

## भारतीय राष्ट्रीय आंदोलन ( भाग-6 )

### # EMERGENCE OF GANDHI

Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi was a lawyer, trained in Britain. He went to South Africa in 1893 and resided there for twenty one years. The treatment of the Indians in South Africa by the British provoked his conscience. He decided to fight against the policy of racial discrimination of the South African Government. During the course of his struggle against the government he evolved the technique of Satyagraha (non-violent insistence for truth and justice). Gandhi succeeded in this struggle in South Africa. He returned to India in 1915. In 1916, he founded the Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmedabad to practice the ideas of truth and non-violence. Gopal Krishna Gokhale advised him to tour the country mainly in the villages to understand the people and their problems. His first experiment in Satyagraha began at Champaran in Bihar in 1917 when he inspired the peasants to struggle against the oppressive plantation system. He also organised a satyagraha to support the peasants of the Kheda districts of Gujarat. These peasants were not able to pay their revenue because of crop failure and epidemics. In Ahmedabad, he organized a movement amongst cotton mill workers.

### # The Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22)

Gandhiji by this time, was convinced that no useful purpose would be served by supporting the government. He was also emboldened by his earlier success in Bihar. In the light of the past events and the actions of British government, he decided to launch a nationwide satyagraha against the proposed Rowlatt Act in 1919. He threatened to start the non-cooperation movement in case the government failed to accept his demands. Why do you think Gandhiji protested against the Act? It was because the Act gave the government enormous powers to repress political activities and allowed detention of political prisoners without any trial for two years.

Gandhiji wanted non violent civil disobedience against such unjust laws. The government paid no heed to it. Gandhiji, therefore, started his non-cooperation movement in August 1920, in which he appealed to the people not to cooperate with the British government. At this time, the Khilafat movement started by the Muslims and the Noncooperation movement led by Gandhi merged into one common confrontation against the British Government. For this Gandhi laid down an elaborate programme-

- (1) Surrender of titles and honorary offices as well as resignation from nominated seats in local bodies;
- (2) refusal to attend official and non-official functions;
- (3) gradual withdrawal of children from officially controlled schools and colleges;
- (4) gradual boycott of British courts by lawyers and litigants;

(5) refusal on the part of the military, clerical and labouring classes to offer themselves as recruits for service in Mesopotamia;

(6) boycott of elections to the legislative council by candidates and voters;

(7) boycott of foreign goods and National schools and colleges.

Later, it was supplemented with a constructive programme which had three principal features:

(1) promotion of 'Swadeshi', particularly hand-spinning and weaving;

(2) Removal of untouchability among Hindus; (3) promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity.

Due to this appeal of Gandhiji, an unusual frenzy overtook the country. A large number of people, dropping their differences, took part in this movement. Over two-thirds of the voters abstained from taking part in the elections to the Council, held in November, 1920. Thousands of students and teachers left their schools and colleges and new Indian educational centers were started by them.