



1. How did Mahatma Gandhi seek to identify with the common people?

Ans: Mahatma Gandhi sought to identify himself with the common people of India. For this action plan,

- (a) He began to live in a very simple life style. He wore simple clothes which a poor Indian would wear.
- (b) He spoke the language of local people.
- (c) Mahatma Gandhi opposed the caste system and attacked untouchability personally lived with the Harijan.
- (d) Mahatma Gandhi attached dignity to labour and physical work. He worked on Charkha and cleaned toilets.
- (e) He attacked the sentiment of the feeling of classifying people into low and high.

2. How was Mahatma Gandhi perceived by the peasants ?

Ans: India is a country of villagers and vast number of Indians are engaged in farming. Mahatma Gandhi knew that during freedom struggle his focus was to address the issues of farmers. He dressed like farmers. His involvement in Indian politics began in Champaran when he successfully resolved the issues of farmers. He stood for farmers against excesses of the British government like high taxes and oppressive tax collections. Apart from all the above, mystery also surrounded the personality of Mahatma Gandhi. Many believed he was endowed with supernatural powers. Stories spread that those who spoke ill of Mahatma Gandhi suffered natural calamities.

Thus, farmers perceived Mahatma Gandhi as their saviour and still many believed he was bestowed with the power to perform miracles.

3. Why did the salt laws become an important issue of struggle?

Ans: Poorest of poor Indian consume food that has salt as one of its prime ingredient. British government brought tax on salt and making salt indigenously was forbidden. It was to become a big burden on the poor people of India. Some important points regarding salt law are as follows.

- 1. Salt law was to lead to monopoly of salt production and distribution. It was to fuel prices, and added to this was the tax levied by the government.
- 2. People were denied access to natural salt and tons of the same were destroyed.
- 3. Salt law was an attack on the local industry in the villages too.

Hence salt law was extremely unpopular and it became an important issue of the struggle.

4. Why are newspapers an important source for the study of national movement?

Ans: Contemporary newspapers are an important source of the study of national movement. Following points lay bare their importance as source of history with reference to Indian Freedom Movement.

- (a) Many contemporary newspapers were published by those who were involved in the freedom struggle. For example, National Herald was issued by Motilal Nehru, further Mr Jinnah issued Dawn.

These newspapers were mouthpieces and represented important voices of the movement. Hence, they made important source of information regarding the freedom movement.

(b) Newspapers do daily reporting, hence, their reporting is more detailed than perhaps any other source can be. As they report on extremely recent events, the chances of misreporting is less. Reading different newspapers further makes our reading balanced and free from bias.

(c) Many newspapers were in local Indian languages, i.e. in vernacular languages and their circulation was limited. Hence, they published newspaper from local perspective which other sources of history may not have.

(d) They reflect the mood of the people too. These newspapers shaped what was published and the way events were reported. Accounts published in a London newspaper would be different from a report in an Indian nationalist paper.

5. Why was the charkha chosen as a symbol of nationalism?

Ans: Gandhiji used to work on charkha. He made it a symbol of our freedom movement. Following are the reasons for making it the symbol of our freedom struggle.

(a) Charkha symbolised manual labour.

(b) Gandhiji wanted to attach respect to manual labour. On charkha people worked with their own hand.

(c) Charkha was a low investment product hence anyone can afford it. It was a boost to the small scale industries.

(d) Charkha as it dignified manual labour. It also promoted the culture of doing one's own work. It would also strike at the root of caste system.

(e) Charkha was used as tool to keep British imported clothes. Thus, Charkha became a symbol of Indian nationalism.

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