

# India's Independence: A Brief Overview

## ■ Historical Background

India's struggle for independence was one of the most significant mass movements in modern history. British colonial rule imposed economic, political, and cultural suppression.

Under British rule, India faced:

- Economic exploitation
- Political suppression
- Cultural and social interference

The demand for self-rule (Swaraj) grew strong in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

## ■ Freedom Movement

Key Phases:

1. Early Nationalism (1885–1905)
  - Formation of Indian National Congress (INC) in 1885
  - Moderate demands for administrative reform
2. Extremist Phase (1905–1919)
  - Leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, and Lala Lajpat Rai
  - Partition of Bengal (1905) sparked mass protests
3. Gandhian Era (1919–1947)
  - Mahatma Gandhi introduced non-violent mass movements:
    - Non-Cooperation Movement (1920)
    - Civil Disobedience Movement (1930)
    - Quit India Movement (1942)

Other Leaders:

- Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Army (INA)
- Bhagat Singh, Chandrasekhar Azad – revolutionary fighters

## ■ Towards Freedom

- 1935: Government of India Act laid groundwork for self-governance
- 1946: Elections held; INC and Muslim League emerged as major players
- Communal tensions grew, leading to the partition plan

## ■ Independence and Partition

- India gained independence on August 15, 1947
- British India split into two nations: India and Pakistan
- Jawaharlal Nehru became India's first Prime Minister
- Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated in 1948 due to tensions from partition

The partition led to:

- Large-scale violence
- Displacement of over 14 million people
- Deep communal wounds

## ■ Legacy

India's independence:

- Inspired anti-colonial movements worldwide
- Marked the birth of the world's largest democracy
- Laid the foundation for a sovereign, secular, and democratic republic (1950)

## ■ Conclusion

India's path to independence was shaped by non-violent resistance, grassroots mobilization, and sacrifices of countless leaders and citizens.