took control of the region. After securing zamindaris, they forced local peasants to grow indigo so that the dye could be extracted from the plants and processed in their factories. The coercion also affected Bihar, and Champaran was where the misery of the peasants was more severe than in other areas of Bihar. As the demand for indigo increased with rising textile imports, the planters imposed what became known as the tinkathia system, forcing the peasants to raise indigo on the best parts of their rented lands, wasting a significant portion of their food supply and livelihood on an unusable crop. Champaran was a centre for plantations, where the majority of European planters obtained leases for entire villages from the large Bettiah zamindari.
- ❑ Two realities constitute the foundation of the Champaran Satyagraha's causes. Secondly, the introduction of synthetic dye caused the demand for indigo to decline, which caused the zamindars, or planters, to shirk their responsibility by raising the rent burden on the peasants, further aggravating their predicament. Second, villagers sought to switch to other crops on the same area when indigo demand decreased. After receiving payment as compensation for switching to other crops, the planters agreed to the same. The planters did not reduce the rent-burden and compensation even after the First World War, when Germany was still a belligerent state and the supply and demand for synthetic materials plummeted.

- ❑ The peasants' delegation travelled all the way from Champaran to Lucknow in 1915, when Gandhiji had just returned from South Africa, to draw the attention of the senior leaders to their situation. Gandhiji had attended the Lucknow Session of the Congress. Gandhi thought that starting Satyagraha from Champaran was the wisest course of action. By leading the peasant uprisings in Champaran (Bihar) and afterwards in Kheda, he reduced the impact of the experiment in non-cooperation (Gujarat). The goal of these struggles, which were adopted as a reformist movement, was to organise the peasants to support their demands.
- ❑ In 1917-18, the Champaran peasant movement was established. Its goal was to stir up opposition among the peasants to the European colonists. These planters used unethical and unlawful ways to grow indigo at a price that, by the standards of justice, could not be considered a fair wage for the work that the peasants performed. Gandhiji researched the Champaran peasantry's complaints. The peasants opposed both the jain-dars and Foreign planters. As a result of their shock at this action, British officials in April 1917 gave Gandhiji an order to leave the district under Section 144 of the Indian Penal Code. On April 18, Gandhiji defied the prohibition and entered a "guilty" plea before the district magistrate in Motihari, prepared to be imprisoned for acting on "the voice of conscience." But after the peasants and Bihar Congress leader Mazhar-ul-Haq organised in front of the district court, the government relented and dropped the charges against Gandhi.
- ❑ For the peasants, this was a significant victory because it was the first time their plight was acknowledged, which gave the movement its full momentum. Gandhi examined the issues in the adjacent, impoverished villages while visiting them, and in May he even met with British representatives in Ranchi to discuss these issues. He received a settlement offer from the officials, which he categorically rejected.

Some of the important causes of Champaran peasant struggles were as under:

1. There was a significant individual increase in the land rent in Champaran and, in fact, throughout Bihar.
2. The peasants' freedom to cultivate was restricted because they had to grow indigo.
3. The peasants were forced to use the best portion of their land for the landlord's preferred crops. Also, they had to provide the crops that the landlord had chosen their best time and effort.
4. The peasants received extremely meagre salaries. Since these were so small, it was incredibly challenging for them to make a living. D.G. Tendulkar, while describing the predicament of the peasants in Champaran, writes: The chronicle of woes of Indian ryots, driven to cultivate indigo by the British planters, forms one of the darkest in the annals of colonial exploitation. No chest of Indigo made it to England unblemished by human blood.
5. The subhuman way of life that the people of Champaran led was one very significant factor in the discontent there. When Gandhiji visited Champaran, he was deeply offended by the peasants' utter destitution. "The peasants in Champaran are leading their lives like animals, suffering from all kinds of hardships," he said, expressing his feelings. The European planters inflicted terrible suffering on the peasantry of Champaran. Together, the government officials and landlords repressed the peasantry. Gandhiji wanted to experience his satyagraha and non-cooperation movement in India after returning from South Africa. Champaran appeared to be an appropriate location for conducting such an experiment.

6. The populace was likewise prepared to follow Gandhiji's leadership, but in the end, the Chauri-Chaura incident caused the movement to devolve into bloodshed. All of this did not sit well with Gandhiji. We would stress once more, nevertheless, that the Champaran peasant movement was a component of the national independence movement.

The sequence of events that gave rise to the peasant uprising in Champaran can be summarised as follows:

- ❑ The fact that the Champaran movement was led by intelligentsia was one of its key characteristics. Gandhiji, Rajendra Prasad, Brijkishore Prasad, Muzharul Haq, and other well-known national leaders took part in the movement. The movement gained momentum and a focus as a result.
- ❑ The problems of the Champaran peasants were thoroughly reviewed during the Bihar Provincial Congress Committee's annual conference on April 10, 1914, and it was determined that they were in a severe situation.
- ❑ The Provincial Congress Committee recommended the creation of an inquiry commission to assess the state of the Champaran peasantry the next year, in 1915.
- ❑ The peasant plight in Champaran was considered by the Indian National Congress at its Lucknow session in 1916. It was decided that something needed to be done to provide the Champaran peasants with immediate relief.
- ❑ On May 14, 1917, Gandhiji sent a letter to W.B. Heycock, the District Magistrate of Champaran, expressing his desire to free the peasants from the control of landlords and the government. Gandhiji wished to foster better ties between tenants and zamindars.
- ❑ Rajendra Prasad was extremely dissatisfied with the inhumane way in which the Champaran villagers lived. He had seen the wretched and impoverished state of the peasantry.
- ❑ Indigo farming was banned and an uprising was organised by the peasants at the Sathi factory and other nearby factories in 1908. 19 people were found guilty in December 1908 to put an end to it. At Motihari, around 200 prisoners were awaiting trial on a variety of offences, including arson and assaulting plantation workers.

Nonetheless, the general peasantry's involvement and the nonviolence concept provided the peasants strength. Examining this movement's results is interesting. In terms of peasant movements in India, the Champaran movement is hailed as a success.

Peasant movement in Bihar

Introduction

While on the one hand nationalists and revolutionaries played an important role in the Indian National Movement, on the other hand the farmers of the country also took part in a big way. The farmers were the most affected by the British colonial exploitative policies.

The British East India Company and the British administration exploited the farmers here at many levels for maximum revenue collection. Landlords, Gumarats, moneylenders, moneylenders etc. also exploited the farmers to a great extent.

Background

For the organized exploitation of the farmers, in 1793, Lord Cornwallis implemented the Permanent Settlement System in Bihar, Bengal, Orissa and Banaras, which was basically the Zamindari system. Under this practice, 10/11th part of land revenue was given to the company and 1/11th part to the landlord. Although, from the very beginning, the farmers opposed their exploitation and oppression, but their voice was suppressed.

The farmers of Bihar also played an important role in the Indian National Movement. In the second half of the 19th century, indigo planters from Bengal came to Bihar on a large scale and revolted at a place called Pandol in 1867-67 AD.

Peasant movement in Bihar

- ❑ The real beginning of the peasant movement in Bihar is believed to be from the Champaran movement (1917 AD). In the year 1917, the Champaran movement was launched under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Along with this, the long-standing Tinkathiya system was abolished. Encouraged by the success of the Champaran movement, in June 1919, Swami Vighanand organized the farmers of Madhubani against the Darbhanga Raj. The year 1922-23, the Kisan Sabha was formed in Munger by Shah Muhammad Zubair and Shrikrishna Singh.
- ❑ Swami Sajhanand Saraswati was the first person of the peasant movement in Bihar. He was born in a village named Devagram in Ghazipur district of Uttar Pradesh, but he dedicated himself to the problems of the farmers of Bihar. Also started working as a farmer-labor leader. He made 'Sitaram Ashram' located in Bihar near Patna the center of political struggle. Along with this, on March 1928 AD, he formed the 'Patna Kisan Sabha' in Bihar, which proved to be a milestone in the history of the peasant movement.
- ❑ Swami Sahajanand Saraswati along with Ramdayalu Singh and Yamuna Karjee formed the 'Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha' in the year 1929 on the occasion of Sonpur Mela. Swami Sahajanand Saraswati and Sanchit Shri Krishna Singh were appointed as its president.
- ❑ The Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha uplifted the pathetic condition of the farmers. Started a campaign to get freedom from the exploitation of landlords, moneylenders and to give ownership rights to the ryots on the land.
- ❑ Swami Sahajanand Saraswati called upon all the farmers to stop paying Malguzari to give their share to the farmers and he gave a grandfather – “Kaise loge Malguzari lath hamara zindabad.” This slogan became the main slogan of the farmer's movement. He used to say that- “We will fight for the rights and will live by ending the zamindari”.
- ❑ With the arrival of Sarkar Vallabhbai Patel in Bihar in 1929 and the starting of civil disobedience movement by Gandhiji in 1930, the peasant movement gained more intensity. The 'anti-chowkidari campaign' was very successful in Bihar in the 1930s.

- ❑ In Bihar, under the leadership of Shrajendra Prasad, the Congress established a farmer-village committee, whose other members were Shrikrishna Singh, Krishna Sahay, Baldev Sahay, Abdul Bari, Rajendra Mishra etc.
- ❑ June, 1933 AD, a committee was formed in the Executive Committee of the Provincial Kisan Sabha to know the problems of the farmers, whose members were Yamuna Karjee, Yugal Kishore Singh, Yadunandan Sharma, Badri Narayan Singh and Swami Sahajanand Saraswati. This committee collected the problems of the farmers of Gaya region, which was published by Swami Sahajanand Saraswati in the form of a book titled 'Gaya Ke Kisan Ki Karun Kahani'.

In the national context

- ❑ April, 1936 AD, the 'All India Kisan Sabha' was established in the Lucknow session of Congress, whose president was Swami Sahajanand Saraswati and General Secretary NG Ranga. Some prominent members associated with Kisan Sabha were- Acharya Narendra Dev, Rahul Sankrityayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Pandit Karyanand Sharma, EMS Namboodiripad, Pandit Yadunand Sharma etc.
- ❑ 1937 AD, the Kisan Sabha started getting disenchanted with the Congress, because the Congress started forging an alliance with the landlords. He believed that Congress is becoming the protector of capitalists, landlords and moneylenders.
- ❑ Shilbhrad Yaji was a prominent person associated with the farmer's movement in Bihar. He was one of the active members of the Kisan Sabha.
- ❑ Under the leadership of Jayaprakash Narayan and Acharya Narendra Dev, in 1934 AD, full support was given to the peasant movement by young progressive people.
- ❑ Result
- ❑ All the farmers in 1935 AD, the resolution of abolition of Zamindari had been passed. The main demands of the farmers in Bihar were- end of legal recoveries and eviction of tenants and return of surplus land.
- ❑ the year 1937, the Congress cabinet was formed. Enthused by this, leaders like Abdul Bari and Ramvriksh Benipuri proposed abolition of zamindari before the new government, but there was no opposition in this direction. However, after independence, the Zamindari system was legally abolished.

Conclusion

Initially, the farmer's movement started in the districts of Patna, Shahabad, Munger, Saran, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga etc., which later spread to the whole of Bihar. Leaders like Shri Krishna Singh and Rajendra Prasad urged the farmers to withdraw their movement, but the farmer's movement continued. Yadunandan Sharma in Gaya, Ramanand Mishra in Darbhanga, Rahul Sankrityayan in Chhapra, Yamuna Karjee, Swami Sahajanand Saraswati started getting attracted towards Samruvaaddi ideology during the Second World War.

In this way, it can be said that after the year 1980, many important peasant movements took place in Bihar and strengthened the Indian freedom struggle. Due to the farmer's movement in Bihar, many laws related to land reforms were made by the state government after independence.

Swami Sahajanand and Kisan Sabha

Introduction

Swami Sahajanand Saraswati, regarded as one of the fundamental and important leaders of the peasantry in Bihar, was a bright thinker and a commanding master of debate. Sahajanand, who possessed many attributes of mass leadership, developed as a social reformer and politician and attracted a large following. Save for a small group of historians and social scientists, all of his contributions to the Indian freedom movement and improving peasants' awareness have since been lost due to his unfortunate death. The most alluring and instructional recognition he ever received was for his intellectual development, which still sets him apart now despite his small population. Over his whole career, he played a variety of roles, including linguist, polymath, sociologist, historian, philosopher, writer, grammarian, ascetic, revolutionary, Marxist, and politician. He was a multifaceted genius.

Role of Swami Sahajanand in Kisan Sabha

- ❑ In Patna district, Sahajanand Saraswati established a smaller Kisan Sabha in conjunction with a formal organisational framework; but, it wasn't until a few years later that it became institutionalised. He created the Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha later that year (BPKS). He became the most important kisan leader in India as a result. The Civil Disobedience Movement, which helped raise public awareness but prevented the Sabha's leaders from having enough time to formalise the body's structure, began in Bihar shortly after the Sabha was established. As a result, there are gaps between some Congress leaders and Kisan Sabhaites due to the experiences of the Civil Disobedience Campaign both inside and outside the jail. Sahajanand so completely cut himself off from the political scene for a period of time.
- ❑ The anticipated membership of this Sabha increased from 80,000 in 1935 to 2,50,000 in 1938, making it India's largest regional assembly. On April 11, 1936, during the Indian National Congress session in Lucknow, the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS) was established with a small number of Congress Socialists. Its inaugural President was Sahajanand. N.G. Ranga, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, Pandit Yamuna Karjee, Pandit Yadunandan (Jadunandan) Sharma, Rahul Sankrityayan, P. Sundarayya, Ram Manohar Lohia, Jayaprakash Narayan, Acharya Narendra Dev, and Bankim Mukerji were just a few of the prominent figures who made up the In addition to the remission of agricultural debts, it requested the end of the zamindari system. The red flag was subsequently chosen as its flag in October 1937.
- ❑ The leaders soon grew more involved with the Congress governments in Bihar and United Province while beginning to separate themselves from the Congress. The Bihar Provincial Kisan Sabha became one of the organization's provincial units after the All India Kisan Sabha was established. Along with Subhas Chandra Bose, Sahajanand formed the Anti-Compromise Conference in opposition to the British and Congress. Even during World War II, he collaborated with the Indian Communist Party. To create his own Kisan Sabha and advocate for the Bihar peasants, he parted with all other lawmakers. He was successful in establishing a reputation among the peasants with his standards of speech and behaviour. He talked to them and gave them assurances about getting better. In a short period of time, he won the affection and respect of the peasants while also inspiring terror and reverence in the hearts of the landlords, Congressmen, and bureaucrats.

Formation of the All India Kisan Sabha (1936)

An anti-feudal movement and farmer's rights organisation in India is called the All India Kisan Sabha. It was first named as the All India Kisan Congress when it was founded in 1936. (AIKC). Sahajanand Saraswati, the creator of the Bihar Kisan Sabha movement, served as the All India Kisan Sabha's first president (BPKS). Following the split of the Communist Party of India in 1964, the All India Kisan Sabha (CPI) and All India Kisan Sabha were established. (Akhil Bhartiya Kisan Sabha; CPI-M)

Work of Kisan Sabha

The following are the goals of the All India Kisan Sabha:

- 1) For farmers, ranchers, and other rural labourers, the All India Kisan Sabha provides a forum.
- 2) to end landlordism and freely transfer land to rural and agricultural labourers.
- 3) to expand agriculture and industry while raising the standard of living for rural residents.
- 4) putting an end to the mistreatment of rural and agricultural employees.

Kisan movement

- ❑ The Akhil Bharatiya Kisan Sabha was another name for the All India Kisan Sabha (AIKS).
- ❑ It is the 1936-founded Communist Party of India's Sahajanand Saraswati Peasant Front.
- ❑ The All India Kisan Sabha was established on April 11, 1936, by Sahajanand Saraswati. The Kisan Sabha movement was founded in the Indian state of Bihar. N. G. Ranga served as this organization's secretary.
- ❑ The group aimed to eliminate the Zamindari system and lower land income.
- ❑ The All-India Kisan Sabha, which was established in Lucknow in April 1936, elected Swami Shajanand as its president and N.G. Ranga as its general-secretary.
- ❑ For the first time, Jawaharlal Nehru spoke before the All-India Kisan Sabha. A Kisan Sabha manifesto was developed and approved in the Congress assembly in Faizabad.

Conclusion

While Swami Sahajanand Saraswati and his Kisan Sabha had a clear legal vision for the development of Indian society via the empowerment of peasants and workers, they lacked a vision for the constitution of the newly independent country of India. The All India Kisan Sabha was a well-known peasant uprising against the Zamindari System that started in the twentieth century. It aided in the improvement of living conditions for farmers, peasants, and other agricultural and rural labourers.