

Ch 2 - Nationalism in India

Exercises

1. Explain

Q Why is the growth of nationalism in the colonies linked to an anti-colonial movement?

A The growth of Modern nationalism in the colonies is linked to an anti-colonial movement due to the factors as mentioned as follows:

- People began discovering their unity in the process of their struggle with colonialism.
- The sense of being oppressed under colonialism provided a shared bond that tied many different groups together.
- As each class and group felt the effects of colonialism differently, their experiences were varied and their notions of freedom were not always the same, so the congress under Mahatma Gandhi tried to forge these groups together within one movement.

Thus, in spite of differences and conflicts, different groups and communities came under the banner of Indian National Congress and took part in various movements which were anti-colonial or against the British.

(b) How did the First World War help in the growth of the National Movement in India?

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Explain any four facts to show how did the First World War help in the growth of the National Movement in India.

A The First World War helped in the growth of the National Movement in India as it created a new economic and political situation as mentioned below:

- The defense expenditure had increased.
- War loans were taken and more taxes were imposed.
- Custom duties were raised.
- Income tax was introduced.
- The rise in prices led to extreme hardships for the people.
- There was widespread discontentment in the rural area due to forced recruitment of soldiers.
- In 1918-19 and 1920-21 crops failed in many parts of India resulting in acute shortages of food.
- There was influenza epidemic too. According to the Census of 1921, twelve to thirteen million people perished as a result of famines and epidemics. People thought that their hardships and suffering would come to an end after the

was but that did not happen. So these factors were responsible for the rise of nationalism of India.

(c) Why were Indians outraged by the Rowlatt act?

A Indians were outraged by the Rowlatt Act (1919) due to the following reasons:

- They had hoped that after the war their hardships would be over and the government would take steps to improve their conditions.
- On the other hand, the government got the Rowlatt Act passed in the Imperial Legislative Council against the united opposition of the Indian Members.
- The Act gave the government enormous powers to repress political activities. It allowed detention of political prisoners without trial for two years.
- These provisions meant the suspension of two principles of justice — trial by jury and habeas corpus — the rights safeguarding against illegal imprisonment.
- The Rowlatt Act was considered as Black Law and the Indians under the leadership of Gandhi decided to oppose it by non-violent civil disobedience which would start with a hartal on 6 April.

(d) Why did Gandhiji decide to withdraw the Non-Cooperation Movement?

A Gandhiji decided to withdraw the Non - Cooperation Movement due to the reasons as mentioned below:

- The movement was turning violent in many places.
- Gandhiji thought that Satyagrahis needed to be properly trained before they would be ready for mass struggles. This was in context of the incident in Chauri - Chaura, a village in Gorakhpur district UP where twenty two policemen were brutally killed after they had fired on a political procession.
- There had been disturbances in Madras and Calcutta also. The above factors made it clear that the country was not yet ready for mass movements. So Gandhiji prevailed upon the Congress Working Committee to call off the movement.

2. What is meant by the idea of Satyagraha?
or

Explain the idea of Satyagraha according to Gandhiji.

A(1) Satyagraha is a pure soul-force. Truth is the very substance of the soul. That is why this force is called Satyagraha. The soul is informed with knowledge. It burns the flame of love.

- (b) Non-violence is the supreme dharma. The idea of Satyagraha emphasised the power of truth and the need to search for truth.
- (c) It suggested that if the cause was true, if the struggle was against injustice, then the physical force was not necessary to fight the oppressor.
- (d) Without seeking vengeance or being aggressive, a satyagrahi could win the battle through non-violence.
- (e) In Satyagraha, people including the oppressors - had to be persuaded to see the truth, instead of being forced to accept truth through the use of violence.
- (f) In this way by this struggle, truth was bound to ultimately triumph. Mahatma Gandhi believed that this dharma of non-violence would unite all Indians.

4. Compare the images of Bharat Mata in this chapter with the image of Germania Chapter 1.

- A (a) The image of Germania was the symbol of German nation whereas; the image of Bharat Mata was the symbol of the Indian nation.
- (b) Both images inspired nationalists who worked very hard to unify their respective countries and to attain a liberal nation.
- (c) The image of Bharat Mata is different from that of Germania in the sense that the former reflects the religious basis of its making.

- (d) The image of Bharat Mata painted by Abanindranath Tagore is bestowed with learning, food, clothing, and some ascetic quality also whereas the image of Germania was painted by Philip Veit in the year 1848.
- (e) Another painting of Bharat Mata in which we find Mata holding Trishul and standing beside a lion and a elephant - symbols of power and authority. This image appears to be more akin to the image of Germania where she holds a sword and a shield.
- (f) These images popularized the idea of sacrifice and devotion to the mother nation.

2.7 Discuss

1. List all the different social groups which joined the Non - Cooperation Movement of 1921. Then choose any three and write about their hopes and struggles to show why they joined the movement.

A In The Non - Cooperation Movement (1920 - 1922), the following social groups took part.

(I) Middle Class people in the Towns.

The movement in cities : The movement started with middle - class participation in the cities. Thousands of students left government - controlled schools and colleges, headmasters and teachers

resigned, and lawyers gave up their legal practices.

Boycott of Council Elections: The Movement started with middle-class participation in the cities. Thousands of students left government-controlled

Boycott of Council Elections: The Council elections were boycotted in most provinces except Madras (Chennai), where the Justice B B Party, the party of Non-Brahmins, felt that entering the council was one way of gaining some power, ~~seen~~ something that ~~was~~ usually only Brahmins had access to.

Swadeshi: The Non-Cooperation Movement had a great impact on the Indian textile industry. Swadeshi goods, especially cloth, got a great impetus. Foreign goods were boycotted, liquor shops picketed, and foreign cloth burnt in huge bonfires.

Impact on Industry: In many places, merchants and traders refused to trade in foreign goods or finance foreign trade. Due to this, the demand for Indian textile mills and handlooms went up. The increase in demand provided a big relief to the vanishing textile industry of India.

Movement in the Countryside: Though people in the countryside interpreted the idea of 'Swaraj' in their

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own way but they participated in the movement on large scale. In Awadh, peasants ~~launched~~ launched the movement against the talukdars and landlords. Whereas the plantation workers launched the movement against the tea estate owners.

(ii) Peasants in rural areas.

i) Participants : In the countryside, the movement was led by the peasants, tribals and the local leaders. For example, in Awadh, it was Baba Ramchandra sanyasi, who had earlier been to Fiji as an indentured labourer.

iii) Why rural people participated?

The movement here was not against the Britishers but against talukdars and landlords. The problems of the rural people were different from those of the urban people:

- * The talukdars and landlords were demanding very high rents and a variety of other taxes.
- * Peasants had to do ~~bogas~~ ^{begar} and work at the landlord's farms without any payment.
- * The peasants had no security of tenure. They were regularly evicted so that they could acquire no security of tenure.
- * As the problems of the people were different, their demands were also different. The peasants

movement demanded :

- Reduction of Revenue.
- Abolition of Begar.
- Redistribution of Land.
- Social boycott of oppressive landlords.

(iii) Ways of protests : The Movement in the countryside had a different angle. In many places, Nai-dhobi bands were organised by the Panchayats to deprive the landlords of the services of barbers, cobblers, washermen, etc. Even national leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru went to villages in Awadh to know the grievances of the people. By October, the Awadh Kissan Sabha was set up headed by Jawaharlal Nehru, Baba Ramchandra, and a few others. When the movement spread in 1921, the houses of talukdars and merchants were attacked. The movement turned violent which was not liked by some of the Congress leaders.

(iii) Tribal People.

Most of the tribal people were dependent on forests for their livelihood but under the new Forest Policy, the government had put several restrictions on the people :

- Closing large forest area for the tribal people.

- Forcing the local people to contribute beas
- Preventing people from entering the forests to graze their cattle, or to collect ~~firewood~~ fuelwood and fruits.

All these steps enraged the hill people. Not only were their livelihoods affected, but they felt that their traditional rights were also being denied. So the people revolted.

(iv) Plantation workers

- For plantation workers in Assam, freedom meant the right to move in and out of the confined space in which they were enclosed, and it meant retraining a link with the village from which they had come.

The government had passed the Inland Emigration Act of 1859 under which plantation workers were not permitted to leave the tea estates without permissions, and in fact, they were rarely given such permission.

When the plantation workers heard of the Non-Cooperation Movement, thousands of them defied the authorities, left the plantations and headed towards their homes.

The plantation workers believed that the Gandhi Raj was coming, and everyone would be given land in their own villages.

2. Discuss the Salt March to make clear why it was an effective symbol of resistance against colonialism.

A The Salt March was an effective symbol of resistance against colonialism because -

- It was the first time that Indian leaders decided to violate law. People were now asked not only to refuse cooperation with the British, but also break colonial laws.
- Thousands of Indians in different parts of the country broke the salt law, manufactured salt and demonstrated in front of the government salt factories.
- As the movement spread, foreign cloth was boycotted and ~~di~~ liquor shops were picketed. Peasants refused to pay revenue and 'chaukidari taxes', village officials resigned, and in many places forest people violated forest laws - going into Reserved Forests to collect wood and graze cattle.
- Worried by the development, the colonial government began arresting the Congress leaders, one by one. This led to violent clashes in many places. Angry crowd demonstrated on streets, facing armoured cars and police firing. Many were killed.

- When Mahatma Gandhi himself was arrested, industrial workers in Sholapur attacked police posts, municipal buildings, law courts and railway stations - all structures that symbolised the British rule.
- The outcome of the movement was the Gandhi-Irwin Pact which was signed by Gandhiji with Irwin on 5th March, 1931. By this Gandhi-Irwin Pact, Gandhiji consented to participate in a Round Table Conference in London and the government agreed to release the political prisoners.

4. Why did the political leaders differ sharply over the question of separate electorates?

A By the system of separate electorates, we mean such a system when people of one ~~sex~~ religion only vote for a candidate of their own religion. Using such a system was a mischief of the British Government who wanted to divide the people to ~~weaken~~ weaken the national movement. By doing so, the British wanted to prolong their stay in India.

The different political leaders differed over the question of separate electorates because of the following reasons:

- (i) The Congress leaders opposed the policy of the British Government in insisting different peoples

in demanding separate electorate. They knew well that it was all the mischief of the British Government who encouraged different people to ask for separate electorates because such a policy would weaken the National Movement, and prolonged Britishers stay in India. The Congress leaders were one and all in favour of joint elections electorates.

(2) The Muslim leaders, like Muhammed Iqbal and Mr. Jinnah asked for ~~seper~~ separate electorates to safeguard the political interests of Muslims. In their opinions, the majority of the people were Hindus, and so in case ~~in case~~ of joint electorates, the Muslims would have little chance of winning the seats. As such, they would always be at the mercy of the Hindus.

(3) The leaders of the Depressed Classes, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, also asked for separate electorates because in the joint electorates, he feared the dominance of the upper electorates or the upper caste Hindus in the elections. By the Poona Pact he, however, agreed to have joint electorates ~~or the upper cast Hindus in the elections~~. By with the hindus, provided the seats for the Depressed Classes were fixed or reserved in the Provincial and Central Legislative Councils.

Outcome: Lord Irwin announced in October 1929, a vague offer of 'dominion status' for India.