

# Freedom fighters of India

## [UPSC Notes]

### Who are the freedom fighters of India?

All those national heroes of India who had contributed to the nation in achieving freedom from the British rule of the East India Company were called the Freedom fighters of India. Many people from different backgrounds came forward and raised their voices against the cruel rule of Britishers. Some were revolutionaries, while others believed in the power of silence and non-violence and followed the path of peaceful protests from time to time.

### List of the important freedom fighters of India

A lot of freedom fighters have lost their lives in the practice of making India free from British rule. It was not only the males who stood against the British and fought for independence, but the leaders like Rani Lakshmi bai and Begum Hazrat Mahal gave a tough fight and created a wave of terror among Britishers. The freedom fighters who fought for the right to liberty and freedom are listed below-

- Vinayak Damodar Savarkar
- Vasudev Balwant Phadke
- Ubaidullah Sindhi
- Tanguturi Prakasam
- Subodh Roy
- Shyamji Krishna Varma
- Rash Behari Bose
- Pritilata Waddedar
- Surya Sen
- Madan Lal Dhingra
- Khudiram Bose
- Prafulla Chaki
- Chittaranjan Das
- Subhas Chandra Bose
- Chandra Shekhar Azad
- Bhavabhushan Mitra
- Sucheta Kriplani
- Alluri Sitarama Raju
- Kanneganti Hanumanthu
- Parbati Giri
- Lakshmi Sahgal
- Tirupur Kumaran
- Kanaiyalal Maneklal Munshi
- Bhikaji Cama
- Senapati Bapat
- Basawon Singh (Sinha)
- Kartar Singh Sarabha
- Bagha Jatin
- Annie Besant
- Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee
- Roshan Singh
- Ram Prasad Bismil
- Sachindra Bakshi

- Rajendra Lahiri
- Manmath Nath Gupta
- Ashfaqulla Khan
- Asaf Ali
- Begum Hazrat Mahal
- Bahadur Shah Zafar
- Chetram Jatav
- Bakht Khan
- Mangal Pandey
- Veerapandiya Kattabomman
- Rani Laxmi Bai
- Pingali Venkayya
- Rani Gaidinliu
- Bhagat Singh
- Jawaharlal Nehru
- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel
- Dr. Rajendra Prasad
- Dr. B R Ambedkar
- Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

## Important freedom fighters of India and their contributions

Freedom Fighters have an outstanding contribution to making India free from British rule by uniting the masses against them. The most Indian Important Freedom Fighter and their contribution to the struggle for freedom is as below-

### Mahatma Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, popular with the name Mahatma Gandhi or Bapu, is the Father of the Nation for his contribution to the nation. He was an Indian reformist who initiated many movements and spread the ideology of non-violence. During his initial days, he started the following movements-

- Champaran Satyagraha- 1917
- Kheda Satyagraha- 1918
- Ahmedabad Mill Strike- 1919.

He was against the Rowlatt Act of 1919 and called this act the Black Act. In opposition to this act, he organized the Satyagraha Sabha. To achieve the idea of Purna Swaraj, he launched the Non-Cooperation movement in 1920. His other contributions include the Dandi March of 1930 against the salt law and the Quit India Movement in 1942.

### Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel

Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel was a man of ethics born in 1875 Gujarat. He was a lawyer by profession, but he withdrew from his career. He was the secretary of a political organization named Gujarat Sabha. He won the "Iron Man of India" for his tremendous contribution to Indian independence.

He initiated the Kheda Satyagrah in 1918 under the guidance of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi against the high agricultural taxes. 1928, he succeeded in canceling the increasing tax rates. After his success, he got the title of "Sardar." He became the first deputy Prime Minister of India after independence.

### Rani Lakshmi Bai

Rani Lakshmi Bai, popular with the name of Rani of Jhansi in Indian History, was the wife of Maharaja Gangadhar Rao. She aimed to restrict the Britishers from attacking her palace and kingdom. After the death of her husband, she took the responsibility to protect her state and became queen of Jhansi from 1843 to 1853.

During the revolt of 1857, Britishers entered the Star Fort of Jhansi and seized the fort. She had a significant role during the revolt of 1857 and died in a fight with the British troops.

### **Mangal Panday**

Mangal Panday was an Indian Soldier who played a crucial role in starting the Revolt of 1857. He was appointed a sepoy in the British East India Company in the 34th Bengal Native Infantry regiment. He initiated the rebellion against the East India Company for making the gun Cartridge greased with animal fat (pigs and cows) that Muslims and Hindus could not consume as it was against their religion.

He stood against such action and influenced his fellow sepoys to rebel and shoot the Europeans for guarding their religion and country.

### **Bal Gangadhar Tilak**

Along with Bipin Chandra Pal and Lal Lajpat Rai, Bal Gangadhar Tilak formed the extremist wing of the Indian National Congress. He was a critical independence activist and an Indian Nationalist teacher. Being the first leader of the Indian Independence movement, he was entitled "Lokmanya." He believed in Swaraj and is known to spread the same among the masses.

He propagated the idea of nationalism among people by initiating the ritual of celebrating the Shivaji Utsav and Ganeshotsav (in 1894). He was the founder of the Swadeshi Movement and Home Rule league movement in the areas of Central Province and Maharashtra. To educate the masses about the glorious Indian History, he started two newspapers in Marathi and English, namely Kesari and Mahratta, respectively. Along with all these contributions, he introduced the Trisutri-Swaraj, Swadeshi, and National education program, i.e., the three-point program.

### **Bhagat Singh**

Bhagat Singh was one of the appealing Indian revolutionary freedom fighters who believed in the ideology of revolutionary socialism. Since his childhood, he was against the British exploitation of Indians.

In 1926, he became the founder of the Naujawan Bharat Sabha, which created a spark of revolution among the masses (young workers and the peasants) against British rule. Apart from being the secretary of the Sabha, he was also an active member and a leader of the Hindustan Republican Association. With his youthful thinking, he used to carry out specific political discussions in different study circles in Lahore.

He was highly inspired by Lala Lajpat Rai, who the police officers killed due to an extreme lathi charge during the Simmon Commission protest. So, he and his revolutionary friends decided to kill those policemen but ended up killing another one because of a lack of identity.

In 1929, he threw two bombs inside the Central Legislative Assembly. They were arrested for this act and sentenced to hang out till death.

### **Begum Hazrat Mahal**

Begum Hazrat Mahal, popular with the name begum of Awadh, was born in 1820. She was the wife (2nd wife) of Wajid Ali Shah (Nawab of Awadh). Begum Hazrat Mahal lead a significant role in the Indian Rebellion of 1857 against the rule of the British East India Company. Her contribution during the revolt inspired the youth, and they gave her the title "The Tigress."

Her husband was exiled to Calcutta. So, to abolish the British rule from her kingdom, she declared her minor son the new king and herself a regent of Awadh. In the beginning, she used to work in association with Nana Sahib. But, later, during the Attack on Shahjahanpur, she joined the Maulavi of Faizabad.

## Chandra Shekhar Azad

Chandrashekhar Sitaram Tiwari, popularly known as Chandra Shekhar Azad, was born on 23 July 1906. He was a famous Indian revolutionary freedom fighter who participated in the Non-cooperation movement started by Gandhi but got arrested during his participation in the movement. Later after the movement was suspended, he renounced non-violence.

At the same point, the founder of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA), Ram Prasad Bismil, and its three significant leaders (Rajendra Nath Lahiri, Roshan Singh, and Ashfaqulla Khan) died. After this incident, Chandra Shekar Azad reorganized the association into Hindustan Republican Association (HRA). He started collecting funds from Hindustan Republican Association (primarily by robberies).

He was primarily involved in the following events-

- Kakori train dacoity, 1925
- Shooting of John P. Saunders at Lahore, 1928
- Attempt to blow up the Viceroy of India's train, 1939

He got constant support from Motilal Nehru.

## Ram Prasad Bismil

Ram Prasad Bismil was a notable freedom activist and patriotic poet. He formed a revolutionary organization called 'Matrivedi' and also launched Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) with Ashfaqulla Khan, Sachindra Nath Bakshi, Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee, and Sachindranath Sanyal.

## Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is a notable name in India's independence movement for his efforts to internationalize India's freedom struggle. His first big involvement in India's politics happened in 1920 during the Non-cooperation movement. He continued to fight for India's freedom and became the first Prime Minister of India after independence.

## Khudiram Bose

Born in Midnapur, West Bengal, Khudiram Bose was one of the youngest martyrs of India's independence movement. At 15, he became a part of the Anushilan Samiti and joined in several revolutionary activities. At 18, Khudiram and Prafulla Chaki attempted to kill Douglas Kingsford, the British Chief Magistrate. Khudiram was arrested and sentenced to death by the court for this crime.

## Savitribai Phule

The first female teacher of India, Savitribai Phule, is a pioneering figure whose utmost importance as one of the female freedom fighters of India were gender equality and the upliftment of the marginalized. Along with her husband, Jyotirao Phule, she fought relentlessly to spread knowledge and education among the women of India and for the rights of women, Dalits, and backward classes.