

RISE OF GANDHI AND THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT OF INDIA

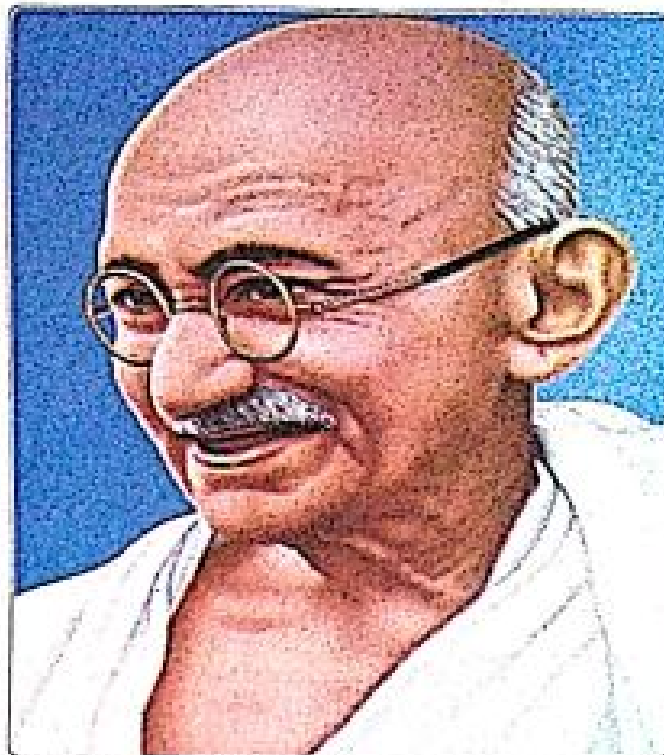
KEY POINTS

- Rise of Gandhi
- Non-Cooperation Movement
- Quit India Movement
- Indian Independence Act
- Non-violence Movement
- Civil Disobedience Movement
- Indian National Army

2.01 : Rise of Gandhi

The advent of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi was a landmark in the history of the freedom movement in India after the world war started in 1914. The Allied nations- Britain, U.S. and France promised that, democracy and national self determination would be offered to India after the war if they support for their war effort. Indian nationalists supported the war expecting this major political gain. But after the Allied victory in 1918, they showed little willingness to end colonial system. This attitude of British, gave rise to disillusion in the nationalists. International situation was also favourable to the resurgence of nationalism to which a major impetus was already given by the impact of the Russian Revolution of 1917. The Revolution brought home to the nationalist movement in India the fact that immense strength and energy reside in the common people.

The Russian Revolution enormously influenced the freedom lover people of India to come forward. The stage was set for Gandhi's entry into the national movement who had already established himself with his leadership in South Africa and in Champaran (North Bihar), Ahmedabad, Kheda (Gujrat) in India. He not only energized the national movement by resurrecting the ideology of truthfulness and non-violence, but also compelled the British to leave the country. Before he took leadership in Indian national movement, Gandhi began the struggle of Indians against racism in South Africa in 1893, when he was a twenty four year old barrister only.



(Mahatma Gandhi was born at Porbandar in Gujarat on October 2, 1869 in a well-to-do family.) He proceeded to England in 1888 to study law, and returned to India as a Barrister-at-law in 1891. After a brief stint as a lawyer both in Rajkot and Bombay, he went to Natal, South Africa in 1893 in connection with professional work. He was deeply shocked by the political and social discriminations which were imposed by the Europeans upon Indian residents. Being humiliated on more than one occasion, he soon assumed leadership of the struggle of Indians against racial discrimination in South Africa. He founded a political association known as Natal Indian Congress and also a newspaper called *Indian Opinion* with a view to educating Indians in political matters and give publicity to their grievances. (It was during this struggle that he used for the first time the weapon of non-violent resistance later known as *Satyagraha* against a humiliating law. The same strategy was adopted against another law which prevented Indians from entering into the Transvaal province. *Satyagraha* was also offered against a judicial decision which made illegal all Indian marriages in South Africa which were not registered and performed in accordance with Christian rites. Gandhi was arrested and imprisoned for nine months but later the Government had to compromise in the form of Indian Relief Act and Gandhi was released.

(The word *Satyagraha* was first used by Gandhi in South Africa. It is a compound of two separate words, *Satya* (truth) and *agraha* (adherence, holding fast). Its root meaning is 'holding on to truth'.

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Gandhi explained that *Satyagraha* was not mere passive resistance. It meant intense political activity by large masses of people. Non-violence formed the very basis of *Satyagraha*. In evolving the concept of *Satyagraha*, Gandhi was influenced by the writings of Tolstoy and Thoreau.

Gandhi's activities in South Africa transformed him into a mature and idealist leader. With this impression he returned to India in 1915. He had to be actively involved and became successful in solving three local disputes— in Champaran (North Bihar), in Kheda (Guajrat) and in Ahmedabad during 1917-18, which recognised him as an influential political leader.

In Champaran, he took up the cause of peasants against landlords, in Kheda that of farmers against the collection of land-revenue when their crops failed, and in Ahmedabad that of the mill-workers against the mill owners. In each of the cases, the strategy was *Satyagraha*, and the principles were truth and non-violence. And in every case the real force working under Gandhi was 'mass participation'.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, the Indians rendered valuable service to the British. The Congress gave ample demonstration of loyalty. Mahatma Gandhi showed great enthusiasm and urged the Gujarat peasants to join the army if they want to win *Swaraj* or self-rule. Until 1918, he was a supporter of the British government.

The expectations of Indian nationalists for major political gains after the Great War of 1914-1918 remained unfulfilled. The post war years were marked by severe economic hardships. Indian industries faced losses and closure. The workers faced unemployment, high prices and poverty; the peasantry was groaning under deepening poverty and high taxation; and the urban educated Indians faced increasing unemployment. Almost all sections of Indian society were adversely affected. Events of the year 1919 also disillusioned Gandhi and from a cooperator of the British, he turned to a non-cooperator.

2.02 : Rowlatt Act, 1919

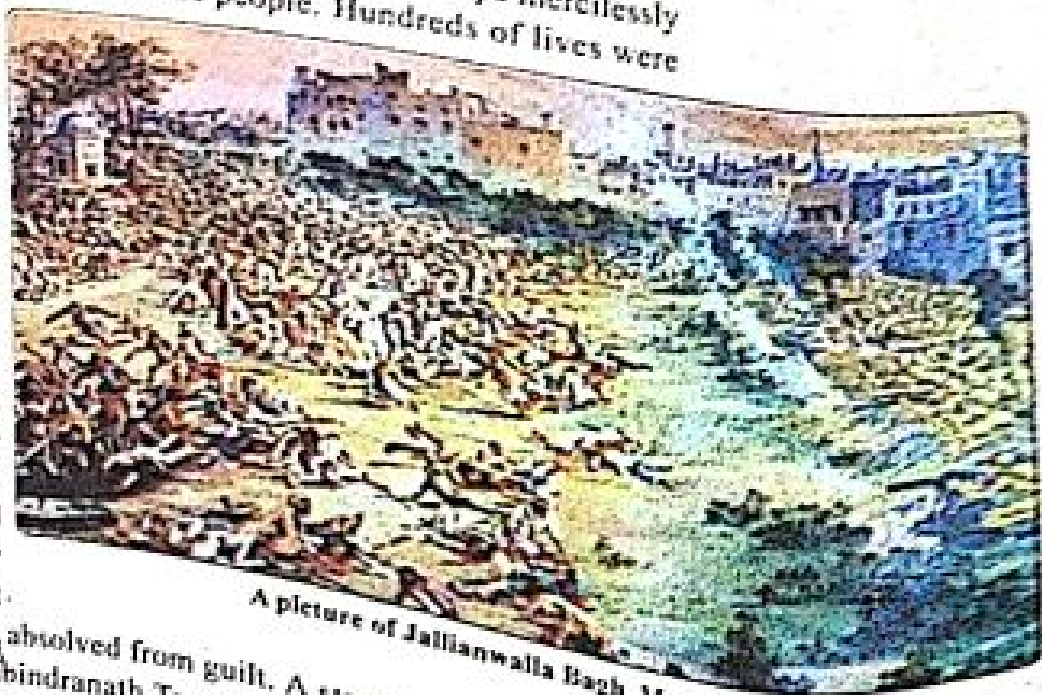
In 1917, the Governor General Lord Chelmsford appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Justice Sydney Rowlatt to investigate the nature and extent of revolutionary activities, and to suggest legislation if necessary to deal with them effectively. On the basis of its Report, the government passed the Rowlatt Act in 1919. The Act authorized the government to imprison any person without trial and conviction in a Court of law. The Act came as a rude shock to Indians.

2.03 : *Satyagraha* or Non-violence movement, 1919

In protest against the Rowlatt Act, Gandhi started the *Satyagraha* or the Non-Violence movement in 1919. *Satyagraha* according to Gandhi, was a 'religious movement', a process of purification and penance'. The movement was launched on April 6, 1919, with a day of *hartal* when business was to be suspended and the people were to fast and pray. The movement gradually became a mass movement. It projected Gandhi as 'an all India leader with immense potential'. He was arrested but was soon set free. The government on its part crushed the movement with a heavy hand.

2.04 : The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, April 13, 1919

Within a week of the *hartal* of April 6, a considerable part of Punjab was convulsed with agitation. On April 10, Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Kitchlew, two popular leaders of the province, were arrested and deported from Amritsar. On April 13, a public meeting was held in Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar. General Dyer, who was in command of the troops, took no steps to prevent it from being held. The meeting ground was enclosed on all sides by high walls and had one narrow entrance. Under the orders of General Dyer, British troops mercilessly fired on the unarmed and defenseless people. Hundreds of lives were



A picture of Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

lost and many more were wounded. Martial law was proclaimed in Punjab. It was marked by indiscriminate arrests, confiscation of property, whipping etc. The government appointed a Committee of Enquiry under Lord Hunter to probe the Punjab disturbances. Dyer was removed from active service by the British government in London, but he was absolved from guilt. A strong wave of discontent swept the country (Rabindranath Tagore renounced his Knighthood in protest against the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre.)

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2.05 : Khilafat Movement

As a result of the defeat of Turkey in the First World War, the influence of the Khalifa was greatly reduced. The Muslims regarded the Sultan of Turkey as their Khalifa or spiritual head. They became upset when they found that he would retain no control over his empire's holy places. The Muslims in India became apprehensive of the fate of the Khalifa and formed a Khilafat Committee under the leadership of Maulana Shaukat Ali and Mohammad Ali. Its object was the restoration of the Sultan of Turkey as Khalifa (Caliph) of Islam. Gandhi decided to extend support to the Khilafat Movement as he viewed it as a golden opportunity for bringing Muslims and Hindus together on the national front. He successfully persuaded the Khilafat Committee to accept the non-violent non-cooperation movement as the only effective way to force the government to accept its demand.

2.06 : The Non-Cooperation Movement, 1920-22

The Non-cooperation Movement (Asahayog Andolan) was a major event in the Indian struggle for independence. This movement started in 1920 and lasted through 1922, supported all along by the Indian National Congress. Under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, the movement aimed at British rule through non-violence (ahimsa). Activists refused to buy British goods, used only local handicrafts, and picketed liquor shops. The goal was to uphold Indian honour and integrity in a peaceful manner. Thousands of common citizens rallied for the cause and it was the first large scale movement in the history of India's independence. Many factors culminated over time leading to the Non-cooperation movement. Some of the significant causes were

1. The discontent over the World War-I, as it had taken big toll on India's economy and human resource.
2. The growing British oppression of Indians as demonstrated by the Rowlatt Act of 1919. It provided the authority with the right to imprison any person suspected of terrorism for two years without any trial. Under Gandhi a wide spread protest movement took place against the Act.
3. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919.
4. The economic exploitation of India by the British.
5. The Indian Muslims had launched the Khilafat movement to ensure protection of the Ottoman Empire.

The realisation by the national leaders that the constitutional reforms were not sufficient enough to provide equitable justice to

Indians and thus decided to launch the Non-cooperation movement under the leadership of Gandhi at a special session of Indian National Congress held at Calcutta in 1920. The movement seriously challenged the economic and political power of the British.

The Non-Cooperation Movement ignited the emotions of the people. Both Hindus and Muslim participated in it. There was huge bonfire of foreign cloth in different places. Shops selling foreign goods and liquor were picketed. Many students left government schools and colleges. The peasants of Midnapore in Bengal organized a very effective no-tax campaign. The Congress set up National educational institutions like the Kashi Vidyapeeth, Banaras Vidyapeeth, the National Muslim University of Aligarh etc. Seth Jamona Lal Bajaj declared that he would give Rupees one lakh a year for the maintenance of non-practising lawyers. Forty lakh volunteers were enrolled by the Congress. Twenty thousand '*Charkhas*' were manufactured. The people started deciding their disputes by means of arbitration. The Tilak Swarajya Fund which was started to finance the Non-cooperation movement was able to collect over a crore of rupees within a short period. The women too actively took part in the movement. Even the visit of the Prince of Wales was boycotted. Gandhi toured almost the whole country to whip up enthusiasm of the people.

The Non-cooperation movement had two aspects – positive and negative. The former included the promotion of *Swadeshi*, particularly the revival of hand-spinning and weaving; removal of untouchability among the Hindus; promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity; prohibition of the use of alcoholic drinks, and the collection of a crore of rupees for the memorial of Tilak (in terms of *Swarajya* Fund).

The negative side is usually referred to as the triple boycott; namely, boycott of Legislatures, Courts and educational institutions—schools and colleges maintained or aided by the Government. The minor items of boycott included surrender of titles, honours etc. The negative programme necessitated some positive steps, like setting up arbitration boards to take the place of Courts, and National schools and colleges where students leaving Government schools and colleges might continue their education. It was made clear that *Ahimsa* or Non-violence was to be strictly observed by the non-cooperators. They were not to give up *satya* or truth under any circumstances.

The movement launched by Gandhi was ratified by the Nagpur session of the Congress in December, 1920. It declared that 'the object of the Indian National Congress is the attainment of *Swaraj* by the people of India by all legitimate and peaceful means'. A new era dawned

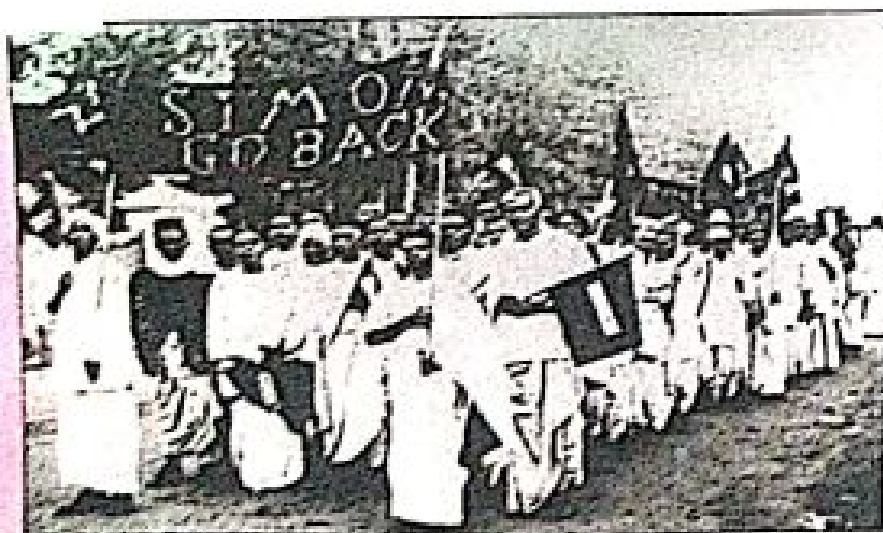
upon India's struggle for freedom. The Congress for the first time decided to follow a policy of direct action. The Congress became a mass-based organization.

2.07 : End of Non-Cooperation Movement, 1922

Much against the wishes and instructions of Gandhi, people at certain places did not remain peaceful. On February 5, 1922, there was serious mob violence at Chauri Chaura in Gorakhpur district of United Province (British India). The local police attacked the protestors and then they violently collided with the police. Three protestors were killed in police firing. Protestors burnt down the police station and about twenty two policemen were killed. Gandhi was shocked at this incident and felt that without adequate discipline and restraint on the part of the people, the Movement had proved to be a 'Himalayan blunder'. He at once suspended the movement and sat on fast for three weeks. Many congress leaders welcomed the decision of Gandhi, but at the same time some other national leaders did not like to stop the movement for isolated incidents of violence. He was arrested on 10th March, 1922 and sentenced to six years imprisonment for the allegation that he instigated people for violence. Still Gandhi remained firm on his principle of non-violence. His imprisonment again led to another movement. The Congress Working Committee ratified Gandhi's decision and accordingly on February 12, 1922, the Non-cooperation movement came to an end.

2.08 : Simon Commission

The Government of India Act of 1919, laid down that after a period of about ten years, a Commission would arrive in India to inquire into the working of the reforms introduced by it. Accordingly, in 1928, a Commission of seven members under the leadership of Sir John Simon reached India. But as the Commission did not have a single Indian member, the Congress boycotted it. Slogans of 'Go Back Simon' rent the air. At Lahore, a procession organized against the Simon Commission under the leadership of Lala Lajpat Rai was 'lathi-charged'.



Protest rally against Simon Commission

Lajpat Rai was seriously wounded and he subsequently died.

Demand for Complete Independence or *Purna Swaraj* : In 1929, the Lahore session of the Congress under the Presidentship of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru declared Complete Independence as the chief goal of the Indians. Consequently, January 26, 1930, was celebrated as Independence Day throughout the country.

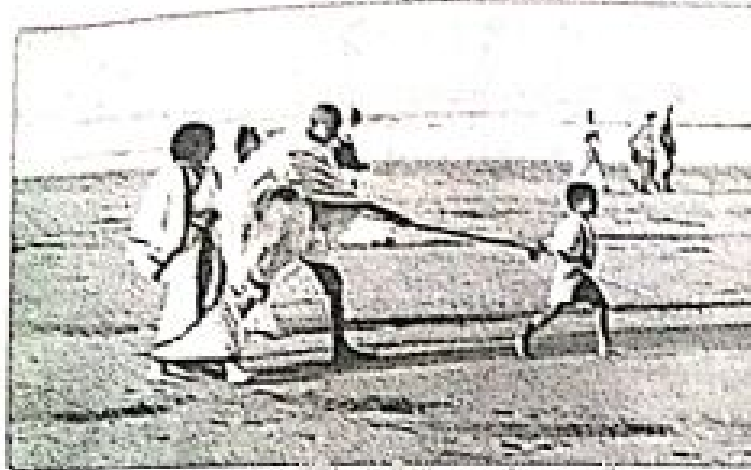
2.09 : Civil Disobedience Movement, 1930-34

One of the factors leading to the Civil Disobedience Movement was the formation of the Simon Commission by the British Government. It included only the British Parliament members and came into effect in November 1927 to report the working of the constitution established by the Government of India Act of 1919. However, political parties and social organisations of India did not accept the Commission as it was accused of being an 'All-White Commission'. This was followed by a strike in Bengal on 3 February 1928. Simon's arrival in Calcutta was met with demonstrations. Meanwhile, Motilal Nehru shouldered the responsibility of the drafting committee and prepared the constitution for India. Indian National Congress accepted the Nehru Report and pressurised the government to accept it. The Calcutta Session of the INC held in 1928 warned the British government that it would start a Civil Disobedience Movement if India was not granted the dominion status.

In 1929, at Lahore Congress, it was decided that the goal of the Congress was to attain *Purna Swaraj* or complete independence for India. Consequently, on 26 January 1930, '*Purna Swaraj* Day' was celebrated in India. On 31 January 1930, Gandhi gave an ultimatum to the Viceroy Lord Irwin to remove the evils of the British rule with a list of demands. The list of demands was:

- Prohibition of use of intoxicants,
- Change of the ratio of rupee and sterling
- Reduction of the rate of land revenue
- Abolition of salt tax
- Reduction of military expenditure
- Reduction of expenditure on civil administration
- Imposition of custom duty on foreign cloths
- Acceptance of the Postal Reservation Bill
- Abolition of the Crime Investigation Department.
- Release of all political prisoners
- Issuing license of arms to citizens for self protection, subject to popular control

Gandhi clearly mentioned that if those 11 points were ignored, then the nation would be going to launch the Civil Disobedience movement. Consequently, the Civil Disobedience Movement started in 1930 with the famous Salt Satyagraha of Gandhi, also known as Dandi March that was launched on 12 March 1930. On that



The famous Dandi march of Gandhi

day, Gandhi with some of his followers left the Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmedabad and made their way towards Dandi, a village on the west coast of India. After travelling for twenty-five days and covering a distance of 385 km, they reached Dandi on 6 April 1930. Here, Gandhi protested against the Salt Law (salt was a monopoly of the government and no one was allowed to make salt) by making salt himself and throwing up a challenge to the British government.

The movement spread and salt laws were challenged in other parts of the country.

In the North West Frontier Province, the Movement was led by the 'Khudai Khidmatgars' (Servants of God) popularly known as the Red Shirts (under the leadership of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan (also known as 'Frontier Gandhi')). Gandhi and thousands of freedom lovers (men, women and children) were arrested. The first Round Table Conference in London was boycotted by the Congress as the Civil Disobedience Movement was going on.

2.10 : Gandhi – Irwin Pact, 1931

On March 5, 1931, an agreement of understanding was reached between Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India. The terms of the agreement included the immediate release of all political prisoners not convicted for violence, the remission of all fines not yet collected and the return of confiscated lands of *Satyagrahis* not yet sold to third parties. The government also conceded the right to make salt for consumption to villages along the coast, as also the right to peaceful and non-aggressive picketing. The Congress on its part agreed to suspend the Civil Disobedience movement. It was also understood that the Congress would participate in the next Round Table Conference.

2.11 : The Second Round Table Conference, 1931

The Second Round Table Conference was held in London in 1931. Mahatma Gandhi participated in it as the sole representative of the Congress. The conference was a failure as no decisions could be reached regarding joint or separate electorates and the number of seats for various communities. Gandhi returned to India being disappointed.



A picture of the Second Round Table Conference

2.12 : Restarting of the Civil Disobedience Movement, 1932

The Civil Disobedience Movement was re-started in 1932, but even before the movement actually started Gandhi was arrested along with Vallabhbhai Patel who at that time was the President of the Congress. The government also took forcible possession of the office of the Congress. Lathi-charges were common to disperse the crowds. Even women and children were not spared. Whipping became a common punishment. The freedom of the Press was curtailed. Nationalist literature - poems, stories and novels were banned on a large scale. Yet, the movement continued to linger on. However, a stage came when the political enthusiasm of the people became less and less and feelings of frustration set in. The Movement was suspended in May, 1933 and completely withdrawn in May, 1934.

The Civil Disobedience Movement demonstrated the awakening of the political consciousness among the Indian masses. At the same time, it exposed the British rule in India in all its naked hideousness and lowered its prestige in the eyes of the world.

2.13 : Communal Award, 1932

It was during the disturbed days of the Civil Disobedience Movement that the British policy of 'Divide and Rule' found a new expression in the announcement of the Communal Award in August, 1932, by British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald. Apart from continuing with the policy of giving separate electorates to the minority communities, namely, Sikh, Christian and Muslim, the Award declared the depressed classes also to be minorities. They were given separate electorates and thus separated them from the rest of the Hindus. On this issue, Gandhi, then in Jail, undertook a fast unto death. He

succeeded in getting the Poona Pact (1932) by which the depressed classes along with other Hindus were to have joint electorates. The British government agreed to amend the Communal Award in the light of the Poona Pact. Gandhi soon got fully involved in the anti-untouchability struggle, which led to the foundation of the Harijan Sevak Sangh.

2.14 : Formation of Congress Ministries, 1937-1939

In 1935, the British government passed the Government of India Act by which Provincial autonomy was given to the Indian Provinces. As a result of the elections, the Congress party formed government in eight out of the eleven provinces, with the exception of Punjab, Sind and Bengal. The prestige of the Congress as the alternative to colonial state rose even higher.

2.15 : Resignation of Congress Ministries, 1939

When the Second World War broke out, the Government of India immediately declared India to be at war with Germany without consulting the Congress or the elected members of the Central legislature. The Congress claimed that since the war had been declared without the consent of the Indian people, it could not associate itself with it unless India was declared an independent nation. The Congress ministries therefore resigned on November 1, 1939.

2.16 : Demand for Pakistan, 1940

The resignation of the Congress ministries was celebrated by the Muslim League as 'The Day of Deliverance' on December 22, 1939. At the Lahore session of the Muslim League (March, 1940), Jinnah, in his Presidential Address, emphasizing on his Two-nation theory demanded a separate homeland for the Muslims or what he called as Pakistan. The English who wanted to weaken the national movement also encouraged separatist spirit.

2.17 : Individual Satyagraha, Oct, 1940

In August, 1940, the Viceroy announced the famous 'August offer' proposing the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council, and to constitute it as a War Advisory Council for the purpose of associating Indians in war efforts. However, as it did not propose the granting of independence, the offer was rejected both by the Congress and Muslim League. As a moral protest against Britain's policy towards India, the Congress started the Individual *Satyagraha* in October, 1940, under the guidance of Mahatma Gandhi. Individual *Satyagraha* was also known as '*Delhi Chalo*

Satyagraha'. The first *satyagrahi* to court arrest was Acharya Vinoba Bhave.

2.18 : Cripps Mission, 1942

The entry of Japan in the War and their remarkable success posed a real danger to the safety of India's defence. It made England to soften her attitude towards India. In March 1942, the British War Cabinet sent Sir Stafford Cripps with new constitutional proposals. He proposed to set up an Indian Union with Dominion status soon after the war. He had consultations with the different political parties, but as he did not propose any immediate transfer of power, his scheme was not accepted both by the Congress and the Muslim League. The general feeling was expressed by a pithy saying, that they were a 'post-dated cheque on a crashing bank'.

2.19 : Quit India Movement, August 1942

In September 1939, the Second World War broke out. M.K. Gandhi and J. Nehru both were strongly critical of Hitler and the Nazis. Therefore, they promised the British to provide the support of the Congress to their war efforts, in return they asked to grant India complete independence. The offer was not accepted by the British government. As a mark of protest the Congress ministers resigned in October 1939. Between 1940 and 1941, the Congress organised a series of individual satyagrahas to put pressure on the government. At this time Britain had all party government, whose labour members were sympathetic to the demands of the Indians, but the Prime Minister Winston Churchill was conservative enough to liquidate Britain's empire. In 1942, Churchill was pressurised to send one of his ministers, Sir Stafford Cripps to negotiate with Indian political parties seeking their support in the war that Britain was waging in Europe. A Draft Declaration of the British Government was offered to India, which included the establishment of a dominion, the establishment of a constituent assembly and the rights of provinces to make separate constitutions. All this would be granted only after the war. However, the Cripps mission failed and Gandhi decided to launch his third major movement against the British. Other factors which led to the Quit India Movement was the fear of Japan attacking India, terror in East Bengal and the fact that India had realised that the British could not defend the country anymore.

Accordingly, in August 1942, Gandhi launched the Quit India Movement, also known as the August Movement on the basis of the resolution passed on 8 August, 1942 in Bombay by the All India

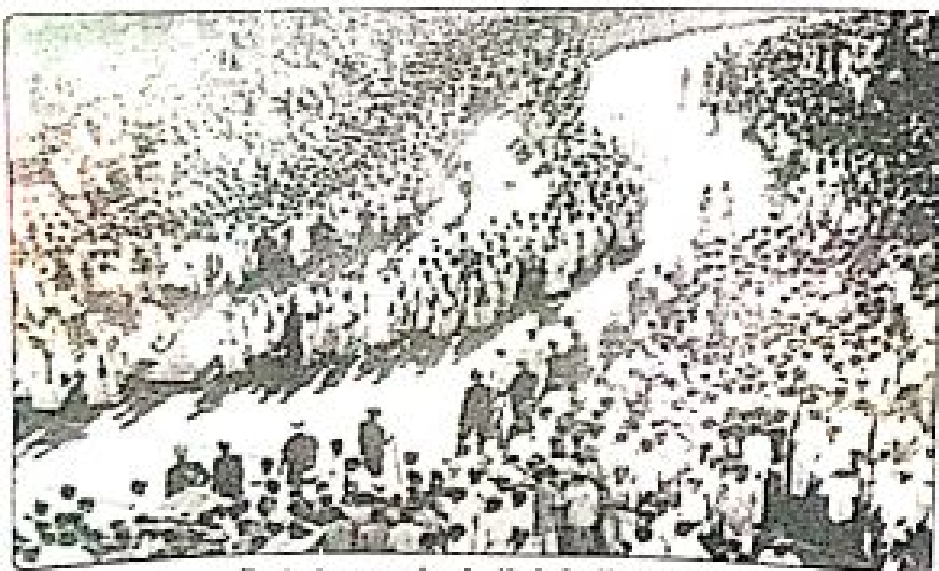


8 August 1942, Gandhi's speech in Quit India Movement

ment such as railway stations, law courts and police stations. Railway lines were damaged and telegraph lines were cut. In some places, people even set up their independent government. The movement was most widespread in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Bengal, Bombay, Odisha and Andhra Pradesh. Places such as Ballia, Tamluk, Satara, Dharwar, Balasore and Talcher were freed from British rule and the people there formed their own governments.

Congress Committee, declaring its demand for an immediate end of the British rule. The nation was inspired by the Gandhi's slogan of 'Do or Die' ('Karo ya Maro').

Immediately, the Congress was banned and Gandhi and most of the Congress leaders were swiftly arrested; most of whom had to spend the next three years in jail, until World War II ended. The people, however, were unstoppable. There were hartals and demonstrations all over the country. The people attacked all symbols of the British government



Protest procession in Quit India Movement

Though the movement was short-lived, it demonstrated the depth that nationalist feeling had reached in the country and the great capacity for struggle and sacrifice that the people had developed. The movement marked a new high in terms of participation of the masses in the nationalist struggle for freedom. Students, women, peasants and workers played important roles. This historic movement placed the demand for independence in the immediate

agenda of the national movement. After 'Quit India' there could be no retreat. Independence was no longer a matter of bargain, for any future negotiations with the British government could only be on the manner of transfer of power.

2.20 : Indian National Army

After the suppression of the Revolt of 1942, there was hardly any political activity inside the country till the war ended in 1945. The national movement however found a new expression outside the country's frontiers. In 1941, Subhas Chandra Bose, who was twice elected as President of the Indian National Congress, was interned in his own house in Calcutta for his anti-British activities. But he eluded police vigilance and went to Afghanistan, Russia, Germany and ultimately to Burma and Malaya. In 1943, with the aid of expatriate nationalist leader Rash Behari Bose, the Indian National Army (INA) or the Azad Hind Fauz was revived.



Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

The idea of the Indian National Army (INA) was first conceived by Captain Mohan Singh, an Indian officer of the British army in Malaya who had to surrender to the Japanese in the Second World War.

In March, 1942, a conference of expatriate Indians was held in Tokyo which led to the formation of the **Indian Independence League**. This was followed by a conference in Bangkok (June, 1942) where Rash Behari Bose was elected President of the League and a decision was taken to raise the Indian National Army or Azad Hind Fauz. The Bangkok conference also invited Subhas Chandra Bose to Japan. Shortly after his arrival, Rash Behari Bose resigned from the Presidency of the Indian Independence League in favour of Bose.

In Singapore, on October 21, 1943, he formed the 'Provisional Government of free India' (Azad Hind Sarkar) whose object was to expel the British from Indian soil. The INA was reorganized, and apart from the Indian Prisoners of War, recruits were sought from civilians, funds were gathered and even a women's regiment called the Rani Jhansi regiment was formed.

The slogan of the INA was 'Jai Hind'. It fought with the Japanese army against the British and Commonwealth forces in the campaigns in Burma, Imphal and Kohima. Bose's famous quote, 'give me blood

and I shall give you freedom' motivated his followers. However, the defeat of Japan and surrender in the war also led to the eventual surrender of INA.

Subhas Bose is reported to have been killed in an air crash in August, 1945. Even though his strategy of winning freedom in cooperation with the Fascist powers was criticized, at the same time most of the Indian nationalist praised him for organizing the INA to set an inspiring example of patriotism before the Indian people and the Indian army. He was hailed as Netaji by the entire country.

TOWARDS INDEPENDENCE : In 1945, the Second World War concluded in favour of the English. So with a view to giving some more powers to the Indians, Lord Wavell, the Viceroy of India, called a conference of the different political leaders at Simla. The conference failed and the political deadlock continued.

In 1946, the new Labour party Prime Minister, Mr. Clement Attlee, who was sympathetic to the Indians, sent the Cabinet Mission to India. Its aim was to resolve the deadlock and make India a free country. The Mission comprised of three members of Attlee's Cabinet, viz, Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Pathic Lawrence and Mr. A.V. Alexander. Among other things, the Mission recommended that (i) there was to be a Union of India comprising both British India and the Indian states with control over foreign affairs, defence and communication. India was to be divided into three groups of provinces- Group A consisting of Madras, Bombay, Central Provinces, United Provinces, Bihar and Orissa; Group B - North West Frontier Province, Punjab, Sind and Baluchistan; and Group C- Bengal and Assam. (ii) A Constituent Assembly should be elected to draw the future Constitution of the country (iii) Till the Constitution was ready, an interim government should be set up at the Centre.

In the elections for the Constituent Assembly, the Congress bagged majority seats. The Muslim League boycotted the Assembly and on August 16, 1946, it observed the 'Direct Action Day' to achieve Pakistan. Communal riots broke out in different parts of the country, especially Bengal. Nevertheless, an interim government under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was formed at the centre. The Muslim League initially refused to be a part of the ministry, but later joined it of its own accord. The rift between the Congress and the Muslim League however continued.

On February 20, 1947, Prime Minister Attlee announced the decision of His Majesty's Government to hand over power to the people

History

of India by a date not later than June, 1948. In March 1947, Lord Mountbatten replaced Lord Wavell as the Viceroy of India.

2.21 : Declaration of June 3, 1947

On June 3, 1947, Lord Mountbatten declared that the only solution to the political impasse was the partition of the country, and he won over the Congress leaders to that viewpoint. The main features of his declaration were - (i) India was to be partitioned. (ii) A referendum would be held in North West Frontier Province to ascertain whether their inhabitants wanted to join India or Pakistan. (iii) The Provincial Legislatures of Punjab and Bengal would decide whether these provinces were to be partitioned or not and (iv) The native states were free to join either India or Pakistan.

2.22 : Indian Independence Act, 1947

The British Parliament passed the Indian Independence Act in July 1947. Its main provisions were-

- (i) India and Pakistan were to become independent on August 15, 1947.
- (ii) Two dominions of India and Pakistan were to be established and their Constituent Assemblies were to decide whether to remain within the British Commonwealth of Nations or not.
- (iii) Each dominion was to have a Governor General appointed by the King.
- (iv) The Legislatures of both the dominions were fully empowered to make their laws.



2.23 : August 15, 1947, birth of Independent India

On August 15, 1947, British domination over India came to an end. The country was partitioned into India and Pakistan. Mohammad Ali Jinnah became the first Governor General of Pakistan, while Lord Mountbatten was appointed as the first Governor-General of Free India. Jawaharlal Nehru was sworn in as the Prime Minister.

15 (On August 17, 1947, the Radcliffe Line was accepted as the boundary demarcation line between India and Pakistan.) In March 1971, when Bangladesh (formerly East Pakistan) became independent from Pakistan, the Radcliffe Line remained as the demarcation line between India and Bangladesh.



Pandit Jawaharlal
Nehru

Rise of Gandhi and the Freedom Movement of India

SUMMARY

MAHATMA GANDHI : CHRONOLOGICAL PROFILE

- 1869 : Born at Porbander (Gujarat) on 2 October.
Father : Karam Chand Gandhi.
Mother : Putlibai Gandhi.
- 1881 : Married to Kasturba.
- 1888 : Went to England to study law.
- 1893 : Went to South Africa to represent a firm of Porbander Muslims in Natal as a lawyer.
- 1893-1914 : Campaigns in South Africa to defend the rights of Indian immigrants.
- 1914 : Awarded 'Kaiser-i-Hind' Gold Medal for his services in the Boer War II.
- 1915 : Returned to India. Establishes *Ashram* at Sabarmati.
- 1919 : Launches anti-Rowlatt Act agitation. Jallianwalabagh massacre on 13 April. Gandhi returns the Kaiser-i-Hind Gold Medal.
- 1920 : Non-cooperation movement was started.
- 1922 : Withdraws the movement after Chauri-Chaura incident.
- 1922-27 : Was away from active politics, but worked for
 - (a) Removal of untouchability
 - (b) Hindu-Muslim unity;
 - (c) and Popularising Khadi.
- 1928 : Bardoli *Satyagraha*.
- 1929 : I.N.C authorizes him to launch the Civil disobedience movement.
- 1930 : Dandi march (from 12 March to 6 April)
- 1931 : Gandhi-Irwin pact. Participated in the Second Round Table conference.
- 1932 : Gandhi started 'fast unto death' (20 September) against Communal Award. The Poona Pact (25 September).
- 1933 : Started the publication of a weekly '*Harijan*'.
- 1934-38 : Was away from active politics. Settled at Sevagram (Wardha).
- 1939 : Resumes active politics.
- 1940 : Resumes Congress leadership for a brief period.
- 1942 : Adopted 'Quit India' resolution, gave the slogan 'Do or Die'.
- 1944 : Lost his wife Kasturba while in detention at Aga Khan Palace.
- 1948 : Assassinated by Nathu Ram Godse (30 January).

EXERCISE

Very short/ short answer questions :

1. When was Mahatma Gandhi born?
2. In which country did Gandhi first apply the technique of *Satyagraha*?
3. Why did Rabindranath Tagore renounce his Knighthood?
4. Under whose leadership was the Khilafat movement started in India?
5. When did the Chauri-Chaura incident take place?
6. Under what circumstances did Lala Lajpat Rai lost his life?
7. When and in which session of the Indian National Congress was *Purna Swaraj* declared to be the chief goal of the Indians?
8. Gandhi started on his Salt march from Sabarmati Ashram to the sea coast at Dandi. What was the distance between Sabarmati Ashram and the sea -coast at Dandi?
9. Who was known as Frontier Gandhi?
10. Who was the sole Congress representative at the Second Round Table Conference in London?
11. Name the British Prime Minister who announced the Communal Award in 1932?
12. During the course of which movement did Gandhi give the slogan "Do or Die"?
13. Who was the founder of the Azad Hind Fauz?
14. "Give me blood and I shall give you freedom". This famous quote is attributed to which Indian leader?
15. What is the name of the International Boundary Line between India and Pakistan?

Long Answers :

1. What do you understand by the term *Satyagraha*? Briefly write about the three local disputes where Gandhi first applied the technique of *Satyagraha* in India?
2. Why was the Khilafat movement started in India?
3. Why did Mahatma Gandhi launch the Non cooperation movement of 1920-22? What were its programmes? What made Gandhi suspend the movement?
4. What was the main aim of the Civil Disobedience Movement? What were the main features of the movement?
5. Under what circumstances was the Quit India movement launched? Do you consider the movement to be a milestone in India's struggle for independence? Give reasons in support of your answer.
6. Write a brief note on the Indian National Army.