

① "The emergence of the Congress in 1885 the culmination of a process of political awakening that had its beginning in the 1870s"
Comment.

Political activities began in India in the second half of the 19th century in a peaceful way. This led to the formation of many political organisations which played an important role in the political awakening of the common people & in exposing the true nature of the Colonial economy. Some of these organisations were -

i) Association of landlords & Bengal British India Society - In 1851 both of these were merged to form the British Indian Association. But this organisation was formed only to safeguard the interests of landlords.

ii) India League - Established by Shishir Kumar Ghosh in 1875 which aimed at awakening of national consciousness among Indians & to make them politically educated.

iii) Indian Association - It was established by Surendra Nath Bannerjee in 1876. It aimed at creating a strong national public opinion, tried to unite all Indians on the basis of national feeling & focused on maintaining cordial relations between Hindus & Muslims.

iv) Poona Sarvajanic Sabha - It was founded in 1867. It attempted to form a bridge between the government & the Indian public. It started the magazine, 'The Quarterly Journal' for the same

purpose.

These organisations led to the starting of political awakening among the masses & created an atmosphere of debates & discussions. The most important among them was the Indian Association. It protested when the age for 'All India Civil Service' was reduced, it also opposed the Arms Act & the Vernacular Press Act. It also protested against the British nationals who were against the passing of the Gilbert Bill. Thus, the Indian Association participated in awakening public opinion & expressing public resentment through processions & public meetings.

Therefore, these organisations paved the path for the formation of 'All India Congress'. These organisations were gradually absorbed in All India Congress which became the foremost political organisation. Thus, the emergence of the Congress in 1885 was the culmination of a process of political awakening that had its beginning in the 1870s.