**The Gandhian Era**

Mahatma Gandhi returned to India from South Africa in Jan. 1915. In his book Hind Swarajya, written in 1909, he interpreted Swaraj (self-rule) in a broad sense. He had evolved in his struggle against socialism in South Africa a new form of struggle-non cooperation and a new technique of struggle-Satyagraha which could be put in to practice against the British in India. He had, moreover a basic sympathy for & understanding of the problems & psychology of the Indian peasantry. He was therefore able to appeal to it & bring in to the mainstream of the national movement. He was thus able to arouse and unite all sections of the Indian people in a militant mass national movement.

In 1916, he founded the Sabarmati Ashram at Ahmedabad where his friends & followers were to learn & practice the ideas of truth & non-violence.

**Champaran Satyagraha (1917)**

Gandhiji is first experiment in Satyagraha came in 1917 in Champaran, a distt.in Bihar. The peasantry on the indigo plantations in the distt.was excessively oppressed by the European planters. They were compelled to grow indigo on at least 3/20th of their land and to sell it all prices fixed by the planters.

Resistance had surfaced in 1908 as well, but the exactions of the planters continued till Raj Kumar Shukla, a local man decided to follow Gandhiji all over the country to persuade him to come to Champaran to investigate the problem.

Gandhiji on searching Champaran was ordered by the commissioner to immediately leave the district. But to the surprise of all concerned Gandhiji refused & preferred to take the punishment for his defiance of the law. The govt. of India, not willing to make an issue of it, ordered the local govt. to returns & allow Gandhiji to proceed with his enquiry.

A victorious Gandhi embarked on his investigation of the peasants grievances. He & his colleagues who now included Brij Kishore, Rajendra Prasad & other members of the Bihar intelligentsia, Mahadev Desai & Narhari Parikh two young man from GJ & JB Kripalani toured the villages & from dawn to dusk recorded the statements of peasants.

Meanwhile the government appointed a commission of inquiry to go in to the whole issue & nominated Gandhiji as one of its members. Armed with evidence collected from 8,000 peasants he had little defficulty in convincing the commission that the tinkathia system needed to be abolished & that the peasants should be compensated for the illegal enhancement of their dues.

Ultimately the disabilities from which the Peasantry was suffering were reduced & Gandhiji had won his first battle of civil disobedience in India.

**Ahmedabad Mill Strike**

In 1918, Mahatma Gandhi intervened in a dispute between the workers & mill-owners of Ahmedabad. The dispute arose on the question of a Plague bonus the employers wanted to withdraw once the epidemic had passed but the workers insisted it stay, since the enhancement hardly compensated for the rise in the cost of living during the war.

British collector, who feared a shadowdown asked Gandhiji to bring pressure on the mill-owners & now out a compromise Gandhiji persuaded the mill owners & the workers to agree to arbitration by a tribunal, but the mill owners, taking advantage of a stay strike, withdraw from the agreement. They offered a 20% bonus and threatened to dismiss those who did not accept it.

The breach of agreement was treated by Gandhiji as a very serious affair & he advised the workers to go on strike. He suggested a demand of 35% increase in wages.

The strike began & Gandhiji addressed the workers every day on the bank of Sabarmati river. He brought out a daily news bulletin & insisted that no violence be used against employers. Ambalal Sarabhai’s sister, Anasuya Behn was one of the main lieutenants of Gandhiji in this struggle in which her brother & Gandhiji’s friend was one of the main adversaries.

Later when the protest began to weaken Gandhiji undertook a fast un to death to strengthen. The workers resolve to continue and the pressure continued on mill-owners who relented on the fourth day and agreed to give the workers a 35% increase in wages.

**Kheda Satyagraha**

In 1918, crops failed in the Kheda district of Gujarat but the govt. refused to remit land revenue & invested on its full collection.

The Gujarat Sabha of which Gandhiji was the President played a leading role in the agitation. Appeal & petitions having failed, Gandhiji advised the withholding of revenue & asked the peasants to fight un to death against such a spirit of vindictiveness & tyranny & show that ‘it is impossible to govern man without their consent.’

Vallabh bhai Patel a young lawyer & a native of Kheda district & other young men including Indulal Yagnik joined Gandhiji in touring the villages & urging the peasants to stand firm in the face of increasing govt. repression. The cultivators were asked to take a solemn pledge that they would not pay; those who could afford to pay were to take a now that they would not pay in the interest of the poorer ryots.

Due to these efforts govt. had issued secret instructions directing that revenue should be recovered only from those peasants who could pay. In these circumstances the movement was withdrawn.

**Anti- Rowlatt Satyagraha**

In view of the growing revolutionary terrorism & the on-going first would war, the govt. gen. Chelmsford had appointed a committee under the president ship of Sydney Rowlatt, a judge of the Kings bench in London to investigate the nature & extent of revolutionary activities & to suggest legislation if necessary to deal effectively with them. The Rowlatt committee, which submitted its report in April 1918, made a comprehensive review of the activities of militant nationalists & recommended special legislation both punitive & preventive in character.

Two bills based on the Rowlatt committees recommendations were placed before the Imperial legislative council. One was dropped the other the Anarchial & Revolutionary Activities Act was passed in March 1919. It provided for speedy trial of offences by a special court consisting of three High court judges. There was no appeal from this court & it could accept evidence not admirable under the Indian Evidence Act.

This act authorized the govt. to imprison any person without trial & conviction in a court of law. The Act would thus also enable the govt. to suspend the right of Habeus Corpus which had been the foundation of civil liberties in Britain.

This act of the govt. was treated by the people of India as a grievous insult, especially as it come at the end of war, when substantial constitutional concessions were expected.

Constitutional protests having failed, Gandhiji stepped in and suggested that a Satyagraha be launched. In organizing Satyagraha Gandhiji tried to utilize three types of political networks- the Home rule leagues, certain Pan-Islamist group & a Satyagraha Sabha which he himself started on 24 Feb. 1919. In first stage of the anti-Rowlatt Satyagraha, volunteers conrfed arrest through formal defiance of the law. Another form of protest decided was the observance of nation wide hartal accompanied by fasting & prayer.

Satyagraha Sabha concentrated on publishing propaganda literature & collecting if whereas to a Satyagraha pledge while Gandhi himself embarked on a whirl wind four visiting Bombay, Delhi, Allahabad. Lucknow & a no. of South Indian cities between March & April.

But after the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre on April 13, 1919 the anti-Rowlatt Satyagraha lost momentum Gandhiji overwhelmed by total atmosphere of violence withdraw the movement on 18 April.

The anti-Rowlatt act Satyagraha transformed the Congress in to a national body with a new ideology & a new strategy under a new leader.

**Jallianwala Bagh Massacre**

The anti-Rowlatt act agitation was particularly severe in the Punjab which was suffering from the after-effects of war time repressions forcible recruitment & the influence of the revolutionaries. The movement provoked a hartal in many parts of the Punjab & violent disturbances took place.

On April 9, 1919, General O’Dwyer arrest of two local congress leaders. Dr. Satyapal & Dr. Kitchlew who were associated with the Reception who were for the annual session of the INC to be held in Dec. 1919.

To protect against their arrest & the British repression, a public meeting was held at Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar on April 13, 1919 where O’Dwyer arrived with armoured ears & troops and fired on an unarmed peaceful crowd without warning killing nearly 1,000 people & scores of others. The massacre was followed by marital law & a veritable reign of terror prevailed in the Punjab.

To protest against the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, Rabindranath Tagore surrendered the knighthood conferred on him by the British govt. & Sir Sankaran Nair, a former president of the I.N.C. resigned his membership of the Viceroy executive council.

**The Khilafat Movement (1920-22)**

The Indian Muslims were agitated over the Pan-Islamic Khilafat issue which originated as a result of Turkeys entry in to the first world war as an ally of Germany against Britain.

The Sultan of Turkey, ruler of vast ottoman empire was the Caliph of the Islamic world. In the 1st world war Turkey was defeated the pttpman empire was dismembered & the Sultan of Turkey was deprived of all real authority even in the remaining dominions.

The Muslims of India regarded the treatment of Turkey as a great betrayal on the part of Britain & other allies & early in 1920 the Indian Muslims started a vigorous agitation to bring pressure on Britain to change its policy towards Turkey. A Khilafat committee was soon formed under the leadership of the Ali Brothers, Moulana Azad, Hakim Azmal Khan & Hasrat Mohani & a country-wide agitation was organized. The All-India Khitafat conference held at Delhi in Nov. 1919 decided to withdraw all cooperation from the govt. if their demands were not met. The Muslim league under the leadership of nationalists gave full support to the National Congress & its agitation on political issues. The Congress leaders like Tilak & Mahatma Gandhiji viewed the Khilafat agitation as a golden opportunity for cementing Hindu-Muslim unity & bringing the Muslim masses in to the national movement.

Mahatma Gandhi was elected President of the All India Khilafat Conference in Nov. 1919. The Amritsar session of the INC held in Dec. 1919 gave a great fillip to the Khilafat agitation.

Meanwhile, the Khilafatist formu;ated a three point programme.

1. The Ottoman Caliph should retain his empire with sufficient temporal power to defend Islam.
2. The Arab lands should remain under Muslim rule.
3. The Sultan of Turkey should be the warden of the places sacred to the Muslims.

“ Khilafat Day” was observed on Oct. 17, 1919 on all India scale & in an impressive manner.

At the special session of the INC held in Calcutta Sept. 1920, a resolution was passed by Mahatma Gandhi’s instance to launch the Non-cooperation movement for two wrongs.

1. The British govt. attitude towards the Khilafat issue.
2. Its failure to protect the innocent people of Punjab & punish the officers guilty of barbarian behaviours towards them.

**Nagpur session of the INC (Dec. 1920)**

The Nagpur session of the INC was a historic session which apart from satisfying the Non-Cooperation resolution undertook two imp. Amendements to the const. of the Congress. First, the goal of the INC, which in the resting const. was “self-govt within the British empire” was replaced with the word Swaraj. Secondly, revolutionary changes were brought about in the Congress organization & a constructive programme was chalked out. These included

1. Opening of congress membership to all adults.
2. The formation of an All-India Congress committee of 300 members.
3. Creating a hierarchy of district ,taluka & village Congress committees.
4. Reorganization of provincial congress committees.
5. Promotion of Swadeshi.
6. Removal of untouchability among the Hindus.
7. Promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity & use of Hindi as far as possible.

**Civil Disobedience**

**I. First phase & the Dandi March- March 12, 1930- March 5, 1931**

The Congress working committee meeting at Sabarmati Ashram invested Gandhiji with full powers to launch the civil Disobedience movement at a time & place of his choice. Gandhiji’s ultimatum of 31 Jan to Lord Irwin, stating the min.demands in the form of 11 points, had been ignored & there was now only one way out civil disobedience.

Gandhiji decided to inaugurate the movement by violating the salt law on the sea coast at Dandi. Salt was made an issue, because the govt. controlled the sale of this indispensable commodity & imposed a tax on it which was felt most keenly by the poor. Mahatma Gandhi launched the salt Satyagraha on March 12, 1930 when he marched from his Sabarmati Ashram (Ahmedabad) with some 80 hand-picked followers. After a 24 day long march, he symbolically broke salt law at Dandi on April 6, 1930. Programme of the civil Disobedience Movement: Among the programmes outlined for the C.D.M. were:

1. The violation of the salt law & other laws.
2. Non-payment of land-revenue, rent or other taxes.
3. Boycott of law courts, legislatures elections, govt. functions, govt. schools & colleges.
4. Boycott of foreign goods & cloth and burning of foreign cloth.
5. Peaceful picketing of shops selling liquor & other intoxicants.
6. Organising mass strikes & demonstration.
7. Resigning govt. jobs & not joining the civil, military or police jobs.

**Progress of the Movement**

In all provinces, people pursued the above programme with great enthusiasm. While Gandhiji was marching to Dandi Congress leaders & workers had been busy at various levels with the hard organizational task of enrolling volunteers & members, forming grass-root congress committee, collecting funds & touring villages & towns to spread the nationalist message. Once the way was cleared by Gandhijis ritual beginning at Dandi. The defiance of salt laws started all over the country. In Tamil Nadu, C. Rajagopalachari, led a salt march from Trichinopoly to Vedaranyam on the Tanjor coast. In Malabar, K. Kelappan the hero of the Vaikom Satyagraha walked from Calicut to Payannur to break the salt law.

A band of Satyagrahis walked all the way from Sylhet in Assam to Noakhali on the Bengal coast to make salt.

In Andhra, a no. of Sivirams (military style-camp) were set up in different districts to serve as the headquarter of the salt satyagraha & bands of Satyagrahis marched through villages on their way to the coastal centres to defy the law.

Jawaharlal Nehru’s arrest on 14 April, for defiance of the salt law, was answered with huge demonstrations & clashes with the police in the cities of Madras, Calcutta & Karachi. In the N-W Frontier Province (NWFP) Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan popularly known as Frontier Gandhi under the banner of his “Khudal Khidmatger.” (servants of God) organization most actively participated in the movement with his volunteers who dressed up in red shirt.

In the N-E, the Manipuris joined the movement & the young Rani Gaidinliu with her Naga followers actively supported the movement.

The British govt. as usual retaliated with repression. In June 1930, the Congress & its affiliate organizations were declared illegal & Mt. Gandhi and all other congress leaders were arrested. There was a massive weave of protest act Gandhiji’s arrest. There were clashes & firing in Calcutta & Delhi. But it was in Sholapur, in Maharastra that the response was the fiercest. The textile workers, who dominated the town went on strike from 7 May & along with other residents, burnt liquor shops & proceeded to attack all symbols of govt. authority- the railway station law courts, police stations & municipal buildings. They took over the city which could only be dislodged with the imposition of martial law after 16 May.

On May 21, with Sarojini Naidu, the first Indian woman to become President of the Congress & Imani Saheb who was Gandhiji’s comrade of the South African struggle at the helm & Gandhijis son Manilal in front ranks, a band of 2000 marched towards the police cordon that had sealed off the Dharasana salt works.

East India became the scene of a new kind of no- tax campaign refusal to pay the Chowkidari tax. The govt. retailed by confiscation of property worth hundreds & thousands in lieu of a few rupees of tax & by beating & torture.

Defiance of forest laws assumed a mass character in Maharastra, Karnataka & the Central Provinces, especially in areas with large tribal population who had been the most seriously affected by the colonial govt. restriction on the use of forest.

In Assam, a powerful agitation led by students was launched against the infamous Cunningham circular which forced students & their guardian to furnish assurances of govt. behaviour. The people seemed to have taken to heart Jawaharlal Nehru’s message when he unfurled the national flag at Lahore in Dec. 1929 ‘Remember once again now that this flag is unfurled, it must not be lowered as long as a single Indian, man, woman or child lives in India.’ The national flag, the symbol of the spirit, now became a common sight even in remote villages.

U.P. was the setting of another kind of movement a no revenue, no-rent campaign. The no-revenue part was a call to the zamindars to refuse to pay revenue to the govt., the no-rent a call to the tenants not to pay rent to the zamindars.

The movement also popularized a variety of forms of mobilization. Prabhat pheris, in which bands of men, women & children went around at dawn singing nationalist songs, become the rule in villages & towns.

Children were organized in to vanar senas or monkey armies & at least at one place the girls decided they wanted their own separate manjari sena or rat army.

Amidst these heroic deeds & official repression, when the movement was at its peak the viceroy took the initiative of releasing the congress leaders & invited. Mt. Gandhi for talks which led to Gabdhi-Irwin part & to suspension of the Civil Disobedience on

**Gandhi- Irwin part- March 5, 1931**

During the course of the C.D.M. the simon commission Report had been published & to consider the recommendation the first round table conference was called in London, in Nov. 1930. The Congress boycotted the conference but other parties such as the Liberals, the Muslim League, the Hindu Mahasabha & the Princely states attended it. Some of the liberal leaders like Tej Bahadur Sapur, V.S Sastri & M.R. Jayakar on their return from the conference appealed to Mahatma Gandhi to seek an interview with the viceory. To create appropriate conditions for talks between the victory & the Congress leaders, other congress leaders were released and viceroy Lord Irwin invited the Congress for talks. The congress authorised Gandhiji to negotiate a settlement with the viceroy. After prolonged Gandhi-Irwin talks an agreement, known as the Gandhi-Irwin pact was signed between the two on March 5, 1931.

Main points of the agreement are:

1. One behalf of the congress Gandhiji agreed to discountinue to C.D.M.
2. The congress agreed to join the 2nd round table conference for drafting the constitutional reforms on the bases of (a) federation (b) responsible (c) safe guards or reservations in the interest of India for such matters as defence, external affairs, minorities & the financial credit of India.
3. The viceroy agreed to withdraw ordinances promulgated in connection with the C.D.M.
4. The govt agreed to release the agitators arrested in connection with the movement & to return properties confiscated on account of movement.
5. The govt. agreed to permit the people living with in a certain distance of the seashore to collect or manufacture see salt free of duty.
6. The govt. agreed to permit peaceful picketing of liquor & opium shops.

The annual session of the congress held in Karachi from March 26 to 29, 1931 endorsed the pact.

**Second Round Table Conference Sept-Dec 1931**

The second session of the Round Table Conference opened on Sept. 7, 1931 with Mt. Gandhi attending as the sole representative of the congress. The conference was a disaster. It was agreed at the conference that responsible govt. must be established immediately & in full, both at the centre and in the provinces, including complete control over finance, army, defence & external relations. There was unending discussions of the communal problem. Gandhiji could not reach to a settlement with Mr- Jinnah due to diplomacy by secretary of state for India, Sir Samuel Hoare. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar demanded a separate electorate for the depressed classes, but Gandhi opposed the grant of separate electorate to the “so called untouchables” on the ground that they could not be classified as a separate class.

Ultimately the conference broke down since no agreed solution could be formed to the communal issue & Mahatma Gandhi returned to India towards the end of 1931, utterly disillusioned.

**Analysis of C.D.M.**

The C.D.M. of 1930-31, then marked a critically imp. stage in the progress of the anti-imperialist struggle.

The no. of people who went to Jail was estimated at over 90,000 more than 3 times the figure for the Non Cooperation of 1920-22. Imports of cloth had fallen by half, other imports like cigarettes had suffered a similar fate. Govt. income from liquor ex use & land revenue had been affected. Elections to the Legislative Assembly had been effectively boycotted.

A vast variety of social groups had been politicized on the side of Indian nationalism- if urban elements like merchants & shopkeepers & students were move active in T.N. & Punjab & in cities in general. Peasants had come to the forefront in GJ, U.P., Bengal, Andhra & Bihar & tribals in the central provinces, MH, KTA,& Bengal workers had not been missing from the battle either.

The participation of Muslims in the C.D.M. was certainly nowhere near that in 1920-22. Still the participation of Muslims was not insignificant either. Their participation in the N-W Frontier province was overwhelming. In Bengal Muslim participation was quite imp. The support that the movement shad garnered from the poor & the illiterate, both in town & in the country was remarkable indeed. For Indian women, the movement was the most liberating experience to date & can truly be said to have marked their entry in to the public space.

**Second Phase of the C.D.M. January 1932-1934**

Lord Willingdon succeded Irwin as the viceroy & he flouted many provisions of the Gandhi-Irwin pact. The govt. repression was in full swing. Most of the imp. Congress leaders were also arrested. The congress working committee, which met on Jan 1 1932 therefore decided to reneme to C.D. on if the govt. did not make some positive gestures. The govt. continued with its repressive measures the movement was resumed in early 1932.

Civil Disobediance in 1932-33 comprised a wide range of activities, in put because many things had now become illegal & civil liberties almost totally suppressed. The forms of defiance included picketing of cloth & liquor shops, closing of market & boycott of white or loyalist business concerns, symbolic hoisting of congress flags, holding in public of illegal congress sessions, salt satyagrahas, non- payment of Chowkidari taxes, no rent as well as no revenue.

By 10 Jan 1932, all leading confressmen were behind the prison bars.

Not only the congress was declared illegal even those organizations which were in any way connected with it or were sympathetic towards it were declared illegal. Youth leagues, students associations national school & institutions, congress hospitals. Swadeshi concerns & libraries were all declared illegal.

Even before the C.D.M. was actually started by Gandhiji, he was arrested along with Vallabh bhai Patel who at that time was the president of the congress: Nearly 90,000 men, women & children were arrested for participating in the movement. Every effert was made to break the spirit of the people.

However a stage came when the political enthusiasm of the people became less & less and feelings of frustrations set in. The movement was suspended in May 1933 & completely withdrawn in May 1934.

**Communal Award & Poona Pact**

The second round table conference having failed to resolve the question of electoral representation to diff. religious communities & the depressed classes, authorized the British P.M. to resolve it. Accordingly, P.M. Ramsay Macdonald announced his communal Award on Aug. 16,1932. According to this award the Muslim, European & Sikh voters would elect their candidates by voting in separate communal electorates. There was also provisions for separate electorate for the Depressed classes, officially described as S.C. as a separate community. Macdonald however promised to accept any alt. scheme mutually agreed upon by the Hindus & the Depressed classes.

**Gandhiji fast un to death & Poona Act.**

At the round table conference Mt. Gandhi had strenuously opposed the idea of a separate electorate for depressed classes & had declared that he would arrest it with his life.

Gandhiji wrote to the British P.M. on Aug. 18 1932 that he would commence the fast on Sept 20 in the yerravada prison. Where he was lodged & it would lease only if the scheme was reviewed & the common electorate restored.

**Poona Pact**: Gandhiji’s fast caused great alarm & anxiety all over the country & Pt. Madan Mohan Mohiya summoned a conference of various castes & political parties including Dr. B.R. Ambedkar the leader of the Depressed classes league. The conference finally arrived at an agreement in Poona on Sept 25, 1932, the sith day of gandhijis fast. A common electorate of all the Hindus was agreed upon subject to two conditions. First 48 seats in diff. provincial legislatures were served for the depressed classes in place of 71 as provided in the communal award, secondly 1.8% of the seats in the central legislatures were attain for the depressed classes.

**The End of C.D.M.**

In the back ground of the Communal Award & Gandhijis fast un to death, the C.D.M. lost its momentum.

After the Poona Pact Mt. Gandhi lost interest in the movement & was fully engrossed in the anti-untouchability movement, which led to the foundation of the Harijan Sevak Sangha.

On May 8,1933 Gandhi announced a self-purification fast for 21 days for purification of himself & his associates “for greater vigilance & watchfulness in connection with the Harijan cause.” The govt. keeping in view the nature & object of his fast, released him from prison. Immediately after his release, Mt. Gandhi recommended to the President of the congress session of the movement for a month or six weeks. Accordingly the movement was suspended for about 12 weeks. During these 12 weeks the mass C.D.M. virtually died out. In its place Mt. Gandhi launched individual C.D.M. on Aug 1, 1933.

**The Third Round Table Conference Nov. 17 to Dec. 24,1932**

The 3rd round table conference was called on Nov. 17,1932 & it lasted till Dec 24 that year, The congress boycotted it & only 46 delegates attended the session. This session put together the final features of a concrete plan for the govt. of India Act 1935, which after some amendement was passed by the British parliament on Aug. 2, 1933.