

Indian Independence Movement

During the late 19th century, Indian Nationalism emerged to overthrow British rule, which led to the Indian freedom struggle. There were many national heroes who came and became an active part of the struggle. From this article, one can get to know the timeline and brief history of all major events of the Indian Independence movement.

It started in 1857 after Mangal Pandey attacked one of his officers in Bengal. The incident later spread fire throughout the country and ended with the country's independence in 1947 after the contribution of important [freedom fighters of India](#).

Indian Independence Movement Timeline

Get the Indian freedom struggle timeline through the following table:

Year	Movement
1857	Revolt of 1857
1876	Vernacular Press Act
1882	Indian Education Commission or Hunter Commission
1883-84	Ilbert Bill
1885	Indian National Congress established
1905	Partition of Bengal
1906	All-India Muslim League
1909	Minto-Morley Reforms or Indian Councils Act 1909
1916	Lucknow Pact
1917	Champaran Satyagraha
1919	Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms
1919	Rowlatt Act
1919	Jallianwala Bagh massacre
1920-22	Non-Cooperation Movement
1927	Simon Commission
1930	Civil Disobedience Movement

1930	First Round Table Conference
1931	Second Round Table Conference
1932	- Poona Pact - Third Round Table Conference
1935	Government of India Act 1935
1942	Quit India Movement
June 1947	Mountbatten Plan
July 1947	Indian Independence Act

Indian Freedom Struggle: Major Events

The freedom movement of India includes major events like the Revolt of 1857, the formation of the Indian National Congress, the Partition of Bengal, the Swadeshi Movement, etc. The important events in the Indian Freedom Struggle are explained as follows:

Revolt of 1857

The major uprising movement in Indian history against British rule in India was the [Revolt of 1857](#). The revolt started at Barrackpore on 29 March 1857 by Mangal Pandey. He was a Sepoy of the 34th Bengal Native Infantry and attacked one of his officers. His rebellion turned out to be a nationwide revolt against the East India Company. The revolt resulted in the end of the rule of the East India Company over India.

Indian National Congress (INC)

After the revolt of 1857, in the late nineteenth century, India experienced the formation of several political parties. These political parties influenced the masses to fight for freedom. The first political party that emerged in India was the Indian National Congress, formed by A. O. Hume, a retired British Civil Servant, along with Dinshaw Wacha and Dadabhai Naoroji. The [First session of the Indian National Congress](#) was held on 28 Dec 1885 at Bombay and continued till 31 December.

Under the leadership of prominent leaders like Sardar Vallabhai Patel, Subhash Chandra Bose, Jawarh Lal Nehru, and Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian National Congress created a huge impact on the Indian independence movement.

Partition of Bengal (1905)

In the early 1900s, Indian National Congress influenced masses in various parts of the country, particularly in Bengal. The INC leaders manipulated the people throughout Bengal as a result to which, and Bengal became the centre of gaining Indian nationalism. Seeing the outrage for the British government in Bengal, the Viceroy (1899-1905), Lord Curzon, attempted to Dethrone Calcutta from being the centre of nationalism.

He came up with the idea to divide the state of Bengal into two parts in December 1903. However, the formal announcement of the [Partition of Bengal](#) was held on 19 July 1905, and the partition took place on 16 October 1905. Not only they divided the region, but they also divided

the people based on their religion to counter Indian National Congress and Muslim Communalists by Divide and Rule policy.

Swadeshi Movement (1905-1908)

Swadeshi is the combination of two words - "Swa" meaning "Self," and "desh" meaning "country." The [Swadesh Movement](#) was initiated by Gandhi to popularize the use and consumption of native products. After the movement, the Indian masses refused to use the British good and ditched them for Indian products. Initially, it started as an active political event in Calcutta Town Hall on 7th August 1905.

Later, it spread throughout the country after the movement's promotion by several leaders like Bhaswat K. Nigoni, Ganesh VyanKatesh, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, and Dadabhai Naoroji. But, the movement was a failure as the Swadeshi Movement was not supported by the masses. Also, the British government used communalism to turn Muslims against the people supporting the movement.

Split in the Congress (1907)

Though the Indian National Congress was formed to achieve Swaraj, there were leaders with different ideologies. Because of the difference in their ideologies, the congress was about to split in 1906. However, the split was avoided by choosing Dadabhai Naoroji as the President of the Congress.

Perhaps they avoided the move in 1906, the difference in view to the extension of the Swadeshi and Boycott movement became a strong reason for its split. The [Split of the Indian National Congress in 1907](#) during the Surat session into two groups-

- Moderates under the leadership of Gokhale.
- Extremists under the leadership of Tilak.

Minto-Morley Constitutional Reforms (1909)

Lord Minto and John Morley, serving in the Indian government as the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, offered the formation of new reforms in the Legislative Councils in discussion with Moderates of the INC. However, these ideas were a huge disappointment for the whole country. The major provisions of the [Minto-Morley Reforms](#) in 1909 were as follows-

- Minto-Morley Constitutional Reforms, or the Indian Councils Act of 1909, increased the number of elected members in Provincial Legislative Councils and Imperial Legislative Councils.
- Indians were appointed as the Governor-General Executive Council's members.
- After the Act's introduction, the power to ask questions in the council was increased.
- Also, it allowed the voting on separate budget items.

Ghadar Movement (1914)

The Ghadar movement was an international political movement that gained popularity during World War I. The movement was founded by expatriate Indians to fight against British rule. The [Ghadar Party](#) was initially supported by the Punjabi Indians living on the West coast of Canada and the United States of America. Later, this movement was supported by people all over the country.

The major leaders of the movement were Bhagwan Singh and Har Dayal. But, this movement was weak as the Ghadar leaders underestimated the extent of preparation at the financial,

tactical, strategic, ideological, and organizational levels. Also, there was a lack of a mass base, and the arrest of Har Dayal resulted in the abrupt end of the Ghadar movement.

Home Rule Movement (1916-1918)

Under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak, the [Home Rule Movement](#) was set up in the Bombay Province. While Annie Basant started another movement on the line of the Irish Home Rule league working in different areas. The Home Rule Movement was considered the turning point in the Indian freedom struggle.

The Movement started under the cooperation of Annie Basant and realized the need for moderates' and Extremists' cooperation, while the one under the leadership of Tilak promoted the Home Rule campaign. Later in December 1916, during the Lucknow session of the INC, the famous Congress-League Pact was declared. However, the decision to arrest Mrs Basant and her associates George Arundale and B.P. Wafia in 1917 came out as the turning point for the Home Rule Movement. Also, in 1920, the movement's name was changed to Swarajya Sabha.

Bihar's Champaran Movement (1917)

After facing racial discrimination in South Africa for more than twenty years, Gandhi returned to India in 1915. He was advised to travel around India by Gokhale to understand the problems faced by the Indians. In his initial days, he kept a distance from political issues but saw the worsening in their conditions. He started Satyagraha against the British government at Champaran in Bihar in 1917, called [Champaran Satyagraha](#).

However, he was threatened by the Commissioner to leave the district. At this time, the leaders of the Home Rule movement obeyed the government, but he refused to leave the movement and preferred to face the punishment. The movement was successful as Gandhi was able to manipulate the government to grant refunds to the peasants.

Ahmedabad Satyagraha (1918)

[Ahmedabad Satyagraha](#) was Gandhi's first-ever hunger strike to dissolve the brewing dispute between the mill owners and workers over the plague bonus. It was another successful Indian independence movement led by Gandhi as the workers received an increased wage of 35%.

Kheda Satyagraha (1918)

Just after 4 days after the Ahmedabad Satyagraha, the Kheda Satyagraha was held by Gandhi and Sardar Patel in March 1918 after the Kheda region was affected by the plague, cholera, and famine leading to the destruction of agriculture. Despite such conditions, the peasants of the region were compelled to submit a 23% tax rise.

Kheda Satyagraha was the first non-cooperation movement led by Gandhi that made the government authorities give concessions to the farmers.

Rowlatt Satyagraha (1919)

A censorship of the press was instituted by the British government during the First World War. To unjustly, the [Rowlatt Act](#), Mahatma Gandhi and Mrs Naidu initiated a Satyagraha on 6th April 1919. The Rowlatt Satyagraha spread throughout the country like wildfire in no time, prominently in Punjab. It was supported by the Home Rule League members, congressmen, and some reformist leaders like Shri Niwas Shastri, Tej Bahadur Sapru, Surendranath Banerjee, and Sir D.E.Vadi.

This Satyagraha was significantly propagated by National press like Akhatav (Lucknow), Independent (Allahabad), Bombay Chronicle (Bombay), Navjeevan (Ahmedabad), and Young India (Fortnightly). Though it has a lot of shortcomings, it marked the beginning of the Indian nationalist politics transformation.

Jallianwala Bagh Massacre (1919)

In March 1919, the Imperial Legislative Council passed the Rowlatt Act. Along with the Act, the British government passed a bill according to which the police have the right to arrest anyone and incarcerate anyone suspected of 'terrorist' activities without trial for up to two years. Though in opposition to the bill, Gandhi called for a peaceful satyagraha, the situation was grim in Punjab.

People decided to come together and protest peacefully in the Jallianwala Bagh, but it turned out to be one of the bloodiest incidents in the Indian Freedom Struggle. The military commander of Amritsar entered the place and commanded to open fire on unarmed men, women, and children inside. The Shooting lasted for almost 10 mins. In the incident, 379 innocent people were killed.

Non-cooperation Movement (1920)

To resist the British dominance in India, Mahatma Gandhi spread the idea of non-cooperation among Indians and launched the [Non-cooperation Movement](#) on 5th September 1920 with the manifesto to adopt the Indian principles along with inheriting the swadeshi habits like weaving and spinning, and work against untouchability. Perhaps the Chauri Chaura incident ended the movement after two years in February 1922.

Khilafat Movement (1919-24)

Under the leadership of Hasrat Mohani, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Shaukat Ali, Maulana Azad, and Muhammad Ali, the Khilafat Movement was started to force the British Indian Government to change its approach towards Turkey along with restoring the former position of Caliphate. The leaders of the Khilafat Movement joined Gandhi's Non-cooperation Movement against the British. The political consciousness was created by the Khilafat Movement among Indian Muslims.

Boycott of Simon Commission (1927)

In November 1927, the British Government appointed the [Simon Commission](#) to look into the working of the Government of India Act of 1919 and to suggest changes. The Commission consisted of Englishmen without a single Indian representative. After the commission came to India in 1930, it was boycotted by the Congress Party along with the Muslim League as no Indians were adopted in the committee.

Nehru Report (1928)

The [Nehru Report](#) was put forward by Motilal Nehru at the Lucknow session of the all-party conference on August 28, 1928, to demand fundamental rights for Indian citizens. The major components of the Nehru Report are as follows-

- Rights bill
- Proposal for Supreme Court creation
- Assigning equal rights to women or men

- Federal form of government formation

Purna Swaraj Campaign (1929)

The Indian National Congress promulgated the Declaration of the Independence of India or the Purna Swaraj declaration on 26 January 1930. On 31 December 1929, Jawaharlal Nehru hoisted the Indian Flag on the banks of the Ravi river, Lahore on 31 December 1929. After the incident, the members of Congress asked Indians to observe Independence day on 26 January. During the Purna Swaraj Campaign, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, and other nationalists publicly hoisted the Indian Flag all across the country.

Civil Disobedience Movement (1930)

Another landmark in the history of the Indian Freedom Struggle was the [Civil Disobedience Movement](#) started under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The movement began when Gandhi left Ahmadanad's Ashram with his selected members for Dandi to break the Salt Law. According to the Salt Law, the British government has a monopoly on making salt, and it is considered illegal for others to make salt.

The [Dandi March](#), or the Salt Satyagraha, was accepted by the public and widespread as a significant Civil Disobedience Movement that symbolized the people's disapproval of the policies made by the British Government.

Quit India Movement (1942)

In 1942, the [Cripps Mission](#) failed. Its failure called for the [Quit India Movement](#) to launch. It was one of the major movements in the Indian Freedom Struggle launched in August at Kranti Maidan by Mahatma Gandhi. It was later joined by the other prominent leaders of the country on August 8 and 9, 1942. People came up with slogans like 'Bharat Chodo', 'Quit India', and 'Do or Die'. The provisions of the movement were as follows:

- End of British rule over India immediately.
- Establishment of a provisional government after the British withdrawal from India.
- Ending imperialism and fascism by declaring the commitment to free India.