



National Movement - The Early Phase 1885-1918

The National Movement in India was an important epoch in the history of India as it helped to weld diverse people and sections of society into one nation. All the sections came together not only to fight against the British rule but also to build a new India.

Early Associations

In Class VII, you had read about the revolt of 1857 in which the soldiers, ordinary peasants, artisans and landlords and even princes joined the struggle against the British rule. While the movement was opposed to the British, it did not have any new vision of the country. It, in fact, wanted to restore the rule of the old kings and queens in India and also old social order.

After English education was introduced during the late nineteenth century, in some major cities like Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, a new consciousness began to develop. The intellectuals of the time opposed the inequalities and injustices of the old social system. They wanted a democratic political order and at the same time, they wanted to point out the exploitation and injustice caused by the

British rule and fight to end it. This was the beginning of the national movement in India.

The seeds of a new consciousness were sown in the second half of the 19th century. The educated Indians, after understanding the nature of the British rule and its impact on India, became more and more critical of the British policies in India. They began to come together and discuss these issues and also formed associations for this. In 1866, Dadabhai Naoroji organized the “East India Association” in London to discuss the Indian question. During 1866 to 1885, various leaders like Surendranath Banerjee, Justice M.G Ranade, Badruddin Tyabji, K. C. Telang and G. Subramaniam organised associations in Calcutta, Pune, Bombay and Madras to discuss the problems faced by Indians in those Provinces. These associations had nationalistic zeal and tried to unite the intellectuals. Though many of these associations functioned in specific parts of the country, their goals were stated as the goals of all the people of India, not those of any one region, community or class. They worked with the idea that the people should be sovereign – a modern



Surendranath Banerjee



Gopala Krishna Gokhale



Dadabhai Naoroji



*Fig 11A.1 :
Meeting at Surat*

consciousness and a key feature of nationalism. In other words, they believed that the Indian people should be empowered to take decisions regarding their affairs. Many of these intellectuals also led campaigns against some British policies like taxes on textiles, racial discrimination against Indians, repressive laws against Indian newspapers etc. They realised the importance of discussing the policies of the government and organising campaigns to change them.

- Do you know of any association in your village or town which discusses the problems faced by all the people? What do they discuss? What suggestions do they have for solving those problems? Discuss some examples in the class.

The Indian National Congress: The Moderate Phase - 1885-1905

All these provincial nationalistic intellectuals came together in the first session of the Indian National Congress

(INC) at Bombay in December 1885. The session was presided over by W. C. Banerjee and attended by 72 delegates from different parts of India. The early leaders – Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozeshah Mehta, Badruddin Tyabji, W. C. Banerjee, Surendranath Banerjee, Ramesh Chandra Dutt, G. Subramanyam Iyer among others – were largely from Bombay (Mumbai), Madras (Chennai) and Calcutta (Kolkata). A. O. Hume, a retired British official, also played an important role in establishing the Congress. The leaders of the Congress realised that the foremost task before them was to build a nationalist consciousness among the diverse people of India and unite them. At the same time, they realised that this unity could be built only by accommodating the special requirements of different regions and religious communities of India. They, therefore, decided to hold the Congress sessions in different parts of the country every year and not to pass any resolution which was objected to by any one religious group.



Fig 11A.2 : Delegates of the First Indian National Congress meeting, 1885

The second major objective of the early Congress was to create a common political platform or programme around which political workers in different parts of the country could gather and conduct their political activities, educating and mobilizing people on an all-India basis. This was to be accomplished by taking up those grievances and fighting for those rights which Indians had in common in relation to the rulers. They studied the grievances of people and wrote appeals to the government and also used them to educate the people about their political rights.

The third major objective was to promote democratic ideals and functioning in India. The Indian National Congress functioned democratically, discussing all the issues and trying to create consensus or sometimes use voting also.

At this stage, the INC decided not to take up issues relating to social reform as it would divide the Indian people. Reform

was to be carried out through different forums.

In 1886, 436 delegates were elected to the Congress by different local organisations and groups indicating its popularity in one year. Hereafter, the National Congress met every year in December in different parts of the country. The number of delegates soon increased to thousands. Its delegates were mostly lawyers, journalists, traders, industrialists, teachers and landlords. There were very few women who participated in the Congress like Kadambari Ganguli who was the first woman graduate from Calcutta. Mostly, men from higher social background attended these sessions.

During the first 20 years, the Congress was led by the leaders who are known as Moderate Nationalists. The Moderates urged the Government to introduce a number of reforms. They demanded a greater voice for Indians in the government and in administration.

They wanted the Imperial Legislative Council to be made more representative, given more power, and introduced in provinces where none existed. They demanded that Indians be placed in high positions in the government. For this purpose, it called for civil service examinations to be held in India as well, not just in London. The demand for Indianization of the administration was part of a movement against racism, since most important jobs at the time were monopolised by the white Europeans.

Leaders like Naoroji, R.C. Dutt and Ranade studied the economic impact of the British Rule and concluded that the British were draining India of her wealth through taxes and other means and leaving her poorer and poorer. They drew attention to the problem of poverty and famines and blamed it on the British policies of excessive land revenue, export of grains etc. The Congress passed many resolutions on the salt tax, treatment of Indian labourers abroad, and the sufferings of forest dwellers caused by an interfering forest administration. The early leaders were convinced of the need for national industrial development to end poverty in India. However, the British rule was standing in the way of development as they were not only draining India of its wealth to England but also enabling selling of British goods at a cheaper rate in India and restraining Indian crafts and industries.

The Moderate leaders reached out to people in different parts of the country by holding lectures, meetings and tours. They believed that the British were committed

to freedom and justice and would accept the demands when expressed properly. They carried on their agitation through newspapers, public lectures. They passed resolutions and led deputations to submit petitions to the government. In short, it may be said that they adopted a policy of pray, petition and protest. Often, they were not able to persuade the government to change, but in the process, formulated Indian opinion on important issues. This was very important for the future growth of Indian national movement.

There were major famines in British India from the late 18th century to the Great Bengal Famine of 1943. They were triggered by bad harvests, but their consequences were devastating because of the policies of the colonial government. The government collected a huge part of the produce as tax which did not leave any buffer with the peasants even in the times of bad harvests. The government also did not intervene by controlling prices or supply of foodstuff during famines allowing traders to hoard and increase prices. All this led to the death of millions of people during the famines.

- Why did the early nationalists believe that the British were responsible for the poverty and famines in India ?
- Why do you think the early nationalists did not want to reestablish the rule of the old kings in India? Would it not have been better than the British rule?

Extremist Phase - 1905-1920 **(Swadeshi Movement)**

With the start of the *Swadeshi* Movement around 1903, the Indian national movement took a major leap

forward. Women, students and a large section of the urban and rural population of Bengal and other parts of India became actively involved in politics for the first time. One major trigger for the movement was the proposal for the partition of Bengal into East and West Bengal in 1903 by Curzon. The Nationalists immediately saw this as a political act by the government to divide the Bengali people and also weaken the national movement. Even the ordinary people of Bengal were enraged by this act and took to streets to protest against it. There were massive protests, petitions and campaigns but they were not heeded to and the government partitioned Bengal in 1905. Several protest meetings were held and together they decided to boycott English cloth and salt. There was a tremendous mass response to this call. Boycott and public burning of foreign cloth, picketing of shops selling foreign goods became common in remote corners of Bengal as well as in many important towns and cities throughout the country. Women refused to wear foreign bangles and use foreign utensils, washermen refused to wash foreign clothes and even priests declined offerings which contained foreign sugar. This spontaneous unity of diverse social groups was the basis of Indian nationalism. The early nationalists were successful in germinating this nationalism.

There was also a call for boycott of all government institutions like schools, colleges, courts etc. People set up *Swadeshi* schools and colleges and parallel courts in which they settled their mutual disputes. The idea was to refuse to

cooperate with the government and in this way, undermine its position. The *Swadeshi* Movement gave tremendous impetus to Indian industry. In fact, beginnings were made in the manufacture of *Swadeshi* salt, sugar, matches and other products on a large-scale. The movement gave a stimulus to P. C. Ray's Bengal Chemical Works, and encouraged Jamshedji Tata of Bombay to open his famous Steel Plant in Bihar. The movement also created tremendous demand for indigenous goods. The textile industry of India, in particular received a great impetus from the *Swadeshi* movement.

The Moderates and the Extremists

In the next Congress session (1905), the extremist Nationalists led by Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Lajapat Rai were in favour of extending the movement to the rest of India and to demand for full fledged freedom or '*SWARAJ*'. Bal Gangadhar Tilak gave the famous slogan, "*SWARAJ* is my birthright and I shall have it." They wanted to move away from the earlier strategy of submitting petitions to government to the new strategy of mobilising the masses against the British rule and forcing the British to give up and go. They called the earlier strategy as 'mendicancy' (or begging for alms). The old leaders, called 'Moderate nationalists', wanted to continue on a more gradual pace of movement and felt that the masses were not yet not ready for a full scale movement for freedom and self rule. The difference between the two sections of leaders grew and eventually led to a split of the Congress into two in the Surat session of 1907. The extremist leaders like Tilak were



Lala Lajapati Rai



Bala Gangadhar Tilak



Bipin Chandra Pal



Annie Besant

forced to leave the Congress.

Soon, the government came down heavily upon the extremists and the activists of the *Swaraj* movement. Most of the leaders like Tilak were imprisoned and exiled. Gradually, the movement petered out. Many young *Swarajists* felt let down by these developments and thus targeted the unpopular British officials. They hoped to restrain the repression and oppression unleashed by the British in this way. Even though they did not succeed and were caught and hanged or imprisoned, they kept alive the spirit of nationalism and the idea of making supreme sacrifices for it.

The national movement revived again in 1915 when Tilak came back from his exile and joined hands with Annie Besant to launch a movement for 'Home Rule'.

The two factions of the Congress united again in 1916 through the Lucknow Pact.

- Imagine yourself as a student participating in a burning of foreign cloth. Describe what all would have happened on that day and your feelings at that time.
- If authorities do not agree to the just requests of people, what do you think should the people do?

The First World War : 1914–1918

The First World War broke out in 1914 with Britain, France and Russia on one side and Germany and its allies on the other side. It lasted for nearly five years till Germany was finally defeated. This caused unprecedented human suffering and destruction. As the war ended, an era of revolutions started in Europe. A socialist

On the day of the Partition of Bengal

On 16th October 1905, the day the partition of Bengal went into effect, was observed in Bengal as a day of mourning. Throughout Bengal, no cooking was done and shops and market places were closed. In Calcutta, a hartal was declared, people took out processions and bathed in the Ganges in the morning and then paraded on the streets singing "*Vande mataram*". People tied *rakhis* on each other's hands as a symbol of unity of the two halves of Bengal. Later in the day, Ananda Mohan Bose and Surendranath Banerjee addressed two mass meetings attended by about 75,000 people.



Bankimchandra Chatterji

Krishna Patrika of Machilipatnam

Krishna Patrika was started in Machilipatnam in 1902. Mutnuri Krishna Rao was one of the founders of the paper and since 1902, was associated with it as its sub-editor. In 1907, he became its editor and continued to serve the journal, till he died in 1945. The *Krishna Patrika* carried on its publicity for all the phases of India's struggle for freedom, like, the



Mutnuri Krishna Rao

Vandemataram movement, the Home-Rule movement, the Non-Cooperation Movement, the Civil-disobedience Movement and the Quit India Movement. The *Krishna Patrika* influenced not only the urban educated elite but also the rural masses. Both the magazine and its editor faced the wrath of the British rulers several times.

conditions, when the discontent of the people was increasing and the British were getting more repressive. Mahatma Gandhi came back from South Africa and joined the Indian freedom movement.

- Find out more about the First World War and its impact on the lives of ordinary people.

- During that period, there were massive movements of people who opposed the war and asked their governments to cease fighting with other countries and restore peace. Do you think it was correct?

revolution took place in Russia in which peasants, workers and soldiers led by communists deposed the Emperor and abolished landlordism and private ownership of land and factories. They also advocated equality among nations and freedom for all the nations that were subjugated by colonial powers. In India, the war brought great suffering for the common people as the British tried to raise funds and resources for the war by raising taxes, exporting food and other necessities to the armies.

This increased the discontent among the people against the British rule. As the news of the Russian Revolution spread, it too inspired people that unjust rulers can be got rid of and a society can be built with equality and justice for all. Everyone expected that the British would accept the just demands for democratic rule in India and bring in the constitutional reforms. However, this was not to be and the British introduced harsher laws. It was under these

Keywords

1. Sovereign
2. Racial discrimination
3. Resolution
4. Moderates
5. Petitions
6. *Swadeshi*
7. Boycott
8. Picketing
9. *Swaraj*
10. Protest
11. Extremism

Improve your learning

1. Correct the false statements:

- In the early phase of Indian National Congress, it included only people from Bombay.
- Indian industrialists began to establish companies in different parts of India.
- People in India expected that India would become democratic after the First World War.



- Write an imaginary dialogue between the extremist and moderate activists of Indian National Congress in the context of their a) main demands; and b) mode of mobilisation.
- After reading this chapter, Mariamma thinks that the early phase of national movement was largely participated by educated Indians. And many of their ideas were of western origin. Would you agree with her? Give reasons.
- Why was it important to understand the economic impact of British rule in India?
- What do you understand by *swadeshi*? What were the major areas of its impact?
- How did different parts of the country and people respond to division of Bengal?
- Locate the following in the map of India:
1. Calcutta (Kolkata) 2. Madras (Chennai) 3. Bombay (Mumbai) 4. Lucknow
- Locate the following in the World map:
1. Britain 2. France 3. Russia 4. Germany
- A few leaders like Gandhi, Tilak, Subhash Chandra Bose and Bhagat Singh sacrificed their lives for the sake of our nation.

What would have happened if they did not do so?

- Are there any movements that have taken place in your region recently? Why?

Project:

- Collect photos of national leaders who participated in the freedom struggle and prepare an album. Make a report on it and present in the class.

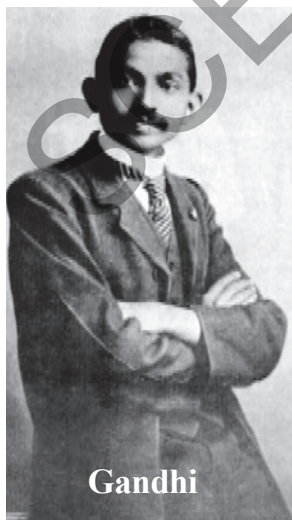


National Movement - The Last Phase 1919-1947

Arrival of Mahatma Gandhi

Mahatma Gandhi arrived in India in 1915 from South Africa. Having led Indians in that country in non-violent struggles against racist restrictions, he was already a respected leader and known internationally. His South African campaigns had brought him in contact with various types of Indians: Hindus, Muslims, Parsis and Christians; Gujaratis, Tamils, North Indians; and merchants, lawyers and workers.

Mahatma Gandhi spent his first year in India travelling throughout the country, understanding the people, their needs and the overall situation. His earliest interventions were in local movements in Champaran and Kheda where he led peasants in their struggles against unfair terms and excessive taxes. In Ahmedabad, he led a successful millworkers' strike in 1918. In these two movements, he also



Gandhi

came into contact with many leaders who were to be his lifelong associates – people like Rajendra Prasad and Vallabhai Patel. Let us now focus on the movements organised between 1919 and 1922.

Rowlatt Act and Jalianwala Bagh Massacre

Mahatma Gandhi did not associate himself with any specific faction of Congress. He built his own political programme and space in nationalist politics. He launched Champaran campaign in 1917, Kaira protest movement in 1918 and participated in Ahmedabad textile workers agitation in 1918. He became the most popular leader and the central figure of political activism. In 1919, Gandhi gave a call for *satyagraha* against the Rowlatt Act that the British had just passed. The Act curbed fundamental rights such as the freedom of expression and strengthened police powers. Any person who was suspected by the police of being a terrorist could be arrested and kept in prison without trial. Even when tried, it would be a secret trial in which even the tried person could not see the evidence against him or her. Mahatma Gandhi, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and others felt that the government had no right to restrict people's basic freedoms. They criticised the Act as "devilish" and tyrannical. Gandhiji asked the Indian people to observe 6 April 1919 as a day of non-violent opposition to this Act, as a day of "humiliation and prayer" and *hartal* (strike). *Satyagraha Sabhas* were set up to launch the movement. The Rowlatt *Satyagraha* turned out to be the first all-India struggle against the British

Communalism and Communal Organisations

Communalism believes in the promotion of the interest of a particular religious community and not the general interests of all. It also believes that the state and government should be run keeping in mind the interest of that particular religious group. This is in contrast to nationalism which believes that the nation is above individual communities and represents the interests of all people including those who may not have any religion at all. This view is also called 'Secular' as it holds that the government should neither interfere in the affairs of a religion nor allow any religion to interfere with the government. It should treat all religions equally without favouring any one religion. As you can see, this secular view is opposed to the communal view which seeks to promote the interests of one religion over the others and insists that governments abide by the needs of particular religions.

Communal organisations sprang up in India in the early years of 20th century as the tide of nationalism too was rising. A group of Muslim landlords and nawabs formed the All India Muslim League at Dhaka in 1906. The League supported the partition of Bengal. It desired separate electorates for Muslims, a demand conceded by the government in 1909. Some seats in the councils were now reserved for Muslims who would be elected by Muslim voters. This tempted the politicians to gather a following by distributing favours to their own religious groups.

Hindu Mahasabha was formed in 1915 with the objective of uniting Hindus and reconverting those who had converted to other religions. It was headed by leaders like Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. They tried to counter the Muslim League and the influence of other religious groups in India.

government although it was largely restricted to cities. In April 1919, there were number of demonstrations and *hartals* in the country and the government used brutal measures to suppress them. The worst example of these atrocities was the firing on a meeting of unarmed people at Jalianwala Bagh in Amritsar in Punjab by General Dyer on 13 April, in which about 400 people were killed and thousands injured. On learning about the massacre, Rabindranath Tagore expressed the pain and anger of the country by renouncing his Knighthood given to him by the British government.

During the Rowlatt *Satyagraha*, the participants tried to ensure that Hindus and Muslims were united in the fight against the British rule. This was also the call of

Mahatma Gandhi who always saw India as a land of all the people who lived in the country – Hindus, Muslims and those of other religions. He was keen that Hindus and Muslims support each other in any just cause.

Indian nationalists, strove for building unity of all people of India, reform of Indian society, bringing democratic form of government and self rule for India.

- Do you think it is right to give the police such powers to suppress revolts ?
- Why do you think were people against such laws during the freedom movement?

Khilafat agitation and the Non-Cooperation Movement

The *Khilafat* issue was one such cause. In 1920, the British imposed a harsh treaty on the Turkish Sultan or *Khalifa*. People were furious about this as they had been about the Jalianwala Bagh massacre. Also, Indian Muslims were keen that the *Khalifa* be allowed to retain control over Muslim sacred places in the erstwhile Ottoman Empire. The leaders of the *Khilafat* agitation, Mohammad Ali and Shaukat Ali, now wished to initiate a full-fledged Non-Cooperation Movement.

Gandhiji supported their call and urged the Congress to campaign against “Punjab wrongs” (Jalianwala Bagh massacre), the *Khilafat* wrong and demand *swaraj*. In the Nagpur session of the Congress in 1920, Gandhiji was acknowledged as the leader of the Congress. In this session, the objective of the Congress was changed to the achievement of *Swarajya* by all legitimate and peaceful means. Non-Cooperation was accepted as the means to get *Swarajya*.

The Non-Cooperation Movement gained momentum throughout 1921-22. Thousands of students left the government controlled schools and colleges. Many lawyers such as Motilal Nehru, C. R. Das, C. Rajagopalachari and Asaf Ali gave up their practice. British titles were surrendered and legislatures were boycotted. People lit public bonfires of foreign cloth. The import of foreign cloth fell drastically between 1920 and 1922.

To this, Gandhi added a campaign for people to spin their own cotton on a *charka* (this cloth is known as *Khadi*). This spread the desire in every house to make the country self reliant.

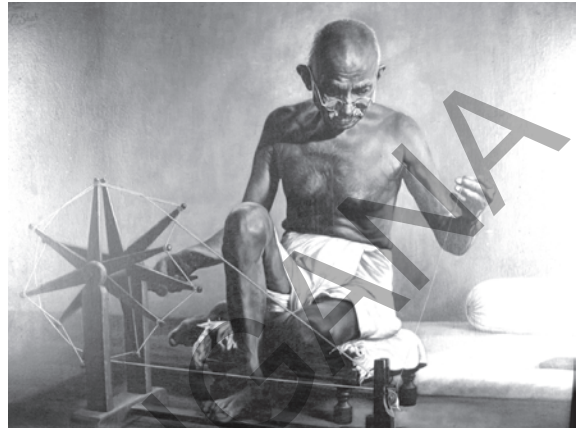


Fig: 11 B.1 : In the late phase of Indian National Movement Gandhiji adopted Charka as a symbol of Swadeshi

But all this was merely the tip of the iceberg. Large parts of the country were on the brink of a formidable revolt. For example, let us see what was happening in the Andhra region.

Guntur district in Andhra Pradesh was at the centre of nationalist activity and the participation was widespread including not only students, but also merchants and peasants in the villages. A highlight of the non-cooperation movement was the famous Chirala Perala movement. The government decided to convert this town into a municipality and forced high taxes. About 15,000 people of the town, led by Duggirala Gopala-krishnayya, refused to pay the taxes and migrated to a new settlement called Ramnagar and remained there for eleven months. There was a powerful movement of non-payment of land revenue by the peasants and mass

resignations of village officers. People said, “*Gandhiji’s swaraj is coming and we will not pay taxes to this government.*”

Another major development was the Forest Satyagraha in Andhra Pradesh Palnati taluqa of Guntur district and in Rayachoti taluqa of Kadapa district. Peasants began sending herds of cattle into the forests without paying grazing fees to the forest department. In many villages of Palnadu, people declared Gandhi Raj and attacked police parties. People were convinced that the colonial rule was coming to an end and the forests would be back in the control of the village people. In the two taluqas the forest administration had to virtually close down during the agitation period.

We can see from the above that sometimes people thought of Mahatma Gandhi as someone who could help them overcome their misery and poverty. Gandhi wished to build class unity, not class conflict. Yet, peasants could imagine that he would help them in their fight against zamindars. Agricultural labourers believed that he would help them to get their lands. At times, ordinary people credited Gandhi with their own achievements. For instance, at the end of a powerful movement, peasants of Pratapgarh in the United Province (now Uttar Pradesh) managed to stop illegal eviction of tenants. But they felt it was Gandhi who had won this demand for them. At other times, using Mahatma Gandhi’s name, tribals and peasants undertook actions that did not conform to Gandhian ideals.

- Find out more about Chirala Perala Movement and the Forest Satyagraha. Prepare a skit and enact it in the class.

The Happenings of 1922-1929

Mahatma Gandhi, as you know, was against violent movements. He abruptly called off the Non-Cooperation Movement when, in February 1922, a crowd of peasants set fire to a police station in Chauri Chaura. Twenty two policemen were killed on that day. The peasants were provoked because the police had fired on their peaceful demonstration.

Once the Non-Cooperation movement was over, his followers stressed that the Congress must undertake constructive work in the rural areas. Other leaders such as C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru argued that the party should fight elections to the councils and enter them in order to influence government policies. Through sincere social work in villages in the mid-1920s, the Gandhians were able to extend their support base. This proved to be very useful in launching the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930.

Two important developments of the mid-1920s were the formation of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu cultural organisation and the Communist Party of India. These organisation had very different ideas about the kind of country India should be. Find out more about their ideas with the help of your teacher. The revolutionary nationalist Bhagat Singh too was active in this period.

Civil Disobedience Movement: Salt Satyagraha (1930-32)

The Indian National Congress met at Lahore in 1929 under the Presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru. In this session, Congress declared that the attainment of “*Purna Swaraj*” was its ultimate goal and it resolved to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement to achieve Purna Swaraj. The Leftists within Congress took lead this time giving a national goal and programme. The Congress Working Committee decided with enthusiasm that 26th January should be observed as the day of “*Purna Swaraj*”.

On March 12th, 1930 Mahatma Gandhi decided to break the government salt laws (making salt very expensive for the common people) by manufacturing salt at Dandi, a small village on the Gujarat sea-coast. The next morning Gandhi and his 78 companions began the 375 km trek, from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi. This March was completed in 24 days. Day after day, newspapers reported his progress, his speeches and the impact on the people. Hundreds of village officials on his route

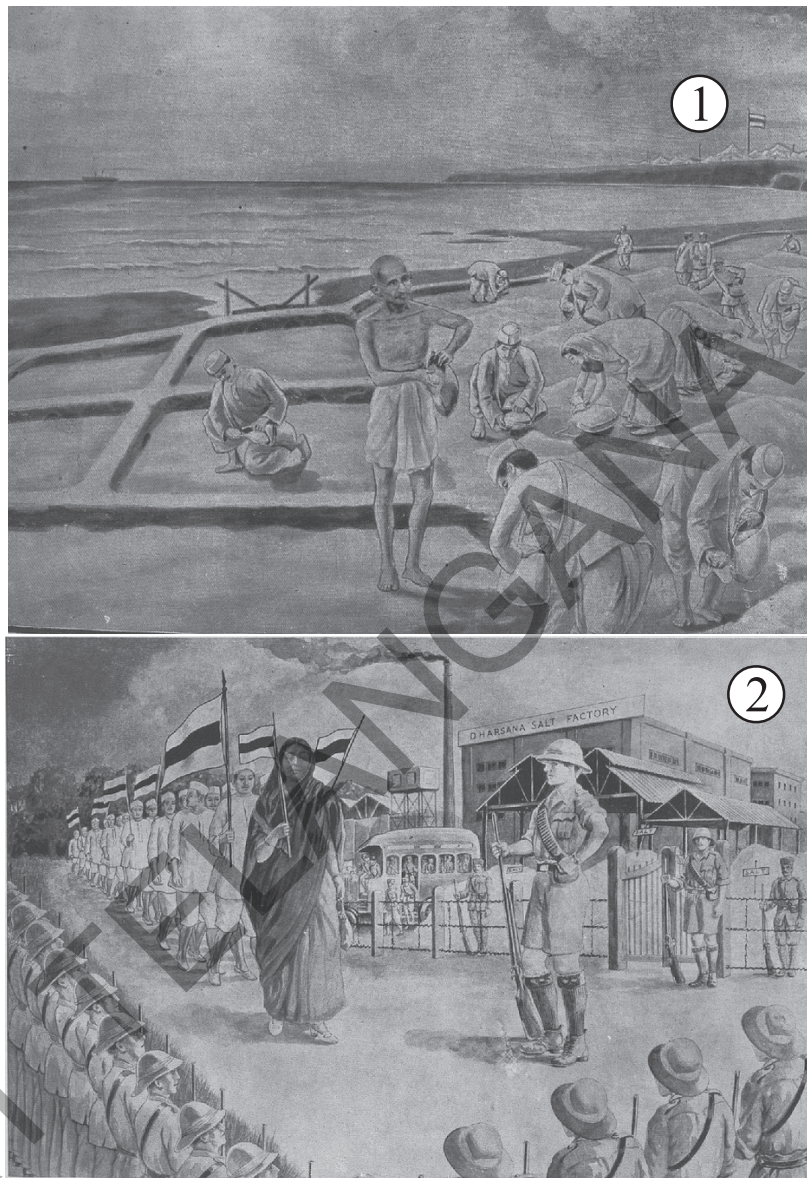


Fig 11 B.2 : Two posters printed during freedom struggle: 1. Gandhiji at Dandi collecting salt, 2. Sarojini Naidu marching in front of Darshana Salt factory.

resigned their jobs. On 6th April, 1930 Gandhi reached Dandi, picked up a handful of salt and broke the salt law as a symbol of the Indian people's refusal to live under the British made laws and therefore, under the British rule.

A wave of enthusiasm swept the country. Salt laws were broken at many places and even women took part in the

Civil Disobedience Movement. In Delhi alone, 1600 women were imprisoned. This Movement was not confined to the Salt *Satyagraha* alone. Foreign-cloth shops and liquor shops were picketed and burned. Hand spinning was taken up as a movement. British schools, colleges and services were boycotted. The people joined in this movement in large number.

The government replied with ruthless repression, lathi charges and firing on unarmed crowds of men and women. Over 90,000 *Satyagrahi*'s including Gandhi and other Congress leaders were imprisoned. 110 persons were killed and over 300 wounded in police firing. Restrictions were imposed on press. The British attempted to divide the Indians by winning over the Muslims, zamindars and other minorities to its side. But the leaders took up constructive programme throughout the country like wearing *Khaddar*,

removal of untouchability to bring social cohesion in the movement. In response to the call of Gandhi, a number of women broke *purdah* and participated in the movement.

The combined struggles of the Indian people bore fruit when the Government of India Act of 1935 prescribed **provincial autonomy** and the government announced elections to the provincial legislatures in 1937. The Congress formed governments in 7 out of 11 provinces. In September 1939, after two years of Congress rule in the provinces, the Second World War broke out. Critical of Hitler, Congress leaders were ready to support the British war effort. But in return they wanted that India be granted independence after the war. The British refused to concede the demand. The Congress ministries resigned in protest.

Quit India Movement – 1942 ‘Do or Die’

World War II (1939–45)

Germany led by Hitler and his Nazi party wanted to gain control over the whole world and declared war on Britain, France, USSR, and other countries. USA joined on the side of England, France and USSR (called Allied Countries). Germany was supported by Japan and Italy. One of the worst wars in human history broke out in 1939 and lasted till 1945 when USSR's armies captured Berlin and the USA dropped atom bomb over Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. Most people who cherished the values of democracy and freedom opposed Hitler and supported the Allied Countries in the war. However, in India it created a dilemma as Indians were at the same time fighting the British.

Britain wanted to use the Indian people and money for the Second World War. Congress demanded that in return for support in the war, India should be given self-rule. But the British Government was in no mood to accept this demand. Congress Working Committee met on 8th August 1942 at Bombay and passed a resolution stating clearly that “British Rule in India must end immediately”. The evening after the Quit India

Resolution was passed; Mahatma Gandhi addressed these memorable words to the Indian people: *“Every one of you should from this movement onwards consider yourself a free man or woman and act as if you are free... I am not going to be satisfied with anything short of complete freedom. We shall ‘do or die’. We shall either free India or die in the attempt.”*

In the early hours of August 9th, 1942, the Government arrested most of the Congress leaders viz., Gandhi, Patel, Nehru, Maulana Azad, Acharya Kriplani, Rajendra Prasad and others. The people protest with hartals, strikes, processions all over the country. Unfortunately, the movement turned violent. The working class in the factories boycotted the work and students attacked the police stations, post offices, railway-stations and other public places. They cut off Telegraph and Telephone wires and railway lines. They burnt government buildings, vehicles, military vehicles, railway carriages. Madras and Bombay were the most affected in this respect. The British authority disappeared in parts of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar,

Odisha, West Bengal, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh. In Midnapur, people set up parallel government during 1942-44. As a result of this movement, ten lakh pounds worth of property was destroyed. Thirty police personnel and ten army men lost their lives; many people were killed, thousands were arrested in the

Subhash Chandra Bose and INA

Subhash Chandra Bose had been a *Swarajist* and a radical nationalist. He organized the Indian National Army (INA) with the cooperation of Rash Bihari Bose in Burma and Andamans. The INA consisted of more than sixty thousand soldiers. He received the help of the Japanese in this fight. On 21st October 1943, the provisional Government of Independent India (*Azad Hind*) was set up in Singapore. On March 18, 1944 the INA crossed the frontiers of Burma and entered India with a slogan *“Dilli Chalo”* - (on to Delhi).

In March 1944, the Indian Flag was hoisted in Kohima. But, with the change of fortunes in the war, the launching of a counter-offensive by the British in the winter of 1944-45 and the final defeat of Japan in the Second World War the INA movement collapsed. On August 23rd, 1945, Subhash Chandra Bose is reported to have lost his life in an air crash while going from Bangkok to Tokyo.



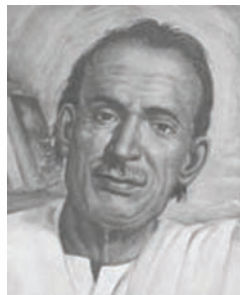
Fig 11 B.3: (left) INA soldiers, (right below) Jhansi regiment in action, (right top) Post mark



Bhagat Singh



Subhash Chandra Bose



J.B. Kripalani



Abdul Kalam Azad

Government suppression. By the end of 1943, over 90,000 people were arrested, and around 1,000 killed in police firings. In many areas, orders were given to machine-gun crowds from airplanes. The rebellion, however, ultimately brought the British Raj to its knees.

Towards Independence and Partition

Meanwhile, in 1940, the Muslim League had moved a resolution demanding “Independent States” for Muslims in the north-western and eastern areas of the country. Why did the League ask for an autonomous arrangement for the Muslims of the subcontinent? From the late 1930s, the League began viewing Muslims population as a separate “nation” from the Hindus. In developing this notion, it may have been influenced by the history of tension between some Hindu and Muslim groups in the

Years of Radical Organisations

The period after 1940 was characterised by intensive activities of radical organisations like the Communist party, trade unions, women’s organisations, *kisan sabhas* and dalit organisations. They mobilised the poor and marginalized peasants and workers, tribals and dalits not only against the British but also against the local exploiters like moneylenders, factory owners and upper caste landlords. They were keen that, in the new independent India, their interests should be properly represented and their long years of suffering should end and they should get equal rights and opportunities. The national movement which was till then dominated by upper class people gained a new dimension and energy which eventually helped to throw out the British rule. The poor, particularly the outcastes and labourers in eastern India, actively participated. The under-tenants in Malabar, tenants in Tebhaga, *vetti* castes and cultivators in Telangana were the active participants in the movements of 1940s. The food shortage and demand for land had driven them to historic post-Second World War movements. The Congress was not in a position to advance these movements as it actively indulged in negotiations for independence. The Communists who were active in All India Kisan Sabha, a peasant front and intelligentsia through All India People’s Theaters Association and All India Students Federation led these movements from the background.

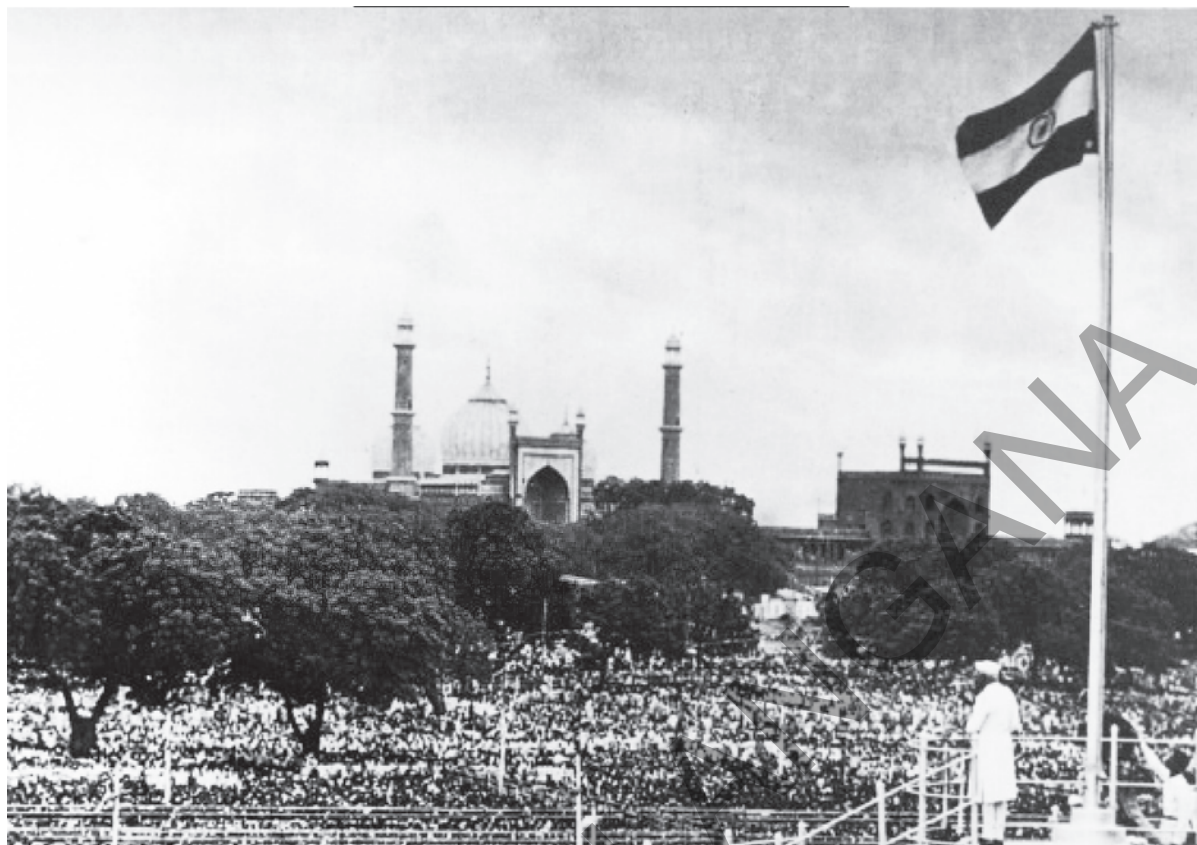


Fig 11B.4 : Jawaharlal Nehru addressing at Red Fort after Independence

1920s and 1930s. More importantly, the provincial elections of 1937 seemed to have convinced the League that Muslims were a minority, and they would always have to play second fiddle in any democratic structure. It feared that Muslims may even go unrepresented. The Congress's rejection of the League's desire to form a joint Congress-League government in the United Provinces in 1937 also annoyed the League.

The Congress's failure to mobilise the Muslim masses in the 1930s allowed the League to widen its social support. It sought to enlarge its support in the early 1940s when most Congress leaders were in jail. At the end of the war in 1945, the British opened negotiations between the

Congress, the League and themselves for the India is independence. The talks failed because the League saw itself as the sole spokesperson of India's Muslims. The Congress could not accept this claim since a large number of Muslims still supported it. Elections to the provinces were held again in 1946. The Congress did well in the "General" constituencies but the League's success in the seats reserved for Muslims was spectacular. It persisted with its demand for "Pakistan". In March 1946, the British cabinet sent a three-member mission (Straford Cripps, Pethick Lawrence and Alexander) to Delhi to examine this demand and to suggest a suitable political framework for a free India. This mission suggested that India should remain united

and constitute itself as a loose confederation with some autonomy for Muslim-majority areas. But it could not get the Congress and the Muslim League to agree to the specific details of the proposal. Partition now became more or less inevitable.

As the proposal of the Cabinet Mission failed, the Muslim League decided on mass agitations in support of its demand for Pakistan. It announced 16th August 1946 as “Direct Action Day”. On this day, riots broke out in Calcutta, lasting several days and resulting in the death of thousands of people. By March 1947, violence spread to different parts of northern India.

Louis Mountbatten, who was appointed as Viceroy in early 1947, was not able to resolve the differences between the Muslim League and the Congress Party. Consequently, it was agreed that India would be split into Muslim-controlled Pakistan, and Hindu-dominated India. India became independent on 15th August 1947, while Pakistan celebrates its independence on 14th August. Even after partition, lakhs of people were killed and numerous women had to face untold brutalities. Lakhs of people were forced to flee their homes. Torn as under from their homelands, people were reduced to being refugees in alien lands. So, the joy of our country’s independence from British rule came along with the pain and violence of Partition.

Keywords

1. Nationalism
2. Secular
3. Moderates
4. Extremism
5. *Satyagraha*
6. Non Co-operation
7. Civil disobedience
8. *Swarajya*

Improve your learning



1. Create a table to show the various efforts of Gandhiji in national movement.

Event	Gandhiji's role

2. The national movement fought against all attempts of the British government to deny democratic freedom and rights of the people. Give examples of the rights which the government tried to curtail and the movement launched against it.
3. To what extent was the Salt satyagraha successful in its objectives? Give your assessment.
4. Which of the following were parts of the national movement:
 - a. Picketing shops that sell foreign clothes
 - b. Hand spinning thread to weave clothes
 - c. Burning imported clothes
 - d. Wearing khaddar
 - e. All the above
5. What were the different events that led to the partition?
6. Read the first paragraph under the heading 'The Happenings of 1922-1929' and answer this, 'Gandhiji called off the movement after the violence'. How do you support it?
7. Why did Quit India Movement become popular?
8. Prepare a timeline chart of the Freedom Struggle from 1885 to 1947.
9. Did the fruits of sacrifices of many great leaders of Independence movement reach all the people? Share your opinion.