

GOVERNORS-GENERAL

GOVERNORS-GENERAL AND VICEROYS OF INDIA : SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THEIR RULE

Governors-General I

1. Warren Hastings 1773-1785

- (i) Regulating Act of 1773.
- (ii) Act of 1781, under which the powers of jurisdiction between the governor-general-in-council and the Supreme Court at Calcutta, were clearly divided.
- (iii) Pitt's India Act of 1784.
- (iv) The Rohilla War of 1774.
- (v) The First Maratha War in 1775-82 and the Treaty of Salbai in 1782.
- (vi) Second Mysore War in 1780-84.
- (vii) Strained relationships with Chait Singh, the Maharaja of Benaras, which led to Hastings' subsequent impeachment in England.
- (viii) Foundation of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (1784).

2. Lord Cornwallis 1786-1793

- (i) Third Mysore War (1790-92) and Treaty of Seringapatam (1792).
- (ii) Cornwallis Code (1793) incorporating several judicial reforms, and separation of revenue administration and civil jurisdiction.
- (iii) Permanent Settlement of Bengal, 1793.
- (iv) Europeanisation of administrative machinery and introduction of civil services.

3. Sir John Shore 1793-1798

- (i) Charter Act of 1793.
- (ii) Battle of Khanda between the Nizam and the Marathas (1795).

4. Lord Wellesley 1798-1805

- (i) Introduction of the Subsidiary Alliance System (1798); first alliance with Nizam of Hyderabad.
- (ii) Fourth Mysore War (1799).
- (iii) Second Maratha War (1803-05).
- (iv) Took over the administration of Tanjore (1799), Surat (1800) and Carnatic (1801).

(v) Treaty of Bassein (1802).

5. Sir George Barlow 1805-1807

Vellore Mutiny (1806).

6. Lord Minto I 1807-1813

Treaty of Amritsar with Ranjit Singh (1809).

7. Lord Hastings 1813-1823

- (i) Anglo-Nepal War (1814-16) and the Treaty of Sagauli, 1816.
- (ii) Third Maratha War (1817-19) and dissolution of Maratha Confederacy; creation of Bombay Presidency (1818).
- (iii) Strife with Pindaris (1817-1818).
- (iv) Treaty with Sindhia (1817).
- (v) Establishment of Ryotwari System by Thomas Munro, governor of Madras (1820).

8. Lord Amherst 1823-1828

- (i) First Burmese War (1824-1826).
- (ii) Capture of Bharatpur (1826).

9. Lord William Bentinck 1828-1835

- (i) Abolition of sati and other cruel rites (1829).
- (ii) Suppression of thug (1830).
- (iii) Charter Act of 1833.
- (iv) Resolution of 1835, and educational reforms and introduction of English as the official language.
- (v) Annexation of Mysore (1831), Coorg (1834) and Central Cachar (1834).
- (vi) Treaty of 'perpetual friendship' with Ranjeet Singh.
- (vii) Abolition of the provincial courts of appeal and circuit set up by Cornwallis, appointment of commissioners of revenue and circuit.

10. Lord Metcalfe 1835-1836

New press law removing restrictions on the press in India.

11. Lord Auckland 1836-1842

- (i) First Afghan War (1838-42).
- (ii) Death of Ranjit Singh (1839).

12. Lord Ellenborough 1842-1844

- (i) Annexation of Sindh (1843).
- (ii) War with Gwalior (1843).

13. Lord Hardinge I 1844-1848

- (i) First Anglo-Sikh War (1845-46) and the Treaty of Lahore (1846).
- (ii) Social reforms including abolition of female infanti-cide and human sacrifice.

14. Lord Dalhousie 1848-1856

- (i) Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848-49) and annexation of Punjab (1849).
- (ii) Annexation of Lower Burma or Pegu (1852).
- (iii) Introduction of the Doctrine of Lapse and annexation of Satara (1848)/ Jaitpur and Sambhalpur (1849), Udaipur (1852), Jhansi (1853), Nagpur (1854) and Awadh (1856).
- (iv) "Wood's (Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control) Educational Despatch" of 1854 and opening of Anglo-vernacular schools and government colleges.
- (v) Railway Minute of 1853; and laying down of first railway line connecting Bombay and Thane in 1853.
- (vi) Telegraph (4000 miles of telegraph lines to connect Calcutta with Bombay, Madras and Peshawar) and postal (Post Office Act, 1854) reforms.
- (vii) Ganges Canal declared open (1854); establishment of separate public works department in every province.
- (viii) Widow Remarriage Ait (1856).

15. Lord Canning 1856-1857

- (i) Establishment of three universities at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay in 1857.
- (ii) Revolt of 1857.

Viceroy

1. Lord Canning 1858-1862

- (i) Transfer of control from East India Company to the Crown, the Government of India Act, 1858.
- (ii) 'White Mutiny' by European troops in 1859.
- (iii) Indian Councils Act of 1861.

2. Lord Elgin I 1862-1863

Wahabi Movement

3. Lord John Lawrence 1864-1869

- (i) Bhutan War (1865)
- (ii) Setting up of the High Courts at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras (1865).

4. Lord Mayo 1869-1872

- (i) Opening of the Rajkot College in Kathiawar and the Mayo College at Ajmer for political training of Indian princes.
- (ii) Establishment of Statistical Survey of India.
- (iii) Establishment of Department of Agriculture and Com-merce.
- (iv) Introduction of state railways.

5. Lord Northbrook 1872-1876

- (i) Visit of Prince of Wales in 1875.
- (ii) Trial of Gaekwar of Baroda.
- (iii) Kuka Movement in Punjab.

6. Lord Lytton 1876-1880

- (i) Famine of 1876-78 affecting Madras, Bombay, Mysore, Hyderabad, parts of central India and Punjab; ap-ointment of Famine Commission under the presiden-cy of Richard Strachey (1878).
- (ii) Royal Titles Act (1876), Queen Victoria assuming the title of 'Kaiser-i-Hind' or Queen Empress of India.
- (iii) The Vernacular Press Act (1878).
- (iv) The Arms Act (1878).
- (v) The Second Afghan War (1878-80).

7. Lord Ripon 1880-1884

- (i) Repeal of the Vernacular Press Act (1882).
- (ii) The first Factory Act (1881) to improve labour con-ditions.
- (iii) Continuation of financial decentralisation.
- (iv) Government resolution on local self-government (1882).
- (v) Appointment of Education Commission under chair-manship of Sir William Hunter (1882).
- (vi) The Ilbert Bill controversy (1883-84).
- (vii) Rendition of Mysore.

8. Lord Dufferin 1884-1888

- (i) The Third Burmese War (1885-86).
- (ii) Establishment of the Indian National Congress.

9. Lord Lansdowne 1888-1894

- (i) Factory Act (1891).
- (ii) Categorisation of civil services into imperial, provi-sional and subordinate.
- (iii) Indian Councils Act (1892).

- (iv) Setting up of Durand Commission (1893) to define the Durand Line between India and Afghanistan (now between Pakistan and Afghanistan).

10. Lord Elgin II 1894-1899

Two British officials assassinated by Chapekar brothers (1897).

11. Lord Curzon 1899-1905

- (i) Appointment of Police Commission (1902) under Sir Andrew Frazer to review police administration.
- (ii) Appointment of Universities Commission (1902) and passing of Indian Universities Act (1904).
- (iii) Establishment of Department of Commerce and Industry.
- (iv) Calcutta Corporation Act (1899).
- (v) Ancient Monuments Preservation Act (1904).
- (vi) Partition of Bengal (1905).
- (vii) Curzon-Kitchener controversy.
- (viii) Younghusband's Mission to Tibet (1904).

12. Lord Minto II 1905-1910

- (i) Popularisation of anti-partition and Swadeshi Movements.
- (ii) Split in Congress in the annual session of 1907 in Surat.
- (iii) Establishment of Muslim League by Aga Khan (1906).

13. Lord Hardinge II 1910-1916

- (i) Creation of Bengal Presidency (like Bombay and Madras) in 1911.
- (ii) Transfer of capital from Calcutta to Delhi (1911).
- (iii) Establishment of the Hindu Mahasabha (1915) by Madan Mohan Malaviya.
- (iv) Coronation durbar of King George V held in Delhi (1911).

14. Lord Chelmsford 1916-1921

- (i) Formation of Home Rule Leagues by Annie Besant and Tilak (1916).
- (ii) Lucknow session of the Congress (1916).
- (iii) Lucknow pact between the Congress and Muslim League (1916).

- (iv) Foundation of Sabarmati Ashram (1916) after Gandhi's return; launch of Champaran Satyagraha (1916), Kheda Satyagraha (1918), and Satyagraha at Ahmedabad (1918).

(v) Montagu's August Declaration (1917).

(vi) Government of India Act (1919).

(vii) The Rowlatt Act (1919).

(viii) Jallianwalla Bagh massacre (1919).

(ix) Launch of Non-Cooperation and Khilafat Movements.

(x) Foundation of Women's University at Poona (1916) and appointment of Saddle's Commission (1917) for reforms in educational policy.

(xi) Death of Tilak (August 1, 1920).

(xii) Appointment of S.P. Sinha as governor of Bihar (the first Indian to become a governor).

15. Lord Reading 1921-1926

(i) Chauri Chaura incident (February 5, 1922) and the subsequent withdrawal of Non-Cooperation Movement.

(ii) Moplah rebellion in Kerala (1921).

(iii) Repeal of the Press Act of 1910 and the Rowlatt Act of 1919.

(iv) Criminal Law Amendment Act and abolition of cotton excise.

(v) Communal riots in Multan, Amritsar, Delhi, Aligarh, Arvi and Calcutta.

(vi) Kakori train robbery (1925).

(vii) Murder of Swami Shradhanand (1926).

(viii) Establishment of Swaraj Party by C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru (1922).

(ix) Decision to hold simultaneous examinations for the ICS both in Delhi and London, with effect from 1923.

16. Lord Irwin 1926-1931

(i) Visit of Simon Commission to India (1928) and the boycott of the commission by the Indians.

(ii) An All-Parties Conference held at Lucknow (1928) for suggestions for the (future) Constitution of India, the report of which was called the Nehru Report or the Nehru Constitution.

- (iii) Appointment of the Harcourt Butler Indian States Commission (1927).
- (iv) Murder of Saunders, the assistant superintendent of police of Lahore; bomb blast in the Assembly Hall of Delhi (1929); the Lahore Conspiracy Case and death of Jatin Das after prolonged hunger strike (1929), and bomb accident in train in Delhi (1929).
- (v) Lahore session of the Congress (1929); Purna Swaraj Resolution.
- (vi) Dandi March (March 12, 1930) by Gandhi to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement.
- (vii) 'Deepavali Declaration' by Lord Irwin (1929).
- (viii) Boycott of the First Round Table Conference (1930), Gandhi-Irwin Pact (1931) and suspension of Civil Disobedience Movement.
- (iv) Resignation of Bose in 1939 and formation of the Forward Bloc (1939).
- (v) Lahore Resolution (March 1940) by the Muslim League, demand for separate state for Muslims.
- (vi) 'August Offer' (1940) by the viceroy; its criticism by the Congress and endorsement by the Muslim League.
- (vii) Winston Churchill elected prime minister of England (1940).
- (viii) Escape of Subhash Chandra Bose from India (1941) and organisation of the Indian National Army.
- (ix) Cripps Mission's Cripps Plan to offer dominion status to India and setting up of a Constituent Assembly; its rejection by the Congress.
- (x) Passing of the 'Quit India Resolution' by the Congress (1942); outbreak of 'August Revolution'; or Revolt of 1942 after the arrest of national leaders.
- (xi) 'Divide and Quit' slogan at the Karachi session (1944) of the Muslim League.

17. Lord Willingdon 1931-1936

- (i) Second Round Table Conference (1931) and failure of the conference, resumption of Civil Disobedience Movement.
- (ii) Announcement of Communal Award (1932) under which separate communal electorates were set up.
- (iii) 'Fast unto death' by Gandhi in Yeravada prison, broken after the Poona Pact (1932).
- (iv) Third Round Table Conference (1932).
- (v) Launch of Individual Civil Disobedience (1933).
- (vi) The Government of India Act of 1935.
- (vii) Establishment of All India Kisan Sabha (1936) and Congress Socialist Party by Acharya Narendra Dev and Jayaprakash Narayan (1934).
- (viii) Burma separated from India (1935)..

18. Lord Linlithgow 1936-1944

- (i) First general elections (1936-37); Congress attained absolute majority.
- (ii) Resignation of the Congress ministries after the out-break of the Second World War (1939).
- (iii) Subhash Chandra Bose elected as the president of Congress at the fifty-first session of the Congress (1938).

19. Lord Wavell 1944-1947

- (i) C. Rajagopalachari's CR Formula (1944), failure of Gandhi-Jinnah talks (1944).
- (ii) Wavell Plan and the Shimla Conference (1942).
- (iii) End of Second World War (1945).
- (iv) Proposals of the Cabinet Mission (1946) and its acceptance by the Congress.
- (v) Observance of 'Direct Action Day' (August 16, 1948) by the Muslim League.
- (vi) Elections to the Constituent Assembly, formation of Interim Government by the Congress (September 1946).
- (vii) Announcement of end of British rule in India by Clement Attlee (prime minister of England) on February 20, 1947.

20. Lord Mountbatten 1947-1948

- (i) June Third Plan (June 3, 1947) announced.
- (ii) Introduction of Indian Independence Bill in the House of Commons.
- (iii) Appointment of two boundary commissions under Sir Cyril Radcliff for the partition of Bengal and Punjab.