



Jai Maa Saraswati Gyandayini

An International Multidisciplinary e- Journal
(Peer-reviewed, Open access & indexed, Online Journal)
Journal home page: www.jmsjournals.in, ISSN: 2454-8367



Vol. 08, Issue-I, July 2022

Gandhi ji And the Freedom Movement of India: An Analytical Study

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KEYWORDS

Gandhi ji, National Movement, British, India, Freedom, Non-violence, Credible Contribution for Society.

ABSTRACT

In this Article, the contribution made by Mahatma Gandhi to the National Movement has been described. Mahatma Gandhi ji was the supreme leader of the Indian National Movement. Gandhi Ji was born on October 2, 1869, in the house of Karamchand Gandhi. After completing his elementary education, Gandhi ji went to England in 1888 to pursue higher education at the age of 19. He came to India in 1891 and then went to South Africa in 1893. He returned to India after 22 Years in 1915 and in 1917 used his weapon of active disobedience against the British in India with the Champaran Movement. Gandhi ji used truth and non-violence in his movement. Because of this the common people also started walking with Gandhi ji. Gandhi ji participated in all the movements done by Indians to free India from the slavery of the British. Gandhi ji becomes synonymous with the national movement at that time. This was the reason that the British put Mahatma Gandhi in Jail many times and tortured him. But Gandhi ji succeeded in driving the British out of India with his weapon of Non-violence.

Introduction

Mahatma Gandhi was the most prominent leader of the Indian National Movement who contributed in liberating India from the British through non-violent movement. Gandhi ji was born on 2 October 1869. His father's name was Karamchand Gandhi and mother's name was Putlibai. Gandhi ji was influenced by his mother's religious views. He was married to Kasturba Gandhi in his childhood. Gandhi ji went to England to practice law in 1888 and returned to India in 1891 and started practicing law in India. Gandhi ji went to South Africa in 1893 to fight a case against a Gujarati merchant. Gandhi ji lived there for 22 years. Gandhi ji started his first movement in Africa only.

Gandhi ji started the 'Civil Disobedience Movement' to get Indians their rights in Africa and to end apartheid. Thousands of people supported Gandhi ji in this. Due to which a commission was appointed to investigate the complaints of Indians. Due to this movement, the demands related to abolition of 3-pound tax on Indians, recognition of their marriages and immigration and residence were accepted. Sumit Sarkar has written that it was because of the experiences in South Africa that Gandhi ji became more popular than others in the beginning of his political career.

After returning from Africa in 1915, Gandhi led the Chaperon movement of 1917 for the first time. Gandhi ji first Divide movement was the 'Rowlett Act' Satyagraha in 1919. In this Gandhi ji urged his followers that this act is unfair. It violates the principles of justice and freedom. We will all do civil disobedience till it is withdrawn. Gandhi

called for a nationwide strike in protest against this and its date was kept on 30 March, which was later changed to 6 April. The information of this movement was given to the Viceroy. This movement was universal of 13 April 1919. Saddened by the Jallianwala Bagh incident, Gandhi called off the movement on 18 April.

Soon after the withdrawal of the Rowlett Act Satyagraha, Gandhi ji started a new movement, which is called 'Non-Cooperation Movement'. Gandhi ji also supported the 'Khilafat Movement' being run by Muslims to include Muslims in this movement. In December 1919, Gandhi ji and other Congress leaders in Amritsar discussed the issue of focusing on 23 issues and advised the Khilafat Committee to launch a non-violent movement in 1920. Gandhi ji focused the 'non-cooperation movement' on the three issues of tyranny, Khilafat and Swaraj of Punjab.

Gandhi ji decided to start this movement on 1 August 1920. But Bal Gangadhar Tilak died on the eve of this day. That's why this movement was started after the funeral of Bal Gangadhar Tilak. In the Calcutta session called by Gandhi ji on September, Gandhi ji and Muslim leaders emphasized on Hindu-Muslim unity. Foreign clothes were boycotted in this movement and the 'Prince of Wales' was opposed. Holi of foreigners was burnt, elections were boycotted, alcohol was opposed, charkhas were distributed, titles were returned, government schools and colleges etc. were boycotted.

In this movement that lasted for 20 months, Hindus and Muslims together opposed the British, but only then on 5 February 1922, due to the violent incident of Chauri-Chauri, Gandhi ji withdrew this

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.53724/jmsg/v8n1.04>

Received 5th June 2022; Accepted 25th June 2022; Available online 30th July 2022

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movement. On March 10, Gandhi ji was arrested and prosecuted and he was sentenced to 6 years. The British Government constituted the Simon Commission in 1927. The agitators were discouraged by this step of Gandhi ji, but still there was no decrease in the popularity of Gandhi ji. The British government realized for the first time that it could no longer maintain control over India.

To examine the reforms of 1919. It was opposed in India, as it did not include any Indian member. The Simon Commission submitted its report despite the protests of the Indians. In protest against this, the Congress passed the proposal of 'Dominion State' in 1929, but the government did not accept it. Because of which Gandhi ji started the civil disobedience movement. The first Independence Day was celebrated on 26 January 1930 and preparations for the movement started.

Gandhi ji started the movement on 12 March 1930. Gandhi ji left for Dandi with 78 of his supporters from the Sabarmati Ashram and broke the 'Salt Law' by making salt on the beach of Dandi on 6 April 1930. This news spread all over the country and laws were broken at various places and arrests were made. The government took drastic steps to suppress this movement. Gandhi ji was arrested and put in jail. Due to this, the Congress intensified the movement. Foreign cloth, English banks, ships and English companies were boycotted. People stopped paying taxes. Dharan's were staged at liquor shops and Gandhi Day was celebrated. The British government had suffered a lot due to this movement of Gandhi ji. The boycott of British materials brought down the cost of goods made in British factories. People stopped buying British clothes. The use of cotton cloth made in India increased, due to which the Indian textile industry developed.

Seeing this movement, the government tried to suppress it. For which Lord Irwin organized the Round Table Conference in 1930. But Gandhi ji put a condition of 'complete independence' to participate in it, but the British were not ready to accept it. Because of Gandhi did not participate in the first-round table conference. But Gandhi decided to participate in the second-round table conference and on 27 January 1931, Gandhi was released from jail. Gandhi ji met Irwin and an agreement was called 'Gandhi Irwin' agreement. This agreement was signed by Gandhi ji on behalf of the Congress. Now the Congress and the British Government have been brought to the level of equality.

After this the 'Civil Disobedience Movement' was suspended. After this Gandhi ji went to England to participate in the Second Round Table Conference. But this conference could not be successful. That's why Gandhi ji resumed civil disobedience on 29 December. The government imposed martial law to end the movement. This spread discontent among the public. People were tortured by the British government to suppress the movement. The repression cycle of the government increased. People were put in the jail. That's why Gandhi ji decided to withdraw the movement. In this way Gandhi ji called off this movement in 1934. After this Gandhi ji toured the whole of India.

On September 1939, the Second World War started. Britain wanted the cooperation of Indians in this war. For this 'Cripps Mission' came to India. But the Congress rejected it. In 1942, the Japanese army reached

Burma. In such a situation, Gandhi ji raised the 'Quit India Movement' against the British. On August 8, 1942, at the Bombay session of the All-India Congress Committee called for 'Quit India Movement'.

Gandhi was arrested the very next day, August 9, along with the members of the Congress. Thus, this movement became leaderless. But still this movement continued. Demonstrations were held all over the country, processions were taken out, hartals, dharna's and civil disobedience were rampant all over the country. The government also took drastic steps to suppress this movement. Tara Chand has written that "the government's behaviour towards the agitators was merciless". People were killed, due to which people also got angry, due to which violent incidents started happening.

Seeing the violent action of the government, Gandhi ji started fasting in jail, which lasted for 21 days. As soon as the news of the fast started spreading, there was an influx of hartals and processions. Demands for Gandhi ji's release were also made from abroad, but the government did not accept it. Gandhi ji ended his fast after 21 days on 3 March 1943. The result was that the attention of the world was diverted towards the Indian problem. Gandhi ji was released from jail on 6 May 1944. With this the movement also came to an end. Tara Chand has written that "this movement also had an effect that the illusion of the British was broken that their empire was morally justified and Indian Muslims, Dalit class people and people of native states wanted to maintain their rule". This is the last Movement of the Gandhi ji. India became Independent on 15 August 1947. Nathu Ram Godse shot and killed Gandhi ji on 30 March 1948.

In the end we can say that Gandhi ji participated in all the movements done by Indians to free India from the slavery of the British. Gandhi ji become synonymous with the national movement at that time. This was the reason that the British put Mahatma Gandhi in Jail many times and tortured him. But Gandhi ji succeeded in driving the British out of India by his weapon of Non-violence.

Many movements led by Mahatma Gandhi from 1919 to 1942 had taken Indian nationalism to its pinnacle and led to the end of the power and basis of the British Raj. Although the British Raj remained in India even after the Quit India Movement of 1942, the movement sent a message to the British Empire that they would eventually have to leave India. The result of this was that on August 15, 1947, the British left India and India became independent.

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