**Chapter 2**

**Nationalism in India**

**Learning Points**

**Learning Objectives**

* Describe Colonial domination and Indian Resistance.
* Focus on the First World War and its impact
* Describe the idea of Satyagraha
* Examine the impact of Rowlatt Act and Jallianwallan Bagh Incident
* Explain Women’s role in India
* Explain common bonds and shared beliefs which gave rise to Collective Belonging

**Learning Outcome:**

* Sensitize learners about rise of Nationalism or National Consciousness
* Analyze the nature of diverse social movements of the time
* Get familiarized with the concept of our National identity in Bharat Mata
* Enhance the feeling of nationalism and patriotism
* Develop rational thinking, truth and equality among learners
* Make a comparative chart of the Nationalism in India and Indo-China

**Modern Nationalism and Anti-Colonial Movement in India**

* Modern nationalism in India closely linked to the anti-colonial movement. People discovered their unity while struggling against colonialism.
* The Congress, under Mahatma Gandhi, tried to unite these groups within one movement.
* New symbols, icons, songs, and ideas created links and redefined community boundaries.
* The making of a new national identity was a long and complex process.
* Nationalism in India was shaped by the anti-colonial movement and the experiences of different social groups.

**The First World War, Khilafat and Non-Cooperation**

* In the years after 1919, the national movement in India witnessed significant developments, with the movement spreading to new areas, incorporating new social groups, and adopting new modes of struggle.

**Economic and Political Situation Post-War**

* The war led to a massive increase in defense expenditure, financed by war loans and increased taxes, including raised customs duties and the introduction of income tax.
* Prices doubled between 1913 and 1918, causing extreme hardship for the common people. Forced recruitment in rural areas led to widespread anger.

**Crop Failures and Famine**

* In 1918-19 and 1920-21, crops failed in many parts of India, resulting in severe food shortages.
* An influenza epidemic accompanied these famines.
* According to the 1921 census, 12 to 13 million people died due to famines and the epidemic.
* People hoped that their hardships would end after the war, but this did not happen. At this stage, a new leader appeared and suggested a new mode of struggle for the national movement.

**The Idea of Satyagraha**

* Gandhi organized various satyagraha movements across India after his return from south Africa in 1915.
* He aimed to inspire people to struggle against oppression without using violence.



**Champaran Movement in 1917**

* Gandhi traveled to Champaran, Bihar, to support peasants against the oppressive plantation system.
* His presence inspired the peasants to stand up for their rights and demand better working conditions.

**Kheda Satyagraha in 1917**

* Organized a satyagraha in Kheda district of Gujarat to support peasants affected by crop failure and a plague epidemic.
* Peasants demanded relaxation of revenue collection as they were unable to pay due to the crisis.

**Ahmedabad Cotton Mill Workers Satyagraha in 1918**

* Gandhi went to Ahmedabad to organize a satyagraha movement amongst cotton mill workers.
* The movement aimed to improve working conditions and wages for the workers.

**The Rowlatt Act**

* Launching the Nationwide Satyagraha Against the Rowlatt Act (1919)
* Gandhiji initiated the nationwide satyagraha against the Rowlatt Act, which granted the government extensive powers to suppress political activities.
* The Act allowed detention of political prisoners without trial for up to two years. Non-violent civil disobedience was planned against the unjust laws, starting with a hartal on 6 April.
* **Protests, Strikes, and the British Administration's Response:** Rallies and strikes were organized in various cities, with workers going on strike and shops closing down, instilling fear in the British administration.
* Local leaders were arrested, and Mahatma Gandhi was barred from entering Delhi.
* On 10 April, the police fired upon a peaceful procession in Amritsar, resulting in widespread attacks on government buildings and the imposition of martial law.

**Jallianwalla Bagh Incident (13 April 1919)**

* On April 13th, the Jallianwala Bagh incident took place.
* A large crowd gathered at the enclosed Jallianwalla Bagh ground, some to protest against the government's repressive measures, while others were attending the Baisakhi fair.
* General Dyer entered the area, blocked the exits, and opened fire on the crowd, killing hundreds to create a feeling of terror and awe among satyagrahis.
* After the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, people became furious and went on strikes, clashes with police and attacks on government buildings.
* **Aftermath and the Need for a Broader Movement :** Protests erupted in various north Indian towns, with strikes and clashes with the police.
* The government responded with brutal repression, humiliating and terrorizing people with actions such as forcing satyagrahis to crawl on the streets and flogging them.
* Mahatma Gandhi called off the movement and realized the need for a more broad-based movement, which required bringing Hindus and Muslims together.

**Uniting Hindus and Muslims Through the Khilafat Issue**

* Gandhiji saw an opportunity to unite Muslims and Hindus through the Khilafat issue, as there were concerns about the harsh peace treaty being imposed on the defeated Ottoman Turkey.
* The Khilafat Committee was formed in Bombay in March 1919, and Muslim leaders like Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali began discussing the possibility of united mass action with Mahatma Gandhi.
* At the Calcutta session of the Congress in September 1920, Gandhiji convinced other leaders of the need to start a non-cooperation movement in support of Khilafat and swaraj.

**Non-Cooperation**

* Mahatma Gandhi stated in Hind Swaraj (1909) that British rule in India was established and survived due to the cooperation of Indians.
* He believed that if Indians refused to cooperate, British rule would collapse within a year, leading to swaraj (self-rule).
* **Gandhi's Proposal for a Non-Cooperation Movement :** Gandhi suggested a staged approach to the Non-Cooperation Movement. Stage 1: Surrender government-awarded titles, boycott civil services, army, police, courts, legislative councils, schools, and foreign goods. Stage 2: Launch a full civil disobedience campaign if the government used repression.
* **Concerns and Opposition within the Congress:** Many Congress members were concerned about the proposals, fearing potential violence and being reluctant to boycott the council elections scheduled for November 1920. From September to December 1920, there was an intense debate within the Congress regarding the movement. In January 1921, the Non-Cooperation-Khilafat Movement began. In this movement, various social groups participated, but the term meant different things to different people.

**The Movement in the Towns**

* The Non-Cooperation Movement began with the involvement of the middle class in urban areas.
* Thousands of students left government-controlled schools and colleges, while headmasters and teachers resigned.
* Lawyers also gave up their legal practices in support of the movement. Council elections were boycotted in most provinces, except Madras, where the Justice Party saw this as an opportunity to gain power.
* **Economic Effects:** Foreign goods were boycotted, and foreign cloth was burned in large bonfires. The import of foreign cloth dropped significantly between 1921 and 1922, from Rs 102 crore to Rs 57 crore. Many merchants and traders refused to deal in foreign goods or finance foreign trade. The production of Indian textile mills and handlooms increased as people started wearing only Indian clothes.

**Challenges and Slowdown**

* The movement faced several challenges, causing it to slow down eventually.
* Khadi cloth was more expensive than mass-produced mill cloth, making it difficult for the poor to continue boycotting mill cloth.
* The boycott of British institutions required alternative Indian institutions, which were slow to come up.
* Students and teachers began returning to government schools. Lawyers resumed their work in government courts.

**Rebellion in the Countryside**

* Non-Cooperation Movement in the Countryside Spread from cities to rural regions, involving struggles of peasants and tribals. Awadh's peasant movement led by Baba Ramchandra, a former indentured laborer in Fiji.
* Protests against high rents, various cesses, and forced labor (begar) by landlords.
* Demand for reduced revenue, abolition of begar, and social boycott of oppressive landlords.
* Formed Oudh Kisan Sabha in October 1920, headed by Jawaharlal Nehru and Baba Ramchandra. Congress aimed to integrate Awadh peasant struggle into the Non-Cooperation Movement.
* **Peasant Movement and Congress Leadership:** Peasant movement took forms that Congress leadership did not approve of. Houses of landlords and merchants attacked, grain hoards taken over, and rumors of land redistribution. Mahatma Gandhi's name invoked to justify actions and aspirations.

**Tribal Peasants and Swaraj Interpretation**

* Guerrilla movement spread in Gudem Hills of Andhra Pradesh in the early 1920s.
* Colonial government restricted access to forest resources, affecting livelihoods and traditional rights. Hill people revolted against forced labor (begar) for road building.
* Alluri Sitaram Raju emerged as leader, claiming special powers and connection to Mahatma Gandhi.
* Encouraged wearing khadi and giving up drinking, but advocated for use of force to achieve swaraj.
* Guerrilla warfare against British officials and police stations to achieve independence.
* Raju captured and executed in 1924, becoming a folk hero.

**Swaraj in the Plantations Workers'**

* Plantation workers in Assam saw freedom as the right to move freely and maintain a connection with their villages. The Inland Emigration Act of 1859 restricted their movement, keeping them confined to tea gardens.
* Non-Cooperation Movement and Plantation Workers Thousands of workers defied authorities, left plantations, and attempted to return to their villages, believing Gandhi Rai would give them land.
* These workers never reached their destinations due to a railway and steamer strike, and were caught and beaten by the police.
* Movements were not defined by Congress programmes, but workers interpreted swaraj in their own ways. They imagined a time when suffering and troubles would end.
* Emotional Connection to All-India Agitation Tribals chanting Gandhi's name and demanding 'Swatantra Bharat' showed their emotional connection to a larger movement.
* They identified with a movement beyond their immediate locality when acting in Gandhi's name or linking their actions to the Congress

**Towards Civil Disobedience**

* In February 1922, Mahatma Gandhi withdrew the Non-Cooperation Movement due to increasing violence. Gandhi believed that satyagrahis needed proper training before participating in mass struggles.
* **Swaraj Party Formation** and Internal Debates Some Congress leaders, like C.R. Das and Motilal Nehru, wanted to participate in provincial council elections and formed the Swaraj Party.
* Younger leaders, such as Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose, pushed for more radical mass agitation and full independence.
* **Impact of Worldwide Economic** **Depression** Agricultural prices fell from 1926, leading to a decline in exports and difficulty for peasants to pay their revenue. By 1930, the Indian countryside was in turmoil due to the economic depression.
* **Simon Commission** and Opposition The Tory government in Britain set up a Statutory Commission under Sir John Simon to review the constitutional system in India. The commission faced opposition in India as it had no Indian members, leading to protests with the slogan 'Go back Simon'. All parties, including the Congress and the Muslim League, took part in the demonstrations against the commission.
* Viceroy's Offer and Demand for Purna Swaraj Viceroy Lord Irwin announced a vague offer of 'dominion status' for India and a Round Table Conference to discuss a future constitution in October 1929. This offer did not satisfy Congress leaders, and the radicals, led by Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Chandra Bose, became more assertive.
* In December 1929, the Lahore Congress, under Nehru's presidency, formalized the demand for 'Purna Swaraj' or full independence for India. 26 January 1930 was declared as Independence Day, but celebrations received little attention.

**The Salt March & the Civil Disobedience Movement**

* Demands Letter and Ultimatum to Viceroy Irwin Gandhi sent a letter on 31 January 1930, stating eleven demands to unite the Indian society. The most significant demand was the abolition of the salt tax, which affected both rich and poor.
* If demands were not met by 11 March, the Congress would launch a civil disobedience campaign. Irwin refused to negotiate, leading to the start of the Salt March. The Salt March Gandhi and 78 volunteers marched 240 miles from Sabarmati to Dandi. The march lasted 24 days, with the participants walking about 10 miles a day. Thousands gathered to listen to Gandhi's speeches on swaraj and peaceful defiance. On 6 April, Gandhi reached Dandi and broke the law by making salt from sea water.

The Civil Disobedience Movement

* Different from Non-Cooperation Movement as people were asked to break colonial laws. Thousands broke the salt law, boycotted foreign cloth, and picketed liquor shops. Peasants refused to pay taxes, village officials resigned, and forest people violated forest laws. Colonial government arrested Congress leaders, leading to violent clashes and repressive measures.
* **The Gandhi-Irwin Pact and the Round Table Conference** Gandhi called off the movement and agreed to participate in the Round Table Conference in London. The government released political prisoners in return. Negotiations in London broke down, and Gandhi returned disappointed. Back in India, the government started a new cycle of repression, and Gandhi relaunched the movement. The Civil Disobedience Movement continued for over a year but lost momentum by 1934.

**Participation of Different Social Groups in the Civil Disobedience Movement**

* **Rich peasant communities** (Patidars of Gujarat, Jats of Uttar Pradesh) Hit hard by the trade depression and falling prices Supported the movement to fight high revenues Disappointed when movement called off without revenue rates revision.
* **Poorer peasantry** Struggled with rent payments to landlord. Joined radical movements led by Socialists and Communists Uncertain relationship with Congress due to Congress' reluctance to support 'no rent' campaigns
* **Role of the Business Classes- Indian merchants and industrialists** Made huge profits during World War I Opposed colonial policies restricting business activities Formed Indian Industrial and Commercial Congress (1920) and Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) (1927) Supported the Civil Disobedience Movement initially, but became apprehensive later
* **Involvement of Industrial Working Class** Limited participation in the movement Distanced themselves as industrialists came closer to Congress Some workers participated in boycott of foreign goods, strikes, and protests Congress reluctant to include workers' demands in its program
* **Participation of Women** in the Movement Large-scale participation in various activities Listening to Gandhiji, protest marches, manufacturing salt, picketing liquor shops Women from high-caste urban families and rich peasant rural households Saw service to the nation as a sacred duty Limited change in the position of women Gandhiji believed women's primary duty was in the home Congress reluctant to allow women in positions of authority within the organization

**The Limits of Civil Disobedience**

* Untouchables, or dalits, felt ignored by the Congress due to fear of offending conservative high-caste Hindus. Gandhi aimed to eliminate untouchability, calling them harijan (children of God) and advocating for their rights to public spaces and amenities. However, many dalit leaders sought political solutions, such as reserved seats in educational institutions and separate electorates. Despite Gandhi's efforts, dalit participation in the Civil Disobedience Movement remained limited.
* **Dr B.R. Ambedkar and the Depressed Classes Association:** Ambedkar organized the dalits into the Depressed Classes Association in 1930. He clashed with Gandhi at the second Round Table Conference, demanding separate electorates for dalits. Following Gandhi's fast unto death, Ambedkar agreed to the Poona Pact, which provided reserved seats for Depressed Classes but with a general electorate. Dalit movement remained cautious of the Congress-led national movement.
* **Muslim Response to Civil Disobedience Movement:** Many Muslim organizations felt alienated from the Congress after the decline of the Non-Cooperation-Khilafat movement. Congress's association with Hindu nationalist groups and communal clashes further deepened the divide between Hindus and Muslims. Efforts to forge unity between the Congress and the Muslim League failed due to disagreements over representation in future assemblies. Jinnah was willing to give up separate electorates in exchange for reserved seats and proportional representation in Muslim-dominated provinces, but negotiations fell apart.
* **Atmosphere of Suspicion and Distrust:** When the Civil Disobedience Movement started, there was already suspicion and distrust between Hindus and Muslims. Many Muslims felt alienated from the Congress and were concerned about their status as a minority within India. As a result, large sections of Muslims did not respond to the call for a united struggle during the Civil Disobedience Movement.

**The Sense of Collective Belonging**

* Nationalism spreads when people believe they are part of the same nation. Unity develops through shared experiences and cultural processes History, fiction, folklore, songs, popular prints, and symbols contribute to nationalism.
* In the twentieth century, India's identity was associated with the image of Bharat Mata Created by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in the 1870s through the hymn 'Vande Mataram' The image evolved over time and devotion to it signified nationalism
* Rabindranath Tagore and Natesa Sastri were prominent figures in the folk revival movement. Folklore was considered national literature and a representation of people's true thoughts and characteristics
* Tricolor flags were designed during the Swadeshi movement and by Gandhiji Carrying and displaying the flag became a symbol of defiance
* Nationalist histories aimed to inspire pride and a desire for change Issues in Unifying People. When the glorified past was predominantly Hindu, people of other communities felt excluded The challenge was to create a sense of unity while maintaining the diverse cultural identity of India