

The Nationalist Movement In India

The **Nationalist Movements in India** were organized as mass movements emphasizing and raising questions concerning the interests of the people of India. In most of these movements, people were themselves encouraged to take action. Due to several factors, these movements failed to win independence for India. However, they did promote a sense of nationalism among the people of the country. The failure of these movements affected many people as they withdrew from Government offices, schools, factories and services. Though they did manage to get a few concessions such as those won by the Salt March in **1930**, they did not help India much from the point of view of their objective.

Entry of Europeans:

Entry of Europeans to the country started with the establishment of the spice trade in the 1400's when several European countries set up trading posts and colonial towns in the country. Portugal, the Dutch Republic, Denmark, France, and England all had a significant presence in the country beginning as far back as the 1400's (Portugal). It was England, however, that held the longest power in the country. After **1858**, the British held colonial power after taking it from the East India Company which had been ruling since **1757**.

Mahatma Gandhi And His Non-Violent Ways:

Mahatma Gandhi is perhaps the most widely recognized figure of the Indian Nationalist Movement for his role in leading non-violent civil uprisings. He first employed the non-violent approach in South Africa where he was serving as an expatriate lawyer. He was hurt and angry when he witnessed discrimination and exploitation of colored people under Whites rule. He organizes non-violent protests in the country which gained him fame and support from the people of **South Africa**. In **1921**, he became the leader of the Indian National Congress, a nationalist political party in India, which demanded nondiscriminatory laws, equal rights for men and women, peaceful inter-religious relations, overthrow of the caste system, and above all, Indian independence. During his lifetime, Gandhi carried out **three major nationalist movements** which are discussed below.

The Non-Cooperation Movement

The first of the Gandhi-led movements was the Non-Cooperation Movement lasting from September **1920 until February 1922**. If the residents of a country stop co-operating with the British, then the minority Britishers would be forced to give up. This meant that people left their jobs, removed their children from schools, and avoided government offices.

The name Mahatma Gandhi became popular. However, the Non-Cooperation Movement ended when a violent mob erupted in **Chauri Chaura in Uttar Pradesh**. The individuals involved

burned a police station, killing **23** police officials. Gandhi stopped the movement, remaining true to his stance on non-violent protesting. The abrupt ending of the Non-Cooperation Movement did nothing to stop the quest for independence.

The Dandi March:

On **March 12, 1930**, protesters took part in the **Dandi** March, a campaign designed to resist taxes and protest the British monopoly on salt. Gandhi began the **24-day, 240-mile march** with **79 followers and ended with thousands**. When the protesters reached the coastal town of Dandi, they produced salt from saltwater without paying the British tax. This movement prompted nearly a year of civil disobedience, illegal salt production and purchase, boycotts of British goods, refusal to pay taxes, and the imprisonment of approximately **80,000 Indians**. The movement earned national and international attention.

The Quit India Movement:

The Quit India Movement began on **August 8, 1942**, during World War II. The India Congress Committee, under the urging of Gandhi, called for a mass British withdrawal and Gandhi made a **“Do or Die”** speech. British officials acted immediately and arrested nearly every member of the Indian National Congress party.

The nation once again entered mass civil disobedience marked by anti-war speeches and refusal to assist in the war efforts. This movement introduced the idea to the British that they might be unable to maintain control of India.

The Cost Of Independence:

At last, on **August 15, 1947**, India gained independence from British rule. However, independence came at a huge cost. Hindus and Muslims who had fought side by side against the united enemy now had to be separated. On **June 3, 1947**, British rulers proposed an Act to separate British India into India and Pakistan. Thus, the hard work, sacrifice, and willpower of Indians led to the freedom of India from British rule.

Sl No	Important Nationalist Movement	Year
1	The Non-Cooperation Movement	1920 until February 1922
2	The Dandi March	12-Mar-30
3	The Quit India Movement	8-Aug-42
4	The Cost Of Independence	15-Aug-47