

- This **Act authorized the government to imprison any person without trial and conviction in a court of law.**
- The Act enabled the government to suspend the right of **Habeas Corpus** which had been the foundation of civil liberties in Britain.

## Reforms and Administration under Lord Curzon

### About Lord Curzon

- George Nathaniel Curzon (11 January, 1859- 20 March, 1925) born in Kedleston Hall, England was a **British statesman and foreign secretary** who during his terms in office **played a major role in British policy making.**
  - Lord Curzon succeeded Lord Elgin and **served as India's Viceroy between 1899 and 1905.**
    - He became the **youngest Viceroy of India** at the age of 39.
  - He was one of the most controversial and consequential holders of that post.
- Before assuming office as governor general and viceroy, **Curzon had visited India (four times)** Ceylon, Afghanistan, China, Persia, Turkestan, Japan, and Korea.
  - No other governor general of India had such vast experience and ideas about the countries of the East as Lord Curzon.
- **Curzon's Views Regarding India:**
  - Lord Curzon was deeply a racist, and **convinced of Britain's "civilising mission"** in India.
  - He described Indians as having "extraordinary inferiority in character, honesty and capacity".

### Curzon's Foreign Policies

- **North-West Frontier Policy:** Curzon, unlike his predecessors, **pursued a policy of consolidation, strength and security of the British occupied territories** in the north-west.
  - He kept Chitral under British control and constructed a road connecting Peshawar and Chitral thereby arranging for the security of Chitral.

- The Khyber Pass, Khur Valley, Waziristan were places where small British troops were stationed by his predecessors. Lord Curzon withdrew them thereby removing the irritant to the tribal people.
- Curzon's north-western frontier policy while bringing peace in the north-west, reduced a huge cost.
- **Afghan Policy:** Lord Curzon's Afghan policy was conditioned by the political and economic interests, fear of Russian expansion in Central Asia and Persian Gulf area.
  - From the very start there was an estrangement of relations between Afghans and the British.
  - An **agreement was signed between Abdur Rahman (the then Afghan Amir) and the British** under which the latter had been committed to render financial help to Afghanistan, thus securing itself from any Afghan tensions.
- **Policy towards Persia:** It was imperative for the British interest to maintain British influence in Persian Gulf area as Russia, France, Turkey were also trying to extend their influence in the region.
  - In order to secure British influence in that region Lord Curzon personally went to the Persian Gulf area in 1903 and took firm measures to protect the British interests there.
- **Relation with Tibet:** Lord Curzon's Tibet policy was also influenced by fear of Russian dominance in the region.
  - The Tibetans had signed a trade agreement with the British in 1890 but by the time Lord Curzon had come as the Viceroy, the trade relations between Tibet and British India had completely ceased.
  - It was **Lord Curzon's efforts that revived the trade relations between the two** under which Tibet agreed to pay a huge indemnity to the British.

### Reforms in Various Fields

- Curzon **believed in a strong centralized government** and powerful bureaucracy.
- **Calcutta Corporation Act, 1899:** The act reduced the number of elected legislatures and increased the number of nominated officials to deprive Indians from self-governance.

Note: