

The Simon Commission, officially known as the Indian Statutory Commission, was a parliamentary commission established by the British government in November 1927. Its primary purpose was to review and make recommendations regarding constitutional reforms in British India. The commission's composition and the circumstances surrounding its formation led to widespread protests and opposition in India. Here are the key features and consequences of the Simon Commission:

Background:

1. **Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms:** The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 had introduced limited self-government in India, creating a legislative council and providing Indians with some representation in government. However, it fell short of Indian expectations for more substantial self-rule.
2. **Demand for Reforms:** Indians were increasingly demanding further constitutional reforms and an end to British rule. In this context, the British government decided to appoint the Simon Commission to review the existing constitutional arrangements.

Key Features:

1. **Composition:** The Simon Commission was composed entirely of British members, with no Indian representation. It was led by Sir John Simon, a British Member of Parliament, and included six other British members, all of whom were White and had no Indian members.
2. **Terms of Reference:** The commission was tasked with reviewing the functioning of the Government of India Act of 1919 and recommending any further constitutional reforms deemed necessary.

Consequences and Impact:

1. **Widespread Protests:** The appointment of an all-British commission with no Indian representation led to widespread protests and opposition in India. Indians across the political spectrum saw the commission as an insult to their demands for greater self-rule and representation.
2. **Boycott and Demonstrations:** Indians boycotted the Simon Commission's arrival in India, and protests were held in several cities. Demonstrators displayed slogans such as "Simon Go Back."
3. **Lala Lajpat Rai's Death:** In Lahore, a protest against the Simon Commission turned violent when police baton-charged the crowd. The renowned freedom fighter Lala Lajpat Rai was seriously injured during the protest and later succumbed to his injuries, leading to further outrage.

4. **Nehru Report:** As a response to the Simon Commission, the Indian National Congress appointed a committee headed by Motilal Nehru. This committee produced the Nehru Report in 1928, which outlined Indian political aspirations and demands for self-governance.
5. **Round Table Conferences:** The widespread protests and opposition to the Simon Commission eventually forced the British government to acknowledge the need for Indian participation in constitutional reforms. This led to the convening of the Round Table Conferences in London between 1930 and 1932 to discuss Indian constitutional matters.
6. **Long-Term Impact:** While the Simon Commission did not result in immediate constitutional changes, it contributed to the broader political climate and the eventual development of the Government of India Act of 1935 and, later, the Indian Independence Act of 1947, which granted India independence.

The Simon Commission's failure to include Indian representation and the subsequent protests marked an important moment in India's struggle for self-rule and constitutional reform. It contributed to the larger narrative of India's path to independence and a more representative and self-governing system.



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