

Socio-Religious **Reform** Movements in India

Modern Indian History — Brahma Samaj • Arya Samaj • Ramakrishna Mission • Aligarh Movement • Wahabi • Dalit & Sikh Reforms

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BPSK

SSC CGL

SSC CHSL

RRB NTPC

State PSC

UPSC Pre

★★★★★ High-Yield Topic — 5–8 questions per exam

1. Introduction & Overview (सामाजिक-धार्मिक सुधार)

Why This Topic Is Critical: Socio-Religious Reform Movements is one of the highest-yielding topics in BPSC, SSC CGL, RRB NTPC, and State PSC exams. Questions appear on founders, years, headquarters, key works, and reform goals. The 19th-century reforms laid the **ideological foundation for India's independence movement**.

1828

Brahmo Samaj Founded

1875

Arya Samaj Founded

1897

RK Mission Founded

1893

Chicago Speech Year

16+

Major Reform Movements

1917

Besant — INC President

1873

Satya Shodhak Samaj

1920

AMU from MAO College

★ Key Reformers at a Glance



Raja Ram Mohan Roy
Founder,
Brahmo Samaj
(1828)



Debendranath Tagore
Revived
Brahmo Samaj
(1843)



Keshab Chandra Sen
Brahmo Samaj
of India (1866)



H.L.V. Derozio
Young Bengal
Movement
(1826)



M.G. Ranade
Prarthana
Samaj, Pune



Dayananda Saraswati
Founder, Arya
Samaj (1875)



Ramakrishna
Mystic,
Dakshineswar
Temple



Swami Vivekananda
RK Mission,
Chicago 1893



Annie Besant
Theosophical
Society & INC



Sir Syed Ahmad Khan
Aligarh
Movement
(1875)



Syed Ahmad Barelvi
Wahabi
Movement,
Balakot



Jyotirao Phule
Satya Shodhak
Samaj (1873)



Savitribai Phule
India's First
Woman
Teacher



Sree Narayana Guru
SNDP Yogam,
Kerala (1903)



Periyar E.V. Ramasamy
Self-Respect
Movement
(1925)



Gopal Krishna Gokhale
Servants of
India Soc.
(1905)

Three Pillars of Reform:

Religious Reform: Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, RK Mission — challenged idol worship, caste, superstition

Social Reform: Against sati, child marriage, untouchability; for widow remarriage and women's education

Political Awakening: Nationalist consciousness emerged from reform movements as precursor to independence

2. Brahmo Samaj (ब्रह्म समाज)



Raja Ram Mohan Roy

Founder, Brahmo Samaj (1828)



Debendranath Tagore

Revived Brahmo Samaj (1843)



Keshab Chandra Sen

Brahmo Samaj of India (1866)

Founded: Roy first started **Atmiya Sabha** (1815), then **Brahmo Sabha** (1828) in Calcutta – India's first modern reform movement. Promoted monotheism, rationalism, and social reform based on reason and Upanishads.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772–1833) – Father of Modern India

- **Atmiya Sabha** (1815) – Roy's *first* reform circle; debating society on social & religious issues
- **Brahmo Sabha** (1828) – later renamed Brahmo Samaj; first rationalist reform body in India
- Campaigned against **Sati**; Regulation XVII (1829) abolished it under Lord Bentinck
- Promoted **English education** and Western science over Sanskrit scholasticism
- Opposed idol worship, caste, purdah, child marriage; championed **widow remarriage** & women's rights
- Went to England (1830) as Mughal Emperor Akbar II's ambassador; died in Bristol (1833)

⚡ Key Works of Ram Mohan Roy

- **Tuhfat-ul-Muwahiddin** (1804) – first rationalist critique of religion (in Persian)
- **Precepts of Jesus** (1820) – extracted ethics of Jesus without divinity
- **Sambad Kaumudi** (1821) – Bengali newspaper championing reform
- **Mirat-ul-Akhbar** (1822) – first Persian journal in India

Debendranath Tagore (1817–1905) – Maharshi

- Founded **Tattvabodhini Sabha** (1839) – philosophical study group
- Formally joined Brahmo Samaj (1843) and revitalized it after Roy's death
- Strengthened Brahmo theology; authored Brahmo Dharma
- Father of Rabindranath Tagore



Keshab Chandra Sen (1838–1884)

- Joined Brahmo Samaj in **1858**; most charismatic leader; championed inter-caste marriage
- Native Marriage Act (1872) – allowed civil (Brahmo) marriages, set min. age 14 girls, 18 boys
- Founded **Brahmo Samaj of India** (1866) after split with Debendranath
- Founded **Indian Reform Association** (1870) and **New Dispensation** (Nava Vidhan, 1881)
- Married his 13-year-old daughter to the Maharaja of Cooch Behar (1878) – triggered Sadharan split

Three Splits in Brahmo Samaj

Year	New Body	Led By	Cause / Focus
1866	Adi Brahmo Samaj	Debendranath Tagore	Opposed Keshab's radical social changes
1866	Brahmo Samaj of India	Keshab Chandra Sen	Inter-caste marriage, civil reforms, activism
1878	Sadharan Brahmo Samaj	Ananda Mohan Bose	Protested Keshab's daughter's underage marriage

Memory Trick

3-D rule: Debendranath (Adi, 1866) → Keshab (Brahmo Samaj of India, 1866) → Ananda Mohan (Sadharan, 1878).
Remember: "DKA" – Debendranath, Keshab, Ananda Mohan.

"Raja Ram Mohan Roy – the first modern man of India who dared to challenge blind tradition with reason"

🔔 PYQ Alert – Previous Year Questions

Q1	Brahmo Samaj was originally called?	SSC CGL 2018
Q2	Who wrote 'Tuhfat-ul-Muwahiddin' (1804)?	State PSC 2021
Q3	'Adi Brahmo Samaj' was led after split by?	RRB NTPC 2019
Q4	Ram Mohan Roy went to England as ambassador of?	BPSC 2020

Answers: Q1-Brahmo Sabha Q2-Raja Ram Mohan Roy Q3-Debendranath Tagore Q4-Mughal Emperor Akbar II

3. Young Bengal Movement (यंग बंगाल आंदोलन)



H.L.V. Derozio
Young Bengal
Movement (1826)

Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809–1831) – Anglo-Indian teacher at Hindu College, Calcutta from age 17 (1826). Inspired students with rationalism, free thinking, and anti-orthodoxy views. He died at only **22 years of age** – the youngest major reformer in Indian history.

- Challenged Hindu orthodoxy, caste system, idol worship, blind superstition
- Encouraged questioning of traditions via Western rationalism and Enlightenment philosophy
- Key **Derozians**: Rasik Krishna Mallick, Tarachand Chakravarti, Krishna Mohan Banerjee
- Published **The East Indian** newspaper and Parthenon journal – free press advocacy
- Dismissed from Hindu College (1831) due to "corrupting student minds"; died same year of cholera
- **Legacy**: Planted seeds of nationalism, women's rights, free press in Bengal

📌 Memory Trick

Derozio = Died young (22), Derozians challenged dogma, taught at Hindu College – "DDH" shortcut.

4. Prarthana Samaj (प्रार्थना समाज)



M.G. Ranade
Prarthana Samaj,
Pune

Founded 1867 in Bombay by **Atmaram Pandurang**, inspired by Brahma Samaj and Keshab Chandra Sen's Bombay visit. Known as "Maharashtra's Brahma Samaj." Key leaders: **M.G. Ranade, R.G. Bhandarkar, Narayan Chandavarkar.**

- Promoted **widow remarriage**, women's education, abolition of caste restrictions
- Opposed child marriage and untouchability; started inter-caste dining
- More moderate than Brahma Samaj – worked within Hindu tradition, not outside it
- **Depressed Classes Mission** (1906) emerged from Prarthana Samaj work

Feature	Brahmo Samaj	Prarthana Samaj
Founded	1828, Calcutta	1867, Bombay
Region	Bengal	Maharashtra
Founder	Ram Mohan Roy	Atmaram Pandurang
Approach	Break from Hinduism	Reform within Hinduism
Key Leaders	Debendranath, Keshab	Ranade, Bhandarkar

5. Arya Samaj (आर्य समाज)



Dayananda Saraswati

Founder, Arya Samaj (1875)

Founded: April 10, 1875 in Bombay by **Dayananda Saraswati** (born Mool Shankar, 1824, Gujarat). Motto: *"Back to the Vedas"* – Vedas are the supreme and infallible authority. Shifted to Lahore in 1877. Main work: **Satyartha Prakash** (Light of Truth, 1875).

⚡ Key Contributions of Arya Samaj

- **Shuddhi Movement** – reconversion of converted Hindus back to Hinduism
- **Sangathan** – Hindu unity and organization to resist conversions
- **Cow Protection** (Gaurakshini Sabhas) – symbol of Hindu identity
- **Hindi promotion** as national language; opposed Persian/Urdu dominance
- **DAV schools** (Dayananda Anglo-Vedic) – modern education with Indian values
- Opposed **child marriage, caste, purdah, idol worship**, and priestly exploitation
- **Women's education** – established gurukuls for girls too

Core Principles (Panch Mahayagya)

- One formless God (Brahman); Vedas as only true scripture
- No idol worship, no hereditary priesthood, no caste by birth
- Equality of all humans; promote education, rationalism, morality
- Reject untouchability; women equal right to Vedic study



DAV Movement & National Education

- **DAV (Dayananda Anglo-Vedic) Schools** – started 1886 in Lahore by Lala Hans Raj, Pandit Gurudatta, Lala Lajpat Rai
- Aimed to combine Western science with Vedic values – alternative to British missionary schools
- **Gurukul Kangri** (near Hardwar, 1902) – residential gurukul by **Swami Shraddhanand** (Munshi Ram)
- Gurukul system: Hindi medium, Vedic curriculum, Indian traditions – complete break from British model
- **Notable followers:** Lala Lajpat Rai (Punjab Kesari), Bal Gangadhar Tilak influenced by Arya ideology

Shuddhi & Sangathan Movements

- **Shuddhi** – purification/reconversion: bringing Muslims/Christians back to Hinduism
- Controversial: led to tension with Muslim community, inspired Hindu Mahasabha formation
- **Sangathan** – Hindu unity campaigns to prevent further conversions

Feature	Brahmo Samaj	Arya Samaj
Founded	1828, Calcutta	1875, Bombay
Founder	Ram Mohan Roy	Dayananda Saraswati
Authority	Reason + Upanishads	Vedas (infallible)
Idol Worship	Opposed	Strongly opposed
Caste	Opposed	Strongly opposed
Reconversion	Not pursued	Shuddhi movement
Region base	Bengal	Punjab, N. India

Memory Trick

SHCDD for Arya Samaj contributions: **S**huddhi, **H**indi, **C**ow protection, **D**AV schools, **D**ayananda (Satyarth Prakash)

“Dayananda Saraswati was the first to call India a nation for Indians – “India for Indians””

🔔 PYQ Alert – Previous Year Questions

Q1 Dayananda Saraswati founded Arya Samaj in which city?	SSC CGL 2017
Q2 What was Dayananda Saraswati's original birth name?	SSC CHSL 2020
Q3 DAV schools are associated with which movement?	RRB NTPC 2018
Q4 Gurukul Kangri (Hardwar) was founded by?	SSC CGL 2020

Answers: Q1-Bombay (Mumbai) Q2-Mool Shankar Q3-Arya Samaj Q4-Swami Shraddhanand

6. Ramakrishna Mission (रामकृष्ण मिशन)



Ramakrishna
Mystic,
Dakshineswar
Temple



Swami Vivekananda
RK Mission,
Chicago 1893

Ramakrishna Paramahansa (1836–1886)

Mystic priest at Dakshineswar Kali Temple, Kolkata. Taught harmony of all religions – “*Joto mat, tato path*” (As many faiths, so many paths). Practiced Islam and Christianity alongside Hinduism. Key disciple: **Narendranath Datta** (later Swami Vivekananda).

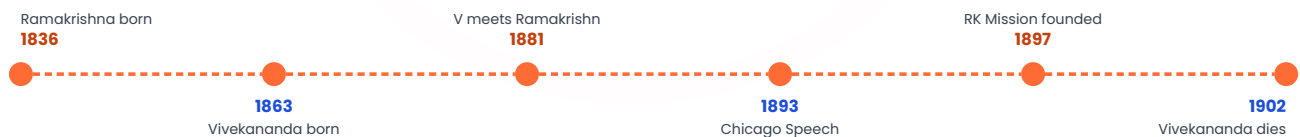
- Emphasized **direct experience of God** over rituals, dogma, or scriptures
- Taught that **all religions are true** and lead to the same divine reality
- Holy Mother: **Sarada Devi** – revered as divine by Ramakrishna devotees
- Attracted educated Bengali intellectuals including Narendranath Datta (Vivekananda)

Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902) – Original name: Narendranath Datta

- Met Ramakrishna at age 18 (1881) – transformed from agnostic to spiritual leader
- **Parliament of World Religions**, Chicago – September 11, 1893: opened with "Sisters and Brothers of America" – historic standing ovation
- Founded **Ramakrishna Mission** on May 1, 1897 – service as worship (“Shiva Jnane Jiva Seva”)
- **Belur Math** (HQ of RK Mission) – 1899, Howrah, West Bengal
- Key works: **Raja Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga**
- Died at only 39 years (1902) – predicted his own early death

⚡ Chicago Speech 1893

Vivekananda put India on the world map. His address at the Parliament of World's Religions introduced **Vedanta and Yoga** to the Western world. He is credited with raising India's spiritual prestige globally.



🚨 PYQ Alert – Previous Year Questions

Q1	Swami Vivekananda addressed Parliament of World Religions in which city?	SSC CGL 2015
Q2	Ramakrishna Mission was founded by?	SSC CHSL 2019
Q3	Belur Math (HQ of Ramakrishna Mission) is located in?	BPSC 2018
Q4	"Joto mat, tato path" is the famous saying of?	State PSC 2022

Answers: Q1-Chicago (1893) Q2-Swami Vivekananda Q3-Howrah, West Bengal Q4-Ramakrishna Paramahansa

7. Theosophical Society (थियोसोफिकल सोसायटी)



Annie Besant
Theosophical
Society & INC

Founded: 1875 in New York by **Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky** and **Colonel Henry Steel Olcott**. Shifted HQ to **Adyar, Madras** in 1882. Upheld Hindu and Buddhist philosophies; believed in universal brotherhood.

Annie Besant (1847–1933) – The Great Indian Reformer

- British-born; became president of Theosophical Society in **1907**
- Founded **Central Hindu College**, Banaras (1898) – later became **BHU** under Madan Mohan Malaviya (1916)
- Co-founded **Home Rule League** (1916) with Bal Gangadhar Tilak
- **First woman president of INC** (Indian National Congress) – 1917, Calcutta session
- Published *New India* and *Commonweal* newspapers
- Championed Indian self-governance; deeply popular among Indian nationalists

⚡ Theosophical Society Key Facts

- HQ: **Adyar, Chennai** (moved from New York, 1882)
- Founders: Blavatsky (Russian) + Olcott (American)
- Supported Hindu revival and revival of Buddhism in Asia
- Annie Besant: only non-Indian INC president who championed Indian independence

8. Muslim Reform Movements (मुस्लिम सुधार आंदोलन)



Sir Syed Ahmad Khan
Aligarh
Movement (1875)



Syed Ahmad Barelvi
Wahabi
Movement,
Balakot

Aligarh Movement (1875) – Sir Syed Ahmad Khan

Sir Syed Ahmad Khan (1817–1898) – modernist reformer; believer in science & rationalism within Islam. Founded **Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) College** at Aligarh (1875) – became **Aligarh Muslim University (AMU)** in 1920.

- **Scientific Society** (1863) – translated Western scientific works into Urdu
- *The Causes of the Indian Mutiny* (1859) – argued Muslims were wrongly blamed
- **Aligarh Institute Gazette** – promoted Western education for Muslims
- Initially advocated Hindu-Muslim cooperation; later pushed for separate Muslim interests

Wahabi Movement (1820s) – Syed Ahmad Barelvi (1786–1831)

- Inspired by Wahhabi movement of Arabia (Abd al-Wahhab); aimed to "purify" Islam
- Remove Hindu and Persian influences from Indian Islam; return to pure Quran & Sunnah
- Declared jihad against Sikh rule in Punjab; also anti-British in later phase
- **Battle of Balakot (1831)**: Syed Ahmad Barelvi killed fighting Sikh forces
- Movement continued by Shah Ismail Shaheed; became anti-British post-1857

Faraizi Movement (c.1818) & Deoband (1867)

- **Haji Shariatullah** (1781–1840) – Bengal-based movement; fara'iz = compulsory duties of Islam
- Son **Dudu Mian** (Muhammad Muhsin) led it after 1840; fought indigo planters + British
- **Darul Uloom, Deoband** (1867) – traditional Islamic education; founded by Muhammad Qasim Nanotvi
- Deoband: anti-British in long run; trained Islamic scholars (ulema); opposed Aligarh's Western approach

Movement	Founder	Approach	Stance vs British
Aligarh	Sir Syed Ahmad Khan	Western education for Muslims	Pro-British (initially)
Deoband	Qasim Nanotvi	Traditional Islamic education	Anti-British
Wahabi	Syed Ahmad Barelvi	Purify Islam, Jihad	Anti-Sikh, then Anti-British
Faraizi	Haji Shariatullah	Fara'idh duties, Bengal focus	Anti-British, Anti-indigo

Memory Trick

AWD-F: Aligarh (Western education), **W**ahabi (purification/jihad), **D**eoband (traditional), **F**araizi (Bengal) – four Muslim reform streams.

9. Sikh Reform: Singh Sabha Movement (सिंह सभा)

Singh Sabha (1873) – founded in Amritsar by **Thakur Singh Sandhwalia** and Giani Gian Singh. **Lahore Singh Sabha (1879)** – more reformist wing. Revived Sikh identity, Gurmukhi literature, and Sikh history.

- Removed Hindu influences from Sikh worship; defined distinct Sikh identity
- **Anand Marriage Act (1909)** – legal recognition of Sikh marriage ceremony
- Led to formation of **Akali Dal** and **SGPC** (Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, 1925)
- First Singh Sabha was **Amritsar (1873)**; Lahore Singh Sabha (1879) was more progressive

10. Dalit & South Indian Reforms



Jyotirao Phule
Satya Shodhak
Samaj (1873)



Savitribai Phule
India's First
Woman Teacher



**Sree Narayana
Guru**
SNDP Yogam,
Kerala (1903)



**Periyar E.V.
Ramasamy**
Self-Respect
Movement (1925)

Satya Shodhak Samaj (1873) – Jyotirao Phule, Pune

- Founded 1873 in Pune; against **Brahmin domination** and the caste system
- Wife **Savitribai Phule** – India's first female teacher (1848 girls' school, Pune)
- Key works: **Gulamgiri** (1873) – compared caste slavery to American slavery; *Sarvajanik Satyadharma Pustak*
- Given **Mahatma** title (1888) by Vitthalrao Krishnaji Vandekar, Bombay

SNDP Yogam (1903) – Sree Narayana Guru, Kerala

- Fought caste discrimination and untouchability in Kerala society
- Motto: **"One caste, one religion, one God for man"**
- Built **Aruvipuram temple** (1888) – low-caste people's worship space; defied Brahmin monopoly
- SNDP (Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam) founded 1903 by **Dr. Palpu** and Narayana Guru

Self-Respect Movement (1925) – Periyar E.V. Ramasamy

- E.V. Ramasamy "Periyar" (1879–1973) – Tamil Nadu reformer; "Periyar" = great man (honorary title)
- Fought **Brahminism, untouchability, superstition**; promoted rationalism
- **Dravida Kazhagam** (1944) – Dravidian political identity; opposed Hindi imposition (1937–40 agitation)

Memory Trick

PSN-P for social reformers: **P**hule (Satya Shodhak, Maharashtra), **S**avitribai (1st woman teacher), **N**arayana Guru (SNDP, Kerala), **P**eriyar (Self-Respect, Tamil Nadu)

11. Master Comparison Tables — Part 1

All Movements Quick Reference

Movement	Year	Founder	Region	Key Focus
Brahmo Samaj	1828	Raja Ram Mohan Roy	Calcutta/Bengal	Monotheism, anti-sati, women education
Young Bengal	1826	H.L.V. Derozio	Calcutta/Bengal	Rationalism, free thinking
Faraizi Mvt.	c.1818	Haji Shariatullah	Bengal (Faridpur)	Muslim purification, anti-indigo
Wahabi Mvt.	1820s	Syed Ahmad Bareilvi	Delhi, N.W. India	Islamic purification, Jihad vs Sikhs
Prarthana Samaj	1867	Atmaram Pandurang	Bombay/Maharashtra	Widow remarriage, social reform
Darul Uloom	1867	Qasim Nanotvi	Deoband, U.P.	Traditional Islamic education
Satya Shodhak	1873	Jyotirao Phule	Pune/Maharashtra	Anti-Brahmin, Dalit rights
Singh Sabha	1873	Thakur Singh Sandhawalia	Amritsar/Punjab	Sikh revival, Gurmukhi
Arya Samaj	1875	Dayananda Saraswati	Bombay → Lahore	Back to Vedas, Shuddhi, DAV
Theosophical Soc.	1875	Blavatsky & Olcott	NY → Adyar, Madras	Hindu-Buddhist revival, syncretism
Aligarh Mvt.	1875	Sir Syed Ahmad Khan	Aligarh, U.P.	Modern Western education for Muslims
SNDP Yogam	1903	Dr. Palpu + Narayana Guru	Kerala	Lower-caste rights, anti-untouchability
RK Mission	1897	Swami Vivekananda	Belur/Pan-India	Service as worship, Neo-Vedanta
Self-Respect	1925	Periyar E.V. Ramasamy	Tamil Nadu	Anti-Brahmin, Dravidian identity

12. Master Comparison Tables — Part 2

Key Works & Publications

Work / Publication	Author	Year	Significance
Tuhfat-ul-Muwahiddin	Raja Ram Mohan Roy	1804	First rationalist critique of religion (Persian)
Precepts of Jesus	Raja Ram Mohan Roy	1820	Ethics of Jesus without divinity claim
Sambad Kaumudi	Raja Ram Mohan Roy	1821	Bengali reform newspaper
Satyartha Prakash	Dayananda Saraswati	1875	Arya Samaj philosophy – "Light of Truth"
Gulamgiri	Jyotirao Phule	1873	Caste = slavery; compared to American slavery
Causes of Indian Mutiny	Sir Syed Ahmad Khan	1859	British-Muslim cooperation; Muslims not at fault
Raja Yoga	Swami Vivekananda	1896	Introduction of Yoga to Western world
New India	Annie Besant	1914	Advocated Indian self-rule and Home Rule

Hindu Reform Movements Compared

Feature	Brahmo Samaj	Arya Samaj	RK Mission
Founded	1828	1875	1897
Founder	Ram Mohan Roy	Dayananda Saraswati	Swami Vivekananda
Scriptural Authority	Reason + Upanishads	Vedas only (infallible)	All scriptures (universal)
Idol Worship	Opposed	Strongly opposed	Allowed (Kali worship)
Caste System	Opposed	Strongly opposed	Opposed (all equal)
Reconversion	Not practiced	Shuddhi movement	Not practiced
Key Legacy	Women reform, Bengal	Hindi, DAV, Punjab	Vedanta globally, service

13. Quick Facts — 16 Points for Last-Minute Revision

#1

Atmiya Sabha (1815) → Brahma Sabha

Roy's FIRST body = Atmiya Sabha (1815); reform body = Brahma Sabha (1828) — 13 yrs later

#2

Sati abolished in 1829

Regulation XVII under Lord Bentinck; Roy's campaign key factor

#3

Dayananda's birth name

"Mool Shankar" — born 1824 in Tankara, Gujarat

#4

Vivekananda's birth name

"Narendranath Datta" — born 1863, Calcutta

#5

Chicago Speech opening line

"Brothers and Sisters of America" — Sept 11, 1893

#6

Annie Besant = 1st woman INC President

1917, Calcutta session — British-born reformer

#7

MAO College → AMU

Founded 1875; became Aligarh Muslim University only in 1920

#8

Theosophical HQ → Adyar

Moved from New York to Adyar, Madras in 1882

#9

Syed Ahmad Barelvi's death

Killed at Battle of Balakot, 1831 — fighting Sikh forces

#10

Gurukul Kangri founder

Swami Shradhanand (Munshi Ram) — founded 1902, Haridwar

#11

Savitribai Phule

India's first woman teacher (1848 school, Pune)

#12

SNDP full form

Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam — founded 1903

#13

Derozio's age at Hindu College

Started teaching at age 17 (1826); died at 22 in 1831

#14

Keshab's "New Dispensation"

Nava Vidhan (1881) — syncretic religion blending Hindu/Christian

#15

Tattvabodhini Sabha (1839)

Founded by Debendranath Tagore — philosophical body for Brahma

#16

"Joto mat, tato path"

Ramakrishna's famous saying: "As many faiths, so many paths"

14. Common Exam Traps — Do Not Get Fooled!

⊗ Common Trap

Wrong belief: Brahma Sabha (1828) was Roy's first organisation / Debendranath founded Brahma Samaj
Correct fact: Roy's FIRST body = **Atmiya Sabha (1815)**, 13 years before Brahma Sabha. Debendranath only joined/revived in 1843.

Why it matters: Two traps in one: (1) Roy's first org = Atmiya Sabha not Brahma Sabha; (2) Debendranath revitalized, not founded.

⊗ Common Trap

Wrong belief: Ramakrishna Paramahansa founded the Ramakrishna Mission

Correct fact: Swami Vivekananda founded Ramakrishna Mission on May 1, 1897. Ramakrishna died in 1886, 11 years before.

Why it matters: Very common mistake — the mission is named after Ramakrishna but FOUNDED by Vivekananda.

⊗ Common Trap

Wrong belief: Annie Besant founded the Theosophical Society

Correct fact: Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Henry Steel Olcott founded it in New York (1875). Besant became president only in 1907.

Why it matters: Besant is more famous in India, so students wrongly attribute the founding to her.

⊗ Common Trap

Wrong belief: Arya Samaj was founded in Lahore

Correct fact: Arya Samaj was founded in Bombay on April 10, 1875. It shifted its main center to Lahore in 1877.

Why it matters: Lahore became the intellectual hub but Bombay was the place of founding — a frequent exam trick.

⊗ Common Trap

Wrong belief: Aligarh Muslim University was founded in 1875

Correct fact: The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental (MAO) College was founded in 1875. It became AMU only in 1920.

Why it matters: Questions test the difference between the college (1875) and the university (1920) — remember both years.

⊗ Common Trap

Wrong belief: The first Singh Sabha was formed in Lahore

Correct fact: The first Singh Sabha was formed in Amritsar in 1873. The Lahore Singh Sabha came later in 1879.

Why it matters: Both are important in Sikh reform history — Amritsar was first, Lahore was the more progressive one.

15. MCQ Practice – Set 1 (Q1–6)

1. Brahmo Samaj was founded by –

- (A) Dayananda Saraswati
(B) Swami Vivekananda
(C) Raja Ram Mohan Roy
(D) Keshab Chandra Sen

SSC CGL 2016 | Easy ●○○

2. In which year was the Arya Samaj founded?

- (A) 1828
(B) 1875
(C) 1897
(D) 1863

RRB NTPC 2016 | Easy ●○○

3. "Back to the Vedas" is the motto of –

- (A) Brahmo Samaj
(B) Prarthana Samaj
(C) Ramakrishna Mission
(D) Arya Samaj

BPSC 2018 | Easy ●○○

4. Ramakrishna Mission was founded by –

- (A) Ramakrishna Paramahansa
(B) Swami Dayananda
(C) Keshab Chandra Sen
(D) Swami Vivekananda

SSC CHSL 2019 | Easy ●○○

5. Which reform movement pioneered 'Shuddhi' (reconversion) in colonial India?

- (A) Arya Samaj
(B) Brahmo Samaj
(C) Ramakrishna Mission
(D) Theosophical Society

BPSC 2015 | Med ●●○

6. The Aligarh Movement was initiated by –

- (A) Muhammad Ali Jinnah
(B) Badruddin Tyabji
(C) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan
(D) Maulana Azad

RRB Group D 2018 | Med ●●○

MCQ Practice — Set 2 (Q7–12)

7. Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in India is located at —

- (A) Mumbai (B) Varanasi
(C) Kolkata (D) Adyar, Chennai

SSC CPO 2017 | Med ●●○

8. Who inspired the Young Bengal Movement?

- (A) Keshab Chandra Sen (B) H.L.V. Derozio
(C) Raja Ram Mohan Roy (D) M.G. Ranade

SSC CGL 2019 | Med ●●○

9. The book 'Satyarthha Prakash' was written by —

- (A) Swami Vivekananda (B) Dayananda Saraswati
(C) Ram Mohan Roy (D) Ramakrishna Paramahansa

UPSC Pre 2015 | Hard ●●●

10. The Faraizi Movement was primarily confined to —

- (A) Bengal (B) Punjab
(C) Maharashtra (D) Mysore

State PSC 2020 | Hard ●●●

11. Who founded the Central Hindu College in Banaras (later became BHU)?

- (A) Swami Vivekananda (B) Dayananda Saraswati
(C) Annie Besant (D) Bal Gangadhar Tilak

BPSC 2017 | Hard ●●●

12. Gurukul Kangri at Hardwar was established by —

- (A) Dayananda Saraswati (B) Swami Shraddhanand
(C) Lala Lajpat Rai (D) Lala Hans Raj

SSC CGL 2020 | Hard ●●●


✓ Answer Key with Explanations

- Q1. (C)** Ram Mohan Roy founded Brahma Sabha in Calcutta, 1828; renamed Brahma Samaj.
Q2. (B) Arya Samaj founded April 10, 1875 in Bombay (now Mumbai) by Dayananda.
Q3. (D) Dayananda's rallying call was "Back to the Vedas" — Vedas as supreme authority.
Q4. (D) Swami Vivekananda founded RK Mission on May 1, 1897 at Belur.
Q5. (A) Arya Samaj's Shuddhi movement reconverted Hindus who had converted to Islam/Christianity.
Q6. (C) Sir Syed Ahmad Khan started Aligarh Movement; founded MAO College 1875.
Q7. (D) Theosophical Society's international HQ shifted to Adyar, Madras in 1882.
Q8. (B) Derozio, Anglo-Indian teacher at Hindu College (1826), inspired the Young Bengal freethinkers.
Q9. (B) Satyarthha Prakash (Light of Truth, 1875) is Dayananda Saraswati's magnum opus.
Q10. (A) Faraizi Movement by Haji Shariatullah was centered in Bengal (Faridpur district).
Q11. (C) Annie Besant founded Central Hindu College, Banaras (1898); became BHU under Malaviya (1916).
Q12. (B) Gurukul Kangri (1902) founded by Swami Shraddhanand (Munshi Ram) near Hardwar.




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