



"ROLE OF GANDHI IN INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT"

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ABSTRACT

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948), here in after Gandhiji, was undoubtedly the most authentic and celebrated representative of the wisdom and culture of India in our times. His countrymen address him, with respect, as the Mahatma. For Many, among the greatest, Gandhiji was the great. He was a social reformer, an economist, a political philosopher and a seeker of truth. We consider him as a 'yugapurusha', one who inaugurated a new era. The contribution of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi to the Indian national movement was un-paralleled. He made the Indian National Congress a peoples 'Congress and the national movement a mass movement. He made people fearless and bold and taught them the non-violent method for fighting against injustice. He had a passion for individual liberty which was closely bound with his understanding of truth and self-realization. He played a pivotal role in the India's struggle for freedom which was the world's largest democratic movement. Indian nationalism achieved its highest peak under Gandhi's leadership. Gandhiji's role in the National Movement of India was undoubtedly the most remarkable. Front 1919 to 1947 A.D. The father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi was one of these great men who dedicated their whole life to the service of the mankind.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The Constitution of India is the product of the Constitution Assembly. It has inherited a solid ideological base and principles from the nationalist movement. In 1909, Mahatma Gandhi mentioned in his book 'Hind Swaraj' that British rule was established in India with the cooperation of the Indian public and has survived this long for a similar reason. Thus, Gandhi planned a non-cooperation movement throughout India, which would unfold bit by bit. It ought, to begin with, the surrendering of assorted government titles and a boycott of civil services, army, police, courts and legislative councils, schools, and foreign products. The Indian National Movement, a significant epoch in the annals of Indian history, witnessed the emergence of two of its most influential leaders – Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Their ideologies, strategies, and contributions not only shaped the contours of the movement but also played a pivotal role in India's quest for independence.

For the next three years, Gandhi seemed to hover uncertainly on the periphery of Indian politics, declining to join any political agitation, supporting the British war effort, and even recruiting soldiers for the British Indian Army. At the same time, he did not flinch from criticizing the British officials for any acts of high-handedness or from taking up the grievances of the long-suffering peasantry in Bihar and Gujarat. By February 1919, however, the British had insisted on pushing through—in the teeth of fierce Indian opposition—the Rowlatt Acts, which empowered the authorities to imprison without trial those suspected of sedition. A provoked Gandhi finally revealed a sense of estrangement from the British raj and announced a satyagraha struggle. The result was a virtual political earthquake that shook the subcontinent in the spring of 1919. The violent outbreaks that followed—

notably the Massacre of Amritsar, which was the killing by British-led soldiers of nearly 400 Indians who were gathered in an open space in Amritsar in the Punjab region (now in Punjab state), and the enactment of martial law—prompted him to stay his hand. However, within a year he was again in a militant mood, having in the meantime been irrevocably alienated by British insensitiveness to Indian feeling on the Punjab tragedy and Muslim resentment on the peace terms offered to Turkey following World War I.

By the autumn of 1920, Gandhi was the dominant figure on the political stage, commanding an influence never before attained by any political leader in India or perhaps in any other country. He refashioned the 35-year-old Indian National Congress (Congress Party) into an effective political instrument of Indian nationalism: from a three-day Christmas-week picnic of the upper middle class in one of the principal cities of India, it became a mass organization with its roots in small towns and villages. Gandhi's message was simple: it was not British guns but imperfections of Indians themselves that kept their country in bondage. His program, the nonviolent noncooperation movement against the British government, included boycotts not only of British manufactures but of institutions operated or aided by the British in India: legislatures, courts, offices, schools. The campaign electrified the country, broke the spell of fear of foreign rule, and led to the arrests of thousands of *satyagrahis*, who defied laws and cheerfully lined up for prison. In February 1922 the movement seemed to be on the crest of a rising wave, but, alarmed by a violent outbreak in Chauri Chaura, a remote village in eastern India, Gandhi decided to call off mass civil disobedience. That was a blow to many of his followers, who feared that his self-imposed restraints and scruples would reduce the nationalist struggle to pious futility. Gandhi himself was arrested on March 10, 1922, tried for sedition, and sentenced to six years' imprisonment. He was released in February 1924, after undergoing surgery for appendicitis. The political landscape had changed in his absence. The Congress Party had split into two factions, one under Chitta Ranjan Das and Motilal Nehru (the father of Jawaharlal Nehru, India's first prime minister) favoring the entry of the party into legislatures and the other under Chakravarti Rajagopalachari and Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai Patel opposing it. Worst of all, the unity between Hindus and Muslims of the heyday of the noncooperation movement of 1920–22 had dissolved. Gandhi tried to draw the warring communities out of their suspicion and fanaticism by reasoning and persuasion. Finally, after a serious outbreak of communal unrest, he undertook a three-week fast in the autumn of 1924 to arouse the people into following the path of nonviolence. In December 1924 he was named president of the Congress Party, and he served for a year.

1.2 RETURN TO PARTY LEADERSHIP

During the mid-1920s Gandhi took little interest in active politics and was considered a spent force. In 1927, however, the British government appointed a constitutional reform commission under Sir John Simon, a prominent English lawyer and politician, that did not contain a single Indian. When the Congress and other parties boycotted the commission, the political tempo rose. At the Congress session (meeting) at Calcutta in December 1928, Gandhi put forth the crucial resolution demanding dominion status from the British government within a year under threat of a nationwide nonviolent campaign for complete independence. Henceforth, Gandhi was back as the leading voice of the Congress Party. In March 1930 he launched the Salt March, a *satyagraha* against the British-imposed tax on salt, which affected the poorest section of the community. One of the most spectacular and successful campaigns in Gandhi's nonviolent war against the British raj, it resulted in the imprisonment of more than 60,000 people. The conference, which concentrated on the problem of the Indian minorities rather than on the transfer of power from the British, was a great disappointment to the Indian nationalists. Moreover, when Gandhi returned to India in December 1931, he found his party facing an all-out offensive from Lord Irwin's successor as viceroy, Lord Willingdon, who unleashed the sternest repression in the history of the nationalist movement. Gandhi was once more imprisoned, and the government tried to insulate him from the outside world and to destroy his influence. That was not an easy task. Gandhi soon regained the initiative.

In September 1932, while still a prisoner, he embarked on a fast to protest against the British government's decision to segregate the so-called "untouchables" (the lowest level of the Indian caste system; now called Scheduled Castes [official] or Dalits) by allotting them separate electorates in the new constitution. The fast produced an emotional upheaval in the country, and an alternative electoral arrangement was jointly and speedily devised by the leaders of the Hindu community and the Dalits and endorsed by the British government. The fast became the starting point of a vigorous campaign for the removal of the disenfranchisement of the Dalits, whom Gandhi referred to as Harijans, or "children of God."

1.3 EARLY LIFE:

- At the age of 19, Mohandas left home to study law in London at the Inner Temple, one of the city's four law colleges. Upon returning to India in mid-1891, he set up a law practice in Bombay, but met with little success. He soon accepted a position with an Indian firm that sent him to its office in South Africa. Along with his wife, Kasturba, and their children, Gandhi remained in South Africa for nearly 20 years.
- Books that inspired Mahatma Gandhi :**Unto this Last** by **John Ruskin** and **The Kingdom of God is within you'** by **Leo Tolstoy**.
- English artist John Ruskin's book *Unto This Last* inspired Gandhi and he set up Phoenix Farm near Durban. Here, Gandhi would train his cadres on non-violent Satyagraha or peaceful restraint. **Phoenix Farm** is considered as the birthplace of Satyagraha. However, it was at the **Tolstoy Farm**, Gandhi's second camp in South Africa, where Satyagraha was molded into a weapon of protest.
- **In 1915, after returning from South Africa, where he had perfected the art of non-violent resistance or satyagraha**, Mahatma Gandhi spent the next few years in fully understanding Indian conditions and **travelled widely across the length and breadth of this vast nation**.
- Gandhi also met the Congress leadership and took everyone's suggestions on board, before taking tentative steps towards launching himself into the Indian Independence struggle.
- While the Indian freedom movement can be thought of as one single struggle that lasted decades, in reality there were **phases of great activity and relatively lull periods as well**. And much of this calendar of protests and tactical retreat was decided by Gandhi himself, who apart from being the greatest advocate of peace and violence in modern times, **was also a brilliant organiser of mass movements**. He understood the people's pulse like few others.
- Here the **movements he launched and led**, which eventually and cumulatively shook the very foundations of the British Raj:
 - **Champaran Movement:** The Champaran Movement is regarded as the **first modern civil disobedience movement in India**. It took place in the then Champaran district of northern Bihar. The **Indian labourers and farm-workers here tilled the land but all the profits went to the European landowners**. The labourers protested but it was Gandhi's involvement in their struggle that culminated in the Champaran Agrarian Act, 1918, which helped farmers secure greater rights over their own land. The success of Champaran made many more Indians aware of Gandhi and his principles, and the Congress party found its greatest mass leader.
 - **Ahmedabad Mill Worker Satyagraha:** In March 1918, under the leadership of Gandhi, there was a strike in the cotton mills. In this strike Gandhi used the weapon of Hunger strike.

- **Kheda Satyagraha:** In Kheda, Gujarat, despite crop failures, the **farmers' desperate pleas for tax remission fell on deaf ears**. Gandhi's message to them was to withhold revenue and fight peacefully but bravely against such vindictiveness and tyranny. Another rising star of the freedom movement, **Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel**, also played a key role in this struggle of 1918. The local government eventually came out with a solution that was acceptable to both parties. The Champaran and Kheda campaigns were limited to specific areas, but they gave Gandhi the confidence to launch his major pan-Indian movements in future.
- **Rowlatt Act Satyagraha:** During **World War I** (1914–18), the British government of India enacted a series of repressive emergency powers that were intended to combat subversive activities. **The Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919** popularly known as **Rowlatt Act (Black Act)** which was passed on **10th March, 1919**, authorised the government to imprison or confine, without a trial, any person associated with seditious activities which led to nationwide unrest. **Gandhiji** called for a one-day general strike (**Rowlatt Satyagraha**) throughout the country.
- **Non-Cooperation Movement:** The Non-Cooperation movement (1920-22) was the **first mass movement launched by Gandhi, seeking self-government or swaraj** for all Indians. It followed from Gandhi's deeply held ideals of satyagraha and civil disobedience, and he called upon Indians to boycott all institutions linked to the British including courts and colleges, give up titles and refuse to pay taxes. Audacious in scope, the Non-Cooperation movement may not have been a 100 per cent success, but it made millions of Indians understand the true meaning of a modern, organised political movement and its power.
- **Dandi March:** An unqualified masterstroke, the Dandi March brought Mahatma Gandhi's **political genius and sense of timing to the fore**. He started the historic march from Sabarmati Ashram to the coastal village of Dandi in March 1930. While the basic reason was to protest against the unacceptably high salt tax levied by the British, it turned into something much bigger as thousands of people joined Gandhi on his 24-day march. The Dandi March became the talking point across the country and the whole nation was inspired. From that moment onwards, **non-violent resistance against the British became the natural course of action for a vast section of Indians for the remaining years of the Raj**.
- **Quit India Movement:** By the beginning of the 1940s, the British knew that their days in India were numbered, but they used the excuse of World War 2 to delay any talk of India's independence. In August 1942, the **All-India Congress Committee** passed the famous 'Quit India' resolution in Bombay, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, who also gave the **slogan of 'Do or Die'**. The entire leadership of the Congress was arrested, but that didn't stop thousands of protests against British rule in every corner of the country. There was no middle path now: the British had to quit India.

1.4 MAHATMA GANDHI: STRATEGY AND GOALS

- **Non-Violent Resistance:** Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence (Ahimsa) and civil disobedience became the cornerstone of the freedom struggle. His leadership in the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22) and the Salt Satyagraha (1930) are prime examples. These movements mobilized masses, cutting across class and caste barriers, thus transforming the national movement into a mass movement.
- **Constructive Work:** Gandhi emphasized on constructive work for national regeneration – promoting Khadi, village industries, and national education. This approach was pivotal in awakening a sense of self-reliance and socio-economic upliftment among Indians.
- **Communal Harmony:** Gandhi's efforts in promoting Hindu-Muslim unity, as seen in the Khilafat Movement (1919-24), showcased his commitment to communal harmony, crucial for national solidarity.

1.5 MAHATMA GANDHI AND THE NATIONAL MOVEMENT

Mahatma Gandhi is the most influential leader and a revered person who participated in India's struggle for freedom against British Raj. Mahatma Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869, in Gujarat. The fight to free India was being fought for many years, but Gandhi gave that fight a direction and brought the whole country together. He was an anti-colonialist, non-violent freedom fighter who led the country towards freedom without picking up any weapon. He believed in the power of Truth or Satya. Thus, he named his movement Satyagraha. Gandhi's belief and fight for truth got him universal support. He was the originator of non-violence cooperation. He applied it to large-scale political masses and obtained an effective result. He was also one of the first leaders who used the Fasting scheme as a political device.

Champan Satyagraha(1917)

Gandhi's first civil disobedience movement was the Champan satyagraha. Gandhi travelled to Champan, Bihar, after being persuaded by Rajkumar Shukla, an indigo farmer, to explore the plight of the farmers there. Europeans compelled cultivators in the Champan district of Bihar to grow indigo, a blue dye, which caused them tremendous agony. They couldn't cultivate the food they needed, and their indigo payments were insufficient.

Result of Champan Satyagraha

The government subsequently appointed a commission to investigate the cultivators' claims. Gandhi accepted to serve on the committee after being asked. As a result, the Champan Agrarian Bill was passed within a few months. The cultivators and land tenants were greatly relieved.

Rowlatt Act Satyagraha (1919)

In March 1919, the Rowlatt Act, also known as the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919, was approved. With this bill, the Imperial Legislative Council gave the British government the authority to arrest anyone accused of terrorism. It also authorised Britishers to detain people for up to two years without trial. In addition, the police have been given permission to search any location without a warrant. In April 1919, Gandhi launched a nationwide Satyagraha movement against the act. It received a massive response with people already suffering from poor socio-economic conditions, coming out in support from all across the country.

Non-Cooperation Movement (1920)

The non-cooperation movement was a nationwide movement launched on September 04, 1920 under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The movement was launched in the wake of a series of events like the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the passing of the Rowlatt Act.

The movement was able to accrue the sympathy of the masses and established Gandhiji as the leader of the resistance. It was active for only two short years and was dissolved due to the Chauri Chaura incident.

Khilafat Issue (1919 – 1925)

While incidents like the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre ignited the spirit of nationalism among Indians, Satyagraha movements were still limited to big cities and towns. Gandhi realised the need for a more broad-based movement. He was convinced that freedom is possible only if Hindus and Muslims get united on a common platform. The Khilafat issue or Khilafat movement allowed him to do it. The first world war, which left the socio-economic condition of India devastated, had also annihilated nations worldwide. Among those empires included Ottoman Turkey, which witnessed a terrible defeat.

Disobedience Movement (1930)

The Indian Statutory Commission, popularly known as the Simon Commission, is recognised as a catalyst for the civil disobedience movement. It was set to debate constitutional reform in India, which was carried out without a single Indian member, prompting a great protest. But before it arrived in India, the Congress was rife with internal debate and had two choices:

- Liberals like Motilal Nehru and C.R. Das wanted to contest the provincial elections and oppose the British within the Councils (set up by the Government of India Act, 1919).
- Revolutionaries like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose urged mass agitation and complete independence. The commission's arrival and the worsening economic condition with the onset of the worldwide economic depression propelled the demands of the revolutionaries, resulting in the civil disobedience movement.

• The Satyagraha Movement:-

One of his major achievements is in the year 1918 were the Champaran and Kheda agitations which are also called a movement against British landlords. The farmers and peasantry were forced to grow and cultivate Indigo and were even to force to sell them at fixed prices. Finally, these farmers pledged to Mahatma Gandhi which resulted in non-violent protest. Wherein Gandhiji won the battle. Kheda, in the year 1918 was hit by floods and farmers wanted relief from tax. Using non-cooperation as his main weapon Gandhiji used it in pledging the farmers for nonpayment of taxes.

• Khilafat Movement:

Gandhiji in the year 1919 approached Muslims, as he found the position of Congress was quite weak and unstable. Khilafat Movement is all about the worldwide protest against the status of Caliph by Muslims. Finally, Mahatma Gandhi had an All India Muslim Conference and became the main person for the event. This movement supported Muslims to a great extent and the success of this movement made him the national leader and facilitated his strong position in the Congress party. Khilafat movement collapsed badly in 1922 and throughout their journey, Gandhiji fought against communalism, but the gap between Hindus and Muslims widened.

• The Non-Cooperation Movement

The first of the Gandhi-led movements was the Non-Cooperation Movement lasting from September 1920 until February 1922. Gandhi, during this movement, believed that the British were only successful in maintaining control because the Indians were cooperative. If the residents of a country stop co-operating with the British, then the minority Britishers would be forced to give up. The movement gained popularity, and soon, millions of people were boycotting British-run or cooperative establishments. This meant that people left their jobs, removed their children from schools, and avoided government offices. The name Mahatma Gandhi became popular.

• **The Dandi March, Civil Disobedience, and Salt Satyagraha**

The abrupt ending of the Non-Cooperation Movement did nothing to stop the quest for independence. On March 12, 1930, protesters took part in the Dandi March, a campaign designed to resist taxes and protest the British monopoly on salt. Gandhi began the 24-day, 240-mile march with 79 followers and ended with thousands. When the protesters reached the coastal town of Dandi, they produced salt from saltwater without paying the British tax. This act was accompanied by civil disobedience across the country. The Dandi group continued moving south along the coast, producing salt along the way.

• **The Quit India Movement**

The Quit India Movement began on August 8, 1942, during World War II. The India Congress Committee, under the urging of Gandhi, called for a mass British withdrawal and Gandhi made a “Do or Die” speech. British officials acted immediately and arrested nearly every member of the Indian National Congress party. England, with a new Prime Minister, offered some concessions to the Indian demands such as the right to make independent Provincial constitutions, to be granted after the war; they were not accepted.

Some of the major movements and freedom struggles led by Mahatma Gandhi are:

1.6 BIRTH OF IDEOLOGY OF NON-VIOLENCE, SATYAGRAHA

Gandhi’s ideology of non-violence and satyagraha changed the course of the national movement in a different direction. Before the arrival of Gandhi, these principles were not deep-rooted in the people and the struggle for freedom was directionless. It was after the advent of Gandhi that the Freedom struggle took a meaningful direction. Over time, these principles only helped India to attain freedom against British rule. Gandhi was very strict in his principles, and the non-cooperation movement was an example of this. The principle of satyagraha compelled the British to leave India.

The Champaran satyagraha emerged as a successful struggle against the oppression of Britishers in India. The government was forced to set up a committee to study the problems of the farmers. In 1918, he intervened in a dispute between the workers and the mill owners of Ahmedabad and undertook fast unto death to force a compromise. The mill owners agreed to raise 35 percent wages of workers. He also supported the cause of the peasants of Kheda against the collection of land revenue after the crops failed. **These three events brought Gandhi into the limelight. Gandhi’s weapons of Satyagraha, Non-Violence, and truth, proved to be effective in attaining the purpose.**

Gandhi and his Mass Movement

In January 1919, the British government passed the Rowlatt Act. This act authorized the government to imprison any person without trial and conviction in a court of law. This was in the course of the policy of the government of India to suppress the revolutionaries. Mahatma Gandhi declared a satyagraha campaign and formed a Satyagraha Sabha whose members pledged to disobey the act non violently. Meanwhile, Gandhi suspended the movement due to violence at some places. It brought no success, but it certainly taught people to make peaceful sacrifices for the nation.

Gandhi mobilized people from all over India during the **Civil Disobedience movement (Salt Satyagraha)** of 1930, Gandhi knew that **salt was of vital importance to every section of society** and tax on it impacts them. Such a step (**Salt Satyagraha**) from Gandhi helped to give a different direction to the movement.

Aroused Self Confidence of the people

After the entry of Gandhi into national politics, India witnessed three victories in the year 1917-18 at Champaran, Kheda, and Ahmedabad. This regained the lost confidence of the Indians and made them feel they could also fight for their freedom without the help of modern arms and ammunition.

Inspired by nationalist feeling

The Gandhian movement inspired nationalist feelings among the people. During the time of the non-cooperation movement, people boycotted schools and colleges and represented the interests of the nation. It united people from all sections to fight for India’s Independence. He led a non-violent civil disobedience

movement against the Britisher's injustice meted at the Indians. The active participation of the people inculcated nationalist feelings among the people.

Hindu Muslim unity

Gandhian phase led to emphasis on Hindus-Muslims Unity. He very well knew that India could not attain freedom without the unity of Hindus-Muslims. Gandhi viewed the Khilafat movement as a golden opportunity for bringing Hindus and Muslims together on the national front. In order to involve the Muslims in the freedom struggle, Gandhi joined the national movement with the non-cooperation movement. Gandhi always laid stress on communal harmony.

Involvement of different groups of people

Gandhi knew that India cannot attain freedom without the involvement and support of every section of society. Before the involvement of Gandhi, the movement was just confined to Congress-dominated people but later the movement witnessed different sections of the society.

Lower class: Gandhi very well knew the importance of the Harijans or dalit person in the freedom movement of India. He always spoke of the upliftment of the Harijans. In 1932, he founded an organization to eradicate Untouchability to improve the social condition of the lower and backward classes.

Women: Even though India was a very patriarchal society, Gandhian movements played an important role in organizing women's social, economic, and political spheres. The national movement during the Gandhian phase empowered women to come forward. **Women took an active part in the non-cooperation and civil disobedience movements. Women played a unique role in promoting Khadi, such as Gandhi's manufacturing program, which ended the anarchy. Anasuya Sarabhai** accompanied Gandhi on his travels and took an active part in the 1918 strike on the textile industry in Ahmedabad. **Sarojini Naidu – Led the raid on the Dharasana salt factory** during the Civil Disobedience Movement after Gandhi's arrest.

Business Class: Gandhian phase witnessed the involvement of the business class in the movement. He emphasized the development of cottage and village industries. It was seen that these cottage industries were on the rise and people became more self-reliant. This helped the Indians be less dependent on imports from other countries and the Britishers.

Ultimately, it can be said that the Gandhian movement helped India attain freedom. Gandhi through his nonviolent method shook the foundation of British rule and defeated the great empire.

In 1934 Gandhi resigned not only as the leader but also as a member of the Congress Party. He had come to believe that its leading members had adopted nonviolence as a political expedient and not as the fundamental creed it was for him. In place of political activity he then concentrated on his "constructive programme" of building the nation "from the bottom up"—educating rural India, which accounted for 85 percent of the population; continuing his fight against untouchability; promoting hand spinning, weaving, and other cottage industries to supplement the earnings of the underemployed peasantry; and evolving a system of education best suited to the needs of the people. Gandhi himself went to live at Sevagram, a village in central India, which became the center of his program of social and economic uplift.

With the outbreak of World War II, the nationalist struggle in India entered its last crucial phase. Gandhi hated fascism and all it stood for, but he also hated war. The Indian National Congress, on the other hand, was not committed to pacifism and was prepared to support the British war effort if Indian self-government was assured. Once more Gandhi became politically active. The failure of the mission of Sir Stafford Cripps, a British cabinet minister who went to India in March 1942 with an offer that Gandhi found unacceptable, the British equivocation on the transfer of power to Indian hands, and the encouragement given by high British officials to conservative and communal forces promoting discord between Muslims and Hindus impelled Gandhi to demand in the summer of 1942 an immediate British withdrawal from India—what became known as the Quit India Movement.

In mid-1942 the war against the Axis powers, particularly Japan, was in a critical phase, and the British reacted sharply to the campaign. They imprisoned the entire Congress leadership and set out to crush the party once and for all. There were violent outbreaks that were sternly suppressed, and the gulf between Britain and India became wider than ever before. Gandhi, his wife, and several other top party leaders (including Nehru) were confined in the Aga Khan Palace (now the Gandhi National Memorial) in Poona (now Pune). Kasturba died there in early 1944, shortly before Gandhi and the others were released.

A new chapter in Indo-British relations opened with the victory of the Labour Party in Britain 1945. During the next two years, there were prolonged triangular negotiations between leaders of the Congress, the Muslim League under Mohammed Ali Jinnah, and the British government, culminating in the Mountbatten Plan of June 3, 1947, and the formation of the two new dominions of India and Pakistan in mid-August 1947. It was one of the greatest disappointments of Gandhi's life that Indian freedom was realized without Indian unity. Muslim separatism had received a great boost while Gandhi and his colleagues were in jail, and in 1946–47, as the final constitutional arrangements were being negotiated, the outbreak of communal riots between Hindus and Muslims unhappily created a climate in which Gandhi's appeals to reason and justice, tolerance and trust had little chance. When partition of the subcontinent was accepted—against his advice—he threw himself heart and soul into the task of healing the scars of the communal conflict, toured the riot-torn areas in Bengal and Bihar, admonished the bigots, consoled the victims, and tried to rehabilitate the refugees. In the atmosphere of that period, surcharged with suspicion and hatred, that was a difficult and heartbreaking task. Gandhi was blamed by partisans of both the communities. When persuasion failed, he went on a fast. He won at least two spectacular triumphs: in September 1947 his fasting stopped the rioting in Calcutta, and in January 1948 he shamed the city of Delhi into a communal truce. A few days later, on January 30, while he was on his way to his evening prayer meeting in Delhi, he was shot down by Nathuram Godse, a young Hindu fanatic.

Mahatma Gandhi is perhaps the most widely recognized figure of the Indian Nationalist Movement for his role in leading non-violent civil uprisings. He first employed the non-violent approach in South Africa where he was serving as an expatriate lawyer. He was hurt and angry when he witnessed the discrimination and exploitation of coloured people under Whites rule. He organizes non-violent protests in the country which gained him fame and support from the people of South Africa. Unforgettable is his services which gave us freedom, the same are enumerated below.

Negative Contributions:

- Centralized leadership: Even though Gandhiji gave mass character to Congress he himself remained its de-facto head till his death in 1948. This set up a very hard precedence of centralized leadership in the country which was followed by many future generations of leaders.
- Lack of Responsibility: Though Gandhiji stressed upon the value system he often bypassed his responsibility of failure.

1.7 CONCLUSION:

The Indian Nationalist movement had an important role in building the nation. It aided in helping the members of the Constitutional assembly draft the main principles for the Indian Constitution. It was created through observation and adopting different constitutions like the British, US, and German. Furthermore, the adoption of objective resolution has helped in drafting the Indian Constitution. The roles of Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru were complementary in shaping the strategy and goals of the Indian National Movement. Gandhi's

emphasis on non-violence, grassroots mobilization, and moral regeneration, coupled with Nehru's focus on modernization, secularism, and internationalism, provided a multifaceted leadership that not only accelerated India's struggle for independence but also laid the foundation for a modern, democratic India. Their legacy continues to inspire and guide the nation in its ongoing journey towards realizing the ideals of justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity.

The British attitude toward Gandhi was one of mingled admiration, amusement, bewilderment, suspicion, and resentment. Except for a tiny minority of Christian missionaries and radical socialists, the British tended to see him at best as a utopian visionary and at worst as a cunning hypocrite whose professions of friendship for the British race were a mask for subversion of the British raj. Gandhi was conscious of the existence of that wall of prejudice, and it was part of the strategy of satyagraha to penetrate it.

His three major campaigns in 1920–22, 1930–34, and 1940–42 were well designed to engender that process of self-doubt and questioning that was to undermine the moral defenses of his adversaries and to contribute, together with the objective realities of the postwar world, to producing the grant of dominion status in 1947. The British abdication in India was the first step in the liquidation of the British Empire on the continents of Asia and Africa. Gandhi's image as a rebel and enemy died hard, but, as it had done to the memory of George Washington, Britain, in 1969, the centenary year of Gandhi's birth, erected a statue to his memory.

Gandhi had critics in his own country and indeed in his own party. The liberal leaders protested that he was going too fast; the young radicals complained that he was not going fast enough; left-wing politicians alleged that he was not serious about evicting the British or liquidating such vested Indian interests as princes and landlords; the leaders of the Dalits doubted his good faith as a social reformer; and Muslim leaders accused him of partiality to his own community.

Research in the second half of the 20th century established Gandhi's role as a great mediator and reconciler. His talents in that direction were applied to conflicts between the older moderate politicians and the young radicals, the political terrorists and the parliamentarians, the urban intelligentsia and the rural masses, the traditionalists and the modernists, the caste Hindus and the Dalits, the Hindus and the Muslims, and the Indians and the British.

It was inevitable that Gandhi's role as a political leader should loom larger in the public imagination, but the mainspring of his life lay in religion, not in politics. And religion for him did not mean formalism, dogma, ritual, or sectarianism. "What I have been striving and pining to achieve these thirty years," he wrote in his autobiography, "is to see God face to face." His deepest strivings were spiritual, but unlike many of his fellow Indians with such aspirations, he did not retire to a cave in the Himalayas to meditate on the Absolute; he carried his cave, as he once said, within him. For him truth was not something to be discovered in the privacy of one's personal life; it had to be upheld in the challenging contexts of social and political life.

Gandhi won the affection and loyalty of gifted men and women, old and young, with vastly dissimilar talents and temperaments; of Europeans of every religious persuasion; and of Indians of almost every political line. Few of his political colleagues went all the way with him and accepted nonviolence as a creed; fewer still shared his food fads, his interest in mudpacks and nature cure, or his prescription of *brahmacharya*, complete renunciation of the pleasures of the flesh.

Gandhi's ideas on sex may now sound quaint and unscientific. His marriage at the age of 13 seems to have complicated his attitude toward sex and charged it with feelings of guilt, but it is important to remember that total

sublimation, according to one tradition of Hindu thought, is indispensable for those who seek self-realization, and *brahmacharya* was for Gandhi part of a larger discipline in food, sleep, thought, prayer, and daily activity designed to equip himself for service of the causes to which he was totally committed. What he failed to see was that his own unique experience was no guide for the common man.

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