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1. Critically assess the administrative and political policies introduced by Lord Curzon. How did these policies influence the trajectory of the Indian national movement?

Introduction: Lord Curzon's tenure (1899–1905) combined administrative efficiency with imperial arrogance. His reforms and political insensitivity provoked deep resentment, laying the ground for aggressive nationalism.

Key Policies:

1. **University Act (1904):** Restricted academic freedom; seen as attack on intellectual growth.
2. **Calcutta Corporation Act (1899):** Curtailment of Indian participation in civic affairs.
3. **Partition of Bengal (1905):** Politically motivated division of Hindu-Muslim unity under the pretext of administrative convenience.
4. **Archaeological reforms:** Boosted cultural conservation but used for imperial prestige.
5. **Famine and Irrigation Policy:** Improved administration but largely seen as image-building.
6. **Creation of North-West Frontier Province (NWFP):** Consolidated British control in the volatile northwest but added to regional discontent.

Impact on National Movement:

- **Swadeshi Movement:** Boycott of foreign goods and promotion of indigenous industries.
- **Political Unity:** Bridged the gap between moderates and extremists.
- **Rise of Extremists:** Aurobindo Ghosh, Tilak, and others called for complete independence.
- **Cultural Nationalism:** Nationalist press, songs, and literature became tools of mass awakening.
- **INC Sessions (1905-07):** Resolutions condemning Curzon's acts; led to rise of assertive politics.

Critical Assessment:

- Administrative gains were overshadowed by his divisive policies.
- His racial arrogance and autocracy alienated even loyalist elites.
- His tenure indirectly unified Indians across religion and class.
- The creation of NWFP was seen as part of British strategic paranoia, reducing local autonomy.

Conclusion: Curzon's legacy is a paradox: a capable administrator who became the unwilling architect of Indian unity and militant nationalism. His policies radicalised the freedom struggle and made nationalism more people-centric.

2. Examine the multifaceted contributions of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in India's socio-economic transformation. How did his vision shape the framework of modern India?

Introduction: Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, a jurist, economist, and social reformer, was central to shaping modern India's constitutional, economic, and social foundations. His mission was to build a just, inclusive, and progressive society.

Key Contributions:

1. **Social Reformer:**
 - Led Mahad Satyagraha (1927) and temple entry movements.

- Established *Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha* to uplift Dalits.

2. Constitutional Architect:

- Drafted Constitution ensuring equality, liberty, fraternity.
- Instrumental in including Article 17, Directive Principles, and reservations.
- Advocated protection of minority rights, including safeguards for linguistic and religious minorities.

3. Economic Thought:

- Wrote *The Problem of the Rupee*; emphasized monetary stability.
- Advocated state socialism and planned economy; member of Viceroy's Council (Labour).

4. Labour & Welfare Policies:

- Introduced laws on maternity benefits, working hours, and workers' rights.
- Championed minimum wage and fair labour conditions.

5. Women's Rights:

- Proposed Hindu Code Bill granting women property and marital rights.
- Advocated gender equality in legal and constitutional frameworks.

Critical Insight:

- His ideas were often sidelined during the freedom movement but gained prominence post-1947.
- He clashed with Gandhi during the Poona Pact but worked for long-term institutional justice.
- Advocated social democracy alongside political democracy.
- Envisioned the state as a moral institution committed to ethical governance, not just rule of law.

Conclusion: Dr. Ambedkar's contributions transcend caste politics. His constitutionalism, economic vision, and unwavering pursuit of equality laid the bedrock for a modern, democratic, and inclusive India. His ideas remain central to India's policy and moral conscience.