



CBSE • CLASS 10 • SOCIAL SCIENCE

HISTORY

CHAPTER 02

Nationalism in India



CHAPTER NOTES

COLONIAL RULE AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

A common struggle

- Indian nationalism grew with the struggle against colonial rule. Shared oppression helped different groups feel united.
- Freedom meant different things to different groups. Congress, under Gandhi, tried to bring their demands together without alienating one group.
- This unity was not permanent: conflicting needs sometimes caused disagreement.

How war affected India

- The First World War greatly increased defence spending. War loans and higher taxes paid for it; customs duties rose and income tax was introduced.
- Prices doubled between 1913 and 1918, making daily life difficult.
- Villagers faced forced recruitment: the colonial state compelled people to join the army.
- Crop failures in 1918-19 and 1920-21 caused food shortages. Influenza added to the suffering.
- According to the 1921 census, famine and epidemic caused about 12-13 million deaths.
- People expected relief after the war, but their hardships continued.

GANDHI AND THE IDEA OF SATYAGRAHA

Truth and non-violence

- Gandhi returned to India in January 1915. In South Africa, he had fought racist laws through satyagraha.
- Satyagraha means the power of truth. A just cause can be fought without violence.
- A satyagrahi does not seek revenge or use force. The aim is to persuade the opponent to recognise the truth.
- It appeals to conscience, not fear. Gandhi called it soul-force and believed it could unite Indians.
- It is active, moral resistance—not weakness or passive surrender.

Early movements

1917	Champaran, Bihar	Gandhi inspired peasants to resist the oppressive plantation system.
1918	Kheda, Gujarat	Crop failure and plague left peasants unable to pay revenue. They demanded relaxation of collection.
1918	Ahmedabad, Gujarat	Gandhi organised satyagraha among cotton-mill workers.

In South Africa, his non-violent protest also brought Indian workers together against unjust laws.

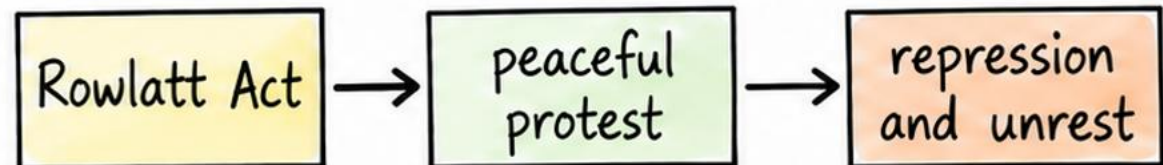
THE ROWLATT ACT AND SATYAGRAHA

An unjust law

- The Rowlatt Act was passed in 1919 despite united opposition from Indian members of the Imperial Legislative Council.
- It gave the government broad powers to repress political activity.
- People could be detained without trial for two years. Indians saw this as an attack on civil rights.
- Gandhi proposed a nationwide, non-violent satyagraha against the Act.
- A hartal—a shutdown of work and business—was organised on 6 April 1919.
- Rallies took place, railway workers went on strike and shops closed.

Protest and repression

- Alarmed by the protests, the government arrested local leaders in Amritsar and stopped Gandhi from entering Delhi.
- On 10 April, police fired on a peaceful procession in Amritsar.
- Attacks on banks, post offices and railway stations followed.
- Martial law was imposed, and General Dyer took command.



THE JALLIANWALA BAGH MASSACRE

13 April 1919

- A large crowd gathered in the enclosed Jallianwala Bagh ground in Amritsar.
- Some people came to protest against government repression. Others came for the annual Baisakhi fair.
- Many villagers did not know that martial law banned public gatherings.
- General Dyer blocked the exits and ordered troops to fire on the crowd. Hundreds were killed.
- His aim was to create fear and discourage Satyagraha.

What followed

- News of the massacre led to strikes, clashes with police and attacks on government buildings.
- The government used brutal repression. Satyagrahis were humiliated, forced to crawl on the streets and flogged.
- Villages near Gujranwala were bombed.
- As violence spread, Gandhi called off the Rowlatt satyagraha.
- The movement had mainly reached cities and towns. Gandhi now looked for a broader national movement.
- He felt that bringing Hindus and Muslims together was essential for wider unity.



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