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## Governors-General & Viceroys of India

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### Introduction

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British rule over India started as a trading unit, when East India Company received a Royal Charter from Queen Elizabeth I on 31 December 1600. Within a time period of nearly three centuries, the British turned from a trading power to one of the most powerful countries in the world.

Even after being a small island country, Britain was able to establish one of the largest empires in the world. The extent of the empire can be depicted by the phrase that **"the empire on which the Sun never sets"**.

Britain was able to achieve this tremendous feat on the backdrop of the strong and efficient bureaucracy that it established in its colonies. In India, the British were able to establish this control through Governor-General & Viceroys.

- **Governor-General of Bengal (1773-1833):** When East India Company came to India, it controlled Bengal through a post named as "Governor of Bengal" (**first Governor of Bengal: Robert Clive**).
  - Other Presidencies, Bombay and Madras, had their own Governor.
  - However, **after the passing of Regulating Act 1773**, the post of Governor of Bengal was converted into "**Governor-General of Bengal**" (first Governor-General of Bengal was **Warren Hastings**).
  - Through this Act Governor of Bombay and Madras worked under the Governor-General of Bengal.
- **Governor-General of India (1833-58):** By **Charter Act of 1833**, the post name of Governor-General of Bengal again converted into "**Governor-General of India**" (first Governor-General of India was **William Bentinck**).

This post was mainly for administrative purposes and reported to the Court of Directors of the East India Company.

- **Viceroy (1858-1947):** After the revolt of 1857, the company rule was abolished and India came under the direct control of the British crown.
  - **Government of India Act 1858** passed which changed the name of post-Governor General of India by **Viceroy of India**.
  - The Viceroy was appointed directly by the British government.
  - The first Viceroy of India was Lord Canning.

### Significant Events Related with Important Governors-General & Viceroys of India

Governors-General & Viceroys	Events During Regime
Warren Hastings (1773-1785)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regulating Act of 1773</li> <li>• Pitt's India Act of 1784</li> <li>• The Rohilla War of 1774</li> <li>• The First Maratha War in 1775-82 and the Treaty of Salbai in 1782</li> <li>• Second Mysore War in 1780-84</li> </ul>
Lord Cornwallis (1786-1793)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Third Mysore War (1790-92) and Treaty of Seringapatam (1792)</li> <li>• Cornwallis Code (1793)</li> <li>• Permanent Settlement of Bengal, 1793</li> </ul>
Lord Wellesley (1798-1805)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of the Subsidiary Alliance System (1798)</li> <li>• Fourth Mysore War (1799)</li> <li>• Second Maratha War (1803-05)</li> </ul>
Lord Minto I (1807-1813)	Treaty of Amritsar with Ranjit Singh (1809)
Lord Hastings (1813-1823)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anglo-Nepal War (1814-16) and the Treaty of Sagauli, 1816</li> <li>• Third Maratha War (1817-19) and dissolution of Maratha Confederacy</li> <li>• Establishment of Ryotwari System (1820)</li> </ul>
Lord Amherst (1823-1828)	First Burmese War (1824-1826)
Lord William Bentinck (1828-1835)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abolition of Sati System (1829)</li> <li>• Charter Act of 1833</li> </ul>

Lord Auckland (1836-1842)	First Afghan War (1838-42)
Lord Hardinge I (1844-1848)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Anglo-Sikh War (1845-46) and the Treaty of Lahore (1846).</li> <li>• Social reforms like the abolition of female infanticide</li> </ul>
Lord Dalhousie (1848-1856)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Second Anglo-Sikh War (1848-49)</li> <li>• The annexation of Lower Burma (1852)</li> <li>• Introduction of the Doctrine of Lapse</li> <li>• Wood's Despatch 1854</li> <li>• Laying down of first railway line connecting Bombay and Thane in 1853</li> <li>• Laying down of first railway line connecting Bombay and Thane in 1853</li> <li>• Establishment of PWD</li> </ul>
Lord Canning (1856-1862)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revolt of 1857</li> <li>• Establishment of three universities at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay in 1857</li> <li>• Abolition of East India Company and transfer of control to the Crown by the Government of India Act, 1858</li> <li>• Indian Councils Act of 1861</li> </ul>
Lord John Lawrence (1864-1869)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bhutan War (1865)</li> <li>• Establishment of the High Courts at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras (1865)</li> </ul>
Lord Lytton (1876-1880)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Vernacular Press Act (1878)</li> <li>• The Arms Act (1878)</li> <li>• The Second Afghan War (1878-80)</li> <li>• Queen Victoria assumed the title of 'Kaiser-i-Hind' or Queen Empress of India</li> </ul>
Lord Ripon (1880-1884)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repeal of the Vernacular Press Act (1882)</li> <li>• The first Factory Act (1881)</li> <li>• Government resolution on local self-government (1882)</li> <li>• The Ilbert Bill controversy (1883-84)</li> <li>• Hunter Commission on education (1882)</li> </ul>

Lord Dufferin (1884-1888)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Third Burmese War (1885-86).</li> <li>• <b><u>Establishment of the Indian National Congress (1885)</u></b></li> </ul>
Lord Lansdowne (1888-1894)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Factory Act (1891).</li> <li>• Indian Councils Act (1892).</li> <li>• Setting up of Durand Commission (1893)</li> </ul>
Lord Curzon (1899-1905)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appointment of Police Commission (1902)</li> <li>• Appointment of Universities Commission (1902)</li> <li>• Indian Universities Act (1904).</li> <li>• Partition of Bengal (1905)</li> </ul>
Lord Minto II (1905-1910)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Swadeshi Movements. (1905-11)</li> <li>• <b><u>Surat Split of Congress (1907)</u></b></li> <li>• Establishment of Muslim League (1906)</li> <li>• Morley-Minto Reforms(1909)</li> </ul>
Lord Hardinge II (1910-1916)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annulment of Partition of Bengal (1911)</li> <li>• Transfer of capital from Calcutta to Delhi (1911).</li> <li>• Establishment of the Hindu Mahasabha (1915)</li> </ul>
Lord Chelmsford (1916-1921)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lucknow pact (1916)</li> <li>• Champaran Satyagraha (1917)</li> <li>• Montagu's August Declaration (1917)</li> <li>• Government of India Act (1919)</li> <li>• <b><u>The Rowlatt Act (1919)</u></b></li> <li>• <b><u>Jallianwalla Bagh massacre (1919)</u></b></li> <li>• Launch of Non-Cooperation and Khilafat Movements</li> </ul>
Lord Reading (1921-1926)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chauri Chaura incident (1922)</li> <li>• Withdrawal of Non-Cooperation Movement (1922)</li> <li>• Establishment of Swaraj Party(1922)</li> <li>• Kakori train robbery (1925)</li> </ul>

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Lord Irwin (1926-1931)

- Simon Commission to India (1927)
- Harcourt Butler Indian States Commission (1927)
- Nehru Report (1928)
- Deepavali Declaration (1929)
- Lahore session of the Congress (Purna Swaraj Resolution) 1929
- Dandi March and the Civil Disobedience Movement (1930)
- **First Round Table Conference (1930)**
- Gandhi-Irwin Pact (1931)

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Lord Willingdon (1931-1936)

- Communal Award (1932)
- **Second & Third Round Table Conference (1932)**
- **Poona Pact (1932)**
- Government of India Act of 1935

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Lord Linlithgow (1936-1944)

- Resignation of the Congress ministries after the outbreak of the Second World War (1939)
- **Tripuri Crisis & formation of Forward Bloc (1939)**
- Lahore Resolution of the Muslim League (demand for a separate state for Muslims) 1940
- 'August Offer' (1940)
- Formation of the Indian National Army (1941)
- **Cripps Mission (1942)**
- **Quit India Movement (1942)**

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Lord Wavell (1944-1947)

- C. Rajagopalachari's CR Formula (1944)
- Wavell Plan and the Simla Conference (1942)
- **Cabinet Mission (1946)**
- Direct Action Day (1946)
- Announcement of end of British rule in India by Clement Attlee (1947)

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Lord Mountbatten (1947-1948)

- June Third Plan (1947)
- Redcliff commission (1947)
- India's Independence (15 August 1947)

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Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (1948-1950)

Last Governor-General of India, before the office, was permanently abolished in 1950