

Class VIII

Subject:- History and Civics

Teacher:- Mili Bhatnagar

Chapter 14

India's Struggle for Freedom

After the withdrawal of Non-Cooperation Movement a number of significant events took place before Civil Disobedience Movement. The Swaraj Party was formed by C.R. Das, Motilal Nehru. The Congress allowed the Swarajists to contest the elections.

In 1927 the government appointed a commission to look into the working of the Government of India Act of 1919 and suggest further administrative reforms. This Simon Commission disappointed the Indians because:-

- i) all members of the Commission were Englishmen and
- ii) the government refused to accept the demand for self government

In 1929, the annual session of Indian National Congress was held at Lahore. In it, the Congress declared 'Purna Swaraj' as its ultimate goal. It asked all nationalists to resign from the Legislatures

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and not to participate in the forthcoming elections. It was decided that 26 January would henceforth be observed as 'Independence Day' every year. To achieve their demands the Congress decided to launch another movement called as the Civil Disobedience Movement.

The Dandi March began from Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmedabad with 78 followers. When Gandhiji reached Dandi he broke the Salt law by making salt. By breaking the Salt law he threw a challenge to the British government. Salt became a symbol of opposition to the British rule.

In November 1930, the government called a conference in London to discuss the reforms proposed by the Simon Commission. The Congress boycotted it. Only the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha and the representatives of the Indian princes participated. The conference was a failure.

The Viceroy Lord Irwin met Gandhiji in 1931 and signed the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. Under its terms, the government agreed to release all political prisoners except those charged with acts of violence.

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As per the terms of Gandhi-Irwin Pact Gandhiji went to London to attend the Second Round Table Conference. But the government refused to accept the demands put up by Gandhiji and the conference ended in failure. After his return to India, Civil Disobedience movement which was suspended earlier was now resumed.

The Second World War started in 1939. Britain involved India in this war without even consulting the leaders of the Congress. In March 1942, Sir Stafford Cripps came to India with some proposals. The Congress felt that the proposals offered too little and too late.

In August 1942, Mahatma Gandhi launched the Quit India Movement. A resolution was passed on 8 August 1942 in Bombay by the All India Congress Committee declaring its demand for an immediate end to British rule. Gandhiji's slogan of 'Do or Die' inspired the entire nation. The government response was quick and the Congress was banned. Most of the leaders were arrested before they could start mobilizing the people. However the people continued the protests. The government responded with terrible brutality.

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The Indian national movement grew stronger after the formation of Indian National Army. In 1943, the leadership of INA came under the hands of Subhash Chandra Bose. On 21 October 1943, he declared the formation of the Provisional Government of Independent India in Singapore. His slogans 'Dilli Dhalo' and 'Jai Hind' inspired many Indians.

In February 1946, the Cabinet Mission arrived in India. The Plan proposed the formation of the interim government and convening of the Constituent Assembly. Lord Mountbatten came to India in March 1947 as a new Viceroy. He presented a plan according to which India was to be divided into — India and Pakistan.

Finally the Indian Independence Act was passed. The main provisions were

1. Two independent dominions to be created.
2. For each dominion there was to be a Governor-General.
3. The legislatures of the two Dominions would have full power to make laws for their respective Dominions.
4. Provisions would be made for the division of the Indian army between the new Dominions.

For more provisions refer to your book.

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