

## Indian National Movement -1

The rise of Nationalism is reflected in the spirit of Renaissance in Europe when freedom from religious restrictions led to the enhancement of national identity. This expression of Nationalism was furthered by the French Revolution. The political changes resulted in the passing of sovereignty from the hands of an absolute monarch to the French citizens, who had the power to constitute the nation and shape its destiny. The watchwords of the French Revolution - Liberty, Equality and Fraternity - inspired the whole world. Many other revolutions like the American Revolution, the Russian Revolution, etc. also strengthened the idea of Nationalism. In this lesson, you will be able to know the rise of Nationalism in India which emerged in the 19th Century after the revolt of 1857.

### \* Rise of Nationalism

For India, the making of national identity was a long process whose roots can be drawn from the ancient era. India as a whole had been ruled by emperors like Ashoka and Samudragupta in ancient times and Akbar to Aurangzeb in Medieval times. But, it was only in the 19th Century that the concept of a national identity and national consciousness emerged. This growth was intimately connected to the anti-colonial movement. The social, economic and political factors had inspired the people to define and achieve their national identity. People began discovering their unity in the process of their struggle against colonialism.

The sense of being oppressed under colonial rule provided a shared bond that tied different groups together. Each class and group felt the effects of colonialism differently. Their experiences were varied, and their notions of freedom were not always the same. Several other causes also contributed towards the rise and growth of Nationalism. One set of laws of British Government across several regions led to political and administrative unity. This strengthened the concept of citizenship and one nation among Indians. Do you remember reading the lesson Popular Resistance Movements, we know the way the peasants and the tribals rebelled when their lands and their right to livelihood was taken away. Similarly this economic exploitation by the British agitated other people to unite and react against British Government's control over their lives and resources. The social and religious reform movements of the 19th century also contributed to the feeling of Nationalism. We know about Swami Vivekananda, Annie Besant, Henry Derozio and many others, They revived the glory of ancient India, created faith among the people in their religion and culture and thus gave the message of love for their motherland. The intellectual and spiritual side of Nationalism was voiced by persons like Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Swami Dayanand Saraswati and Aurobindo Ghosh. Bankim Chandra's hymn to the Motherland, 'Vande Matram' became the rallying cry of patriotic nationalists. It inspired generations to supreme self-sacrifice. Simultaneously, it created a fear in the minds of the British. The impact was so strong that the British had to ban the song. Similarly, Swami

Vivekananda's message to the people, "Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached", appealed to the Indians. It acted as a potent force in the course of Indian Nationalism.