

Review

Contribution of Indian leaders to Indian Nationalist Movement: An analytical discussion

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At present, India is the most growing powerful nation state of the world. Although it came into being in 1947, it was a colony of the British Empire. The British had ruled this land for more than 200 years. To become independent it has to go through a long journey. In this long journey it was guided by its great leaders. These leaders gave Indians the tools to become independent that is Nationalist Movement. Hence, Indian leaders are called the soul of the Indian Nationalist Movement. In this paper to pay a tribute to these great leaders we would put an analytical light on the contribution of these leaders toward Indian Nationalist Movement. We will advance on the basis of chronological development of the British India history and evaluate how they keep this movement alive until the independence.

Key words: Indian Nationalist Movement, contribution, colonial rule, democracy.

INTRODUCTION

The Indian Nationalist Movement is considered as a great movement against colonial power in the world history. The imperialist policies of British led to the growth of Indian Nationalist Movement which was characterized by unity of diversified Indians irrespective of religion, caste, region etc. The Nationalist Movement in India was the outcome of a large number of factors and the most important among them was British Imperialism. It was during the British rule that the whole of India was conquered and brought under one sovereign authority. The domination by any country over the whole of India enabled the people of India to think and act as one nation. Before the coming of the British in India, the people of the South were usually separated from the rest of India except for short intervals. British Imperialism

helped the unification of the country. In the name of good government they exploited its economy. It was as a result of economic exploitation that the seeds of nationalist awakening were sown.

Moreover, the Nationalist Movement in India was a part of the worldwide upsurge of the concepts of democracy and nationalism. The educated class in India came under the influence of these ideas.

The contribution of Raja Ram Mohan Ray can be considered as noteworthy in this respect. The "Sepoy Mutiny" of 1857, though crushed ruthlessly, was the first assertion of the discontentment against British rule. The nationalist awakening took some concrete shape with the establishment of the Indian National Congress in 1885.

However, it was mostly dominated by the moderate

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leaders like S. N. Banerjee, G.K. Gokhale, Dadabhai Naroji and Ferozshah Mehta who were not for the end of British Rule. It was during 1905- 20, under the influence of the extremist leaders like 'Lal-Bal-Pal' and Aurobindo Ghose, the Congress acquired the status of mass organization and nationalist awakening rose to a considerable height. In the later period it was dominated by M.K. Gandhi who occupied a crucially important position. Hence, many English scholars stated, that it was Gandhi and his non-violence movement that brought the Independence to India. In one word without any doubt we can say that the growth and success of the Indian Nationalist Movement is nothing but the gift of great Indian leaders.

Origin of nationalism

The rise of nationalism is reflected in the spirit of Renaissance in Europe when freedom from religious restrictions led to the enhancement of national identity. This expression of nationalism was furthered by the French Revolution. The political changes resulted in the passing of sovereignty from the hands of an absolute monarch to the French citizens, who had the power to constitute the nation and shape its destiny. The watch words of the French Revolution - *Liberty, Equality and Fraternity* - inspired the whole world. Many other revolutions like the American Revolution of 1779, the Russian Revolution of 1917, etc. also strengthened the idea of nationalism. Here we will put light on the rise of nationalism in India which emerged in the 19th century after the revolt of 1857 and how the feeling of nationalism took India toward the Indian Nationalist Movement.

Rise of nationalism in India

For India, the making of national identity was a long process whose roots can be drawn from the ancient era. India as a whole had been ruled by emperors like Ashoka and Samudragupta in ancient times and Akbar to Aurangzeb in Medieval times. But, it was only in the 19th century that the concept of a national identity and national consciousness emerged. This growth was intimately connected to the anti-colonial movement. The social, economic and political factors had inspired the people to define and achieve their national identity. People began discovering their unity in the process of their struggle against colonialism.

The sense of being oppressed under colonial rule provided a shared bond that tied different groups together. Each class and group felt the effects of colonialism differently. Their experiences were varied, and their notions of freedom were not always the same. Several other causes also contributed towards the rise

and growth of Nationalism. One set of laws of British Government across several regions led to political and administrative unity. This strengthened the concept of citizenship and one nation among Indians. As a result, the peasants and the tribes rebelled when their lands and their right to livelihood were taken away. Likewise, this economic exploitation by the British agitated other people to unite and react against British Government's control over their lives and resources. The social and religious reform movements of the 19th century also contributed to the feeling of Nationalism. In this regard Swami Vivekananda, Annie Besant, Henry Derozio and many others played a great role. They revived the glory of ancient India, created faith among the people in their religion and culture and thus gave the message of love for their motherland.

The intellectual and spiritual side of nationalism was voiced by persons like Bankim Chandra Chatterji, Swami Dayanand Saraswati and Aurobindo Ghosh. Bankim Chandra's hymn to the Motherland, '*Vande Matram*' became the rallying cry of patriotic nationalists. It inspired generations to supreme self-sacrifice. Simultaneously, it created a fear in the minds of the British. The impact was so strong that the British had to ban the song. Alike, Swami Vivekananda's message to the people, "Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached", appealed to the Indians. It acted as a potent force in the course of Indian Nationalism.

The rise of the Indian Nationalism chiefly attributed the expansion and advancement of the Indian Nationalist Movement. Besides this there are some other factors which are also responsible for the growth of Indian nationalist movement and eventually the Indian independence. Let us discuss these factors in the following:

Violent rule of British

British introduced different kinds of revenue, economic, political policies and socio –religious reforms in India to setup their domination in India. Almost all the policies and reforms of British were imperialistic in nature. These policies implemented by British entirely changed India's old peaceful conditions. They introduced many policies to drain the wealth of India to their home country. Finally, Indians recognized the object behind the British. So, different policies introduced by British resulted in the growth and development of Indian national movement.

Unwillingness of British to give India more to say in government

During the rule of the East India Company, the Indians were treated as slave. They governed the country only to fulfill their interest. They never asked anything to Indians

nor gave any chance to raise their voice. Even when the British Crown took over the power from the East India Company in 1857, they hardly gave any chance to the Indians to say anything in government. Although democracy began with the British, they did not allow the Indians to practice democracy in India.

ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION OF INDIA

The British economic policy in India led to impoverishment of the country. The main object of British policies was a systematic destruction of traditional Indian economy. The Indians' reaction to the discriminatory economic policy of the British government was the rise of economic nationalism in India. India became a supplier of raw materials to the British industries, a market for the sale of British goods and a place for investment of British capital. Indian economy was sacrificed for British economic interests. Economic exploitation by the British was increasing India's poverty.

The British Indian administration was extremely costly. Systematic attempts were made to destroy the indigenous industries of India to make room for manufactured goods from England. Gradually the people realized that it was drain of wealth from India which made India poor. As all classes suffered economically because of the British rule, they realized the necessity of uprooting the British rule from India. It gave a great impetus to the spirit of nationalism.

Unification by British

In the pre-colonial India the people were not socially and economically integrated in the absence of a unified national economy and efficient and extensive means of communication. Common subjection, common institutions, common laws began to unite India in a common bond.

In the words of Edwyn Bevan, "the British Raj was like a steel-frame which held the injured body of India together till the gradual process of internal growth had joined the dislocated bones, knit up the torn fibres and enabled the patient to regain inner coherence and unity". Thus establishment of political unity, uniform system of administration, uniform reign of law and a uniform currency system generated the idea of India as a nation. British rule brought the entire geographical area of the country under a single administration. It unified the country by introducing a uniform system of law and government.

IMPROVEMENTS OF MEANS OF TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

The improvements in the means of transport and communication also quickened the pace of the nationalist

movement in the country. It is said that but for railways, motor buses and other modern means of communication, political and cultural life on a national scale would not have been possible. It can be said that if these became the means of consolidating and preserving British rule in India, they also played their part in organizing the political movement of the Indian people on a national scale against their rule

Practice of one (English) language by Indians

The English language played an important part in the growth of nationalism in the country. It acted as the lingua franca of the intelligentsia of India. Without the common medium of the English language it would have been impossible for the Bengalees, Madrasis and the Punjabis to sit at one table and discuss the common problems facing the country. The English language also made the Indians inheritors of a great literature which was full of great ideas and ideals.

Influence of Indian Press and Nationalist Literature

The Indian press, both English and vernacular also aroused national consciousness. Great was the influence of the news papers like the Amrit Bazar Patrika, the Hindu, the Kesari, the Bengalee, the Hurkura and a lot more. These became a powerful instrument of political education for the middle class and stimulated the growth of national feeling by making public the grievances of the people and also by exposing the failings and deficiencies of the foreign rule. B.B. Majumdar has mightily remarked, "Western education and the Indian press were the two of the most important agencies destined to infuse into the people of India the spirit of national unity and to inspire them to achieve independence without bloodshed."

Nationalist literature in the form of novels, essays and patriotic poetry played an important role in creating national consciousness. Bankim Chandra, Rabindranath Tagore, Vishnu Shastri Chiplunkar, Subramanyam Bharati and Altaf Hussain Hali were some of the writers who infused the spirit of patriotism in the minds of the common people.

The growth of Indian Press was phenomenal and by 1875, there were no less than 478 newspapers in the country. The Indian press helped in mobilizing the public opinion, convening national and provincial conferences, organizing political movements, building up public institutions and fighting out public controversies. There was no issue of foreign policy or internal administration which escaped the notice of the news papers.

Establishment of Indian National Congress

The Indian National Congress was formed in December

1885 by a group of 72 politically conscious educated Indians. Mr. A.O. Hume a retired English Indian Civil Service officer played a significant role in its formation. Among its members were Pherozeshah Mehta, Badruddin Tyabji, WC Bonnerji, Surendranath Banerji, Anandamohan Bose and Romesh Chandra Dutt. This organization was by no means the first such association of the Indian people. The English educated class in India was slowly becoming politically conscious and several political associations were being formed between 1875 and 1885. But among those associations what made the Indian National Congress (INC) different from the other associations was its attempt to provide a common political platform for the people of India which enabled it to claim that it represented the country. Although the British administrators attempted to play down the significance of the INC, it did manage to reflect the aspirations of the people. Thus, the most important and the foremost objective of this organization were to create the consciousness among the people of belonging to a single nation. Eventually it guided the Indian toward the Indian Nationalist Movement.

Impact of Western Education

Perhaps the greatest contribution of the British rule to the growth of India nationalism was the introduction of western education in India. It brought about a profound intellectual transformation in India. Western education brought the Indians into touch with the works of great European thinkers and writers like Milton, Thomas Paine, Burke, J.S. Mill, Spencer, Locke, Voltaire, Rousseau and Mazzini and helped them imbibe the ideas of liberty, equality, fraternity, democracy and national freedom. The pioneers of Indian nationalism were moved by the aspirations for self-government, for political power and representative institutions.

The study of English language not only helped build up a democratic and national outlook, it also did a great service to the cause of Indian nationalism by providing a medium of communication for the educated Indians throughout India to exchange views on a national scale. It cut across personal barriers and served as a lingua franca. Educated Indians began to meet and discuss common problems through the medium of English and to meet on a common platform to devise plans for independence of the country.

Religious and Social Reforms

The religious and social reformers like Ram Mohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Debendranath Tagore, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, Ramkrishna Paramhansa, Swami Vivekananda and

others inculcated a spirit of confidence, courage, self-respect and pride in the ancient heritage of India. It is contended that political awakening in India began with Raja Ram Mohan Roy. The socio-religious reform movements also known as the Indian Renaissance were the first expression of national awakening. They represented attempts to revise the old religion in the spirit of the new principles of nationalism and democracy. To quote or Zacharias; "The Indian national movement was a part of the Indian Renaissance of India which manifested in the form of a general reform movement and produced striking religious and social reforms long before it issued in a movement for political emancipation." The Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj, the Ramakrishna Mission and the Theosophical Society in their own respective ways, revived the glory of ancient India, generated faith in Indian culture and religion and tried to strengthen them by removing the evils.

Similarly, revivalism among the Muslims was provided by the wahabi Movement on the one side and by the personality of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan on the other. These movements breathed a new life into the degenerated Hindu and Muslim communities. They created self-confidence and inculcated a sense of self-respect which in its turn brought dissatisfaction against the British rule. They preached love for India and everything Indian. It promoted pa-Indian feelings and spirit of nationalism.

If we go through the entire history of Indian Nationalist movement then we can divide it in some phases. Let's view these phases and understand the contribution of the Indian leaders in the Indian Nationalist Movement.

Era of Raja Ram Mohon Roy (Formative-1905):

Although the beginnings of the Indian Nationalist Movement were generally denoted from the inception of the Indian National Congress in 1885, now more attention is being given to the formative period of Indian nationalist movement, prior to 1885. This period is highlighted with the activities of some politico-religious reformers who raised their voice against the ancient Indian superstitions and forward toward modernization. Thus, this period is belongs to those great personas. Among them Raja Ram Mohan Roy (1772-1833) is the pioneer leader who is often called not only "the father of Indian Nationalism" but also "the father of Modern India". He acquired a remarkable knowledge of both Western and Indian civilization. He was critical of such Indian practices or institutions as the caste system, child marriage, and widow-burning. He founded and edited newspapers in Bengali, English and Persian, and he established several secondary schools. In 1828, he organized the Brahmo Samaj (Society of God) which was to exercise a deep influence on the intellectual, social, and religious life of India, and which has been described as the pioneer of

the nationalist movement., . Many other liberal reformers founded various politico-religious organizations and influenced the growth of Indian nationalism, such as the British India Society (1843), the British Indian Association (1851), Arya Samaj (1853), and so on.

During that period India belonged to the English East India Company. In the one hundred year of the English East India Company, nationalistic feelings had begun growing within the Indian society. Such feelings received a major boost during the Revolt of 1857, which created in many Indians for the first time, a sense of nationhood. The growth of nationalism was an inevitable result after a century of oppression by a foreign power. The standard of living of the average Indian had deteriorated considerably, and the condition of the peasants was shocking. The Indian people began to realize that their country was being run solely for the interests of a foreign economy and the longer this continued the greater harm it would bring to the country. The economic backwardness of India would prove to be the backbone for the freedom struggle, for every Indian had been adversely affected economically because of the British rule. With this as a common base it became a simpler task for nationalistic leaders to raise popular support for their movement. The work of the social reformers had also managed to raise support for the national movement, for they had educated the people about India's former greatness and encouraged them to attempt to return India to it. The early nationalists were the educated class of India, for they had been exposed to the ideas of liberty, equality, democracy and free speech. They saw that the British had implemented such ideas in their own country but were denying it to India. This class would prove to be the major force behind the early years of the nationalistic movement in India. The press would also play an important role in spreading nationalistic ideas; in fact it was so effective that the British passed a law preventing the vernacular press from publishing material that was anti-British. What was now required was an organization where Indian nationalists could share a common platform and discuss their strategies. Many small organizations came up, but eventually a particular one would come up, which would be instrumental in organizing India's struggle for freedom; it was known as the Indian National Congress. The Indian National Congress was founded ironically by an Englishman, A.O. Hume a retired civil servant. He got in touch with the prominent nationalists and organized the first session of the Indian National Congress at Bombay in December, 1885. W.C. Bonerjee became the president and it was attended by seventy two delegates. They pledged to promote the idea of nationalism amongst all sections of Indian society and unite Indian opinion on the above matter. The Indian National Congress represented the first small step in the organized struggle for freedom. The Indian National Congress quickly expanded, and the next year there were

four hundred and thirty six delegates. The Indian National Congress now met in the December of every year, in a different part of the country each time. The numbers of delegates increased rapidly, and soon were numbering several thousand. They came from a variety of professions like law, journalism, trade, industry and education. Even landlords joined the organization. One of the greatest presidents of the Indian National Congress was DadabhaiNaorji, also known as the grand old man of India. An extremely learned and educated man, he lived in England for many years and even got elected to the British parliament.

The Indian National Congress gave the freedom struggle direction, which so far had been missing. The Indian National Congress did not immediately begin efforts to free the country. They realized that they first had to create the environment before such efforts could be made. India was essentially a 'nation in making'. Hence the initial priorities were to increase awareness about the concept and to improve the lives of average Indians. They also realized that directly confronting the British at such an early stage would be futile and could in fact be detrimental. This period is dominated by a set of nationalists known as the moderates, who aimed to establish some form of democracy and autonomy within the framework of the British rule. They did not press for total independence and instead simply asked for more representation of Indians in the governing of their own country. Some moderates were not averse to the concept of British rule, they believed that if the British were made aware of the Indian point of view, they would modify their ways. Thus the moderates would send many petitions to the British authorities requesting for fulfillment of various demands. The British rarely agreed to most of their demands.

The British were initially un-perturbed by the Indian National Congress for they did not view it as a serious threat, but as the demands of the Indian National Congress grew, they began to grow suspicious of its motives. Realizing the potential, if the Indian National Congress was able to gather popular support, they began pursuing the policy of Divide and Rule and made efforts to encourage communal forces.

The nationalist movement began during this period but otherwise did not do anything particularly significant. The involvement of the masses of India had still not begun. The moderates perhaps failed to realize the true nature of the British rule in India, and instead falsely believed that if requested in a proper manner, the British would agree to their demands. To their credit it may be said that the the early nationalists did manage to bring in a few reforms, like persuading the British to hold the Indian civil service exams simultaneously in India and England. They were also able to get the Legislative councils expanded, and take the first steps to securing some Indian representation. More importantly; however, they started a

process which would eventually result in India's freedom.

Era of Lal-Bal-Pal (1905-1918)

The nationalist movement entered into a new phase during this period. In this period for the first time the Indian Nationalist Movement turned into an extremist mode. In this phase the Indians became aware of the concept of nationalism and approached toward some forceful political action.

This period was dominated by the leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bepin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghose (1872-1950) and many others. The early stage of the nationalism had been characterized by nationalists that believed that the British could be reformed from within. However, at this period people realized that there was little scope for progress under the imperialistic rule of the British. They knew that economically India had been adversely affected as a result of becoming a British colony, and the only way it could flourish again was if a government controlled and run by the Indian people was put in place. The desire to co-operate with the British grew less, for the Indians nationalists were treated with contempt and their demands rarely met. The British attitude disappointed many, for instead of reforming their policies they were instead in some cases making them even more oppressive. Even the initial good will that the British enjoyed because of the spread of education and new technology was now diminishing for these fields had stagnated over the years. Nationalists also were angry at the policy of the British to divide Indians on communal lines and realized the disastrous implications of continued British rule. These fears were not unfounded, for in the forty two years more it would take for India to achieve independence, the divide and rule policies of the British increased communal forces, which eventually led to the country failing to remain a single country at the time of independence, splitting into India and Pakistan.

This phase of nationalists saw a more confident set of leaders who had faith in their ideas and of Indians being able to run their own country. These set of leaders would extend the idea of nationalism to more sections of the Indian society realizing that the only way India could obtain independence was if it launched a massive movement supported by the masses of India. The myth of European superiority was meanwhile being shattered. Japan a backward Asian country had managed to transform itself in a few decades into a powerful economic and military power. The defeat it inflicted on the great European power of Russia only further substantiated such ideas. Even a small African nation of Ethiopia was able to defeat the Italian army. Revolutionary movements in countries like Ireland, Russia, Egypt, Turkey and China convinced the Indian people that they could overthrow a

powerful despotic government.

This phase was thus dominated by a section of nationalists known as the extremist, who believed in more direct measures in order to achieve freedom. They are not to be confused with another smaller group called the militant nationalists, for unlike them the extremists did not advocate violent means. The methods of the extremists were extreme in relation to those of the moderates. The extremists believed in actions like public rallies, protest marches, the promotion of swadeshi (self reliance) and the boycott of foreign goods. Such measures were considered extreme, because their predecessors, the moderates had adopted a conciliatory co-operative policy with the British. This eventually led to a divide in the Indian National Congress which caused a split in 1906, and it was not until 1916, when the two factions were reunited. The British capitalized on this split, and attempted to undermine the nationalist movement. They would offer sops to the moderates and would be harsh on the extremists. While the split may have temporarily diluted the focus of the nationalist movement, it had now reached a stage where it was unstoppable. Organizations like the Home rule league, strongly pressed for self government after World War I, and were able to extract some sort of agreement on this issue, which the British reneged on after the war.

In the period of the 1905-08 revolutionary upsurge Tilak became the chief leader of the democratic wing of the national movement not only of Maharashtra but of the whole of India. Likewise covering ten years, 1898-1908, the third stage terminated in another trial of Tilak, his being sentenced to transportation, and a great revolutionary spurt of the masses of Mumbai who elevated the struggle for India's liberation to a new and higher plane.

Indian National Congress from 1879 to 1897 Tilak's patriotic activity proceeded mainly in his native Maharashtra and was, therefore, of a local character to some extent. This time period was marked by number of important developments. The British had turned India into a source to obtain raw materials for British industry. Then it was also made a field for the export of British capital. The peasantry, which praised the overwhelming majority of the population, grew increasingly dependent on merchants and moneylenders and sank into poverty. At the same time a process of Indian native capitalist development with the formation of a working class and indigenous bourgeoisie class emerged along with the growth of an intelligentsia. The young liberal bourgeoisie, considering India as a whole to be the Sphere of its trading, money-lending and enterprising activity crossed the national barriers dividing the peoples of India, overcame religious and caste prejudices, and, in 1885, founded the Indian National Congress, the first political organization claiming all-India leadership.

The British were now perturbed by the growing level of

nationalism in the country and began to take steps to curb it. They fell back on the reliable policy that had helped them conquer the country in the first place, divide and rule. The revolt of 1857 had met with its successes primarily because the participants had fought together for the same cause regardless of their religious background. The British hence took steps to ensure the growth of communalism, as this would divide the nationalist movement. The first major step they took in this regard was to partition the province of Bengal. While claiming it was done to simplify administration, it was very apparent what their real motives were. The division of Bengal, into East Bengal and West Bengal was done on communal lines, with the Eastern half dominated by Muslims and the Western half dominated by Hindus. This was resented by India and the people of Bengal, who despite different religions had shared a common culture and had lived harmoniously for centuries. The nationalist movement now gathered more support and soon massive protests were held against this decision. The leaders realized that they would have to take some stronger measures in order to have an effect. They attacked the very backbone of the British power in India, its economic interests. Swadeshi was encouraged and foreign goods were boycotted. In some cases extreme measures like the burning of foreign goods also took place. Instead of crushing the national movement, the partition of Bengal gave it even more strength (McLane, 1965). While the nationalists failed to revoke the partition, and to some extent the aim of the British, of increasing communalism was achieved, the nationalists were able to give the freedom struggle a new outlook. No longer was it perceived as a half hearted effort by a group of intellectuals but truly a struggle of the Indians. This set the environment for the final stage of nationalism, one that under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi would, through the efforts of millions of Indians, finally free the country from foreign rule.

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Entrance of Gandhi into National Movement (1918-1927)

In this phase of the nationalist movement turned into a more meaningful struggle which is only for the freedom rather than reforms or development. During this period a new era has been initiated in history of nationalist movement with the emergence of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948) in the Indian politics. He became the cardinal personality in the life of the Indian. Under his guidance the nationalist struggle turned into a mass struggles for freedom of all times. This finally forced the British to leave India.

In 1915, Mahatma Gandhi returned to India after twenty years in South Africa. In South Africa, he developed a philosophy called "Satyagraha" which he often translated loosely as "Soul-force" or Non-violence. Arriving in India for some months he traveled throughout the country and observed the conditions of the country and countrymen. After that he took an active part in the independence movement people and at first of visited Represented

The stage for such developments had been set in the previous phase, as extremists dominated the movement. Moderates began to slowly change their views, for they too noticed that the British had no intention of co-operating with them. For instance during World War I, Britain had taken the aid of a number of its colonies, including India and had promised some form of self-government in return. After the war however, these promises were quickly forgotten and the Indian people thus felt betrayed. As a half hearted measure the British introduced the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, which led to the Government of India act of 1919. These reforms gave the Indians some power, but these sorts of concessions

no longer satisfied the nationalists.

By now the two factions of the Indian National Congress had been re-united, and more or less had similar views on achieving freedom for India. In 1919, however the British introduced a terrible law, known as the Rowlatt Act. Under this act, the government had extraordinary powers and it was empowered to imprison any person without giving them a trial. This was a cruel blow, for the Indian people had been promised some form of democracy post-war, but now were slammed with an even more oppressive regime. In such a situation, a new leader, called Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (Mahatma Gandhi) took control of the freedom struggle. Mahatma Gandhi had spent a number of years in South Africa, fighting racism there. He had learnt two valuable lessons, while fighting a mightier force. The most effective method was a non violent movement involving thousands of people. He realized that violence could easily be suppressed by the better equipped enemy, but a massive non violent struggle would be extremely difficult to stop. If the Indians launched a violent attack, the British could easily crush them with mightier force, and get away for it could be termed defense. In a non violent struggle however, it would be difficult for the British to justify firing on unarmed, peaceful demonstrators.

Mahatma Gandhi soon launched a series of movements amongst the peasants. Mahatma Gandhi sat with them in hunger strikes and took part in their marches. His efforts in most cases proved successful, for he was able to get the government to agree to some of their demands, and more importantly he was able to mobilize mass support. Soon this idea spread across the country, the Indian people no longer submitted passively to British rule and began opposing it. Meanwhile the government was keen to suppress this movement, for they were worried that if it gained mass support it would threaten their position in India. Hence protesters were routinely lathi charged (hit with a stick) and occasionally they even fired on unarmed protesters. On the sixth of April 1919, a terrible incident took place in a garden called JallianwalaBagh, in Amritsar, Punjab. Responding to a call by Mahatma Gandhi, a large group of peaceful unarmed people gathered in the garden to protest against the arrest of their leaders and speak out against the British rule. JallianwalaBagh while a large garden, had only one narrow exit. General Dyer, a British military commander of Amritsar entered with his troops into the garden.

The third phase of the nationalist movement would mark the beginning of one of the greatest mass struggles for freedom of all time. Millions of Indians, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi would embark on a non-violent struggle, which finally would force the British to leave India.

The stage for such developments had been set in the previous phase, as extremists dominated the movement.

Moderates began to slowly change their views, for they too noticed that the British had no intention of co-operating with them. For instance during World War I, Britain had taken the aid of a number of its colonies, including India and had promised some form of self-government in return. After the war however, these promises were quickly forgotten and the Indian people thus felt betrayed. As a half hearted measure the British introduced the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, which led to the Government of India act of 1919. These reforms gave the Indians some power, but this sort of concessions no longer satisfied the nationalists.

By now the two factions of the Indian National Congress had been re-united, and more or less had similar views on achieving freedom for India. In 1919, however the British introduced a terrible law, known as the Rowlatt Act. Under this act, the government had extraordinary powers and it was empowered to imprison any person without giving them a trial. This was a cruel blow, for the Indian people had been promised some form of democracy post-war, but now were slammed with an even more oppressive regime. In such a situation, a new leader, called Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (Mahatma Gandhi) took control of the freedom struggle. Mahatma Gandhi had spent a number of years in South Africa, fighting racism there. He had learnt two valuable lessons, while fighting a mightier force. The most effective method was a non violent movement involving thousands of people. He realized that violence could easily be suppressed by the better equipped enemy, but a massive non violent struggle would be extremely difficult to stop. If the Indians launched a violent attack, the British could easily crush them with mightier force, and get away for it could be termed defence. In a non violent struggle however, it would be difficult for the British to justify firing on unarmed, peaceful demonstrators. Mahatma Gandhi soon launched a series of movements amongst the peasants. Mahatma Gandhi sat with them in hunger strikes and took part in their marches. His efforts in most cases proved successful, for he was able to get the government to agree to some of their demands, and more importantly he was able to mobilize mass support. Soon this idea spread across the country, the Indian people no longer submitted passively to British rule and began opposing it. Meanwhile the government was keen to suppress this movement, for they were worried that if it gained mass support it would threaten their position in India. Hence protesters were routinely lathi charged (hit with a stick) and occasionally they even fired on unarmed protesters. On the sixth of April 1919, a terrible incident took place in a garden called JallianwalaBagh, in Amritsar, Punjab. Responding to a call by Mahatma Gandhi, a large group of peaceful unarmed people gathered in the garden to protest against the arrest of their leaders and speak out against the British rule. JallianwalaBagh while a large garden, had

only one narrow exit. General Dyer, a British military commander of Amritsar entered with his troops into the garden and ordered the troops to fire on the unarmed people. As a result more than thousand people were killed. The poet Rabindranath Tagore lettered to Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy, repudiating his Knighthood honor in protesting for Jalianwalahbag mass killing. (The letter was published in *The Statesman*, June 3, 1919)

Era of Ghandi and Independence (1927-1947)

The fourth and final stage of the nationalist movement was the final twenty years of British rule, and after almost a century of organized struggle, the British were finally made to quit India in 1947. By the year 1927, the ideas of socialism and revolution began to make an impact on the minds of many nationalists. They saw an example in Russia where an oppressed nation was able to overthrow the czar and set up a government which would work for the welfare of all its citizens. After spending years as inferior citizens and economically weakened, the idea of socialism was appealing to the Indian public. Hence many notably pro-socialist organizations came up with a number of noted nationalists joining their ranks. The socialist influence in India would continue even after India won independence, and the economic policy for the first forty years of independence was based on socialistic lines. Revolutionaries also began making an impact, attempting to overthrow the British power with radical though unsuccessful methods. Such movements re-ignited nationalist feelings and the country was once more engaged in active political struggle. Strikes and demonstrations once again dominated the scene with peasants and workers fighting against the oppressive policies of the British.

In November 1927, the Simon Commission was appointed to evaluate the possibility of constitutional reforms for the next government of India act. It was a committee made up solely of Englishmen, with no Indian representation. This was resented by the nationalists who had expected the British attitude to have been more consolatory. Hence the nationalists struck back and organized massive rallies and protests against the commission. In various parts of the country huge crowds gathered, waving signs with wordings like "Simon Go Back". The movements of the commission became difficult because wherever they went they were met with massive opposition. Some Indian nationalists like Motilal Nehru drafted an Indian constitution as an alternative to what the Simon commission was offering. This was formulated in 1928 but an All Parties conference did not pass it as communal elements from various parties objected to portions of it. Meanwhile, the leader of the national movement Mahatma Gandhi was contemplating the prospect of another country wide movement, he did not however have to wait long, for the mood amongst the

people for such a struggle was positive. Mahatma Gandhi returned to active politics in late 1928, and made some quick changes. Various factions were re-conciled, so as to have one universally accepted plan of action. Jawaharal Nehru was appointed as the president of the Congress; he would later go on to become the first Prime Minister of the country. This session was historic, for the Congress now propagated the new idea of Poorna Swaraj or complete Independence. No longer would the nationalists be satisfied with constitutional reforms offered by the British government, they wanted to have total independence. Mahatma Gandhi was now given the tasking of realizing this dream.

Mahatma Gandhi launched a Civil Disobedience Movement on the 12th of March 1930, with his famous Dandi march. The British government had for a long time had a law which forbade Indians to make their own salt. They had also levied a massive tax on salt, making it an expensive commodity. Salt was an essential commodity and hence these high prices caused much difficulty for Indians. The Dandi march symbolized the beginning of civil disobedience, the refusal of the Indian people to follow British made laws. Mahatma Gandhi walked three hundred and seventy five kilometres with his followers to the village of Dandi on the coast of Gujrat. Hundreds of people joined his march en-route. The gathering then made salt from the sea, symbolizing their refusal to abide by the law. Soon the movement spread across the country, the salt law was broken at several other places as well. Once again people joined in demonstrations, a campaign against foreign goods and the refusal to pay taxes. The movement involved all sections of the Indian people, with women playing an important role. The effects even spread to the Indian members of the British army, who now began violating orders to shoot at unarmed demonstrators. The government response to the struggle was typical, the top leaders of the Indian National Congress were arrested, the press was gagged and various other measures were taken.

Meanwhile the British had been organizing Round Table conferences in London, the first of which was held in 1930. Its aim was to reform the constitution taking into account the views of the princely states as well as the Indian people. The Indian National Congress boycotted the first such proceedings, which rendered the conference useless. The government realized that in order to make the conference count, they would have to involve the Indian National Congress. Under an agreement known as the Irwin-Gandhi pact of 1931, Mahatma Gandhi was released from prison. The government agreed to release many of the prisoners it had taken, it allowed Indians to make salt and even conceded to allowing Indians to peacefully picket shops selling foreign goods. In return Mahatma Gandhi went to England for the second round table conference. The pact was criticized by many Indian nationalists for it did not concede some of the major

demands. However, Mahatma Gandhi had agreed to it, for he followed the philosophy that the opponent should be given every opportunity to show a change of heart. He also realized that mass movements were not infinitely sustainable and were more effective when used for short durations. The round table conference however proved to be a disappointment with the British refusing to concede some of the basic nationalist demands. Mahatma Gandhi returned to India and resumed the civil disobedience movement. The new Viceroy, Lord Willingdon had also been an opponent of the Irwin-Gandhi pact, for he had not favored a truce with the Indian National Congress. The government hence once again attempted to crush the movement, arresting Congress leaders. The press was gagged and the police were given greater powers. The movement eventually died out, and was formally withdrawn in 1934. Although it had not been successful in achieving freedom, the civil disobedience movement had contributed substantially to the nationalist movement.

In 1935, the third round table conference in the absence of the Indian National Congress had formulated the new Government of India Act. This gave the legislative councils a little more power, and elections were held. The Indian National Congress participated and emerged the dominant political force in most states. Within the restricted framework that they had to work in, they were able to do some good work for the Indian people. More importantly it perhaps gave them the much needed experience in government. In 1939, World War II broke out. The British were anxious to obtain the support of India. The nationalists however remembering the experience of World War I, refused to provide any support unless their demands were conceded to. The British refused and as a sign of protest the Indian National Congress resigned its ministries. The British then attempted to pit the princes and communal forces against the Congress. The Indian nationalists were not sympathizers of the forces the British were fighting in the war, and hence they did not launch any major strikes in India which could embarrass the British. Meanwhile the axis powers had overrun large portions of Europe, and the British were now anxious to enlist Indian support in the war effort. The Indian nationalists however re-iterated their earlier stand of wanting a transfer of power to Indians in exchange for India's active co-operation in the war effort. The British sent a cabinet minister, Sir Stafford Cripps to negotiate a deal with the nationalists. Cripps was a good choice, for when he was a labour party member, he had been a supporter of the Indian national movement. However, even he was not able to negotiate any settlement, for the British government refused to accept the demand of the Indian National Congress for immediate transfer of effective power to Indians. Meanwhile the Japanese were slowly advancing on India, a development that worried the Indian nationalists as much as it did the British. The prospect of a Japanese

attack on India was disturbing, and the nationalists were keen to resolve the issue of independence. Hence the Indian National Congress decided on the 8th of August 1942, to launch the Quit India movement, which would drive the British out of the country. Unfortunately however the British struck early, arresting all the major leaders on the morning of the ninth and thus the movement was left leaderless. Chaos followed with people across the country attacking British posts and destroying government property. The British went all out to crush the movement, its repression knowing no bounds. The press was gagged, demonstrating crowds were either machine gunned or bombed from the air. People were arrested indiscriminately and prisoners were tortured. Rebellious villages were made to pay massive fines and their residents were flogged. Thus the British were able to crush the movement in its infancy, and political activity in India subsided till the end of the war in 1945. Meanwhile Subash Chandra Bose, a nationalist had gone out of India and sought help of the axis powers, the enemies of the allies in the World War II. He planned to liberate India with their support. He assembled the Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army) from Indian prisoners of war released by the Japanese. He invaded the country through the north east in 1944-45 but after some early successes was defeated. Subash Chandra Bose was apparently killed in an aeroplane accident on his way back to Tokyo, although till this date this has not been confirmed.

India after the end of the war was a country in revolt, with rebellions breaking out in all parts of the country. The war had also shattered the British economic and military power, and two countries, USA and USSR emerged as the new world leaders. Both these countries were against the imperialism and supported the cause of the Indian people. The British now realized that they could no longer hold onto India and hence began working out a proposal for a transfer of power. Another positive development was that the labour party had come to power, a party that was more sympathetic to the Indian cause. The situation was now more complicated, for communistic forces were now demanding that the country be partitioned, and a separate nation created for Muslims. Many nationalists however were against this proposal and urged the British government to maintain the unity of the country. In 1946 the British presented a plan, by which the unity of the country would be maintained, but would also give a fair degree of regional autonomy. India at that time consisted of a number of princely states as well as provinces directly under the British. In the proposed plan, the provinces would be a part of an all India federation. The centre would only have the powers of defence, foreign affairs and communications. The states and provinces could also form regional unions, in which they would surrender certain

powers to a regional government. This plan gave the spirit of a separate nation within the framework of a unified set up. Unfortunately however the two major political parties of the time, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League disagreed on their interpretations of the plan, and eventually they both rejected it. Meanwhile an interim government was being formed, which was under the leadership of the Jawaharlal Nehru and had members of the Indian National Congress in it (Jalal, 1994). The Muslim league also eventually joined it, but later left. An election to the constituent assembly was held, a body that would draft a constitution for the country. The Muslim League after participating in the elections boycotted the assembly and instead asked for a separate assembly to be set up, for Pakistan.

On the 20th of February, 1947, Clement Attlee, the British prime minister, declared that the British would quit India by 1948 and would hand over the country to one or more governments, an indication that partition was imminent. Lord Mountbatten arrived as the last Viceroy with the mission of working out an agreement for the transfer of power. After intense negotiation, a plan was announced whereby the British would transfer power in August. Two nations would be set up, India and Pakistan. Under the agreement certain parts of the North West and certain parts of the East and North east would form the Islamic state of Pakistan, with the remaining portion of British territory going to India. This resulted in Pakistan, separated into two halves, West Pakistan and East Pakistan which would be separated by thousands of kilometers of Indian territory. This was resented by the Muslim league, which viewed it as a moth eaten state, but eventually accepted the proposal. East Pakistan would eventually cede away from Pakistan in 1971 and form the nation of Bangladesh. The princely states were given the option of remaining independent or ceding to one of the two nations, an option they were advised take. The nationalists viewed the partition as an inevitable reality as a result of an almost seventy year buildup of communalism. Many nationalists were saddened by it, for although they had achieved their dream of freeing the country, they had failed to unite its people under one nation. The jubilation over independence was marred by the communal riots that followed partition, as communal forces unleashed a reign of terror on people migrating from India to Pakistan and vice versa. Thousands lost their lives and property, and the partition caused the displacement of millions of people.

Finally, independence arrived: Pakistan celebrated it on the 14th of August, 1947 and India, on the 15th of August, 1947. After two hundred years of foreign rule, the people of both countries were finally free.

POST IMPACTS OF INDIAN NATIONALIST MOVEMENT

The Indian Nationalist Movement not only brings the

independence to the Indian. Besides this it has many impacts on various issues and grounds. Let us discuss some of them:

1. The first and foremost impact of the Indian Nationalist Movement was the genesis of India and Pakistan as independent nation-state.
2. Due to Indian nationalist movement India has been divided into two countries as a result massive population exchange took place between these two newly-formed countries. Once the lines were established, about 14.5 million people crossed the borders to what they hoped was the relative safety of religious majority. Based on 1951 Census of displaced persons, 7,226,000 Muslims went to Pakistan from India while 7,249,000 Hindus and Sikhs moved to India from Pakistan immediately after partition. About 11.2 million or 78% of the population transfer took place in the west, with Punjab accounting for most of it; 5.3 million Muslims moved from India to West Punjab in Pakistan, 3.4 million Hindus and Sikhs moved from Pakistan to East Punjab in India; elsewhere in the west 1.2 million moved in each direction to and from Sind.
3. It was also responsible for some communal riots which took place after the partition of India.
4. In addition, a war broke out in 1965 between India and Pakistan because of extreme feeling of nationalism in both countries.
5. Moreover, it influenced the Bengali people to become conscious about their rights, and raise their voice against the oppression of Pakistan government. Finally, to struggle for their rights and free themselves from the clutches of Pakistan in 1971.
6. Furthermore, Indian Nationalist movement encouraged the countries of Africa to fight for their rights and independence.
7. Indian Nationalist movement also assisted the Indian to become united which works for their state-building and nation-building.
8. In addition, the Indian nationalist movement influenced the progress of women movements which ensure the equal rights for women and universal adult suffrage in the constitution of independent India.
9. It has also enriched the Indian literature and culture. Most of the novelists, writers, poets and painters of that period were significantly influenced by the Indian nationalist movement which reflection we found in their creations.

In summing up, we can say that Indian Nationalist Movement has some drawbacks, but same way it is also true that it brought independence to India. To make this movement fruitful and successful the sacrifices of the Indian leaders are inevitable. Number of leaders laid down their lives and number of leaders passed their lives in exile and jails for India to become independent.

Conflict of Interests

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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