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# India Under PM Modi



While India and Indians worldwide celebrate India's 75th Independence day, Prime Minister Modi's seven+ years in office marks the longest uninterrupted non-Congress government at the centre.

It's a combination of the pull of PM Modi's personality, a right-of-centre stream of politics, and a few lessons learned from the Congress party.

In 2007, with the BJP nowhere within striking distance of a return to power, and Modi still running for his third term as Gujarat chief minister, political commentator Swapan Dasgupta spotted the larger-than-life personality of Modi as a phenomenon in national politics. In a piece for the *Telegraph*, Dasgupta wrote:

*"Modi is not just another politician; he is a phenomenon. The editorial classes, like the symbols of old money in Ahmedabad, may nurture an aesthetic dislike of his brashness and his refusal to genuflect before the holy cows of society, but they will no longer be able to ignore him. Moditva is certain to alter India's landscape."*

Similarly a month after PM Modi became prime minister, Cambridge historian Shruti Kapila wrote:

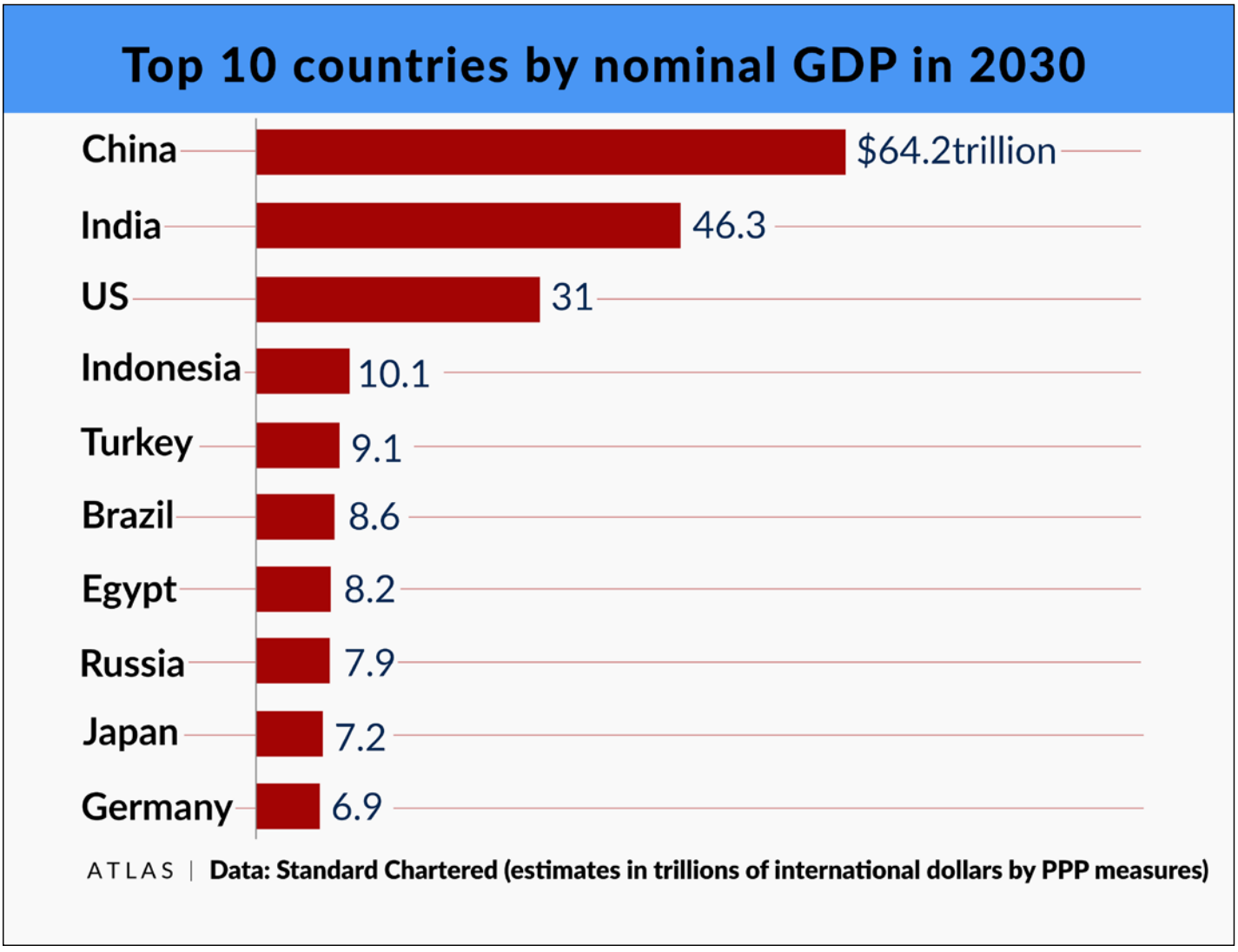
*"Modi's victory has declared the arrival of a distinctive brand of conservatism as the mandated political language to direct India's future...In India today, conservatism has acquired a kind of revolutionary import, in that it is the byword of change. Overwhelmingly, the Modi mandate is certainly not about protecting old privilege. Quite the opposite. It is all about validating the new."*

The past seven+ years stand as evidence for Prime Minister Modi's desire to ensure development for all. Under him, the Indian government has implemented various schemes and programmes for the welfare of the Indian masses.

- One flagship progr am of the Modi government is the Jan - Dhan Yojana. Under this program, the formal banking sector is easily accessible to the Indian masses and thus, provides for financial inclusion.
- Another leading scheme is the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna, which aims at providing affordable housing to more than 4 crore people residing in rural areas.
- The Ujjwala Yojana scheme of the government to provide for the use of clean LPG gas in rural areas has touched many lives.
- The construction of roads to link villages has had a significant impact on the rural masses. This factor along with the focus on rural employment, through MNREGA, has been an impelling cause for rural development.
- The Gram Jyoti Yojana, implemented by the government, has served to supply full-time electricity supply to the rural population.

## The World Sees a New India

The poor and devastated country getting freedom from the imperial rulers is now a major force in the global arena showing instances of success and sustainability and India truly has become an icon of sustainable development under the aegis of able leadership and smart administration. 73 years after independence, India has excelled in all the sectors and uplifted the life



and living standards of her people that received global acclaim too.

United Nations' Voluntary National Review 2020 has highly praised the Sustainable Development Goals of India through the different developmental programs of the Government of India that has uplifted more than 271 million people from poverty and that became possible through economic development and empowerment, improved health facilities, much-improved access to child and maternal health, nutrition, drinking water, electricity and housing facilities through the Sashakt Bharat - Sabal Bharat program, meaning empowered and strong India. Other programs like Swachh Bharat - Swasth Bharat meaning clean and healthy India stresses cleanliness and improved health facilities, Satat Bharat – Sanatan Bharat or Sustainable India stresses on use of renewable energy sources where India ranks third in renewable power, fourth in wind power, and fifth in solar power globally and Samagra Bharat - Saksham Bharat meaning Inclusive and self-sufficient India that stresses on better social and civic facilities and development of entrepreneurial skills. Along with it, there is the Sampanna Bharat- Samriddh Bharat meaning prosperous India gives importance to the development of infrastructure and youth force along with improving the business and manufacturing scenario

The seven+ years has led to a transformation in the perception of India around the globe, mainly facilitated by Prime Minister Modi's growing friendship and solidarity with other leaders of the world. Under his leadership, India has secured a spot in the list of elite countries to have their own navigation systems. India's participation in international institutions and regional forums for regional stability has also witnessed significant improvement. The modernisation of the Indian military, air force and navy has secured India's position as a dominant power in world politics. India has also emerged as a leading country against climate change by playing a vital role in the recent climate change conference in Paris and spearheading the Solar Alliance. India has become a global growth engine as a result of the actions of the Modi administration. The current foreign policy of the Modi government committed to securing better relations with our neighbours has also led to improved bilateral ties with them. With the diplomatic efforts of India, International Yoga Day is celebrated across the globe with great vigour.




## **Women** Empowerment

Women empowerment is a necessary prerequisite of any society, and the Modi administration has reiterated this simple fact by employing women in positions of power. Their emphasis on women entrepreneurship and financial inclusion for them has led to social progress in the society by challenging the stereotypes and virtues associated with women. The death penalty ordinance for rapists is another step towards ensuring that women are not subject to any violation. The Ujjwala Yojana of the government has provided for a cleaner environment for women by promoting clean LPG gas in rural areas. The flagship program of the Modi government - Swachh Bharat Mission - has also led to the construction of toilets all over the country for women to satisfy their sanitation requirements. The Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao programme implemented has been the driving force behind the rise in literacy rates among girls in India and smoothed the path for women-led development. Various programs and policies have also been enacted to secure the

> **The flagship program of the Modi government - Swachh Bharat Mission - has also led to the construction of toilets all over the country for women to satisfy their sanitation requirements.**

well-being of expectant mothers. In Modi's India, women are developing leadership qualities to enable them to lead India to a new age.

Education has expanded the thought-process of common Indians, especially in the case of women. They are no longer treated as a burden of the family because her marriage will drain out the resources of the family. On the contrary, more and more women are being educated and getting appointed in various jobs, even in so-called 'only for men' jobs. The Gandhi Nagar Railway station in Rajasthan can be a unique example. This station is staffed by women only. From station master to the porter–all are women. Not only that, the station is clean, organized and giving good income.

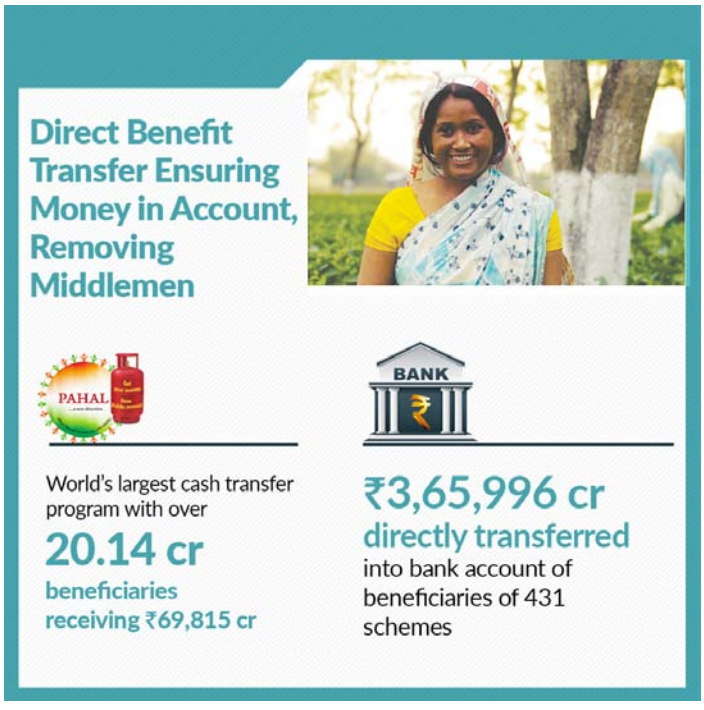
The constitution has ruled that 33% of the legislative assembly or parliament seats must be reserved for women and it is well-implemented now. This has given rise to the emergence of many prominent and eminent women politicians. Corporate affairs have also categorically mentioned that companies with paid-up share capital of Rs 100 crores and above or turnover of Rs 300 crores and above must appoint at least one woman director.

Women empowerment has been prominent at the rural level too. There are women members of the Panchayats, self-help groups of women and even farming is done by women in many cases. The 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' or 'Save and Educate the Girl-Child' program has been immensely popular in rural India.

Not only women empowerment, but the society of Post-Independence India has also undergone several changes in its outlook. Inter-caste or inter-religion marriage is no longer taboo now. Liberalization followed by digital communication and exposure to the greater world has opened up Indian society and made it free from the irrational notions about life as a whole.

## Harnessing Yuva Shakti

The past seven+ years have witnessed many positive changes, facilitated by the Modi government for youth empowerment.



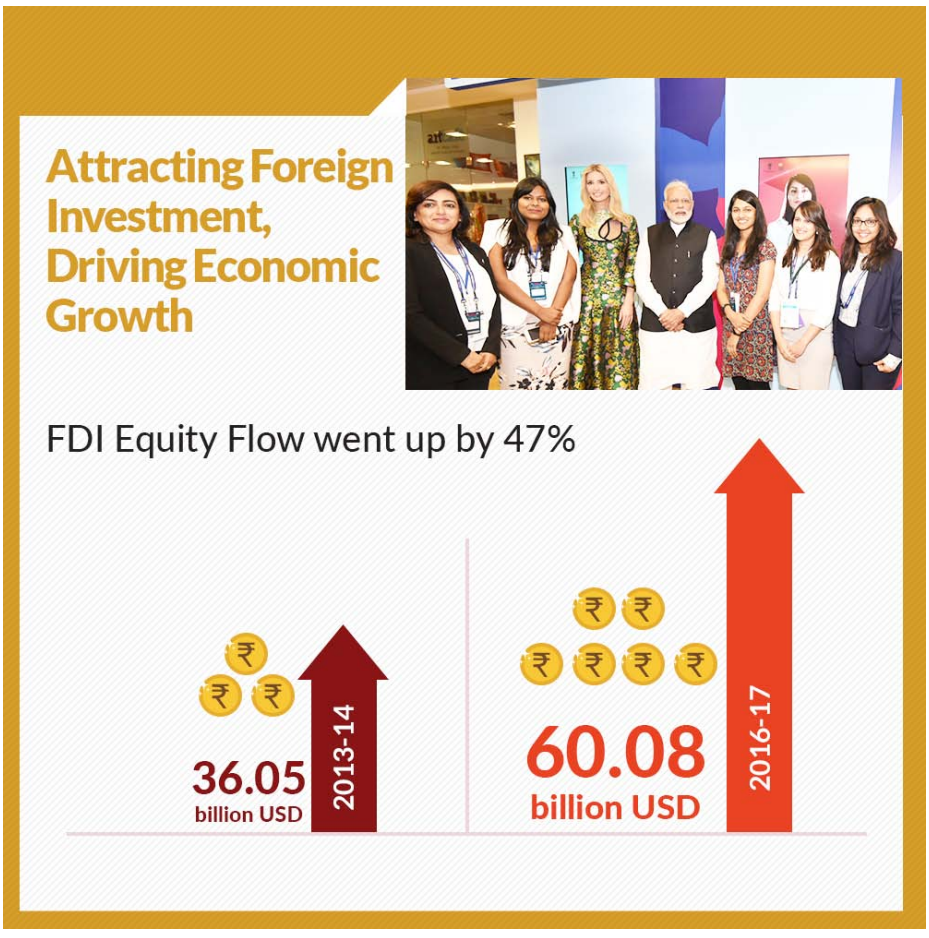



- The government's commitment to transform ten public and private educational institutions into world-renowned ones served as an impetus for the growth of the Indian youth.
- The priority given to higher education, particularly in the case of women, has led to socio-economic benefits.
- The tax relief for start-ups has also promoted employment opportunities in the country.
- The Modi Government has also devoted time and effort for the promotion of fitness and sports in the youth.

## Eliminating Corruption

In the seven+ years that the Modi government has been in power, it has taken several significant steps to eliminate this blight.

- Their zero-tolerance approach to white collar crimes was apparent in their decision to approve a new law - Fugitive Economic Offenders Bill 2018 - that targets economic offenders fleeing the country. The bill provides for the confiscation of all assets of such economic offenders.
- The government has also established another institution, i.e. National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) to regulate auditors.
- The most important step by the Modi Government in fighting corruption was the demonetisation process, initiated on 8th November 2016. Denominations of 1000 and 500 were taken out of circulation to weed out black money stashed in the country.
- The current Modi government also took action against over two lakh companies suspected of money laundering.
- The Benami Transactions (Prohibition) Amendment Act, 2016 also paved the way for a corruption-free India.




## Accelerating Growth

seven+ years of the Modi government have paved the way for an impressive and robust 7.7% economic growth.Presently, India also holds record foreign exchange reserves as a result of the actions of the Modi administration. The GST (Goods and Service Tax) was finally implemented and has led to the steady growth of the Indian economy. The Modi government is also taking steps to ensure the acceleration of growth at the district levels. Demonetization has also resulted in higher tax compliance. The service sector, which contributes a lot to the real GDP (Gross Domestic Product), has continued to improve under the current administration. Therefore, the growth of the Indian economy can be traced back to the steps undertaken by the Union Government.

## Infrastructure for New India

Since assuming power seven+ years ago, the Modi government has emphasized on creating world class infrastructure for building a New India. The government has undertaken various projects such as the Sagarmala Project (for accelerating port-led development), the Bharatmala Project (to link India from west to east), the Mumbai Trans Harbour Link project (for building the country's largest sea bridge) and the Setu Bharatam Project (making national highways free of railway level crossings) among others to improve the present conditions of our infrastructure. The current administration has also connected various villages through the construction of roads providing significant relief to the

rural masses. The Modi government has also served as an impetus for regional air connectivity, increased safety measures in railways and the development of smart cities for urban transformation. All these developmental efforts have paved the way for a better India with a strong economic base.

Gone are the days of poor roads and dark villages. India has achieved noteworthy success in the infrastructural development of both rural as well as urban sectors. The lengths of the national and state highways have increased to a great extent. With a total of 5.89 million kilometres, the Indian road network is the second largest in the world. This has made transport and communication of passengers, goods and services easier and less time-consuming. Along with that, the communication between the villages and the cities has also become easier.

## Latest World Economic Outlook Growth Projections

| | ESTIMATE | PROJECTION | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ( real GDP, annual percent change ) | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| **World Output** | **-3.5** | **5.5** | **4.2** |
| **Advanced Economies** | **-4.9** | **4.3** | **3.1** |
| United States | -3.4 | 5.1 | 2.5 |
| Euro Area | -7.2 | 4.2 | 3.6 |
| Germany | -5.4 | 3.5 | 3.1 |
| France | -9.0 | 5.5 | 4.1 |
| Italy | -9.2 | 3.0 | 3.6 |
| Spain | -11.1 | 5.9 | 4.7 |
| Japan | -5.1 | 3.1 | 2.4 |
| United Kingdom | -10.0 | 4.5 | 5.0 |
| Canada | -5.5 | 3.6 | 4.1 |
| Other Advanced Economies | -2.5 | 3.6 | 3.1 |
| **Emerging Markets and Developing Economies** | **-2.4** | **6.3** | **5.0** |
| Emerging and Developing Asia | -1.1 | 8.3 | 5.9 |
| China | 2.3 | 8.1 | 5.6 |
| India | -8.0 | 11.5 | 6.8 |
| ASEAN-5 | -3.7 | 5.2 | 6.0 |
| Emerging and Developing Europe | -2.8 | 4.0 | 3.9 |
| Russia | -3.6 | 3.0 | 3.9 |
| Latin America and the Caribbean | -7.4 | 4.1 | 2.9 |
| Brazil | -4.5 | 3.6 | 2.6 |
| Mexico | -8.5 | 4.3 | 2.5 |
| Middle East and Central Asia | -3.2 | 3.0 | 4.2 |
| Saudi Arabia | -3.9 | 2.6 | 4.0 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | -2.6 | 3.2 | 3.9 |
| Nigeria | -3.2 | 1.5 | 2.5 |
| South Africa | -7.5 | 2.8 | 1.4 |
| Memorandum | | | |
| Low-Income Developing Countries | -0.8 | 5.1 | 5.5 |

Source: IMF,World Economic Outlook Update, January 2021

Note: For India, data and forecasts are presented on a fiscal year basis, with FY 2020/2021 Starting in April 2020. India's growth projections are -7.6 percent in 2020 and 11.0 percent in 2021 based on calendar year.

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**The Modi government is also taking steps to ensure the acceleration of growth at the district levels. Demonetization has also resulted in higher tax compliance. The service sector, which contributes a lot to the real GDP (Gross Domestic Product), has continued to improve under the current administration.**

| These are the world's largest economies<br>GDP, current prices - US Dollars | |
|---|---|
| **2010** | **2019** |
| 1 United States | United States |
| 2 China | China |
| 3 Japan | Japan |
| 4 Germany | Germany |
| 5 France | India |
| 6 United Kingdom | United Kingdom |
| 7 Brazil | France |
| 8 Italy | Italy |
| 9 India | Brazil |
| 10 Russian Federation | Canada |
| Source: IMF world Economic Outlook, October 2019 | |

The power sector of India has achieved great success with the development of thermal and hydel power projects. All the inhabited villages have been electrified. India is also a potential user of renewable energy and has a promising future in this sector. The leading among them is solar energy. According to a survey by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), India is the cheapest producer of solar power in the world. There are great potentials for wind, tidal, bioenergy and energy from wastes.

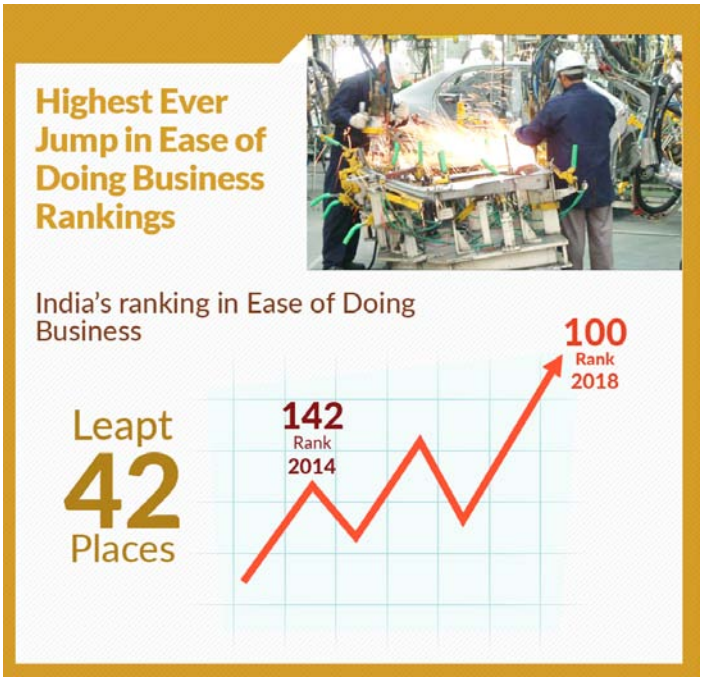
Honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his inaugural speech at RE-Invest 2020 said that the renewable energy capacity in India will increase from 136 gigawatts (GW) to over 220 GW, by 2022.

The Smart City Mission of the Government of India in June 2015 is an innovative approach to sustainability and local development. This is a great move towards urban development and improving the infrastructural and civic amenities of a city or town. The objective of this competition-based program is to promote developmental models in sustainability, quality of life and cleanliness in the cities and towns.

## Speed and Scale of Transformation

India has grown exponentially in the last seven+ years since the inauguration of the Modi government. Under the current administration, there is higher tax compliance, greater financial inclusion, increased levels of employment, and unprecedented



**India has grown exponentially in the last seven+ years since the inauguration of the Modi government. Under the current administration, there is higher tax compliance, greater financial inclusion, increased levels of employment, and unprecedented degrees of infrastructure development.**

degrees of infrastructure development. Millions across the country are now connected through the construction of roads and highways. India's macroeconomic parameters have made it an excellent investment for other countries, driving India's economic growth. The successful launch of 104 satellites at one time only enhances India's impressive growth trajectory. Every village has been electrified in this new India providing the impetus for rural development. The well-being of the farmers, a priority for the government, has also been ensured through the doubling of their income in the present scenario. India's momentous rise has only occurred as a result of the progressive actions of the Modi government.

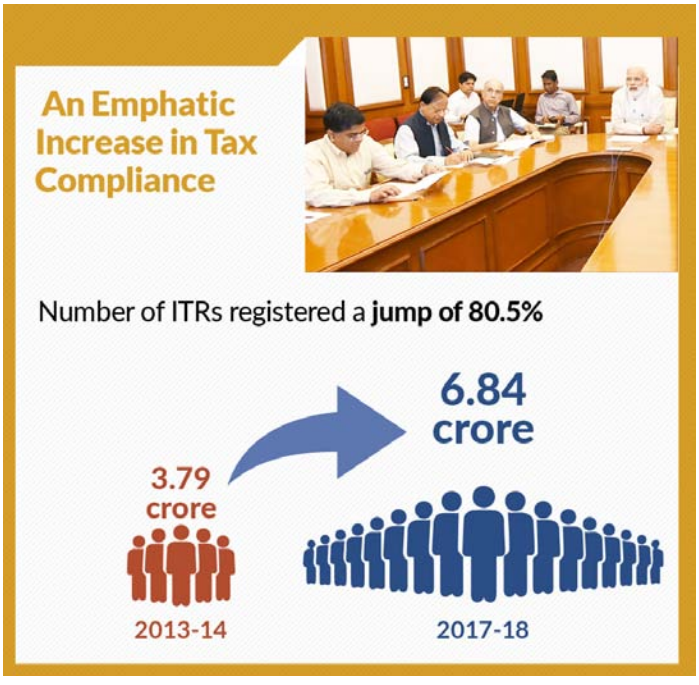
From Spaceships to Vaccines, India's achievements in the field of science and technology have been phenomenal. The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) under the Department of Science has been successfully launching satellites, lunar exploration and exploration to Mars. These achievements have made India a major player in the area of space science. Satellites have created a sea change in the communication system of the country and enabled her to move ahead. In the fields of nuclear power and weapons, India has been able to develop a trend of success due to her able and competent scientists.

The Pharmacy sector of India has a noteworthy contribution in producing low-cost generic medicine and supplying them worldwide. As described by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the Pharmacy of the World, the Indian pharmaceutical sector has also been able to produce Covid 19 Vaccines in her laboratories.

The telecommunications and Information Technology sectors have revolutionized India's communication system and made the lives of common people easier and convenient along with developing the economy and creating a lot of employment opportunities for the youth.

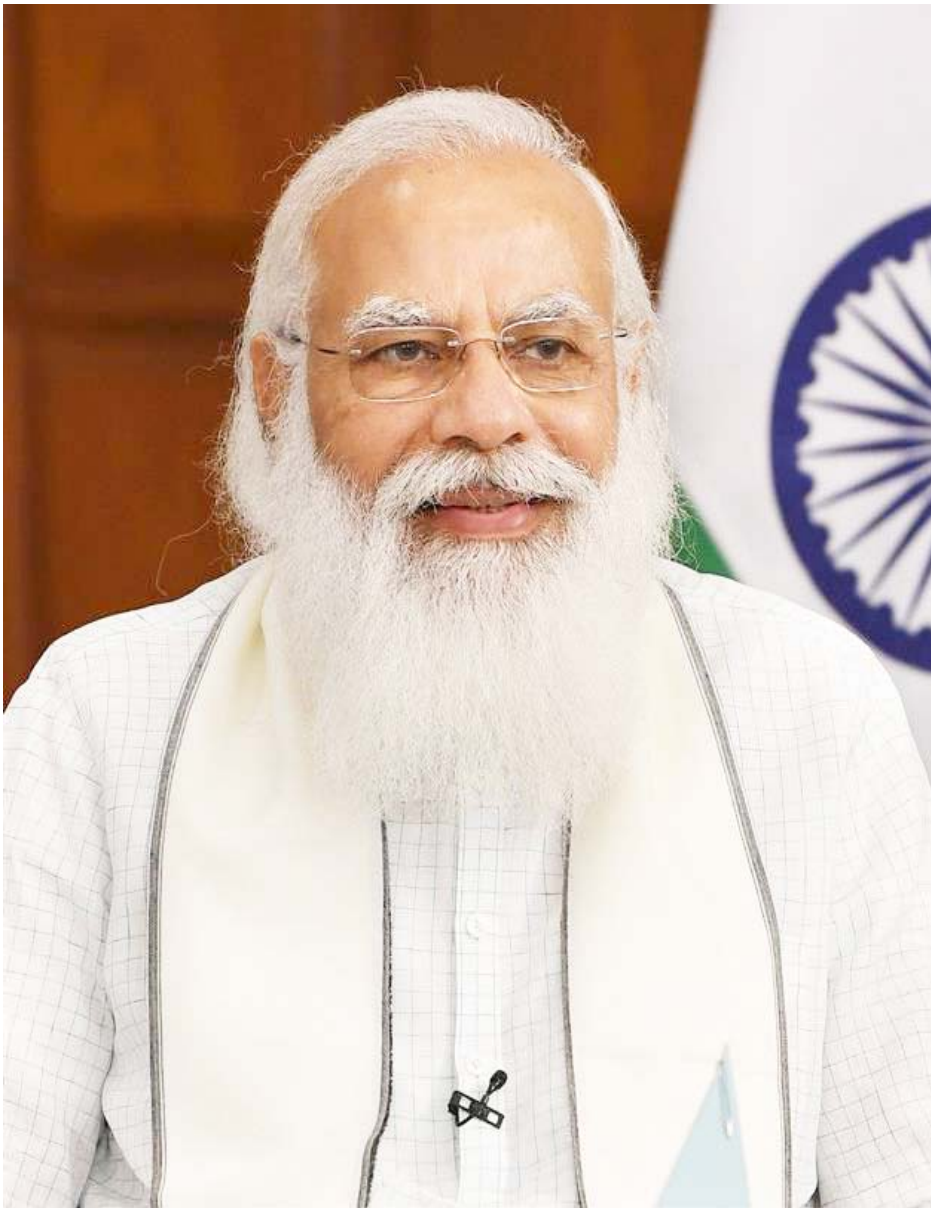
The relentless efforts and initiatives of the scientists of India have been able to make her agricultural sector green and prospective with projects like Green Revolution and White Revolution. Not only in terms of achievements and accreditations but Indian science and technological development have also been able to elevate the lives of the common Indians.

Source : https://www.mygov.in






# Honorable Prime Minister of India Narendra Modi addresses at the inauguration the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'



Present on the stage, Governor of Gujarat Shri Acharya Dev Vrat ji, Chief Minister Shri Vijay Rupani ji, my colleague in the Union Council of Ministers, Shri Prahlad Patel ji, my fellow Parliamentarian in the Lok Sabha, Shri C.R. Patil ji, the newly elected Mayor of Ahmedabad, Shri Kirit Singh Bhai, trustee of Sabarmati Trust, Shri Kartikeya Sarabhai ji and respected Amrit Modi ji who has dedicated his life to Sabarmati Ashram, all the dignitaries, ladies and gentlemen and my young colleagues from across the country!

Today, when I left Delhi in the morning, it was a very wonderful coincidence. Ahead of the Amrit Festival, rains and Sun God graced the country's capital. It is the privilege of all of us that we are becoming witness to this historic period of independent India. We are witnessing history being created on the land of karma of Bapu on the anniversary of the Dandi Yatra today and also becoming a part of history. Today is the first day of the Amrit Festival of Independence. The Amrit Festival started today 75 weeks before August 15, 2022 and will continue till 15th August 2023. It is believed in our country that when such an occasion comes, there is a confluence of all the pilgrimages. As a nation, it is like a solemn occasion. So many

sacrosanct centres of our freedom struggle are being connected with the Sabarmati Ashram today.

This Amrit festival is starting today simultaneously at a number of places, including Andaman's Cellular Jail, which salutes the apogee of the freedom struggle, the land of Kekar Monying in Arunachal Pradesh, which is witness to the Anglo-Indian War, the August Kranti Maidan in Mumbai, Jallianwala Bagh in Punjab, and Meerut, Kakori and Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh. It appears as if the countless struggles of freedom, innumerable sacrifices and the energy of legion atonements are being reawakened together all over India. I pay my floral tributes to Bapu on this sacred occasion. I respectfully salute everybody who sacrificed his life for the freedom struggle and all the great personalities who led the country. I also salute all the brave soldiers who, even after independence, kept the tradition of national security alive, made supreme sacrifices for the defence of the country and were martyred. I also bow down to all those virtuous souls who have laid each and every brick of progress in the reconstruction of a free India and brought the country to the fore in 75 years.

Friends,

When we imagine the period of servitude when millions of people waited for the dawn of independence for centuries, the realization grows as to how historic the occasion of 75 years of freedom is and how glorious it is. The festival also has a tradition of eternal India, shadow of the freedom struggle, and the privileged progress of independent India. Therefore, the presentation that has been put before you now has special emphasis on five pillars of the Amrit Festival. These five pillars -- Freedom Struggle, Ideas at 75, Achievements at 75, Actions at 75 and Resolves at 75 -- will inspire the dreams and duties of a free India to move forward. Based on these messages, the 'Amrit Festival' website as well as Charkha Abhiyan and Atmanirbhar incubator have also been launched today.

Brothers and sisters,

History is witness to the fact that the glory of a nation remains conscious only when it teaches the next generation of the traditions of self-esteem and sacrifice, and inspires them continuously. The future of a nation is bright only when it is associated with the pride of its past experiences and heritage. And India has a profound repository to take pride, a rich history and a conscious cultural heritage. Therefore, this occasion of 75 years of independence will be like an elixir for the present generation -- an elixir that will inspire us to live for the country and to do something for the country every moment.

**"Today, when I left Delhi in the morning, it was a very wonderful coincidence. Ahead of the Amrit Festival, rains and Sun God graced the country's capital. It is the privilege of all of us that we are becoming witness to this historic period of independent India."**

Friends,

It is written in our Vedas: मृत्योः मुक्षीय मामृतात् (free from death into immortality) i.e., we should move towards immortality leaving behind sorrow, distress, tribulation and destruction. This is also the resolution of this Amrit Festival of Independence. The Azadi Amrit Mahotsav means elixir of energy of independence; elixir of inspirations of the warriors of freedom struggle; elixir of new ideas and pledges; and elixir of Aatmnirbharta. Therefore, this Mahotsav is a festival of awakening of the nation; a festival of fulfilling the dream of good governance; and the festival of global peace and development.

Friends,

Amrit Festival is being inaugurated on the day to mark Dandi Yatra. A yatra (journey) to revive that historic moment is also getting flagged off shortly. It is a wonderful coincidence that the impact and message of the Dandi Yatra is the same as the country is moving forward through the Amrit Festival today. This one yatra of Gandhi ji was an inspiration to the freedom struggle which led the masses to join it. This one yatra had spread India's perspective on its independence to the whole world. It was historic because Bapu's Dandi yatra included the insistence of freedom as well as the nature and ethos of India.

Salt was never valued on the basis of mere cost. For us, salt represents honesty, trust and loyalty. We still say that we have eaten the salt of the country. It is not because salt is very precious. It is so because salt represents labour and equality. Salt during that time was a symbol

of India's self-reliance. The British hurt not only the values of India, but this self-reliance as well. People of India had to depend on salt coming from England. Gandhi ji understood this chronic pain of the country; understood the pulse of the people and turned that into a movement of every Indian and it became a resolution of every Indian.

Friends,

Similarly, there are inspirations and messages from different battles and events in the freedom struggle which India can imbibe and move forward. The freedom struggle of 1857, the return of Mahatma Gandhi from abroad, reminding the nation of the power of Satyagraha, the call for complete independence by Lokmanya Tilak, the Azad Hind Fauj's Delhi March under the leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and the slogan of Dilli Chalo which India cannot forget even today. The unforgettable movement of 1942, the declaration of the British Quit India, there are so many countless milestones that we take inspiration and energy from. There are so many spirited fighters to whom the country expresses its gratitude every day.

Be the daring Mangal Pandey and Tatya Tope of the 1857 Revolution, the fearless Rani Lakshmibai who fought against the British army, Rani Chennamma of Kittur, Rani Gaidinliu, Chandra Shekhar Azad, Ram Prasad Bismil, Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev, Rajguru, Ashfaqulla Khan, Guru Ram Singh, Titus ji, Paul Ramasamy, or countless leaders of the masses like Pandit Nehru, Sardar Patel, Babasaheb Ambedkar, Subhas Chandra Bose, Maulana Azad, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Veer Savarkar! All these great personalities are the pioneers of the freedom movement. Today, we are taking collective resolve and inspiration from them to make India their dreams.

Friends,

There were so many agitations and battles during our freedom struggle which did not find the mention as should have been. Each one of these struggles are powerful declarations of truth by India against falsehood itself, evidence of India's independent nature. These battles are testimony to the fact that India's consciousness against injustice, exploitation and violence, which was there in the age of Rama, was in the Kurukshetra of Mahabharata, in the battlefield of Haldighati, in the war cry of Shivaji, and the same eternal consciousness, the same indomitable valour, was ignited by every region, section and society of India within itself in the fight for freedom. The mantra of जननि जन्मभूमि, स्वर्गादपि गरीयसी (Mother and motherland are superior even to Heaven) continues to inspire us today.

Whether it is the Kol uprising or Ho movement, Khasi agitation or Santhal revolution, the Cachar Naga agitation or the Kuka movement, the Bhil movement or the Munda Kranti, the Sanyasi Movement or the Ramosi uprising, the Kittur movement, the Travancore movement, the Bardoli Satyagraha, the Champaran Satyagraha, the Sambalpur conflict, the Chuar rebellion, the Bundel movement... There were so many such agitations and movements which kept the flame of freedom ignited during every period in every part of the country. In the meantime, our Sikh Guru tradition gave us new energy, inspiration, renunciation and sacrifice to protect the culture and customs of the country. There is another important aspect which we should remember.

Friends,

Our saints, Acharyas and teachers continued to awaken this flame of the freedom movement, in east-west, north, south; in every direction and in every region. In a way, the Bhakti movement prepared the stage for the nationwide freedom movement. In the east, the ideas of saints like Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Ramakrishna Paramhans and Srimanta Sankardev gave direction to the society and focused on their goals. In the west, Mirabai, Eknath, Tukaram, Ramdas, Narsi Mehta, in the north, Sant Ramananda, Kabirdas, Goswami Tulsidas, Soordas, Guru Nanak Dev, Sant Raidas, in the south Madhvacharya, Nimbarkacharya, Vallabhacharya, Ramanujacharya, during the Bhakti period, Malik Muhammad Jayasi, Raskhan, Soordas, Keshavdas, Vidyapati, inspired the society to rectify their shortcomings.

It was because of many such personalities that this movement crossed the boundaries and embraced all the people of India. During these innumerable freedom movements, there are so many fighters, saints, souls, many brave martyrs whose every saga is a golden chapter in history! We have to take the life history of these great heroes to the masses. The life stories of these people, the struggle of their lives and the ups and downs of our freedom movement will teach our present generation every lesson of life. They will have a better understanding regarding solidarity, the tenacity to achieve goals and every colour of life.

Brothers and sisters,

You would recall how Shyamji Krishna Verma, the brave son of this land, struggled for freedom under the nose of the British till the last breath of his life. But it took seven decades before his mortal remains could find the lap of the Bharat Mata. Finally, I carried the mortal remains of Shyam ji Krishna Verma from abroad in 2003. There are so many fighters who have sacrificed everything for the country. There are

so many Dalits, Adivasis, women and youth from across the country who have made innumerable sacrifices. Recall the 32-year-old young man of Tamil Nadu, Kodi Katha Kumaran, who did not let the country's flag fall on the ground even while shot in the head by the British. Tamil Nadu is associated with Kodi Katha which means protector of the flag. Velu Nachiyar of Tamil Nadu was the first queen who fought against the British rule.

Similarly, the tribal society of our country brought the foreign power to its knees several times with its valor and bravery. In Jharkhand, Birsa Munda challenged the British and the Murmu brothers led the Santhal movement. In Odisha, while Chakra Bisoi waged a war against the British, Laxman Nayak spread awareness through Gandhian methods. In Andhra Pradesh, Manyam Virudu and Alluri Siraram Raju led the Rampa movement and Pasaltha Khungchera who took on the British in the hills of Mizoram. Other freedom fighters from Assam and Northeast like Gomdhar Konwar, Lachit Borphukan and Serat Sing contributed to the independence of the country. How can the country forget the sacrifice of Nayak tribals in Jambughoda in Gujarat and the massacre of hundreds of tribals led by Govind Guru in Mangadh? The country will always remember their sacrifices.

Friends,

The history of such brave sons of Mother Bharati is in every village and in every nook and corner of the country. The country has been making a conscious effort for the last six years to preserve this history, in every state and every region. The country had completed the renovation of a place connected with the Dandi March in just two years. I had the privilege to go to Dandi on that occasion. The site where Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose hoisted the tricolor in Andaman after the formation of the country's first independent government has also been revived. The islands of Andaman and Nicobar have been named after the freedom struggle. On completion of 75 years of the Azad Hind government, a function was also held at the Red Fort where the tricolour was hoisted and tributes were paid to Netaji Subhas Babu. The world's tallest statue of Sardar Patel in Gujarat is spreading his immortal glory across the world. The memorials in Jallianwala Bagh and the Paika movement have also been developed. The places associated with Babasaheb, which had been forgotten for decades, have also been developed by the country as 'Panchtirtha'. At the same time, the country has initiated an effort to build museums in the country to bring the history of tribal freedom fighters and stories of their struggles to the fore for the future generations.

**"This Amrit festival is starting today simultaneously at a number of places, including Andaman's Cellular Jail, which salutes the apogee of the freedom struggle, the land of Kekar Monying in Arunachal Pradesh, which is witness to the Anglo-Indian War, the August Kranti Maidan in Mumbai, Jallianwala Bagh in Punjab, and Meerut, Kakori and Jhansi in Uttar Pradesh."**

Friends,

Like the history of the freedom movement, the journey of 75 years after independence is a reflection of the hard work, innovation, enterprise of ordinary Indians. Whether in the country or abroad, we Indians have proved ourselves with our hard work. We are proud of our Constitution. We are proud of our democratic traditions. The mother of democracy, India is still moving forward by strengthening democracy. India, rich in knowledge and science, is leaving its mark from Mars to the moon. Today, the strength of the Indian Army is immense and economically also, we are progressing fast. Today, India's startup ecosystem has become a centre of attraction in the world, is a matter of discussion. Today, India's potential and talent are echoed on every platform in the world. Today, India is moving out of the darkness of scarcity to meet the aspirations of more than 130 crore people.

Friends,

It is also the privilege of all of us that we are celebrating the 75 years of independent India and the 125th birth anniversary of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose together. This confluence is a wonderful combination not only of dates but also of India's vision of the past and

future. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose said that India's freedom struggle is not only against British imperialism but against global imperialism. Netaji described India's independence as essential for the entire humanity. Over time, this statement of Netaji was proven correct. When India became independent, the voices of freedom were raised in other countries and in a very short time, the scope of imperialism was reduced. And, friends, India's achievements are not just our own, but they are going to enlighten the whole world and to awaken hope for the whole of humanity. Our development journey with India's self-sufficiency is going to speed up the development journey of the whole world.

It has been proven during the Corona period. India's self-sufficiency in vaccine manufacturing is benefiting the whole world today, lifting humanity out of the pandemic crisis. Today, India has the power of vaccines and we are working to relieve the misery of all in the spirit of "Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam" (the world is one family). We have not given grief to anyone, but we are trying to reduce the sufferings of others. This is the ideal and the eternal philosophy of India and it is also the philosophy of Atmanirbhar Bharat. Today, the countries across the world are thanking India, trusting in India. This is the first hue of the sunrise of the new India, the first aura of our grand future.

Friends,

In the Gita, Lord Krishna has said 'सम-दुःख सुखम् धीरम् सः अमृतत्वाय कल्पते' i.e., those who remain steady even in happiness and distress become eligible for liberation and attain immortality. This is our inspiration for getting the nectar of India's bright future from the Amrit Festival. Let us all be determined to play our role in this nation's yagna.

Friends,

During the Azadi Amrit Mahotsav, innumerable ideas will emerge from the suggestions of the countrymen and their original ideas. On my way here, there were several things in my mind. Public participation, connecting the masses and every citizen of the country should be part of this Amrit Festival. For example, all schools and colleges should compile 75 incidents related to independence. Every school should decide to compile 75 incidents of independence, create 75 groups, which can have 800-2,000 students. One school can do it. The children of our Shishu Mandir and Bal Mandir can make a list of 75 great men associated with the freedom movement, prepare their costumes, utter their speeches, and there should be a competition and 75 places associated with the freedom movement should be identified on the map of India. Children should be asked where Bardoli or Champaran? I would urge students of law colleges to find 75 incidents of legal war which continued simultaneously during the independence struggle. Who were the people fighting the legal battle? What kinds of efforts were made to save the heroes of freedom? What was the attitude of the British Empire towards the judiciary? We can compile all these things. Those who are interested in plays should write plays. The students of fine arts should make paintings on those events and those who want to write songs should write poems. All these should be handwritten at the outset. Later, it can be stored digitally. I would like the efforts of every school and college to become the heritage of their educational institutions. Attempts should be made to complete it before 15th August this year. You see, a complete idea-based establishment will be prepared. Later, competitions at district, state and country levels can also be organized.

Our youth and scholars should take up the responsibility to fulfill the country's efforts in writing the history of our freedom fighters, to bring the achievements of our society during and after the freedom movement prominently before the world. I would also urge the people associated with art, literature, drama, film and digital entertainment to explore the unique stories of our past and bring them to life for the future generations. Our youth have to take the responsibility of building the future by learning from the past. Make efforts to make the future better in whatever field you are in, be it science, technology, medical, politics, art or culture.

I am sure the 130 crore countrymen will be inspired by millions of freedom fighters when they join this Amrit Festival of Independence. India will achieve the tallest goals. If every Indian takes a step for the country and society, the country takes 130 crore steps further. India will once again become self-reliant and provide a new direction to the world. I wish all the best to all those who are taking part in this Dandi Yatra. It is starting today at a small scale without any frills. But as the days go on and we approach the 15th of August, it will envelop the entire India. I am sure it will become a huge festival. It will be the resolve of every citizen, institution and organization to take the country forward. This will be the best way to pay homage to the heroes of freedom.

With these best wishes, I thank all of you. Say with me

Bharat Mata Ki – Jai! Bharat Mata Ki – Jai! Bharat Mata Ki – Jai!

Vande – Mataram! Vande – Mataram! Vande – Mataram!

Jai Hind – Jai Hind! Jai Hind – Jai Hind! Jai Hind – Jai Hind!

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# PM Modi's address at India Ideas Summit



**Jul 22, 2020**

"Namaste!

Business leaders, Distinguished guests,

I thank the US-India Business Council for inviting me to address the 'India Ideas Summit'. I also congratulate the USIBC on its forty-fifth anniversary this year. Over the past decades, the USIBC has brought Indian and American business closer. USIBC's choice of this year's Ideas Summit -'Building a Better Future' is also very very relevant.

We all agree that the world is in need of a better future. And, it is all of us who have to collectively give shape to the future. I firmly believe that our approach to the future must primarily be a more human- centric one. Our growth agenda must place the poor and vulnerable at the core. 'Ease of Living' is as important as 'Ease of Business'.

Recent experience has taught us that the global economy has been too focused on efficiency and optimization. Efficiency is a good thing. But, on the way, we forgot to focus on something equally important. That is resilience against external shocks. It has taken a global pandemic to remind us how important resilience is.

Global economic resilience can be achieved by stronger domestic economic capacities. This means improved domestic capacity for manufacturing, restoring the health of the financial system and diversification of international trade.

India is contributing towards a prosperous and resilient world through the clarion call of an 'Atmanirbhar Bharat'. And, for that, we await your partnership!

Today, there is global optimism towards India. This is because India offers a perfect combination of openness, opportunities and options. Let me elaborate. India celebrates openness in people and in governance. Open minds make open markets. Open markets lead to greater prosperity. These are principles on which both India and the USA agree.

During the last six years, we have made many efforts to make our economy more open and reform oriented. Reforms have ensured increased 'Competitiveness', enhanced 'Transparency', expanded 'Digitization', greater 'Innovation' and more 'Policy stability'.

India is emerging as a land of opportunities. Let me give you one example of the tech sector. Recently, an interesting report came out in India. It said for the first time ever, there are more rural internet users than even urban internet users. Imagine the scale! There are about half a billion active internet users in India now. Half a billion connected people. Does this sound huge to you? Hold your breath. Because, there are

over half a billion more people who are being connected. Opportunities in technology also include opportunities in the frontier technologies of 5G, Big data analytics, Quantum computing, Block-chain and Internet of things.

The options to invest in India are extensive. India invites you to invest in the hard-work of our farmers. India has done historic reforms in the agriculture sector recently. There are investment opportunities in: Agricultural inputs and machinery, Agriculture supply chain management, Ready-to-eat items, Fisheries and Organic produce. India's food processing sector is expected to be worth over half a trillion dollars by 2025. To grow more streams of revenue, the best time to tap investment opportunities in Indian agriculture sector is now!

India invites you to invest in healthcare. The Healthcare sector in India is growing faster than 22 percent every year. Our companies are also progressing in production of medical-technology, tele-medicine and diagnostics. India and the US have already built a robust partnership in the Pharma sector. To achieve scale and speed, now is the best time to expand your investment in Indian health-care sector!

India invites you to invest in energy. As India evolves into a gas-based economy, there will be big investment opportunities for US companies. There are also big opportunities in the clean energy sector. To generate more power for your investment, this is the best time to enter the Indian power sector!

India invites you to invest in infrastructure. Our nation is witnessing the largest infrastructure creation drive in our history. Come, be a partner in building housing for millions, or building roads, highways and ports in our nation.

Civil Aviation is another area of great potential growth. The number of Air passengers is expected to more than double within the next 8 years. The top private Indian airlines plan to include over a thousand new aircraft over the coming decade. This is a huge opportunity for any investor who chooses to set up manufacturing facilities in India, which can become a base for supplying regional markets. A similar case is obvious for setting up Maintenance Repair and Operations facilities. To give flight to your aviation targets, this is an ideal time to invest in the Indian aviation sector.

India invites you to invest in defense and space. We are raising the FDI cap for investment in the defense sector to 74 percent. India has established two defense corridors to encourage production of defense equipment and platforms. We offer special incentives for private and foreign investors. A few weeks ago, we cleared path-breaking reforms in the space sector. Come, be a part of these upcoming sectors.

India invites you to invest in finance and insurance. India has raised the FDI cap for investment in insurance to 49 percent. Now 100 percent FDI is permitted for investment in insurance intermediaries. The insurance market in India is growing at a rate of more than 12 percent and is expected to grow to 250 billion dollars by 2025. With the success of Ayushman Bharat, our health assurance scheme, PM Fasal Bima Yojna, our crop insurance scheme and Jan Suraksha or social security schemes, the government has laid the ground for quick adoption and acceptance of insurance products. There are large untapped opportunities for increasing insurance cover in health, agriculture, business and life insurance. To generate long term and assured revenues, the Indian insurance sector is one of the best investment options right now!

I have given you a few options and that too without any consultancy fees.

When the markets are open, when the opportunity is high and the options are many, can optimism be far behind! You can see the optimism when India rises in key business ratings. Particularly the Ease of Doing Business ratings of the World Bank.

Investment is the best show of confidence. Every year, we are reaching record highs in FDI. Each year is significantly higher than the earlier one. FDI inflows in India in 2019-20 were 74 billion dollars. This is an increase of 20 percent from the year before that. Friends in USIBC inform me that 'pledged investment' from the US has already crossed 40 billion dollars this year! Also see what has happened even during the ongoing pandemic. In the middle of COVID, India has attracted foreign investment of more than 20 billion dollars between April and July 2020!

But, India offers many more opportunities. We have what is needed to power the global economic recovery.

The rise of India means: a rise in trade opportunities with a nation that you can trust, a rise in global integration with increasing openness, a rise in your competitiveness with access to a market which offers scale. And raise your returns on investment with the availability of skilled human resources.

For this vision, there are few better partners than the United States of America. India and the USA are two vibrant democracies with shared values. We are natural partners. The US-India friendship has scaled many heights in the past. Now it is time our partnership plays an important role in helping the world bounce back faster after the pandemic. American investors often look out for the perfect timing to enter a sector or a country. To them, I would like to say: there has never been a better time to invest in India!

I once again thank the USIBC leadership for their commitment to advancing India-US economic partnership. May the USIBC keep scaling new heights!

May the India-America friendship grow further!

Namaste!

Thank you!"

Source: PIB

# The Modi foreign policy doctrine: India as a smart power




The opening address by the President of India to the new Parliament is really an occasion for the new government to outline its policy agenda for the next five years. The presidential address on June 9 was probably one of the most ambitious in the history of independent India: the goal of building 100 new smart cities; a promise to provide urban facilities to rural India; a commitment to providing basic needs (housing, electricity and clean drinking water) to every Indian by the 75th anniversary of Indian independence (2022); and a pledge to ensure that the demographic dividend of a youthful India is realised through a massive programme of skilling as well opening an Indian Institute of Technology and an Indian Institute of Management in every state.

It was on foreign policy, however, that the Modi government was most surprising.

Power is the ability to influence the behaviour of others. In international relations, as the Harvard academic Joseph Nye reminds us, power can be exercised in three ways: by threatening or actually using military force, by offering economic incentives or imposing economic sanctions, or by building what Nye famously dubbed "soft power". That is, the soft power of nations to persuade others based on the attractiveness of their technology, politics, culture, ideas or ideals.

If president Pranab Mukherjee's opening address to the Indian parliament is anything to go by, the foreign policy of the new Indian government under prime minister Narendra Modi will likely employ a nuanced combination of all three of Nye's instruments of international influence. All those who had expected the Modi foreign policy doctrine to be defined by a new muscularity or even machtpolitik – the wielding of the conventional stick - will probably be disappointed.

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Instead, there will be a renewed emphasis on using the carrots of economic levers and soft power. This suggests a thoughtful understanding of the importance of what Nye terms "smart power": a clever combination of the tools of conventional hard, or military and economic, power and soft power. It is this integrated approach that will best serve India in a complex interdependent world, which is defined as much by conflict and competition as it is by cooperation and the need for greater coordination in confronting common global threats.

The incipient Modi doctrine has five key elements. First, and most important, is the idea that a strong, self-reliant and self-confident India will pursue a foreign policy of "enlightened national interest". National interest is a contested term; enlightened national interest even more so. Often national interest is defined as raison d' etat, or "reason of state", and can be viewed as the selfish pursuit of national ambitions, mostly as defined by the government of the day.

Enlightened national interest adds a moral prism to the policy. When Alexis de Tocqueville wrote his masterly Democracy in America, in the early 19th century, he described enlightened self-interest as that which made the United States unique: the ability of its citizens to work for the common good because the pursuit of a better life for everyone serves the self-interest of all.

In international diplomacy, enlightened national interest is arguably the recognition that the narrow pursuit of self-interest in an interdependent world can lead to sub-optimal policy outcomes. Japan - a nation Modi clearly admires - has used the term enlightened national-interest to define many of its policies, including those steering its overseas development assistance. Through supporting other nations via giving and via attractive development funding and loans, Japan has greatly increased its regional influence. The concept opens up the possibilities of creating cooperative outcomes for many issues, even those traditionally seen as difficult, zero-sum conflicts by realists in the establishment.

Within the Indian tradition, this sense of enlightened national-interest is captured in this verse from Hindu scripture, the Mahoupinishad, "Only small men discriminate by saying 'one is a relative, the other is a stranger'. For those who live magnanimously the entire world constitutes but a family." Its essence, it may be recalled, can be found in the BJP's manifesto as well.

And while Mr Modi may not be comfortable with this notion, his idea of enlightened national interest sits at ease with Nehruvian thinking. After all, it was Jawaharlal Nehru who believed that while foreign policy must be rooted in a spirit of realism, it should not be stymied by the narrow realism that lets you look only at the tip of the nose and little beyond.

Second, is the idea that India will help to build and strengthen a democratic, peaceful, stable and economically inter-linked neighbourhood. This, of course, is not particularly new thinking. In the past, the Gujral Doctrine was perhaps the strongest articulation of a policy of reaching out to the neighbourhood, even through gestures that did not demand reciprocity. What was both novel and encouraging, however, was the presence of heads of government or senior representatives from all the South Asian countries at the swearing in of Prime Minister Modi and his Cabinet, effectively turning the ceremony into a regional celebration of democracy.

In the recent past, India has not been explicitly seen as a champion of democracy in the region. Whether or not the strong links in other parts of the world between mature democracies - and absence of conflict – are mirrored in South Asia,

**In international diplomacy, enlightened national interest is arguably the recognition that the narrow pursuit of self-interest in an interdependent world can lead to sub-optimal policy outcomes. Japan - a nation Modi clearly admires - has used the term enlightened national-interest to define many of its policies, including those steering its overseas development assistance.**

it is clear that the strengthening of democracy in the region is the first step towards building what the political scientist, Karl Deutsch, described as a security community. That is, a region in which the large scale use of violence has become unthinkable.

That said, it must be recognised that only a strong and economically resurgent India can lead the process of South Asia integration and so much will now depend on how quickly India's economy can be revived. Meanwhile, however, enlightened national interest will demand India considers making unilateral gestures to serve longer-term self-interest. For instance, arriving at an accord on the sharing of the Teesta rivers with a stridently India-friendly regime in Bangladesh would clearly be an important step that should not be undermined by the capricious behaviour of one leader from West Bengal.

Third is Modi's emphasis on soft-power, explained through yet another Modi alliteration of five Ts: tradition, talent, tourism, trade and technology. For this to translate into reality, will require real effort. For a start, the Ministry of External Affairs will need to be restructured and every major mission abroad would need to include a trade, scientific and cultural counsellor knowledgeable in the relevant domains.

In addition, the role of the Diaspora in the future development of India has been emphasised. One clear step that would ensure deeper engagement between India and the Diaspora would be to allow Non Resident Indians to carry dual passports. For many Indians continuing to hold an Indian passport is a badge of honour which they will not give up for any convenience, glory or money. Allowing dual citizenship for NRIs carries virtually no additional risk; and indeed most countries in the world allow their citizens this privilege.

Fourth, the incipient Modi doctrine moves beyond the former delineation between "non-alignment", "non-alignment 2.0", and "alignment" to suggest that India could follow a policy of what MP Shashi Tharoor may describe as "multi-track alignment" with all the great powers. This was emphasised in the President's address that explicitly stated the government will work with China to develop a strategic and cooperative partnership, work with Japan to build modern infrastructure, build on the firm foundations of the relations with Russia, pursue the relationship with the United States with renewed vigour and make concerted efforts to achieve progress in key areas with the European Union.

Finally, there was only about 50 words of the address devoted to what may have been seen, pre-election, as the most vital part of a future Modi government's foreign policy: the willingness to raise issues of concern at a bilateral level (read Pakistan) and the uncontroversial claim that stability can only be built in the region if there is an end of the export of terrorism. Clearly, concerns about Pakistan have deliberately not been emphasised as this may still be a work in progress. Or perhaps the Modi government recognises that there is much merit in the adage: carry a big stick, but speak with a soft voice. For, in the past, as my colleague Ashok Guha once remarked: "India has carried a tooth pick, and shouted from the roof top and from television studios."

If the Narendra Modi government can deliver on the promises within the President's speech, it will make history. If he lets himself be distracted by divisive social issues or is provoked into adopting zealous nationalism, he will prove his critics right.

As the election results were announced, I was interviewed by a Chinese Radio station. The first question they asked me was whether Narendra Modi would be India's Deng Xiaoping. I replied tentatively that it was too early to tell and that, in any case, India was a messy democracy and not an authoritarian state. However, if Modi does want to be like an Indian Deng, it is well worth recalling the great Chinese leader's 24 Character Strategy:

Observe calmly; secure our position; cope with affairs calmly; hide our capacities and bide our time; be good at maintaining a low profile; and never claim leadership

In other words, India requires stability within and peace in our neighbourhood and beyond for at least the next decade to emerge as great power of some standing. During that period it is best not to get dragged in external conflicts, assume leadership or prominence on the international stage, or attract attention. That will be Mr Modi's biggest challenge.

## About the Author



Professor Amitabh Mattoo is a Professor of International Relations at Jawaharlal Nehru University and Honorary Professor at the University of Melbourne (founder and director of the Australia India Institute).

Professor Mattoo has been a Member of the National Knowledge Commission, a high-level advisory group to the Prime Minister of India. He was also the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Jammu from 2002–2008. He received his Doctorate from the University of Oxford and has been a visiting Professor at Stanford University, the University of Notre Dame, the University of Illinois, and the Maison des Sciences de l'Homme in Paris.

He has been awarded the Padma Shri, one of India's highest civilian awards, for his contribution to education and public life. Professor Mattoo is Honorary Professor of the Australia India Institute's new centre in Delhi.

# Indian election: Modi win delivered thanks to faith in economic growth pledges



India's electoral colossus has re-elected Narendra Modi's BJP party, following the largest democratic exercise in the world. India has united to put Modi back in office. This is the second time since 1971 that a majority incumbent government has returned to power with majority in India.

Over the past five years, Modi's government projected an image of working non-stop to advance the cause of those on the fringes of India's economy. The BJP's policy initiatives included a controversial demonetisation move to stop corruption, which created bank accounts for 356 million poor people. He also provided cooking gas connections to nearly 60 million households and brought electricity to nearly 16,000 villages, covering more than 40 million households that didn't have it before, making all of India electrified.

Health coverage was extended to the country's poorest citizens and more than 90 million toilets were built. Modi introduced the MUDRA scheme to give collateral-

free micro loans for self-employed entrepreneurs and a unified goods and service tax for the entire country, which accelerated tax collections.

## Diverse electorate

Since Modi was first nominated as a prime ministerial candidate in 2014, a debate over his government fueling intolerance against certain groups in Indian society has deflected attention from the good work on the ground. Recently, Time magazine called Modi the "divider in chief". But Modi successfully united the most diverse electorate in the world to come together to vote in his favour and advance his vision of developing the Indian economy.

This is no small achievement. India's diversity, the presence of numerous regional parties that command local influence as well as religious and social groups that have preferred candidates and parties and a private media that has an anti-Modi bias make this victory an incredible achievement.

Two weeks before the elections began, the main opposition party – the Indian National Congress – released its manifesto with a promise to give a universal basic income to the poorest 20% of the Indian households. This became the core campaign message of Congress, which it believed to be a game changer.

But the promise to remove poverty from India – one that Congress has kept making since India gained independence, without managing to deliver on it when in power – did not inspire trust in the electorate. The Indian voter watched with disbelief when Modi was accused of corruption by parties (including Congress) which have histories that are riddled with scandal and corruption issues.

## Development for one and all

Modi pitched the contest as one between a dynasty and an incorruptible deliverer – and the Indian voter believed the track record of Modi over the previous five years, along with his message of "*sabka sath and sabka vikas*" (development for one and all). And the 2019 campaign was centred around the phrase "*mein bhi chowdikar*" (I too am a watchman) emphasising his anti-corruption credentials and presenting him as an upholder of justice.

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India's opposition parties have to rethink the strategy they have adopted over the last five years. Arguing that Modi is a divisive leader has not cut ice with the Indian voter. In Modi, the country has found a development messiah.

Over the next five years, his government will have to deliver on the long list of campaign promises. These include ensuring that every Indian family has a home of its own by the 75th year of Indian independence in 2022, doubling farmers' incomes, developing world-class infrastructure and accelerating support to entrepreneurs and start-ups – all the while retaining the focus on inclusive development to accomplish the 75 milestones for India at 75 that the party has put forth in its election manifesto.

## About the Author



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**Experience**

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**Education**

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**Modi pitched the contest as one between a dynasty and an incorruptible deliverer – and the Indian voter believed the track record of Modi over the previous five years, along with his message of *"sabka sath and sabka vikas"* (development for one and all).**

# August 15, 1947 – From Bondage to Freedom

**- Dr Eugene D'Souza**



Every year on August 15, the Indian nation celebrates its Independence Day with great pride and enthusiasm. It is the day on which in 1947, the British transferred political power to the Indians after nearly 200 years of imperial rule over the country. This day is remembered as the day on which India shook the chains of bondage and made a passage to freedom after a long period of struggle and sacrifice of thousands of freedom fighters.

As we celebrate this national day, it may be of interest to many to know how it all started. It was exactly 400 years ago in 1608 that the British tryst with India began. In 1608, during the reign of the Mughal Emperor Jahangir, the first ship of the East India Company named 'Hector' with William Hawkins as its captain arrived at the Surat port on the coast of Gujarat. Though the Portuguese had arrived in India a century and a decade earlier (1498), it was the British who eventually dominated the history of India.

The East India Company formed by a group of merchants acquired a Charter from the British Queen Elizabeth I in 1600 for exclusive trade with India. After the arrival of the first ship of the Company at Surat in 1608, the British obtained permission from the Mughal Emperor to establish trade settlements at Surat and other parts of the Mughal Empire. From a humble beginning the East India Company's trade and commerce began to multiply and the Company established several trading posts in various parts of India especially on the east and west coast including Bombay, Madras and Calcutta.

For nearly 150 years the East India Company concentrated on trade and commerce, carrying Indian

manufactured goods and spices to Europe and making huge profits by their sale in England and other European countries. Meanwhile, the gradual collapse of the Mughal Empire and the emergence of regional rulers and their mutual rivalries drew the East India Company in the vortex of the power struggle in India. The French who had arrived in India during the later part of the seventeenth century became trade and political rivals of the British, who eventually lost their race to the British in a bid to establish political power over India.

The British military success in the Battle of Plassey (1757) against the Nawab of Bengal marked the beginning of the imperial ambition of the East India Company. Under successive Governors General British territorial expansion was achieved with ruthless efficiency. Major victories were achieved against Tipu Sultan of Mysore and the Marathas. Finally, the conquest of Sindh and subjugation of the Sikhs led to the political domination of the East India Company over the entire Indian subcontinent. In some regions, the British imposed indirect rule over the native rulers.

The rule of the East India Company for a century had adversely affected practically every section of the Indian society. The sepoy rebellion that broke out in May 1857 was taken advantage of by the disgruntled elements including the dispossessed rulers, landlords, peasants and artisans and craftsmen giving it a mask of general revolt. However, the Revolt of 1857, the first serious attempt of the Indians to get rid of the Company's rule proved futile due to lack of unity and coordination and effective leadership among the rebels.

Though the Revolt of 1857 failed in its primary purpose of driving out the British from India, it succeeded in putting an end to the Company's exploitative rule in India. Queen Victoria in her famous Proclamation of 1858 transferred political power from the East India Company to the British Crown and the Queen became the Empress of India.

The British cannot be absolved of their responsibility in ruining India's economic structure. While their land revenue policy ruined the peasants and drove them to poverty and misery, their commercial policy proved disastrous to Indian industries especially the textile manufacturers. Following the Industrial Revolution in England, the British authorities converted India into a huge market for their manufactured goods and a source of raw materials. The net result of the British economic policies in India was the drain of huge amount of wealth from India to England.

On the other hand the British rule over India had some positive results. They established the principle of equality before the law and the rule of law. They also established a hierarchy of law courts and drafted the Indian Penal Code. The introduction and spread of the English education and establishment of the Universities in 1857 at Bombay, Madras and Calcutta led to the emergence of a new urban middle class which was receptive to the idea of socio-religious reforms and later actively participated in the freedom movement. Through various social legislations the British government tried to abolish such inhuman practices as 'Sati' and female infanticide.

Introduction of railways and telegraph in the mid nineteenth century and the construction of a network of roads and bridges facilitated travel, transport and communication between different parts of the country. Gradually, few Indians came to be associated with the legislative and executive functions of the government through various Acts which led to the gradual development of self and responsible government in India, the precursor of the Parliamentary democracy that was adopted following the independence of the country.

After 1858, local political associations especially in Bengal, Maharashtra and Madras came to be organized with the aim of securing reforms in various fields from the British government. A retired British civil servant, Allan Octavian Hume founded the Indian National Congress in 1885 which became a common forum to nationalist leaders from different parts of the country. Initially, the primary objective of the Indian National Congress was to secure political, economic and other reforms from the British rulers. However, gradually the Indian National Congress became the official organization of India's freedom struggle.

The programme of the Indian National Congress passed from the moderate phase to militant phase from around 1905 following the partition of Bengal by the British government. The militant leaders in the Indian National Congress led by Bal Gangadhar Tilak preached a stronger brand of nationalism by adopting the programme of Swadeshi and boycott of British manufactured goods. Meanwhile few secret societies began to spread a message of revolutionary nationalism targeting British officials known for their highhandedness against the Indians.

The British policy of 'Divide and Rule' to drive a wedge between the Hindus and the Muslims led to the foundation of the Muslim League in 1906 with the blessings of the British. Gradually, the Muslim League under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah put forward the demand for a separate nation for the Muslims within India.

With the emergence of Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian national movement acquired a new direction from 1920 onwards. With the doctrine of 'Satyagraha' and non-violence as his credo, Mahatma Gandhi launched a movement against the mighty British Empire with non-cooperation and civil disobedience as his weapons.

A number of leaders and thousands of followers accepted Mahatma Gandhi's principles of 'Satyagraha' and non-violence and plunged into the freedom struggle that has few parallels in the history of national movement in any country of the world. Thousands of freedom fighters sacrificed their lives for the sake of freedom. Millions of people including nationalist leaders underwent many years of imprisonment.

In order to pacify the Indian sentiments for freedom, the British government introduced certain reforms with a view of granting some degree of self and responsible government to the Indians, which were insufficient and insignificant. As the demand for 'complete freedom' became the focal point of the Indian National Congress, the British authorities became more rigid in their approach to the cause of India's freedom.

The Second World War (1939-45) proved to be a catalyst in India's freedom struggle. As the War was at its height, and the Japanese forces were fast advancing in South East Asia towards Burma and India, in August 1942, Mahatma Gandhi gave a call to the British 'to quit India and leave the country in the hands of God'. The Quit India Movement was widespread leading to British brutality and death of thousands of freedom fighters.

As the freedom struggle reached its penultimate stage, the British realized the futility of holding on to their Indian possession and made a number of proposals through various diplomatic missions to chalk out the programme of final transfer of power to the Indian hands after the end of the War. Meanwhile, the Muslim demand for Pakistan became so vocal that it led to communal violence among the Hindus and the Muslims, especially in Bengal and Punjab which ultimately led to the partition of Indian sub-continent into two nations-India and Pakistan.

At the mid-night of August 14-15, 1947, the Union Jack, the symbol of British political power over India was lowered from the flag post and its place was taken by the Indian tri-colour indicating the passage of India from bondage to freedom. Jawaharlal Nehru's 'Tryst with destiny' speech in the Constituent Assembly summed up the pain that the country had undergone and hope for the future.

Besides the Indian National Congress other organizations, groups and individuals contributed to the freedom struggle. Peasants, factory workers, tribals and many others participated in the national movement. The martyrdom of Sardar Bhagat Singh and his companions and the role of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in leading the Indian National Army (Azad Hind Fauj) from out side India are the glorious chapters in the history of India's freedom struggle.

Thus, after nearly two centuries of bondage under the British rule, on August 15, 1947, India passed to the light of freedom. As we celebrate the Independence Day on 15th August every year let us pause for a moment and pay respect to Mahatma Gandhi and hundreds of nationalist leaders and millions of freedom fighters who laid down their lives so that we could breathe the air of dignity and freedom.



**The British cannot be absolved of their responsibility in ruining India's economic structure. While their land revenue policy ruined the peasants and drove them to poverty and misery, their commercial policy proved disastrous to Indian industries especially the textile manufacturers.**



# Quit India

WITH THE OUTBREAK of the war in 1939, Gandhi was dragged back into the political arena. He had loyally supported the Empire in the First World War. In the Boer War, even though his moral sympathies were with the Boers who were fighting for their independence, he had offered his services to the Empire out of a sense of loyalty. His feelings were different now, though, as stated, "my sympathies are wholly with the allies." He had came to believe "all war to be wholly wrong". He was also aware of the anomaly in Britain's position in fighting for freedom while denying India her. There were many patriots in India who felt that this was the hour to strike, since Britain's difficulty was India's opportunity. But Gandhi refused to countenance such an attitude. "We do not seek our independence out of Britain's ruin. That is not the way of non-violence."

The majority of Congress leaders would have welcomed participation in the war effort, provided India could do so as an equal partner with Britain. Gandhi did not believe in conditional non-violence, but he was realistic enough to know that he could not carry the majority of the Congress leaders, who were at best patriot-politicians, not saints, along the arduous path of absolute non-violence. Nor was he vain enough to insist on the Congress accepting his terms as the price of his leadership, though he knew that in the impending political crisis the party could not do without him. He therefore effaced himself and advised the nation to accept the Congress stand and pleaded with the British on its behalf.

But the British Government was in no mood to listen and Winston Churchill was frank enough to say that he had not become "the King's First Minister in order to preside at the liquidation of the British Empire." In the meanwhile, the situation rapidly deteriorated. The British were unable to stem the Japanese advance to the Indian border. The people were becoming increasingly restive and impatient, and Gandhi feared that if this excitement were not given an organized non-violent expression, it would break out in sporadic disorder and violence. Since the British did not seem able at that time to ensure India's defence and were not willing to let India defend herself, Gandhi called upon them to "Quit India" and prepared to organize satyagraha. Addressing historic session of the All India Congress Committee on August 7, 1942, he said : Our quarrel is not with the British people; we fight their imperialism. The proposal for the withdrawal of British power did not come out of anger. It came to enable India to play its due part at the present critical juncture."

**Addressing historic session of the All India Congress Committee on August 7, 1942, he said : Our quarrel is not with the British people; we fight their imperialism.**

He had not yet formulated any clear plan of action. In any case, he wanted to see the Viceroy before doing so. But the initiative was taken away from his hands, for in the early hours of the morning of August 9, he and other leaders of the Congress were arrested. Disorders broke out immediately all over India, many of them violent. The Government having deprived the people of non-violent leadership answered violence with greater violence till India virtually became a country under armed occupation.

Gandhi was interned in the Aga Khan Palace near Poona. He was greatly perturbed by the terror reigning in the country and at the British Government's charge that he was responsible for violence. He entered into a long correspondence with the Government which ended in his fasting for twenty-one years. During the fast, which began on February 10, 1943, his condition grew very critical and it was feared that he would not survive. Fortunately he did. This period in prison was one of tribulation and tragedy for Gandhi. Six days after his arrest, Mahadev Desai, his secretary and companion for twenty-four years, died suddenly of heart failure. In December 1943, Kasturbai fell ill and in February of the following year she, too, died.

The mental strain he had gone through his arrest told on Gandhi's health and six weeks after Kasturbai's death he had a severe attack of malaria. On May 3, the doctor's bulletin described his general condition as "giving rise to anxiety." The Government, embarrassed by the public agitation caused by the news of his illness, released him unconditionally on May 6. For a long time after, he was so weak that to conserve his energy he was obliged to observe long periods of silence.

But weak or strong, he could not sit idle and watch the situation in the country rapidly deteriorate. He asked to see the Viceroy but Lord Wavell declined to meet him. He knew that the British were encouraging Muslim demands to keep the Hindus and Muslims divided and were using this difference as an excuse for their continued occupation of India. Although his political career he had worked passionately for Hindu-Muslim accord. In 1919, he had made the Khilafat cause his own and had later fasted to bring about communal harmony. But the more he tried to placate the Muslims the more adamant and extravagant grew their demands until their leader Jinnah would be satisfied with nothing less than a separate state for the Muslims.



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# What Swaraj meant to Gandhi?

The twentieth century has been characterised as a century of widespread democratic upsurge. The first half of the century witnessed the overthrow of colonialism in Asia and Africa because of the liberation struggles. The Indian freedom movement led by Mahatma Gandhi which used nonviolent direct action satyagrahaas a technique of struggle, has won general acclaim for the pioneering role it played in sharpening and hastening the process of dismantling the classical forms of colonialism and imperialism. The next two decades witnessed massive attempts at post colonial transformation in the newly independent colonies initiated by the state. There has been a deeply entrenched presumption that the state was an effective mediator in ameliorating the conditions of the weaker and poorer sections of people, for the purpose of ensuring social justice and equality, the liberator of the oppressed and "an engine of growth and development that would usher in a new civil order based on progress and prosperity and confer rights to life and liberty, equality and dignity, on the people at large."1



The third decade of independence was period of disillusionment and demystification. It becomes clear that expectations of the positive and interventionist role of the state and the presumed alliance between the state and the masses have been completely belied. As pointed out by Kothari; 'Today the state is seen to have betrayed the masses, as having become the prisoner of the dominate classes and their transnational patrons and as having increasingly turned anti-people...The state in the third world, despite some valiant efforts by dedicated leaders in a few countries, has degenerated into a technocratic machine serving a narrow power group that is kept in power by hordes of security men at the top and a regime of repression and terror at the bottom kept going by millions of hardworking people who must go on producing goods and services for the system, for if they did not, every thing would collapse".2

This has evoked sharp response from the victims. They are being organised and mobilised under the aegis of what are known as New Social Movements / Action Groups / People Movements and these movements are engaging the oppressors in violent and nonviolent struggles. These are movements of dalits, tribals, women, displaced people, environmental movements, movements for regional autonomy movements against globalization etc.

One can say without being seriously contested that the major nonviolent/peaceful struggles of the post Gandhian period in India are organic extensions of satyagraha campaigns carried out by Gandhiji in his anti-racial and anti-colonial struggles in South Africa and India. In fact, there is hardly any significant nonviolent struggle in any part of the world during the last fifty years that does bear the impress and impact of Gandhian nonviolence in a substantial way.

The anti-colonial struggle led by Gandhi for the liberation of India was unique in many ways. That it was predominantly a nonviolent one has been mentioned repeatedly. It is another aspect that I want to highlight here. The Indian freedom movement was a multidimensional one. Gandhi did not limit it to a single point agenda of putting an end to British rule in India. Of course, ending foreign domination was an important and crucial item in the Gandhian agenda. However, his goals were greater and more ambitious. What he wanted to achieve was SwarajPoorna Swaraj or complete freedom.

A brief explanation of what Gandhi meant by swaraj is called for here. Although the word swaraj means self-rule, Gandhi gave it the content of an integral revolution that encompasses all spheres of life. "At the individual level swaraj is vitally connected with the capacity for dispassionate self-assessment, ceaseless self-purification and growing swadeshi or self-reliance".3 Politically swaraj is self-government and not good government (for Gandhi, good government is no substitute for self-government) and it means continuous effort to be independent of government control, whether it is foreign government or whether it is national. In the other words, it is sovereignty of the people based on pure moral authority. Economically, poorna swaraj means full economic

freedom for the toiling millions. For Gandhi, swaraj of the people meant the sum total of the swaraj (self-rule) of individuals and so he clarified that for him swaraj meant freedom for the meanest of his countrymen. And in its fullest sense, swaraj is much more than freedom from all restraints, it is self-rule, self-restraint and could be equated with moksha or salvation."4

How to realise swaraj also engaged Gandhiji's attention seriously. He reminded his colleagues that swaraj will not drop from the cloud and it would be the fruit of patience, perseverance, ceaseless toil, courage and intelligent appreciation of the environment.5 He also reminded them that swaraj means vast organising ability, penetration into the villages solely for the services of the villagers; in other words, it means national education i.e., education of the masses.'6 And in the Gandhian discourse, education of the masses means conscientization, mobilisation and empowerment, making people capable and determined to stand up to the powers that be. He said: "Real swaraj will come, not by the acquisition of authority but by the acquisition of the capacity by all to resist authority when it is abused. In other words, swaraj is to be attained by educating the masses to a sense of their capacity to regulate and control authority.»7

Political independence was an essential precondition and the first step towards the realisation of the goal of swaraj, but it was only a first step. For political independence Gandhi worked with and through the Indian National Congress, but there existed serious philosophical and ideological differences between Gandhi and other prominent leaders of the Congress, particularly Nehru. The development model visualised by Gandhi and enunciated in the Hind Swarajknown as Gandhi's manifestoand the strategy he evolved subsequently were totally unacceptable to Nehru and his Congress, Nehru dismissed Hind Swaraj as "completely unreal" and declared that neither he nor the Congress had ever considered the picture presented in it. However, to Gandhi the vision presented in the Hind Swaraj was the ideal for the realisation of which he had devoted his life fully. He wanted to rebuild India after the model presented there. This required much more than ending British rule.

India was a subjugated nation. However, foreign domination was not the only form of subjugation suffered by her. India was the victim of many ills and evils of her own making for which no foreign power could be blamed. Therefore, Gandhi wanted an internal cleansing chiefly through self-motivated voluntary action in the form of constructive work. He, therefore, dovetailed them into his movement for freedom, Swaraj of his dream was to be built from below, brick by brick. It meant the elimination of all forms of domination, oppression, segregation and discrimination through the use of active nonviolence and a simultaneous economic regeneration of rural India through programmers like the revival and propagation of khadi and other related villages industries. For translating these constructive programmes into reality, organisations were necessary.

> **The anti-colonial struggle led by Gandhi for the liberation of India was unique in many ways. That it was predominantly a nonviolent one has been mentioned repeatedly.**

Congress was chiefly concerned with the question of political independence and believed in mobilising the people politically for it. It was not prepared to take up constructive work. Therefore, Gandhi founded voluntary organisations to carry out his constructive program. The All India Spinners Association (AISA) and All India Village Industries Association (AIVIA) the Harijan Sewak Sangh, the Leprosy foundation etc., are examples. Through the instrumentality of these organisations, Gandhi launched a massive programme of rural reconstruction and of empowering the marginalised sections of people. As these organisations were primarily meant for social transformation through voluntary action at the grassroots level, their thrust was mainly social. However it does not mean that they were apolitical. On the contrary, they developed what later came to be labeled peoples' politics and basic politics, which in turn helped in the consolidation of lokshakti or peoples' power. Although constructive workers were barred from directly taking part in political struggles, on crucial occasions Gandhi enlisted their services for political mobilisation. For example, the 79 volunteers who constituted the Dandi salt march team were all constructive workers. When Gandhiji launched the Individual Satyagraha it was the most prominent constructive worker Vinobawhom he selected as the first Satyagrahi. Gandhi visualised constructive work as a training programme for nonviolent resisters or satyagrahies and advocated the extensive use of constructive programme for preparing a favorable environment for launching satyagraha. Therefore, the political thrust of the constructive programme shall not be lost sight of.

In what is known as his Last Will and Testament Gandhi suggested the disbanding of the congress organisation as a political forum and its blossoming into a constructive work organisationLok Sewak Sangh was the name he proposedto conscientise and mobilise the people to work and struggle for swaraj. Congressmen of

the party-political disposition gave no heed to the advice of the Mahatma. However, after Gandhi's assassination the constructive workers, under the leadership of Vinoba Bhave, formed the Sarva Seva Sangh at the national level and Sarvodya Mandals at the regional/state levels to carry on samagra grama sevaintegrated village servicefor realising the goal of swaraj. Two major nonviolent movements for socio-economic and political revolution in India viz. the Bhoodan-Gramdan Movement led by the Vinoba and the Total Revolution movement led by Jayprakash Narayanan (JP) were actually held under the aegis of the Sarvodaya Movement. On closer scrutiny it could be seen that the constructive work organisations founded by Gandhi and the Sarvodaya Mandals and Sarva Seva Sangh have actually served as precursors and role models of peoples movement, Voluntary Organisations (V.O.s.) and some of the Non-Government Organisations (N.G.O.s) that were subsequently launched in various parts of India. As the similarities in their approach and praxis are obvious, it is not necessary to elaborate on them.

Gandhi had very clear ideas about the role to be played by the constructive work organisations and the proposed Lok Sevak Sangh in the reconstruction of India. He made it clear that he would not hesitate to use nonviolent direct action against the new government headed by Nehru, his chosen heir. In his conversation with Louis Fischer, Gandhi made it unequivocally clear that mass satyagraha will have to be launched also against the landlords for persuading them to end their oppression and exploitation and that he was mentally preparing himself for that historic struggle for justice.

Why did Gandhi take such a position vis-à-vis the state, the capitalists and the landlords who were his supporters and the Indian National Congress begs deeper probing. Although most of his prominent colleagues and contemporaries pinned their vision of transformation of society and polity on state power Gandhi cherished a deep-rooted suspicion of the state machinery. He defined the state as the most organised and concentrated form of violence and called it an impersonal entity, a soulless machine that satisfied individuality, which lay at the root of all progress. The raison d'etre of the state is that it is an instrument of serving the people. But Gandhi feared that in the name of moulding the state into a suitable instrument of serving people, the state would abrogate the rights of the citizens and arrogate to itself the role of grand protector and demand abject acquiescence from them. This would create a paradoxical situation where the citizens would be alienated from the state and at the same time

**Why did Gandhi take such a position vis-à-vis the state, the capitalists and the landlords who were his supporters and the Indian National Congress begs deeper probing.**

enslaved to it which according to Gandhi was demoralising and dangerous. If Gandhi's close acquaintance with the working of the state apparatus in South Africa and in India strengthened his suspicion of a centralized, monolithic state, his intimate association with the congress and its leaders confirmed his fears about the corrupting influence of political power and his skepticism about the efficacy of the party systems of power politics and his study of the British parliamentary systems convinced him of the utter impotency of representative democracy of the Westminster model in meting out justice to people. So he thought it necessary to evolve a mechanism to achieve the twin objectives of empowering the people and empowering the state. It was for this that he developed the two pronged strategy of resistance (to the state) and reconstruction (through voluntary and participatory social action).

Socio-political developments in the post-colonial world corresponded with the Gandhian prognosis. The post-colonial Indian state started showing signs of becoming authoritarian under the pretext of becoming an adequate instrument of serving the people. Since erstwhile colonies had to overcome their under- development (due to colonial exploitation) and develop in order to "catch up with the west", post colonial societies were urged to give their states enormous power in every domain. As Neera Chandhoke points out, 'development empowered the state in a way no other ideology could, indeed development became ideology. Narrowly conceived in an economist fashion development portrayed the state as an impersonal vehicle of social change. As the post colonial elite who were captains of the state believed that development was the imperative of the time and considered it to be a value free social process, they ignored the crucial fact that such an approach would breed its own patterns of domination and social oppression'.8 This became clear in less than two decades after independence. As pointed out in the beginning the hope of postcolonial transformation in which the state was assigned a pivotal role was completely belied. The state was made visibly pro-elitist, catering to the needs of the rich and the powerful. With the beginning of the last decade of the century, the post colonial states began openly collaborating with Trans-National and Multi-National Corporations and Companies compromising even the sovereignty of the nation state and exposing the weaker sections of the people to stark exploitation.

New forms of Western domination are being facilitated by the market. In short, the very conception of the state as an instrument of human liberation and social transformation is to be doubted and contested. Not only the state but active mediators of the political process namely the political parties also have alienated themselves from the people and forfeited their credibility. It is not necessary to argue so hard to show that all these trends correspond to the Gandhian prognosis.

In this paradoxical situation, the victims of oppression are compelled to fall back on the legacy of the anti-colonial struggle that challenged the authoritarian conception of the state and political power. The anti-colonial struggles had opened up the streams of democratic consciousness that gave the people not only a sense of their fundamental and inalienable rights but also confidence in their capability to challenge and throw anti-people regimes, through peaceful means. Another dimension of the anti-colonial struggle was that it gave the people the vision of an ideal social order that is free from exploitation, segregation and domination and also the hope that they can, through corporate effort, translate this vision into reality. All these have boiled down to a new determination among the massesparticularly the oppressed and the marginalised and the displacedon the one hand to resist all forms of oppressive structures including the state, and on the other to strive for a more humane, participatory, just and sustainable social order. The socio-political turbulence and upheavals that we witness today are manifestations of this new determination.

As pointed out by Harsh Sethi,9 the Action Groups/Peoples Movements that are spearheading this campaign size organization and operation, it is well-nigh impossible to put them under a single rubric. Most of these groups are composed mainly of sensitised and radicalised middle class youth working with and for the oppressed and exploited strata with a vision to transform society. Another commentator has identified three major groups of actors in Peoples MovementsGandhians, radical Christians and freelance Marxist intellectuals.10

## Typology and Issues

1. Struggles for gender Justicefighting structural and cultural oppressionresisting harassment of women and girl children through direct action and legal measures. Many women's action groups are involved.
2. Struggles of the Dalitsfighting structural and socio-cultural oppressionsmost action groups are Ambedkaritesvery active in Karnataka and Maharashtramost of them not committed to nonviolence. Demand socio-economic justice and equality.

> **Socio-political developments in the post-colonial world corresponded with the Gandhian prognosis.**

3. Struggles of the Tribalsthe worst hit victims of major development projects of India like big dams, mines and collieries, thermal power stations, etc. demand the right to live in their natural and traditional habitats and control and use their natural resourcesalso demand Tribal self-government in their scheduled areasmany action groups are active.
4. Ecological Strugglesprobably the most popular and widespread are environmental strugglesdemand an end to pollution, environmental degradation, over-exploitation of natural resources, and non-renewable sources of energypose the issues of sustainable development and alternative life styles. NBA, the most popular movement today.
5. Human Rights/Civil Rights Strugglesexpose and resist the authoritarian acts of the state and other powerful social forces and vested interestsseek mainly legal redressal. People's Union for Civil Liberties.
6. Anti-Nuclear Campaigns and Strugglesresist the establishment of atomic power plantsthe attempt to establish nuclear reactors were defeated twice in Keralaand the escalation of nuclear weapons and other weapons like missilesthe Baliapal Struggle.
7. Struggles against the liquor, drug menacedemand legal ban on the manufacture, sale and consumption of alcohol, drugs and other intoxicantschiefly under the aegis of All India Prohibition Council and State Prohibition Councilsalso led by citizens and Women's Action Groups prohibition was an item in Gandhi's Constructive Programme.
8. Struggles for land redistributionmobilising landless agricultural labourers and tillers and other landless sections and offering satyagraha against the state and landlords and certain institutions that are monopoly holders of landcapture and occupation of land the campaigns led by Shri Jagannathan, a senior Sarvodaya leader in Tamil Nadualso similar struggles in Bihar.
9. Struggles for Gramswarajan ongoing campaign for realising village-self-sufficiency and autonomy through struggles and constructive activitiesled by Sarva Seva Sangh.
10. Struggles against Commercial Tourismexpose the evil designs of corporate capitalism in promoting tourism as an industry leading to cultural pollution, carnivalisation of religious festivals, child prostitution and large scale environmental destructionactive in states like Goa and Kerala.

11. Struggles to reverse globalisationthese struggles are for community control of natural resources and protection of bio-diversity as against corporate controlthe farmer's struggles for protecting indigenous seed varieties and their fight against the terminator seed also come under this.

## A General Assessment

As already mentioned these struggles are held around a variety of issues that are different but inter connected. The theatres of struggles are also equally varied. The actors are disparate and sometimes even conflicting. At a glance, they appear almost kaleidoscopic. But there are certain characteristics that stand out. The most predominant, I suppose is the convergence and alliance of actors in each struggle. Most of these struggles are localised and single-issue based and take place in remote and inaccessible places. Therefore during the early years of these struggles, as the issues were not properly reported in the media, the action groups found it difficult to hold on against their adversaries who were formidable. But as a result of organised and concerted effort the situation changed gradually. As the action groups could succeed in publicising the seriousness of the problem and the consequences thereof, most of the theatres of struggle now attract a chain of actors. At the base are, of course, the direct and immediate victims, but on these converge people from media, professionals like researchers, technologists, doctors, professors, and human rights activists including lawyers and also writers and theatre artistes, and students from different levels.11 Some of the struggles have attracted support even from overseas.

This kind of convergence of concerned and sensitised people drawn from different walks of life and various areas of specialisation has helped those at the base line of the action to acquire factually accurate data and argue their case more scientifically and convincingly. It has also created a new sense of solidarity and fraternity reminiscent of the days of the historic anti-colonial struggle. Recently when a selected team of satyagrahies of the N.B.A. decided to do jail samarpan, i.e. offering themselves as sacrifice in the rising waters of the river Narmada and refused to leave their post, many sympathisers, drawn from various parts of the country, offered to drown with the satyagrahies. And they remained with them in neck deep waters braving the risk of being washed away by the state-created flood. This is one of the rarest demonstrations of solidarity that can be read as a very reassuring sign of hope by all those who stand and struggle for the greater common good.

> **A closer and critical look at Gandhi's concept of swaraj will show that it can provide a more adequate conceptual apparatus to locate and assess the struggles of the oppressed peoples.**

Alliance building within the theatre of a struggle is not without problems. Harsh Sethi, for example, points out that as a result of the intervention of professionals from outside real issues tend to get clouded and there is even the chance of it moving away from the central question of power. He has also hinted at a cognitive handicap likely to arise out of an interface of two contradictory worldviews, that of communities rooted in nature and that of the urban middle class professionals. Sethi feared a distortion and downgrading of traditional wisdom and folk knowledge.12 However, later developments show that such well meaning criticisms and the warning implied therein were received very positively. Collaboration was carefully developed into an alliance, which proved transformatory for both sets of actors. Both became self-conscious in a positive sense, accepting one's limitations and never trying to exchange roles. The professionals worked with commendable restraint, and they have openly acknowledged the great transformatory education they received from the experience of being with traditional communities. Needless to say that this has helped considerably in strengthening the struggles.

Almost at the struggles are localised. However, the issues involved are non-local and sometimes they are of global significance. Therefore, there arises the need to transcend localism while remaining local. For resolving most of the issues, wider support becomes essential because the issues are complex and the opponents formidable. The message of an ancient axiomunited we stand, divided we fallhas become clearer than before to the Action Groups. So alliance building between Peoples Movements has become an imperative need of the times and to fulfill this need the National Alliance of People›s Movements has been formed. The N.A.P.M. is a co-ordination of such people oriented organisations, parties, movements, institutes and individuals that are working towards alternative development paradigm based on equality, justice and peace, and striving to evolve a sustainable society.13 Within three years of its inception the N.A.P.M. has succeeded in getting a large number of Peoples Movements affiliated to it and has made its presence felt in the overall scenario of peoples struggles in India. It appears that in the years to come it is going to play a pivotal role in the consolidation of people's Movements and struggles in this country.

One of the important results achieved by the struggles is that they succeeded in initiating a serious dialogue and discussion within and among the Action Groups and Peoples Movements on an alternative development paradigm. This has helped the Action Groups in placing the whole gamut of struggles in perspective and in evolving a consensus on what is meant by sustainable developmentthe values that underlie it, the components that constitute it and the methodology that would translate it into practice. The dialogue on an alternative development model has thus narrowed down the ideological distance between movements. It has also emphasised the need to evolve an alternative politics. Discussions on various aspects of the emerging peoples› politics which is distinguished from party politics, are galore in People›s Movements, though nothing concrete, capable of making a dent nationally, has emerged yet . But a fundamental and crucial political question hitherto ignored or marginalised by mainstream political parties and political commentators have been pushed into the vortex of contemporary political discourse by the Movements.

An important trend that has started emerging with the struggles that attempt to resist and reverse globalisation is the importance given to constructive activities. Action Groups that were oriented primarily to agitation and were engaged in mobilising people only for struggle, have effected a change in their orientation by incorporating constructive work also into their praxis. There was a time when interest in and insistence on constructive work was brushed aside as a Gandhian fad, but now, the number of Movements and Groups that assign a key role to the building up of models of alternative enterprises and structures, are on the increase as they have understood the substantive and strategic significance of these programmes.

The role of nonviolence in these struggles is of course a moot question. As already mentioned, while some movements and groups have openly expressed their disapproval of nonviolence as a method of struggle, others have emphasised the need to give up violence and resort to peaceful means. Although these groups do not adhere to Gandhi›s position on nonviolence, i.e., accepting nonviolence as an article of faith and making it the central organising principle of life, they are convinced more than ever before that nonviolence has to be accepted as an ideal if a just social order is to be translated into reality. For them, justice is an essential value and they know that violence in any form and in any degree amounts to a denial of justice. Therefore, they emphasise peace, taking peace as one form and manifestation of nonviolence. It is really indicative of an emerging trend among Action

**The role of nonviolence in these struggles is of course a moot question.**

Groups of giving up violent methods and gradually moving towards nonviolence. Some organisations claim to be nonviolent. However, a critical observer is constrained to point out that theirs is not the nonviolence of the brave visualised and demonstrated by Gandhi, but nonviolence of the weak. Most of the ‹satyagrahas› that we see today are only passive resistance and not real satyagraha as conceived by Gandhi. It will be relevant to recall that J.P. described the movement for total revolutions as «peaceful» and not «nonviolent» . But it serves as a sign of hope that more and more action groups are renouncing violence, being convinced about its utter futility and accepting peace and nonviolence as key values. Probably they have come to the realisation with Martin Luther King Jr. that the choice before humanity today is not between violence and nonviolence but between nonviolence and non-existence.

People›s Movements and their struggles have been mainly located in civil society by social scientists.14 Civil society has been advanced to provide the conceptual frame work to comprehend and evaluate people struggles. It has been pointed out that these struggles are to be seen as part of an attempt to create an authentic civil society in which the values of freedom and equality can be experienced by all its members. But as Neera Chandhoke argues, the civil society constructed by the post colonial state is a constrictive and exclusive arena.... a peaceable arena.... in which any one who confronts the state is a political offender and can be banished outside the pale of society... it is neutralised civil society that is stripped of its potential to engage with the state. Thus in fact, the concept of civil society does not provide an adequate conceptual apparatus to locate peoples struggles.15 Manoranjan Mohanty introduces the concept of 'creative society' to situate peoples' struggles and here 'creative society' refers to a phase of development of a society in which a large number of political contradictions become articulate and active and oppressed people get politically mobilised and demand their rights.16

A closer and critical look at Gandhi's concept of swaraj will show that it can provide a more adequate conceptual apparatus to locate and assess the struggles of the oppressed peoples. As pointed out earlier Gandhi's concept of swaraj is a comprehensive one and encapsulates the individual human person and life in a holistic framework. It visualises the progressive liberation of all from all oppressive structures and therefore can be equated with salvation. If we examine the vision of the new world orderthe heaven freedomconceived and formulated by the ideologues of the peoples struggles, it would become unambiguously clear that nothing less than a concept as comprehensive and holistic as Swaraj will be necessary to locate it properly. That is why I look upon these struggles as peoples' pursuit of the ideal of swaraj and situate them in the Gandhian legacy.

# How the Partition of India happened – and why its effects are still felt today



"Partition" – the division of British India into the two separate states of India and Pakistan on August 14-15, 1947 – was the "last-minute" mechanism by which the British were able to secure agreement over how independence would take place. At the time, few people understood what Partition would entail or what its results would be, and the migration on the enormous scale that followed took the vast majority of contemporaries by surprise.

The main vehicle for nationalist activity was the Indian National Congress, whose best-known leaders included Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. Even before the 1940s, it had long argued for a unitary state with a strong centre; even though Congress was ostensibly secular in its objectives, organisations representing minority interests increasingly viewed this idea with suspicion, believing that it would entrench the political dominance of Hindus, who made up about 80% of the population.

At around 25% of its population, Muslims were British India's largest religious minority. Under imperial rule, they had grown accustomed to having their minority status protected by a system of reserved legislative seats and separate electorates. The British system of political control hinged on identifying interest groups willing to collaborate, a governing style often described as "divide and rule".

The prospect of losing this protection as independence drew closer worried more and more Muslims, first in parts of northern India, and then, after World War II, in the influential Muslim-majority provinces of Bengal and Punjab. In 1945-6, the All-India Muslim League, led by Muhammad Ali Jinnah, won a majority of Muslim votes in provincial elections. This strengthened the party's claim to speak for a substantial proportion of, but never all, the subcontinent's Muslims.

Then came World War II – and suddenly, the political stakes in India were considerably higher.

## The end of the Raj

When Britain took India into the war without consultation in 1939, Congress opposed it; large nationalist protests ensued, culminating in the 1942 Quit India movement, a mass movement against British rule. For their part in it, Gandhi and Nehru and thousands of Congress workers were imprisoned until 1945.

Meanwhile, the British wartime need for local allies gave the Muslim League an opening to offer its cooperation in exchange for future political safeguards. In March 1940, the Muslim League's "Pakistan" resolution called for the creation of "separate states" – plural, not singular – to accommodate Indian Muslims, whom it argued were a separate "nation".

Historians are still divided on whether this rather vague demand was purely a bargaining counter or a firm objective. But while it may have been intended to solve the minority issue, it ended up aggravating it instead.

After the war, Attlee's Labour government in London recognised that Britain's devastated economy could not cope with the cost of the over-extended empire. A Cabinet Mission was dispatched to India in early 1946, and Attlee described its mission in ambitious terms:

*My colleagues are going to India with the intention of using their utmost endeavours to help her to attain her freedom as speedily and fully as possible. What form of government is to replace the present regime is for India to decide; but our desire is to help her to set up forthwith the machinery for making that decision.*

An act of parliament proposed June 1948 as the deadline for the transfer of power. But the Mission failed to secure agreement over its proposed constitutional scheme, which recommended a loose federation; the idea was rejected by both Congress and the Muslim League, which vowed to agitate for "Pakistan" by any means possible.

All the while, communal violence was escalating. In August 1946, the Great Calcutta Killing left some 4,000 people dead and a further 100,000 homeless.

By March 1947, a new viceroy, Lord Louis Mountbatten, arrived in Delhi with a mandate to find a speedy way of bringing the British Raj to an end. On June 3, he announced that independence would be brought forward to August that year, presenting politicians with an ultimatum that gave them little alternative but to agree to the creation of two separate states.

Pakistan – its eastern and western wings separated by around 1,700 kilometres of Indian territory – celebrated independence on August 14 that year; India did so the following day. The new borders, which split the key provinces of the Punjab and Bengal in two, were officially approved on August 17. They had been drawn up by a Boundary Commission, led by British lawyer Cyril Radcliffe, who later admitted that he had relied on out-of-date maps and census materials.

## Torn apart

Partition triggered riots, mass casualties, and a colossal wave of migration. Millions of people moved to what they hoped would be safer territory, with Muslims heading towards Pakistan, and Hindus and Sikhs in the direction of India. As many as 14-16m people may have been eventually displaced, travelling on foot, in bullock carts and by train.

Estimates of the death toll post-Partition range from 200,000 to two million. Many were killed by members of other communities and sometimes their own families, as well as by the contagious diseases which swept through refugee camps. Women were often targeted as symbols of community honour, with up to 100,000 raped or abducted.

What can explain this intensely violent reaction? Many of the people concerned were very deeply attached not just to religious identity, but to territory, and Britain was reluctant to use its troops to maintain law and order. The situation was especially dangerous in Punjab, where weapons and demobilised soldiers were abundant.

Another unforeseen consequence of Partition was that Pakistan's population ended up more religiously homogeneous than originally anticipated. The Muslim League's leaders had assumed that Pakistan would contain a sizeable non-Muslim population, whose presence would safeguard the position of Muslims remaining in India – but in West Pakistan, non-Muslim minorities comprised only 1.6% of the population by 1951, compared with 22% in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh).

And even though Pakistan was ostensibly created as a "homeland" for India's Muslim minority, not all Muslims even supported its formation, never mind migrated there: Muslims remained the largest minority group in independent India, making up around 10% of the population in 1951. Gandhi himself was assassinated in January 1948 by a Hindu nationalist extremist who blamed him for being too supportive of Muslims at the time of Partition.

Both states subsequently faced huge problems accommodating and rehabilitating post-Partition refugees, whose numbers swelled when the two states went to war over the disputed territory of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947-8. Later bouts of communal tension generated further movement, with a trickle of people still migrating as late as the 1960s.

Today, the two countries' relationship is far from healthy. Kashmir remains a flashpoint; both countries are nuclear-armed. Indian Muslims are frequently suspected of harbouring loyalties towards Pakistan; non-Muslim minorities in Pakistan are increasingly vulnerable thanks to the so-called Islamisation of life there since the 1980s. Seven decades on, well over a billion people still live in the shadow of Partition.

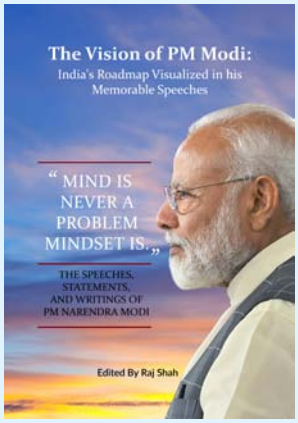
## About the Author



My main research interests focus on the recent history of South Asia, in particular those parts of the subcontinent that became Pakistan in 1947. Between 2007-2010 I was co-investigator on an AHRC-funded collaborative research project entitled "From Subjects to Citizens: Society and the Everyday State in India and Pakistan, 1947-1964". This involved me exploring in detail the kinds of interaction that took place between ordinary people and the state in the context of the Pakistani province of Sindh and the city of Karachi during the decades following independence and partition.

Apart from a number of individual publications and the popular history of Pakistan that I am currently writing (to be published by Cambridge University Press), I have co-authored an article with my project colleagues William Gould (Leeds) and Taylor Sherman (formerly at Royal Holloway, now at LSE) entitled 'The flux of the matter: loyalty, corruption and the everyday state in post-partition India and Pakistan' (Past and Present, 2013), that highlights some of the project's joint findings as well as areas for further research. I am also editor of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, which publishes four issues a year.

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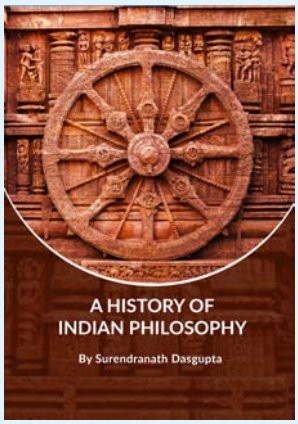
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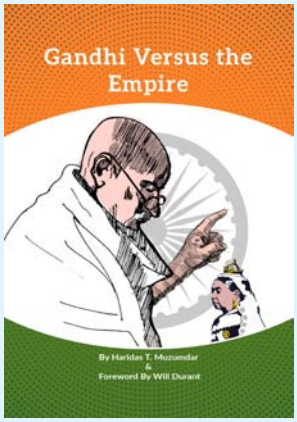

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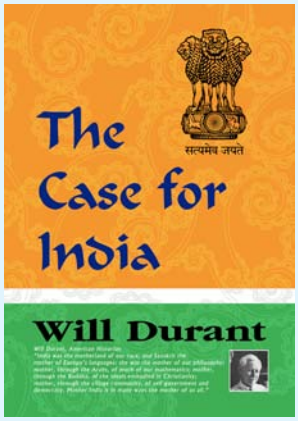

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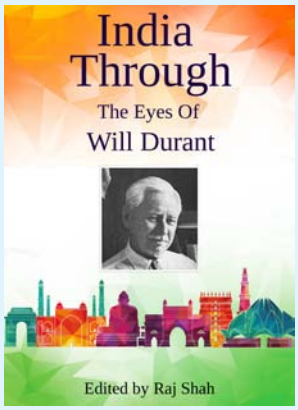



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# The road to India's partition



As citizens of India and Pakistan celebrate 71 years of their independence on August 15, they will also remember 1947 as the momentous year of their simultaneous birth. That year, the British quit their "jewel in the crown" and partitioned colonial India on the basis of religion.

What followed in the aftermath of the partition was one of the largest forced migrations of the 20th century. Over the next two decades, nearly nine million Hindus and Sikhs moved into India and approximately five million Muslims to a spatially fragmented East and West Pakistan. This movement was accompanied by horrific mass violence which targeted women through rape and abduction and left an estimated million dead.

Scholars have called the partition the "other face of freedom."

But, as late as the summer of 1946, hardly anyone could have foretold that partition would be the political solution to the transfer of power at the end of the long nationalist struggle for independence. Nor would people have predicted that it would lead to such horrific violence and mass uprooting, causing long-term memories of exile and loss.

So what led to this division? And why 1947? As a scholar of South Asian history, I would suggest that there are multiple and complex reasons.

## The long road

In fact, many divisions had been a long time in the making.

Early on, the British justified their subordination of India by claiming that Indians were socially and morally weak. And they mistakenly viewed their Indian empire as a set of distinct communities. They also saw them as being in conflict with each other, ignoring the interwoven cultural and shared traditions at the time.

It was this British view that eventually translated into giving political representation based on religious identities. This meant that Indians could gain political power (however limited) only through separate electorates based primarily on their religion. Thus, Hindus could elect their own Hindu representatives and Muslims could do the same.

Scholars note that these trends taken together led to the emergence of Muslim separatism from the 19th century onwards. It culminated in the idea that Hindus and Muslims were distinct and that India comprised "two nations" sharing different histories and cultures.

## The idea of Pakistan

Other scholars have argued that it was the politics of the 1930s onwards that led to the partition.

Here the key debate was about the demand for Pakistan, a separate homeland for Muslims. One of the reasons the idea of Pakistan started to gain popularity was that Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the leader of Muslim League, the main Muslim political party, did not define clearly the geographical coordinates of Pakistan. Indeed, the very vagueness of the location of Pakistan was what helped in getting support from Muslims across India who were divided by language, culture and class and, most of all, geography.

Pakistan carried different meanings for different groups: To

farmers in the Eastern state of Bengal it meant a "peasant utopia" where they would be free of landlord oppression. For the elite Muslims in northern India, it meant a "new Medina," a new civilizational heart for Muslims in the subcontinent and beyond.

It should be said, however, that the idea of Pakistan was not supported by all Muslims: More than half of them would remain in India after partition.

## The road of many paths

As the debate over Pakistan developed, other events were taking place as well. After 1935, Indians received a larger share of political representation under colonial rule. Such devolution of power, however, meant little as Indians were forced to join British efforts in the Second World War.

It was in the middle of the war, in August 1942, that Gandhi called for the British to "Quit India" permanently. The famine in Bengal in 1943 that ravaged the lives of an estimated three million Indians added to perception of the colonial state's negligence and inability to continue to administer its Indian empire.

All in all, the stage was set for discussions on India's independence.

After the war, there were many options on the negotiating table. These included the possibility of a united India with a strong center where Muslims would be equal citizens but a political minority, with no hope of leading a government. The Indian National Congress, the largest and main political party, had long advocated for such a united India.

However, given that in British India Muslims were around 25 percent of the population, a united India would be dominated by majority Hindus. Under British rule, Muslims had come to enjoy representation through separate electorates and reserved legislative seats.

For Jinnah and the Muslim League then, the key issue was to ensure that Muslims had equal political representation in independent India. This was not going to be possible under the Congress plan for a unified India with a strong center.

Another option was to make India and Pakistan part of a federation. There were many other such combinations that were proposed. The inability of Indian political leaders, however, to work together at this crucial moment made negotiations difficult.

Some scholars argue that it was Jawaharlal Nehru, leader of the Indian National Congress at the time, who insisted on a "secular" united India and thereby paved the path for a division.

However, partition was not, even at this late date, a necessary condition for the creation of the new nation of Pakistan. One possibility would have been India and Pakistan sharing political power in a federation.

## Turning points

By the summer of 1946, the leaders of the Congress (claiming to represent majority Indians irrespective of caste and religion) and the Muslim League (claiming to represent Indian Muslims) met in Simla, the summer capital of British India, and later in Delhi with the British representatives regarding the contours of India's freedom and the fate of Pakistan.

Two things severely impacted the direction such negotiations would take.

The first was the start of communal riots between Hindus and Muslims in Calcutta in August 1946 which quickly spread to different parts of eastern India. Although Gandhi's efforts were able to quell the violence by December that year, the damage had been done.

Whether Hindus and Muslims would be able to live together – even though they had for centuries – became an urgent question in the minds of both Indians and British leaders. Partition emerged as a plausible solution.

Indeed, sizeable groups of Hindus from both Bengal and Punjab – the two major provinces that would be split between India and Pakistan – began to urge for such an outcome along with the Muslim League's followers.

Amid such confusion, the last viceroy of India, Lord Louis Mountbatten arrived in India from London in March 1947 with the mandate to transfer power quickly. Mountbatten, in an attempt to resolve the political impasse, persuaded many Indian leaders to accept a partition.

Consequently, Mountbatten's Plan of June 3, 1947 announced that not only would India gain independence in August 1947, a full year ahead of schedule, but also that it would be partitioned so as to accommodate the demand for a Muslim homeland.

Decisions made behind closed doors would decide the fate of millions.

*This piece was first published on August 15, 2017 and was updated to reflect the 71 years of partition of India and Pakistan.*

### About the Author



Haimanti Roy specializes in the political and social history of colonial India and modern South Asia. Her first book entitled Partitioned Lives: Refugees, Migrants, Citizens in India and Pakistan, 1947-65 (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2012) examines issues of territoriality, identity, migration and citizenship, and the subsequent re-ordering of national identities of ordinary men and women in post-Partition India and East Pakistan (present day Bangladesh). She is currently working on a social history of certificates and documents in twentieth century India.

Roy has previously taught at the University of Cincinnati, Massachusetts Institute of Technology and at Georgia Institute of Technology. At the University of Dayton, she teaches courses on Gandhi, The British Empire, Indian Cinema, Gender and Sexuality in South Asia.

# Britain, India and the Koh-i-Noor diamond – don't expect the jewel to be prised out of the crown





The history of the Koh-i-Noor diamond is steeped in mystery and conflict. It is currently stored in the Tower of London, as part of the British Crown Jewels, set the crown of Queen Elizabeth (the crown of the late Queen Mother), though many Indians have long called for it to be returned the country it was taken from during the era of the British Empire.

Now it has once again moved to centre stage after the British Indian MP Keith Vaz called for the diamond to be sent back to India after the visit of India's prime minister, Narendra Modi, to the UK in November.

In a statement Vaz said:

*Pursuing monetary reparations is complex, time-consuming and potentially fruitless, but there is no excuse for not returning precious items such as the Koh-i-Noor diamond, a campaign I have backed for many years ... What a wonderful moment it would be, if and when prime minister Narendra Modi finishes his visit, which is much overdue, he returns to India with the promise of the diamond's return.*

We believe good journalism is good for democracy and necessary for it.

Vaz's comments came in response to a recent Oxford Union speech by Indian National Congress MP Dr Shashi Tharoor, arguing that Britain owes reparations to her former colonies. The speech has been viewed more than 2.7 million times and Modi has given it his support, saying: "Tharoor's speech reflected the feelings of patriotic Indians".

This fresh debate over Britain's possession of the Koh-i-Noor, which means Mountain of Light, demonstrates that symbolic value can be so much more important than monetary value. It is a diamond with a past which is both murky and dramatic. Its true meaning for India is complex and ambivalent – and yet in the competitive ranking of great diamonds it is well down the scale.

## Conquest and empire

Imperial wars throughout history have been about loot. Loot was used to help finance campaigns and compensate the fighters of victorious armies or flatter monarchs of dominant states. Britain's wars of empire in the 18th and 19th centuries were no different.

British military and public museums, private collections and country houses are littered with loot that were once the prizes won by the soldiers lucky enough to survive. India was inevitably a major source after a succession of wars and the suppression of the 1857 "Mutiny" or revolt produced shiploads. Contemporary descriptions of destruction and looting after the sieges of Delhi and Lucknow make horrendous reading for modern eyes.

A coloured lithograph of The Siege of Delhi in 1857 by Bequet Freres. E Morier, Paris, 1858

The centuries-old history of the Koh-i-Noor perfectly reflects this. Its origins are mysterious, enhancing its allure. Originally thought to have been 793 carats uncut, it was possibly mined at the Kollur Mine, in what is now Andhra Pradesh. It may have been in the possession of the early medieval Kakatiya dynasty. Or it may have been owned by the Sultan of Malwa, further west. Either way, the invading Delhi Sultanate got hold of it in the early 14th century. From the Sultanate, it passed to the Mughal emperors, although the timing is disputed. But the Mountain of Light was certainly in the possession of the emperor, Shah Jahan, builder of the Taj Mahal.

The Taj Mahal, built by Shah Janan, a former owner of The Mountain of Light. Yann, CC BY-NC

At this stage, the diamond was exceptionally large, but uncut, so it was more mountain than light. Emperor Aurangzeb had it cut down, rather crudely, to 186 carats by a visiting Venetian jeweller, but it remained highly coveted. In 1739 it was seized by the Persian invader Nadir Shah and taken to Persia. Next it was taken by the Durrani dynasty ending up in Afghanistan, ultimately passing to Ranjit Singh, ruler of the Sikhs.

Queen Alexandra, the then Queen consort of the United Kingdom and Empress consort of India, wearing the Koh-i-Noor in her coronation crown, 1902. W. and D. Downey

So the diamond had already been looted several times before it fell into the hands of the British in 1849 after the Sikh Wars. Allegedly, it was presented to Queen Victoria by the Maharajaha Dulip Singh after he moved to Britain, but it may well be imagined that he was "persuaded" to do the "appropriate" thing. In 1852 it was cut down again by Garrards of London, reducing it to 109 carats. The diamond became part of the Queen Consort's Crown in the 20th century.

The Mountain of Light symbolises the multiple religions of India, as it is seen to have Hindu origins, yet it was in the hands of Muslims, then Sikhs, for more then 500 years. It surely also reflects both the warring elites of pre-colonial India and the repeated looting of its treasures.

> **"We believe good journalism is good for democracy and necessary for it. Vaz's comments came in response to a recent Oxford Union speech by Indian National Congress MP Dr Shashi Tharoor, arguing that Britain owes reparations to her former colonies."**

## Other Indian treasures

History aside, the Mountain of Light is far outranked both in size and magnificence by the Great Star of Africa (Cullinan I) – at 530 carats and a good deal more brilliant – and even more so by the astonishing Golden Jubilee diamond, also sourced in South Africa and running to 545 carats after cutting, which is now owned by the Thai royal family. The Koh-i-Noor may be famous, but it is surprisingly inferior in both size and brilliance.

The fabulous crown of the Emperor Bahadur Shah II, the last Mughal, which is also in the British royal collection, is far more desirable. It is of gold with turquoises, rubies, diamonds, pearls and emeralds. It was nabbed after the siege of Delhi by Major Robert Tytler. To this list we can add the magnificent tiger finials of the throne of Tipu Sultan, gold and encrusted with diamonds and rubies, to be found in several British collections.

Even in the headiest days of restitution demands, it is highly unlikely that the Koh-i-Noor will be prised out of its crown any time soon. But that may not stop it becoming a much-discussed part of the Indian prime minister's visit to the UK.

## About the Author



John MacKenzie is Emeritus Professor of Imperial History at Lancaster University and holds honorary professorships of Aberdeen, St. Andrews and Edinburgh universities. He is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh. Among his many publications are Propaganda and Empire and Museums and Empire and he edited the Manchester University Press 'Studies in Imperialism' series for thirty years, taking it to more than 100 books.




# British Government Must Apologize for Jallianwala Baugh Massacre

**By Sumit Ganguly**

In 2019, the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby visited the site of a brutal massacre, Jallianwala Baugh, which happened in 1919 under British colonial rule in India and offered his personal apologies. He expressed his "deep sense of grief" for a "terrible atrocity."

The former U.K. Prime Minister Theresa May told the House of Commons that the episode was "a shameful scar on British-Indian history." However, she stopped short of apologizing.

The massacre is still remembered in India as a symbol of colonial cruelty. Here is what happened one hundred years ago.

## Killing unarmed protesters

After World War I, the British, who controlled a vast empire in India, agreed to give Indians limited self-government due to India's substantial contribution to the war effort. These reforms, named the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms after the secretary of state for India and the viceroy of India, promised to lead to more substantial self-government over time.




However, around the same time the British had passed the draconian Rowlatt Acts, which allowed certain political cases to be tried without trial. And the trial was also to be conducted without juries. The acts were designed to ruthlessly suppress all forms of political dissent. The Rowlatt Acts were designed to replace the constraints on political activity that had been embodied in colonial rules, known as the Defense of India Rules, which had been in force during World War I.

Not surprisingly, there were widespread public protests, led by the noted Indian nationalist leader, Mahatma

Gandhi. As part of this nationwide agitation, some 10,000 individuals gathered in a park in the northern Indian city of Amritsar on April 13, 1919. Since this protest was in defiance of a curfew which prohibited political gatherings, Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer, who was stationed in the nearby city of Jalandhar, decided to take action.



Troops under his command blocked the sole entrance to the park, called Jallianwallah Bagh. Without warning they opened fire. The British officially estimated that 379 people died. The unofficial count was more. Close to 1,200 were injured.

Troops under his command blocked the sole entrance to the park, called Jallianwallah Bagh. Without warning they opened fire. The British officially estimated that 379 people died. The unofficial count was more. Close to 1,200 were injured.

Dyer's men stopped firing only after they had run out of ammunition. The soldiers did not offer any medical assistance to the wounded, and others could not come to their aid because of the imposition of a curfew on the city.

## An apology long overdue



Then viceroy of India, Lord Chelmsford, convened an inquiry commission that led to Dyer being relieved of his command. However, upon returning to the United Kingdom, he found support for his actions among a segment of the British population.

In India, there was widespread shock and horror over this wanton use of force. The Nobel Laureate in literature, Rabindranath Tagore, protested by renouncing his knighthood, which he had received from the British Crown in 1915. Writing to the viceroy, Tagore decried "the disproportionate severity of the punishment inflicted upon the unfortunate people."

As a political scientist who has written on the impact of British colonialism on India, I believe that the legacy of this episode, along with a host of other ugly events, continues to trouble Indo-British relations.

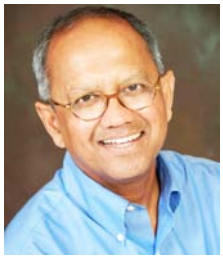


Britain, for the most part, has failed to come to terms with its tragic colonial heritage in South Asia and elsewhere. In the wake of the archbishop's apology, I believe, it is time for the British government to follow suit.

An unequivocal apology to the memory of the victims is long overdue.

*This article is republished from* The Conversation, *a nonprofit news site dedicated to sharing ideas from academic experts.*

## About the Author



Sumit Ganguly is a Distinguished Professor of Political Science and the Tagore Chair in Indian Cultures and Civilizations at Indiana University in Bloomington, Indiana.

# How a British royal's monumental errors made India's partition more painful



The midnight between August 14 and 15, 1947, was one of history's truly momentous moments: It marked the birth of Pakistan, an independent India and the beginning of the end of an era of colonialism.

It was hardly a joyous moment: A botched process of partition saw the slaughter of more than a million people; some 15 million were displaced. Untold numbers were maimed, mutilated, dismembered and disfigured. Countless lives were scarred.

Two hundred years of British rule in India ended, as Winston Churchill had feared, in a "shameful flight"; a "premature hurried scuttle" that triggered a most tragic and terrifying carnage.

The bloodbath of partition also left the two nations that were borne out of it – India and Pakistan – deeply scarred by anguish, angst, alienation and animus.

By 1947, the political, social, societal and religious complexities of the Indian subcontinent may have made partition inevitable, but the murderous mayhem that ensued was not.

As a South Asian whose life was affected directly by partition, and as a scholar, it is evident to me that the one man whose job it was, above all else, to avoid the mayhem, ended up inflaming the conditions that made partition the horror it became.

That man was Lord Louis Mountbatten, the last Viceroy of British India.

How did Mountbatten contribute to the legacy of hatred that, 72 years later, still informs the bitter relationship between India and Pakistan?

## A murderous orgy

Let us begin by recognizing the scale of barbarity that was unleashed by the mishandling of partition.

No one has captured this more poignantly than Urdu's most prominent short story writer, Saadat Hasan Manto, who according to his grandniece and eminent historian Ayesha Jalal "marveled at the stern calmness with which the British had rent asunder the subcontinent's unity at the moment of decolonization."

In "The Pity of Partition," Jalal channels the content of Manto's work in Urdu to write:

*"Human beings had instituted rules against murder and mayhem in order to distinguish themselves from beasts of prey. None was observed in the murderous orgy that shook India to the core at the dawn of independence."*

As author Nisid Hajari reports in "Midnight's Furies," a chilling narrative of the butchery: "some British soldiers and journalists who had witnessed the Nazi death camps, claimed partition's brutalities were worse: pregnant women had their breasts cut off and babies hacked out of their bellies, infants were found literally roasted on spits."

Indeed, it does not matter which was worse. What is important to understand is that partition is to the psyche of Indians and Pakistanis what the Holocaust is to Jews.

Author William Dalrymple calls this terrible outbreak of sectarian violence – Hindus and Sikhs on

one side and Muslims on the other – "a mutual genocide" that was "as unexpected as it was unprecedented."

## Could the genocide have been avoided?

The violence was not, in fact, entirely unexpected. On August 16, 1946, literally a year before actual partition, a glimpse of what was to come was on display: In what came to be called "the week of the long knives," three days of rioting in Calcutta left more than 4,000 dead and 100,000 homeless.

The hellish proportion of the slaughter that was to come was, however, unnecessary.

Well before the August of 1947, those following the tumultuous political boil in India – including U.S. Presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry S. Truman – fully understood that it was time for Britain – now a flailing power made bankrupt by World War II – to leave India.

As 1947 dawned, the task before the British was to find the least worst way to retreat from India: to manage the chaos, to minimize the violence and, if at all possible, to do so with some modicum of grace.

To perform this job, King George VI sent his cousin Lord Louis Francis Albert Victor ("Dickie") Mountbatten to India as his last viceroy. This great-grandson of Queen Victoria – the first British monarch to be crowned Empress of India – was, ironically, given the task of closing the imperial shop, not just in India but around the world.

In India, he proved to be monumentally unequal to the assignment.

Mountbatten arrived in India in February 1947 and was given until June 1948 – not 1947 – to complete his mission. Impatient to get back to Britain and advance his own naval career, he decided to bring forward the date by 10 months, to August 1947 (he eventually did become first sea lord, a position he coveted because it had been denied to his father).

## How crucial were those 10 months?

I would argue, they could have meant the difference between a simply violent partition and a horrifically genocidal partition.

## A hurried drawing of border lines

The context for a bloody partition was set with the decision to sever Bengal in the east and Punjab in the west in half – giving Jinnah what he called a "moth-eaten Pakistan." That killed any hopes of a federated India, which was Jinnah's preference, if it allowed for power sharing and autonomy to Muslim majority provinces.

To decide the fate of 400 million Indians and draw lines of division on poorly made maps, Mountbatten brought in Cyril Radcliffe, a barrister who had never set foot in India before then, and would never return afterwards. Despite his protestations, Mountbatten gave him just five weeks to complete the job.

> **Two hundred years of British rule in India ended, as Winston Churchill had feared, in a "shameful flight"; a "premature hurried scuttle" that triggered a most tragic and terrifying carnage.**

All of India, and particularly those in Bengal and Punjab, waited with bated breath to find out how they would be divided. Which village would go where? Which family would be left on which side of the new borders?

Working feverishly, Radcliffe completed the partition maps days before the actual partition. Mountbatten, however, decided to keep them secret. On Mountbatten's orders, the partition maps were kept under lock and key in the viceregal palace in Delhi. They were not to be shared with Indian leaders and administrators until two days after partition.

Jaswant Singh, who later served as India's minister of foreign affairs, defense and finance, writes that at their moment of birth neither India nor Pakistan "knew where their borders ran, where was that dividing line across which Hindus and Muslims must now separate?"

He adds that as feared and predicted, this had "disastrous consequences." The uncertainty of exactly who would end up where fueled confusion, wild rumors, and terror as corpses kept piling up.

As historian Stanley Wolpert writes in "Shameful Flight," Mountbatten kept the partition maps a closely guarded secret, as he did not want the festivities of British transfer of power to be marred or distracted.

"What a glorious charade of British Imperial largesse and power 'peacefully' transferred," lamented Wolpert as he contemplated the possible implications of Mountbatten's hubris.

## 70 years later

As the preeminent biographer of all the major political actors of British India's last days, Wolpert

acknowledges that many – and, most importantly, Indian political leaders themselves – contributed to the chaos that was 1947.

But there is no room for doubt in Wolpert's mind that "none of them played as tragic or central a role as did Mountbatten."

By botching the administration of partition in 1947 and leaving critical elements unfinished – including, most disastrously, the still unfinished resolution to Jammu and Kashmir – Mountbatten's partition plan left the fate of Kashmir undecided.

Mountbatten, thus, bestowed a legacy of acrimony on India and Pakistan.

It was not just rivers and gold and silver that needed to be divided between the two dominions; it was books in libraries, and even paper pins in offices. As Saadat Hasan Manto's fictional account conveys, the madness was such that even patients in mental hospitals had to be divided.

Yet, Mountbatten, the man who would fret incessantly about what to wear at official ceremonies, made little effort to devise arrangements for how resources would be divided, or shared.

## Learning from history

Nowhere does the unfinished business of partition bleed more profusely than in the continuing conflict between India and Pakistan over Jammu and Kashmir.

Would a little more attention and a few more weeks of effort in 1947 have spared the world a nuclear-tipped time bomb that keeps ticking on both sides?

We can never know the answer to this question.

Nor can, or should, I believe, India and Pakistan blame the British and Mountbatten for all their problems. Seventy-two years on, they have only themselves to blame for missing opportunity after opportunity to fix the troubled relationship they inherited.

However, maybe, today, on the anniversary of their birth, both India and Pakistan can take a break from simply bashing each other and recognize that at times history can deal you a bad hand in many different ways – in this case, due to the hasty and monumental errors of a British royalty. But also recognize, it is on you to learn from history and fix it.

*This piece was first published on August 15, 2017 and was updated to reflect the 72 years of partition of India and Pakistan.*

## About the Author



Prof. Adil Najam is Dean of The Frederick S. Pardee School of Global Studies at Boston University, where he is also a Professor of International Relations and of Earth & Environment. Earlier, he has served as Vice Chancellor of Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) in Lahore, Pakistan; and as Director of the Pardee Center for the Study of the Longer-Range Future at Boston University.

Prof. Najam was a co-author for the Third and Fourth Assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); work for which the scientific panel was awarded the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize for advancing the public understanding of climate change science. In 2008 he was invited by the United Nations Secretary General to serve on the UN Committee on Development (CDP). In 2010 he was awarded the Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Star of Excellence), one of Pakistan's highest civil awards by the President of Pakistan.

Prof. Najam has written nearly 100 scholarly papers and book chapters, and his recent books include: South Asia 2060: Envisioning Regional Futures (2013); How Immigrants Impact their Homelands (2013); The Future of South-South Economic Relations (2012); Trade and Environment Negotiations: A Resource Book (2007); Envisioning a Sustainable Development Agenda for Trade and Environment (2007); Pakistanis in America: Portrait of a Giving Community (2006); Global Environmental Governance: A Reform Agenda (2006);Environment, Development and Human Security: Perspectives from South Asia (2003); and Civic Entrepreneurship (2002). Prof. Najam is frequently interviewed by and writes for the popular media and is the founding editor of the award-winning blog Pakistaniat.com (voted the Best Current Affairs Blog in Pakistan (2010) and also won the 2010 Brass Crescent Award for Best Muslim Blog from South Asia)..

He is a past winner of MIT's Goodwin Medal for Effective Teaching, the Fletcher School Paddock Teaching Award, and the Stein Rokan Award of the International Political Science Association, the ARNOVA Emerging Scholar Award, and the Pakistan Television Medal for Outstanding Achievement. In 2011, he was elected a Trustee on the International Board of WWF; and in 2013 elected a Trustee of The Asia Foundation (TAF). He has been a Council Member of the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) in Vienna, Austria; and is the Board Chair of the South Asia Network of Development and Environmental Economics (SANDEE). Dr. Najam has also served on the Academic Council of the South Asian University (SAU), New Delhi, India and the Syndicate (Board) of the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), Lahore, Pakistan. He continues to serve as a Board's Visiting Committee member at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

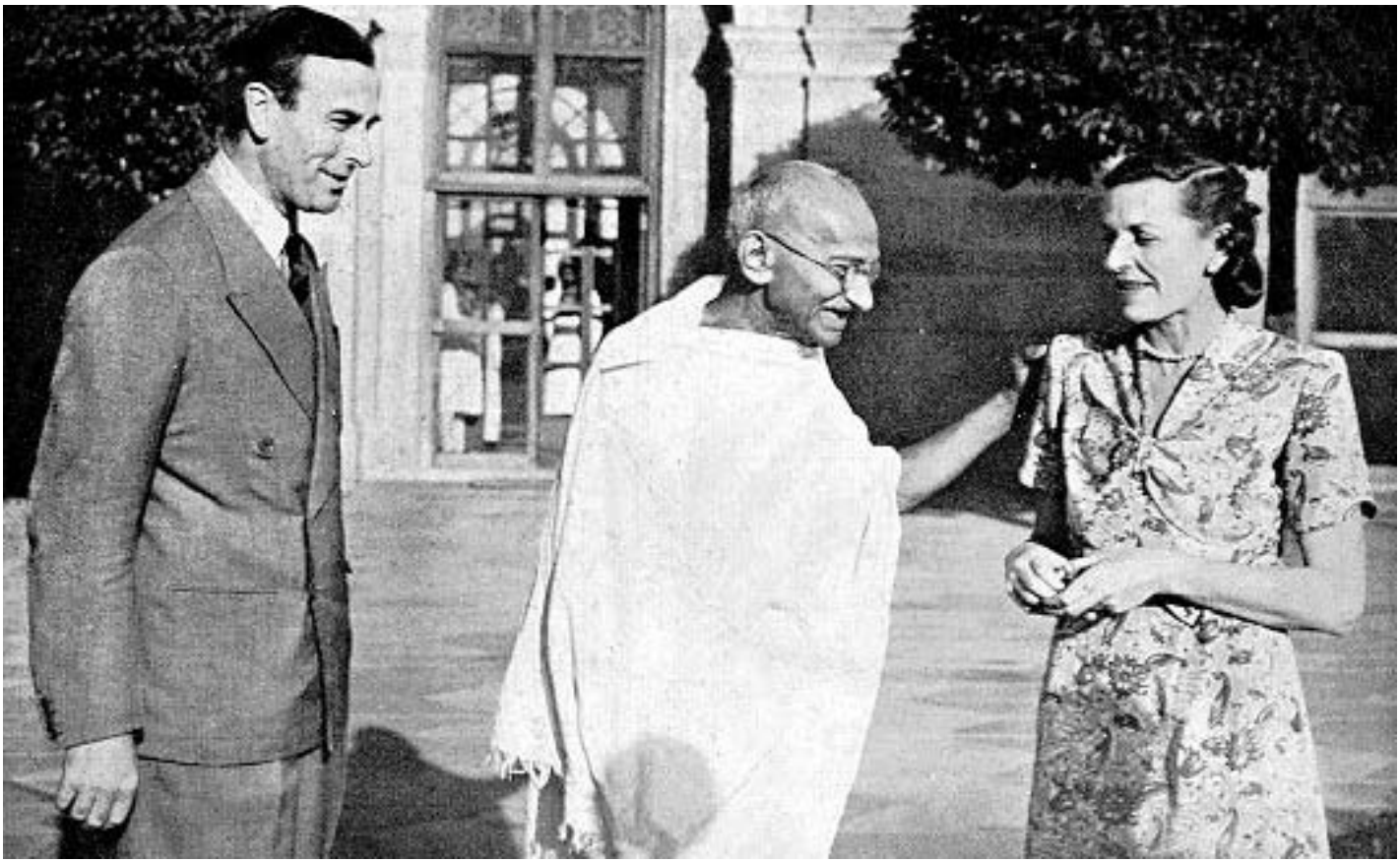



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# Secret history: the release of the Mountbatten archives and the fight to access royal diaries



An immense trove of the most important royal historical material for decades has quietly been released in the United Kingdom. These are the diaries of Lord Louis Mountbatten and his wife Lady Edwina, from the 1920s until 1968.

As the last great-grandchild and godchild of Queen Victoria, uncle of Prince Philip and adored great-uncle of Prince Charles, Mountbatten exercised a “Rasputin-like influence” in the court of Queen Elizabeth.

He had a long, typically aristocratic, naval officer career from head of combined operations during the second world war to admiral of the fleet. He was also the last viceroy of

India, presiding over transition and partition. All this gave Mountbatten an unmatched insight into the royal family and its intersections with the highest levels of wartime and post-imperial governance.

But the release of this material doesn't just shed light on the royal family. It again highlights the significant barriers to accessing our history; specifically, the claimed "convention of royal secrecy" that imposes strict secrecy over royal communications across the Commonwealth nations.

## A four-year battle

The release of the Mountbatten diaries is entirely due to the work of historian and Mountbatten biographer Andrew Lownie, who fought for four years to get public access to the previously secret diaries.

They are held in the Broadlands Archives, purchased by Southampton University from the Mountbatten family in 2010 for £2.8 million ($A5.3 million) using public funds. At the time, the university said it would "preserve the collection in its entirety for future generations to use and enjoy" and "ensure public access".

The university's catalogue gives their legal status as "public records", and states they were "open on transfer". Yet the papers were closed after an officious university historian warned the government the papers contained "many references to the royal family".

Lownie's initial request for access under the UK's freedom of information regime was rejected by the university, citing a cabinet directive preventing the release of the diaries and letters. A successful appeal followed, which the university ignored until threatened with a contempt action.

Finally, late last month, 22 MPs signed a motion tabled in the House of Commons calling for "their publication without further obfuscation and delay". The university finally released many – though not all – of the diaries.

Lownie, meanwhile, has spent £250,000 (A$472,000) of his own money in pursuit of public access to the Mountbatten archives, which were always purportedly a public resource.

## A fascinating window

Former US ambassador to India John Kenneth Galbraith has previously described Mountbatten's unabashed use of royal privilege for personal advancement:

> **The university's catalogue gives their legal status as "public records", and states they were "open on transfer". Yet the papers were closed after an officious university historian warned the government the papers contained "many references to the royal family".**

*no one was ever better served by the accident of birth or put royal connection to greater use.*

So the Mountbatten archive will provide a fascinating window into a rare familial link to the final years of a fading, disintegrating, European royalty and its intersection with key episodes in British political history.

Many of Mountbatten's (at times conflicting) roles attracted significant controversy, on which the diaries and letters in particular will shed great light. This includes the fiasco of the raid on the French coast at Dieppe in 1942. As Galbraith also noted, this was

*widely believed the single most ill-advised, costly and generally disastrous operation of the war.*

There is also the contentious, brutal, partition of India. And his unconventional "open marriage", including Edwina's close relationship with the first post-independence Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru. All of these will be re-evaluated in light of this remarkable shared archive.

Yet, several files Lownie is particularly interested in are missing from the public release.

These include the 1947 and 1948 diaries covering the Mountbattens' involvement in pre-Independence India, transition and partition, among "scores of files" not yet released. These crucial historical documents covering a contentious time in British imperial history remain locked away and the fight for public access to them continues.

## 'Eerily similar' to the palace letters

Lownie's case has been described as "eerily similar" to the long-running palace letters case I took against the National Archives of Australia, in its denial of access to archival documents relating to the royal

family, "the effect being that public knowledge of key constitutional and political events is limited".

The denial of access to royal documents shields royal activities from the consideration of history, simply because of their absence from the public record, profoundly distorting the history itself.

Our own history gives us a clear example of this. The queen did not want the palace letters – her correspondence with governor-general Sir John Kerr about the dismissal of the Whitlam government – to be made public. And the National Archives of Australia and federal government unsuccessfully fought against public access to the letters all the way to the High Court, to a total cost of close to A$2 million. With their release, the history of the dismissal of the Whitlam government has changed dramatically.

As Australian National University historian Frank Bongiorno recently concluded:

*the claim the palace had no involvement in the dismissal is now unsustainable. The palace was indeed a player.*

## Backlog at the archives

Unfortunately, the routine removal of royal material from the public archival record under the claimed "convention of royal secrecy" is just one means of denying access to key historical records.

The failure to deal with everyday requests for access to documents is, for the individual researcher and for history, more prevalent and no less severe.

The National Archives of Australia recently revealed the extent of this denial of access through institutional inaction, in answers to independent senator Rex Patrick in Senate estimates. Although the archives is statutorily required to deal with requests for access within 90 days, it has a backlog of over 20,000 requests that are at least one year overdue. More than half of those were submitted five to ten years ago.

Even more shocking is that 256 of these unfulfilled access requests are more than a decade old. Several applications for access which I submitted nine to ten years ago are still drifting somewhere in this archival black hole. I've written three books since then, and I'm still waiting for the archival documents intended for them.

My experience is, regrettably, by no means unique. As Patrick notes:

*These chronic delays have had a severe impact on historical research and the understanding of our nation's past [...] Numerous research projects have been abandoned because of the failure of the archives to provide timely access.*

These figures are an extraordinary indictment of Australia's national archives' failure to meet its core statutory function "to make Commonwealth records available for public access". Little wonder it has ceased publishing figures on the access clearance backlog in its annual report.

## Still waiting

Lownie has done us all a great public service in his efforts to bring the Mountbatten archives to public view. However, it should not be up to individual historians to take arduous legal action to ensure public archives – whether in universities or government-funded national archives – adhere to their requirements to make official records publicly available.

This includes royal communications between governors-general and the monarch, as our High Court ruled in the palace letters case in 2020.

The National Archives of Australia has said that, as a result of the High Court's decision, it would also release the royal correspondence of all governors-general from Richard Casey to Bill Hayden (1965 to 1996), thirty years of exceptionally significant archival records.

More than a year later, we are still waiting for their release.

## About the Author



Professor Jenny Hocking is Emeritus Professor at Monash University and the inaugural Distinguished Whitlam Fellow with the Whitlam Institute at Western Sydney University. She is the author of eight books including the two-volume biography of Gough Whitlam - Gough Whitlam: A Moment in History (Melbourne University Press, 2008) and Gough Whitlam: His Time (MUP. 2012) - short-listed for several awards, including the Prime Ministers Awards for Literature, The Age Book of the Year and the National Biography Award, and winner of the Fellowship of Australian Writers' Barbara Ramsden Award. Her latest book The Palace Letters was published by Scribe in October 2020 and her essay 'Archival secrets and hidden histories - Reasserting the right to public access' appeared in Griffith Review Issue 67 'Matters of Trust' (2020). Jenny Hocking's case against the National Archives of Australia seeking access to the 'Palace letters' relating to the dismissal of the Whitlam government succeeded at the High Court of Australia, which found in her favour in May 2020 in a 6:1 decision. As a result of Professor Hocking's successful legal action the National Archives released the Palace letters in July 2020. She is a frequent media commentator and public speaker on biography, Australian politics, the Whitlam dismissal and an Australian Republic.

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# Colonialism was a disaster and the facts prove it



Recently an academic article, asserting the historical benefits of colonialism, created an outcry and a petition with over 10, 000 signatures calling for its removal.

*The Case for Colonialism*, published in *Third World Quarterly* by Bruce Gilley, argues Western colonialism was both "objectively beneficial and subjectively legitimate" in most places where it existed.

Gilley, an associate professor of political science at Portland State University, claims the solution to poverty and economic underdevelopment in parts of the Global South is to reclaim "colonial modes of governance; by recolonizing some areas; and by creating new Western colonies from scratch."

Understandably, the article faces widespread criticism for whitewashing a horrific history of human rights abuses. *Current Affairs* compared Gilley's distortion of history to Holocaust denial.

Last week, after many on the journal's editorial board resigned, the author issued a public apology for the "pain and anger" his article may have caused.

Whether the article is ultimately retracted or not, its wide circulation necessitates that its claims be held up to careful historical scrutiny. As well, in light of current public debates on censorship and free speech versus hate speech, this is a discussion well worth having. Although this debate may seem as though it is merely academic, nothing could be further from the truth.

Although it may seem colonialist views are far behind us, a 2014 YouGov poll revealed 59 per cent of British people view the British Empire as "something to be proud of." Those proud of their colonial history outnumber critics of the Empire three to one. Similarly, 49 per cent believe the Empire benefited its former colonies.

Such views, often tied to nostalgia for old imperial glory, can help shape the foreign and domestic policies of Western countries.

Gilley has helped to justify these views by getting his opinions published in a peer review journal. In his article, Gilley attempts to provide evidence which proves colonialism was objectively beneficial to the colonized. He says historians are simply too politically correct to admit colonialism's benefits.

In fact, the opposite is true. In the overwhelming majority of cases, empirical research clearly provides the facts to prove colonialism inflicted grave political, psychological and economic harms on the colonized.

***The Case for Colonialism, published in Third World Quarterly* by Bruce Gilley, argues Western colonialism was both "objectively beneficial and subjectively legitimate" in most places where it existed.**

It takes a highly selective misreading of the evidence to claim that colonialism was anything other than a humanitarian disaster for most of the colonized. The publication of Gilley's article – despite the evidence of facts – calls into question the peer review process and academic standards of *The Third World Quarterly*.

## Colonialism in India

As the largest colony of the world's largest imperial power, India is often cited by apologists for the British Empire as an example of "successful" colonialism. Actually, India provides a much more convincing case study for rebutting Gilley's argument.

With a population of over 1.3 billion and an economy predicted to become the world's third-largest by 2030, India is a modern day powerhouse. While many attribute this to British colonial rule, a look at the facts says otherwise.

From 1757 to 1947, the entire period of British rule, there was no increase in per capita income within the Indian subcontinent. This is a striking fact, given that, historically speaking, the Indian subcontinent was traditionally one of the wealthiest parts of the world.

As proven by the macroeconomic studies of experts such as K.N. Chaudhuri, India and China were central to an expansive world economy long before the first European traders managed to circumnavigate the African cape.

During the heyday of British rule, or the British Raj, from 1872 to 1921, Indian life expectancy dropped by a stunning 20 per cent. By contrast, during the 70 years since independence, Indian life expectancy has increased by approximately 66 per cent, or 27 years. A comparable increase of 65 percent can also be observed in Pakistan, which was once part of British India.

Although many cite India's extensive rail network as a positive legacy of British colonialism, it is important to note the railroad was built with the express purpose of transporting colonial troops inland to quell revolt. And to transport food out of productive regions for export, even in times of famine.

This explains the fact that during the devastating famines of 1876-1879 and 1896-1902 in which 12 to 30 million Indians starved to death, mortality rates were highest in areas serviced by British rail lines.

## Colonialism did not benefit the colonized

India's experience is highly relevant for assessing the impact of colonialism, but it does not stand alone as the only example to refute Gilley's assertions. Gilley argues current poverty and instability within the Democratic Republic of the Congo proves the Congolese were better off under Belgian rule. The evidence says otherwise.

Since independence in 1960, life expectancy in the Congo has climbed steadily, from around 41 years on the eve of independence to 59 in 2015. This figure remains low compared to most other countries in the world. Nonetheless, it is high compared to what it was under Belgian rule.

Under colonial rule, the Congolese population declined by estimates ranging from three million to 13 million between 1885 and 1908 due to widespread disease, a coercive labour regime and endemic brutality.

Gilley argues the benefits of colonialism can be observed by comparing former colonies to countries with no significant colonial history. Yet his examples of the latter erroneously include Haiti (a French colony from 1697 to 1804), Libya (a direct colony of the Ottoman Empire from 1835 and of Italy from 1911), and Guatemala (occupied by Spain from 1524 to 1821).

By contrast, he neglects to mention Japan, a country that legitimately was never colonized and now boasts the third largest GDP on the planet, as well as Turkey, which up until recently was widely viewed as the most successful secular country in the Muslim world.

These counter-examples disprove Gilley's central thesis that non-Western countries are by definition incapable of reaching modernity without Western "guidance."

In short, the facts are in, but they do not paint the picture that Gilley and other imperial apologists would like to claim. Colonialism left deep scars on the Global South and for those genuinely interested in the welfare of non-Western countries, the first step is acknowledging this.

## About the Author



Joseph McQuade is a SSHRC Postdoctoral Fellow in the Centre for South Asian Studies, a branch of the Munk School of Global Affairs at the University of Toronto. He is also a Senior Research Fellow and Co-Editor-in-Chief at the NATO Association of Canada and a Sessional Lecturer in the Department of History at Ryerson University.

Joseph completed his Ph.D. at the University of Cambridge as a Gates Scholar, with a dissertation that examined the origins of terrorism in colonial South Asia in an international perspective. This research is currently being revised into a book manuscript, tentatively titled, "From thugs to terrorists: Conspiracy, law, and violence in colonial India, 1857-1947".

His postdoctoral research at the University of Toronto looks at the role of terrorism and insurgency in postcolonial India and Burma (Myanmar) up to the present day. His broader research and teaching interests include critical genealogies of 'terrorism' as a political and legal category, the relationship between insurgency and nation-states, and global histories of Asia.

# Colonialism in India was traumatic – including for some of the British officials who ruled the Raj



When India gained independence from Britain on August 15 1947, the majority of Anglo-Indians had either left or would leave soon after. Many within the Indian Civil Service would write of the trauma that they experienced from witnessing the violence of the years leading up to the end of British rule and the bloodbath that would follow as the lines of partition were revealed.

Colonialism was certainly a far more traumatising experience for colonial subjects than their colonisers. They suffered poverty, malnutrition, disease, cultural upheaval, economic exploitation, political disadvantage, and systematic programmes aimed at creating a sense of social and racial inferiority. While some may argue that any suffering on the part of the British colonialists ought to be met with little sympathy, this is not a reason to obscure it from history.

It was the very notion that Indian civil service servicemen were usurpers, full of privilege, in a foreign land that led to the sapped sense of humanity that many wrestled with – both during and after their India careers.

As my own forthcoming book details, some shut themselves off from the day-to-day lives of Indians, unless forced to engage for work purposes. Others escaped through drowning themselves in alcohol, opium or other drugs. Some convinced themselves of the intellectual superiority of the white man and his right to rule over "lesser races", while a number found solace in Christianity. Several came to see their role as being a peacekeeper between various ethnic and religious groups, despite the irony of the British having encouraged and exploited the categorisation of colonial subjects on these grounds in the first place.

Underneath all of this sits a trauma that the coloniser had to either deal with – or resign their post and go home.

## Serving the Raj

One serviceman of the late Raj who I have focused on in my research is an example of the coping mechanisms that British officials deployed. Andrew Clow entered the Indian Civil Service in 1912 at the age of 22 and would remain a civil servant until 1947 when he reached the mandatory retirement ceiling of 35 years. His most notable portfolios were as secretary of the Indian Labour Bureau in the late 1930s, followed by minister for communications and then governor of Assam from 1942 to 1947.

Clow, and his one thousand or so colleagues at any one time, effectively ruled India during the late Raj. This was a time of declining British prestige, and declining public and political opinion of colonialism as an acceptable social, economic and political practice. The rise of the Indian independence movement with Mohandas Gandhi as its nominal leader, coincided with the anti-British international propaganda concerning its empire that came from the Soviet Union and its sympathisers.

## Doubt and self-loathing

In the early 1920s, the Indian independence movement grew in prominence and received a significant level of sympathy at home and abroad. In 1919, the Amritsar Massacre of unarmed protesters by British and Gurka troops received much public criticism. A year later, two of Clow's civil service intake year group were assassinated in a market in Midnapore, West Bengal. From letters Clow wrote to a friend, we know he considered resigning on several occasions during the early 1920s. This period of reflection led him to fundamentally question his role within the colonial system, but he ultimately decided to continue his career.

Clow was a devout Christian and his life in India would develop into a religious cocoon of sorts where he used his relationship with God to suppress his trauma at being a colonial usurper.

As he became more senior within the administration he increasingly distanced himself from Indians, Indian culture and expressed little sympathy for the plight of people who suffered from British exploitation. He spent the vast majority of his time with other Europeans and his holidays at his house at the British hill station of Simla. His diaries throughout the 1930s and 1940s became almost entirely written prayers requesting salvation punctuated by private comments of self-loathing, written in confidence between himself and God.

## Defender of British colonialism

Upon his retirement from the Indian Civil Service in 1947, Clow returned to Scotland and became chairman of the newly-created Scottish Gas Board. His private time was spent largely in the pursuit of the preservation of the legacy of British India. He voraciously read memoirs and other reflections by his former colleagues, and would lambast any critique of the British, even if those criticisms were rather sparse.

**Clow was a devout Christian and his life in India would develop into a religious cocoon of sorts where he used his relationship with God to suppress his trauma at being a colonial usurper.**

Clow's failure to concede publicly that colonialism was an exploitative practice is indicative of a complex reaction to his trauma at being a key part of a system of suppression. His heightened religiosity was a key part of his way of dealing with this. In many ways he "used" God to negate his discomfort at being one of the main figures of the British colonial enterprise.

Clow was typical of many within the Indian Civil Service who became troubled by their roles facilitating the exploitation of the Indian subcontinent for the British Empire. Yet, rather than resign his post and become a critic of colonial practices, Clow built a number of internal mechanisms so that he could carry on. Reactions like Clow's go some way to explain the romance that many within British society have had for the age of empire. But today, 70 years on from the end of the Raj, public bodies and the British media are willing to engage in a much more robust critique.

## About the Author



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# Churchill and India: imperial chauvinism left a bitter legacy



For those who enjoy debunking the reputations of national heroes, there can be few softer targets than Winston Churchill. The phrase "flawed hero" could almost have been invented to characterise his long, wilfully erratic career. Running through it, like some bitter-tasting lettering in a stick of rock was a strain of extreme imperial chauvinism.

Indeed, for all his other faults, Churchill tends to be at his least attractive to a 21st-century audience when involved in issues of race and empire: prejudiced, jingoistic, opportunistic and sometimes callous.

His dealings with India, where the 50th anniversary of his death is likely to attract more criticism than praise, demonstrated all these features in abundance. His opposition to constitutional reform in India in the interwar period, which ultimately failed to prevent the passing of the 1935 Government of India Act, owed much to a self-interested attempt to rally support within the Conservative Party against the leadership of Stanley Baldwin.

## Racism and vitriol

His notoriously vitriolic and racist denunciations of Indian nationalists both then and during his wartime premiership have fuelled accusations that Churchill left millions of Indians to die during the Bengal famine.

Some of his more crudely racist remarks were no doubt motivated in part by an almost childish desire to shock his determinedly un-politically correct inner circle. If so he certainly succeeded. In an entry in his diaries in 1955, his doctor, Lord Moran, records Churchill complaining:

*he didn't like 'blackamoors' … He asked a little irrelevantly, what happened when blacks got measles … When he was told there was a very high mortality rate … he growled; 'Well there are plenty left. They've a high rate of production', and he grinned good-humouredly.*

## A man of his times

So how easy is it to reconcile all of this with the image of Churchill as Britain's national saviour?

Churchill was, of course, a product of his times. He had some direct experience of the practical business of administering the British Empire during two periods at the Colonial Office, first as under-secretary of state from 1905-8, then as secretary of state from 1921-2.

For Churchill, however, the British Empire was above all India –

although an India largely of his own imagining. It was administered by its own separate Whitehall department, and Churchill's actual experience of India was limited to his time there as a young subaltern in the closing years of Queen Victoria's reign. He left in 1897, never to return. The contempt he regularly expressed for India's Hindu population over subsequent decades was little more than an echo of the casual racism of the late-Victorian officers' mess.

At the same time, as the research of Warren Doctor has recently revealed, during his military career in north-west India and north Africa, Churchill developed a romantic admiration for Islamic culture.

"Empire" then, as for many of his class and generation, was for Churchill a mixture of nostalgic and distant memories, crudely racist and orientalist projections of particular traits and values onto colonised people, and a powerful rhetoric inextricably bound up with notions of Britain's greatness and its supposed "civilising mission". But it was essentially always an empire of imagination: four parts fantasy to one part reality.

Ironically, it was the conflict in which Churchill led his nation to victory that saw the fantasy of empire colliding catastrophically with its reality. He boldly proclaimed in November 1942 that he had "not become the King's first minister in order to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire". Yet while the resources of the Empire were mobilised to an unprecedented extent, war placed an intolerable strain on the rickety structures that had maintained imperial control.

## The Bengal famine

In Asia in particular, sweeping Japanese victories and the Bengal famine of 1943-4 shattered the illusions of British military and moral superiority. The latter, which claimed up to four million lives, is likely to remain one of the most bitterly contested episodes in Churchill's controversial career.

Certainly, its causes were multifaceted, including the loss of rice supplies from Burma following its fall to the Japanese, the cyclone which hit East Bengal in October 1942 and the reactions of local politicians and traders. But Churchill's characteristically provocative interventions – scrupulously recorded at the time – have fuelled accusations that this was little less than British-inspired genocide.

As conditions worsened, he mused that "starvation of anyhow underfed Bengalis is less serious than that of sturdy Greeks" and that Indians were, in any case, "breeding like rabbits". His defenders have stressed the practical limitations on effective famine relief and the fact that Churchill's outbursts were sometimes followed by decisions to take action. Nevertheless, if the accusation of genocide against Churchill and his ministerial colleagues can be relatively easily dismissed, that of callous indifference remains difficult to counter.

**Indeed, for all his other faults, Churchill tends to be at his least attractive to a 21st-century audience when involved in issues of race and empire: prejudiced, jingoistic, opportunistic and sometimes callous.**

## Late realism

According to one of his colleagues, the Empire lost much of its interest for Churchill once India achieved its independence in 1947. Although he continued to dig into the Conservative party's rattle bag of imperial rhetoric, all that remained for Churchill in practical terms was a mopping-up exercise.

He was suitably sceptical when, in the mid-1950s, elaborate plans were drawn up to build a new Colonial Office, telling his colonial secretary that soon, all he would need was "a fine drawing room, a good kitchen and an office".

During his second term as prime minister, he presided over vicious counter-insurgency campaigns in Malaya and Kenya. Yet his personal role was often as a moderating influence, expressing concern that brutal reprisals were at odds with British values and would alienate global opinion. At least by the end of his political career, then, the Victorian imperialist had become a realist of sorts.

## About the Author

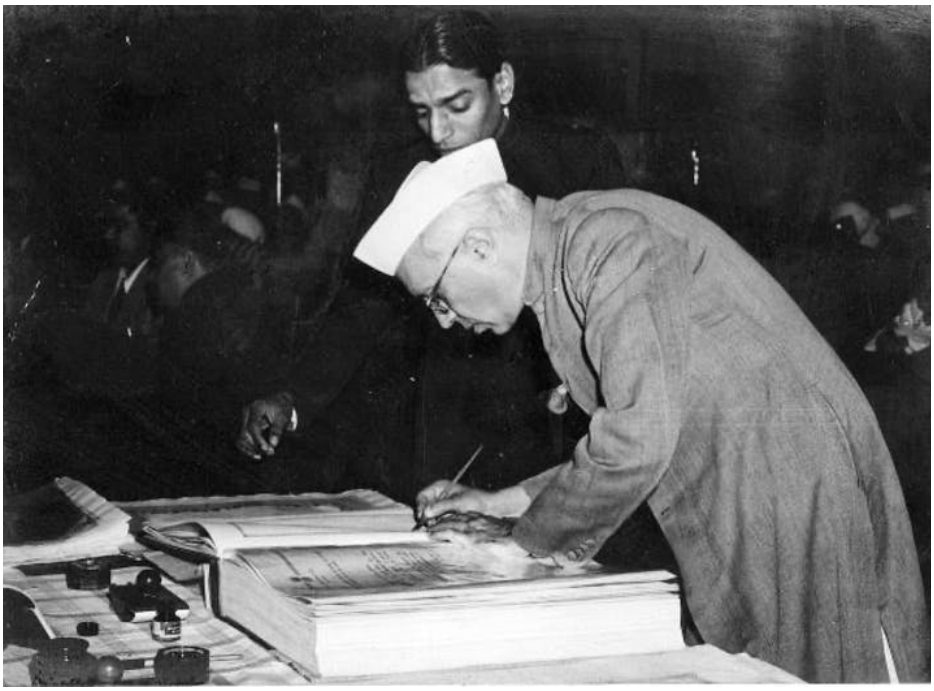


Philip Murphy is Director of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies; Professor of British and Commonwealth History; and Joint editor of the Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History.

His research interests include Twentieth-century British and Commonwealth history, including aspects of post-war British decolonization particularly in Africa, and post-war African politics.

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# Jawaharlal Nehru's vision for a just and equitable post-colonial world, with India leading the way



*This piece is part of a new series in collaboration with the ABC's Saturday Extra program. Each week, the show will have a "who am I" quiz for listeners about influential figures who helped shape the 20th century, and we will publish profiles for each one. You can read the other pieces in the series here.*

Jawaharlal Nehru was not just the architect of modern India and the country's first prime minister. He also played a central role in the discrediting of European imperialism and gave a voice to people across Asia and Africa struggling for self-determination and racial equality.

An unlikely revolutionary, Nehru was born in 1889 into wealth and privilege. His father was a Kashmiri, a high caste Brahmin and a successful barrister, able to fund the best education for the young Jawaharlal the British system could offer.

After attending Harrow School and Cambridge University, Nehru, too, became a lawyer and could easily have settled into a comfortable life.

Instead, Nehru was swept by the enigmatic Mahatma Gandhi into the campaign against British rule in India. For the next 25 years, he dressed in homespun cotton, endured long terms in prison and campaigned relentlessly for the cause.

## Successes and failures

Once the British were overthrown and he rose to power, Nehru quickly set about ensuring his vast, impoverished and hugely diverse country was governed by democratically elected leaders and the rule of law.

In parallel, he tried to make India economically self-reliant, so that it could no longer be exploited or manipulated by foreign powers.

Perhaps inevitably, given the scale of the challenges involved, the results of these efforts were mixed.

Nehru's hopes for a peaceful transition from British rule were dashed by the horrific violence that accompanied partition – the division of the British colony into the separate states of India and Pakistan. Hundreds of thousands died in clashes between Hindus and Muslims, and millions more were displaced and traumatised.

Nehru did succeed in the herculean effort of transforming India into a constitutional democracy, but his ambitious plans to modernise the economy proved harder to realise.

To be sure, India avoided mass famines like those that ravaged Bengal in the mid-1940s and China during the so-called "Great Leap Forward" in the late 1950s and early 1960s. But most Indians did not see major improvements in their standard of living.

## A vision for a post-colonial world

Where Nehru really shone was on the world stage. Urbane, well-read,

charismatic and eloquent, he was convinced India had a special role to play in international politics, despite its poverty and relative weakness.

And to ensure that happened, Nehru served as his own foreign minister and ambassador-at-large.

Initially, Nehru's principal concern was the struggle against European imperialism, especially in Asia. Britain, France and the Netherlands all reasserted control over their colonial possessions in the region after the second world war. In response, Nehru and Gandhi rallied anti-colonial leaders, holding the Asian Relations Conference in New Delhi in 1947 to chart the way forward for the continent.

In Nehru's view, Asia's newly liberated or soon-to-be liberated states should show the world a different way to conduct international relations.

They need not be suspicious of each other's intentions, nor greedy for each other's territory, he argued. And they should not waste their scarce resources on building armies or atom bombs. Committed to social and economic development and to treating others with mutual respect, they could – and should – create a more just and peaceful world.

Nehru was highly adept in using new platforms like the United Nations and the global media to promote this vision. He delivered passionate speeches and charmed foreign journalists in long interviews.

He campaigned against nuclear weapons, calling in 1954 for the superpowers to halt their tests of increasingly destructive bombs. This paved the way for a partial ban on testing in 1963.

He called for an end to racial discrimination, most notably in South Africa. He also commissioned India's diplomats to offer their services to mediate in a series of disputes, including the Korean war and France's disastrous attempt to cling to its colonial possessions in Indochina.

## The birth of non-alignment

Throughout, Nehru made the case for what became known as "non-alignment" – perhaps his greatest contribution to the 20th century world.

India and other post-colonial states, he argued, had no good reason to take sides in the Cold War and plenty of reasons to maintain cordial relations with both the US and Soviet Union.

Allying with one or the other was too costly and compromising. It brought obligations to build armies and fight distant wars. And it meant renouncing the ability to criticise your ally when it did things with which you disagreed.

Non-alignment annoyed Cold Warriors in both Moscow and Washington. But it proved popular elsewhere, especially among newly independent states.

It helped inspire a series of major meetings intended to promote African and Asian cooperation in the shadow of US-Soviet competition, including the Bandung Conference in 1955, as well as the creation of the Non-Aligned Movement in the 1970s.

Today, 120 states belong to the movement, though India's interest in the bloc has waned as it has grown stronger and wealthier.

## Nehru's greatest failure

Nehru helped delegitimize imperialism and usher in a new world no longer dominated by the Europe powers. He laid out principles that he hoped would encourage mutual respect in international relations – principles eagerly embraced, if not always followed, by other post-colonial leaders.

It is ironic, then, that arguably Nehru's greatest failure – the one that irreparably tarnished his leadership and broke his health – concerned foreign policy.

Convinced China would abide by the "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" agreement it struck with India in the mid-1950s, Nehru failed to anticipate a military conflict over the long-disputed frontier. When Mao Zedong ordered a surprise attack in 1962, India's forces were humiliated. And to Nehru's dismay, neither the UN, nor the superpowers, intervened.

To critics, the Sino-Indian war exposed Nehru's naivety and the limits of non-alignment. It compelled India to retrench and rearm, and laid bare his dream of an Asia free from "power politics".

India has travelled far since Nehru's time and left much of his legacy by the wayside. It now possesses the world's second largest military - after China - and a nuclear arsenal. It has forged a strong security partnership with the United States.

But New Delhi still remains wary of alliances or anything that might compromise independence of voice or action. And it is as convinced today as when Nehru was in power that India is destined to play a special role in the world.

## About the Author



Ian Hall is a Professor in the School of Government and International Relations and the Deputy Director (Research) of the Griffith Asia Institute, Griffith University, Queensland, Australia. He is also an Academic Fellow of the Australia India Institute and the co-editor (with Sara E. Davies) of the Australian Journal of International Affairs. His latest book is Modi and the Reinvention of Indian Foreign Policy (Bristol University Press, 2019) https://bristoluniversitypress.co.uk/ian-hall.

**Jawaharlal Nehru was not just the architect of modern India and the country's first prime minister.**

# The Pledge of Independence

## Declaration of Purna Swaraj, Lahore Congress, January 26, 1930



**We will therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary associations from the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes.**

The Indian National Congress, on December 19, 1929, passed the historic 'Purna Swaraj' – (total independence) resolution – at its Lahore session, which called for "complete freedom from the British."

The Purna Swaraj resolution– proclaimed on January 26, 1930, – a day, which the Congress Party urged Indians to celebrate as 'Independence Day'. The declaration was passed due to the breakdown of negotiations between leaders of the freedom movement and the British over the question of dominion status for India.

In 1929, Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy of India, made a vaguely announced – referred to as the Irwin Declaration - that India would be granted dominion status in the future. Indian leaders welcomed this as they had been making the demand for dominion status for a long time. They now wanted all further negotiations with the British to focus on the formalization of dominion status for India.

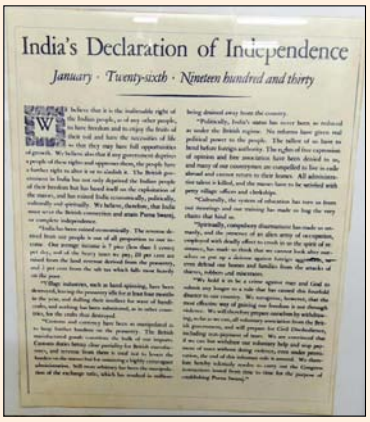
The Irwin Declaration triggered a backlash in England: politicians and the general public were not in favour of India obtaining dominion status. Under pressure, Lord Irwin, at a meeting with Jinnah, Nehru, Gandhi and Sapru, told Indian leaders that he could not promise dominion status anytime soon. The Indian National Congress irked and now changed its stance: it gave up demands for dominion status and instead, at its Lahore Session in 1929, passed the 'Purna Swaraj' resolution that called for complete independence. The resolution marked the beginning of a large-scale political movement against colonial rule.

The resolution was a short 750-word document.. It did not have a legal/constitutional structure – it read more like a manifesto. It called for severing ties with the British and claimed 'Purna Swaraj' or 'complete independence'. It indicated British rule and succinctly articulated the resulting economic, political and cultural injustice inflicted on Indians. The document spoke on behalf of Indians and made its intention of launching the civil disobedience movement clear.

Most scholars, like Mithi Mukherjee in India under the Shadows of Empire, see the Purna Swaraj resolution as a critical component of the changing strategy of the independence movement in engaging with the British: the demand for freedom was now made in the language of justice and not charity. Mithi Mukherjee say it was an important part of Indian independence because it said becoming independent was about justice

The Purna Swaraj resolution was seen as a critical symbolic event by leaders of the freedom movement and Indians in general. During the constitution-making process during 1946 -1950, members of the Constituent Assembly chose 26 January 1950 for the Constitution of India to come into effect to honour the date of the public declaration of Purna Swaraj.

# Declaration of Purna Swaraj, Lahore Congress, January 26, 1930


India's Declaration of Independence

*January · Twenty-sixth · Nineteen hundred and thirty*

We believe that it is the incredible right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom to enjoy the fruits of their soil and have the necessities of life, so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter or abolish it. The British Government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India must sever the British connection and attain Purna Swaraj or complete independence.

India has been ruined economically. The revenue derived from our people is out of all proportion to our income. Our average income is seven paisa per day, and of the heavy taxes we pay 20% are raised from the land revenue derived from the peasantry and 3% from the salt tax, which falls most heavily on the poor.

Village industries, such as hand spinning, have been destroyed, leaving the peasantry idle for at least four months in the year, and dulling their intellect for want of handicrafts, and nothing has been substituted, as in other countries, for the crafts thus destroyed.

Customs and currency have been so manipulated as to beep further burdens on the peasantry. British manufactured goods constitute the bulk of our imports. Customs duties betray partiality for British manufacturers, and revenue from them is not used to lessen the burden on the masses but for sustaining a highly extravagant administration. Still more arbitrary has been the manipulation of the exchange which has resulted in millions being drained away from the country.

Politically, India's status has never been so reduced as under the British regime. No reforms have given real political power to the people. The tallest of us have to bend before the foreign authority. The rights of free expression of opinion and free association have been denied to us and many of our countrymen are compelled to live in exile abroad and cannot return to their homes. All administrative talent is killed and the masses have to be satisfied with petty village offices and clerkships.

Currently, the system of education has torn us from our moorings and our training has made us bug the very chains that bind us.

Spiritually, compulsory disarmament has made us unmanly and the presence of an alien army of occupation, employed with deadly effect to crush in us the spirit of resistance, has made us think that we cannot look after ourselves or put up a defence against foreign aggression, or even defend our brothers and families from the attacks of thieves, robbers and miscreants.

We hold it to be a crime against man and God to submit any longer to a rule that has caused this fourfold disaster to our country. We recognise, however, that the most effective way of getting our freedom is not through violence. We will therefore prepare ourselves by withdrawing, so far as we can, all voluntary associations from the British Government, and will prepare for civil disobedience, including non-payment of taxes. We are convinced that if we can but withdraw our voluntary help and stop payment of taxes without doing violence, even under provocation; the need for his inhuman rule is assured. We therefore hereby solemnly resolve to carry out the Congress instructions issued from time to time for the purpose of establishing Purna Swar.

# How Gandhi's Dandi March Shook the British Empire!



The march on foot undertaken by Gandhi and seventy-eight freedom fighters was the most significant event in the history of the breach of salt law in our country. It was commenced in accordance with a fixed schedule to be carried on by them during the long journey ending at Dandi. Undoubtedly, it was a disciplined band of nonviolent satyagrahis who were to present a new model of satyagraha which later on converted into a bigger movement at all-India level.

On 12 March 1930 at 6-10 A.M. Gandhi came out of his room, calm and composed, accompanied by Prabhashankar Patani, Mahadev Desai and Pyarelal, his secretary. He offered prayers, looked at his watch and exactly at 6.30 A.M. commenced his march with seventy-eight volunteers With his usual gentle smile, betokening his unifying faith in the justice of the cause he was pursuing and in the success of the great campaign he had embarked upon, he headed the procession with quick and unfaltering steps.

'Like the historic march of Ram Chandra to Lanka, the march of Dandi would be memorable' exclaimed Motilal Nehru in a message. P.C. Ray called it the 'exodus of Israelites under Moses.' Jawaharlal Nehru called Gandhi, '.... the pilgrim on his quest of truth, quiet, peaceful, determined and fearless who would continue that quiet pilgrimage regardless of consequences.' The satyagrahis were to face a fatiguing journey through heat and dust of the Kheda villages. Thousands of men, women and children accompanied the marching column for a few miles and thousands lined the route and showered flowers, coins, currency notes and kum kum at the satyagrahis

Following the commencement of his epic Dandi March, a tremendous wave of enthusiasm swept over the entire country. The historic day was celebrated all over India. Calcutta woke that morning amidst sounds of conch shells and shouts of 'Gandhiji ki Jai'. At a conference of the Congress leaders of Bengal a decision was taken to appoint immediately an ad hoc council to be called the Bengal Civil Disobedience Council, with the object of carrying out the programme outlined by Gandhiji. J.M. Sen Gupta appealed to all men and women of the province to enroll themselves as volunteers for the Civil Disobedience Movement. He said, 'Bengal is on trial. She had always been in the vanguard of the country's battle for freedom and cannot lag behind. Let us plunge head-long in the fight and regain the rights which are ours.'

In Bombay, a public meeting was held under the presidentship of K.F. Nariman. He exhorted the audience to get ready for the fight. The 'War Council' of the Bombay Provincial Congress Committee announced a list of 'iron-sides' to join the first detachment of volunteers from the town

In Madras, at a public meeting at Tilak Ghat, prayers were offered for the success of the Civil Disobedience campaign by the Madras District Congress Committee, Andhra Congress Committee, the Triplicate Congress Sabha and the political section of the Youth League. The meeting reiterated India's resolve to achieve Swaraj by nonviolent means under Gandhi's leadership by following his path.'

In Lahore, a band of Congress volunteers paraded the streets and raised shouts of 'Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai'. In a mammoth meeting of the citizens of the town, held under the auspices of the City Congress Committee, Maulana Abdul Qadir, in opening the proceedings, said, 'The 12th of March would be a red letter day and it would figure in letters of gold in the future history of India' He hoped that the people of India, from that day onward would give practical demonstration of their determination to win freedom. He believed that as soon as the people of the Punjab would receive the news of Gandhi's arrest, they would suspend their business and work out the plan of the movement

In Peshawar, the 'Satyagraha Day' was observed by taking out a procession and holding a public meeting. Resolutions reiterating the pledge of independence and wishing Godspeed to the soldiers of freedom and congratulating Vallabhbhai Patel on his imprisonment were unanimously passed. Besides, a large number of volunteers were enlisted for the satyagraha

Civil Disobedience Day was celebrated in Delhi in a meeting attended by about 10,000 persons, including a large number of ladies. Devdas Gandhi gave the detailed history of the salt tax and called it the most 'barbarous' tax which affected the poor classes, and pleaded for its abolition immediately. He also exhorted the people to observe complete but peaceful hartals if Mahatma Gandhi was arrested.

Allahabad, the nerve centre of U. P. politics, witnessed scenes of enthusiasm in connection with the celebration of the commencement of the satyagraha campaign. Jawaharlal Nehru hoisted the national flag over the building occupied by the offices of the A.I.C.C., the City Congress Committee and the All-India Spinners' Association, U.P. branch. A large gathering participated in the ceremony. While addressing the audience, Nehru said that the pledge of satyagraha laid stress on nonviolence which was the very basis of the Civil Disobedience campaign. He warned that only those who were convinced of the efficacy of that method either as a creed or as a policy in the present circumstances of the country, should take the pledge. He opined that nonviolence was not a convenient shelter either for cowards or for those who wanted to prepare for violence. He asked the non-believers in nonviolence to withdraw from the movement to give others a chance

In Ahmedabad, a meeting of the Youth League was held in which a resolution was passed empowering the secretaries to enlist volunteers for the Civil Disobedience Movement. About twenty-five names were enlisted on the spot including two secretaries and Miss Mridula Ambalal, daughter of a local mill-magnate

The 'Dandi March Day' was observed in Nagpur by hoisting the national flag. A procession passed through the main bazaars of the town, and, thereafter, a public meeting was also held. Gandhi's letter to the Viceroy was read out and explained to the audience. An appeal for the enlistment of volunteers was also made. While exhorting the people to give the moment their whole-hearted support M.V. Abhyankar said, 'I shall perish in the struggle for Independence or live to enjoy freedom after its achievement.'

> Following the commencement of his epic Dandi March, a tremendous wave of enthusiasm swept over the entire country. The historic day was celebrated all over India.

Similar celebrations were held all over the country and considerable enthusiasm was aroused with people for participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement. For the first time, a new spirit for the attainment of Swaraj-full and complete-was found bubbling everywhere. The Viceroy informed the Secretary of State on 13 March 1930, 'Most of my thoughts at the moment are concentrated upon Gandhi. I wish I felt sure what the right way to deal with him is.'

The same day Gandhi and his satyagrahis reached a small village, Aslali, where they were received well by the villagers. Gandhi emphasised the importance of salt and criticised the salt tax levied by the government. He stated, 'The poor destitute villagers do not have the strength to get this tax repealed. We want to develop this strength... We should make a resolution that we shall prepare salt, eat it, sell it to the people and, while doing so, court imprisonment, if necessary. If, out of Gujarat's Population of 90 lakhs, we leave out women and children, and the remaining 30 lakhs get ready to violate the salt tax, the Government does not have enough accommodation in jails to house so many people.'

Next day, Gandhi, who was apprehensive of his arrest, informed Jawaharlal Nehru, 'The news given to me of my impending arrest was said to be absolutely authentic. But we have reached the second stage. We take the third tonight'

The second halt of the Dandi marchers was at Bareja, a village with a Population of 2,500. He emphasised the importance of khadi, its production and use by the villagers. 'Khadi is the foundation of our freedom struggle.... I request you to renounce luxuries and buy khadi from this heap before you'.

'We have come forward to win our freedom from this tyrannical and oppressive Government. If we cannot put our own house in order in an organized manner, how shall we run the country's Government? I ask you, therefore, to learn order and organization.... This struggle against the Government on which we have embarked is not going to reach its conclusion with five, or twenty-five, or even millions of men getting killed. We have to look after other things also simultaneously.'

As Gandhi entered the Kheda district, memories-some sweet, some bitter-filled his mind. It was while working in this district that he became one with the lives of people. He had seen nearly all the villages of the district and had covered many of them on foot. He stated, 'I have come to Navagam in the middle of a battle... The Government found some pretext or other to arrest Vallabhbhai... Pressure was brought to the Magistrate somehow to serve a notice on Sardar and he was arrested. What could a poor Magistrate do where the entire atmosphere is vitiated?

As Gandhi entered the Kheda district, memories-some sweet, some bitter-filled his mind. It was while working in this district that he became one with the lives of people.

When some headmen and matadars of Kheda district submitted their resignations as a protest against the oppressive policy of the government, Gandhi advised them, '*Remember that in the resignations you have handed in, I see God's hand. The Kheda District has made an auspicious beginning.*'



At Vasana, where the villagers had gathered to accord reception to the marchers and listen to their leader, Gandhi explained that abolition of the salt-tax or remission of some taxes would not mean swaraj for them. Winning of swaraj was not going to be so easy as they might think. It was only a way to do it and by following it they would reach the goal of freedom. He had a word of praise for the headmen of Navagam, Vavdi, Agam, Mahelaj and other villages who had tendered their resignations. 'Why should they stick to Headmanship for the mere five rupees a month that the government pays them? If the Collector summons a Headman, let him say, 'Give us back our Sardar. Grant us a remission in land revenue.'

At Nadiad, a town with a population of thirty-one thousand, Gandhi reminded the people, 'Bound by the chains of slavery, we are being crushed at present and we want to shake them off.' He wished all government servants to give up their jobs. A government job gave them the power to tyrannize over others. Finally, be asked to enlist themselves as volunteers. And as soon as he got behind the bars or as soon as the All-India Congress Committee gave a call, they should come forward to offer themselves for being jailed. 'Then alone shall I believe that Nadiad has made its contribution to our struggle'

In a letter to Jayaprakash Narayan which Gandhi wrote from Anand on 17 March, he explained, 'No where else have I observed such zeal for sacrifice as has been displayed by the Ashram women. At present the women are to a great extent managing the internal affairs of the Ashram. The chance of acquiring such experience will never be repeated. I would therefore advise you to send Prabhavati there. After my arrest the Ashram women too will face court imprisonment. I think Prabhavati should join them. She is worthy in every respect.'

At Anand, an educational centre of Patidars, Gandhi demanded, 'In your hands lies the honour of the Patidars of Charotar. You are like salt in the sea of Patidars. If the salt loses its savour, wherewith shall it be salted? Salt is more sapid than either sugar or jaggery. The latter may even cause jaundice, whereas a pinch of salt adds flavour to the meal. If Anand gives up its savour of courage and such other virtues which have been attributed to the Patidars are not displayed in Anand at this juncture, where else can one see them?.'

The students' services to the national cause were also applauded. They were advised to suspend their studies for as long as this struggle continued. Formerly, Gandhi had asked his students to leave schools and to set up national

schools. But this time he asked them to leave schools and come out on the 'battle-field' and become 'mendicants' for the sake of the country. But he did not ask them to give up their studies for good, but only to give up book-learning so long as the struggle lasted.

At Borsad, the reception of Gandhi and his satyagrahis was celebrated with the immediate announcement of the resignations of headmen, matadars and ravanias of twenty villages of the taluka. Over one hundred village officers of twenty-five villages submitted their resignations. The government sources commented, 'Gandhi's attention is directed on two points i.e. resignations of patels and enrolling volunteers. Under his instructions local workers are trying to get more resignations under the threat of social boycott.'.

They were warmly received by the village folk. They were keen to listen to Gandhi's discourse. He explained to them, 'Our patience has been severely tried. We must free ourselves from the yoke of this Government and we are prepared to undergo any hardships that we may have to suffer in order to secure swaraj. It is our duty as well as our right to secure swaraj.'

'Today we are defying the salt law. Tomorrow we shall have to consign other laws to the waste-paper basket. Doing so we shall practise such severe non-cooperation that finally it will not be possible for the administration to be carried on at all. Let the Government then, to carry on its rule, use guns against us, send us to prison, hang us. But how many can be given such punishment? Try and calculate how much time it will take a lakh of Britishers to hang thirty crores of persons.'

Gandhi once again exhorted the students to leave their institutions and join the struggle for independence. He desired that all students studying in the local high school and who were above the age of fifteen, and all teachers too, should enroll themselves. He pleaded that wherever revolutions had taken place, that is, in Japan, China, Egypt, Ireland and in England, students and teachers had played a prominent role. In Europe, war broke out on 4 August 1914, and when Gandhi reached England on the 6th of the same month, he found that students had left colleges and marched out with arms

Gandhi further explained that his prostrating himself on the ground for the sake of removing the hardships of crores of people was of no avail. He had spared no efforts in drafting appeals.

He became a revolutionary when politeness and persuasion proved infructuous. He indeed found peace in describing himself as a revolutionary and appealed that in a revolution of that nature which was calm, peaceful and truthful, people should get themselves enrolled regardless of the religious faith to which they belonged. He was confident that if they enlisted themselves with sincerity and if they could keep up their courage, the salt tax would have been abolished, this administration would have come to an end and all the hardships enumerated in the letter to the Viceroy as well as those which had not been enumerated would have to cease.

On 19 March, the party of satyagrahis reached Ras Taluka where Sardar Patel was arrested and sentenced to prison and in which he had carried on such a vigorous struggle in 1924 that the Government had finally to admit its error and mete out justice that should not have required a struggle. It is as if Sardar was sentenced to prison as a reward for having served you'

During the short stay of Gandhi, some of the headmen and matadars had handed in their resignations. But Gandhi expressed unhappiness at the small number of resignations at Ras. In fact, the headman, talati and

At Borsad, the reception of Gandhi and his satyagrahis was celebrated with the immediate announcement of the resignations of headmen, matadars and ravanias of twenty villages of the taluka.

revania were the representatives of the government in the villages and it was through these persons that the latter carried on its administration. A village which was afraid of a handful of men and continued to act in a manner contrary to its own wishes, neither enhanced the prestige of the headman, the talati or the revania nor that of the villagers themselves. Sardar Patel had been making great effort to end this indignity

Gandhi praised the services rendered by Sardar Patel. He also apprised the villagers of his mission. He explained 'Sardar neither made speeches nor came here to foment trouble. Neither the Magistrate nor you had acted in any sort of trouble. The task for which Sardar had approached you was not a secret to anyone. A satyagrahi has no secrets..... What secret can a satyagrahi like Sardar have?' He had come there to clear the way for Gandhi and he had not come there to convey the message regarding salt. Gandhi was at a loss to know about the offence committed by Sardar Patel and wondered that a man of his stature should have been awarded a sentence of three months' jail and labeled it a matter of shame to the Sardar and to the government. Gandhi wished that a person like Sardar Patel should be sentenced to

a term of seven years' imprisonment or be exiled. 'It would not befit the Government to sentence me to three months' imprisonment. Exile for life or hanging would be a punishment fit for a person like me. I am guilty of sedition. It is my dharma to commit sedition against the Government. I am teaching this dharma to the people. A regime under which tyranny is being perpetrated, under which the rich and the poor are made to pay the same amount of tax on an item like salt, under which exorbitant sums are being spent on watchmen, the police and the army, under which the highest executive receives a salary which is five thousand times the income of the cultivator, under which an annual revenue of 25 crores of rupees is derived from narcotics and liquor, under which foreign cloth of the value of Rs. 60 cores is imported every year, and under which crores of persons continue to remain unemployed, it is one's dharma to rise against and destroy such a regime, to pray that fire may consume its policies

Meanwhile, the A.I.C.C. held a meeting on the banks of the Sabarmati on 20 March. Besides the president Jawaharlal Nehru, it was attended by other prominent leaders like Maulana Azad, Sarojini Naidu, P.D. Tandon, Abbas Tyabji, Darbar Gopaldas, J.B. Kripalani, N.C. Kalelkar, Kasturba Gandhi, Ansuyabehn and Mrs. Ambalal. Many members excused themselves from attendance on the plea that they were busy with preparations for the Civil Disobedience Movement, in their own areas. The leaders met under a sense of 'heavy' responsibility and the result was a foregone conclusion.

By its principal resolution, the A.I.C.C. confirmed the Working Committee's resolution authorising Gandhi to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement. It laid down the conditions under which the various provinces should start satyagraha on a mass scale. The Provincial Congress Committees were given wide discretion about the manner, the form and the place of Civil Disobedience. It was open to them, to prepare their provinces for any form of satyagraha, best suited to them. But it was clearly laid down that the salt satyagraha should be undertaken in every province when it was possible. Other forms of satyagraha might be prepared for, but should be reserved for the second stage of the campaign. In case Gandhi was arrested, the Provincial Congress Committees should immediately determine to start Civil Disobedience, and if he was not arrested, they should await instructions which he might issue on reaching his destination. He would give the necessary signal and the Provincial Congress Committees would be informed immediately through the A.I.C.C. Office.

The Government of India felt much concern over the resolution of Congress. The Home Member suggested, 'it is essential that we should be able to give timely warning owing to local Governments. He also suggested that the correspondence of the members of the Working Committee; the correspondence of the head office of the Congress and of all provincial Congress offices and provincial Congress Presidents and of any particular individual whose correspondence in local government concerned might regard as likely to yield 'especially important' information, should be censured.

> At Nadiad, a town with a population of thirty-one thousand, Gandhi reminded the people, 'Bound by the chains of slavery, we are being crushed at present and we want to shake them off.' He wished all government servants to give up their jobs. A government job gave them the power to tyrannize over others. Finally, be asked to enlist themselves as volunteers.

It was barely ten days ago that Gandhi had begun his historic march and the actual campaign was yet to be started. The whole country was already in a state of fervour for a parallel to which one might recollect the 'hottest days' of the Non-Cooperation Movement of 1920-22. People in the provinces were planning to start the movement, and in some cases preliminary steps had already been initiated. In Bengal, for instance, which had for the moment, lost both its outstanding leaders, a 'War Council' had been formed. In the United Provinces, the Provincial Congress Committee had started a satyagraha committee consisting of prominent leaders, including the President of the Congress himself. Judging from the signs, the whole country appeared to be in the throes of an agitation of unprecedented magnitude.

## The Civil Disobedience plans of Gandhi and the Congress leaders

As the march proceeded, so the pressure of publicity and social boycott was built up and resignations began to occur in large numbers. By 22 March, approximate number of resignations were four from Ahmedabad district: twenty-seven from Kaira (of whom sixteen were from Borsad taluka) seventeen from Broach, and two from Surat. But Surat soon became the most affected district by 5 April. One hundred and forty headmen had resigned and ten clays later, the figure had risen to two hundred and twenty seven. Gandhi warned them, 'It will be regarded as cowardice to hand in one's resignation and then to withdraw it. There is no compulsion to resign. It is advisable to give up the post of Headman, looking upon it as something base, dirty and filthy.'

The speech delivered by Gandhi at Broach on 26 March dealt with the communal question43 He explained that he had never dreamt that he could win swaraj merely through his effort or assisted only by the Hindus. He sought the assistance of Muslims, Parsis, Christians, Sikhs, Jews and all other Indians. He needed the assistance of even Englishmen. 'But I know too that all this combined assistance is worthless if I have not one other assistance, that is, from God. All is vain without His help. And if He is with this struggle, no other help is necessary.'

In a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru on 31 March Gandhi expressed his optimism about the forthcoming movement. 'Things seem to be shaping very well indeed in Gujarat... I feel you are right in confining your attention to the salt tax for the time being. What more we can or should do. Unless you hear from me to the contrary, please take 6th April as the date for simultaneous beginning.'

At Jambusar, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyaya arrived to see Gandhi to remove the general impression that had gone abroad that, as he had not included women in his first batch of volunteers, they might not be taken up at all. Gandhiji told her, 'If impatient mothers will be a little patient they will find ample scope for their zeal and sacrifice in this national struggle for freedom'46 She asked Gandhi what women with children should do. He said that he neither desired nor expected women to neglect their children. They might have to wait and bide their time, and thus be of use in some ways. Those women, however, who could make some satisfactory arrangements to have the children well looked after, should join the struggle.

At Surat where Gandhi and the satyagrahis reached on 1 April, they received a big welcome. He called the salt tax beastly, inhuman and a Satanic Law. 'I have not heard of such justice anywhere in the world where it prevails ... To bow to an empire which dispenses such justice is not dharma but adharma. A man who prays to God every morning at dawn cannot, must not, pray for the good of such an empire. On the contrary while praying or saying the namaaz he should ask God to encompass the destruction of such a Satanic empire, such an inhuman government. To do so is dharma.'

In a message to the nation in the issue of Young India dated 3 April 1930, Gandhi exhorted the people to 'Remember 5th April', and start mass Civil Disobedience regarding the salt laws. He advised them to observe nonviolence in the fullest sense of the term. This was to be a spontaneous action. The workers were required to merely guide the masses in the initial stages. Later, the masses would regulate the movement themselves48 The congress volunteers would render aid wherever needed. They, however, would be expected to be in the forefront. They were advised not to take sides in any communal quarrels. Wherever, there was a violent eruption, volunteers were expected to die in the attempt to quell violence. Those who were to be engaged in Civil Disobedience were to occupy themselves and induce others to be engaged in some national service, such as khadi work, liquor and opium picketing, foreign-cloth shops, village sanitation, assisting the families of civil resistance prisoners in a variety of ways.

Gandhi also expected that if there was a real response about civil resistance regarding the salt tax, people should by proper organisation secure boycott of foreign cloth through khadi and secure total prohibition. This would mean a saving of 91 crores per year, and supplementary work for the millions of unemployed. 'If we secure these things, we cannot be far from independence. And not one of these things is beyond our capacity.

Thus at each village, where the party stopped, Gandhi spoke briefly, telling the villagers that a great ordeal was at hand. He filled his political appeal with exhortations relevant to village life, such as khadi, cow-protection, cleanliness and untouchability. His appeal was not for money but for change of attitudes: he called on village officials to resign their posts which buttressed the exploitative regime. As he journeyed, he continued to give press interviews and to write to Navajivan and Young India, spreading his message of swaraj and giving instructions for the conduct of the campaign during the days ahead.

Out of twenty-five days, which the journey took, the party of satyagrahis had walked for twenty-two days, excluding three days of Gandhi's silence. On his way, Gandhi passed by forty villages and towns and everywhere he addressed the audience. The whole country-side was awake to the call of the Mahatma.

At least fifty thousand persons heard his stirring message to the nation: his speeches were generally impassioned and always brave and there was a tone of pathos which had gone home to the hearts of the listeners. Despite all the fatigue and other hardships of the journey, he never allowed himself any comfort that was denied to the last man of his 'army'.

The satyagrahis reached Dandi on 5 April. Sarojini Naidu had already arrived there to welcome them. When interviewed by a special correspondent of The Bombay Chronicle, Gandhi said, 'Government, perhaps, deserves congratulations for their policy of non-interference which is not exactly in keeping with their proven capacity for provoking popular sentiment.'

Next day he was to break the salt tax law. If the Civil Disobedience Movement became widespread in the country and the government tolerated it, the salt law, Gandhi declared, might be taken as abolished. He indeed had no doubt in his mind that the salt tax was abolished the very moment that the decision to break that salt law was reached.

'If they arrest me or my companions tomorrow, I shall not be surprised. I shall certainly not be pained. It would be absurd to be pained if we get something that we have invited on ourselves.'

Gandhi advised the people to make salt freely in every home, as our ancestors used to, and sell it from place to place, and they should continue doing so wherever possible till the government yielded, so much so that the salt in government stocks would become superfluous. 'If the awakening of the people in the country is true and real, the salt law is as good as abolished'.

Gandhi highlighted the importance of Dandi and praised the efforts of the people of the taluka. He explained, 'Dandi was chosen not by a man but by God.

Gandhi highlighted the importance of Dandi and praised the efforts of the people of the taluka. He explained, 'Dandi was chosen not by a man but by God. How otherwise could we have chosen for the battle-field of satyagraha such an out-of-the-way place-a place where no food grains are to be had, where there is scarcity of water, where thousands can assemble only with difficulty, walking ten miles from the railway station, and where if you are travelling on foot, you have to negotiate creeks full of slush and mud? The truth is that in this struggle we have to put up with suffering. You have made the road from Navsari to Dandi famous throughout the world by arranging for free drinking water at frequent intervals all along it... Dandi should be a sacred ground for us, where we should utter no untruth, commit no sin. Everyone coming here should come with this devout feeling in his heart.'

'If you have not yet gone out to remove salt, let the whole village get together and go. Hold the salt in your fist and think that you are carrying in your hand salt worth Rs 6 Crores. Every year the Government has been taking away from us Rs 6 Crores through its monopoly of salt.'

Gandhi and his volunteers broke the salt laws at 8-30 A.M. on 6 April 1930 by taking a lump of natural salt which was deposited in a small pit. Hundreds of people witnessed this scene. Sarojini Naidu stood by Gandhiji's side, and, as the symbolic gesture was made, she cried, 'Hail Deliverer' Gandhi, while picking up a lump of salt in his hand, said, 'With this, I am shaking the foundations of the British Empire.' Not a single policeman or excise officer was present there. While talking to the representative of the Free Press, Gandhi said, 'Now that the technical or ceremonial breach of the Salt Law has been committed it is open to any one who would take the risk of prosecution under the Salt Law to manufacture salt wherever he wishes and wherever it is convenient. My advice is that the workers should manufacture salt everywhere to make use of it and to instruct the villagers to do so.'

'Thus the war against the salt tax should be continued during the national week. Those who are not engaged in this sacred work should devote themselves to vigorous propaganda for the boycott of foreign cloth and the use of Khadar. They should also endeavour to manufacture as much Khadar as possible.'

After Gandhi had addressed the meeting on 6 April about 25 grams of salt which was taken by him in the morning and also cleaned by him, was auctioned for about $7.50 to Seth Ranchhod Shodhan, a mill-owner of Ahmedabad.

Gandhi's march on foot, from village lo village through Gujarat which was his home and where his influence was greatest, aroused considerable interest and excitement. It has in fact appealed to the imagination of multitudes of people who were emotionally swayed by the dramatic turn of events. Throughout the march, Gandhiji went on preaching his cult of truth and nonviolence to the multitudes that gathered from far and near and he did not hesitate to impose the strictest discipline on the satyagrahis that flocked to his banner. The salt became the symbol of India's will to freedom. The same day the salt laws were broken throughout India at least by five million people at over 5,000 meetings. The entire country-side became acutely conscious of the struggle for Swaraj which was intensifying. The Dandi march received world-wide publicity. Soon the Civil Disobedience Movement spread simultaneously in western, northern, central, eastern and southern regions of India.

# Webb Miller: The Man Who Showed The Indian Independence Struggle To The World



*(In the following dispatch, delayed by censorship in India, Webb Miller, European news manager of the United Press, describes the raid of volunteers on the Dharasana Salt Works yesterday, giving an eye-witness description of the manner in which the raiders permitted police to beat them without even raising their hands to ward off the blows.)*

By WEBB MILLER, United Press Staff Correspondent

DHARASANA, India, Wednesday, May 21, 1930 (UP) - Prayers said as white-clad volunteers knelt in the moonlight and an impassioned speech by the poetess-leader, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, opened the mass attack of 2,500 independence demonstrators today on the Dharasana Salt Works.

The poetess, wearing a rough, homespun robe and soft slippers, but no stockings, exhorted her followers to the raid in which 260 of them were injured and which brought about her own arrest.

"Although Gandhi's body is in prison, his soul goes with you," she cried in an impassioned voice as she sent the volunteers to the attack.

The volunteers formed into columns, with their leaders carrying ropes and wire cutters. They advanced slowly for half a mile - a ghostly procession - toward the salt works.

The 400 police clutched their clubs and about 25 of them revealed their rifles as the volunteers approached. There were a few cheers and then the leaders who had ropes attempted to lasso the posts holding up the barbed wire, intending to uproot them. The police ran up and demanded that they disperse. The volunteers refused.

Police charged, swinging their clubs and belaboring the raiders on all sides. The volunteers made no resistance. As the police swung hastily with their sticks, the natives simply dropped in their tracks.

Less than 100 yards away I could hear the dull impact of clubs against bodies. The watching crowds gasped, or sometimes cheered as the volunteers crumpled before the police without even raising their arms to ward off the blows. With almost unbelievable meekness they submitted to the clubbing and were carried away by their comrades who had collected a score of stretchers.

As the attacks continued, stretcher bearers were overworked. Other volunteers joined, using blankets as stretchers for the injured who were falling so fast that the volunteers established a clearing station a hundred yards from the pans.

I counted 42 injured lying on the muddy ground and a few others who were unconscious and writhing in pain.

After police had driven the raiders back, leaders altered their tactics and started stretching themselves on the ground or sitting in front of the police as closely as they could press to the entanglements. They were warned repeatedly by police, who then struck the men sitting in front of them. The volunteers who were hit simply reeled over on the ground - without making a cry or an effort to defend themselves.

Police also altered their tactics and started dragging the volunteers about 100 yards away to the edge of the ditch, where I stood. Some of the volunteers were hurled bodily into the ditch, splashing mud on everyone nearby.

The man who were so treated did not make a sound but submitted without protest or resistance. Sometimes police became angered and in a few instances they kicked men who were sitting before the entanglements. The crowd of volunteers massed a short distance away and taunted the police, although their leaders implored them to remain silent.

Mrs. Naidu directed operations from a point near the front of the struggle. She commented briefly on the raid and promised to make a statement after it was over. A few minutes later a British official, accompanied by three police, approached and placed her under arrest.

As the heat increased at noon the operations slackened. About 20 doctors and nurses were working over prone men stretched in the shade of a mango tree in a nearby thicket.

Doctor Shah said he had treated about 200, mostly for minor injuries. I counted more than 200 in a nearby shack and saw more arriving.

Many of the volunteers were college students or clerks from all part of Gujerat. Many spoke English. I was the only American correspondent at Dharasana and they talked freely to me but I was refused auto transportation by native drivers because I wore foreign clothes, which have been boycotted.

# The Dandi March and its Long-term effect

The Dandi March, also known as the Salt Satyagraha, salt March and the Dandi Satyagraha, was an act of nonviolent civil disobedience in colonial India led by Mahatma Gandhi. The twenty-four day march lasted from 12 March 1930 to 5 April 1930 as a direct action campaign of tax resistance and nonviolent protest against the British salt monopoly. Another reason for this march was that the Civil Disobedience Movement needed a strong inauguration that would inspire more people to follow Gandhi's example. Gandhi started this march with 78 of his trusted volunteers. The march spanned 240 miles (390 km), from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi, which was called Navsari at that time (now in the state of Gujarat). Growing numbers of Indians joined them along the way. When Gandhi broke the British Raj salt laws at 6:30 am on 6 April 1930, it sparked large scale acts of civil disobedience against the salt laws by millions of Indians.

After making the salt by evaporation at Dandi, Gandhi continued southward along the coast, making salt and addressing meetings on the way. The Congress Party planned to stage a satyagraha at the Dharasana Salt Works, 25 mi (40 km) south of Dandi. However, Gandhi was arrested on the midnight of 4–5 May 1930, just days before the planned action at Dharasana. The Dandi March and the ensuing Dharasana Satyagraha drew worldwide attention to the Indian independence movement through extensive newspaper and newsreel coverage. The satyagraha against the salt tax continued for almost a year, ending with Gandhi's release from jail and negotiations with Viceroy Lord Irwin at the Second Round Table Conference. Although over 60,000 Indians were jailed as a result of the Salt Satyagraha, the British did not make immediate major concessions.

The Salt Satyagraha campaign was based upon Gandhi's principles of nonviolent protest called satyagraha, which he loosely translated as "truth-force". Literally, it is formed from the Sanskrit words satya, "truth", and agraha, "insistence". In early 1930 the Indian National Congress chose satyagraha as their main tactic for winning Indian sovereignty and self-rule from British rule and appointed Gandhi to organise the campaign. Gandhi chose the 1882 British Salt Act as the first target of satyagraha. The Salt March to Dandi, and the beating by British police of hundreds of nonviolent protesters in Dharasana, which received worldwide news coverage, demonstrated the effective use of civil disobedience as a technique for fighting social and political injustice. The satyagraha teachings of Gandhi and the March to Dandi had a significant influence on American activists Martin Luther King JrJames Bevel, and others during the Civil Rights Movement for civil rights for African Americans and other minority groups in the 1960s. The march was the most significant organised challenge to British authority since the Non-cooperation movement of 1920–22, and directly followed the Purna Swaraj declaration of sovereignty and self-rule by the Indian National Congress on 26 January 1930. It gained worldwide attention which gave impetus to the Indian independence movement and started the nationwide Civil Disobedience movement which continued until 1934.



## Long-term effect

The Salt Satyagraha did not produce immediate progress toward dominion status or self-rule for India, did not elicit major policy concessions from the British, or attract much Muslim support. Congress leaders decided to end satyagraha as official policy in 1934, and Nehru and other Congress members drifted further apart from Gandhi, who withdrew from Congress to concentrate on his Constructive Programme, which included his efforts to end untouchability in the Harijan movement. However, even though British authorities were again in control by the mid-1930s, Indian, British, and world opinion increasingly began to recognise the legitimacy of claims by Gandhi and the Congress Party for sovereignty and self-rule. The Satyagraha campaign of the 1930s also forced the British to recognise that their control of India depended entirely on the consent of the Indians – Salt Satyagraha was a significant step in the British losing that consent.

Nehru considered the Salt Satyagraha the high-water mark of his association with Gandhi, and felt that its lasting importance was in changing the attitudes of Indians:

Of course these movements exercised tremendous pressure on the British Government and shook the government machinery. But the real importance, to my mind, lay in the effect they had on our own people, and especially the village masses ... Non-cooperation dragged them out of the mire and gave them self-respect and self-reliance ... They acted courageously and did not submit so easily to unjust oppression; their outlook widened and they began to think a little in terms of India as a whole ... It was a remarkable transformation and the Congress, under Gandhi's leadership, must have the credit for it.

More than thirty years later, Satyagraha and the March to Dandi exercised a strong influence on American civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr., and his fight for civil rights for blacks in the 1960s:

*Like most people, I had heard of Gandhi, but I had never studied him seriously. As I read I became deeply fascinated by his campaigns of nonviolent resistance. I was particularly moved by his Salt March to the Sea and his numerous fasts. The whole concept of Satyagraha (Satya is truth which equals love, and agraha is force; Satyagraha, therefore, means truth force or love force) was profoundly significant to me. As I delved deeper into the philosophy of Gandhi, my skepticism concerning the power of love gradually diminished, and I came to see for the first time its potency in the area of social reform.*

Source: Wikipedia

> The Salt Satyagraha campaign was based upon Gandhi's principles of nonviolent protest called satyagraha, which he loosely translated as "truth-force". Literally, it is formed from the Sanskrit words satya, "truth", and agraha, "insistence". In early 1930 the Indian National Congress chose satyagraha as their main tactic for winning Indian sovereignty and self-rule from British rule and appointed Gandhi to organise the campaign.




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