



HISTORY CHAPTER – 2 NATIONALISM IN INDIA

Write in brief

Question 1. Explain:

- (a) Why growth of nationalism in the colonies is linked to an anti-colonial movement?
- (b) How the First World War helped in the growth of the National Movement in India?
- (c) Why Indians were outraged by the Rowlatt Act?
- (d) Why Gandhiji decided to withdraw the Non-Cooperation Movement?

Answer: (a) Nationalism is a feeling that combines all the people of the nation into a single unit. It is a powerful sentiment that binds people together in a common bond beyond their communal, lingual, caste or religious differences. In all the colonies of the world, the imperialist power exploited the people socially, religiously, economically and politically.

- Colonization affected people's freedom, and nationalist sentiments surged during the process of struggle against imperial domination.
- The sense of oppression and exploitation became a common bond for people from different walks of life, and this resulted in the growth of nationalist ideals.
- Although each class or group of people felt that they were being oppressed under colonialism, the effects of colonialism were felt differently.
- People started uniting against the colonialism which strengthened the sense of nationalism further.

Thus, the growth of nationalism in the colonies is linked to anti-colonial movements.

- (b)
- During the First World War, the British army conducted forced recruitment from rural areas in India.
 - To finance the defence expenditure, high customs duties and income taxes were imposed.
 - Also, during 1918-19 and 1920-21, crops failed in many parts of India, thereby resulting in a cut in food shortages. Accompanied by epidemics it accounted for 12 to 13 million deaths. All this caused extensive anger and opposition against the British colonial rule.
 - People hoped that their hardships would end after the war was over. But this did not happen.
 - The war had given rise to many social and economic problems. The Montague- Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 could not satisfy the aspirations of the Indians. There arose a general discontent among the Indian masses against the British rule.

(c)

- The Indians helped the British Government during World War I. They were hopeful that after the war, the government would give them many rights.
- However, the government did not do anything and therefore, there was an immense discontent among the people.
- To cope with the situation, they passed the Rowlatt Act 1919. Imperial Legislative Council passed the Rowlatt Act against the opposition of Indians.
- It gave the government autocratic powers to repress political activities besides allowing it to detain political prisoners without a trial, for two years.
- The Indians were outraged by this act as it was clearly undemocratic and oppressive and hurt national sentiments and dignity.
- Rallies were organized in various cities, workers went on strike in railway workshops and shops were closed down.

(d)

- Gandhiji had declared that the non-cooperation movement will be a non-violent one. He decided to
- withdraw the Non-Cooperation Movement due to various incidents of violence perpetrated by the masses, especially the Chauri Chaura incident in 1922 where the people clashed with the police, setting a police-station on fire.
- Although he had stopped the national revolt single-handedly, on 10 March 1922, Gandhi was arrested. On 18 March 1922, he was imprisoned for six years for publishing seditious materials. This led to the suppression of the movement and was followed by the arrest of other leaders.
- Gandhiji felt that the people were not yet ready for a mass struggle and that satyagrah needed to be properly trained for non-violent demonstrations.

Question 2. What is meant by the idea of satyagraha? Answer:

- Satyagraha was a novel method of mass agitation in a non-violent way.
- The idea of Satyagraha emphasized upon the power of truth and the need to search for truth. It suggested that if the cause was true and if the struggle was against injustice, then physical force was not necessary to fight the oppressor.
- Through non-violent methods, a Satyagraha could appeal the conscience of the oppressor by the power of truth.
- People-including the oppressors-had to be persuaded to see the truth through the use of non-violence.
- Gandhiji firmly believed that the truth was bound to ultimately triumph.

Question 3. Write a newspaper report on:

(a) The Jallianwala Bagh massacre

(b) The Simon Commission

Answer: (a)

- On 13th April 1919, a large crowd had gathered in the enclosed ground of Jallianwala Bagh – some to protest against the British government's repressive measures, others to attend the annual Baishakhi Fair.
- These people were unaware of the imposition of Marshal Law in the city. General Dyer, the Commander, blocked the exit points from the Bagh and opened fire upon the innocent citizens.
- Dyer went with Sikh, Gurkha, Baluchi, Rajput troops from 2-9th Gurkhas, the 54th Sikhs and the 59th Sind Rifles they entered the garden, blocking the main entrance after them, took up position on a raised bank and on Dyer's orders fired on the crowd for about ten minutes, directing their bullets largely towards the few open gates through which people were trying to flee, until the ammunition supply was almost exhausted.
- Dyer's intention was to produce a 'moral effect' and terrorise satyagrahis. Hundreds of innocent people including women and children were killed and wounded due to this indiscriminate firing by the British soldiers,
- This incident angered masses of India ultimately led to nation-wide outrage. Jallianwala Bagh incident was the most brutal incident in the History of India.

(b)

- The Simon Commission was constituted by the Tory Government in Britain, under Sir John Simon. The objective of the Commission was to look into the functioning of the constitutional system in India and suggest some constitutional changes.
- But nationalists in India opposed the Commission because it had not a single Indian member. Therefore, when the Simon Commission arrived in India in 1928, it was greeted with the slogan "Go Back Simon".
- The Commission was strongly opposed by many in India and met with protests in every major Indian city it visited
- All parties, including Congress and the Muslim league, participated in the demonstrations. Thus it brought a sense of unity in Indians for the moment. The Simon
- commission recommendations formed the basis of the Act of 1935.

**Question 4. Compare the images of Bharat Mata in this chapter with the image of Germania
Chapter 1.**

Answer:

- The image of Germania was the symbol of German nation whereas; the image of Bharat Mata was the

symbol of the Indian nation.

- Both images inspired nationalists who worked very hard to unify their respective countries and to attain a liberal nation.
- The image of Bharat Mata is different from that of Germania in the sense that the former reflects the religious basis of its making. The image of Bharat Mata painted by Abanindranath Tagore is bestowed with learning, food, clothing, and some ascetic quality also whereas the image of Germania was painted by Philip Veit in the year 1848.
- Another painting of Bharat Mata in which we find Mata holding Trishul and standing beside a lion and an elephant – symbols of power and authority. This image appears to be more akin to the image of Germania where she holds a sword and a shield.
- These images popularized the idea of sacrifice and devotion to the mother nation.

Discuss Project

Question 1. List all the different social groups which joined the Non-Cooperation Movement of 1921. Then choose any three and write about their hopes and struggles to show why they joined the movement.

Answer: The different social groups that joined the Non-Cooperation Movement of 1921 were the urban middle class comprising lawyers, teachers, and headmasters, students, peasants, tribals and workers.

- The middle class joined the movement because the boycott of foreign goods would make the sale of their textiles and handlooms go up.
- The peasants took part in the movement because they hoped they would be saved from the oppressive landlords, high taxes taken by the colonial government, abolition of begar and variety of other cesses.
- The tribals employed guerrilla tactics to fight the British in some parts of India, the Gudem rebels attacked police stations & attempted to kill British officials. Means they were inspired by the Gandhiji but were not keen to follow nonviolent ways of struggle. Plantation workers took part in the agitation hoping they would get the right to move freely in and outside the plantations, maintain a link with the village they had come from and get land in their own villages.

Question 2. Discuss the Salt March to make clear why it was an effective symbol of resistance against colonialism.

Answer:

- Gandhiji thought the salt was an effective symbol of resistance against colonialism because it was done in revolt against a commodity – salt, used by the rich and the poor alike. An item of daily use could resonate more with all classes of citizens than an abstract demand for greater political rights.
- The tax on salt and the government monopoly over its production was a severely oppressive

administrative move.

- By breaking the salt law India showed their intention of non-cooperation and to break the oppressive colonial laws.
- The Salt March was effective also because Gandhiji met a large number of commoners during the march and he taught them the true meaning of swaraj and non-violence.
By peacefully defying law and making salt against government orders,
- Gandhiji set forth an example to the whole nation of how the oppressor could be confronted in a non-violent manner. This also led to the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930.

Question 3. Imagine you are a woman participating in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Explain what the experience meant to your life.

Answer: I was very happy to participate in the **Civil Disobedience Movement** because I understood that I have to serve the nation in whatever capacity I could. I had heard Gandhiji speaking and asking us to participate in this movement. I feel service to the nation as a sacred duty of women. Inspired by him, I also offered Satyagraha. Picketed liquor shops and shops selling foreign cloth and also courted arrest. I felt empowered by these activities and felt that women also can help the men in the ultimate goal of achieving independence from the British. I felt very proud to be the part of the movement but also I felt that the participation of women was taken by many Indians as symbolic.

Question 4. Why did political leaders differ sharply over the question of separate electorates?

Answer:

- Political leaders differed sharply over the question of separate electorates because of differences in opinion.
- While those supporting the cause of minorities and the Dalits believed that only political empowerment would resolve their social backwardness, Dalit leaders like Dr. Ambedkar demanded a separate electorate.
- others like Gandhiji thought that separate electorates would further slow down the process of their integration into society. Also, it was feared that the system of separate electorates would gradually divide the country into numerous fragments because every community or class would then ask for separate representations.
- Even Muslim leaders favoured these separate electorates as they feared their identity and culture would be in danger due to the domination of majority. They feared that the culture and identity of minorities would be submerged under the domination of Hindu majority.