While having a critical discourse on freedom struggle it is urgently required to cast glance over a monumental lapse, i.e., on the great Swadeshi Movement. This was the first great people's movement to reckon with, being spearheaded by the great nationalists of the day. Its simple reason is owing to the ideological concern of the present day politics. Whatever the excuse put forward by this school or the other it is obviously a national blunder, and thus evokes introspection at academic plane.

Every movement owes to some ideological context or other, but in case of the Swadeshi Movement of 1905-07 it is more so. It constitutes a great stride in the annals of modern history so much so that it was the cumulative effect of an indigenous Indian nationalist thought-structure or what may be called, the genuine Indian variant of nationalism. It underscored the expression of veritable soul of Indian nationhood in right perspective. But it was dubbed as sectarian or communal approach to the Indian society. First in the jargon came forward the comment from none but Jawaharlal Nehru who was then (1907) studying in Cambridge. Reacting to the concept of nationalism of Aurobindo and others of the Congress Nationalists, Nehru was worried as to what would happen to one-third population (implying the Muslims) who had remained in this country from centuries. This kind of apprehension was in fact the beginning of the internalization of appeasement policy. Those were nothing but populist reactions marginalizing the vitality of the nation cropping out of the entire panorama of history. Thus it was also the beginning of polarization of political ideology which was earlier confined within the Extremists and Moderates on their approaches to the alien rule.

The upsurge of 1905 was not accentuated in a single day. But it was the fallout of a thought-process cropping up since the year 1875 when the Arya Samaj made its headway. Hindu identity of Indian nationalism was carried aloft by a number of religio-reformatory organizations like Hindu Mela of Nabagopal Mitra and Raj Narain Bose (18676-1880), Prarthana Sabha of Atmaram Pandurang in 1867, one 'Patit Pawan Samaj' in 1880, 'Arya Mahila Samaj' of Pandit Rambhai, one 'Gayan Samaj' at Poone in 1874 Society for Protection of Hindu Religion by Chapekar brothers in 1890's, Mitra Mela (later Abhinav Bharat) of Savarkar brothers at Nasik in 1899, and the like. Publication of Bankim Chandra's novel 'Ananda Math' in 1883, Vivekananda's Chicago sojourn in 1893, Annie Besant's arrival in Indian same year, Ganapati Festival by Tilak in 1894 and Shivaji Mahotsav in 1896, and Aurobindo's celebration of Kali Puja in 1904 had basically buttressed the Hindu
cultural dimension of Hindu identity and Hindu pride translated in the form of Hindu nationalism or what may be called Cultural Nationalism in Indian perspective. Religious fervour was given vent to patriotism true to Hindu tradition so much so that 90% of the Hindu sermons depict the cultural geography of India while giving 10% scope to metaphysics. Bharat was adorned as 'Mata' - exact incarnation of Jagadamba as expressed by Vivekananda and earlier which had been assiduously sketched by Bankim Chandra.

Extremism in the Congress hierarchy surfaced to provide expression of resilience Hindu nationalism. Of course Tilak did not like the expression 'extremism' appended to them. Lal Chand, without mincing word, declared that the Congress would specifically take the cause of the Hindus. Bal Gangadhar Tilak expressed in full voice his Hindu sentiment in the Congress platform which was steadily drifting towards westernization. He glorified Hinduism at the expense of western culture. Aurobindo Ghose challenged the right of a foreign imperialism to force an "inferior civilization" of India. The nationalists (the title the 'extremists' liked to have) spoke of a Hindu nation and the protection of Hindu interests on political level. K.P. Karunakaran holds that Hindu nationalism became the creed of the extremists. They drew sustenance from India's age-old glorious heritage and appealed to the Indians by invoking religious patriotism.

In the contrary, the Moderates were the veritable apologists of western culture and education, and they interpreted and reacted in western perception. For seven decades they were fed on the distilled intellectual diets of Burke, Bentham, Hume, Mill, Spencer, Darwin and the like, and their mind-set did not budget out of it. Rather they ridiculed Indian tradition, belief and practices. When they talked of reforms without loving the society it looked as if an alien force was invading. Debased imported copy book maxims were their creed, and they liked to perceive Indian nationalism and construct in that paradigm. It is evident from Keshav Chandra Sen's remark that to the liberal reformers (the moderates) the spirit of Christianity had already pervaded the whole atmosphere of Indian society and they used to breath, think, feel and move in a Christian atmosphere. Hence, the Nationalists threw candid challenge to it, which was amply demonstrated in the great Swadeshi movement.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak had been consistently emphasizing on 'Swaraj' as the birth right of people right since 1896. He availed the support of likeminded heavy weights like Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and Aurobindo Ghose in his rank. In the Kashi Congress Session they could pursue to get inserted their cherished goal of Swaraj in spite of disenchantment of the Moderates; and next year in Calcutta even under the presidency of Dadabhai Narojee the resolutions of Swaraj, Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education received official stamp. Finally the concept of Swaraj was tinged with Swadharma and Swabhaya. This kind of indigenous world view inextricably interwoven with the land and society became the inbuilt intellectual bedrock by the turn of the century. Thus by the year 1905 the wheel of history turned to the side of the Nationalists.

The year 1905 is a watershed in Indian history. The entire scenario of the Swadeshi movement is ascribed to the Partition of Bengal. It was a mischievous design to divide Bengal in order to contain the revolutionary forces. It was so divided as if to shape the future territory of Pakistan-Muslim majority East Bengal being carved out! Even the Secretary of State for India
was reluctant on the move. But Lord Curzon could obtain the consent clandestinely on 19th July 1905. The notification was published a month later inviting widespread anger and fury. A huge gathering met at the Town Hall of Calcutta on 7th August in order to protest the "cruel wrong". It may be assumed as the unofficial inauguration of the Anti-Partition Movement. Soon it turned into the fateful Swadeshi Movement and spread over the whole country.

Tilak exhorted to the people to uphold the dignity of the nation rolling down the long vista of history. He expected that by the grace of providence they would consolidate themselves as a mighty Hindu nation, and it would be the objective of every Hindu. In his words, "I go further and say that it is our 'Dharma', you cannot separate Home Rule from us, as you cannot separate the quality of heat from fire".13

By synthesizing religion and political agenda, or for that matter religion and nationalism, the nationalists in effect, created Hindu nationalism and awake the masses.14 Aurobindo, the hero of the Swadeshi movement, attempted to rationalize this dimension in his work "Dayananda-Bankim-Tilak". He infused mysticism to nationalism. It upheld the Hindu ideals and idioms, and there was no escape from it since it was the reality in view of the chequered cultural history of India. It seemed natural to retrieve the lost glory and vitality. It is not a matter of racial arrogance, but rediscovery of the soul of the nation.

Aurobindo observed in the editorial of much esteemed paper "Bande Mataram" that Hindus' outward life, like that of other nations, is subjected to growth and limit and a term, he has none. The elixir of national life has been discovered by the Indian alone. This immortality, this great secret of life, she has treasured up for thousands of years, until the world has been fit to receive it. The time has now come for her to import it into other nations, who are on the verge of decadence.15

'Bande Mataram' edited by Aurobindo Ghose and Bipin Chandra Pal wrote, "Swaraj as a sort of European ideal...... will not awaken India. Swaraj as the fulfillment of the ancient life of India under modern conditions, the return of the 'Satyayuga' (era of the truth) of national greatness, the resumption of her great role of teacher and guide, self-liberation of the people for the final fulfillment of the Vedantic ideal in politics, this is the true Swaraj for India". It continued," The groundwork of what may well be called the composite culture of India is undoubtedly Hindu. Though the present Indian nationality is composed of many races, and the present culture of more than one world civilization, yet it must be admitted that the Hindu forms its base and centre.....The dominant role of Hindu culture, its sense of the spiritual and universal, will, therefore, be the peculiar feature of this composite Indian nationality.....And the type of spirituality that it seeks to develop is essentially Hindu." Similarly Lala Lajpat Rai wrote,"The spiritual note of the present Nationalist Movement in India is entirely derived from......Vedantic thought".

Historian B.B.Mazumdar sketched that the "militant nationalism" (as it was branded) was predominantly a Hindu movement.16 Swadeshi was deeply rooted in all classes of Hindu community.17 Another historian is given to understand that extremism in Indian politics was a response to the challenge of haphazard and superficial westernization of Indian life. Spiritually it countered the threat to traditional Hindu religion, ethics and social values posed by Christianity and "utilitarianism."18

Aurobindo unequivocally stated: "Politics and religion are interdependant. To talk of religion and politics as two unconnected departments of
human affairs provokes laughter in India. Here everything that claims popular attention must have the sanction of religion. Neither does religion concern any other subject so intimately as politics". In his famous Uttarpara speech Aurobindo evolved that 'Sanatana Dharma' is Indian nationalism. It is immortal; and Indian nationalist movement was guided by God Himself. He addressed: "We meet here tonight to worship the spirit of our Race to pay homage to the Genius of the great Hindu nation, in the sacred Temple of our Fatherland". This father..... is not a mere word, a mere abstraction, a mere idea....His (Shivaji’s) ideal of an organised Hindu commonwealth, based upon the law of righteousness as evolved in the religious and ethical life of the scriptures is distinctly a great national movement with us as long as the protection of the permanent elements of our race consciousness will lie in future advancement of our nation" "The Hindu shall help the realisation of present national ideals, not by ceasing to be Hindu....but by developing the higher features of his culture and civilisation."

The Nationalists showed how to arouse the tradition-bound mass with the music of religion and culture. T.R.Sareen and William Holland also corroborate this world view. The Nationalists began to construct an Indian philosophy of politics from the Indian philosophy of life. Bipin Chandra Pal probed that the central fact in Indian history is the peculiar Hindu spirit consciousness of the self.

In the contrary, the Moderates discerned the Indian nation as creation of the British rule in India. Their perception on nationalism revolved round constitutional fabric and political, economic, educational and social advancement. But to the Nationalists, mystically Indian nation is exact incarnation of Goddess Durga- the nation being a living organised entity with past, present and future encompassing the entire wave-length of Indian way of life. Their emphasis was on religion, culture and ethos of the society.

It is imperative to mention few publications of the day which accentuated the march of the Swadeshi movement. Hindu epics, traditions and legends were reflected in the writings, and that too were aimed at inspiring the cause of nationalism. Notables among them include drama like 'Sharda' and novels like 'Pan Lokshot kon Gheto' and 'Ushakal'. Valentine Chirol did cast aspersion that in the play "Kichak Badha", Draupadi was to mean India, Kichaka to Lord Curzon, Pandavas to the Extremists and Bhism to the Moderates. Week long "Dhanujatra" was organised each year at Bargarth, a town in western Orissa, where Kansa used to display his despotism and was killed. It sent the feeler that a demon however despotic and powerful might be, is destined to be eliminated. A play 'Nil Darpan' was written by Dinabandhu Mitra which became a 'cause celebre', where the plight of the indigo growers was vibrantly depicted. Michael Madhusudan Dutt's masterpieces were famous during those days, which included dramas like 'Sharmistha Padmavati' and 'Krishna Kumari', the epic 'Titottoma', 'Meghanad Badha' the unfinished musical poem 'Brajanayana' and epistolary poem 'Birangana'. Rabindranath Tagore's 'Shivaji Utsav' published in 1904 and 'Swadeshi' songs were familiar. Journals like 'Hitabadi', 'Sanjibane', 'Sandhya' and 'Nayak', 'Desher Katha', 'Rashtramat' beside many others were the pioneers of the movement. 'Amrit Bazar Patrika' was on this side. The 'Sanjivanee' on April 1906 published that the Brahmans in Sirajganj resolved not to perform any religious ceremonies whenever Swadeshi was not observed and the paper eulogized it.

"Yugantar" brought out by a group associated with Barindra Kumar Ghose asked the
people to avenge the murder of the motherland by blood - the blood that would propitiate the goddess Kali. Once it wrote: "Many a female demon must be killed in course of time in order to extirpate the race of 'asuras' (demons) from the breast of the mother-earth". "Bhavani Om Chandikaya" once wrote." The nation is a mighty 'Shakti' composed of the 'Shaktis' of all the millions of units that make up the nation, just as 'Bhavani Mahisa Mardini' sprang into being from the 'Shakti' of all the millions of gods assembled, in one mass of force and wedded into unity .... India cannot perish, our race cannot become extinct, because among all the divisions of mankind it is to India the highest and the most splendid destiny is reserved, the most essential to the future of the human race". Sandhya' preached the cult of "Kali mair boma" (Bomb of Mother Kali).

Inspired by all these feedings compounded with the action-oriented philosophy interpreted by Tilak the revolutionaries climbed up the gallows holding Bhagavat Gita and shouting the battle cry of Bande Mataram. Valentine Chirol sent report to the British press that the Arya Samaj was very much behind the Indian unrest those days. The revolutionaries drew their inspiration from the idealization of the nation with religious fervour and crystallized together it surfaced in the form of Hindu nationalism.

Valentine Chirol wrote the work "The Indian Unrest" in order to dub the contemporary Hindu nationalist movement. Nonetheless his observations abundantly unfold the contemporary situation. He did not find the involvement of the Muslim community in the movement. He used the expression "Hindu unrest" to explain the Swadeshi movement. He quoted a newspaper from Poone, 'Kal', which read: "We have our own country, our religion, our heroes...." He again quoted Calcutta based 'Dharma', which reads.

"Politics is part of our religion, but it has to be cultivated in Aryan way." He witnessed that "Rakhi (wristlets of coloured threads) were being exchanged on the Partition Day, i.e., 16th October 1905 as a symbol of brotherhood. He found 'Kali' and 'Durga' being involved for the cause of the movement. He testified 50000 Swadeshi activists holding 'tulsi' plant in hand after holy bath in river Ganges and taking swadeshi vow before the Kalighat temple. The Swadeshi vow spelt out to save their sacred race. Chirol reported that the Swadeshi activists used to take vow "in the presence of Mahadevi" shouting "Hara Hara Mahadev". He felt the upbringing of ancient Hindu tradition in the movement. Worship of the Mother-cult in the form of Kali was crystally evident in the movement. The concept of 'Dharma Rajya' and 'Dharma Juddha' was deeply embedded in the mind of the Swadeshi activists. He found in the literature of the unrest frequent expression of the strongest juxtaposition of names of Hindu deities. He studied that Hindu nationalism and political disaffection was glorified under the name of nationalism.

It was also the feeling of another author that Hindu character of nationalism was the marked feature in these developments. Tara Chand observes that the "fighters" used to have deep faith in the Ganges and 'Rakhi' bands round the arms to bind all in one brotherhood, which had been cultivated since the great revolt of 1857. Bipin Chandra Pal rightly summarized. "This new National Movement is essentially a Spiritual Movement. The philosophy of the Absolute, the philosophy of Brahman..... It looks upon mass as the spirit of God incorporated, and views racial and civil institutions and vehicle for the progressive revelation and realization of God in and through man."
On the other hand Dunlop Smith opines that the Hindu nationalists tried to use Hindu symbols and idioms to exhort the masses as a matter of technique. In his letter to Lady Minto he wrote. " ...... It (the Indian nationalist movement) was not religious in character ...... But the leaders found their women or the masses with them on purely secular lines." But these contentions are hardly apt. The leaders of the movement were not political strategists to win over the sentiment of the people by the use of religion. But they had pinned faith on the Hindu character of Indian nationalism to the core of their heart. Their thinking was not manufactured to gain a shorter end. But it was to explore the age old genius of India - Hindu identity of Indian nationhood peeping beneath the driving force of historical mishap. Indian nationalism and Hinduuness were inextricably interwoven which was quixotic to be insulated. Unlike the western breed Indian nationalism is culture-based. Vincent Smith probe that even though there were large number of political states they were supplanted by the fundamental underlying unity of Hindu religious symbols, shrines, scriptures, heritage and what not. The way of life which sprouted in this land was made known as Hinduism - a geo-cultural connotation rather than of creedal signification. As a result of this kind of nationalism India survived over the repeated alien pillages for millennia. To the contrary, the western nations were politics (state) based, which waxed and waned with the vicissitude of political upheavals. The Moderates were easy prey to this think-tank.

Myron Weinar presents the problem with slight distinction. To him, in India religion cannot be left out of politics, partly because religion and culture have been so intermingled that "the use of culture as a weapon against the British invaders could not be kept separate from the use of religion, and partly because of the Hindu-Muslim conflict in politics, which gave the Hindus an acute consciousness of their identity. Further more, the struggle for separate electorate established by the British, was no small a factor in bringing into politics as a religious group. However, by that time the Muslims did not react to the expression of Hindu sentiment in the movement. Rather they had quietly internalized it. It is evident that when Tilak reached Calcutta to attend the Congress session in 1906 the large gathering stretched from the Howrha station across the Howrha Bridge to welcome him also consisted of Muslims.

Lord Meston presents a thought-provoking account thus." ..... It follows that the battalions which face the British administration calling themselves the army of Indian extremists claims as a subjective nationality, the sentiment and tradition of the ...... Hindus." It had been justified by Lajpat Rai with precision that the political consciousness created by the Extremists in a decade could not have been created by the Moderates in a half century. Keeping this ground reality in mind, K.R. Malkani observes, all the great fathers of Indian renaissance invoked the innate Hindu spirit and roused the people to action by touching the same chord of the Hindu heart.

Lest, the nationalist battle was lost in Surat session of Indian National Congress in term of numerical strength against the Moderates. But the nationalists unleashed countless impression in the heart of the masses. Their platform of action was the mass, not mere legislature or press involving the elite few. Every movement is beset with certain slogan. The basic thrust of the Swadeshi movement was the cult of Bande Mataram and whatever it entails. It was not a matter of temporary hypothesis; but the 'summom bonum' of Indian nationalism to its very core or what may be called the fundamentals of Indian nationalism. Marginalisation of the Hindu nationalists and
equalization of Hindu with Islam in order to negotiate Indian nationalism greatly affected the fortune of India. It needs serious re-appraisal.

Notes and References:

1. Prof. Bipin Chandra in a lecture at Jawaharlal Nehru University on 27 January lamented Hindu nationalism as Hindu communalism. Dr. Bharati Mukherjee of Calcutta University, who was CPM candidate for Lok Sabha from South Calcutta in 1996, expressed in the course of deliberation on a paper presented by the present author in the Orissa Political Science Conference on 21 March 1995 at Sambalpur that there was no "communal (Hindu) touch" in the Swadeshi movement.


10. Ibid., p.105.


17. Mukherjee and Mukherjee, op.cit., p.12.


26. Ibid., p.593.


GOVERNOR INAUGURATES TRAINING PROGRAMME FOR YATRI PANDAS

His Excellency the Governor of Orissa Shri Rameshwar Thakur yesterday inaugurated a comprehensive training programme for hereditary Yatri Pandas at Collector's Conference Hall at Puri. The programme aims at training of 400 Yatri Pandas in a phased manner.

Inaugurating the programme, the Governor said that in the past the Yatri Pandas were instrumental in propagating Orissa's culture, literature and art. Yatri Pandas took all the care of their respective Yatris, even at times helping them financially, if the need so demanded. However times have changed Shri Thakur said, therefore we must act accordingly. If one Yatri or tourist to Lord Jagannath temple or Puri faces any problems or is humiliated, the entire Oriya society will have to repent. Such a situation should not occur, he warned and added that all of us must ensure the safety of Yatris.

It may be mentioned here that a total of 400 Yatri Pandas will be covered under the training programme in a phased manner in 9 batches. An expert team comprising experts from various fields and 28 in number will look after the training programme.

Gajapati Shri Dibyasingha Deb presided over the meeting. Chief Administrator of Shree Mandir Suresh Chandra Mohapatra, Deputy Chief Administrator and Puri Collector, Shri A.K. Das, member of Shree Mandir Administration Rabindra Pratihari and Ipsit Pratihari also spoke.

The Governor released three books on the occasion titled Prasikshyan Pustika, Oriya Sahityare Shree Jagannath and Shri Jagannath Geetika.

Dr. Pattnaik after obtaining Ph.D. and D.Litt. degrees lives at Modi Para (Near Park) Sambalpur - 768002.