

INDIAN INDEPENDENCE

Uncovering events that led to Independence

Introduction

People from all over the world were always crazy about India and its wealth, tradition and knowledge. The Aryans came from Central Europe and settled down in India. The Persians followed by the Iranians and Parsis immigrated to India. Then came the Moguls and they too settled down permanently in India. But the French and British people came by 17th Century colonized India by grabbing the full control of almost all territories across India. Britishers had ruled India for nearly 200 years.

INDIA'S FIRST WAR OF INDEPENDENCE - 1857

India's First War of Independence, termed Sepoy Riots by the British was an attempt to unite India against the invading British. The rebellion led to the end of the East India Company's rule in India. In August, by the Government of India Act 1858, the company was formally dissolved and its ruling powers over India were transferred to the British Crown.

FORMATION OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS (INC) - 1885

The Indian National Congress was Formed in 1885 by A.O.Hume, an Englishman and a retired civil servant. First session was held in Bombay under W.C.Banerjee in 1885 with 72 delegates. The party was quite moderate in its approach and confided in British justice and generosity during its first two decades. But the repressive measures of the British gave rise to extremists within Congress like Bipin Chandra Pal, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Lala Lajpat Rai (who are known popularly as Lal, Bal, Pal).

PARTITION OF BENGAL - 1905

Partition of Bengal is carried out by **Lord Curzon** on Oct 16, 1905, through a royal proclamation, reducing the old province of Bengal in size by creating East Bengal and Assam out of rest of Bengal. **The objective was to set up a communal gulf between Hindus and Muslims.** A mighty upsurge swept the country against the partition. National movement found real expression in the movement against the partition of Bengal in 1905.

SWADESHI MOVEMENT - 1905

Lal Bal Pal (Lala Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and Bipin Chandra Pal), and Aurobindo Ghosh played the important role in 1905's Swadeshi movement. INC took the Swadeshi call first at the Banaras Session by 1905 presided over by G.K.Gokhale. Foreign goods were kept on fire at various places.

FORMATION OF MUSLIM LEAGUE - 1906

Muslim league founded in 1906 Under the leadership of Aga Khan, Nawab Salimullah of Dhaka and Nawab Mohsin-ul-Mulk. It was a loyalist, communal and conservative political organization which supported the partition of Bengal, opposed the Swadeshi movement, demanded special safeguards to its community and a separate electorate for Muslims.

SPLITTING OF INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS - 1907

The INC split into two groups – **The extremists** and **The moderates**, at the Surat session in 1907. **Extremists were led by Bal, Pal, Lal** while the **moderates by G.K.Gokhale**. Besides other constitutional measures, Indian Councils Act or Minto Morley Reforms

GHADAR PARTY - 1913

Ghadar Party was Formed by Lala Hardayal, Taraknath Das and Sohan Singh Bhakna in 1913. The headquarter of the party was at San Francisco.

THE ARRIVAL OF MAHATHMA GANDHI - 1915

Gandhiji returned to India and joined the Indian National Congress. He took leadership of Congress in 1920 and began agitating against the British. On January 26, 1930, the Indian National Congress declared the independence of India which the British did not recognize.

HOME RULE MOVEMENT - 1916

Home Rule Movement Started by B.G.Tilak (by April, 1916) at Poona and Annie Besant and S.Subramania Iyer at Adyar, near Madras (by Sept, 1916). Its Objective is Self – government for India in the British Empire. Tilak linked up the question of Swaraj with the demand for the formation of Linguistic States and education in vernacular language. He gave the slogan: "Swaraj is my birth right and I will have it".

LUCKNOW PACT - 1916

Lucknow Pact Happened following a war between Britain and Turkey leading to anti-British feelings among Muslims by 1916. Both INC and separate electorates and both jointly demanded for a representative government and dominion Muslim League concluded this Pact (The status for the country).Congress party had accepted the

ROWLATT ACT - 1919

Rowlatt Act brought by march 18, 1919 gave unbridled powers to the govt. to arrest and imprison suspects without trial for two years maximum. This law enabled the Government to suspend the right of Habeas Corpus, which had been the foundation of civil liberties in Britain. The act Caused a wave of anger in all sections across the nation. It was the first country-wide agitation by Gandhiji and marked the foundation of the Non Cooperation Movement.

JALLIANWALA BAGH MASSACRE - 1919

People were agitated over the arrest of Dr. Kitchlu and Dr. Satyapal. On April 13, 1919 - General O' Dyer fires at people who assembled in the Jallianwala agh, Amritsar. As a result hundreds of men, women and children were killed and thousands injured. Rabindranath Tagore returned his Knighthood in protest. Sir Shankaran Nair resigned from Viceroy's Executive Council after this. Hunter Commission was appointed to enquire into it. On March 13, 1940, Sardar Udham Singh killed O'Dyer when the later was addressing a meeting in Caxton Hall, London.

KHILAFAT MOVEMENT - 1920

Muslims were agitated by the treatment done with Turkey by the British in the treaty that followed the First World War.Two brothers, Mohd Ali and Shaukat Ali started the Khilafat movement by 1920.

NON-COOPERTION MOVEMENT -1920

Non-cooperation Movement was the first mass-based political movement under Gandhiji. Congress passed the resolution in its Calcutta session in Sept 1920.

CHAURA INCIDENT - 1922

A mob of people at Chauri – Chaura (near Gorakhpur) clashed with police and burnt 22 policemen on February 5, 1922. This compelled Gandhiji to withdraw the Non Cooperation movement on Feb.12, 1922.

SIMON COMMISSION - 1927

Simon Commission was Constituted under John Simon by 1927, to review the political situation in India and to introduce further reforms and extension of parliamentary democracy. Indian leaders opposed the commission, as there were no Indians in it. The Government used brutal repression and police attacks to break the popular opposition. At Lahore, Lala Lajpat Rai was severely beaten in a lathi-charge. He succumbed to his injuries on Oct.30, 1928.

LAHORE SESSION - 1929

On Dec.19, 1929 under the President ship of J.L.Nehru, the INC, at its Lahore Session, declared Poorna Swaraj (Complete independence) as its ultimate goal. On Dec.31, 1929, the newly adopted tri-colour flag was unfurled and Jan 26, 1930 was fixed as the First Independence Day, was to be celebrated every year. In remembrance with this only Indian republic day is celebrated by January 26.

DANDI MARCH - 1930

Dandi March by Gandhiji on 1930 is also called as the Salt Satyagraha. Along with 78 followers, Gandhiji started his march from Sabarmati Ashram on March 12, 1930 for the small village Dandhi to break the salt law. He reached the seashore on Apr 6, 1930. He picked a handful of salt and inaugurated the Civil Disobedience Movement.

FIRST ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE - 1930

First Round Table conference was the first conference arranged between the British and Indians as equals. It was held on Nov.12, 1930 in London to discuss Simon commission. The conference was Boycotted by INC, Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha, Liberals and some others were there.

GANDHI IRWIN PACT - 1931

Moderate Statesman, Sapru, Jaikar and Srinivas Shastri initiated efforts to break the ice between Gandhiji and the government. • Government represented by Irwin and INC by Gandhiji signed a pact on March 5, 1931. • In this the INC called off the civil disobedience movement and agreed to join the second round table conference. The government on its part released the political prisoners and conceded the right to make salt for consumption for villages along the coast

SECOND ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE - 1931

Gandhiji represented the INC and went to London to meet British P.M. Ramsay Macdonald. However, the session was soon deadlocked on the minorities issue and this time separate electorates was demanded not only by Muslims but also by Depressed Classes, Indian Christians and Anglo – Indians.

THIRD ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE - 1932

Third Round Table Conference held at 1932 was proved fruitless as most of the national leaders were in prison. The discussions led to the passing of the Government of India Act 1935

THE CRIPPS MISSION - 1942

In Dec. 1941, Japan entered the World War – II and advanced towards Indian borders. By March 7, 1942, Rangoon fell and Japan occupied the entire S E Asia. The British govt. with a view to getting co-operation from Indians sent Sir Stafford Cripps, leader of the House of Commons to settle terms with the Indian leaders. He offered a draft which proposed dominion status to be granted after the war. Rejected by the Congress as it didn't want to rely upon future promises. Gandhiji termed it as a post dated cheque in a crashing bank.

THE QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT - 1942

The resolution for The Quit India Movement was passed on Aug.8, 1942, at Bombay. Gandhiji gave the slogan 'Do or Die'. On Aug 9, the Congress was banned and its important leaders were arrested. The arrests provoked anger among the masses and, there being no program of action, the movement became spontaneous and violent. Violence spread throughout the country. However the movement was crushed.

THE INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY (INA) - 1942

The Indian National Army was Founded by Ras behari Bose with Captain Mohan Singh. Subhash Chandra Bose secretly escaped from India in 1941, and reached Berlin in Germany. In July 1943, he joined the INA at Singapore. There, Ras behari Bose handed over the leadership to him. The soldiers were mostly raised from Indian soldiers of the British army who had been taken prisoners by the Japanese after they conquered South East.Asia. Two INA head quarters were Rangoon and Singapore . INA had three fighting brigades named after Gandhiji, Azad and Nehru. Rani Jhansi Brigade was an exclusive women force.

THE CABINET MISSION PLAN - 1945 - 46

The struggle for freedom entered a decisive phase in the year 1945-46. The new Labour Party PM.Lord Attlee, made a declaration on March 15, 1946, that British Cabinet Mission (comprising of Lord Pethick Lawrence as Chairman, Sir Stafford Cripps and A.V.Alexander) will visit India. The mission held talks with the INC and Muslim League to bring about acceptance of their proposals. On May 16, 1946, the mission put towards its proposals. It rejected the demand for separate Pakistan and instead a federal union consisting of British India and the Princely States was suggested. Both Congress and Muslims League were

FORMATION OF CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY - 1946

The Constituent assembly met on Dec 9, 1946 and Dr.Rajendra Prasad was elected as its president.

MOUNTBATTEN PLAN - 1947

On June 3, 1947, Lord Mountbatten put forward his plan which outlined the steps for the solution of India's political problem. The outlines of the Plan were: India to be divided into India and Pakistan. Bengal and Punjab will be partitioned There would be a separate constitutional assembly for Pakistan to frame its constitution. The Princely states would enjoy the liberty to join either India or Pakistan or even remain independent. Aug.15, 1947 was the date fixed for handing over power to India and Pakistan. The British govt. passed the Indian Independence Act of 1947 in July 1947, which contained the major provisions put forward by the Mountbatten plan.

PARTITION & INDEPENDENCE - 1947

All political parties accepted the Mountbatten plan. At the time of independence, there were 562 small and big Princely States in India. Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel who was the first home minister, used iron hand in this regard. By August 15, 1947, all the States, with a few exceptions like Kashmir, Hyderabad and Junagarh had signed the Instrument of Accession. These all remaining Princely states alongwith Goa which was with the Portuguese and Pondicherry held by French also added to the Indian Territory Later.

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