

Indian national movement -part-7

Movement with Gandhi

In 1922, Gandhiji suspended his non-cooperation movement after Chauri Chaura incident, even when the movement was on its peak. Many people criticized the decision of Gandhi ji. Imagine that you were a journalist at that time Mahatma Gandhi just after this movement.

C. R. Das, Motilal Nehru and other like minded persons hatched out a novel plan of non-cooperation from within the reformed councils. They formed the Swaraj Party on January 01, 1923. C. R. Das was the president of the party and Motilal Nehru the Secretary. The party was described as 'a party within the Congress' and not a rival organization. But, they could neither end nor amend the Act of 1919. In 1927, British government appointed a commission under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon. The Commission was appointed to study the reforms of 1919 and suggest further measures for Constitutional reforms. The Commission had no Indian member in it. The Indians boycotted this all-White commission. Therefore, when this Commission arrived in India, it faced protests all over the country. Black flags were shown, demonstrations and Hartal took place all over the country and the cry of 'Simon go back' was heard. These demonstrators were lathi charged at a number of places by the British Police. Lala Lajpat Rai was severely assaulted by the police and he succumbed to his injuries. This agitation against the Simon Commission gave a new strength to the National Movement of India.

Meanwhile, Indian political leaders were busy in drafting a Constitution. This is known as Nehru Report which formed the outline of the Constitution. Among its important recommendations were a declaration of rights, a parliamentary system of government, adult franchise and an independent judiciary with a supreme court at its head. Most of its recommendations formed the basis of the Constitution of independent India which was adopted more than twenty years later. At the historic annual session of Congress in Lahore in 1929, the Congress committed itself to a demand for Purna Swaraj or complete independence and issued a call to the country to celebrate 26th January as Purna-Swaraj Day. On January 26, 1930, the Congress celebrated 'Independence Day'. On the same day in 1950 the Constitution of Independent India was adopted, making India a sovereign, democratic socialist republic. Since then January 26th is celebrated as Republic Day.

#Dandi March

Around the same time, the government made a new law. They imposed taxes on the use of salt. This was opposed by the people, as salt was the basic need of the people. But, no attention was paid to demands of the people. During March-April, 1930, Gandhi marched from his Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi on the Gujarat coast for the purpose of raiding the Government Salt. The violation of salt law was his first challenge to the government. It was a peaceful march.

Gandhi committed a technical breach of the Salt Law on 6th April, 1930, when he picked up the scattered sea salt from the coast to break this Law. In this movement farmers, traders and women took part in large numbers. The government arrested him in May 1930 and put him in Yervada jail at Poona. The campaign had a significant effect on British attitude toward Indian independence. Gandhi-Irwin Pact in 1931 was one of its examples. Gandhiji also went to London in 1931 and participated in the second round table conference as the sole representative of the Congress but no settlement could be arrived at. Although, Gandhi's arrest removed him from the active leadership of the movement, this civil disobedience continued. Special stress was laid on boycott of foreign goods particularly clothes.