

UNIT 31 – UPSC - Lord Curzon becomes Governor

India's History : Modern India : Lord Curzon becomes Governor-General and Viceroy : 1899

Lord Curzon



George Curzon, the eldest son of Baron Curzon, was born on 11th January, 1859. A brilliant student, at Eton College he won a record number of academic prizes before entering Oxford University in 1878. He was elected president of the Oxford Union in 1880 and although he failed to achieve a first he was made a fellow of All Souls College in 1883.

A member of the Conservative Party, Curzon was elected MP for Southport in 1886. It was a safe Tory seat and Curzon neglected his parliamentary duties to travel the world. This material provided the material for Russia in Central Asia (1889), Persia and the Persian Question (1892) and Problems of the Far East (1894).

An advertisement featuring a man in a suit with arms crossed on the right. On the left, there are several colorful boxes with text: 'YOUR CAREER' (blue), 'YOUR FUTURE' (pink), 'YOUR ABILITY' (red), 'YOUR SUCCESS' (green), and 'YOUR DREAMS' (teal). A blue arrow points from the left towards these boxes. At the bottom left, there is a green WhatsApp icon and the phone number '0 7830294949'. A large watermark 'EDUCATERERINDIA.COM' is visible diagonally across the background.

In November, 1891, Marquis of Salisbury appointed Curzon as his secretary of state for India. Curzon lost office when Earl of Rosebery formed a Liberal Government in 1894.

After the 1895 General Election, the Conservative Party regained power and Curzon was rewarded with the post of under secretary for foreign affairs. Three years later the Marquis of Salisbury granted him the title, Baron Curzon of Kedleston, and appointed him Viceroy of India.

Curzon introduced a series of reforms that upset his civil servants. He also clashed with Lord Kitchener, who became commander-in-chief of the Indian Army, in 1902. Arthur Balfour, the new leader of the Conservative Party, began to have doubts about Curzon and in 1905 he was forced out of office.

Curzon returned to England where he led the campaign against women's suffrage in the House of Lords. In 1908 he helped establish the Anti-Suffrage League and eventually became its president.

In 1916 the new prime minister, David Lloyd George, invited Curzon into his War Cabinet. Curzon served as leader of the House of Lords but refused to support the government's decision to introduce the 1918 Qualification of Women Act. Despite Curzon's objections, it was passed by the Lords by 134 votes to 71.

Curzon was appointed foreign secretary in 1919 and when Andrew Bonar Law resigned as prime minister in May, 1923, Curzon was expected to become the new prime minister. However, the post went to Stanley Baldwin instead. He continued as foreign secretary until retiring from politics in 1924. George Curzon died on 20th March, 1925.