

**History Part – 31**

**31] Freedom Movement In India – Phase II**

**Notes**

**Freedom Movement In India – Phase II – Gandhian Era (A.D. 1920 – A.D. 1947) Notes**

In 1920 Bala Gangadhar Tilak died. Gandhiji became the leader of the Congress. The second phase of our freedom movement saw a new beginning and awakening among the people of India. The advent of Gandhiji to Indian politics brought a great enthusiasm and pride among the people. Gandhiji, who is known as the father of our nation, advocated a new technique in our freedom struggle called Satyagraha, a movement based on truth and non-violence.

**Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-1922)**

Mahatma Gandhi announced his plan to begin Non-Cooperation with the government as a sequel to the Rowlatt Act, Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the Khilafat Movement. It was approved by the Indian National Congress at the Nagpur session in December, 1920.

**Programmes**

The programmes of the Non-Cooperation Movement were:

- ✓ Surrender of titles and honorary positions.
- ✓ Resignation of membership from the local bodies.
- ✓ Boycott of elections held under the provisions of the 1919 Act.
- ✓ Boycott of government functions.
- ✓ Boycott of courts, government schools and colleges.

- ✓ Boycott of foreign goods.
  - ✓ Establishment of national schools, colleges and private panchayat courts.
  - ✓ Popularizing swadeshi goods and khadi.
- The movement began with Mahatma Gandhi renouncing the titles, which were given by the British. Other leaders and influential persons also followed him by surrendering their honorary posts and titles.
- Students came out of the government educational institutions. National schools such as the Kashi Vidyapeeth, the Bihar Vidyapeeth and the Jamia Millia Islamia were set up.
- All the prominent leaders of the country gave up their lucrative legal practice. Legislatures were boycotted. No leader of the Congress came forward to contest the elections for the Legislatures.
- In 1921, mass demonstrations were held against the Prince of Wales during his tour of India.
- The government resorted to strong measures of repression. Many leaders were arrested.
- The Congress and the Khilafat Committees were proclaimed as illegal. At several places, bonfires of foreign clothes were organised.
- The message of Swadeshi spread everywhere. Most of the households took to weaving cloths with the help of charkhas.
- But the whole movement was abruptly called off on 11th February 1922 by Gandhi following the Churi Chaura incident in the Gorakpur district of U.P. Earlier on 5th February an angry mob set fire to the police station at Churi Chaura and twenty two police men were burnt to death.

- Many top leaders of the country were stunned at this sudden suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement. Mahatma Gandhi was arrested on 10 March 1922.

### **Significance of the Non-Cooperation Movement**

1. It was the real mass movement with the participation of different sections of Indian society such as peasants, workers, students, teachers and women.
2. It witnessed the spread of nationalism to the remote corners of India.
3. It also marked the height of Hindu-Muslim unity as a result of the merger of Khilafat movement.
4. It demonstrated the willingness and ability of the masses to endure hardships and make sacrifices.

### **The Chauri Chaura Incident – 1922**

- When the non co operation movement was in full swing , Gandhiji advised his followers not to involve in violence.
- But at chauri chaura (Gorakhpur) in uttar Pradesh. On February 5 ,1922 a procession of 1000 peasants was organized.
- The police fired at the peasants. In retaliation the angry peasants attacked and burnt the police station killing 22 police men.
- Gandhiji was upset and suspended the non co operation movement immediately but very soon gandhiji was arrested , the activities of the national movement were suspended for some years.
- During this period gandhiji worked for hindu muslim unity , removal of untouchability and uplift of women.

### **The Swarajya Party - 1923**

- The suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement led to a split within Congress in the Gaya session of the Congress in December 1922.
- Leaders like Motilal Nehru and Chittranjan Das formed a separate group within the Congress known as the Swaraj Party on 1 January 1923.
- The Swarajists wanted to contest the council elections and wreck the government from within.
- Elections to Legislative Councils were held in November 1923. In this, the Swaraj Party gained impressive successes.
- In the Central Legislative Council Motilal Nehru became the leader of the party whereas in Bengal the party was headed by C.R. Das.
- The Swaraj Party did several significant things in the Legislative Council.
- It demanded the setting up of responsible government in India with the necessary changes in the Government of India Act of 1919.
- The party could pass important resolutions against the repressive laws of the government.
- When a Committee chaired by the Home Member, Alexander Muddiman considered the system of Dyarchy as proper, a resolution was passed against it in the Central Legislative Council.
- After the passing away of C.R. Das in June 1925, the Swaraj Party started weakening.

### **Simon Commission (1927)**

- The Act of 1919 included a provision for its review after a lapse of ten years. However, the review commission was appointed by the British Government two years earlier of its schedule in 1927.

- It came to be known as Simon Commission after the name of its chairman, Sir John Simon. All its seven members were Englishmen.
- As there was no Indian member in it, the Commission faced a lot of criticism even before its landing in India.
- Almost all the political parties including the Congress decided to oppose the Commission.
- On the fateful day of 3 February 1928 when the Commission reached Bombay, a general hartal was observed all over the country.
- Everywhere it was greeted with black flags and the cries of ‘Simon go back’.
- At Lahore, the students took out a large anti-Simon Commission demonstration on 30 October 1928 under the leadership of Lala Lajpat Rai who is also called as lion of punjab.
- In this demonstration, Lala Lajpat Rai was seriously injured in the police lathi charge and he passed away after one month.
- The report of the Simon Commission was published in May 1930. It was stated that the constitutional experiment with Dyarchy was unsuccessful and in its place the report recommended the establishment of autonomous government.
- There is no doubt that the Simon Commission’s Report became the basis for enacting the Government of India Act of 1935.

### **Nehru Report (1928)**

- In the meanwhile, the Secretary of State, Lord Birkenhead, challenged the Indians to produce a Constitution that would be acceptable to all.
- The challenge was accepted by the Congress, which convened an all party meeting on 28 February 1928.

- A committee consisting of eight was constituted to draw up a blueprint for the future Constitution of India.
- It was headed by Motilal Nehru. The Report published by this Committee came to be known as the Nehru Report.

The Report favoured:

- ✓ Dominion Status as the next immediate step.
- ✓ Full responsible government at the centre.
- ✓ Autonomy to the provinces.
- ✓ Clear cut division of power between the centre and the provinces.
- ✓ A bicameral legislature at the centre.

However, the leader of the Muslim League, Mohammad Ali Jinnah regarded it as detrimental to the interests of the Muslims. Jinnah convened an All India Conference of the Muslims where he drew up a list of Fourteen Points as Muslim League demand.

### **The Lahore Congress – 1929**

- The congress met at Lahore under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru in 1929.
- It declared poorna swaraj or complete independence for india as its goal. At midnight on 31 , December 1929 , the tricolor flag was unfurled on the banks of river ravi admist the slogans vande mataram.
- Consequently , January 26 ,1930 was celebrated as independence day all over the country.
- The indian constitution was formally adopted on January 26 , 1950 to make this day memorable in our history.This day is now celebrated as republic day.

### **Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-1934)**

- In the prevailing atmosphere of restlessness, the annual session of the Congress was held at Lahore in December 1929.
- During this session presided over by Jawaharlal Nehru the Congress passed the Poorna Swaraj resolution.
- Moreover, as the government failed to accept the Nehru Report, the Congress gave a call to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement.
- The Congress had also observed January 26, 1930 as the Day of Independence. Since then January 26th had been observed as a day of independence every year.
- The same date later became the Republic Day when the Indian Constitution was enforced in 1950.

### **The Dandi March**

- Thus, the stage was set for the second major struggle led by the Congress.
- On 12<sup>th</sup> March 1930, Gandhi began his famous March to Dandi with his chosen 79 followers to break the salt laws.
- He reached the coast of Dandi on 5 April 1930 after marching a distance of 200 miles and on 6 April formally launched the Civil Disobedience Movement by breaking the salt laws.
- On 9 April, Mahatma Gandhi laid out the programme of the movement which included making of salt in every village in violation of the existing salt laws; picketing by women before the shops selling liquor, opium and foreign clothes; organising the bonfires of foreign clothes; spinning clothes by using charkha fighting untouchability; boycotting of schools and colleges by students and resigning from government jobs by the people.

- Over and above all these, the programme also called upon the people not to pay taxes to the government. Soon, the movement spread to all parts of the country. Students, workers, farmers and women, all participated in this movement with great enthusiasm.
- As a reaction, the British Government arrested important leaders of the Congress and imprisoned them.

### **Round Table Conference**

- The British government adopted the strategy of talking to different political parties by convening the Round Table Conferences.
- The first Round Table Conference was held in November 1930 at London and it was boycotted by the Congress.
- In January 1931 in order to create a conducive atmosphere for talks, the government lifted the ban on the Congress Party and released its leaders from prison.
- On 8 March 1931 the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed. As per this pact, Mahatma Gandhi agreed to suspend the Civil-Disobedience Movement and participate in the Second- Round Table Conference.
- In September 1931, the Second Round Table Conference was held at London. Mahatma Gandhi participated in the Conference but returned to India disappointed as no agreement could be reached on the demand of complete independence and on the communal question.
- In January 1932, the Civil-Disobedience Movement was resumed.
- The government responded to it by arresting Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel and by reimposing the ban on the Congress party.

### **Gandhi – Irwin Pact – 1931**

- As a result in 1931 , the Gandhi Irwin pact was signed.
- According to this pact , the civil disobedience movement was suspended and the congress decided to attend the next round table conference on the condition of release of all political prisoners and withdrawal of the salt laws.

### **The Communal Award and Poona Pact of 1932**

- By 1930, Dr Ambedkar had become a leader of national stature championing the cause of the depressed people of the country.
- While presenting a real picture of the condition of these people in the First Round Table Conference, he had demanded separate electorates for them.
- On 16 August 1932 the British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald made an announcement, which came to be as the Communal Award.
- According to this award, the depressed classes were considered as a separate community and as such provisions were made for separate electorates for them. Mahatma Gandhi protested against the Communal Award and went on a fast unto death in the Yeravada jail on 20 September 1932.
- Finally, an agreement was reached between Dr Ambedkar and Gandhi.
- This agreement came to be called as the Poona Pact. The British Government also approved of it.
- Accordingly, 148 seats in different Provincial Legislatures were reserved for the Depressed Classes in place of 71 as provided in the Communal Award.
- The third Round Table Conference came to an end in 1932. The Congress once more did not take part in it.
- Nonetheless, in March 1933, the British Government issued a White Paper, which became the basis for the enactment of the Government of India Act, 1935.

### **The Government Of India Act – 1935**

On the basis of the Simon Commission report and proposals of the three round table conferences, the Government of India Act 1935 was passed. It introduced the following changes. This Act

- 1) Introduced provincial autonomy
- 2) Abolished diarchy in the provinces
- 3) Established federal government at the centre
- 4) Provided for the establishment of a federal court to decide the conflicts between the provinces and the centre
- 5) Provided for the establishment of a federal reserve bank

### **The Second World War and National Movement ( 1939 – 1945 )**

- In 1937 elections were held under the provisions of the Government of India Act of 1935.
- Congress Ministries were formed in seven states of India. On 1 September 1939 the Second World War broke out.
- The British Government without consulting the people of India involved the country in the war.
- The Congress vehemently opposed it and as a mark of protest the Congress Ministries in the Provinces resigned on 12 December 1939.
- The Muslim League celebrated that day as the Deliverance Day. In March 1940 the Muslim League demanded the creation of Pakistan.

### **Demand For Pakistan – 1940**

- In March 1940, at the Lahore session of the Muslim League, the demand for a separate nation of Pakistan was made.

- Muhammad Ali Jinnah put forth the Two Nation Theory that is two different nations namely and Pakistan for the hindus and muslims respectively.
- He addressed that the muslims wanted a separate home land styled as Pakistan.
- It comprised of those provinces where the muslims were in majority.

### **August Offer - 1940**

- The british viceroy linlithgow was responsible for involving Indians in the second world war which was opposed by congress.
- He made some offer to satisfy the congress. Dominion status for india after the war , was promised.
- It was promised that a committee would be setup for framing the indian constitution. And an indian would be appointed in the council of viceroy.
- These offers were made in the month of August 1940. So it is called the August offer. The congress totally rejected it.

### **Cripps Mission (1942)**

- In the meantime, the Viceroy, Lord Linlithgow expanded his Executive Council by including five more Indians into it in July 1941. However, in the midst of worsening wartime international situation, the British Government in its continued effort to secure Indian cooperation sent Sir Stafford Cripps to India on 23 March 1942. This is known as Cripps Mission.

The main recommendations of Cripps were:

- ✓ The promise of Dominion Status to India,
- ✓ Protection of minorities
- ✓ setting up of a Constituent Assembly in which there would be representatives from the Princely States along with those of the British Provinces,

- ✓ There would be provision for any Province of British India not prepared to accept this Constitution, either to retain its present constitutional position or frame a constitution of its own.
- The major political parties of the country rejected the Cripps proposals. Gandhi called Cripps' proposals as a "Post-dated Cheque".
- They did not like the rights of the Princely States either to send their representatives to the Constituent Assembly or to stay out of the Indian Union.
- The Muslim League was also dissatisfied as its demand for Pakistan had not been conceded in the proposal.

### **Quit India Movement (1942-1944)**

- The failure of the Cripps Mission and the fear of an impending Japanese invasion of India led Mahatma Gandhi to begin his campaign for the British to quit India.
- Mahatma Gandhi believed that an interim government could be formed only after the British left India and the Hindu-Muslim problem sorted out.
- The All India Congress Committee met at Bombay on 8 August 1942 and passed the famous Quit India Resolution.
- On the same day, Gandhi gave his call of 'do or die'. On 8th and 9th August 1942, the government arrested all the prominent leaders of the Congress.
- For once, this pre-planned action of the government left the Indian people without leadership. Mahatma Gandhi was kept in prison at Poona.
- Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Abul Kalam Azad, and other leaders were imprisoned in the Ahmednagar Fort.
- At this time, leadership was provided by Ram Manohar Lohia, Achyuta and S.M. Joshi.

- The role of Jayaprakash Narain in this movement was important. Large number of students also left their schools and colleges to join the movement.
- The youth of the nation also participated in this movement with patriotism. Strikes, demonstrations and public meetings were organised in various towns and cities.
- Slowly the movement reached the rural areas. In 1943, as the movement gained further momentum, there were armed attacks on government buildings in Madras and Bengal.
- In 1944 Mahatma Gandhi was released from jail. Quit India Movement was the final attempt for country's freedom. The British Government ordered for 538 rounds of firing. Nearly 60,229 persons were jailed.
- At least 7,000 people were killed. This movement paved the way for India's freedom. It aroused among Indians the feelings of bravery, enthusiasm and total sacrifice.

### **Subash Chandra Bose and The Indian National Army – 1942**

- Subash Chandra Bose popularly known as Netaji was one of the greatest patriots. He joined the Indian National Congress in 1927.
- He worked with Jawaharlal Nehru. Netaji was the source of inspiration for the youth and masses.
- He made several youth to join the national movement. He was elected as the president of the Indian National Congress in 1938.
- He started the Forward Bloc party in 1939. The presidentship of the Indian Independent League was handed over to Subash by Rash Behari Bose.
- Subash became the supreme commander of the INA or Azad Hind Fauj. From then onwards Subash Chandra Bose was popularly called Netaji. Netaji means the leader.

- A women's regiment named after the rani of Jhansi was organized under the captaincy of Lakshmi from Tamil Nadu.
- The INA gave a tough fight against the British and played a great role in the freedom struggle of India. Netaji's slogan 'Jai Hind' echoed throughout India and it became the popular form of salutation. 'Dilli Chalo' was another famous slogan of Subash.
- It is believed that Bose was killed in an air crash on the way.

### **Cabinet Mission (1946)**

- After the Second World War, Lord Attlee became the Prime Minister of England.
- On 15 March, 1946 Lord Attlee made a historic announcement in which the right to self-determination and the framing of a Constitution for India were conceded.
- Consequently, three members of the British Cabinet - Pethick Lawrence, Sir Stafford Cripps and A. V. Alexander - were sent to India. This is known as the Cabinet Mission.
- The Cabinet Mission put forward a plan for solution of the constitutional problem.
- Provision was made for three groups of provinces to possess their separate constitutions.
- The Cabinet Mission also proposed the formation of a Union of India, comprising both the British India and the Princely States.
- The Union would remain in charge of only foreign affairs, defence and communications leaving the residuary powers to be vested in the provinces.
- A proposal was envisaged for setting up an Interim Government, which would remain in office till a new government was elected on the basis of the new Constitution framed by the Constituent Assembly.

- Both the Muslim League and the Congress accepted the plan. Consequently, elections were held in July 1946 for the formation of a Constituent Assembly.
- The Congress secured 205 out of 214 General seats. The Muslim League got 73 out of 78 Muslim seats.

### **The Interim Government - 1946**

- An Interim Government was formed under the leadership of Jawaharlal Nehru on 2 September 1946.
- Nehru sought the help from Jinnah to form interim government. But Jinnah refused to cooperate with Nehru.
- He became adamant in the demand of Pakistan. Hence partition of India became inevitable.

### **Mountbatten Plan (1947)**

- On 20 February 1947, Prime Minister Atlee announced in the House of Commons the definite intention of the British Government to transfer power to responsible Indian hands by a date not later than June 1948.
- Thus, to effect the transference of that power Atlee decided to send Lord Mountbatten as Viceroy to India.
- Lord Mountbatten armed with vast powers became India's Viceroy on 24 March 1947.
- The partition of India and the creation of Pakistan appeared inevitable to him. After extensive consultation Lord Mountbatten put forth the plan of partition of India on 3 June 1947.
- The Congress and the Muslim League ultimately approved the Mountbatten Plan.

### **Indian Independence Act 1947**

The British Government accorded formal approval to the Mountbatten Plan by enacting the Indian Independence Act on 18 July 1947. The salient features of this Act were:

- ✓ The partition of the country into India and Pakistan would come into effect from 15 August 1947.
  - ✓ The British Government would transfer all powers to these two Dominions.
  - ✓ A Boundary Commission would demarcate the boundaries of the provinces of the Punjab and Bengal.
  - ✓ The Act provided for the transfer of power to the Constituent Assemblies of the two Dominions, which will have full authority to frame their respective Constitutions.
- The Radcliff Boundary Commission drew the boundary line separating India and Pakistan.
  - On 15th August 1947 India, and on the 14th August Pakistan came into existence as two independent states.
  - India became free on 15th August 1947. Tricolour flag was hoisted in the place of British Union Jack on the historic Red Fort in Delhi.
  - Lord Mountbatten was made the first Governor General of Independent India, whereas Mohammad Ali Jinnah became the first Governor General of Pakistan.
  - The most tragic incident occurred on 30 January 1948, when Mahatma Gandhi - the father of the nation - on his way to a prayer meeting was assassinated by Nathuram Godse.

### **The Integration Of Princely States**

- The integration of Indian states was the greatest achievement of Patel. On the eve of Indian independence there were nearly 565 princely states in India.
- About 562 princely states were merged with the Indian union. But states like Kashmir, Hyderabad and Junagadh were reluctant to join.
- When Jawaharlal Nehru was the prime minister, Patel, by his diplomacy and stern action integrated them with the Indian union and earned the name 'The Iron Man of India' and 'Bismarck of India'.
- With the consent of the French government Pondicherry, Karaikal, Mahe, Yanam and Chandernagore became the parts of the Indian union in 1954. Goa, Diu and Daman were the Portuguese settlements in India.
- The people of these places wanted to merge with India. So the government of India had to resort to military action over these areas in 1961. They became finally a part of the Indian union.
- The Constituent Assembly had set itself the task of preparing a new constitution for free India. Dr. Rajendra Prasad was appointed as the president of the Constituent Assembly.
- The Drafting Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar completed the work in November 1949.
- The Constitution of India came into force on January 26, 1950 when India became a republic.
- Dr. Rajendra Prasad became the first president of independent India.