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Tender Heart High School,
Sector 33 B, Chandigarh
Class VIII

Subject:- History and Civics

Teacher:- Mili Bhatnagar

Chapter 12
Socio-Religious Reforms

Good Morning Students!

In this chapter we will study about some social reformers who realized that key to India's progress lay in a reformed society. So they tried to do away with some social evils prevalent in the Indian society.

The leading reformer was Raja Rammohun Roy who opposed caste system, untouchability, superstition, idol worship, unnecessary rituals and sacrifices. He advocated women's rights and it was due to his efforts that the practice of Sati was banned by Lord William Bentinck in 1829. He wanted Indians to learn from west and make positive changes in the society. Raja Rammohun was against blind imitation and laid emphasis on reason. In 1828 he set up Brahma Sabha, later known as Brahma Samaj.

↓ Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar was a social reformer who was a learned man and dedicated to the cause of education in general. He welcomed people of all castes to enrol in Sanskrit College. It was because of his efforts that the Widow Remarriage Act was passed in 1856. He was also against child marriage and polygamy.

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Swami Dayananda Saraswati led the reform movement in north India. He regarded Vedas as the source of all knowledge. His philosophy was — Go back to the Vedas. Dayananda attacked social customs such as idol worship and performance of rituals. He opposed child marriage and encouraged widow remarriage. In 1875 he founded the Arya Samaj. He wrote his philosophy in Satyarth Prakash.

Swami Vivekananda, the disciple of Ramakrishna Paramhansa believed that the Indians should work for their upliftment. His speech at the All World Religious Conference in 1893 made the world take notice of India. In 1897 he established Ramakrishna Mission to spread his guru's teachings.

Annie Besant was a member of the Theosophical Society. She wanted Indians to take pride in their culture. She opened many schools for boys and girls. She established Central Hindu School in Benaras.

There were some social reform movements for the improvement of lower castes in India. One of it was led by Jyotirao Govindrao Phule who founded the Satyashodhak Samaj. This association propagated caste equality and worked for the upliftment of the oppressed classes. Sri Narayan Guru who had experienced the oppressive caste system devoted

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his life to the upliftment of the untouchables. He defied caste and acquired Sanskrit education.

A strong need was felt in the then Muslim society. The greatest reformer was Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. He believed that the social practices such as purdah and polygamy had kept the community backward. He founded the Translation Society which was later renamed the Scientific Society. He established Mohammedan Anglo-Oriental College in Aligarh in 1875.

In the early twentieth century, there was a movement to free gurdwaras from the control of the mahants. The movement was led by the Akali Dal and the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. The mahants were turned out and all gurdwaras began to be managed by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee.

MCQ

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| 1) Lord William Bentinck | 6) 1873 |
| 2) Raja Rammohun Roy | 7) Sree Narayana Guru |
| 3) 1875 | 8) 1875 |
| 4) 1887 | 9) 1925 |
| 5) both (a) and (b) | 10) 1856 |