

Bardoli Satyagraha

Floods and hunger struck the Bardoli Taluka in Gujarat, causing agricultural yields to plummet. This had a financial impact on the farmers. The Bombay Presidency ignored the farmers' distress and hiked tax rates by 22%.

- Despite petitions and appeals from civic groups and farmers urging the government to reconsider this unfair tax rise in light of the dire circumstances, the administration opted to proceed with tax collection.
- The local Congress Party released a study in 1927 demonstrating that the farmers would be unable to bear the weight of the increased assessment. The authorities, however, refused to budge.
- Farmers in Bardoli urged Vallabhai Patel to lead a protest campaign in which they unanimously agreed not to pay taxes in January 1928.
- Patel agreed to take on the leadership position only after receiving guarantees from the farmers about their commitment to the cause.
- He warned them about the probable implications of their decision, including land and property seizure and imprisonment.
- Patel contacted the authorities and informed them of the issue. But received the retort that the administration would not make any compromises. This was the beginning of Bardoli Satyagraha.

Bardoli Satyagraha Movement

Patel led his nonviolent 'army' in Bardoli with excellence. He split the taluk into camps and enlisted hundreds of men and women under it. Volunteers hailed from Hindu, Muslim, and Parsi backgrounds.

- There was also door-to-door campaigning. Volunteers produced news bulletins, campaigns, and lectures from the camps, teaching the public the importance of being disciplined and prepared for austerity.
- The Bardoli Satyagraha movement drew a considerable number of female participants. These women were the ones who gave Patel the title 'Sardar.'
- Peasants were asked to swear in the name of God that they would not pay taxes.
- Those who paid taxes or supported the British were shunned socially.
- They also attempted to improve the Kaliparaj caste's situation (farmers who worked as landless labourers).
- They refused to sell non-essential supplies to local government agencies.
- They used a variety of strategies to fight eviction and confiscation (Jabti).
- They had informers in government agencies who would provide them advance notification of whether or not a "Jabti" notice would be carried out.
- When the cops arrived to confiscate the land, the whole town would have relocated to a new location, leaving the officers with an empty village.

- Despite its small size, the Bardoli Satyagraha campaign drew national notice and support.

Post-Movement Effects of the Bardoli Satyagraha

- Fearing that things may run out of control, the government established the Maxwell-Broomfield committee to investigate the situation.
- The profit margin was cut to 6.03 per cent.
- The seized land was restored to the villagers.
- Following the success of the Bardoli Satyagraha, Patel rose to prominence as a national leader. He demonstrated exceptional organisational and leadership abilities.

The Bardoli Satyagraha movement advocated for a tax-free society. Even though the campaign mostly overlooked destitute farmers and failed to modify the bonded labour system, it was a watershed moment in the Indian nationalist struggle. The Bardoli Satyagraha Movement is considered to be a turning point in the Civil Disobedience Movement, which was a pivotal part of the Indian Independence Movement.

