

## Indian national movement -2

### # INC ( INDIAN National Congress)

The Indian National Congress was founded by Allan Octavian Hume in 1885. Hume was a retired Civil Service Officer. He saw a growing political consciousness among the Indians and wanted to give it a safe, constitutional outlet so that their resentment would not develop into popular agitation against the British rule in India. He was supported in this scheme by the Viceroy, Lord Dufferin, and by a group of eminent Indians. Womesh Chandra Banerjee of Calcutta was elected as the first President. The Indian National Congress represented an urge of the politically conscious Indians to set up a national organization to work for their betterment. Its leaders had complete faith in the British Government and in its sense of justice. They believed that if they would place their grievances before the government reasonably, the British would certainly try to rectify them. Among the liberal leaders, the most prominent were Firoz Shah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Dada Bhai Naoroji, Ras Behari Bose, Badruddin Tayabji, etc. From 1885 to 1905, the Indian National Congress had a very narrow social base. Its influence was confined to the urban educated Indians.

The early aims of this organization were limited only to communicate with British government on behalf of the Indian people and voice their grievances. It was rightly called the era of the Moderates.

### # Initial stages of Indian National Congress:-

The congress placed its demands before the government always in the form of petitions and worked within the framework of law. It was for this reason that the early Congress leaders were referred to as 'Moderates'. During its first twenty years the Congress made moderate demands. The members placed their demands before the Government always in the form of petitions and worked within the framework of law. It was for this reason that the early Congress leaders were referred to as 'Moderates' They asked for: (a) representative legislatures, (b) Indianization of services, (c) reduction of military expenditure, (d) education, employment and holding of the ICS (Indian Civil Services) examination in India, (e) decrease in the burden of the cultivators, (f) defense of civil rights, (g) separation of the judiciary from the executive, (h) change in the tenancy laws, (i) reduction in land revenue and salt duty, (j) policies to help in the growth of Indian industries and handicrafts, (k) introduction of welfare programmes for the people. Unfortunately, their efforts did not bring many changes in the policies and administration of the British in India. In the beginning, the Britishers had a favourable attitude towards the Congress. But, by 1887, this attitude began to change. They did not fulfill the demands of the Moderates.

The only achievement of the Congress was the enactment of the Indian Councils Act, 1892 that enlarged the legislature by adding a few nonofficial members and passing of a resolution for holding Indian Civil Services Examination simultaneously in London and in India. Many leaders gradually lost faith in the Constitutional process. Even though the Congress failed to achieve its goal, it succeeded in creating national awakening and instilling in the minds of the Indian people a sense of belonging to one Nation. They provided a forum for the Indians to discuss major national issues. By criticizing the government policies, they gave the people valuable political training. Though, They were not ready to take aggressive steps which would bring them in direct conflict with the Government. The most significant achievement was the foundation of a strong national movement.