

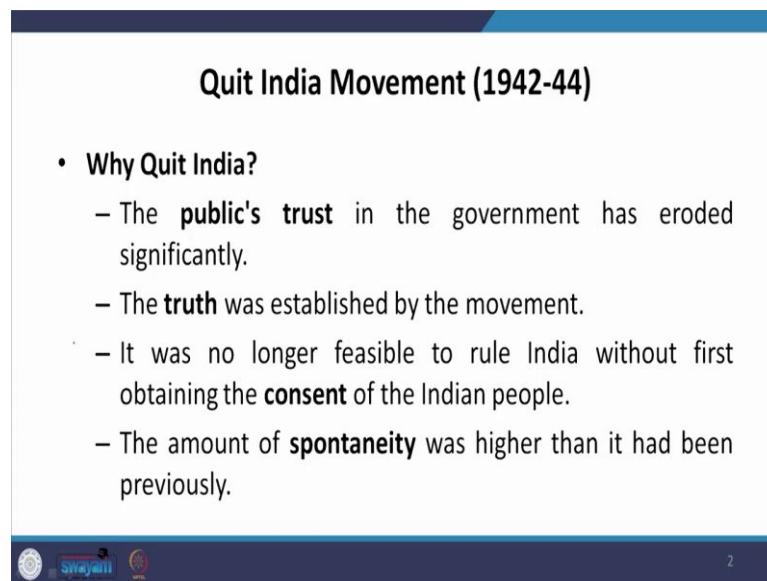
Partition of India in Print Media and Cinema
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Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee

Lecture - 05
History of the Partition of India - V

Good morning students and welcome to my Lecture five for the course Partition of India in Print Media and Cinema. So, for today's class, we shall continue with the History of Partition of India. We have already discussed about the different British policies that were actually adding up to the course of Partition, and then we have talked about the Lahore Resolution. Today, we are going to talk about a quintessential movement - the Quit India Movement.

So, when we talk about the Quit India Movement that happened between 1942 and 1944, we need to ask, why quit India? What were the propellants?

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Quit India Movement (1942-44)

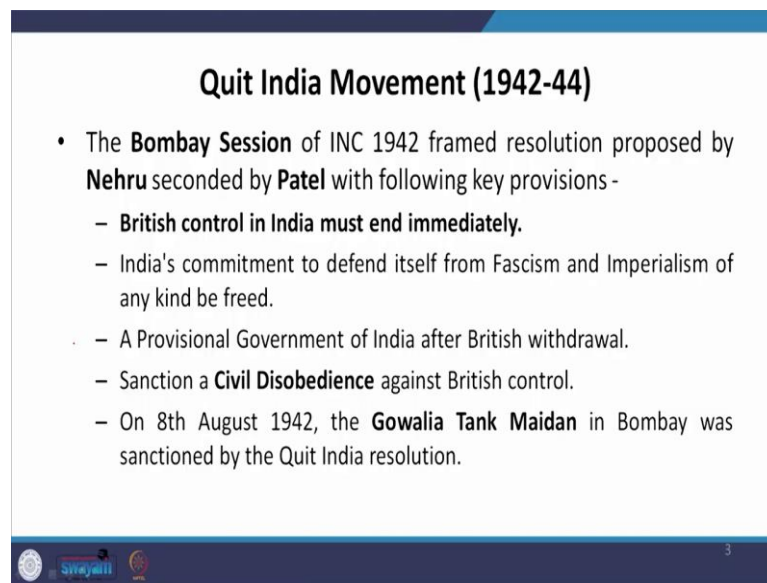
- **Why Quit India?**
 - The **public's trust** in the government has eroded significantly.
 - The **truth** was established by the movement.
 - It was no longer feasible to rule India without first obtaining the **consent** of the Indian people.
 - The amount of **spontaneity** was higher than it had been previously.

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So, the public's trust in the government had actually dwindled; it had eroded over time and it had eroded significantly. The truth about the real aims of the Raj was being exposed in front of the people. It was ... finally established by the Quit India Movement.

So, it was no longer feasible to rule India without obtaining the consent of the Indian people, and the amount of spontaneity that was observed in Quit India was much higher than it had been previously.

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Quit India Movement (1942-44)

- The **Bombay Session** of INC 1942 framed resolution proposed by **Nehru** seconded by **Patel** with following key provisions -
 - **British control in India must end immediately.**
 - India's commitment to defend itself from Fascism and Imperialism of any kind be freed.
 - A Provisional Government of India after British withdrawal.
 - Sanction a **Civil Disobedience** against British control.
 - On 8th August 1942, the **Gowalia Tank Maidan** in Bombay was sanctioned by the Quit India resolution.

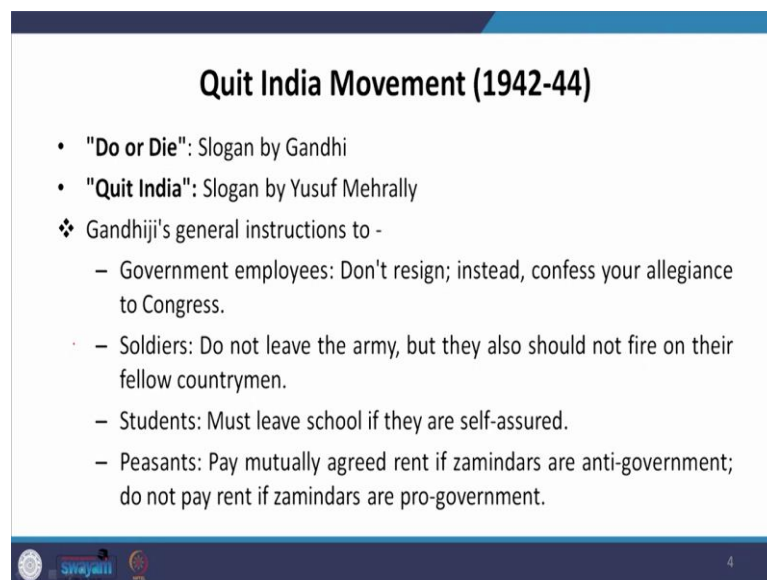
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So, we see that the Bombay Session of Indian National Congress in 1942 framed the resolution proposed by Jawaharlal Nehru and seconded by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and it had the following key provisions:

The British control in India must end immediately - that was the first provision that INC proposed, and then India's commitment to defend itself from Fascism and Imperialism of any kind must be acknowledged. And, so, India should be free to refrain from participating in any form of, any expressions of fascism and imperialism.

And then three - a provisional government of India after British withdrawal - that was the third provision, and followed by that a sanction of a civil disobedience against British control. And finally, on 8th of April 1942 the Gwalior Tank Maidan in Bombay was sanctioned by the Quit India resolution.

So, the famous slogan that we get from M. K. Gandhi in association with this movement is "Do or Die," whereas the slogan by Yusuf Mehrally is "Quit India", actually the name Quit India comes from Yusuf Mehrally's slogan. To the government employees, Gandhi would say that don't resign; instead, you should confess your allegiance to Congress. (Refer Slide Time: 03:34)



Quit India Movement (1942-44)

- "Do or Die": Slogan by Gandhi
- "Quit India": Slogan by Yusuf Mehrally
- ❖ Gandhiji's general instructions to -
 - Government employees: Don't resign; instead, confess your allegiance to Congress.
 - Soldiers: Do not leave the army, but they also should not fire on their fellow countrymen.
 - Students: Must leave school if they are self-assured.
 - Peasants: Pay mutually agreed rent if zamindars are anti-government; do not pay rent if zamindars are pro-government.

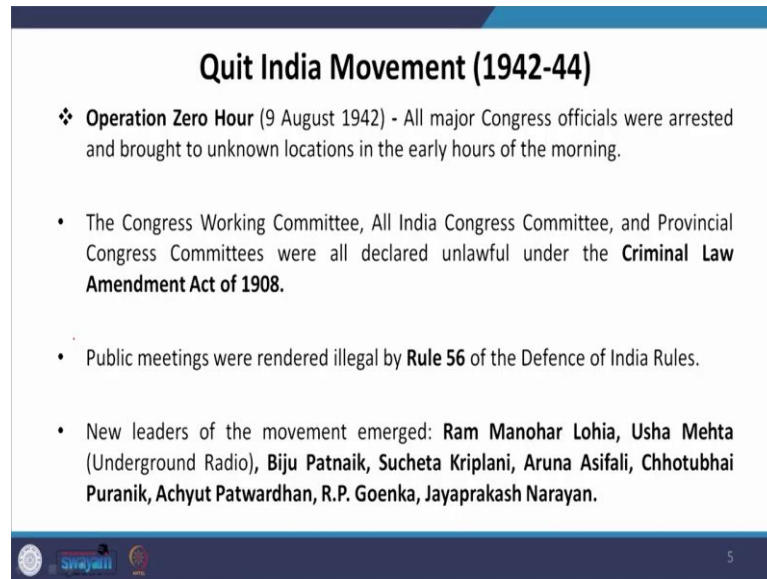
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Similarly, to the soldiers he would say they should not leave the army, but rather as a soldier one should not fire on their fellow countrymen. And then, for the students M. K. Gandhi had to say that they must leave school if they are sure about it; if they are self-assured. And then, to the peasants M. K. Gandhi said that they should pay mutually

agreed rent if the zamindars were anti-government and the peasants should not pay any rent if the zamindars were found to be pro-government.

While talking about Quit India Movement, we need to look at the different incidents that can be described within this movement.

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Quit India Movement (1942-44)

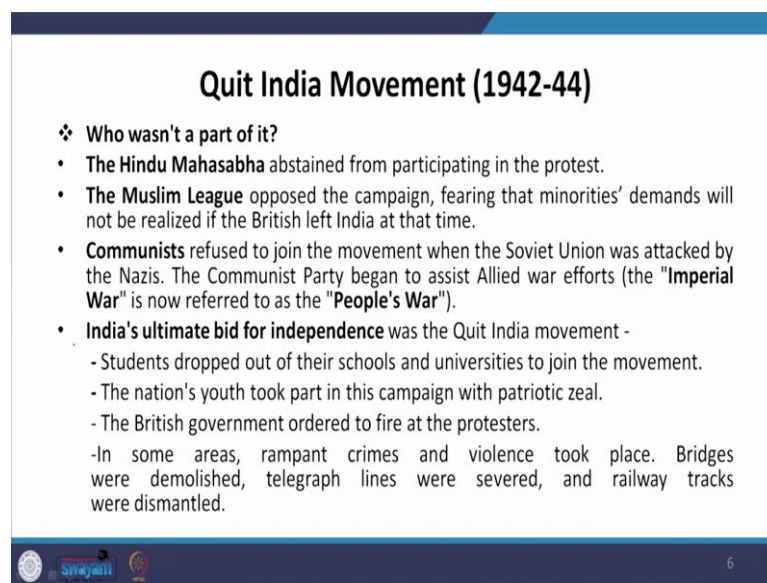
- ❖ **Operation Zero Hour** (9 August 1942) - All major Congress officials were arrested and brought to unknown locations in the early hours of the morning.
- The Congress Working Committee, All India Congress Committee, and Provincial Congress Committees were all declared unlawful under the **Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908**.
- Public meetings were rendered illegal by **Rule 56** of the Defence of India Rules.
- New leaders of the movement emerged: **Ram Manohar Lohia, Usha Mehta** (Underground Radio), **Biju Patnaik, Sucheta Kriplani, Aruna Asifali, Chhotubhai Puranik, Achyut Patwardhan, R.P. Goenka, Jayaprakash Narayan.**

5

One was the Operation Zero Hour on 9th of August 1942, where all major Congress officials were arrested and brought to unknown locations in the early hours of the morning. And then the Congress Working Committee, the All India Congress Committee and Provincial Congress Committees were all declared as unlawful under the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908.

Public meetings were rendered as illegal by Rule 56 of the Defense of India rules. As a result of Quit India, India actually saw new leaders coming up - Ram Manohar Lohia, Usha Mehta from Underground Radio, we had Biju Patnaik and then Sucheta Kriplani, Aruna Asifali, Chhotubhai Puranik, Achyut Patwardhan, R. P. Goenka and of course, Jayaprakash Narayan. When talking about Quit India Movement we also need to understand the groups that did not participate in this quintessential movement.

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Quit India Movement (1942-44)

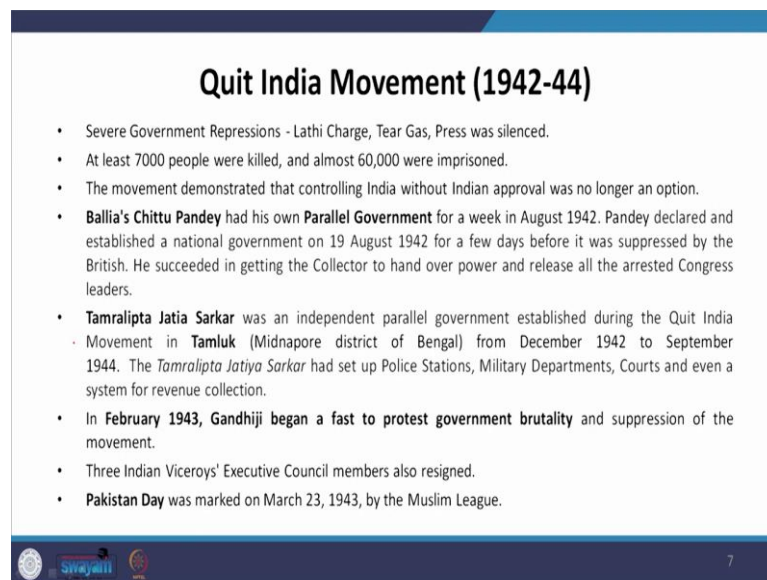
- ❖ **Who wasn't a part of it?**
 - **The Hindu Mahasabha** abstained from participating in the protest.
 - **The Muslim League** opposed the campaign, fearing that minorities' demands will not be realized if the British left India at that time.
 - **Communists** refused to join the movement when the Soviet Union was attacked by the Nazis. The Communist Party began to assist Allied war efforts (the "**Imperial War**" is now referred to as the "**People's War**").
 - **India's ultimate bid for independence** was the Quit India movement -
 - Students dropped out of their schools and universities to join the movement.
 - The nation's youth took part in this campaign with patriotic zeal.
 - The British government ordered to fire at the protesters.
 - In some areas, rampant crimes and violence took place. Bridges were demolished, telegraph lines were severed, and railway tracks were dismantled.

So, the Hindu Mahasabha actually abstained from participating in this protest. Similarly, the Muslim League opposed the campaign and feared that the minority's demands would not be met if the British left India at that time. Then the Communists also refused to join the movement when the Soviet Union was attacked by the Nazis. The Communist Party began to assist Allied war efforts; India's ultimate bid for independence was the Quit India Movement.

So, at that time, India actually saw the mass coming together to support this movement. The students would drop out of their schools and universities to join the protest. The

nation's youth took part in this campaign with a lot of patriotic zeal and British government ordered to fire at the protesters. So, in some areas rampant crimes and violence were actually taking place. Bridges were demolished, telegraph lines were severed and railway tracks were being dismantled.

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Quit India Movement (1942-44)

- Severe Government Repressions - Lathi Charge, Tear Gas, Press was silenced.
- At least 7000 people were killed, and almost 60,000 were imprisoned.
- The movement demonstrated that controlling India without Indian approval was no longer an option.
- **Ballia's Chittu Pandey** had his own **Parallel Government** for a week in August 1942. Pandey declared and established a national government on 19 August 1942 for a few days before it was suppressed by the British. He succeeded in getting the Collector to hand over power and release all the arrested Congress leaders.
- **Tamralipta Jatiya Sarkar** was an independent parallel government established during the Quit India Movement in **Tamluk** (Midnapore district of Bengal) from December 1942 to September 1944. The *Tamralipta Jatiya Sarkar* had set up Police Stations, Military Departments, Courts and even a system for revenue collection.
- In **February 1943**, **Gandhiji** began a **fast to protest government brutality** and suppression of the movement.
- Three Indian Viceroy's Executive Council members also resigned.
- **Pakistan Day** was marked on March 23, 1943, by the Muslim League.

Severe government repressions could be witnessed through lathi charges, tear gas being thrown and free press being silenced coercively. As a consequence of Quit India Movement, at least 7000 people were killed and almost 60000 were imprisoned.

The movement demonstrated that controlling India without Indian people's approval was no longer an option for the Britishers. Then we see certain instances of parallel governments being formed. For example, there are two such instances that we can mention here - one was in U.P.

Ballia's Chittu Pandey, who had actually established his own Parallel Government and it ran for a week in August 1942. Pandey declared and established a national government on 19th August 1942 for a few days before it was actually suppressed by the British. So, he succeeded in getting the collector to hand over the power and release all the arrested Congress leaders.

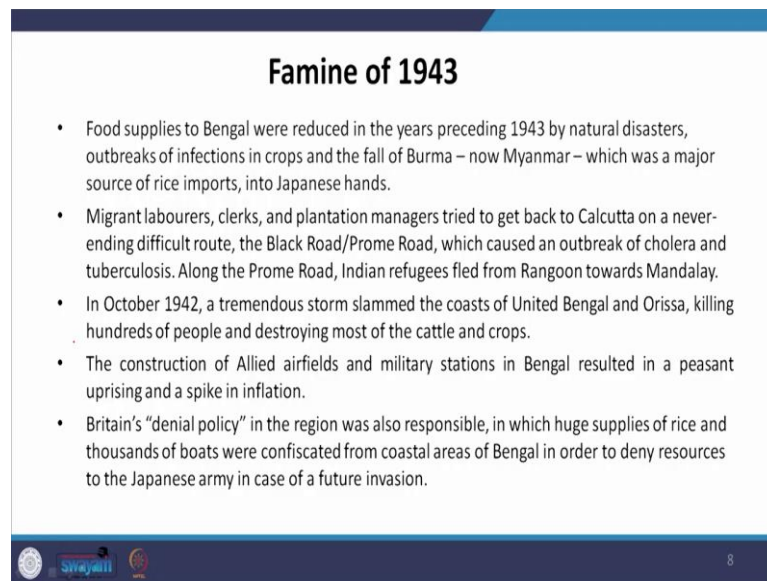
The second instance that we see is in Midnapore, West Bengal. Tamralipta Jatiya Sarkar was an independent parallel government that was established during the Quit India

Movement in Tamluk. Tamluk is in Midnapore district of Bengal and it actually ran between December 1942 and September 1944. The Tamralipta Jatiya Sarkar had set up police stations, military departments, courts and even a system for revenue collection.

There are spontaneous expressions that find their voice under the banner of Quit India Movement. So, the desires for autonomy through parallel governments are seen in at least two prominent cases. In February 1943, Gandhiji began a fast to protest the government's brutality and suppression of the Quit India Movement.

So, as a result we see that three Indian Viceroy's Executive Council members are resigning. In the meantime, Pakistan day was marked on March 23, 1943 by the Muslim League.

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Famine of 1943

- Food supplies to Bengal were reduced in the years preceding 1943 by natural disasters, outbreaks of infections in crops and the fall of Burma – now Myanmar – which was a major source of rice imports, into Japanese hands.
- Migrant labourers, clerks, and plantation managers tried to get back to Calcutta on a never-ending difficult route, the Black Road/Prome Road, which caused an outbreak of cholera and tuberculosis. Along the Prome Road, Indian refugees fled from Rangoon towards Mandalay.
- In October 1942, a tremendous storm slammed the coasts of United Bengal and Orissa, killing hundreds of people and destroying most of the cattle and crops.
- The construction of Allied airfields and military stations in Bengal resulted in a peasant uprising and a spike in inflation.
- Britain's "denial policy" in the region was also responsible, in which huge supplies of rice and thousands of boats were confiscated from coastal areas of Bengal in order to deny resources to the Japanese army in case of a future invasion.

8

Now, talking about Quit India Movement several things are happening at the same time, which vitiate the Britisher's position in India, and it actually leaves no other option than to Quit India by 1940s.

The famine of 1943 is another prominent historical event or chapter, which happened prior to the independence and the Partition, and this actually affected the Bengal and Odisha regions in a very significant way. So, food supplies of Bengal were reduced in the years preceding 1943 as a result of natural disasters, outbreaks of infections in crops

and because of the fall of Burma, which is now called Myanmar and which was a major source of rice imports, because it went into Japanese hands.

So, the famine of 1943 was the result of several factors tied together. Food supplies to Bengal were reduced in the years preceding 1943 as a result of natural disasters; outbreaks of infections in crops and the fall of Burma which is now called Myanmar and which was a major source of rice imports and Burma actually went into the Japanese hands.

Migrant labourers, clerks and plantation managers tried to get back to Calcutta through a difficult route, which was called the Black Road or the Prome Road, and this journey actually caused an outbreak of cholera and tuberculosis. Along the Prome Road, Indian refugees fled from Rangoon towards Mandalay.

In October 1942, a tremendous storm slammed the coasts of a united Bengal and Odisha, killing hundreds of people and destroying most of the cattle and crops. At the same time, the construction of allied airfields and military stations in Bengal resulted in a peasant uprising and a spike in inflation.

Britain's "denial policy" in the region was highly responsible, in which huge supplies of rice and thousands of boats were confiscated from coastal areas of Bengal in order to deny resources to the Japanese army in case of a future invasion. So, all these factors together lead to the situation of famine, the Great Famine that we know.

Through its agents, the government purchased vast amounts of rice from Bengal peasants for the war effort.

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Famine of 1943

- Through its agents, the government purchased vast amounts of rice from Bengal peasants for the **war effort**.
- Amartya Sen (1981) - the mass deaths came about as a combination of wartime inflation, speculative buying and panic hoarding, which together pushed the price of food out of the reach of the poor.
- Madhusree Mukerjee - the famine was exacerbated by the decisions of Winston Churchill's wartime cabinet in London. The Viceroy and the Bengal Lieutenant Governor's request for food imports was turned down by **Churchill's War Cabinet**, citing a shipping shortage during the war.
- The famine's height occurred between 1943 and 1944, but the aftershocks of cholera and typhoid survivors lasted well into 1945 and beyond.
- Nearly 3 million people were killed.

And later, critics like Amartya Sen would go on to say that the mass deaths came about as a combination of...so, we have several reasons behind these mass deaths that Bengal saw at that time. One was the wartime inflation; and then speculative buying and panic hoarding. All of these together pushed the price of food out of the reach of the poor.

So, there is an inflation and we see that a lot of critics also say that there is a situation of artificial food crisis, artificial food crisis being created by the British government. So, although food stock is available it was not made accessible for the poor and so, it was almost tantamount to mass murdering of people.

Madhushree Mukerjee, another critic, would say that the famine was exacerbated by the decisions of Winston Churchill's wartime cabinet in London. The Viceroy and the Bengal Lieutenant Governor's request for food imports was turned down by Churchill's War Cabinet, and it cited a shipping shortage during the war.

The famine's height occurred between 1943 and 1944, but the aftershocks of cholera and typhoid survivors lasted well into 1945 and beyond. So, nearly 3 million people died as a result of the 1943 famine. So, coming back to Quit India... Calcutta and Bengal according to the historians never fully recovered from the 1940s tragedy. When we talk of Quit India, we actually fold in these incidents that also happened at the time when the movement was going on.

Talking about the Bengal famine we cannot actually not mention a famous film by Satyajit Ray. It is called "Ashani Sanket", and it depicts the miseries of the 1943 Bengal famine.

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Quit India Movement (1942-44)

- Calcutta and Bengal, according to historians, never fully recovered from the 1940s tragedies.
- Satyajit Ray, a well-known film director, depicted the misery of the 1943 Bengal famine in the Bengali film **Ashani Sanket**.
- The famine is alleged to have been exacerbated by Churchill's **scorched-earth policy** in the face of a planned Japanese and INA invasion of British India.

The famine is alleged to have been exacerbated by Churchill's what we call as the scorched earth policy; this policy was made in the face of a planned Japanese and INA invasion of British India.

Next, we are going to talk about Attlee's Labour Government in 1945. So, World War 2 and Attlee's Labour government brought a great change in the policy of Britain towards India. Linlithgow's declaration of 8th August 1940 demanded a precondition of constitutional advancement that Hindus and Muslims must agree about.

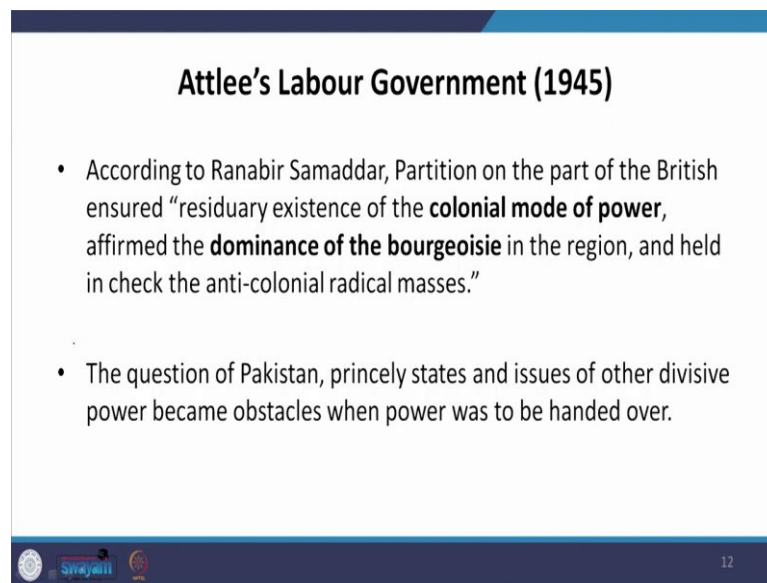
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Attlee's Labour Government (1945)

- WW2 and Attlee's Labour Government (July 1945) brought a great change in the policy of the British towards India.
- Linlithgow's declaration of 8 August 1940 demanded a **precondition of constitutional advancement** that Hindus and Muslims must agree about. The failure of the Congress and Muslim League to come to terms had justified the British in postponing the question of Constitutional change until after the War.
- With Attlee taking office, the **Simla Conference** was followed by elections in India, the first since 1936-37, and the arrival of the Cabinet Mission in India. The most important question was to whom the British would transfer power in India and in what terms.

The failure of the Congress and the Muslim League to come to terms had justified the British in postponing the question of constitutional change until after the war. With Attlee taking the office, the Simla Conference was followed by elections in India, the first since 1936 - 1937, and the arrival of the Cabinet Mission in India. The most important question at that time was to whom the British would transfer power in India and in what terms.

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Attlee's Labour Government (1945)

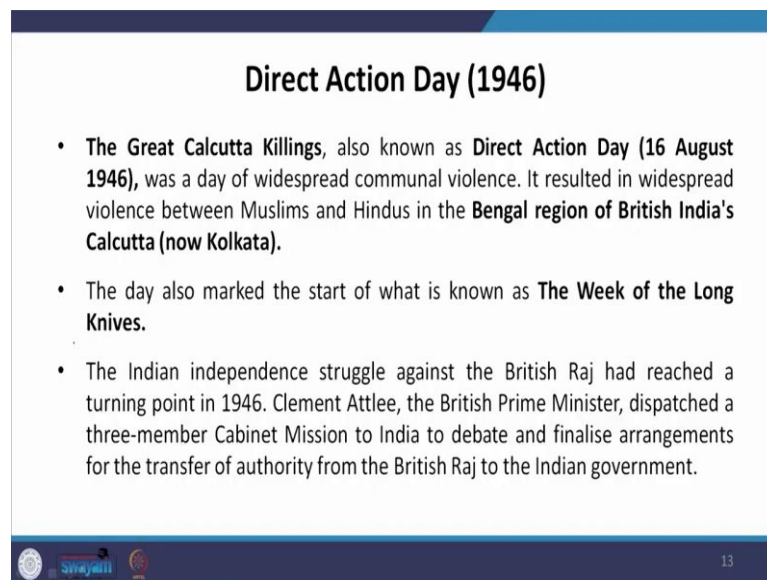
- According to Ranabir Samaddar, Partition on the part of the British ensured “residuary existence of the **colonial mode of power**, affirmed the **dominance of the bourgeoisie** in the region, and held in check the anti-colonial radical masses.”
- The question of Pakistan, princely states and issues of other divisive power became obstacles when power was to be handed over.

12

Historians such as Ranabir Samaddar note that Partition on the part of the British had ensured, what he calls, "residuary existence of the colonial mode of power, affirming the dominance of the bourgeoisie in the region and then checking the force of the anti-colonial radical masses".

So, this is what the future independent India would look like. The free India would be dominated majorly by the bourgeoisie, and the radical masses would be... their power, their voices would be curbed. So, the question of Pakistan, the question of princely states, and the issues of other divisive powers became obstacles when power was to be handed over.

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Direct Action Day (1946)

- **The Great Calcutta Killings**, also known as **Direct Action Day (16 August 1946)**, was a day of widespread communal violence. It resulted in widespread violence between Muslims and Hindus in the **Bengal region of British India's Calcutta (now Kolkata)**.
- The day also marked the start of what is known as **The Week of the Long Knives**.
- The Indian independence struggle against the British Raj had reached a turning point in 1946. Clement Attlee, the British Prime Minister, dispatched a three-member Cabinet Mission to India to debate and finalise arrangements for the transfer of authority from the British Raj to the Indian government.

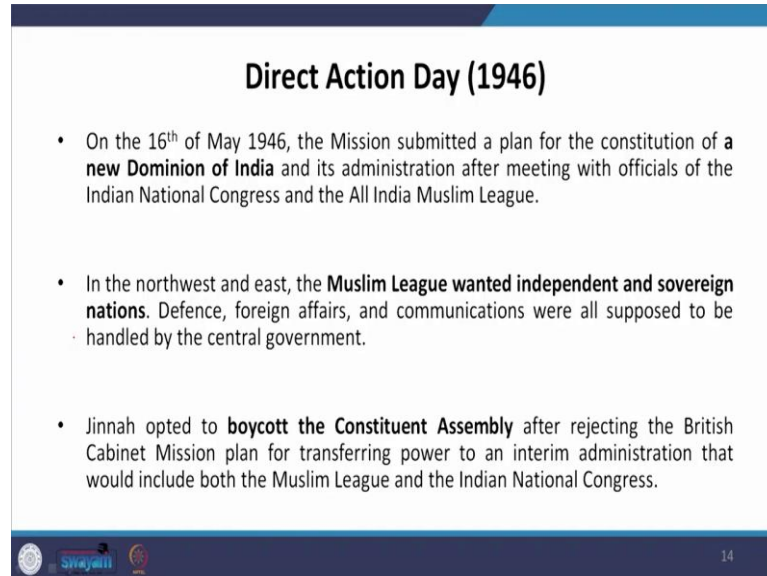
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Next, we are going to talk about a gruesome chapter in the history of pre-partition India, and a chapter that is marked with blood. When we talk about Calcutta and we talk about the year that preceded Partition...it is called the Direct Action Day. It happened on 16th of August 1946; it is also called The Great Calcutta Killings. It resulted in widespread violence between the Muslims and the Hindus in the Bengal region of British India's Calcutta, which is now Kolkata.

The day also marks the start of what is known as The Week of the Long Knives. The Indian independence struggle against the British Raj had reached a turning point in 1946. Clement Attlee, the British Prime Minister had dispatched a three - member Cabinet

Mission to India to debate and finalize arrangements for the transfer of authority from the British Raj to the Indian government.

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Direct Action Day (1946)

- On the 16th of May 1946, the Mission submitted a plan for the constitution of a **new Dominion of India** and its administration after meeting with officials of the Indian National Congress and the All India Muslim League.
- In the northwest and east, the **Muslim League wanted independent and sovereign nations**. Defence, foreign affairs, and communications were all supposed to be handled by the central government.
- Jinnah opted to **boycott the Constituent Assembly** after rejecting the British Cabinet Mission plan for transferring power to an interim administration that would include both the Muslim League and the Indian National Congress.

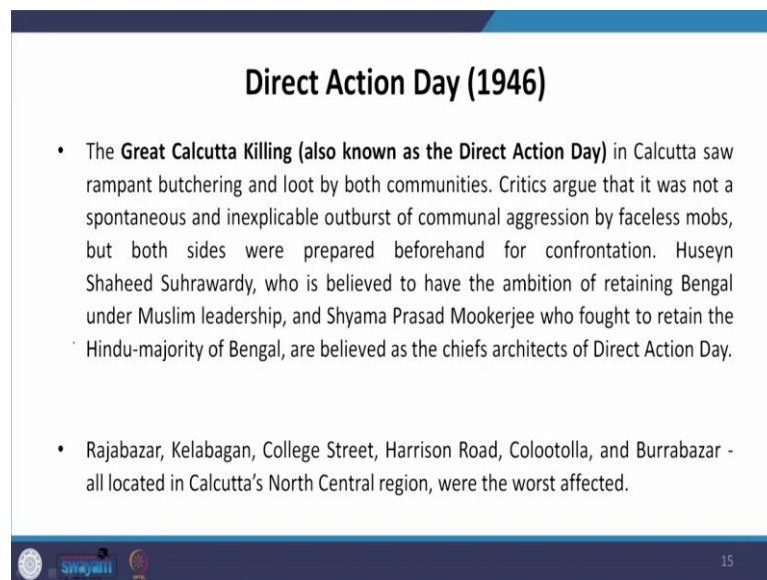
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So, on 16th May 1946, the Mission submitted a plan for the constitution of a new Dominion of India and its administration, after meeting with officials of the Indian National Congress and the all India Muslim League. In the northwest and in the east, the Muslim League wanted independent and sovereign nations. Defense, foreign affairs and communications were all supposed to be handled by the Central government.

Even Jinnah opted to boycott the Constituent Assembly after rejecting the British Cabinet Mission plan for transferring power to an interim administration that would include both the Muslim League and the INC. So, he was basically wholeheartedly supporting the Two-nation theory by then. He did not actually believe in any administration that would bring ML with INC.

So, The Great Calcutta Killing, also known as the Direct Action Day in Calcutta, saw rampant butchering and loot by both the communities, and critics argue that it was not a spontaneous and inexplicable outburst of communal aggression initiated by faceless mobs. Rather both sides were prepared beforehand for confrontation.

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Direct Action Day (1946)

- The **Great Calcutta Killing (also known as the Direct Action Day)** in Calcutta saw rampant butchering and loot by both communities. Critics argue that it was not a spontaneous and inexplicable outburst of communal aggression by faceless mobs, but both sides were prepared beforehand for confrontation. Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, who is believed to have the ambition of retaining Bengal under Muslim leadership, and Shyama Prasad Mookerjee who fought to retain the Hindu-majority of Bengal, are believed as the chiefs architects of Direct Action Day.
- Rajabazar, Kelabagan, College Street, Harrison Road, Colootolla, and Burrabazar - all located in Calcutta's North Central region, were the worst affected.

15

Here, we need to understand the basic difference between rampant and spontaneous riots, and something that we can call as a pogrom. So, pogrom is basically preplanned; it is financed by the influential sections of the society, mainly oriented to a certain political party and so, it is an entirely chalked out program and it generally uses the proletarian masses. It is the elite sections from different political factions..the people from the lowest

rung of the socio-economic ladder are responsible for carrying out or for enacting the cause that the leaders want to implement.

So, the ones that get killed as a result are the proletarian masses, the grassroots people. The pogrom is much more large scale and it involves a lot of financial support, political planning and manpower - everything prearranged and organized, whereas riots are more abrupt, spontaneous and thereby easy to stop.

Here, we see in the case of Direct Action Day, there were hardly riots and when historians study this chapter of history, they understand that it is a pogrom. Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy, who is believed to have the ambition of retaining Bengal under Muslim leadership and Shyama Prasad Mookerjee - these two leaders were thought to be the chief architects of Direct Action Day.

On the one hand, Huseyn Shaheed Suhrawardy wanted to retain the entire Bengal, the undivided Bengal under Muslim leadership and on the other hand, S. P. Mookerjee spearheading the Hindu Mahasabha actually fought to retain the Hindu majority of Bengal within India.

So, these two leaders are believed to be the chief architects of the Direct Action Day, and some of the areas in Calcutta that were the most affected include Rajabazar, Kelabagan, College Street, Harrison Road, Colootolla and Burrabazar. All these areas... different areas that are located in Calcutta's Northern and Central regions and they were the worst affected.

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Direct Action Day (1946)

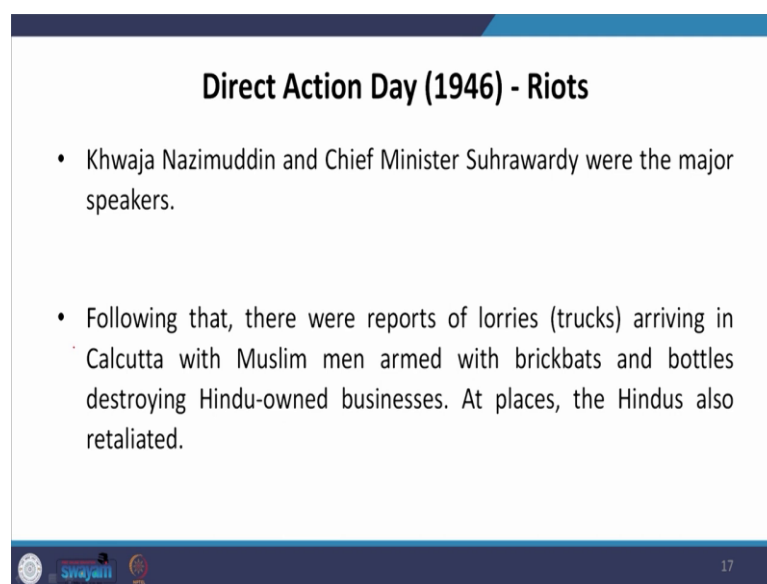
- Jinnah conducted a news conference at his Bombay house in July 1946. He declared that the Muslim League was "**preparing to launch a struggle**" and that they had "**mapped out a strategy**." He stated that if Muslims are not given Pakistan, they will take "**Direct Action**".
- Jinnah declared August 16, 1946, to be "**Direct Action Day**."
- The problem had taken on a collective tone, which was maintained throughout.
- The conference started about 2 p.m., however processions of Muslims from all across Calcutta had been gathering since noon prayers.
- According to reports, a substantial number of participants were equipped with **iron bars** and *lathis*.

M.A. Jinnah conducted a news conference at Bombay house in July 1946, and there he declared that the Muslim League was "preparing to launch a struggle". Through Jinnah's conference, actually we find this term "Direct Action" for the first time. In July 1946, he had used this [term] in the Bombay news conference, and Suhrawardy's masses, as it is popularly known, had picked up this term "Direct Action" from Jinnah's speech. So, there in the press conference, Jinnah actually said that Muslim League was "preparing to launch a struggle" and that they had "mapped out a strategy." He stated there in the conference that if the Muslims are not given the Pakistan that they want, then they will resort to what Jinnah called as the "Direct Action."

So, the term "Direct action" comes from Jinnah, and Jinnah declared August 16th 1946 to be the "Direct Action Day." The problem that people saw in Calcutta had taken on a collective tone and it was maintained throughout. The conference started about 2 p.m; however, processions of Muslims from all across Calcutta had been gathering since the noon prayers.

According to reports, a substantial number of participants were equipped with iron bars and with rods. So, the two major speakers were Khwaja Nazimuddin and Chief Minister Suhrawardy.

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Direct Action Day (1946) - Riots

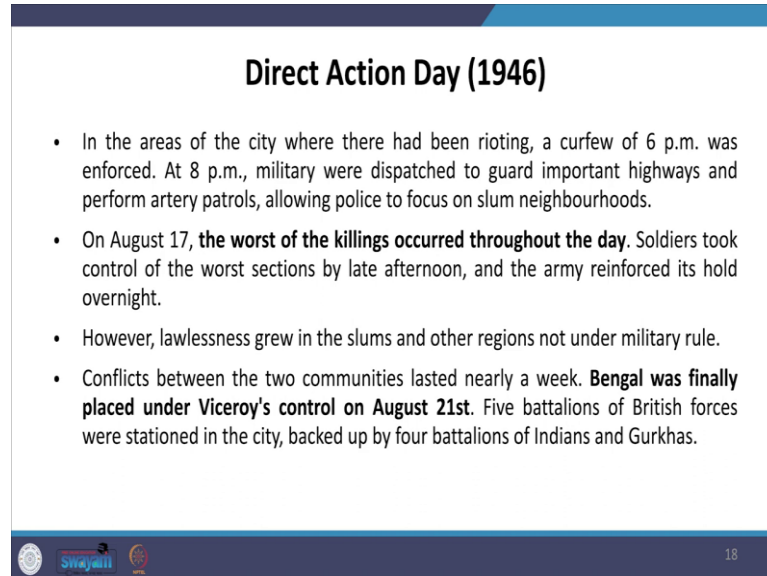
- Khwaja Nazimuddin and Chief Minister Suhrawardy were the major speakers.
- Following that, there were reports of lorries (trucks) arriving in Calcutta with Muslim men armed with brickbats and bottles destroying Hindu-owned businesses. At places, the Hindus also retaliated.

17

Following the speech, there were reports of trucks arriving in Calcutta with Muslim men armed with brickbats and with bottles, and they destroyed Hindu-owned businesses. At


places, the Hindus as well as a small section of Sikhs that resided in Calcutta also retaliated.

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Direct Action Day (1946)

- In the areas of the city where there had been rioting, a curfew of 6 p.m. was enforced. At 8 p.m., military were dispatched to guard important highways and perform artery patrols, allowing police to focus on slum neighbourhoods.
- On August 17, **the worst of the killings occurred throughout the day**. Soldiers took control of the worst sections by late afternoon, and the army reinforced its hold overnight.
- However, lawlessness grew in the slums and other regions not under military rule.
- Conflicts between the two communities lasted nearly a week. **Bengal was finally placed under Viceroy's control on August 21st**. Five battalions of British forces were stationed in the city, backed up by four battalions of Indians and Gurkhas.

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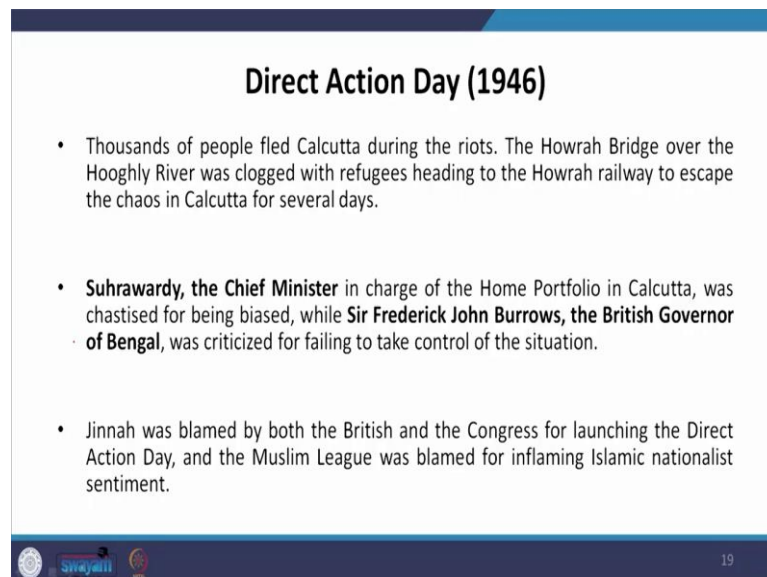
In the areas of the city where there had been rioting, a curfew of 6 p.m. was enforced. By 8 p.m, military were dispatched to guard important highways and to perform artery patrols, allowing police to focus on slum neighborhoods.

So, on August 17, the following day, the worst of the killings occurred throughout. Throughout the day, people saw soldiers taking control of the devastated sections at least by late afternoon, and the army reinforcing its hold overnight. However, we see gross lawlessness growing in the slums and in other regions that were not under the military rule.

Conflicts in different regions between different communities lasted nearly for a week. Bengal was finally placed under Viceroy's control on August 21st. Five battalions of British forces were stationed in the city and backed up by four battalions of Indians and Gurkhas.

As a result of the Direct Action Day, thousands of people fled Calcutta. The Howrah Bridge over the Hooghly River was clogged with refugees heading to the Howrah railway to escape the chaos in Calcutta for several days.

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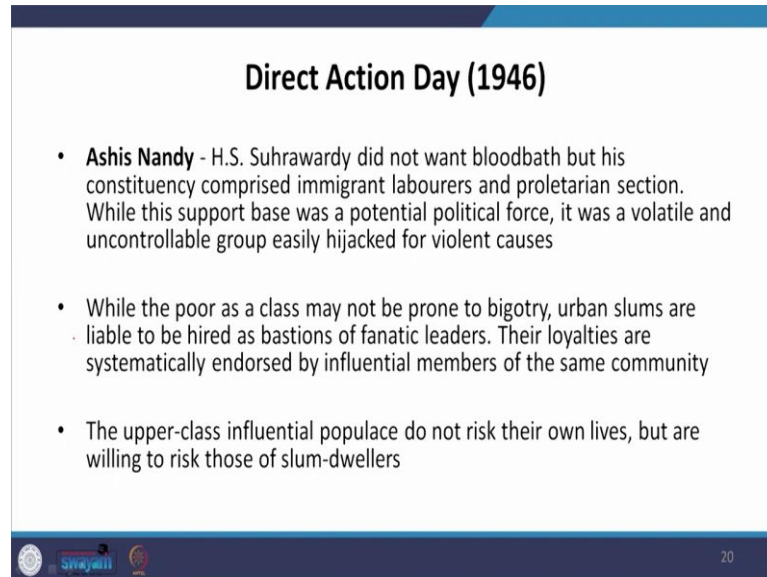
Direct Action Day (1946)

- Thousands of people fled Calcutta during the riots. The Howrah Bridge over the Hooghly River was clogged with refugees heading to the Howrah railway to escape the chaos in Calcutta for several days.
- **Suhrawardy, the Chief Minister** in charge of the Home Portfolio in Calcutta, was chastised for being biased, while **Sir Frederick John Burrows, the British Governor of Bengal**, was criticized for failing to take control of the situation.
- Jinnah was blamed by both the British and the Congress for launching the Direct Action Day, and the Muslim League was blamed for inflaming Islamic nationalist sentiment.

19

So, H. S. Suhrawardy the Chief Minister at that time and in charge of the home portfolio in Calcutta, was chastised for being biased, whereas Sir Frederick John Burrows, the British Governor of Bengal was criticized for failing to take control of the situation.

Jinnah was blamed by both the British and the Congress for launching the Direct Action Day, and the Muslim League was blamed for inflaming Islamic nationalist sentiments. (Refer Slide Time: 27:32)



Direct Action Day (1946)

- **Ashis Nandy** - H.S. Suhrawardy did not want bloodbath but his constituency comprised immigrant labourers and proletarian section. While this support base was a potential political force, it was a volatile and uncontrollable group easily hijacked for violent causes
- While the poor as a class may not be prone to bigotry, urban slums are liable to be hired as bastions of fanatic leaders. Their loyalties are systematically endorsed by influential members of the same community
- The upper-class influential populace do not risk their own lives, but are willing to risk those of slum-dwellers

20

Later, we see critics such as Ashis Nandy observing that H. S. Suhrawardy did not want bloodbath on Direct Action Day; however, his constituency comprised immigrant laborers and proletarian sections, who could not be controlled beyond a point. This support base was a potential political force; however, it was volatile and it was an uncontrollable group that easily got hijacked for violent causes. So, this entire political base was used in a very deliberate fashion, and the consequences were almost calculated. So, the proletarian masses were used.

While the poor as a class may not be prone to bigotry - generally the poor people do not have their identification with any community be it as Hindus or Muslims; they live, they coexist in a very syncretic fashion in a village community or in a slum community, and the bigotry, the rabid behavior actually comes vertically down from the upper-classes, from the elite sections to the grassroots masses.

However, the urban slums are liable to be hired as bastions of fanatic leaders. Their loyalties are, therefore, systematically endorsed by influential members of the same community. So, the upper-caste influential populists do not risk their own lives, but they are willing and they are ready to risk that of the slum dwellers and of the peoples from

the fringes. So, with this we come to the end of this lecture, and I will meet you again with the next module and the next lecture.

Thank you.