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EMERGENCE OF NATIONAL LEADERS

Gandhi

- Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born in the coastal town of Porbandar in 1869. When he returned to India in 1915 he had a record of fighting against inequalities imposed by the racist government of South Africa. Gandhi certainly wanted to be of help to forces of nationalism in India. He was in touch with leaders India as he had come into contact with Congress leaders while mobilizing support for the South African Indian cause earlier. Impressed by activities and ideas of Gopala Krishna Gokhale, he acknowledged him as his political Guru.
- On his return to India, following Gokhale's advice, Gandhi, who was away from India for over two decades, spent a year travelling all over the country acquainting himself with the situation. He established his Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmedabad but did not take active part in political movements including the Home Rule movement.
- While in South Africa, Gandhi, gradually evolved the technique of 'Satyagraha,' based on 'Satya' and 'Ahimsa' i.e, truth and non-violence, to fight the racist South African regime. Even while resisting evil and wrong a Satyagrahi had to be at peace with himself and not hate the wrong doer.
- A Satyagrahi would willingly accept suffering in the course of resistance, and hatred had no place in the exercise. Truth and nonviolence would be weapons of the brave and fearless and not cowards. For Gandhi there was no difference between precept and practice, faith and action.

Gandhi's Experiments of Satyagraha:

1. Champaran Movement (1917)

- The first attempt at mobilizing the Indian masses was made by Gandhi on an invitation by peasants of Champaran. Before launching the struggle, he made a detailed study of the situation. Indigo cultivators of the district Champaran in Bihar were severely exploited by the European planters who had bound the

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peasants to compulsorily grow indigo on lease on 3/20th of their fields and sell it at the rates fixed by the planters.

- This system squeezed the peasants and eventually reduced them to penury. Accompanied by local leaders such as Rajendra Prasad, Mazharul Huq, Acharya Kripalani and Mahadeva Desai, Gandhi conducted a detailed enquiry. The British officials ordered Gandhi to leave the district. But he refused and told the administration that he would defy the order because it was unjust and face the consequences.
- Subsequently an enquiry committee with Gandhi also as a member was formed. It was not difficult for Gandhi to convince the committee of the difficulties of the poor peasants. The report was accepted and implemented resulting in the release of the indigo cultivators of the bondage of European planters who gradually had to withdraw from Champaran itself.

2. Mill Workers' Strike and Gandhi's Fast at Ahmedabad (1918)

Thus Gandhi met with his first success in his homeland. The struggle also enabled him to closely understand the condition of peasantry. The next step at mobilizing the masses was the workers of the urban centre, Ahmedabad. There was a dispute between the textile workers and the mill owners. He met both the parties and when the owners refused to accept the demands of the low paid workers, Gandhi advised them to go on strike demanding a 35 percent increase in their wages. To bolster the morale of the workers he went on fast. The worker's strike and Gandhi's fast ultimately forced the mill owners' to concede the demand.

3. The Kheda Struggle (1918)

- The peasants of Kheda district, due to the failure of monsoon, were in distress. They had appealed to the colonial authorities for remission of land revenue during 1918. As per government's famine code, in the event of crop yield being under 25 percent of the average the cultivators were entitled for total remission.
- But the authorities refused and harassed them demanding full payment. The Kheda peasants who were also battling the plague epidemic, high prices and

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famine approached the Servants of India Society, of which Gandhi was a member, for help. Gandhi, along with Vithalbhai Patel, intervened on behalf of the poor peasants and advised them to withhold payment and ‘fight unto death against such a spirit of vindictiveness and tyranny.’

- Vallabhbhai Patel, a young lawyer and Indulal Yagnik joined Gandhi in the movement and urged the ryots to be firm. The government repression included attachment of crops, taking possession of the belongings of the ryots and their cattle and in some cases auctioning them.
- The government authorities issued instructions that revenues shall be collected only from those ryots who could afford to pay. On learning about the same, Gandhi decided to withdraw the struggle.
- The three struggles led by Gandhi, demonstrated that he had understood where the Indian nation lay. It was the poor peasants and workers of all classes and castes, who constituted the pith and marrow of India, whose interests Gandhi espoused in these struggles. He had confronted both the colonialist and Indian exploiters and by entering into dialogue with them, he had demonstrated that he was a leader who could mobilize the oppressed and at the same time negotiate with the oppressors. These virtues made him the man of the masses and soon he was hailed as the Mahatma.

Nehru

Jawaharlal Nehru was born into an affluent Kashmiri Brahman family in Allahabad on November 14, 1889. Tutored at home until the age of 15, Nehru subsequently attended Harrow in England and, later, Trinity College, Cambridge. After studying law at London's Inner Temple, he returned to India at the age of 22 where he practiced law with his father and prominent barrister, Motilal Nehru.

Political Awakening

- Upon learning of esteemed theosophist Annie Besant's arrest in 1917, Nehru was moved to join the All India Home Rule League, an organization devoted to obtaining self-government within the British Empire.

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- In April 1919, British troops opened fire on thousands of unarmed civilians who had been protesting recently passed legislation that permitted the detainment of suspected political foes without trial. The Massacre of Amritsar, in which 379 Indians were killed and more than a thousand others were wounded, outraged Nehru and further solidified his resolve to win India's independence.
 - During the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22) led by Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru was imprisoned for the first time for activities against the British government and, over the course of the next two and a half decades, spent a total of nine years in jail.
 - In 1929, Jawaharlal was elected president of the Indian National Congress—his first leadership role in politics—whereby he promoted the goal of complete independence from Britain as opposed to dominion status.
 - In response to Britain's declaration of India's participation in the war against Germany at the onset of World War II without consulting Indian leaders, members of Congress passed the Quit India resolution on August 8, 1942, demanding political freedom from Britain in exchange for support in the war effort. The following day, the British government arrested all Congress leaders, including Nehru and Gandhi.

Challenges and Legacy as Prime Minister:

- On August 15, 1947, India finally gained its independence and Nehru became the nation's first prime minister. Amid the celebration of newly acquired freedom, there was also considerable turmoil. The mass displacement that followed partition into the separate nations of Pakistan and India, along with disputes over control of Kashmir, resulted in the loss of property and lives for several hundred thousand Muslims and Hindus.
- Throughout his 17-year leadership, Nehru advocated democratic socialism and secularism and encouraged India's industrialization beginning with the implementation of the first of his five-year plans in 1951, which emphasized the importance of increasing agricultural production.
- He also promoted scientific and technological advancements through the establishment of higher learning, and instituted various social reforms such as free public education and meals for Indian children, legal rights for women—including

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the ability to inherit property and divorce their husbands—and laws to prohibit discrimination based on caste.

- During the Cold War, Nehru adopted a policy of non-alignment in which he professed neutrality, but was criticized when he refused to condemn the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956 and later requested foreign aid after China invaded India's northern border in 1962.
- The conflict, known as the Sino-Indian War, had a deleterious effect on Nehru's health, resulting in a severe stroke in January of 1964 and his death a few months later on May 27.

Tagore

1. Rabindranath and the Bengal Partition:

- On July 22, 1904, the Viceroy of India Lord Curzon announced that the Bengal province would be divided into two parts. The British government was worried about the social integrity among different communities in Bengal and wanted to divide and rule.
- The Bengal Partition took place on October 16 in 1905 and this sparked a nationwide protest. The Indian National Congress had started the Swadeshi Movement where Indians denounced all British items and use all native items.
- Rabindranath Tagore wrote the song *Banglar Mati Banglar Jol* (Soil of Bengal, Water of Bengal) to unite the Bengali population. He started the Rakhi Utsav where people from Hindu and Muslim communities tied colourful threads on each other's wrists. In 1911, the two parts of Bengal were reunited.

Going against conventional Western education

- Tagore was against conventional classroom education. He believed that interaction with nature is essential for learning. On December 29, 1918, Tagore laid the foundation stone of Visva Bharati University.
- He remodelled education as a holistic development process where teachers would be more like mentors guiding students towards emotional, intellectual and spiritual upliftment.

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- He invested his Nobel Prize money in building the campus and a town in Bolpur, West Bengal. He named the place as Shantiniketan, the abode of peace. His educational reforms are included in many curricula across the world.

Politics and Tagore

- Rabindranath faced criticism from radical politicians and agitators for being an upper-class author who did not connect to the public. This was the result of low educational standards.
- A lot of Tagore's critics did not understand that revolution is not an overnight phenomenon but a constructive, progressive movement through education.
- In his lecture, entitled "Swadeshi Samaj", he explained how the British control of India is the "political symptom of our social disease" of self-subjugation. He urged Indians to believe that "there can be no question of blind revolution, but of steady and purposeful education"

Netaji

- Subash Chandra Bose (1897-1945) revolutionized the freedom struggle with his ideas. He was born in 1897, Jan 23 at Cuttack in Orissa. He pursued higher studies in Calcutta and at the Cambridge University, after which he passed the Indian Civil Service Examination in England. But he did not join the ICS. He returned home to join the Non-Cooperation Movement.
- From then onwards, he became an active member of the Congress. He was made the Chief Executive Officer of the Calcutta Corporation in 1924. It was during his association with congress volunteers at the congress session in Calcutta that communism had its impact on him.
- As a result, he developed thoughts and ideas of his own which were unsupportive of Gandhi's programmes. In spite of Gandhi's opposition, Subash Chandra Bose was elected the Congress President in 1938 at Haripur and 1939 at Tripuri.

Removal of Bose from Congress

The August offer came too late for the Congress to even negotiate a settlement. The Congress, at this time, was losing its sheen. Its membership had fallen from 4.5 million in 1938-39 to 1.4 million in 1940-41. Subhas Chandra Bose was isolated within the

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Congress, as most leaders in the organisation's top refused cooperation with him. Bose resigned and the AICC session at Calcutta elected Rajendra Prasad as president. Bose founded the Forward Bloc to function within the Congress and was eventually removed from all positions in the organization in August 1939.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the INA

- After the Indian National Congress acted against Bose in August 1939, shunting him out of all offices including as president of the Bengal Congress Committee, Bose embarked upon a campaign trail, to mobilize support to his position, across India. He was arrested by the British on July 3, 1940 under the Defence of India Act and kept under constant surveillance.
- As the war progressed in Europe Bose believed that Germany was going to win. He began to nurture the idea that Indian independence could be achieved by joining hands with the Axis powers. In the midnight of January 16-17, 1941, Bose slipped out of Calcutta, and reached Berlin by the end of March, travelling through Kabul and the Soviet Union on an Italian passport.
- Bose met Hitler and Goebbels in Berlin. Both the Nazi leaders were cold and the only concession they gave was to set up the Azad Hind Radio. Nothing more came out of his rendezvous with Hitler and his aides. With Germany facing reverses, Bose found his way to Singapore in July 1943.
- A considerably large contingent of the Indian Army was posted on the South East Asian countries that were part of the British Empire. They were in Malaya, Burma and elsewhere. The forces, however, could not stand up to the Japanese army. The command of the British Indian Army in the South-East Asian front simply retreated leaving the ranks behind as Prisoners of War (POWs).
- Mohan Singh, an officer of the British Indian Army in Malaya, approached the Japanese for help and they found in this an opportunity. Japan's interests lay in colonizing China and not much India. The Indian POWs with the Japanese were left under Mohan Singh's command. The fall of Singapore to the Japanese forces added to the strength of the POWs and Mohan Singh now had 45,000 POWs under his command.

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- Of these, Mohan Singh had drafted about 40,000 men in the Indian National Army by the end of 1942. Indians in the region saw the INA as saviours against Japanese expansionism as much as the commander and other officers held out that the army would march into India but only on invitation from the Indian National Congress.
 - On July 2, 1943, Subhas Chandra Bose, reached Singapore. From there he went to Tokyo and after a meeting with Prime Minister Tojo, the Japanese leader declared that his country did not desire territorial expansion into India. Bose returned to Singapore and set up the Provisional Government of Free India on October 21, 1943.
 - This Provisional Government declared war against Britain and the other allied nations. The Axis powers recognised Bose's Provisional Government as its ally. Bose enlisted civilians too into the INA and one of the regiments was made up of women.
 - The Rani of Jhansi regiment of the INA was commanded by a medical doctor and daughter of freedom fighter Ammu Swaminathan from Madras, Dr Lakshmi.
 - On July 6, 1944, Subhas Bose addressed a message to Gandhi over the Azad Hind Radio from Rangoon. Calling him the 'Father of the Nation', Bose appealed to Gandhi for his blessing in what he described as 'India's last war of independence.'

Moulana Abulkalam Azad

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was one of the most influential independence activists during India's freedom struggle. He was also a noted writer, poet and journalist. He was a prominent political leader of the Indian National Congress and was elected as Congress President in 1923 and 1940. Despite being a Muslim, Azad often stood against the radicalizing policies of other prominent Muslims leaders like Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Azad was the first education minister of independent India. Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was posthumously awarded 'Bharat Ratna', India's highest civilian honor, in 1992.

Early Revolutionary Activities

- In Egypt, Azad came into contact with the followers of Mustafa Kemal Pasha who were publishing a weekly from Cairo. In Turkey, Maulana Azad met the leaders of the Young Turks Movement. After his return to India from an extensive visit of Egypt, Turkey, Syria and France, Azad met prominent Hindu revolutionaries Sri Aurobindo Ghosh and Shyam Sundar Chakraborty.
- They helped in developing radical political views and he began to participate in the Indian nationalist movement. Azad fiercely criticized the Muslim politicians who were more inclined towards the communal issues without focusing on the national interest. He also rejected the theories of communal separatism advocated by the All India Muslim League.
- Azad, inspired by the passion of Indian as well as foreign revolutionary leaders, started publishing a weekly called "Al-Hilal" in 1912. The weekly was a platform to attack the policies of the British Government and highlight the problems faced by the common Indians. The paper became so popular that its circulation figures went up to 26,000 copies. The unique message of patriotism and nationalism blended with religious commitment gained its acceptance among the masses.
- But these developments disturbed the British Government and in 1914, the British Government put a ban on the weekly. Unfazed by the move, Maulana Azad, few months later, launched a new weekly, called "Al-Balagh". Failed to put a prohibition on the writings of Maulana Azad, the British Government then finally decided to deport him off Calcutta in 1916.
- When Maulana Azad reached Bihar, he was arrested and put under house arrest. This detention continued till December 31, 1919. After his release on January 1, 1920, Azad returned to the political atmosphere and actively participated in the movement. In fact, he continued to write provocative articles against the British Government.

Pre-Independence Activities

As an activist demanding the reinstatement of the Caliph in Istanbul, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad came onboard with the Khilafat movement during 1920. He became involved with the Indian freedom struggle through the Non-cooperation movement

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initiated by Gandhi, of which the Khilafat issue was a big part of. He wholeheartedly advocated the principles of the non-cooperation movement and in the process became drawn to Gandhi and his philosophy.

Although initially skeptical of Gandhi's proposal to launch an intensified drive against the British Raj demanding independence, he later joined the efforts. He travelled all over the country giving speeches and leading various programs of the movement. He worked closely with Vallabhbhai Patel and Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

On August 9, 1942, Maulana Azad was arrested along with most of the Congress leadership. Their incarceration lasted for four years and they were released in 1946. During that time, the idea of an independent India had solidified and Maulana headed the Constituent Assembly Elections within Congress as well as led the negotiations with the British Cabinet mission to discuss the terms of independence. He vehemently opposed the idea of partition based on religion and was deeply hurt when the idea went forward to give rise to Pakistan.

Post-Independence Activities

- During the violence that erupted following partition of India, Maulana Azad assured to take up the responsibility for the security of Muslims in India. Towards this, Azad toured the violence-affected regions of borders of Bengal, Assam, Punjab. He helped in establishing the refugee camps and ensured uninterrupted supply of food and other basic materials. It was reported that in the crucial Cabinet meetings both Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Maulana Azad clashed over the security measures in Delhi and the Punjab.
- The role and contribution of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad could not be overlooked. He was appointed as India's first Minister for Education and inducted in the Constituent Assembly to draft India's constitution. Under Maulana Azad's tenure, a number of measures were undertaken to promote primary and secondary education, scientific education, establishment of universities and promotion of avenues of research and higher studies.



Association with the Indian National Congress

- While extending his support to Mahatma Gandhi and non-cooperation movement, Maulana Azad joined the Indian National Congress in January 1920. He presided over the special session of Congress in September 1923 and was said to be the youngest man elected as the President of the Congress.
- Maulana Azad emerged as an important national leader of the Indian National Congress Party. He also served as a member of the Congress Working Committee (CWC) and in the offices of general secretary and president on numerous occasions.
- In 1928, Maulana Azad endorsed the Nehru Report, formulated by Motilal Nehru. Interestingly, the Motilal Nehru Report was severely criticized by a number of Muslim personalities involved with the freedom movement. As opposed to Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Azad also advocated for the ending of separate electorates based on religion and called for a single nation committed to secularism.
- In 1930, Maulana Azad was arrested for violation of the salt laws as part of Gandhiji's Salt Satyagraha. He was put in Meerut jail for a year and a half.
- Maulana was a firm believer in the co-existence of religions. His dream was that of a unified independent India where Hindu and Muslims co-habited peacefully. Although this vision of Azad was shattered post partition of India, he remained a believer.
- He was the founder of the Jamia Milia Islamia Institution in Delhi along with fellow khilafat leaders which has blossomed into a renowned University today. His birthday, November 11, is celebrated as National Education Day in India.

Ambedkar

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's personality was a multifaceted one. He emerged on the Indian socio-political area in early 1920s and remained in the head of all social, economic, political and religious efforts for upliftment of the lowest layer of the Indian society called untouchables.

Babasaheb was a great researcher who made exceptional contributions as an economist, sociologist, legal luminary, educationalist, journalist, Parliamentarian and as a social reformer and supporter of human rights. Babasaheb organized, united and

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enthused the untouchables in India to effectively use political means towards their goal of social fairness.

Movement for Rights of Marginalized community

- In 1919, in his testimony before the Southborough Committee in preparation of the Government of India Act Ambedkar opined that there should be a separate electoral system for the Untouchables and other marginalized communities.
- In 1920, Ambedkar launched a newspaper called “Mooknayaka” (leader of the silent) with the assistance of Shahaji II, the Maharaja of Kolhapur. (other periodicals- ‘Bahishkrit Bharat’ (1927), ‘Samatha’ (1929) and ‘Janata’ (1930))
- In 1923, he set up the ‘Bahishkrit Hitkarini Sabha (Outcastes Welfare Association)
- Ambedkar launched full-fledged movements for Dalit rights by 1927 and demanded public drinking water sources open to all and right for all castes to enter temples.
- In 1932, Ambedkar signed the Poona Pact.

Contributions of Baba Saheb:

Education:

He said that “It is the education which is the right weapon to cut the social slavery and it is the education which will enlighten the downtrodden masses to come up and gain social status, economic betterment and political freedom” In 1923 Baba Saheb founded ‘Bahishkrit Hitkarni Sabha to spread education among marginalized and to improve their economic conditions.

He gave the slogan: “*Educate-Agitate-Organize*”

Changing hierarchical structures of Indian society

Dr. Ambedkar devoted his whole life to fight for the annihilation of caste by proliferating a movement against the evils of the caste system. Being himself a Dalit, he made all his efforts to change the hierarchical structures of Indian society and restoration of equal rights/justice to the marginalized and abolition of Untouchability. He stood for a complete reorganization and reconstruction of the Hindu society on the principle of equality free from castism. He advocated equality of opportunity. He opted

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for peaceful and constitutional methods for the sake of resolution of the social problems.

He advocated a society based on three fundamental principles of liberty, equality, and fraternity

Dr. Ambedkar was a remarkable liberal crusader who realized the ideological hollowness of the Dalit Movement and provided necessary ideology to it. He created awareness among depressed classes to have a graceful life.

Political party

He formed three political parties, viz. Independent Labor Party, the Republican Party of India and All India Scheduled Caste Federation which were instrumental in organizing Dalit community and raising voice in favour of Dalit community.

Reservation in the election

He represented the untouchables in the Round Table Conference in 1930. Due to his consistent ceaseless efforts, the Harijans were granted reservation of seat in the elections.

Bringing Untouchables to the mainstream of Indian society

His programs were focused on mainstreaming the Untouchables into Indian society. He fought not only for equal status of Varna but for social, economic and political equality as well as equal opportunity to all. His ideas & programs set forth concrete proposals for the removal of untouchability and the empowerment of the downtrodden. Dr. Ambedkar demanded justice to untouchables and other weaker sections of the society via making provisions in the Indian Constitution.

His role in framing Constitution

In framing the constitution of independent India, he played a leading role. He was appointed as the Chairman of the constitution drafting committee in 1947.

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- Ambedkar was a wise constitutional expert, he had studied the constitutions of about 60 countries. Ambedkar is recognized as the “Father of the Constitution of India”
 - The text prepared by Ambedkar provided constitutional guarantees and protections to individual citizens for a wide range of civil liberties, including freedom of religion, the abolition of untouchability, and the outlawing of all forms of discrimination.
 - Ambedkar advocated extensive economic and social rights for women and won the support of the Assembly to introduce a system of reservations for members of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and Other Backward Class in the civil services, schools, and colleges.
 - He laid emphasis on religious, gender and caste equality. Even Ambedkar recommended the adoption of Uniform Civil code to bring reform in the Indian society.

Patel

- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is a revered name in Indian politics. A lawyer and a political activist, he played a leading role during the Indian Independence Movement. After independence, he was crucial in the integration of over 500 princely states into the Indian Union. He was deeply influenced by Gandhi's ideology and principles, having worked very closely with leader.
- Despite being the choice of the people, on the request of Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel stepped down from the candidacy of Congress President, which ultimately turned out to be the election to choose the first Prime Minister of independent India. He was the first Home Minister of Independent India and his uncompromising efforts towards consolidation of the country earned him the title ‘Iron Man of India’.

Role in the Indian National Movement

- In 1917, Sardar Vallabhbhai was elected as the Secretary of the Gujarat Sabha, the Gujarat wing of the Indian National Congress. In 1918, he led a massive "No Tax

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Campaign" that urged the farmers not to pay taxes after the British insisted on tax after the floods in Kaira.

- The peaceful movement forced the British authorities to return the land taken away from the farmers. His effort to bring together the farmers of his area brought him the title of 'Sardar'. He actively supported the non-cooperation Movement launched by Gandhi. Patel toured the nation with him, recruited 300,000 members and helped collect over Rs. 1.5 million.
- In 1928, the farmers of Bardoli again faced a problem of "tax-hike". After prolonged summons, when the farmers refused to pay the extra tax, the government seized their lands in retaliation. The agitation took on for more than six months. After several rounds of negotiations by Patel, the lands were returned to farmers after a deal was struck between the government and farmers' representatives.
- In 1930, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was among the leaders imprisoned for participating in the famous Salt Satyagraha movement initiated by Mahatma Gandhi. His inspiring speeches during the "Salt Movement" transformed the outlook of numerous people, who later played a major role in making the movement successful. He led the Satyagraha movement across Gujarat when Gandhi was under imprisonment, upon request from the congress members.
- Sardar Patel was freed in 1931, following an agreement signed between Mahatma Gandhi and Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy of India. The treaty was popularly known as the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. The same year, Patel was elected as the President of Indian National Congress in its Karachi session where the party deliberated its future path. Congress committed itself towards defence of fundamental and human rights. It was in this session that the dream of a secular nation was conceived.
- During the legislative elections of 1934, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel campaigned for the Indian National Congress. Though he did not contest, Sardar Patel helped his fellow party mates during the election.
- In the 1942 Quit India Movement, Patel continued his unwavering support to Gandhi when several contemporary leaders criticized the latter's decision. He continued travelling throughout the country propagating the agenda of the movement in a series of heart-felt speeches. He was arrested again in 1942 and was imprisoned in the Ahmednagar fort till 1945 along with other Congress leaders.

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- Sardar Patel's journey often saw a number of confrontations with other important leaders of the congress. He voiced his annoyance at Jawaharlal Nehru openly when the latter adopted socialism in 1936. Patel was also wary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and considered him to be "keen on more power within the party".

Sardar Patel & the Partition of India

The separatist movement lead by Muslim League leader Mohammed Ali Jinnah led to a series of violent Hindu-Muslim riots across the country just before the independence. In Sardar Patel's opinion, the open communal conflicts incited by the riots had the potential to establish a weak Government at the Centre post-independence which will be disastrous for consolidating a democratic nation. Patel went on to work on a solution with V.P. Menon, a civil servant during December 1946 and accepted his suggestion of creating a separate dominion based on religious inclination of states. He represented India in the Partition Council.

Contributions to Post-independence India

- After India achieved independence, Patel became the first Home Minister and also the Deputy Prime Minister. Patel played a very crucial role in post-independence India by successfully integrating around 562 princely states under the Indian Dominion.
- The British Government had presented these rulers with two alternatives - they could join India or Pakistan; or they could stay independent. This clause magnified the difficulty of process to mammoth proportions.
- Congress entrusted this intimidating task to Sardar Patel who started lobbying for integration on August 6, 1947. He was successful in integrating all of them barring Jammu and Kashmir, Junagarh and Hyderabad. He eventually dealt with the situation with his sharp political acumen and secured their accession. The India that we see today was a result of the efforts put in by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- Patel was a leading member of the Constituent Assembly of India and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar was appointed on his recommendation. He was the key force in establishing the Indian Administrative Service and the Indian Police Service. He

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took personal interest in initiating a restoration endeavour of the Somnath Temple in Saurashtra, Gujarat.

- Patel dealt ruthlessly with the Pakistan's efforts to invade Kashmir in September 1947. He oversaw immediate expansion of the army and marked improvement of other infrastructural aspects. He often disagreed with Nehru's policies, especially about his dealings with Pakistan regarding the refugee issues. He organised multiple refugee camps in Punjab and Delhi, and later in West Bengal.

Influence of Gandhi

Gandhi had profound effect on Patel's politics and thoughts. He pledged unwavering support to the Mahatma and stood by his principles all through his life. While leaders including Jawaharlal Nehru, Chakravarthi Rajagopalachari and Maulana Azad criticized Mahatma Gandhi's idea that the civil disobedience movement would compel the British to leave the nation, Patel extended his support to Gandhi.

Despite the unwillingness of the Congress High Command, Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel strongly forced the All India Congress Committee to ratify the civil disobedience movement and launch it without delaying further. Upon Gandhi's request he gave up his candidacy for the post of the Prime Minister of India. He suffered a major heart attack after Gandhi's death. Although he recovered, he attributed it to having lamented silently for the loss of his mentor.

Questions

1. Discuss the Gandhi's Experiment of Satyagraha to draw the participation of mass in to National Movement.
2. Evaluate the contribution of Netaji in the India's Independence.
3. Evaluate the role in the Indian National Movement by Sardar Vallabhai Patel.