

**Impact Of Non Cooperation Movement In Indian Freedom Struggle**

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**Abstract**

India's freedom struggle was revolutionized by the Non-Cooperation Movement (1920–22), which established the first mass movement, mobilized millions of peasants, students, and women through boycotts of British institutions (schools, courts, and goods), and promoted Satyagraha (nonviolent resistance) and Swadeshi (self-reliance). Even though it failed to achieve its immediate goals of Swaraj and accountability for Jallianwala Bagh, its impact included a massive political awakening, Hindu-Muslim unity (Khilafat link), the rise of new leaders (Nehru, Bose), laying the foundation for future movements (Civil Disobedience, Quit India), and demonstrating the power of mass non-violent action against colonial rule. The non-cooperation movement was the most significant part of India's freedom movement. Mahatma Gandhi believed that if Indians did not cooperate with the British government in any way, it would be difficult for the British to form a government and grant the Indians freedom. One of the most important periods in the history of the Indian Freedom Movement was the Non-Cooperation Movement. A new chapter in the history of the Indian Freedom Movement began with Gandhi's rise to prominence as the movement's leader. The Congress chose to adopt a direct action strategy for the first time. Because the NonCooperation Movement was a widespread, coordinated effort by the Muslim and Hindu communities to oppose the British Government, it was a distinctive feature of India's Freedom Movement. The district's initial impetus for the NonCooperation Movement was comparable to that of Bengal's other districts. Gandhiji's demand for the Non-Cooperation Movement received a tremendous response from the Birbhum district's residents, which had a profound effect on practically every area of the district. The effort was successful in giving the district's fairly inactive residents a fresh lease on life.

**Keywords: Gandhi, Nonviolence, Independence, Untouchability, Politics, India**

## **Introduction**

The twentieth century saw a strong rise in national political awareness and the development of organized national movements in India. The year 1921 was a very important time in the struggle for India's freedom. During this period, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi became the main leader of the Indian National Congress and decided to start a Non-Cooperation Movement against British rule. This was a major turning point. The Non-Cooperation Movement was a significant part of India's freedom struggle. Gandhi's leadership brought a new direction to the freedom movement. It was the first time that the Congress decided to take direct action. The start of the Non-Cooperation Movement was due to the British government's stubborn decisions on several issues. The First World War changed things. Nationalism grew stronger, and the nationalists hoped for big political changes after the war. During the war, people in India expected to get self-government, but the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms (1919) did not fulfill this hope. The British introduced the Rowlatt Act (1919), which limited the freedom of Indians. This act was strongly opposed and led to the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. In 1920, the Hunter Commission's report did not strongly condemn General Dyer's actions in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, which deeply affected people in India. The Khilafat issue was another important factor in the Non-Cooperation Movement. The Khilafat movement was caused by anger over a harsh treaty imposed on the defeated Ottoman Empire, which still recognized the Ottoman Sultan as the Islamic leader. In January 1921, Gandhi started the Non-Cooperation Movement. This movement reached common people by promoting simple and not very clean clothes and traveling in third-class trains. He organized several programs to follow Gandhiji's non-violent non-cooperation movement. These included:

- Giving up titles and honors given by the British government.
- Quitting government and army jobs and stopping government schools and courts.
- Boycotting the 1920 elections and resigning from legislatures, encouraging people not to vote for candidates not supported by the Congress.
- Students and teachers boycotting schools and joining the movement.
- Using local goods instead of foreign items.
- Lawyers and officials leaving their jobs and forming their own courts.

Gandhiji called for Congress activists to follow about fourteen programs.

In the Haveri district, people like Govindacharya Raichur, Huchurao Keremathihalli, who were lawyers, gave up their professions. Galaganath and Mahadevappa Mailara opened a store

selling local goods. Agnihoti also supported them. Students boycotted government schools, which was a big event in the district. National schools started in places like Haveri, Hanagallu, Guttala, and Ranebennur. Gandhiji's work in the district gave a new form to the freedom movement.

The Non-Cooperation Movement happened in four stages:

1. Students and lawyers joined the movement by boycotting schools, colleges, and court offices.
2. The Tilak Swarajya Nidhi was formed to collect money.
3. Rejection of certain drafts in certain areas.
4. All these actions were done in a truthful and non-violent way through boycott methods.

In the year 1919, the Khilafat Committee started the Khilafat movement in Bombay. The movement had three main demands: first, the caliph or Khalifa should regain control over Muslim holy sites; second, he should be allowed to keep the territories he had before the war so he could remain the leader of the Islamic world; and third, Jazirat-ul-Arab should not be controlled by non-Muslim authorities. Because of this, Gandhi was confident that the Muslim community would support the Congress if they launched the Non-Cooperation Movement. So, Gandhi started calling for the Non-Cooperation Movement. On March 10, 1920, he released his first statement on Non-Cooperation, saying, "Non-Cooperation is the only remedy open to us." The movement was started by the Khilafat Committee and the Congress, under Gandhi's guidance. The Non-Cooperation Movement was unique, as it was a large-scale united effort by both Hindus and Muslims against the British. It was bigger and more intense than any previous popular protest. Jawaharlal Nehru said, "Non-Cooperation was led by a man with a commanding personality. And Gandhi was that man. There was a new sense of freedom. Fear disappeared into the background. The peasants stood taller. They raised their heads." Under Gandhi's leadership, the Congress took on a new look. The Non-Cooperation Movement began in January 1921. Many students left their schools and colleges, and lawyers gave up their legal practice. Over 1,500 lawyers stopped working. Peasants refused to pay taxes to the government. In Bengal, the campaign against paying taxes was quite successful. The movement became more militant as people started boycotting and holding hartals. People publicly burned foreign clothes. During the movement, a nationwide strike was held on November 17 when the Prince of Wales arrived in India. A series of meetings were held at that time. The government took severe actions to stop the movement, beating people and arresting those who supported Non-Cooperation. In 1921, thirty thousand Satyagrahis were taken into custody. One of the main

features of the movement was that it was uneven across the country and had different regional variations. Both Hindus and Muslims actively took part in the national movement. The excitement and enthusiasm of that time was something special, as the sleeping giant was beginning to wake up. Gandhi spread the ideas of Non-Cooperation to the masses by traveling through different parts of India with Saikat Ali. Every section of society, every man and woman, was deeply influenced by the Non-Cooperation Movement, and they made their greatest possible self-sacrifices for the national cause. Women played an important role in the movement. They gave their jewelry freely to support the cause with great enthusiasm. The years 1921 and 1922 saw a new spirit of freedom and fearlessness and an unprecedented movement by the Indian people. The Tilak Swaraj Fund was set up to support the Non-Cooperation Movement, and within six months, over 10 million rupees were collected. Twenty thousand charkhas were made. The movement was marked by the involvement of regions and classes that had not participated in any previous Congress-led movements.

## **Origins of the Non-Cooperation Movement**

### **Historical Context and Background**

The Non-Cooperation Movement started in the early 1920s because Indians were getting more upset with British rule. This movement was a big act of peaceful protest meant to fight against British control and push for self-government, called Swaraj. It was made stronger by events like the Jallianwala Bagh massacre and the strict Rowlatt Act, which made people even more determined to gain independence.

### **Role of Mahatma Gandhi**

Mahatma Gandhi was key in starting the Non-Cooperation Movement. He asked Indians to stop supporting the British government. Gandhi thought that by peacefully resisting, the people could win their freedom without using violence. His strong leadership helped many people get involved, turning the movement into a large-scale effort.

### **Influence of the Khilafat Movement**

The Khilafat Movement, which was about protecting the Ottoman Empire and its leader, had a big impact on the Non-Cooperation Movement. Many Indian Muslims joined together with Hindus under Gandhi's guidance, showing unity between the two communities. This teamwork was important in making the movement stronger and presenting a united front against British rule. The Non-Cooperation Movement was a big step in India's fight for independence, bringing together different groups under one common goal.

### **Causes of the Origin of the Movement**

In his famous book \*Hind Swaraj\*, Gandhiji said that British rule in India was built with the help of Indians and stayed because of their support.

He believed that if Indians stopped helping the British, their rule would fall within a year, and independence, or \*Swaraj\*, would come. That's why he started the Non-Cooperation Movement. These are the reasons behind the start of the movement.

**Rowlett Act**-The Rowlatt Act was related to the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre.

It greatly affected the Indian people and leaders. Their trust in the British legal system was broken, and the whole country turned against the British government.

**Khilafat Movement**-During the First World War, Turkey fought against the British.

After Turkey lost the war, it was suggested that the Ottoman caliphate should be ended. Muslims saw the Sultan of Turkey as their leader, or \*caliph\*. The movement was started by the Ali Brothers, Maulana Azad, Hakim Ajmal Khan, and Hasrat Mohani. It got support from Mahatma Gandhi to stop the British from ending the caliphate. The leaders of the Non-Cooperation Movement joined the protest against the British.

**Home Rule Movement**-The Home Rule Movement, started by Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, helped lead to the Non-Cooperation Movement.

The extremists and moderates in the Indian National Congress came together, and the Lucknow Pact showed unity between the Muslim League and the Congress Party. This pact played a big role in the beginning of the Non-Cooperation Movement.

**Economic Hardship Due to World War** – When India joined the First World War, it caused a lot of economic problems for the people. The prices of goods went up, which hurt the common people. Farmers also faced financial trouble because of the high cost of goods. All these issues made the people angry with the government.

### **Essential Techniques of the Non-Cooperation Movement**

An important component of India's fight for independence was the Non-Cooperation Movement. It included a number of tactics meant to challenge British authority. People were urged by the campaign to reject British institutions and products.

#### **Boycott of British Institutions and Products**

- Many Indians boycotted British government employment, schools, and courts;
- people were persuaded to cease purchasing British goods;
- The boycott of elections conducted in accordance with British legislation was another aspect of the movement.

#### **Promotion of Swadeshi and Khadi:**

Silk: The movement encouraged the use of regional goods, particularly the hand-spun textile known as Khadi. Khadi, which became a symbol of independence, was made at home by a large number of people. Public events were organized to promote the use of local products and to burn imported clothing.

### **Civil disobedience and nonviolent resistance**

In keeping with Gandhi's ahimsa philosophy, the movement placed a strong emphasis on nonviolence. In opposition to British regulations, protesters staged nonviolent protests and strikes. Regardless of their origins, the movement sought to unite Indians.

The goal of the Non-Cooperation Movement was to instill a sense of patriotism in Indians, not merely to boycott products.

In order to mobilize the populace and promote a feeling of national identity against colonial control, these tactics were essential. The movement's influence was felt in many areas, resulting in broad support and engagement from a variety of social groups.

### **Important Occurrences During the Movement for Non-Cooperation**

#### **Aftermath of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre**

The 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre marked a sea change in Indian nationalism. This terrible incident sparked massive protests and increased resentment of British control. Hundreds of Indians were killed in the massacre, which heightened the demand for non-cooperation with the British authority. This event had a profound emotional impact since it brought people from all areas and communities together to seek justice and self-government.

#### **Important Demonstrations and Protests**

There were many demonstrations against the Non-Cooperation Movement in India. Here are a few noteworthy occasions:

- **Punjab:** The Akali movement sought to bring Sikhs, Muslims, and Hindus together by reforming Gurudwaras.
- **Bengal:** In Midnapore, Birendranath Sasmal spearheaded demonstrations against Union board taxes.
- **Assam:** J.M. Sengupta coordinated railroad and tea plantation strikes.
- **United Provinces:** Baba Ram Chandra led agrarian disturbances that exposed peasant unrest.

#### **The Indian National Congress's role**

An important part of the Non-Cooperation Movement was the Indian National Congress (INC). The INC formally supported the campaign in September 1920 during a special session in

Calcutta. The INC's willingness to forgo constitutional measures in favor of self-rule signified a dramatic change in their approach. The movement urged individuals to stop sending their kids to public schools, quit government employment, and boycott British products. This group effort showed how Indians are becoming more concerned of their country.

In India's fight for independence, the Non-Cooperation Movement was crucial because it brought disparate factions together to oppose colonial rule and set the stage for later movements.

### **Effects on Indian Politics and Society**

Indian politics and society were significantly impacted by the Non-Cooperation Movement. People became more politically conscious as a result, which inspired them to take an active role in the independence movement.

### **Growth in National Awareness**

- People from a variety of backgrounds, including workers and peasants, joined the movement, forming a unified front against British rule;
- This collective action gave Indian society confidence to resist colonial oppression;
- The movement helped awaken a sense of national identity among Indians.

### **Hindu-Muslim Harmony**

• The movement sought to promote togetherness by bridging the divide between Muslims and Hindus. In addition to strengthening the national cause, this collaboration promoted unity among various populations. It established the framework for further cooperation in the struggle for independence.

### **Women's and marginalized groups' empowerment**

- The participation of marginalized groups in the movement demonstrated their significance in the fight for independence;
- Women played an important role in the movement, breaking established gender stereotypes;
- This change helped Indian society gain a more comprehensive notion of equality and social justice.

Although self-rule was not immediately attained, the Non-Cooperation Movement raised political awareness and gave Indian society the confidence to fight against colonial oppression.

### **People's Response to the Non-Cooperation Movement**

**Business Class:** The economic boycott of British goods benefited the business class, which backed the initiative. Nonetheless, a large portion of the corporate class opposed the initiative.

**Peasants:** Because they opposed being exploited by traders and landlords, peasants supported Gandhiji. For the sake of the peasantry, Baba Ramchandra and Jawahar Lal Nehru founded the Oudh Kisan Sabha in October 1920. They attempted to incorporate the peasant struggle of Awadh into the Non-Cooperation Movement.

**Tribals:** The peasants in these tribal areas adopted Gandhiji's philosophy in a different manner. Large tracts of woodland were under colonial control in their regions. Peasants rebelled against the rule when they were made to pay the Bega.

Leading the uprising there, Alluri Sitaram Raju claimed to be motivated by the movement and asked the populace to don Khadi as Gandhiji's disciple.

**Women:** Gandhiji organized a sizable number of women during the Non-Cooperation Movement, which marked the beginning of women's involvement in public life. During that time, Sarojini Naidu was a well-known nationalist. She visited the places devastated by riots after joining the organization in 1921. She urged women to protest the Rowlett Act. During the movement, prominent female organizers were Basanti Devi, Urmila Devi, and Suniti Devi.

**Students** emerged as the movement's most engaged participants. They joined the nationalist movement after dropping out of school and college. The majority of the pupils came from Kashi Vidyapeeth and Jamia Milia Islamia.

### **Conclusion**

Gandhiji played a crucial part in India's freedom struggle, which provided the common people newfound confidence despite the Non-Cooperation movement's failure to accomplish its important goals. During this period, these mill owners made money. Gandhiji became a popular leader in India as a result of this effort. Tribal and peasant movements joined the Indian National Movement. According to Gandhiji's philosophy, it was a nonviolent movement. An important turning point in India's struggle for independence was the Non-Cooperation Movement. Despite not accomplishing all of its objectives, it had a significant influence on the nation. Many Indians were aware of the significance of opposing British authority because to this movement. It brought together people who shared a desire for change from a variety of backgrounds, including farmers, laborers, and students. Many were motivated to join the movement by Gandhi's teachings of unity and nonviolence. Additionally, the campaign brought attention to societal issues such as discrimination based on caste. All things considered, the Non-Cooperation Movement was essential in determining India's course toward independence and laid the groundwork for subsequent demonstrations.

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