



HISTORY IN THE NEWS



by: Piyush Kumar

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Channar Revolt

Prelims & GS Paper - I

Context: *Women from the Nadar caste, an OBC community, were in the forefront of this militant public action known as 'Marumarakkal Samaram' and 'Channar Revolt' in Kerala and 'Thol Seelai Porattam' in Tamil Nadu.*

About:

- **"From the Channar Revolt we know that these are battles that have been fought by women much prior to our Constitution even coming into force."** - Kalyani Menon
- The Channar Lahala or Channar revolt, refers to the fight from 1813 to 1859 of Nadar climber women in Travancore kingdom of India.
- This revolt is for the right to wear upper-body clothes covering their breasts.
- It is also called Maru Marakkal Samaram.

Background:

- In nineteenth-century Travancore, it was a **socially acceptable norm for women to be seen naked from waist up in public places.**
- Higher caste women like the **Nairs** (Savarna) were **expected to bare their upper bodies** only in **temples in front of priests**, who were considered an authority of god.
- But **lower caste women (Avarna)**, the toddy tapping **Shanars or Nadars** being an example, were **not allowed to wear a cloth** over their breasts in public.
- If **any woman disagreed with the practice**, they were obliged to **pay a breast tax** or **Mula Karam.**

- This tax amount was **determined** by the **size of their breasts.**

Initiation:

- It was the **women of the Nadar community** who **initiated a change** against it.
- They declared they wanted to have the **right to dress however they want.**
- They did get the **right to be dressed as per their convenience**, but partly.
- In 1813, to contain the **inevitable chaos** and to **please the upper classes** at the same time, the **Dewan (judicial officer)** of the **Travancore court, Colonel John Munro** took a step.
- He **decreed that Nadar women could cover their breasts** only if they had **converted to Christianity** first.
- Then they could **only wear long blouses** similar to **Muslims or Syrian Christians** of the time.
- Nadar women were **forbidden to wear the Nair sharf.**
- They were **allowed to wear the Kuppayam**, a **type of jacket** worn by **Syrian Christians, Shonagas, and Mappilas.**
- The **Pindakars** were members of the **king's council** who argued that this **move would end the difference** that identified with their castes.

Nangeli:

- She is said to have been a **poor woman during** those times, who was **asked for breast tax.**



- **Enraged at the idea** that the **dimensions of her breasts** would determine how much **she would pay, she cut off her breasts** and handed them to the officials.
- She **bled to death** on the spot.
- Her husband upon finding out was so **scared and distraught** that he **jumped in her funeral pyre**. This has been dubbed by historians as the first example they have come across of **male Sati**.



Civil Disobedience Movement

Context: *Civil Disobedience Movement was launched on 12th March 2023.*

Background:

- During the 1920s, **world economics and politics got doomed** due to the **worldwide economic depression**.
- **Agricultural prices began to fall** from 1926 and collapsed after 1930. As the **demand for agricultural goods fell** and **exports declined**, **peasants found it difficult to sell** their harvests and pay their revenue.
- By 1930, the **countryside was in turmoil**.
- Against this background the new **Tory government in Britain constituted a Statutory Commission** under **Sir John Simon**.
- Set up in **response to the nationalist movement**, the commission was to look into the **functioning of the constitutional system** in India and suggest changes.
- The problem was that the **commission did not have a single Indian member**. They were all British.
- When the **Simon Commission arrived in India** in 1928, it was greeted with the slogan '**Go back Simon**'.
- All parties, including the **Congress and the Muslim League**, **participated in the demonstrations**.
- In an effort to win them over, the viceroy, **Lord Irwin**, announced in October 1929, a vague offer of '**dominion status**' for **India** in an unspecified future, and a **Round Table Conference** to discuss a **future constitution**.

- This did **not satisfy the Congress leaders**. The radicals within the Congress, led by **Jawaharlal Nehru** and **Subhas Chandra Bose**, became **more assertive**.
- The **liberals and moderates**, who were **proposing a constitutional system** within the **framework of British dominion**, gradually **lost their influence**.
- In **December 1929**, under the **presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru**, the **Lahore Congress formalized** the demand of '**Purna Swaraj**' or full independence for India.
- It was declared that **26 January 1930**, would be celebrated as the **Independence Day** when **people were to take a pledge to struggle for complete independence**. But the celebrations attracted very little attention.
- So **Mahatma Gandhi had to find a way** to relate this **abstract idea of freedom** to more **concrete issues** of everyday life.

Initiation:

- Mahatma Gandhi found in **salt a powerful symbol** that could unite the nation.
- On 31 January 1930, he sent a **letter to Viceroy Irwin stating eleven demands**.
- Some of these were of **general interest**; others were **specific demands** of different classes, from **industrialists to peasants**.
- The idea was to make the **demands wide-ranging**, so that **all classes within Indian society could identify with them** and everyone could be brought together in a united campaign.
- The most stirring of all was the **demand to abolish the salt tax**.



- Salt was something **consumed by the rich and the poor** alike, and it was one of the **most essential items of food**.
- The **tax on salt** and the **government monopoly over its production**, Mahatma Gandhi declared, revealed the **most oppressive face of British rule**.
- Mahatma Gandhi's letter was, in a way, an ultimatum.
- If the demands **were not fulfilled by 11 March**, the letter stated, the Congress would launch a **civil disobedience campaign**.
- Irwin was **unwilling to negotiate**.
- So Mahatma Gandhi **started his famous salt march** accompanied by **78 of his trusted volunteers**.
- The march was over **240 miles**, from **Gandhiji's ashram** in **Sabarmati** to the **Gujarati coastal town** of **Dandi**.
- The **volunteers walked for 24 days**, about 10 miles a day.
- **Thousands came to hear Mahatma Gandhi** wherever he stopped, and he told them what he meant by **swaraj** and urged them to **peacefully defy the British**.
- On 6 April **he reached Dandi**, and **ceremonially violated the law**, **manufacturing salt by boiling sea water**.
- This marked the **beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement**.
- As the **movement spread**, **foreign cloth was boycotted**, and **liquor shops were picketed**.
- Peasants **refused to pay revenue** and **chaukidari taxes**, village officials resigned, and in many places forest people violated forest laws – going into Reserved Forests to collect wood and graze cattle.

How Participants Saw the Movement?

- **Rich Peasant Communities:** In the countryside, rich peasant communities – like the Patidars of Gujarat and the Jats of Uttar Pradesh – were active in the movement.
 - ▶ Being producers of commercial crops, they were very hard hit by the trade depression and falling prices.
 - ▶ As their cash income disappeared, they found it impossible to pay the government's revenue demand.
 - ▶ The refusal of the government to reduce the revenue demand led to widespread resentment.
 - ▶ These rich peasants became enthusiastic supporters of the Civil Disobedience Movement, organizing their communities, and at times forcing reluctant members to participate in the boycott programmes.
 - ▶ For them the fight for swaraj was a struggle against high revenues.
- **Poor Peasants:** The poorer peasantry were not just interested in the lowering of the revenue demand. Many of them were small tenants cultivating land they had rented from landlords. As the Depression

Influence:

- Thousands in different parts of the country broke the salt law, manufactured salt and demonstrated in front of government salt factories.



continued and cash incomes dwindled, the small tenants found it difficult to pay their rent. They wanted the unpaid rent to the landlord to be remitted.

- **Business Class:** They wanted protection against imports of foreign goods, and a rupee-sterling foreign exchange ratio that would discourage imports. To organize business interests, they formed the Indian Industrial and Commercial Congress in 1920 and the Federation of the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) in 1927.
 - ▶ Led by prominent industrialists like Purshottamdas Thakurdas and G. D. Birla, the industrialists attacked colonial control over the Indian economy, and supported the Civil Disobedience Movement when it was first launched.
 - ▶ They gave financial assistance and refused to buy or sell imported goods.
 - ▶ Most businessmen came to see swaraj as a time when colonial restrictions on business would no longer exist and trade and industry would flourish without constraints.
- **Workers:** The industrial working classes did not participate in the Civil Disobedience Movement in large numbers, except in the Nagpur region.
 - ▶ As the industrialists came closer to the Congress, workers stayed aloof.
 - ▶ But in spite of that, some workers did participate in the Civil Disobedience Movement, selectively adopting some of the ideas of the Gandhian programme, like boycott of foreign goods, as part of their own movements against low wages and poor working conditions.

- ▶ There were strikes by railway workers in 1930 and dockworkers in 1932.
- ▶ In 1930 thousands of workers in Chotanagpur tin mines wore Gandhi caps and participated in protest rallies and boycott campaigns.
- ▶ But the Congress was reluctant to include workers' demands as part of its programme of struggle. It felt that this would alienate industrialists and divide the anti imperial forces

Leaders & Regions:

- **Satish Chandra Das Gupta** designated **SodepurKhadiPratisthan** as a **satyagraha camp**. Over 100 volunteers assembled at the camp. From there, Satish Chandra Das Gupta **led the first group of 30 Bengali and Hindi-speaking volunteers** to Mahishbathan to **break the unjust Salt Law**. After completing their activities, the satyagrahis triumphantly returned to their camp with the jubilant cry that the Salt Law had been broken.
- In the **West Godavari district** of Andhra Pradesh, the **Civil Disobedience Movement** of 1930 was **noted for the support** given to it by the **local bodies in the district**. The **District Board of West Godavari** conducted a meeting in **Anantapalli** to extend its **support** for the movement. The meeting was conducted on April 22nd, 1930, and was presided over by **Penumatcha Peddiraju**.
- **Kalipada Das (Bhadrak District)** left the school and **plunged into salt satyagraha** by **violating salt law** for which he was arrested and kept in jail. After his release, he joined the individual satyagraha in 1932



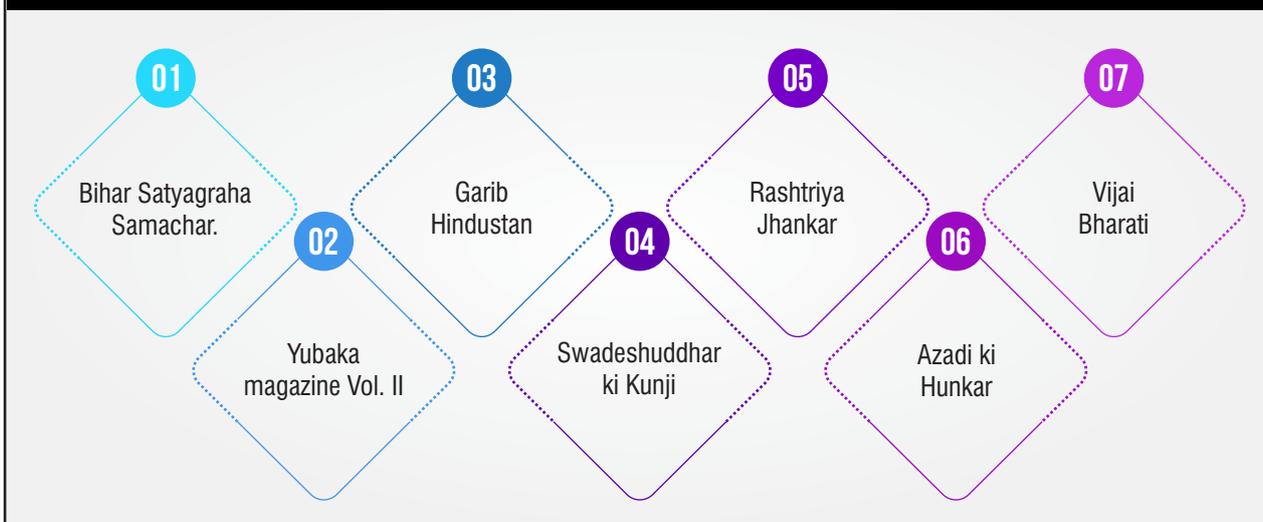
and was arrested again. He was sentenced to one year, but this one year was full of torture for him.

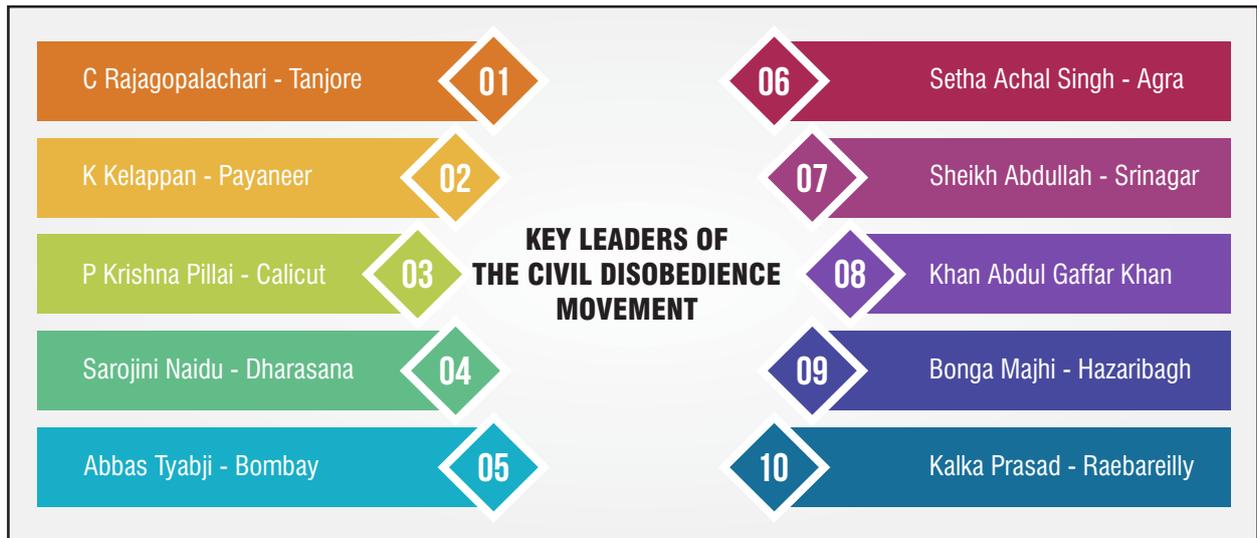
- The **Azamgarh District Congress Committee** of which **Suryanath Singh** was declared the first leader, responded immediately. On 9th April, Singh led an **animated crowd** and **broke the salt law** at **Ailval Bagh**. The second part of the Satyagraha which involved **picketing of liquor shops** and **boycott of foreign cloth** too was carried out enthusiastically.
- **Jalaun district in Uttar Pradesh**, was a **prominent center of activity** of the civil disobedience movement during the 1930s. Responding to Gandhi's call, the activists in the Jalaun district showed great enthusiasm in organizing mass protests in the region.
- **Indian National Congress** created **camps of volunteers** willing to assist in the

campaign in different parts of the country. These camps were called **sibiram**, and **Chinnapuram was the location** of one such camp. Volunteers from the **eastern and western parts of Krishna** marched to Chinnapuram by foot under the leadership of the veteran freedom fighter **C. Lakshmi Narasimham** on 13th April 1930, collected salt from there for three days, and returned with it.

- **Naga Potharao**, a **prominent textile merchant** from the city of **Machilipatnam** was deeply moved by their efforts and the **message of Mahatma Gandhi**. He gave a **written assurance** to the **Congress volunteers** that he would not only cancel any pending orders of foreign clothes, but also refuse to order imported clothes going forward. Following his lead, a number of other merchants of the city also pledged to not sell European clothes anymore.

LITERARY WORKS DURING THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT







Gandhi Irwin Pact

Context: *Gandhi Irwin Pact was signed on 5th March 1931.*

About:

- The Gandhi–Irwin Pact was a political agreement signed by Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India, on 5 March 1931.
- This pact marked the end of the Civil Disobedience Movement in India.
- Gandhi and Lord Irwin had eight meetings that totalled 24 hours.
- Although Gandhi was impressed by Irwin's sincerity, the terms of the pact fell manifestly short of those Gandhi had prescribed as the minimum for a truce.

Background:

- In October 1929, **Lord Irwin made an unclear offer** of a 'dominion status' for India.
- It marked the **end of a period of civil disobedience** in India against British rule.
- **Gandhiji and his followers had initiated the Salt March** between March and April 1930.
- **Gandhiji's arrest and imprisonment** at the end of the March, for making **salt**, sparked off one of his **more effective civil disobedience movements**.
- By the end of 1930, thousands of Indians, including Jawaharlal Nehru, were in jail.
- The **movement had generated worldwide publicity**, and Irwin was looking for a way to end it.

Proposed Conditions:

- **Discontinuation of the Salt March** by the Indian National Congress.
- **Participation by the Indian National Congress** in the **Second Round Table Conference**.
- **Withdrawal of all ordinances issued by the Government of India** imposing curbs on the activities of the Indian National Congress.
- **Withdrawal of all prosecutions** relating to several types of political offenses (Rowlatt Act) except those involving violence.
- **Release of prisoners arrested** for participating in the Salt March.
- **Removal of the tax on salt**, which allowed the Indians to produce, trade, and sell salt legally and for their own private use.

Provisions:

- Withdrawal of ordinances related to Congress' activities
- Revoking the ban on Indian National Congress
- Indian National Congress to attend the Second Round Table Conference
- Removal of Salt Tax
- Civil Disobedience Movement would stop
- Release of people who were arrested during the Civil Disobedience Movement
- Withdrawal of all persecution involving non violent crimes.

Not Agreed Terms:

- Congress' demand of enquiring into police excess.



- Mahatma Gandhi's demand of converting death penalty of Bhagat Singh, Rajguru and Sukhdev to lesser punishment.

Round Table Conferences:

- **Round Table Conferences** (1930–32), were a series of meetings in three sessions called by the British government to consider the future constitution of India.
- The conference resulted from a review of the **Government of India Act of 1919**, undertaken in 1927 by the **Simon Commission**, whose report was published in 1930.
- The conference was held in London.
- The **first session** (Nov. 12, 1930–Jan. 19, 1931) had **73 representatives**, from **all Indian states and all parties except the Indian National Congress**, which was waging a civil disobedience campaign against the government.

- Its principal achievement was an insistence on parliamentarianism—an acceptance by all, including the princes, of the federal principle—and on dominion status as the goal of constitutional development.
- The **second session** (September–December 1931) was attended by **Mahatma Gandhi** as the Congress representative; it **failed to reach agreement**, either constitutionally or on communal representation.
- The **third session** (Nov. 17–Dec. 24, 1932) was shorter and less important, with neither the **Congress** nor the **British Labour Party attending**. The result of these deliberations was the **Government of India Act, 1935**, establishing **provincial autonomy** and also a **federal system** that was never implemented.



Humayun

Context: Book - *“The Planetary King: Humayun Padshah, Inventor and Visionary on the Mughal Throne”* by Ebba Koch.

About:

- He was born in Kabul in March 1508.
- Humayun “the Fortunate” was the **eldest son of Babur**.
- He had three brothers, **Kamran, Askari** and **Hindal**.
- He was the son of **Mahim Begum**.
- Young Humayun learnt **Turkish, Arabic** and **Persian**.
- On account of his careless habits, he did not acquire the exactness of a scholar.
- In his early youth, he was **associated by his father with the government of the country**.
- He was **appointed the governor of Badakhshan** at the age of 20.
- On the eve of the **Battle of Panipat 1526** he was **sent against Hamid Khan** who was defeated near **Hissar Firoza**.
- He also participated in the **Battle of Khanwa**.

Tussle for the Throne:

- An attempt was made to place **Mahdi Khwaja** on the throne of agra. He was an experienced and competent administrator.
- On the other hand, Humayun had not shown any outstanding traits of greatness.
- In spite of that **Humayun successfully placed himself** on the throne of Agra on 30th December, 1530.

- The throne inherited by Humayun was **not a bed of roses**.
- Babur had practically no time to **consolidate his position** and **authority**.
- Humayun inherited an **ill organized empire**, **empty treasure**, a **kingdom divided into fiefs** and a **heterogeneous army**, which was not dependable.
- In addition to the claims of his three brothers, **Humayun had to deal with many Khans** and nobles.
- They were **busy in intrigues against the new emperor** and many of them did not consider the kingdom of Delhi and agra beyond the scope of their ambitions. humayun had innumerable rivals.
- The Afghans were defeated in the **Battle of Panipat (1526)** and the **Battle of Ghagra (1529)** but they were not completely crushed, neutralized or pacified.
- Moreover, they had not forgotten the days when they were the rulers of the country and aspired to restore their rule.

Issues with Brothers:

- Humayun made a **mistake of real politics** in **showing kindness to his brothers**.
- In accordance with the wishes of his father, he gave **Sambhal to Askari**, and **Alwar to Hindal**.
- As regards Kamran, he gave him the provinces of Kabul and Kandahar. In spite of this, Kamran was not satisfied.
- **Kamran attacked Punjab** and brought the **whole of Punjab under his control**.



- Humayun did not fight with Kamran and gave the Province of the Punjab to him.
- This **possession of vital military importance gave Kamran control over the high road** between Delhi and Punjab.
- It was a **suicide attempt by Humayun**.
- He was **deprived of the source** from which he could have **recruited his new army**.
- He was **left only with the empire which was newly conquered** and over which his hold was not secure.
- Humayun approached the **ruler of Bhakhar, Shah Hussain Arghun** for help to **recover Hindustan**, but in vain.
- Then **he besieged Thatta**, the **capital of the ruler of Sindh**, but he was not successful due to the intrigues.
- **Humayun stayed with the Shah of Persia** for a long time as his honorable guest, after a long negotiations a treaty was concluded between the two, according to which the **Shah promised to give Humayun 14,000 strong forces** to enable him to conquer Kabul and Kandahar, in return **Humayun promised to give Kandhar to the Shah, propagating Shiasim in his new kingdom** and to confirm Shia faith.

Shershah Suri and Journey to Iran:

- After his **defeat at Kanuj** at the hands of **Shershah**, Humayun **crossed the river Ganga** and reached Agra persistently persuaded by Sher Shah.
- After having **managed to collect his treasure**, he straightaway reached Delhi, but found that **he could not retain even Delhi on account of the uncertainty** of any solid help from any quarter.
- At Lahore, **Humayun collected all his brothers and relatives** and requested them for help.
- **Kamran was the last person prepared to help him while Mirza Haider Daghat**, cousin of **Babur advised Humayun to retire towards Kashmir** for some time and then organized his forces to attack Sher Shah.
- In the meantime the Mughals heard that **Shershah had already crossed the Beas** and was coming to Lahore.
- At last **Humayun decided to proceed towards Sindh**. Passing through great hardships during his journey along the river Sindh, **Humayun reached Rohri**.

Regaining the Throne:

- **Humayun left Persia with a 14,000 strong Persian army** to conquer Kabul and Kandahar.
- Humayun laid siege to Kandahar, **defeated Askari and occupied Kandahar**.
- He **put Kandahar in charge of Bairam Khan**, his faithful ally who was with him throughout his exile.
- Humayun proceeded to take Kabul. **Kamran put up resistance but ultimately he too was defeated**.
- Humayun had recovered the throne of Delhi after an interval of about 15 years, but he was not destined to enjoy the fruits of his victories for a long time.
- He died on 26th January 1556, by an accidental fall from the roof of his library and fractured his head.
- His **tomb in Delhi**, built several years after his death, is the **first of the great Mughal architectural masterpieces**; it was designated a **UNESCO World Heritage site** in 1993.



Lala Hardayal

Prelims & GS Paper - I

Context: 4th March Death Anniversary of Lala Hardayal

About:

- Lala Hardayal, was born on October 14, 1884.
- He was the 6th child of a large Kayastha Mathur family in Delhi, to **Gauri Dayal Mathur**, a **district court reader** and Bholi Rani.
- He was **influenced by the ideals of the Arya Samaj** at an early age.
- His other influences included **Mazzini**, the **great Italian revolutionary leader**, **Karl Marx** and **Mikhail Bakunin**, the Russian anarchist.
- He later **graduated in Sanskrit from St. Stephen's** and also did his Post Graduation in the same subject from Punjab University.
- He was an **academically brilliant student**. He got 2 scholarships from Oxford in 1905 for higher studies in Sanskrit.
- In a letter to **The Indian Sociologist**, published in 1907, he started to **explore anarchist ideas**, arguing that **"our object is not to reform government, but to reform it away, leaving, if necessary only nominal traces of its existence."**
- The letter led to him being **put under surveillance by the police**.
- Later that year, saying **"To Hell with the ICS"**, he gave up the prestigious Oxford scholarships and returned to India in 1908 to live a life of austerity.
- But in India too, he started writing harsh articles in the leading newspapers.

- When the **British government decided to censor his works**, Lala Lajpat Rai advised him to leave and go abroad.

Outside India:

- He **moved to the United States in 1911**, where he became involved in industrial unionism.
- He had also **served as secretary of the San Francisco branch of the Industrial Workers of the World** alongside Fritz Wolffheim.
- In California, he soon developed contacts with **Punjabi Sikh farmers in Stockton**.
- Punjabis, a great majority of whom were Sikhs, had **started emigrating to the West Coast** around the turn of the century.
- Having **experienced hostility by the Canadians in Vancouver**, they had already **become disaffected with the British**.
- Hardayal tapped into this **sentiment of these energetic Sikhs and other Punjabis**.
- Having developed an Indian nationalist perspective, he encouraged young Indians to gain scientific and sociological education
- He founded the **Ghadar Party**.
- He also **mobilized Indians of the diaspora** and encouraged them to be **part of the freedom movement**.
- In April 1914, he was **arrested by the United States government** for spreading anarchist literature and fled to Berlin, Germany.



- In Berlin he became instrumental to the formation of the **Berlin Committee** (later: **Indian Independence Committee**) and cooperated with the German Intelligence Bureau for the East.

Ghadar Party:

- The Ghadar movement was started by Lala Hardayal in the early twentieth century among Indians in North America.
 - It was primarily having Sikhs, to **end British rule in their country of India**.
 - The **Hindustani Workers of the Pacific Coast**, a group of immigrants based in California, started the initiative.
 - Its main objectives were to **use force to free India from British rule** and establish a free and independent India with equal rights
 - On November 1, 1913, they also launched their journal '**Ghadar**'.
 - It included **articles about Indians living under British rule** and issues affecting
- Indians' livelihood abroad, such as racial attacks and prejudice.
 - It **provoked Indians to band together and rise against the British government** to drive the British out of India.
 - Ghadar has been **translated into Urdu, Punjabi, Hindi, and other Indian languages**.
 - Besides Ghadar, the **Ghadar Party's headquarters**, the **Yugantar Ashram**, published many books to **uplift public awareness** and **sum up people to revolt** against the British.
 - The Ghadar Movement began to **lose its spark after the harsh British crackdown**.
 - Near the end of World War I in 1917, the **Ghadar Party split into a Communist and a Socialist**.
 - Despite this setback, the **Ghadar Party served as inspiration for many freedom fighters**, including Bhagat Singh.



Moidams

Prelims

Context: Assam's pyramid-like structures known as moidams or maidams have met all the technical requirements of UNESCO's World Heritage Centre.

About:

- A moidam is a **tumulus of the royalty and aristocracy** of the **medieval Ahom Kingdom** (1228–1826) in Assam.
- The **royal maidams** are found exclusively at **Charaideo**; whereas other maidams are found scattered in the region between **Jorhat and Dibrugarh** towns.

Structure & Architecture:

- Structurally, a moidam consists of **vaults with one or more chambers**.
- The vaults have a **domical superstructure** that is covered by a **hemispherical earthen mound** that rises high above the ground with an open pavilion at the peak called chow chali.
- An octagonal dwarf wall encloses the entire moidam.
- **Burial is the predominant funeral rite** of the Tai people, to which the Ahom people originally belonged.
- This is opposed to the Hindu system of cremation.
- After the **Ahom kings adopted Hinduism**, they chose to **bury the ashes after cremation**.
- **From the period between 13th CE to 17th CE, wood was used as the primary material** for construction whereas in the 18th CE onwards stone and burnt bricks of various sizes were used for the inner chambers.

- The **Changrung Phukan** (canonical text developed by the Ahoms) records the **materials used to construct a Moidam**.
- It records the **construction using bricks and stones** cemented by the mixture of **black pulse, molasses, eggs of duck, barali fish, lime** (from limestone and snail shell).
- Boulders of **different sizes, broken stones, bricks, and broken brick** were used to construct the superstructure, whereas large stone slabs were used for the sub-substructure.

Ahoms Kingdom:

- The Ahom kingdom was **established in 1228** when **Sukaphaa** entered the **Brahmaputra valley**.
- Sukaphaa did not battle any established kingdom and seems to have occupied a depopulated region on the south bank with the Burhi Dihing river in the north, the Dikhau river in the south and the Patkai mountains in the east.
- He **befriended the local groups**, the **Barahi** and the **Marans**, finally settled his capital at **Charaideo** and established the offices of the **Dangarias**—the **Burhagohain** and the **Borgohain**.
- In the **1280s**, these **two offices** were given **independent regions of control**, and the **check and balance** that these three main offices accorded each other was established.
- The Ahoms brought with them the **technology of wet rice cultivation** that they shared with other groups.



- The peoples that took to the **Ahom way of life and polity** were incorporated into their fold in a process of **Ahomization**.
- As a result of this process the **Barahi people**, for instance, were **completely subsumed**, and some of other groups like some Nagas and the Maran peoples became Ahoms, thus enhancing the Ahom numbers significantly.
- Ahoms always had a **war strategy** in place and that was about **keeping invaders west** of the **river**.
- The **paik system** ensured that **each family** in the **Brahmaputra valley** had to **depute the male members** whenever there was a war or any other extraordinary situation. This implied a backup of army men whenever the need arose.
- **Decline of the Ahom Dynasty:**
 - ▶ **Moamoria Rebellion:** A religious-political rebellion against the Ahoms and their cold shoulder attitude towards the Koch, Kachhari and Motok tribes. The growing influence of Neo Vaishnavism made popular by Srimanta Sankardev, didn't go well with the Ahoms.
 - ▶ **Weak Leaders and Economic Decline:** Assam was blessed with fertile land and the mighty Brahmaputra which was the lifeline of trade. However, by the 2nd half of the 18th century, the leaders were not able to develop the economy and drive prosperity through trade and agriculture.
 - ▶ **Internal Conflict and Burmese Invasion:**
 - ◆ Burmese invaded Assam thrice, between the years 1817 to 1826 and made the economy weaker. There was infighting amongst various clans and Burmese King Bodoupaya, invaded and robbed the coffers of the state.
 - ◆ The British, in the garb of joining hands with the Ahoms to defeat the Burmese, annexed Assam into the British East India colony.



Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Context: **Raja Ram Mohan Roy's 250th Birth Anniversary.**

About:

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy is considered as the pioneer of modern Indian Renaissance for the remarkable reforms he brought in 18th and 19th century India.
- Raja Ram Mohan Roy was born on May 22, 1772 in village **Radhanagar in the District of Hooghly in Bengal.**
- His father Ramkanto Roy, was a **Vaishnavite**, while his mother, Tarini, was from a **Shakta background.**
- At the age of 14 **Ram Mohan expressed his desire** to become a **monk**, but his mother vehemently opposed the idea and he dropped it.
- Raja Ram Mohun Roy was **sent to Patna for higher studies.**
- By the age of fifteen, Raja Rammohun Roy had learnt **Bangla, Persian, Arabic** and **Sanskrit.**
- **Persian and Arabic** were in **high demand** at that time as it was still the **court language** of the Mughal Emperors. He studied the Quran and other Islamic scriptures.
- Post completion of his education, **Rammohan entered the services of the East India Company** as a clerk.
- He worked in the **Collectorate of Rangpur**, under **Mr. John Digby**. He was eventually promoted to be a **Dewan**, a post that referred to a native officer entrusted with the role of collecting revenues.

Social Reforms:

- Raja Ram Mohan Roy was abhorred by the **cruel practice of Sati Pratha** and he raised his voice against it.
- He **spoke freely and took his views** to the higher ups in the **East India Company.**
- His **passionate reasoning** and **calm perseverance** filtered through the ranks and **ultimately reached the Governor General Lord William Bentinck.**
- **Lord Bentinck sympathized with Roy's sentiments** and **intentions** and amid much outcry from the orthodox religious community, the **Bengal Sati Regulation or Regulation XVII, AD 1829** of the **Bengal Code** was passed.
- The **act prohibited the practice of Sati Daha in Bengal Province**, and any individual caught practicing it would face prosecution.
- **Raja Ram Mohan Roy's name** is thus **etched forever as a true benefactor of women.**
- He also raised his voice against **child marriage** and **polygamy**, while demanding **equal inheritance rights for women.**
- He was also a **great opponent of the rigid caste divisions** of his time.

Religious Reforms:

- Ram Mohan Roy vehemently **opposed the unnecessary ceremonialism** and the **idolatry** advocated by priests.
- He had **studied religious scriptures** of different religions and advocated the fact that Hindu Scriptures like **Upanishads upheld the concept of monotheism.**



- This began his quest for a **religious revolution** to introduce the **doctrines of ancient Vedic scriptures** true to their essence.
- He founded the **Atmiya Sabha** in 1928, and the first meeting of this new-found religion was held on August 20 that year.
- The **Atmiya Sabha reorganized itself into the Brahma Sabha**, a precursor organization of the Brahma Samaj.
- The primary facets of this new movement were **monotheism**, independence from the scriptures and renouncing the caste system.

Educational Reforms:

- He **advocated the introduction of an English Education System** in the country teaching scientific subjects like **Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry** and even Botany.
- He paved the way to **revolutionizing the education system** in India by establishing **Hindu College** in 1817 along with **David Hare** which later went on to become one of the best educational institutions in the country.
- His efforts to combine true to the **roots theological doctrines** along with **modern rational lessons** saw him establish the **Anglo-Vedic School** in **1822** followed by the **Vedanta College** in **1826**.