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Nationalism in India

The growth of modern nationalism is intimately connected to the anti-colonial movement. The congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi tried to forge groups together within one movement. However, the unity did not emerge without conflict.

First World War, Khilafat and Non-Cooperation

1. The National Movement was spreading in New areas in 1919 and incorporating new social groups and developing new modes of struggle.
2. Mahatma Gandhi came to India and the Idea of Satyagraha emphasised the power of truth and the need to search for truth.
3. He advocated that physical force was not necessary to fight the oppressor.
4. In 1916, He travelled to Champaran in Bihar to inspire the peasants to struggle against the oppressive plantation system.

The Idea of Satyagraha

1. Mahatma Gandhi returned to India in January, 1915. His heroic fight for the Indians in South Africa was well-known. His novel method of mass agitation known as Satyagraha had yielded good results.
2. The idea of Satyagraha emphasized the power of truth and the need to search for truth.
3. In 1916, Gandhi travelled to Champaran in Bihar to inspire the peasants to struggle against the oppressive plantation system.
4. In 1917, crops that were planted in Kheda district of Gujarat were destroyed due to famine, but the government refused to remit land revenue and insisted on its full collection.
5. In 1918, Mahatma Gandhi intervened in a dispute between workers and mill owners of Ahmedabad. He advised workers to go on strike and to demand a 35% increase in wages.
6. Satyagraha brought Gandhiji into close touch with the workers in the urban areas.

The Rowlatt act

1. When the Rowlatt Act 1919, was passed hurriedly through the Imperial Legislative Council with unanimous opposition of the Indian members. Gandhiji's patience came to an end due to the enactment of the Rowlatt Act.
2. Gandhi wanted non-violent civil disobedience against such unjust laws, which would start with a hartal on 6th April.
3. The 6th of April 1919 was observed as Satyagraha Day when people all over the country observed fast and hartal.
4. In 1919, the country witnessed a remarkable political awakening in India.

5. Local leaders were picked up from Amritsar and Mahatma Gandhi was barred from entering Delhi.
6. On 10th April, the police in Amritsar fired upon a peaceful procession, provoking widespread attacks.

Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

1. A large crowd gathered in the enclosed ground of Jallianwalla Bagh.
2. People came to protest against the government's repressive measures while some came to attend the annual Baisakhi fair.
3. General Dyer entered the area. Blocked the exit points and opened fire on the crowd, killing hundreds.
4. The government responded with brutal repression seeking to humiliate and terrorise people.
5. Satyagrahis were forced to rub their noses on the ground, crawl on the streets and do Salaam (salute) to all Sahibs.

Khilafat movement

1. Rowlatt Satyagraha had been a widespread movement, it was still limited mostly to cities and towns.
2. Mahatma Gandhi now felt the need to launch a more broad based movement in India.
3. But he was certain that no such movement could be organized without bringing the Hindus and Muslims closer together.
4. The First World War had ended with the defeat of the Ottoman Empire. There were rumors that a harsh peace treaty was going to be imposed on the Ottoman Emperor, who was the spiritual head (Khalifa) of the Islamic world.
5. The Muslims of India decided to force Britain to change her Turkish policy.
6. A Khalifa Committee was formed under the leadership of Maulana Azad, Ajmal Khan and Hasrat Mohani.
7. A young generation of Muslim leaders like the brothers Muhammad Ali and Shaukat Ali began discussing with Mahatma Gandhi about the possibility of a united mass action on the issue.

Differing strands within the movement:

1. **Rebellion in the countryside:** – From the cities, the non-cooperation movement spread to the countryside. After the war, the struggles of peasants and tribals were developing in different parts of India.
2. One movement here was against talukdars and landlords who demanded exorbitantly high rents and a variety of other cesses from the peasants.

3. **Peasants had to begar:** The peasant movement demanded reduction of revenue tax, an abolition of begar and social boycott of oppressive landlords.
4. Oudh Kisan Sabha was set up headed by Jawaharlal Nehru and others; within a month over 300 branches had been set up by the villagers.
5. Tribal peasants interpreted the message of Mahatma Gandhi and the idea of Swaraj in yet another way.
6. The colonial government had closed large forest areas preventing people from entering the forests to graze their cattle, or to collect fuel wood and fruits.
7. Alluri Sitaram Raju Claimed that he had a variety of special powers. He asserted that India could be liberated only by the use of force.

Towards Civil Disobedience

1. Mahatma Gandhi decided to withdraw the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1922.
2. The movement was turning violent in many places and satyagrahis needed to be properly trained for mass struggle.
3. CR Das and Motilal Nehru formed the Swaraj Party within the congress to argue for a return to council politics.
4. Salt was a powerful symbol that could unite the nation.
5. Salt march accompanied by 78 of his trusted volunteers.
6. Finally, Mahatma Gandhi once again decided to call off the movement and entered into a pact with Irwin on 5 March 1931.
7. Participants saw the movement from different angles such as Patidars of Gujarat and Jats of Uttar Pradesh.
8. To organise business interest, formed the Indian Industrial and commercial congress in 1920 and Federation of the Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industries (FICCI).
9. Gandhi called the Untouchable as Harijan, meaning Children of God.

The Sense of Collective Belonging

1. Nationalist Movement Spreads when people belonging to different regions and communities begin to develop a sense of collective belongingness. The identity of a nation is most often symbolized in a figure or image.
2. This image of Bharat Mata was first created by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay in 1870 when he wrote 'Vande Mataram ' for our motherland. Indian folk songs and folk sung by bards played an important role in making the idea of nationalism. In Bengal, Rabindranath Tagore and in Madras, Natesa, Sastri collection of folk tales and songs, which led the movement for folk revival.

3. During the Swadeshi Movement, a tri-color (red, green and yellow) flag was designed in Bengal. It had eight lotuses representing eight provinces and a crescent moon representing Hindus and Muslims.
4. Means of creating a feeling of nationalism was through reinterpretation of history. The nationalist writers urged the readers to take pride in India's great achievements in the past and struggle to change the miserable conditions of life under British rule.

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