
Chapter-13

Mahatma Gandhi and The Nationalist Movement

- Mahatma Gandhi is the most influential and revered of all the leaders who participated in the freedom struggle of India.
- In January 1915, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi returned to India after spending two decades in South Africa.
- It was in South Africa he first focused the distinctive techniques of non-violent protest known as Satyagraha and Promoted harmony between religions.
- On Gokhale's advice he spent one year traveling around British India to know the land and its peoples.
- His first major public appearance was at the opening of the Banaras Hindu University in February 1916.
- Here in his speech Gandhiji Charged the Indian elite with a lack of concern for the laboring poor.
- He successfully organized Satyagraha at Champaran (Bihar in 1917); Ahmedabad and Kheda in 1918.
- In 1919 Gandhiji called for a century wide campaign against the "Rowlatt Act". It was the Rowlatt Satyagraha that made Gandhiji a truly national leader.
- In 1920 After Jalianwala Bagh Massacre he called for a campaign of non-cooperation with British Rule and joined hands with the Khilafat movement.
- The British Raj was shaken to its foundations for the first time since the Revolt of 1857.
- Non-cooperation movement was suspended in 1922 after Chauri-Chaura incident.
- Causes of Gandhiji's popularity among Indians-he dressed like them lived like them and speak their language.
- Mahatma Gandhi was released from prison in February 1924 devoted himself in constructive work like promotion of home-spun cloth khadi, abolition of untouchability, Hindu-Muslim unity etc.
- In 1928 Gandhiji began to think of reentering politics. After the failure of Simon Commission in its annual session at Lahore Congress demanded Purna Swaraj and decided to observe 26th January 1930 as Independence Day.
- 12th March 1930-Dandi Satyagraha, Salt March.
- On 6th April 1930 broke the salt law.
- Across large parks of India peasants breached forest laws, factory workers went on the strike, lawyers boycotted courts and students refused to attend government run educational institutions.
 - 1930- First Round Table conference- Gandhiji did not attend.
 - 1931- Gandhi-Irwin pact, 2nd Round Table Conference- Gandhi attended but it failed.
 - 1935- Government of India Act.



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- 1937- Provincial Election, Congress formed ministries in 8 out of 11 provinces.
 - 1939- World War II broke out, Individual Satyagraha.
 - 1940- Two Nation Theory put forward by Jinnah.
 - 1942- Failure of Cripps Mission.
 - 9th August 1942- Quit India Movements by Gandhiji. Gandhiji along with all prominent leaders sent to jail.
 - 1946- Cabinet Mission- Failed to get the Congress and the League to agree on the federal system.
 - 16th August 1946- Direct Action Day and Communal riots in Bengal, Bihar, U.P and Punjab.
 - 1947- Mountbatten was appointed as viceroy.
 - 15th August 1947- Formal transfer of power, announcement of partition and India got her independence.

The last heroic days of Gandhiji:

- On 15th August 1947 Gandhiji was not at Delhi to witness the festivities. He was at Calcutta and undertook a 24 hour fast.
- Due to initiative of Gandhiji and Nehru Congress passed a resolution on the rights of the minorities.
- After working to bring peace to Bengal Gandhiji shifted to Delhi from where he hoped to move on to the riot-torn districts of Punjab. On 30th January 1948 Gandhiji was shot dead by Nathuram Godse.

Sources to know more about Gandhiji:

- Public voice and private scripts.
- Series of Personal letters published by Gandhiji in his journal Harijan.
- A bunch of old letters edited by Nehru.
- Fortnightly Reports of the Home Department.
- From newspapers.

