

Discipline Course-1

Semester- II

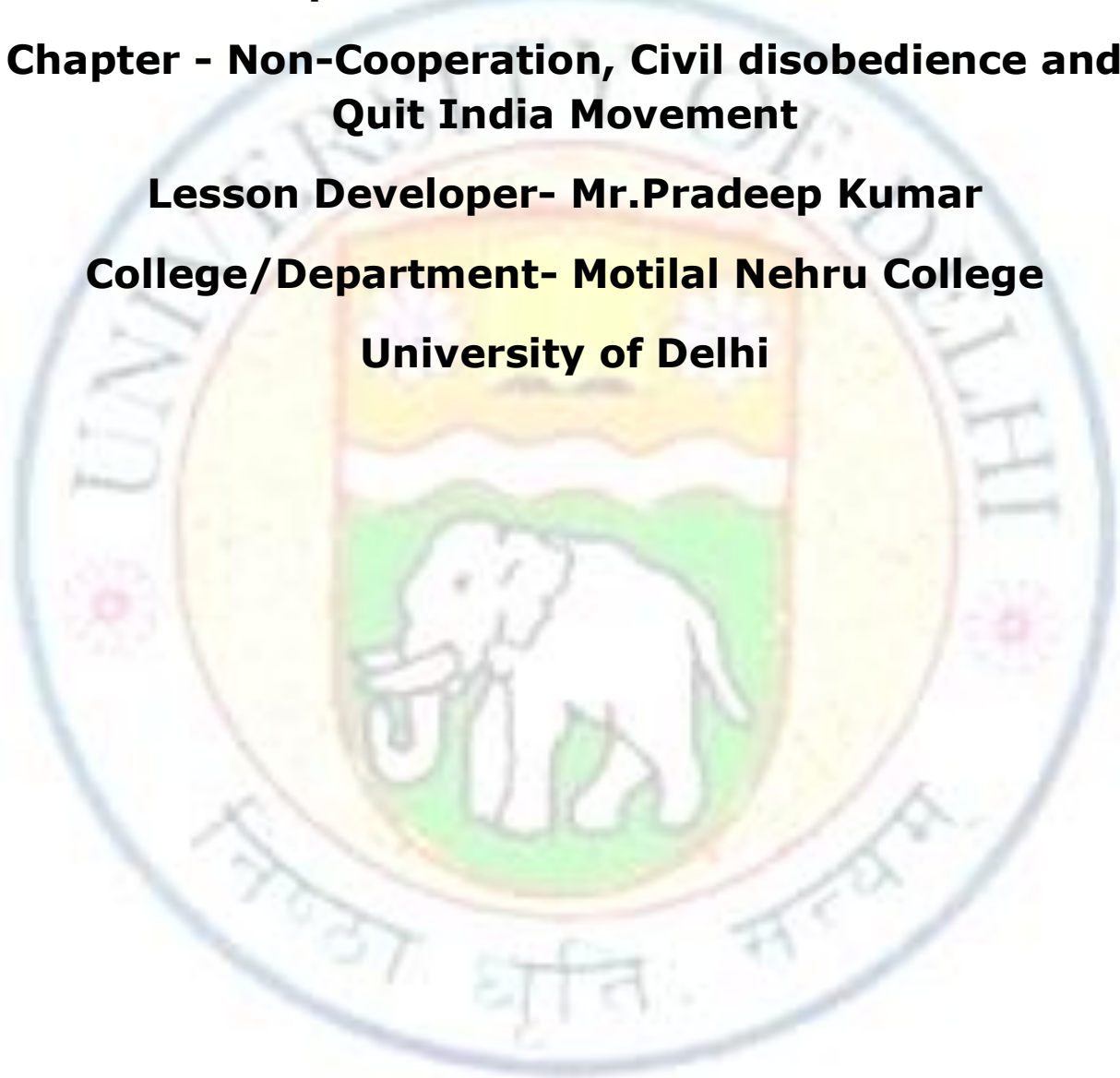
Paper - Nationalism in India

Chapter - Non-Cooperation, Civil disobedience and Quit India Movement

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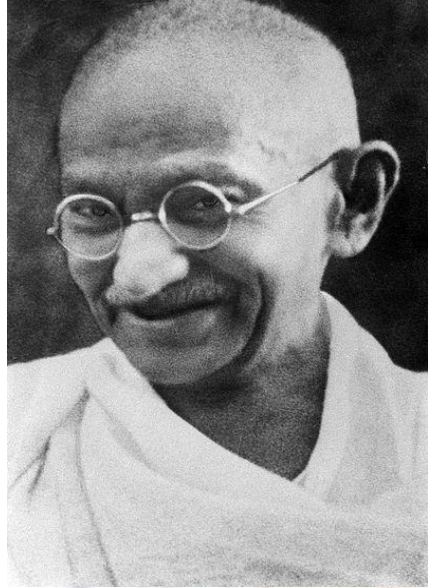
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1. Introduction

The nature and character of the Indian national movement was transformed with the entry of Mahatma Gandhi on the Indian scene. He organized and led a number of mass movements, which ultimately proved vital for national independence. Amongst these mass movements for national independence, three movements are very important in understanding the course of India's national movement. These three movements were in three different decades, all these three had an all India character, and all these three had a greater mass participation. Above all, all these three movements were based on the Gandhian idea of Truth and non-violence. However, we can observe that there are greater variations also in the three movements. These variations are in terms of techniques, strategies and also about the acceptability of sporadic violence.

After attaining the goal of Satyagraha in South Africa Gandhiji returned to India in the winters of 1915. On the advice of his political guru Gokhale he joined the servant of the India society and began his initial work in Gujarat. Although he was not a formal member of the society, as his application for the membership was not considered due to some difference of opinion, however, Gokhale assured him that admitted as a member or not, he will be seen as one. [Ghosh, 1968 ,69] At this, Gandhi decided to establish an ashram, for which Gokhale ensured financial support. Thus the journey extending beyond 30 years for Swaraj began from the banks of river Sabarmati, where he opened the Satyagraha ashram. On this way for Swaraj Gandhiji led the people of India in three major movements: Non-Cooperation movement, Civil Disobedience movement and Quit India movement. Before discussing the three major movements in the struggle for freedom one must know the events leading to these.



Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (2 October 1869- 30 January 1948) is considered as the Apostle of peace, love, self-sacrifice and Non-Violence Mahatmaji The Father of Nation, liberated the people of India not only from political bondage but he also liberated us from social slavery of more than one kind. His vision of social equality, liberty and Justice restored the dignity for the trodden and forgotten untouchables, which was in fact remained almost unknown to the socially stratified society of India. Half of the Indian society which was marginalized for centuries, the "women" took part in the national struggle and felt the relative ease of breathing in a nation which was moving towards gender equality at least constitutionally. For a united India, He discussed with both Muslims and Hindus, and put all efforts to bridge the gap between two communities. His vision for Indian economy was based on Swavlamban, dignity of labor, and small scale cottage industry. Gandhiji also worked tirelessly for the people suffering from leprosy. Thus we find that Gandhiji gave his

life for the overall development of the nation, society and for the humanity as a whole. Thus he reinforced India's national identity and enabled the people to regain not only their freedom but their pride and dignity, eroded by centuries. Mahatmaji did it with Non-Violence and Satyagraha. Satyagraha could be defined as a true force or to say a true and reasonable appeal which is hitherto not granted. In more practical words, this is a civil disobedience. It seeks for superior moral power of an individual or protesters, Who are capable enough to influence the oppressor through the means of upwas, dharna, strike and peaceful resistance. So that he is forced to reshape his policy in favour of the oppressed. A satyagrahee thus need to follow the path of peace, love, self: sacrifice, empathy, self; control and nonviolence, which is nonnegotiable in any circumstance.

2. Events leading to Non-Cooperation Movement

(i) Champaran Satyagraha

In 1916 Rajkumar Shukla met Gandhiji in Lucknow, and persuaded him to visit the peasants of Champaran. Where the European planters have forced the peasants to grow indigo under the Tinkathia system. Because of this exploitative policy the peasants of Champaran were agitated. Gandhiji after a careful survey of the situation agreed to lead the movement. But he was refused entry into the district by the District Magistrate and was tried for defiance. Gandhiji pleaded guilty but justified it on the grounds that human authority must give in to the higher authority of human conscience.

The Government was forced to appoint a Commission of inquiry to go into the issue of indigo cultivator's with Gandhiji as one of its members.

The educated young congressmen like Rajendra Prasad, J.B. Kripalani and Braj Kishor babu helped Gandhiji in this Satyagrah. [Kripalani, 1970, 68-69]

Agitated masses followed Gandhiji and saw in him a divine virtue to which they responded spontaneously. Rich peasants, in his name but without his knowledge indulged poor peasant in to violence and the masses began to defy even the British might. However mahatma never approved of this. In 1918 in the month of November, the Champaran agricultural act was brought for legislation, and the Satyagrah reached to an end, but it achieved a limited goal, as says Bandopadhyay in his book [Bandopadhyay, 2004 , 293] for, the struggle continued between peasants and European planters and British raj.

(ii) Kheda Satyagraha

In 1917 in the district of Kheda of Gujarat peasant unrest was on the rise. A variety of factors, such as destruction of crops by late rains, sudden rise in agricultural wages, high rate of inflation and the outbreak of bubonic plague contributed to unusual hardship particularly for the rich Patidar peasants. In a small town of Katella in the northern part of the district, a no-revenue campaign was actually started by two local leaders, Mohanlal Pandya and Shankarlal Parikh, with a demand for revenue remission. In Jan 1918 with the help of Gujarat sabha the leaders of the campaign came in touch with Gandhiji. For Gandhiji was involved in Ahmadabad mill workers movement, so the Satyagrah could not be initiated till march 22 1918. Even now the movement was a patchy campaign, as it affected only a few villages; often the peasants capitulated to government pressure and often they crossed the boundaries of Gandhi an politics of non-violence.

Soon the Bombay government gave in and partially accepted the demands of the peasants, only to the extent that it would not confiscate the land of the agitated peasants. In the month of June same year Gandhiji withdrew the Satyagraha. Although Mahatma enjoyed the support of the masses in the villages but when he returned to appeal for the recruitment in the army to fight for the British in the world war. They rejected the appeal by the Mahatma. [Bandopadhyay ,2004, 294]

(iii)Ahmadabad Mill Workers and Gandhiji

In early 1918 in Ahmadabad Gandhiji led the textile worker movement against mill owners, who were not giving in the demands of the workers for a 50 percent increase in the wages, however Gandhiji gave the call for the Satyagraha fasting which drew support from all over India. This step brought the Indian mill workers united. This experiment of Satyagraha proved fruitful for the striking workers and negotiations took place. The owners decided to increase the pay by 35 percent, eventually bringing an end to the movement.

(iv)Rowlett Satyagraha

In early 1919 notorious Rowlett act was passed which vehemently agitated the minds of Indian people. The act prepared by a committee under Justice S.A.T. Rowlett, to provide the government with additional coercive power to deal with increasing revolutionary activities in India from within and abroad. The black bill suggested certain measures of arbitrary arrests without trial and restrictions on the movement of persons suspected of anti-government activities. Restrictions were also forced on Indian press. The Bills were introduced in the central legislature in February 1919 against the unanimous opposition of all non-official Indian members. Unprecedented powers with the authorities agitated the people from all walks of life, young and the old, moderates and extremists, peasants and workers and people from village and from cities all denounced the act, and called it a black law.

At this time Gandhiji decided to call for a Satyagraha against the Rowlett act. For the first time a countrywide movement was launched, colonial India was told how the act was undemocratic and authoritarian in nature; as it was unjust, subversive of all principles of liberty and justice and destructive of the elementary rights of the individual. First all India Satyagraha hartal was decided on March 30 1919 [March 30 in Delhi and Bombay] and on April 6. Although the notice was short but it received maximum support of the people. The prayers, fasting and hartal was observed, people remained in doors. In Calcutta, a Meeting held at the conclusion of the hartal was attended by one Hundred thousand people on April 6. [Ghosh , 1968 , 82] Gandhi himself had not expected so much success. On April 7 he proceeded for North to Delhi and Punjab. And on the 8th April, he was arrested at Paliwal station, brought back to Bombay and let off. [Ghosh , 1968 , 83] The news of his arrest provoked reprehensible Acts of mob violence at Ahmadabad, Viramgam and other Places. He rushed to Ahmadabad and helped restore the peace.

Overwhelmed by the total atmosphere of violence in Punjab, Gujarat and Bengal, Gandhi withdrew the Satyagraha. As Satyagraha required strict adherence to non-violence even under the severest provocation. Gandhi felt that people had not grasped the full meaning of this message. They were not yet ready to use the new weapon of non-violence. He, therefore, called off the movement and admitted that he had made "a Himalayan miscalculation" inasmuch .he had overrated the patience of the people and their capacity for disciplined action. [Kripalani , 1970, 86]

(v)Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

Punjab however was not calm, the situation there deteriorated rapidly. For reason unknown to the people, Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlu were arrested in Amritsar and taken away, and the police fired on the procession the people had taken out in protest against the arrests. The infuriated masses also indulged in violent acts killing some Europeans. [Kripalani , 1970, 83] although Martial Law was not formally in place, General Dyer took command of Amritsar. He banned public meetings; but the prohibitory Notification was not properly circulated. On the 13th April, a crowd of several thousand people, including small children, gathered in an enclosed place called Jallianwala Bagh for Baisakhi celebration. On hearing of this, General Dyer left for the place with a body of troops and armored cars equipped with machine guns. But as the approaches to the Bagh were narrow, it was not possible to take the armored cars inside it. On entering the Bagh, The General, without giving any warning to the crowds to disperse, ordered his troops to open fire and the firing continued until ammunition was exhausted. [[Kripalani , 1970, 83 84.] Hundreds of people were killed and thousands were wounded. Not only this, curfew was imposed thus barring the possibility of any help reaching there. Atrocities inflicted on the public without cease. This brutal massacre and cruel repression constituted a shameful chapter in the history of British rule in India. Sir Michael O'Dwyer, who was then Lt. Governor of the Punjab supported the cruel measures adopted by General Dyer. It seemed, indeed, that the two together had decided on teaching the people of the Punjab a lesson, and far from feeling repentant, General Dyer was proud of what he had done.[ibid] an inquiry was commissioned under MR. Hunter which did submit for General Dyer's early retirement. Stunned by the brutality in Punjab Rabindranath Tagore renounced the knighthood conferred on him by the British government.

(vi) Khilafat Question

Another development which stirred the minds of India and of Gandhiji was Khilafat question, where in Muslims of India especially felt betrayed by the British policy .“Which arose in the wake of the War.? In the War Turkey was against the English, and yet Indian Muslims fought against their co-religionists, relying on a Pledge given by the British Government that the powers of The Khalifa would not be curbed on the termination of the War. But that pledge was not honored in the peace negotiations. Indian Muslims who interpreted this as an affront to their religious sentiments started an agitation against the proposed restrictions on the Khalifa's powers, and this came To be known as the Khilafat movement” [Ghosh , 1968 ,88] Gandhiji extended his support to the cause led by Maulana Mohammed Ali,Shaukat Ali, Abul Kalam Azad and Hakim Ajmal Khan were the leaders [Ghosh , 1968, 88]

It was in the month of November 1919 in a meeting in Delhi with Muslim leaders that Gandhi for the first time spoke of the Non-Cooperation arguing If in case the British fail to honor its own pledge. The Muslims may move forward with the idea of Non-Violent Non-Cooperations. Khilafat conferences were held in Allahabad, Madras and many other places. In these conferences the decision to launch progressive non-cooperation was reiterated. [Kripalani, 1970 ,93]

2. Non-cooperation movement

Gandhi now pressed the Congress to adopt a similar plan of campaign on three issues: Punjab wrong, Khilafat wrong and Swaraj. In an article in *Young India* he announced that through this movement he would bring Swaraj in one year. He did not; however, -define what this Swaraj would actually mean. [Bandopadhyay ,2004, 300] senior congress leaders had their doubts that this mass movement might lead to violence as the people of India were yet to be trained. However, the call for Non-Co-operation was receiving support from hitherto unnoticed population, from tribes, and from backward regions.

From sep. 4th to 9th 1920 a special session of congress was held in Calcutta, Lala Lajpath Rai presided over the meeting. Here in Gandhiji moved the resolution. "Calling upon the country "to approve of and adopt the policy of progressive non-violent non-cooperation", until the Khilafat wrongs were righted and Swaraj established." [93] Though the resolution met with opposition from the likes of Bepin Chandra Pal and C. R. Das, it was adopted by the congress.

After long discussions the scheme was adopted calling for surrender of titles of Indians, resignation from the nominated seats in local bodies, boycott of official functions, boycott of Government and aided educational institutions by students, encouraging national schools, boycott of law courts by lawyers and litigants. The Reformed Councils were also to be boycotted. Further, people were asked to boycott foreign goods and actively promote Swadeshi. (Promotion of indigenous goods.) Henceforth giving rise to charkha and Khadi etc. at the same time striving for "Swavlamban"

By this time congress leadership had realized that activities of congress were not limited only to small educated urban Indian elite, the issues and the policies of congress were read, discussed and analyzed by the people throughout the nation. The voice of congress was not related only to a small minority but it was a voice of the nation. In December 1920 in Nagpur session Gandhiji reassured that Swaraj could be achieved in one year. If that did not happen or if government resorted to repression, then a civil disobedience campaign was to be launched, involving non-payment of taxes. The resolution also provided for a radical restructuring of the Congress through the constitution of district and village level units to transform the party into a true mass organization. [Bandopadhyay , 2004 300-301]

A new constitution of congress was also adopted in the same session, where some important structural changes were announced. The formation of the 15-member working committee to look after the day-to-day work of the organization, to set up an All India Congress Committee (AICC) with 350 members, Re-organization of the Congress Provincial Committees on a linguistic basis, the organization of the Congress to be built at village, town, Tehsil and District levels, along with the provincial and national levels, and The Congress was to launch a membership programme with a symbolic fee of only four Annas; this was the first major attempt to reach out to the common man. (Pradhan ,2008, 139) Apart from this, Congress also tried to change its creed and its goal. Its earlier goal of the 'attainment of self-government by constitutional means' was replaced by the 'attainment of Swaraj by peaceful and legitimate means'. One obvious result of this new creed of the Congress was that non-violent Satyagraha came to be accepted as the legitimate means

under the new dispensation of the Congress. [Pradhan ,2008 , 139] it was also decided that efforts will be made for Hindu-Muslim unity, promotion of national education, raising a national fund, etc.

The movement which was a few months old by this time gained momentum and wave of mass action in favor of Gandhiji and his appeal was felt across the nation. The Council election was boycotted. Titles and honors were renounced; lawyers like Motilal Nehru, C R Das, Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Rajendra Prasad, C Rajagopalachari and others left their legal practice. Schools and colleges were boycotted and several new educational institutions opened with nationalistic feeling, thence promoting the idea of nationalism. Prominent amongst these institutions were: Gujarat Vidyapeeth, Bihar Vidyapeeth, Kashi Vidyapeeth National College Lahore and Jamia Millia Islamia. renowned nationalist leaders joined these educational institutions as teacher, which includes Subhas Chandra Bose, Acharya Narendra Dev, Rajendra Prasad, and Dr Sampurnanand in the summer of 1921 congress decided to boycott foreign clothes, not only this, AICC also affirmed that it would boycott the coming visit of the prince of Wales. It was accepted in the Nagpur session that civil disobedience and nonpayment of taxes will be incorporated at a later stage.

Khilafat movement was an integral constituent of the noncooperation movement. In July 1920 Ali was arrested as he opposed the British dictate to be a part of the British army. His refusal was based on the argument that his religion does not allow him to do so. His arrest led to widespread protests. [Pradhan , 2008 , 140]

i. Moplah Rebellion

August 1921 witnessed the Moplah uprising in Malabar, although it was unrest against the British Raj to establish a Khilafat kingdom, but unfortunately it took a communal turn, in the process a number of Hindus were killed and their properties were looted and seized. Some forcible conversion of Hindus to Islam also took place. Soon repressive measures by the government followed. A number of Mullahs were killed, and a large number of them were wounded. Some Mullahs died due to asphyxiation in railway wagon.

Here we find that this uprising was against the Hindu land owners. And the agitation in fact was to over throw a system which was hitherto economically and politically dominated by a particular community. Though the appeal was for Khilafat, but the anger of the less dominant community was against the long standing traditional political power. In short, the agitation was purely local in nature. And did not follow the idea of the Khilafat movement, which in association with Non-Co-operation movement was pursuing the restoration of power of Khalif [The civil and religious leader of a Muslim state considered to be a representative of Allah on earth] and Swaraj.

In November 1921 prince of Wales visited India, Black flags were shown to him. And agitated crowd failed to control its anger against the British. They attacked some Christians who were to welcome the Prince of Wales, when a nationwide strike was observed. Gandhiji condemn these violent acts and fasted for two days. Violent activities like this prompted the

Congress leadership to delay the civil disobedience movement; however, in November 1921 the provincial committees were authorized to decide on their own when to begin the civil disobedience and no taxation movement.

Colonial masters, at this time resorted to full repressive measure, and declared Khilafat and Non-Co-operation as unlawful. Leaders of both communities were arrested on large scale. On this, the Congress met at Ahmadabad in December 1921 and it called up its members to suspend all other activities and volunteer them for arrest. Mahatma Gandhi was made its sole executive. British repression not only stirred the nation but Gandhiji also got disturbed so much that on February first 1922, He intimated the viceroy that he intended to launch a civil disobedience movement. It was decided that an experimental no revenue campaign would be launched at Bardoli in Gujarat in February 1922. The venue was carefully chosen, as it was a Ryotwari area, with no Zamindars and therefore no danger of a no-revenue campaign snowballing into a no-rent campaign tearing apart the fragile coalition of classes. [Bandopadhyay, 2004, 302]

ii. Chauri Chaura episode and the withdrawal of the movement

In Gorakhpur district of Uttar Pradesh, on 4 February 1922 the villagers burned alive twenty-two policemen in a small locality of Chauri Chaura in the local police station. Here the local volunteers had gathered to protest against police oppression, and the sale and high prices of certain articles. The police initially sought to deter them by firing in the air. This was interpreted by the crowd as a sign of fear, as bullets were turning into water "by the grace of Gandhiji". The crowd then marched towards the market, threw brickbats at the police and when the latter opened real fire, they were chased into the Thana, which was then set on fire. For the demonstrators the destruction of the Thana only meant the coming of the Gandhi raj. But for Gandhiji, who could not forget the violence in Bombay and communal killings in Kerala, it confirmed the absence of an environment of non-violence. Non-cooperation movement was, thence, withdrawn on 11 February 1922. This was followed by the Bardoli resolution, which emphasized the need for constructive work before beginning any political agitation. [Bandopadhyay, 2004, 303]

Gandhiji was criticized by his own party men, Motilal, Deshbandhu, Lajpath Rai, Subhash Bose, M.N. Roy etc expressed their displeasure although accepted the decision for withdrawing the movement when it had reached its peak. Gandhiji found it difficult to explain to the congress, and faced the criticism for the withdrawal of the movement, but did not budge from his decision. On March 10 1922 he was arrested by the government, and was sentenced for 6 years.

iii. Assessment

Despite the fact the movement was called off by the congress but its impacts were felt in the following years too, although sporadically. Khilafat movement also reached to gradual end. According to Shikhar Bandopadhyay "another problem for Gandhi, as the attitudes of the Khilafat leaders increasingly revealed that they had accepted the Gandhi a creed of non-violence more as a matter of convenience to take advantage of Gandhi's charismatic appeal,

rather than as a matter of faith. By bringing in the ulama and by overtly using a religious symbol, the movement evoked religious emotions among the Muslim masses"[179]. The communal tensions were visible in some areas notably in moplal uprising, where less dominant Muslims resorted to violence against rich Hindus. The religious emotions which Khilafat had articulated continued to persist, matched by an equally militant Hindu radicalism.

The movement was largely depended on middle class participation in the small towns and cities. But as says Bandopadhyay, it gradually declined. He further finds that the movement took different shapes in different regions. There was low turnout at the council election almost everywhere; except Madras, where very few candidates withdrew and the Justice Party returned as a majority party in the legislature. Here the conflict between Brahman and non-Brahman was clearly witnessed. Justice Party launched an active campaign against the 'Brahman' Congress and its non-cooperation programme and supported the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms. Because of this, the boycott of foreign cloth was also much weaker in the Tamil regions. However, it is also noteworthy that Khadi was costly for the poor peasant in comparison to mill cloth in some places.

Due to inadequacy of national educational institutions in some regions and also because of repressive British policy, the students were forced to get back to the government schools, as it happened in Nagpur division. [Bandopadhyay, 2004, 305] as arbitration courts became defunct, lawyers got back to their usual legal practice. It should also be recorded that in many places, local issues dominated the movement in the name of the non-cooperation. In Tamilnadu, the success of the temperance movement depended on various social motives, such as the Sanskritising tendencies of the upwardly mobile castes and local factionalism. In some other areas, mobilization to an extent depended on personal influence of local leaders, such as C.R. Das in Bengal, Baba Ramchandar and Jawaharlal Nehru in united province, C. Rajagopalachari in Madras, T prakasam in Andhra region Etc.

The economic boycott in the movement was far more intense and successful. With the value of imports of foreign cloth falling from Rs 102 crores in 1920-21 to Rs 57 crores in 1921-22. Import of British cotton piece goods was 1292 million yards and 955 million yards respectively in the same years. [Sarkar, 1983, 206] Sarkar indicates how Business support was decisive in bringing about a qualitative change in the Congress funds situation. The AICC had only Rs 43,000 in its coffers in 1920, but was able to collect more than 130 Lakhs between 1921 and 1923—while no less than Rs 371/2 lakhs out of the Tilak Swaraj Fund of a crore came from the City of Bombay alone. [Sarkar ,1983, 207]

A section of big business, did not support the noncooperation movement, and formed an Anti-Non-Cooperation Association in 1920. Business leaders who support this hostile association were Purshottamdas Thakurdas, Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Cowasji Jehangir, Pheroze Sethna, and Setalvad. [sarkar208] .Although the big business houses were reluctant to join the boycott but the Labour did seem to be 'running amock' throughout 1921, with 396 strikes involving 600,351 workers and a loss of 6,994,426 workdays. In the Calcutta jute industry, with the mill-owners trying to cut back production with a four-day week, the workers fought back, and there were 137 strikes in Bengal jute mills in 1921, involving 186,479 labourers. [Sarkar ,1983, 208] Swami Viswanand and Swami

Darsananand tried to organize the coal miners of the Raniganj-Jharia belt, initially with some help from Indian mine-owners fighting European hegemony. The Jharia session of the AITUC in December 1921 was marked by considerable participation of actual workers. [Sarkar , 1983, 208]

Strikes and hartals, violence and not cooperating in the day to day government activities may have worked for the movement but Gandhiji's own stand was unequivocal: strikes 'do not fall within the plan of non-violent non-cooperation. "In India we want no political strikes We must gain control over all the unruly and disturbing elements ... We seek not to destroy capital or capitalists, but to regulate the relations between capital and labour. We want to harness capital to our side. It would be folly to encourage sympathetic strikes." As He wrote in Young India (Sarkar , 1983, 208]. Programme of village reconstruction through self-help envisaged an economic revival through the spinning wheel and hand-woven cloth charkha and Khadi, Panchayats or Arbitration courts, National schools, and campaigns for Hindu-Muslim unity and against the evils of liquor and untouchability. Gandhiji deserves all credit for bringing the issue to the forefront of national politics for the very first time. Thus the emphasis was always on unifying issues and on trying to cut across or reconcile class divisions. Thus the noncooperation movement provided a strong social base for the national freedom struggle. It brought the nation united on many fronts, culturally;; religious boundaries were weakened, language was no more a barrier and education nationalistic in nature made the people realize their immediate goal of Swaraj. Socially;; idea of getting rid-off untouchability gained prominence, women emancipation was felt necessary, and their participation also increased, and anti liquor campaign promoted the discipline among men. On economic front, labours and workers movements forced the capitalists to give concessions to the former. Peasant and Zamindars reconciled to some extent for the national cause. Swaraj though, was nowhere to be seen yet the people were ready to fight for it and were sure that it was only a matter of time but Swaraj will be achieved.

3. Civil Disobedience movement

i. Simon Commission

"When a commission was wanted the British Government would not give it; but they would impose upon the Indian people a commission which is not wanted, and when it is not wanted."

Dr. Pradhan quotes S. Srinivasa Iyengar in his book "Raj to swaraj".

When on November 5 , 1927 Gandhiji came to Delhi having completed a journey to the South India and Ceylon, The then viceroy Irwin handed him a memo announcing that "a Parliamentary Commission, headed by Sir John Simon, was to come to report on the working of dyarchy in India and on future constitutional progress." [Kriplani 1970,112] Gandhiji asked the Viceroy "if that was all for which he had been called from about 2000 km away. On Irwin's reply in the affirmative, he said that a post-card could have served the purpose!" [Kriplani ,1970 ,112]The commission consisted of 4 conservatives, 2 laborites and 1 liberal. Sir John Simon [chairman], Clement Attlee, [future prime minister of Britain in

post-world war II era] Harry Levy –Lawson, Edward cadogan, Vernon Hartshorne, George Lane –Fox and Donald Howard. It was an all-white commission. And no representative was there to put the case of India. In fact, representative from India was not even considered. The reaction of the people in general and the Congress in particular to this announcement was not only adverse but also angry.

The fundamental resentment against the Commission was that it was an all-white Commission. And the second objection, on which the Indian leadership was unhappy, was non-representative Character of the commission. "Stung by the deliberate insult (compounded by Birkenhead's taunt that Indians were quite incapable of agreeing on any workable political framework), liberal politicians like Saprú And Muslim leaders headed by Jinnah joined hands with the Congress to formulate a Dominion Status Constitution—till communal differences broke up the united front of such relatively moderate groups in late 1928." [Sarkar,1983, 261-262] however, for a nationalist the arrival of the commission proved a unifying factor for both communal groups in India. The middle of the third decade of the 20th century had shown intense communal tension and violence. INC took its well-known stand that the people of India had a right to make their own constitution. This was a consensual national viewpoint as evidenced by the passage of two resolutions (February 1924 and September 1925) by the Central Assembly, reiterating the same demand. [Pradhan, 2008, 158] S Srinivasa Iyengar argued, "Any enquiry to the fitness of the Indian people for self-government was nothing but a direct affront to our national respect. All that was needed, he further argued, was a direct negotiation between the people of India and the British with a view to grant self-government to us." [Pradhan, 2008, 158]

The commission did not receive any favorable response from the people of India. In fact, it was boycotted by all corners of the society, and All political parties denounced the parliamentary commission. On February 16 1928 Lalaji in the central assembly proposed a resolution where a complete lack of confidence in the commission was expressed. In its madras session, in December 1927 INC took the strongest step by calling on the people of India to boycott the Commission by organizing demonstrations against it on its arrival in India. It further called upon all members of Indian legislatures, including the non-members, not to associate with the Commission's work in any manner. [Pradhan, 2008, 158]

On February 3 1928 the Simon commission landed in India, the day marked by strikes, and protests, and the slogans of "go back simon" rocked the whole atmosphere. All the towns, villages and hemlets held the demonstrations and black flags were shown to the commission members. The Congress was determined not to meet the Commission, not to give evidence, not to serve on any select committee nor to vote for their formulations. It was declared that Indians were entitled to determine their own constitution and will form it. [As will be discussed under Nehru Report] at the same time other political parties also decided to boycott the commission. the Liberal Federation presided over by Saprú adopted a similar resolution. The Muslim League also resolved to boycott the Commission and appointed a committee to prepare a constitution For India in consultation with other parties. The Hindu Mahasabha, and the Khilafat Conference also followed the same path.

The opposition was so strong that government resorted to lathé-charge and other violent means. In lucknow Jawaharlal Nehru and Govind Vallab Pant were beaten up. Police opened

fire in madras killing a person. But the episode that shook the nation was the lath-charge by the police in Lahore on October 30 1928 where Lalaji was leading a protest march; brutal British forces did not even spare the man as old as Lala Lajpath Rai. Lalaji got injured and died due to the injuries he received. Revolutionary youths of HSRA retaliated, Bhagat Singh and his comrades attempted to kill Saunders [the man responsible for the killing of Lala Lajpath Rai] in December 1928.

The commission was opposed in India, but it took the assignment seriously. After two visits, from March 1928 to October 1928 and in April 1929, it toured various parts of the country. Finally, in May 1930, it submitted its report, with following proposals. It recommended that the experiment of diarchy was a failure and it should be replaced by the introduction of provincial autonomy i.e. transference of all provincial subjects to the popular ministries. At the same time, it ensured the special powers for the governors to take over the entire administration in case of breakdown of constitutional mechanism. It recommended enlargement of the provincial legislatures with a minimum of 200 and maximum of 250 members. It also wanted the percentage of voters in India to be increased from 3 percent to 10 to 15 percent. Instead of appointment of a commission every ten years to review the working of the constitutional provisions, the Commission recommended the enactment of a new constitution for India which should be flexible enough to absorb the necessary changes whenever necessary. It recommended separation of Sind from Bombay, Orissa from Bihar, grant of a legislative council to North West Frontier Province, and separation of Burma from British India as a separate colony. The report did not evoke much response both from Indian and British sides. Not to speak of the dominion status, it did not even recommend partial sharing of responsibility at the centre. Although provincial autonomy was recommended yet it was circumscribed by the vast powers of the governor. National leaders condemned the meager reforms suggested by the Commission. The report was equally cold-shouldered by the British government. Even before the report of the Commission was submitted, the viceroy, in consultation with the home government, announced on 31 October 1929 dominion status as the goal of Indian's political progress and holding of a Round Table Conference consisting of the representatives from the Parliament, the Indian states and British India.

The commission though was cold shouldered from all corners yet it had some positive impacts for the people of India. 1:-the unity between two communal groups was strengthened and 2:-the challenge of framing of a constitution was also positively accepted. [The Nehru report]. However, Some portions of the report were adopted by the Government of India Act 1935.

In December 1927 in its annual session, for the first time, congress decided to have a Swaraj constitution. For this, a committee was formed to carry out consultations with other political parties. Congress Working Committee called a meeting of different political parties in Delhi in February 1928, where in it was decided that before moving to any further course of action, more discussions and consultations are required to resolve the differences.

ii. Nehru report

The committee chaired by Motilal Nehru, took the responsibility, and presented the report in [Nehru report] all parties' convention in Calcutta. The Report was accepted by the convention, but Jinnah who opposed the report on the issue of Hindu Muslim representation and division of seats, could not get his proposals inserted in the report. In fact his suggestions were put to voting where he failed to win support of the majority. Nehru report was the first major Indian effort to draft a constitution, complete with lists of central and provincial subjects, fundamental rights and universal adult suffrage, . The report, even while demanding responsible government both at the Centre and in the provinces, advocated dominion status and not complete independence much to the anguish of young leaders like Jawaharlal and Sub hash Chandler Bose, Who pressed for the acceptance of 'Purna Swaraj' as the goal of the Congress. The older generation led by Motilal Nehru and Gandhi felt that the dominion status which was accepted by all parties should not be abandoned in haste. However, at the mediation of Gandhi, it was resolved that if the dominion status was not accepted by the British government within a year, the Congress would opt for complete independence. And fight to achieve it by civil disobedience. It is worth mentioning that Report did not try to resolve the question of communalism. The events moved so fast that Nehru report lost its significance by December 1929. Yet one must remember that Nehru report was an important milestone in the history of India.

The year 1929 saw many important political events, strikes in factories and mills were everyday affair, the great economic depression was jolting the great economies, communal activities on both fronts were moving fast. And revolutionary programs were in full swing. In April 1929, Bhagat Singh and Batukeswar Dutt threw bomb in the central legislative assembly and were arrested. Bhagat Singh along with Sukhdev and Rajguru were later sentenced to death. Lord Irwin was called to London for consultations ones the labour government came to power in may 1929. On his return the viceroy declared that a Round Table Conference would be held to discuss the future course for India. However, the debates in British Parliament revealed that there was no change in the policy of the government. Dominion status was the goal of India in the fullness of time, not in the immediate future. In December 1929 a delegation under the leadership of Gandhiji met the Viceroy to elucidate the position that the discussion in the round table conference would proceed on the basis of full Dominion Status, the Viceroy was unable to give the assurance and the talks broke down. [Pradhan ,2008, 169] This series of events finally led to the Lahore session of congress in the end of December 1929, where congress adopted the historic resolution of Purna Swaraj. It read 'This Congress, therefore, declares that the word Swaraj in the article of the Congress constitution shall mean complete independence.' [Pradhan , 2008, 169]

On 2 January 1930, the Congress Working Committee passed a resolution to observe 26 January as the Independence Day. On 9 January, Gandhiji observed in Young India; "Granted a perfectly non-violent atmosphere and fulfilled constructive programme, I would undertake to lead the mass civil disobedience struggle to a successful issue in the space of a few months." [Anand , 2006 37] On 18 January, when Tagore visited the Sabarmati Ashram, Gandhiji told him: "I am furiously thinking night and day I do not yet see any light coming out of the surrounding darkness." [Anand, 2006, 37] Gandhiji's text of the pledge to be taken on 26 January, 1930, included the following: "India has been ruined economically.

— — Our average income is seven pice, per day, and of the heavy taxes we pay, 20% are raised from the land revenue and 3% from the salt tax, which falls most heavily on the poor. — — Politically, India's status has never been so reduced - - Culturally, the system of education has ---- made us hug the very chains that bind us. Spiritually, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly-- --.We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country." [Anand,2006,37, 38]

iii. Salt Satyagraha

Before launching the Salt Satyagraha to initiate the civil disobedience, Gandhiji said, "he would put off civil disobedience, if Britain would grant the essence, if not the outward form, of self-government." [Anand, 2006, 38] this essence included eleven points: total prohibition, restoration of the exchange rate, 50% reduction of land revenue, abolition of Salt Tax, reduction of military expenditure by least 50%, reduction of civil service salaries by 50%, a protective tariff against foreign cloth, release of political prisoners save those condemned for murder, abolition of C. I. D, issue of fire-arms licences for self-defence, and enactment of coastal reservation bill. [Anand ,2006, 38] Of these, The Salt Law became the core issue, as Gandhiji wrote: "There is no article like salt, outside water, by taxing which the state can reach the starving millions, the sick, the maimed and the utterly helpless." [Anand 2006 38] The adamant British authorities refused the Gandhian plea. Gandhiji on this wrote, "On bended knees I asked for bread and I have received stone instead." [Anand, 2006, 38] On March 12th 1930, with 78 of his followers from the banks of river Sabarmati, Gandhiji began the pilgrim for Swaraj; 240 miles of distance and 24 days. The divine march moved towards a small village dandi on the coast of Gujarat in western India, with the sole objective of breaking the salt law.(Under the regulations of the India Salt Act 1882). the government enforced a monopoly on the collection or manufacture of salt, restricting its handling to officially controlled salt depots and levying a tax of Rs 1-4-0 (46 cents) on each maund [Dalton, 1998, 91].



(Source : http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Salt_March.jpg.)

On April 6 Gandhiji defied this monopoly and so broke the law by simply collecting natural salt from the seashore. The broader object of the march was to spark a campaign of civil disobedience against the Raj in order to attain independence. [Dalton 1998, 91] the salt satyagraha thus began all over the country with the arrest of Mahatma on 5 may and continued for one year until negotiations between Gandhiji and viceroy took place.

It seems necessary here to discuss why "salt" Satyagraha? For Mahatma Salt was necessary for all, be it poor or rich. "... Gokhale, Gandhi's mentor, roundly condemned the salt tax in 1902 before the Imperial Legislative council in Bombay. Gokhale dwelt on the "unquestioned hardship" that the salt tax "imposes upon the poorest of the poor of our community." Then he buttressed his case by citing evidence from British officials who had themselves conceded as early as 1888 their "greatest reluctance" in imposing this particular tax. Gokhale quoted from none other than Lord Cross, Secretary of State for India, 1886-1892, who had then expressed "great regret" for placing this "burden on the poorest classes of the population, through the taxation of a necessity of life."³³ However sincere these officials were at the time, this was precisely the language that Gandhi was to adopt as he began to

oppose the salt tax. In 1905, Gandhi wrote from South Africa that the tax should be abolished immediately, and the demand is repeated, though not stressed, over the years.. In his blanket indictment of British rule in Hind Swaraj, Gandhi makes a special point of commenting that "The salt-tax is not a small injustice." [Dalton, 1998, 99-100] hence salt became evermore precious for the people.

Once the salt was picked up from the sea, Gandhi declared "Now that the technical or ceremonial breach of the salt law has been committed, it is now open to any one who would take the risk of prosecution under the salt law to manufacture salt. He called it the struggle "of the right against might." [anand2006 p.40] Men and the women, young and the elderly, workers and the peasants, in villages and , towns and cities, people joined the call for the Satyagraha from all walks of life. The movement had gathered momentum and Mahatma further conveyed to the nation, ""Let every village manufacture or fetch contraband salt, sisters should picket liquor shops, opium dens and foreign-cloth dealers' shops. Young and old — — should ply the tikli and spin — —. Foreign cloth should be burnt. Hindus should eschew untouchability. Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Parsis, and Christians should all achieve heart unity. — — let the students leave Govt. schools, and Govt. servants resign their service and devote themselves to service of the people, and we shall find that Purna Swaraj will come knocking at our doors."" [Anand ,2006, 40] He gave a particularly fighting programme to women: ""To call women the weaker sex is libel; it is a man's injustice to woman. — — If by strength is meant moral power, then woman is immeasurably man's superior. Has she not greater intuition, is she not more self-sacrificing, has she not greater powers of endurance, greater courage? If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with woman. — — The picketing of liquor shops and foreign cloths shops by men, — — in 1921 failed because violence crept in. Let the women take up these two activities and they would contribute more than men to national freedom." — " [Anand ,2006,40]. British repressive policy could not control the agitation which was non-violence directed towards violent means. Firing took place in Calcutta and Madras. Kasturba Gandhi launched the mass campaign of picketing the liquor shops from 17 April. In the north-west province, frontier Gandhi was arrested. In the wake of increasing civil disobedience, Gandhiji was taken in to custody on May 5. Gandhiji's arrest led to hartals and strikes all over India. "Sholapur went under people's possession for one week. Tanks, guns and aeroplanes were used by Government in the N.W.F.P. On 12 May, 1930. Abbas Tyabji and his followers, while starting for March on the Dharasana salt works, were arrested. On 21 May, over 2000 volunteers, led by Sarojini Naidu and with Manilal Gandhi in front, raided Dharasana salt depot. As observed by Miller "Not one of the marchers even raised an arm to fend off the blows. — — I heard sickening whacks of the clubs on unprotected skulls. the ground was quilted with bodies. — — The survivors without breaking ranks, silently and doggedly, marched on until struck down."" Daring mass raids by thousands took place on the salt depot at Wadala in Bombay, and on Sanikatta salt works in Karnataka. George Slocombe, a British journalist wrote: "The imprisoned Mahatma now incarnates the very soul of India."" [Anand ,2006 , 41] The Congress Working Committee accelerated the boycott activities such as boycott of foreign cloth, British banking, British insurance and shipping. In some places, no tax campaigns were started. Liquor shops were picketed and appeals were made to the Indian army and police to treat the non-cooperators as their bretherns. Before his arrest, Gandhi had already called for boycott of foreign cloth and liquor shops and specially

asked women to actively participate in the movement. Traders' associations and commercial bodies were themselves quite active in implementing the boycott. Consequently, there was a remarkable fall in British cloth imports from 26 million yards in 1929 to 13.7 million yards in 1930. Other British imports also suffered from May to August 1930 and the British Trade Commissioner's office was flooded with panic reports and complaints from Imperial Tobacco, Dunlop and other white firms. Similarly, liquor boycott also brought the government's revenue from excise duties crashing down. In all, British government suffered heavy losses due to this nonviolent civil disobedience.

After about six months of standoff, first Round table conference [RTC] was held in November; where Indian national congress [INC] was not a party. This led to the realization that without INC no solution could be found. At the end of the RTC British PM expressed that those who are engaged in civil disobedience should also come forward for negotiations. On other hand, movement was also tiring, so some rethinking was going in the minds of nationalist leaders. Pt. Malaviya T.B. Sapro and S. Shastri created the environment for the talks to be held between Gandhiji and the viceroy, resulting in the release of the congress leaders and withdrawal of the ban on the INC. [Pradhan, 2008, 175]. On March 5 1931 after long discussions, negotiations reached to a conclusion, the "Gandhi Irwin pact". Consequently, the Civil Disobedience Movement was withdrawn as the Government agreed to release political prisoners and restore the properties seized during the Satyagraha.

Many people on the side of the Government as well as that of the Congress were not happy with the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. More conservative elements on the side of the government took it as surrender on the part of Lord Irwin, whereas more militant leaders like Subhas Chandra Bose and others of the Congress also looked at it as an act of surrender on the part of Mahatma Gandhi. However, the Pact was ratified both by the Working Committee and the Karachi Congress. Mahatma agreed to participate in the Second RTC which was to be held in London from 7 September 1931. [Pradhan, 2008, 175] although, the Civil Disobedience was called off but this first phase met with criticism." Muslim members of the Congress, like Dr Ansari, were unhappy, as communal unity they thought was an essential precondition for the success of a civil disobedience movement. Outside the Congress, the Muslim Conference and the Muslim League condemned the movement as a device to establish Hindu Raj. Similarly, Sikh support also seemed to have shifted away from Congress. Non-Congress Hindus, like the Hindu Mahasabha and the Justice Party in Madras declared their opposition to civil disobedience. Business groups were apprehensive about the uncertain possibilities of the Lahore resolution, while young Congressmen were pressing for more militant action. Under the circumstances, the celebration of the "Independence Day" on 26 January 1930 evoked little enthusiasm, except in Punjab, UP, Delhi and Bombay." [Bandopadhyay, 2004, 317] the many reasons which could be posed for the withdrawal of the movement few become worth mentioning, rich business houses got tired of the movement, thus could offer a weak support. Important to remember that the weightiest reason for withdrawal of the movement was appearance of radicalism and violence among certain lower classes that refused to remain under the control of local Congress leaders. The movement was moving in wayward directions—or going against the Gandhi and creed of non-violence and was tearing apart the fragile unity of the political nation;

hence, the compromise and withdrawal. But the negotiations with the government failed and Gandhi returned empty-handed from the second Round Table Conference in London held in September-December 1931. [Bandopadhyay, 2004, 321] the deadlock on some questions like the minority issue not only that of Muslims, but all other minorities, such as the depressed classes (untouchables), Anglo-Indians, Indian Christians and Europeans demanded separate electorates, which Gandhi was adamant not to concede. Thus the second RTC failed. He came back to India and his only option was a renewal of the battle. [Bandopadhyay, 2004, 321]

iv. Civil Disobedience Second Phase

Gandhiji was unhappy by the attitude of the government and decided to resume the civil Disobedience in January 1932. The Government took little time to declare the Congress as an illegal body, and arrested senior leaders, including Pandit Nehru and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan. In spite of the ruthless repression, the Civil Disobedience movement continued. Anand discloses that amongst those who went to prison, "A majority of them, besides Congress leaders and activists, were the underprivileged. For instance in UP out of 2004 people arrested (in early 1932), 1530 were peasants, workers and other illiterates." [Anand ,2006 ,53] In August 1932, while Gandhiji was still in jail, British Prime Minister, Ramsay MacDonald, announced the Communal Award, providing separate electorates for Depressed Classes (Untouchable, Harijans, or dalits). It reserved certain seats for Harijans and only the Harijans electorate would elect their representatives. Gandhiji saw it as a ploy to further divide the Indian society. He demanded that the number of seats reserved for Harijans be increased but for each reserved seat electorate of all the castes should have the right to elect their representative from among the Harijan candidates. He undertook fast unto death against the Award giving separate electorates for Depressed Classes. Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, a valiant campaigner for the Depressed Classes, eventually accepted Gandhiji's position and the Poona Pact was signed.[Anand, 2006 , 53] .The third Round Table Conference in November-December 1932 was largely formal and unimportant, as only 46 out of 112 delegates attended the session. After this incident Gandhiji carried a nationwide campaign to arouse people's conscience against 'untouchables'. In April 1934, he decided to withdraw the Civil Disobedience movement and to redirect workers to constructive work. On June 25 some upper caste fundamentalists threw a bomb on his car. However, he survived. [Anand , 2006 , 53]

v. Assessment

The civil disobedience movement received opposition from the day one, some of the Muslim leaders were not in favor of the movement the way it was about to be initiated. Muslim members of the Congress, like Dr Ansari, were unhappy, as communal unity they thought was an essential precondition for the success of a civil disobedience movement. Ansari noted, "Muslims were generally not supportive, and that "your direct action today would only appeal to a very small section, i.e., those who are and have been always with you; but a considerable position of the Hindu population, an overwhelming number of Muslims and Sikhs would not be touched by your movement. Rather, these would be used as a counterfoil against you." [Dalton,1998, 97]Outside the Congress, the Muslim Conference and the Muslim League condemned the movement as a devise to establish Hindu Raj. Yet leaders like

Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan participated in the movement and his contribution through his party Khudai KhidmatGhar was praise worthy but what Dr. Ansari predicted came true, when, Sikh support also seemed to have shifted away from Congress. The Hindu Mahasabha and the Justice Party in Madras declared their opposition to civil disobedience. Business groups were apprehensive about the uncertain possibilities of the Lahore resolution, while young Congressmen were pressing for more militant action.

This event of Gandhiji's political life could be concluded in three different outcomes, :-

Firstly, the movement may have faced some challenges from the political parties who were seeking same objectives with congress, but the movement was successful in achieving the target of creating a feeling of nationalism, and it showed the British authorities that the people of India are capable of framing and evolving a constitution of its own. [Nehru report was a milestone in this respect].

Thus, the political aim of the INC to win complete independence moved a step further.

Secondly, British government, because of the movement and by the efforts of Gandhiji, had to stop the politics of divide and rule. The idea of communal award received a jolt when Gandhiji began fasting and people of India resisted such British policy. However, Poona pact resolved the political crisis in favor of the nationalist leadership and the masses. This also helped the depressed classes to join hands with congress for the larger national interest.

Thirdly , The Civil Disobedience Movement compelled the British Govt. to bring out constitutional reforms in India although the process of the reforms from the British Govt. had begun much earlier specifically with the announcement of the Simon Commission but a Nationalist view point suggests that it was the long struggle of the people of India and specifically The Civil Disobedience Movement during which three round table conferences and negotiations between INC and the Govt were held which in fact expedited the reforms specially the framing of the Govt of India Act 1935 which although did not receive the support from either INC or the Muslim League yet both these parties and other smaller parties like that of the Unionist decided to take part in the elections which were to be followed in 1937 under the provisions of GOI Act 1935. Most of the provisions of the Act remained on paper only yet this Act proved immensely significant when the drafting committee of the Independent India adopted a good number of provisions in the Indian constitution of India. Finally one can conclude that the Gandian Satyagraha during this phase was an important milestone for the future course of Action oriented towards the attainment of Puran Swaraj.

5. Quit India movement

"Here is a mantra, a short one that I give you. You may imprint it on your hearts and let every breath of yours give expression to it. The mantra is: 'Do or Die.' We shall either free India or die in the attempt; we shall not live to see the perpetuation of our slavery. - - - Take a pledge with God and your own conscience as witness, that you will no longer rest till freedom is achieved and will be prepared to lay down your lives in the attempt to achieve it.

He who loses his life will gain it; he who will seek to save it shall lose it. Freedom is not for the coward or the faint-hearted.”[Anand ,2006, 61]

i. Background

INC had a strong view that any aggression against anyone is regrettable. People of India believed that Britain would go to war not to protect democracy but to protect its imperial interests. During latter half of the fourth decade of the last century, Congress repeatedly declared that it would resist any effort to use Indian men, money and resources in a war to serve British imperialism. As congress always adopted the policy of non-violence, India expressed deep concern against Italy for invading Ethiopia. In 1937 it objected to imperial power sending Indian troops to China without India's consent. It is not to say that Indian people or congress were resisting only the British aggression but it was any aggressive ideologies--the Nazis and the fascists. Dr. Pradhan says, “the national leaders found themselves between the two horns of a dilemma. Any unconditional support to the British would further boost its stranglehold over the Indian people; but any blind opposition to it would result in strengthening the forces of Nazism and Fascism. Besides, it also brought about a division among the Indian leadership: Subhas Chandra Bose favoured all-out opposition to the British, whereas the dominant section of the Congress was willing to offer conditional support to them. The Congress demanded an immediate declaration of the British war aims and their specific applications to the Indian situation.” [Pradhan , 2008, 209, 210] But the Viceroy was not willing to give any assurance. On this, Agitated congress decided to resign from the provincial ministries.

To break the deadlock, in July 1940, the Congress found it fit to offer support to British war efforts on following conditions: firstly, the Indian people's right to self-determination should be recognized; and secondly, a provisional government responsible to the Central Legislature should be constituted. But all that the Viceroy was willing to offer were: (a) a dominion status and constitution-framing body after the war; (b) expansion of the Executive Council; and setting up of a War Advisory Council. [Pradhan ,2008, 210] for congress, it was of little significance, and it rejected the viceroy's proposals.

ii. Individual Satyagraha

The Congress held its annual session at Ramah in Bihar in March 1940 and resolved that in the event of rejection of a legitimate demand of the Congress, , civil disobedience was the only course left. [Kripalani, 1970, 190] It was accepted that the leadership of the struggle will be in the hands of Gandhiji. Here he told Congressmen: "As soldiers, we have to take our orders from the General and obey them implicitly. His word must be law. I am your General." [Kripalani , 1970, 191] mid of 1940, saw the German attack on its neighbors. Hitler overran a part of Europe, and threatened England with invasion. At this stage, Gandhiji wrote on June 1, 1940 : "We do not seek our independence out of Britain's ruin." [Kripalani ,1970, 191] Thus congress dropped the program of civil disobedience, and fresh attempts were made to arrive at a settlement with the Government. The Working Committee met at Wardha on June 18 and decided to cooperate with the government, provided, the government recognizes India's claim to complete independence after the war and the immediate establishment of a National Government. Since Gandhiji was against any

violent effort so he decided not to be a part of the movement. In fact he chose to hold an individual Satyagraha.

The AICC met in Bombay on September 15, 1940 and, not wanting to hamper the Allies' war effort, decided on the advice of Gandhiji, to launch individual civil disobedience, under Mahatma's guidance. The issue was limited to, "one of freedom of speech to express and propagate views on a war into which India had been dragged without its consent and in the conduct of which people had no say." [Kripalani, 1970, 193] Thus on 17 October, 1940, Gandhiji launched his civil disobedience campaign on individual basis with Vinoba Bhave as the first Satyagrahi. Persons desiring to offer civil disobedience were selected by Gandhiji from amongst the lists sent by the Provincial Congress Committees. [Kripalani, 1991, 193] on the Christmas time nobody offered Satyagraha. The movement continued through 1940 to the close of 1941. Mass arrests took place and prisons were full. Colonial masters had to stop arrests and repressive measures. At this juncture, the Government expanded the Viceroy's Executive Council, A number of eminent Indians were invited to join it, The Satyagrahee leaders and other Congressmen were released. Given a congenial environment a majority of congress leaders were thinking of making a fresh offer of co-operation with the British. But Gandhiji again requested the Working Committee to relieve him of his command. His wishes were respected and he was relieved of his charge. In Bardoli on December 23. The same was confirmed by A.I.C.C. in Wardha on January 15, 1942. [Kripalani, 1970, 193] By the end of 1941, the military might of Japan, Germany and Italy forced the allied powers to recede.

At this, discloses Kripalani [a Gandhian] "Churchill, who had declared that he had not become "the King's First Minister in order to preside at the liquidation of the British Empire", said in one of his speeches that "the Atlantic Charter's self-government clause did not apply to India.", The Atlantic Charter had been drawn up and agreed to by the Allied powers earlier. However, hard pressed by Chiang Kai-shek,* President Roosevelt and the Labour Members in Churchill's wartime coalition Government, he was obliged to send Stafford Cripps to India to negotiate a settlement with the Indian leaders [Kripalani,1991, 195]

iii. Sir Stafford Cripps visits India

In the spring of 1942 Sir Cripps arrived in India, with a proposal according to which:

(1) The British Government would very soon take steps to establish Colonial Self-Government in India and India would, of course, have the right to opt out of the Commonwealth.

(2) After the conclusion of the war, a Constituent Assembly would be set up to draft a Constitution for British India and the Native States, and this Constitution would be binding on the British Government. But if one or more provinces or Native States refused to accept it, they would be free to frame their own Constitution.

(3) In the matter of the defence of India, all powers would for the time being be vested in the British Government, but it would be for the Indian Government to spend Its own resources for this purpose. When Sir Stafford Cripps met Gandhiji, mahatma said, ""Why have you come with such a proposal? My advice is that you should go back home by the

first available plane. "A report is current that Mahatmaji told him, "It is a post-dated cheque on a crashing bank." But Mahatmaji said no such thing, and yet when a piquant rumor once gets currency, it is difficult to drive it out of men's minds. Mahatmaji opposed the Cripps proposal primarily for the following reasons:

- Although the Cripps proposals gave the right of secession, yet Colonial Self-Government was not acceptable. There was to be complete independence.
- The proposal envisaged the possibility of dividing India into three segments.
- Under this scheme, the Ministers would not be responsible for the defense of the country.

Mahatmaji's objections were quite cogent. He left Delhi after giving a frank expression to his views. It is patent that from about this time the British Government was determined to divide India. The Working Committee met in Mahatmaji's absence and after carrying on deliberations for a few days decided to reject the proposal." [Ghosh ,1968, 181-182] the rift between government and INC apparently became so wide that Gandhiji resorted to quit India resolution.

iv. Quit India movement:-the last resort

A few days later AICC met at Allahabad. Gandhiji could not attend the meeting but sent a draft resolution. Ghosh in his book finds, "The Working Committee was then sharply divided into two camps. The majority was in favor of the English quitting India; but some influential members were opposed to this, and a few expressed the desire to resign." [Ghosh ,1968, 182] To avert the conflict, a compromise resolution was adopted, and the decision for the future course was postponed. In the next meeting at Wardha, the Working Committee struggled to bridge the gap between the members. However, in the wake of the situation:- the world war, Imperialism, undecided policies of Britain and the future of India, it was felt necessary to adopt the quit India movement. Gandhiji stressed on the need of the movement, and expressed, "if they had objections to his proposal he would not start the agitation on behalf of the Congress, but on his own responsibility and with those who chose to follow him." [Ghosh ,1968, 183] Following this resolve on August 8 1942, in Bombay, the All India Congress Committee adopted the famous "Quit India" Resolution, and decided that a mass movement would be conducted with complete non-violence under Gandhiji's leadership. For the movement, Gandhiji this time, pronounce the battle cry "do or die". Gandhiji wanted to negotiate with the Viceroy but the government did not even wait for the movement to be launched formally. All the top leaders were arrested in the early hours of 9 August 1942 and were put behind the bars.

Arrests took place All over the nation and political leaders were put under strict control, thus creating an environment of complete repressive authoritarianism. , all Congress organizations were declared unlawful and their funds were confiscated. Not only that, "defense of India Rules, along with a number of other ordinances, were issued to impose strict control over all walks of our national life." [Pradhan ,2008, 211] Pradhan sums up, "The sudden arrest of our national leaders, followed by other draconian repressive measures, miserably failed to dampen the freedom-spirit of our people. On the contrary, it had an electrifying impact on the minds of our people: virtually left leaderless, each man

felt free to it in the light of his own understanding of the situation. The response of our people was instantaneous and spontaneous. [Pradhan ,2008, 211]

The nation fought against the brutality of the British with amazing determination, both in, urban and rural India, public life came to a standstill as strikes, demonstrations and processions became the order of the day. The areas like, eastern UP, Bihar, Maharashtra, Bengal, Orissa, parts of Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh witnessed active participation of the masses. It is true that the first response to the government's repressive measures came from the urban areas. Apart from the general public, the working class came openly in support of the movement. In places like Lucknow, Kanpur, Bombay, Nagpur, Ahmadabad, Madras, Delhi, and Jamshedpur the working class stopped working as they were demanding a national government.

"Students played a crucial role in spreading the message of the movement to the masses as well as leading demonstrations from the front. Students spread the message of 'Quit India' by writing slogans on the walls, and even on the trees. They organized mass meetings, distributed leaflets, pamphlets and other revolutionary literature. They boycotted schools and colleges and at many places hoisted our national flags by pulling down the Union Jack. In the course of their attempts to hoist the national flag on the Patna secretariat on 11 August 1942, seven students were shot dead, which further led to the intensification of the movement in that part of the country. Subsequently, Pundit Punyadeo Sharma succeeded in hoisting the national flag on the Patna Secretariat. In Banaras, the army was called to quell the revolutionary spirit of the students of Kashi Vidyapeeth and Banaras Hindu University. In Etawa (UP), Arjun Singh Bhadauria continued armed rebellion through his Lai Sena for a long time. In Bombay, Yusuf Meherally, a socialist leader, exhorted the student community to paralyze the administration of the province." [Prada 2008, 212]

An important aspect which shook the government was the formation of "parallel governments " which were set-up in a number of places, replacing the British administration. Ballia, Midnapore, and Satara in Maharashtra were the three places where parallel governments earned prominence. And virtually controlling the government. Though such governments could not remain for long, imperial power came down heavily to quell the short timed governments. Ephemeral though , yet the psychological impact of these governments was tremendous. Chitoo Pandey and Nana Paul, became folk heroes.

Congress Socialist Party played an important role in the quit India movement, led by Jayaprakash Narayan They organized an underground movement to paralyze the British administration. The prominent socialist leaders who were in the forefront in underground resistances were Rammanohar Lohia, Ram Nandan Mishra, Basawan Singh, Achyut Patwardhan, Usha Mehta and others. In Bombay, Usha Mehta and Rammanohar Lohia organized a secret Radio Station to broadcast the message of the movement. "In Bihar, they organized Azad Dasta under the active leadership of Nityanand Singh and Suraj Narayan Singh, which played a crucial role in cutting communications and paralyzing the British oppressive machinery." [Pradhan, 2008, 212] the symbols of the government like police stations, courts, post offices and railway stations were attacked, railway tracks were removed so that the Government could not move men and material for the suppression of

the people. In Bihar and eastern UP, the slogan of *Thana jalao* and *station phoonko* became popular from the beginning of the movement, the Government was blaming the Congress for all the violence that was taking place in the country. Even Gandhiji was blamed for the violent acts.

Gandhiji as always, told that the movement was designed to remain non-violent. Therefore, for any violence the blame must go to the government. But he received a letter from the viceroy wherein he said, he would consider the fast as motivated by a desire on the part of Gandhiji to find an "easy way out" and described it as "political blackmail". [Kripalani, 1970, 216] When Gandhiji failed to convince the Government, He commenced the fast on February 10, 1943. The news of his fast caused deep anxiety and gloom over the whole country. Demands for release of Gandhiji, while he was on fast grew strong as it had evoked worldwide interest in India's cause. Inside the country, many people returned the honors conferred to them by the Government. Three members of the Viceroy's Executive Council, namely, H P Modi, N R Sarkar and M S Aney followed suit and resigned. But the Government stuck to its position and refused to release Gandhiji.

v. An Assessment

The British repression and Indian resistance, in the days of World War II, brought the Indian concern to the fore front, and The Quit India movement forcefully presented the case of India's independence on the world agenda. Subsequently, Gandhiji was released on 6 May 1944 on health grounds. Meanwhile, the War took a turn in favor of the allied powers. Most of the Congress leaders were released in June 1945 to enable them to participate in the Shimla conference called by the Viceroy to find a way out of the political deadlock. That marked the end of the movement.

Gandhiji inspired the masses and mobilized them to take part in the freedom struggle which was hitherto unattended by the people of India although the educated elite under the banner of Indian national congress had taken up the work since 1885. Gandhiji brought the idea of freedom and Swaraj to the people and participation from all communities, classes and caste groups came together to strive for the India's independence. He called upon the peasants not to pay taxes to the government, exhorted the students to boycott the educational institutions. Called upon the lawyers to desert the courts and asked women to picket the liquor shops to attain the objective of Swaraj.

On the call of the mahatma people were ready to face the wrath of the British. Faced lathis and Bullets and went to jails. His new ideas and novel techniques for the cause of humanity became very popular in the commons. Satyagraha, Non-Cooperation, Civil Disobedience, Hunger Strike, Khadi, Charkha, cottage industries, swavalamban, basic education and Ramrajya finally leading to Swaraj, became everyday discussion among the Indians, from all corners. Till now obscure quality leadership came to the fore under the guidance of mahatma. Prominent amongst those were; DR. Rajendra Prasad, J.B. Kriplani, Indulal Yagnik, Sardar Patel, Jawaharlal Nehru etc. and also, socialist leaders worked under the command of the priest of peace.

However the participation of the Indian people which was witnessed in the Non-Cooperation Movement was seen far less at this time as the Movement could not draw the support of

the Muslim League and a large Muslim population was under the influence of the Jinnah who was defending the "Two Nations" Theory thenceforth contemplating the partition of India. The depressed classes who were given political parity and equal representation under the Poona Pact failed to support the Movement. However the Gandhian contribution in the Indian freedom struggle was invaluable and without this the Independence of India was just a dream for the people of India. Apostle of Peace finally fell victim to violence and died on January 30th 1948.

6. Exercises

- 1 Briefly discusses the causes of Champaran , Kheda and Rowlett Satyagraha.
- 2 What do you understand by the word Boycott explain its significance in Non-Cooperation Movement ?
- 3 Briefly describe the Salt March and its historical significance in Indian Freedom Struggle.
- 4 "Quit India Movement led the people of India towards freedom" Give a political and historical count of the above.
- 5 Write short notes on:
 - Jallianwala Bagh Massacre
 - Individual Satyagraha
 - Cripps Mission
 - Poona Pact.

7. References

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