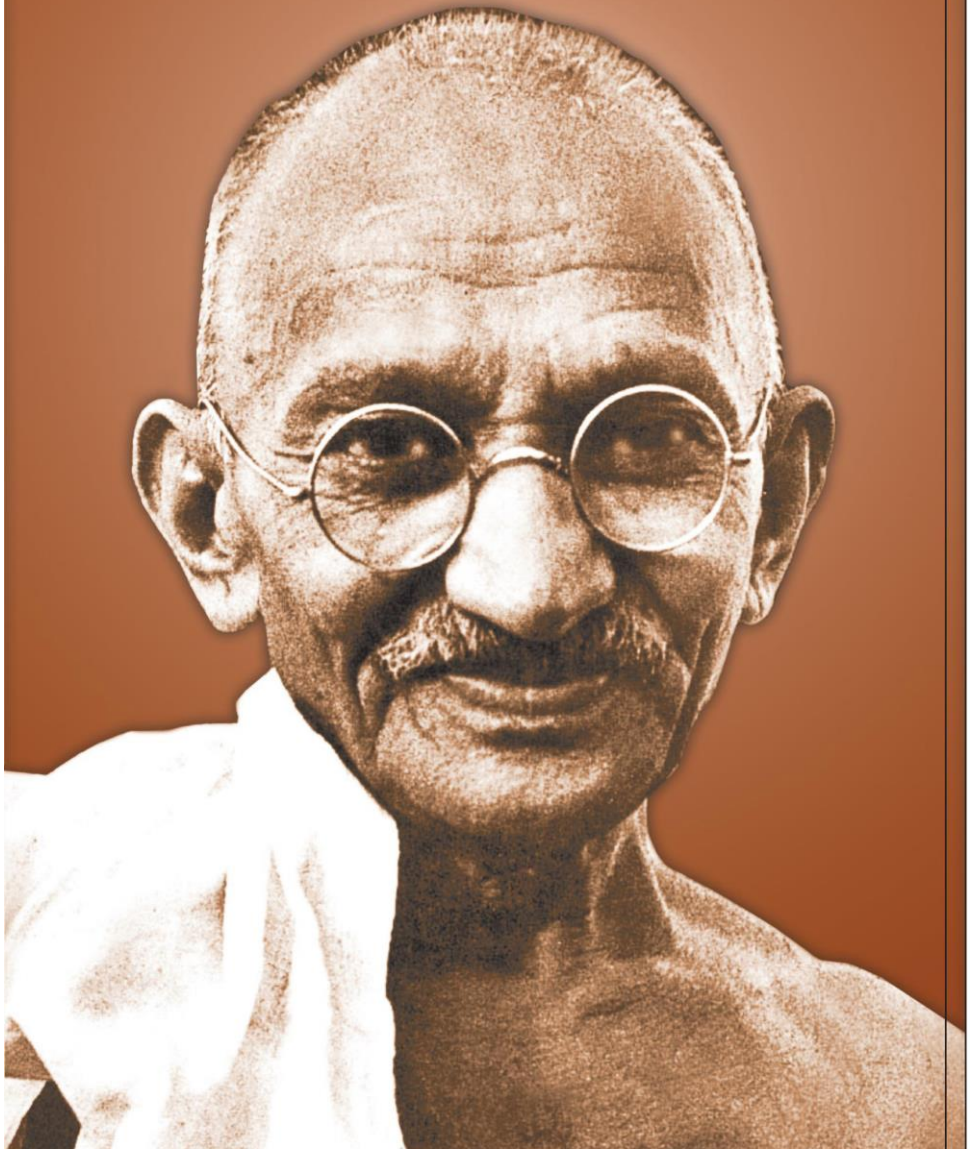


GANDHIJI

Prof. Anand Mense



GANDHIJI

Prof. Anand Mense

Translation : Keerti Marathe

Gandhiji / Anand Mense

©Anand Mense

©Dada Purav Research And Training Institute

Telephone: 9448347452

Email: anandmense@gmail.com

Translated (English) First edition : January 2020

Price : Rs. 100/-

Publisher :

Dada Purav Research And Training Institute,
Suwastu Prestige, Behind RMD Institute,
Near Aditya Garden City, Off Mumbai Bangalore
Highway, Service Road, Warje, Pune 411058.

Printed at :

Anjum Binding Works, Hamid Sheth Gala,
Mesent Road, Off Freeway, Pole No. 200,
Shivri (E), Mumbai-400015,
Phone : 2498 5290/91

Dedicated to :

Gandhian activists

Ashokbhai Deshpande and
Shivajidada Kaganikar

- Anand Mense

From the publisher...

Annapurna Mahila Mandal was established in 1975 by Com. Narendra (Dada) Purav and Padmashri Prematai Purav.

Com. Narendra Purav was born in 1929. At the young age of 15, he joined the organization of the youth, viz. 'Loksena', in Dadar. On the background of the Second World War, the members of this organization were opposing Hitler's Fascism and were participating in the freedom movement in the country. In 1949, he joined Bank of India. During the period 1950 to 1982, for 32 years he led the Mumbai Union in Bank of India. During 1973 to 1982, Com. Purav was the Assistant Secretary of All India Bank Employees' Association (A.I.B.E.A.). He was one of the prominent leaders in Mumbai, Maharashtra during the A.I.B.E.A.'s movement for the nationalization of banks.

He was the inspiration behind establishing Annapurna Mahila Mandal in 1975, which was founded for making available loans from the nationalised banks to the needy poor women and for helping these women for other problems that they faced. He was the main leader of Mumbai and Maharashtra State

Council of Communist Party of India. At the time of the invasion by China, during 1959 to 1964, which was a very difficult period for the Indian Communist movement, he had conducted hundreds of lectures for the activists to explain how the Labor Internationalism and the Indian Nationalism were complementary to each other.

In 1993, Medha Purav-Samant started the work of Annapurna Mahila Mandal in Pune. Besides Micro-finance, various other activities were initiated such as micro insurance, pension, day-care centres, Vidyapurna for the educational scholarships which have evolved into the Annapurna Pariwar today.

Dada Purav Research And Training Institute was founded by Annapurna Pariwar. Through this organization, every year, on the occasion of the death anniversary of Com. Dada Purav, (on 18th August), we publish books on contemporary financial-banking-social subjects.

During the last few years, we have published books on Micro Insurance, Micro finance, Notabandi (demonetization), Future of the public sector banks. We also publish 'Samvad', a quarterly magazine, which is published for the members in Annapurna family.

This year is the 150th Birth Anniversary for Mahatma Gandhi as well as his wife, Kasturba Gandhi. On this occasion, we are publishing the book on 'Gandhiji', written by Prof. Com. Anand Mense.

The first two chapters of the book describe how and under what situation Mahatma Gandhi started his political work in South Africa.

The third chapter gives us information about the situation in India when Mahatmaji arrived in India

and about the protest movements that he initiated in the beginning.

From the fourth chapter onwards, Prof. Anand Mense has described the entire journey of Gandhiji, about how he shaped the freedom movement, his rapport with the people, how he united the people and also how he initiated various social programs to maintain continuity of participation between two protest movements. These chapters also describe how he inspired the women to participate in the freedom movement, and how he made the common man in the country brave enough through the 'satyagrahi' movement. Com. Anand Mense has described in a lucid way how Gandhiji imbibed the principles of freedom, brotherhood, secularism in the people of a country like India which had millions of people from all religions and faiths and how at the time of the communal riots, he intervened regardless of the danger to his own life and stopped the riots.

Through his book 'Gandhiji', Prof. Com. Anand Mense has made available a book which would provide food for thought, for the young generation born after the independence and studying in the schools and colleges, while all around us we are witnessing the atmosphere of hatred about Gandhiji and Nehru and there have been attempts to rewrite the history itself by distorting the facts.

For this very contribution, we thank Com. Anand Mense, who is closely associated with Annapurna Pariwar.

Shri Kumar Saptarshi has written a very effective foreword for this book. We would like to thank him for writing this foreword, sparing some time during his

stay in the United States and his very busy schedule. No doubt this was possible only due to the affection for Prof. Com. Anand Mense and Annapurna Pariwar.

We would also like to thank New Age Printing Press, Mumbai, for printing this book in a very short time.

- Suresh Dhopeswarkar,

Trustee,

Dada Purav Research And Training Institute

- Annapurna Pariwar.

१०

Preface

A lot of authors have written about Mahatma Gandhiji. These include Indian writers as well as writers from abroad. In future also, the authors will continue to write about Gandhiji. This will be done from various angles and views. If the literature is available on such a large scale, a question can arise as to why was it necessary for me to write on the subject of Gandhiji?

Since childhood, I kept on hearing about Gandhiji. My father, Comrade Krishna Mense had stayed in Gandhiji's Sevagram Ashram in 1946. He had arrived at the ashram, with the sole objective of devoting his life for the cause of freedom. After staying there for a few days, as per Gandhiji's suggestion, he went to Pavnar to stay in the ashram of Acharya Vinoba Bhave. After some time, as per the suggestion of Gandhiji and Vinobaji he returned home. When the country acquired freedom, after due thought, he entered the communist movement and for his entire life he worked as a full-time worker for the communist party. Today, at the age of 92, he is very active.

I got to hear a lot about Gandhiji from my father. Even if he had chosen a different path for life, he has great respect for Gandhiji and Vinobaji, even today. Naturally, the same effect was felt by me and my siblings. I grew up in a house, where there were photos of Marx, Lenin and beside them there used

to be the photo of Gandhiji too.

For many years, I used to wonder how Gandhiji must have inspired the people in this huge country and made them ready for the freedom movement. I had an opportunity to discuss about this with many personalities in the communist movement as well as the Gandhian movement too. I read a lot on this topic and slowly I could get a glimpse of the entire process. I read the speech made by Gandhiji in 1916 and I was very impressed. However, I also realized that those who talk about Gandhiji and write about him do not always mention this speech with proper emphasis. I started mentioning this speech and got a positive response. My friends from the communist movement insisted that I should write down whatever I had spoken on various occasions and finally I agreed to their request.

There is one more reason why I finally decided to write. During the last ten years, we have seen a growing trend of denouncing Gandhiji and glorifying Nathuram Godse. There are some people who are using the media to proclaim that whatever Nathuram Godse did was an act of his love for his country and whatever Gandhiji had done was not in the interest of the country. I noticed that the voice and stance of such people is very aggressive and so I thought of presenting the facts and the truth as I know it. The outcome of these efforts is this book.

Comrade Dada Purav Research Centre was established at Pune by Annapurna Mahila Mandal, Pune. Dr. Medha Purav-Samant, the Chair-person of this organization requested me to write such a book. She also suggested that the book should be

written in such a way that it would be useful for the volunteers/ activists working for the movement. As per her suggestion, I have tried to write in a very simple language and with the objective that it should be useful for those who are working for the social movement. I sincerely thank all the officials of Comrade Dada Purav Research Centre for accepting the responsibility of publishing my book.

During the process, I had discussions with many of my friends. They made a lot of suggestions which I have accepted and I thank them for these suggestions. I thank my friend Mr. Basvant Patil, who helped in the work of typing this book.

- Prof. Anand Mense

70/2 Anandi, Pipeline, First cross, Sarasvatinagar,
Belgaum, Tal. Dist. Belgaum. Post Hindalga:
591108

१०

Foreword...

Ramayan, Mahabharat are epics. Thousands of story tellers, Kirtankars, Puraniks, have recited the stories from these ancient epics to the general public for generations together and they became a part of the Indian culture. Due to this, any Indian person easily likes to read the stories from the past. A powerful book is necessary for bringing him to the present. The history of India's freedom movement is very interesting. This history of the last one hundred and fifty years is very unique. The world witnessed the fact that there can be an alternative to the armed wars, and that the alternative is nothing but a collective action by the people and that too without the use of weapons. War means destruction for the entire world! For the first time in the history of mankind, India's freedom movement proved to the world that we can fight the injustice, without destroying ourselves and the others. This movement was led by Mahatma Gandhiji and the entire world acknowledged him as a great soul. India was known as the 'country of Gandhi'.

Even though Gandhiji is known as the 'father of the nation' for India, there are some people with a specific ideology who consider him as the 'step-father' of the country. They do not think that the history of the country's fight for freedom is inspiring. They also cannot identify with the freedom struggle. These people

are currently at the helm of affairs of the nation. In fact, the freedom movement deserved a special mention and place in our history, which would be higher than Mahabharat, however this did not happen because there were not enough 'story-tellers' for this. However, we can see that there are innumerable 'Kirtankar' who are spreading the feeling of hatred against Mahatma Gandhiji. They are continuously busy spreading lies about Gandhiji.

People belonging to this group think that the murder of the father of the nation was a great achievement. They glorify the murderer, Mr. Nathuram Godase. They want to build temples for him in every town and village. Those who consider Mahatmaji as the father of the nation are normal people. Thinking of Nathuram as the ideal for bravery, a divine soul and an ideal human being, is a pervert mindset.

The Second World War was ended by America's bombing on Japan with the atom bomb. The entire world realized how horrible this weapon was, only after the explosion of the bomb. Due to the use of atomic weapons, the war became meaningless. In future, nobody can lose or win wars. Also, if an atomic war takes place, it will not be between two countries. The world has realized that, if at all the third world war takes place, it will destroy the entire human race along with all the other living beings. Therefore the entire world is now for 'no war now'. Only two incidents in the twentieth century are considered as the greatest events, out of which one is the atom bomb created by man and the second is the answer to prevent the horrendous manslaughter- the answer is Gandhi ! Even though there is no war, still there would be the battles

against injustice, exploitation and discrimination and how can we avoid these? For this, Gandhiji gave the world a totally new weapon - Satyagrah.

Throughout the world, research is being done and books are being written about Gandhiji's life, character, philosophy. Many new angles and references are known now which were not known earlier. The world is increasingly accepting Gandhiji now. This is why, ten years ago, UNO passed a resolution to celebrate 2 October, which is Gandhiji's birth date, as 'World Ahimsa (non-violence) Day'. On 2 October, in every country, the people celebrate the 'Ahimsa Day'. On this occasion, Gandhiji's principles and philosophies are explained. All the Indian people should feel proud that a common man from India became the global leader. However, there have been systematic and unfortunate efforts going on for uprooting this person from the Indian minds.

For this, a specific group is making all out efforts for spreading lies. On 30 January 1948, an hot hotheaded angry young man from Pune, Mr. Nathuram Godase very cruelly murdered a 79 year old weaponless man who had rejected the police protection. Till today the Hindutvavadi people have been showering praise about the intelligence and bravery of Nathuram.

The problem is not explained just by calling Mr. Nathuram as hotheaded. Nathuram, in fact, represents the personification of the collective hotheadedness. For the common Hindutvavadi person's thought process is not very much different from that of Nathuram's thought process. In the young age, due to the fight for freedom, the old Indian society saw a sea change and a new process for building up a new nation was

started. The new nation would be the modern India. At such a time, it was inevitable that the old and the new value systems would clash. During the years of freedom struggle, the foundation was also being laid for the constitution of modern India. Under these circumstances the philosophy or the thought process was evolved which depicted the emerging India.

The main philosophy was Gandhian philosophy. This was based on all-inclusiveness. The removal of cruel traditions such as un-touchability, respect for all religions, converting the subjects into citizens, the system of democracy, equality of men and women - these were some of the characteristics of this new philosophy ! This philosophy had chosen the 'non-violence' way of 'satyagrah' for fighting against injustice, for creating the new India. The middle class people of the society, who were oriented towards the leftist philosophy, was a characteristic of this philosophy.

Another philosophy was of communism. It had reference at the international level. The base of this philosophy was to unite the workers and laborers. On this point, they agreed with the Gandhian philosophy. However, they did not agree with the principle of 'ahimsa' i.e. non-violence. However, the communist and the Gandhians agreed on opposing the inequalities in the society, the un-touchability, exploitation, caste systems.

Dr. Ambedkar had his own philosophy. He did not have basic disagreement with the Gandhin philosophy. However, he did not agree to depend fully upon the favors of the 'savarna' (people belonging to the upper strata of the caste system). He considered Gandhiji

only as the leader of the 'savarna' people instead of the leader of the entire nation. He trusted the liberal philosophies and fair decision making of the British more, as compared to the 'savarna' people.

Even though, apparently these two philosophies appear to be different, they have something common in their core values. However, the two philosophies which intended to build a nation on the basis of religion, i.e. Hindutvavadi and Islamic nationalist philosophies, were totally against Gandhiji's philosophy.

This year is the 150th birth anniversary year for Gandhiji. This book written by Comrade Aanand Mense tells us in a very simple language about all the philosophies in the freedom struggle and about Gandhiji's personality. Today, it is very much necessary for us to understand Gandhiji. It's historically needed. The people with Hindutvavadi philosophy are ruling the nation. They do not agree about the relationship between end and means or the justification for violence - non-violence. They have altered the constitution of India and have staged a military assault on the Kashmiri people. Modi-Shah think that the majority in the parliament means the license to destroy the democracy with the help of military strength. They have turned Kashmir state into a Union Territory. The state assembly has been dismissed. Due to this incident, India has become a mini Hindu nation. Taking the hatred for the Muslims to new heights they have paved the way for majority philosophy. In the end, we are going to create Hitler. Our journey towards the total destruction has already started.

To save the country, the Gandhians, Ambedkarians and communist will have to unite to defeat the

Hindutvavaad. For this, they will have to make the country free from hating the Muslims. This would start with freeing oneself from hating Gandhiji. Due to this necessity, which is a demand of the history itself, this book becomes even more valuable. This book has presented a comprehensive view of the conflicts in the Indian politics. If one reads this book, with a mind that is free of hatred, then one can definitely understand one's own duties. Everybody, especially the youth, must read this book.

Comrade Anand Mense is my friend. His father, Comrade Krishna Mense, had stayed in Gandhiji's ashram and then became a communist. I sincerely wish to thank him for writing a book which insists that the Gandhian philosophy and communism are complementary philosophies and that they have a common relationship at the core. This is a writer whose two generations were blessed with the philosophies of Gandhiji and Marx! There is indeed no doubt that he is the proper choice for writing such a book. Thanks.

- Kumar Saptarshi.

१०

Chapter 1

Barrister Gandhi in South Africa

Gandhiji arrived in South Africa in 1893. Mr. Dada Abdullah in South Africa needed a lawyer who was well versed in Gujarathi and English languages. Mr. Dada Abdullah was an Indian Gujarathi merchant who had a huge business in South Africa. There was a suit going on in the court against his relative Mr. Sayyadbhai who was also a merchant. At that time, Gandhiji was in search of a job. He had acquired the degree of Barrister in England, in 1891. After getting the degree, he returned to India. He wished to work as a lawyer in Mumbai and support his family. However, he could not cope up with the atmosphere in the courts in India at that time and also the method in which the legal work was carried out. During the same time, Mr. Dada Abdullah needed a lawyer in South Africa, to take care of his ongoing suit, a lawyer conversant with Gujarathi and English languages and hence he placed an advertisement in the newspapers. Gandhiji read the advertisement and contacted Mr. Dada Abdullah. On his invitation, Gandhiji arrived in South Africa.

A lot of people had migrated from India to South Africa. There were Tamil, Gujarathi, Marathi, Hindi, Bangali people who went to South Africa in those days. They had created a smaller version of India

in South Africa. It is important to know, why these people had gone to South Africa. During the period 1860 to 1890, India witnessed severe famine at various places in the country and millions of people had died. The erstwhile 'Sansthaniks' (heads of princely states) had neglected their subjects. During this period, the British had established their empire in India but they also did not fulfill their responsibility. So the people of India suffered on two fronts - natural calamities as well as gross neglect from the rulers.

During this period, the British plantation owners in South Africa thought of cultivating sugar cane on a very large scale. They wished to manufacture sugar and other chemicals from the sugar cane. For all this, they needed farmers and laborers who had good knowledge of sugar cane farming. When they came to know that there are such farmers and laborers available in India, they wrote to the British government in India and requested for permission to carry the farmers and laborers to South Africa. They received such permission from the British government. The British administration in India gave such permission to maintain better relations with the British in South Africa. The plantation owners in South Africa visited India and had a dialogue with the farmers. They promised the farmers better treatment, better money and permission to buy properties in South Africa if the farmers would come there and cultivate sugar cane.

At that time, India had witnessed severe famine. The Indian farmers saw this as a very good opportunity for earning money and they were ready to go to South Africa. With the farmers, the merchant community and other professionals were also ready to go to South

Africa.

When all these people arrived in South Africa and established their businesses, a totally new category of problems emerged. When they faced problems regarding legal matters, they needed lawyers. The Indian merchants maintained their books of accounts in Indian languages. However, in South Africa the language for commercial transaction was English, so these merchants needed a lawyer knowing the local language and one more lawyer knowing the Indian languages. Mr. Dada Abdullah needed a lawyer knowing Gujarathi and English, who would be able to help his lawyer in South Africa. Mr. Dada Abdullah got such a lawyer in the form of Barrister Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

In this way, Gandhiji arrived in South Africa as a lawyer and stayed there for 22 years. He visited India in 1896 and 1902.

In those days, whenever any Indian farmer or any other person visited South Africa for any official purpose, they had to sign an agreement with the government. Due to this, such persons staying in South Africa under the terms of the agreement were called 'agreement'. After some time, this word was pronounced as 'girmite'. However, the British referred to all those who had arrived from India as 'Coolies', regardless of whether it was a farmer or merchant or a lawyer. When Barrister Gandhi arrived in the court in South Africa, he heard the words 'Coolie Barrister' for the first time and he was shocked. As per the agreements, these 'girmite' persons were allowed to stay there for five years. The Indian farmers toiled hard in the African lands to cultivate the sugar cane

plantations. They put in hard work and earned money. Some of them even bought houses and livestock. They even started thinking about settling there. While all this was going on, the rulers had a totally different plan altogether. When the Indian farmers, merchants settled in South Africa, the white rulers who hated the Indians came out with rules and laws which were based on racial hatred.

The British government in South Africa started harassing and exploiting the Indian citizens. They made the rules and regulations in such a ways, that, if the Indians wished to stay in South Africa, they would have to suffer the atrocious rules and regulations or else they would have to return to India. If the Indian farmers and merchants returned to India due to the atrocious regulations, the British would be able to confiscate their properties. Hence they made some stringent laws which were based on racial hatred.

The Nature of Racial Discrimination :

1. In 1894, the government in Natal state passed a law and levied annual tax of 25 pounds on the Indian laborers. In those days, this was a very huge amount. The erstwhile Viceroy in India, Lord Elgin expressed dismay about this and supported the Indian citizens. So this tax was reduced to 3 pounds. If there were four members in any laborer's family, he would have to pay 12 pounds as tax. This was a very big amount for the laborer. After Gandhiji arrived in Natal state, this tax was levied in the next year. He was shocked by this.

2. In Transwall state, the law that was passed for the Indians required every Indian person to pay 3

pounds as tax.

a. The Indians in Transwall did not have the right to vote. Before 1894, they had the right to vote but by this law the right to vote was withdrawn.

b. They were not allowed to walk on the footpaths. Only the white people were allowed to walk on the footpath.

c. Indians were not allowed to travel in the first class carriage of the railway train.

Barrister Gandhi's experience

Gandhiji had heard the words 'Coolie Barrister' in the court premises. Besides this, he had a shocking experience due to which he was totally shattered. On the Petermorissberg station, he purchased a ticket for the first class and entered the first class carriage of the railway. Two white men came towards him and asked him to leave the carriage, as it was reserved only for the white people. Gandhiji showed them the ticket purchased by him and said that he had every right to sit in that carriage. However, the white men pushed him out of the carriage and threw his luggage after him. He realized that such a treatment was being given to him because he was black and an Indian and he resolved there and then to fight against such laws which were based on racial hatred and get justice.

The white administration insisted that the Indians should return to their country after the five year agreement was ended. Indians were trying to settle there and the white administration insisted on making life difficult for them.

Barrister Gandhi keenly observed all these developments. He thought that he had to fight against

this injustice. However, first of all, he had to settle in South Africa. He studied in detail all the lawsuits that were going on in respect of Mr. Dada Abdullah. After studying all the suits, he had the opinion that these can be settled out of court and he convinced Mr. Dada Abdullah about this. He convinced the opposing party also and the suits were settled out of court, so both the parties were happy. Due to this, people in South Africa came to know that an Indian lawyer, Barrister Gandhi had arrived to help them. He started guiding his clients. He started talking with all the Indians and tried to understand the nature of problems that prevailed in that society. During this period, he read a lot. Barrister Gandhi was slowly getting involved in the social movement and less involved in his law practice. When he talked with the people, he became aware about many problems that existed in the society and he was conscious that he had to do something to fight against the injustice.

During his stay in South Africa, Gandhiji read a lot of books. Some of the books influenced him so much that these books outlined the direction for his political and social movements. Out of these, from the book '**Resistance to civil government**' by Henry David Thoro, he adopted the principle of 'non-cooperation' and the non-cooperation movement was based on this principle. From the book written by Leo Tolstoy, '**The Kingdom of God Is Within You**', he accepted the principles of vegetarianism, sanyasi lifestyle, non-political attitude, parallel government, and he adopted the principle of truth from the book '**Ethical Religion**' written by Willian Salter. From the book '**Unto this last**' of John Ruskin he accepted the principles of

sarvoday (progress for all), sahakar (cooperation), samata (equality). He was deeply influenced by 'Bhagavad Geeta'. His yog-sadhana is based on this great book.

Natal Indian Congress

Barrister Gandhi decided to raise a voice against the injustice in respect of the Indian people in South Africa, and founded the Natal Indian Congress on 22 April 1894. He thought that, if they wanted to oppose any system, they could not do this individually, they had to unite and oppose the system. With this in mind he had founded the Natal Indian Congress. In those days, in India, the Indian National Congress had been established. With a view that a similar organization should be established in South Africa, he founded the Natal Indian Congress and started the task of opposing the system of racial discrimination.

The Black Law in South Africa

Let us get some information about the law that Barrister Gandhi had described as the 'Black Law in South Africa'. This law stated that every Indian person over the age of eight years had to register himself/herself in the Registrar's office and obtain a license. At the time of registration, the caste of the applicant was noted. Finger prints were obtained for all fingers. Any signs and birth marks etc. on the body were noted. This procedure was similar to the procedure in which the criminal's information is noted at the Police Station. The entire procedure was very insulting. The Indian persons had to show the license whenever the police would ask for the same. Those

who would not be able to show the license would be sent to jail. This law was passed and was made applicable on 22 August 1906.

The Marriage Act

The Marriage Act was passed and made applicable from 14 March 1913. This law was even more atrocious. It stated that only those marriages which had been performed as per the Christian traditions would be recognized as legal and all other marriages would be illegal. Due to this, the marriages of non-Christian people were declared to be illegal. The children born to the parents whose marriages were illegal, would be illegal and would have no right to their parents' properties. In this way, the government had planned to seize the properties of the Indian citizens by passing such atrocious law about marriages.

Support from India

Even though he was staying in South Africa, Gandhiji was constantly in touch with the leaders in India. In 1896, he had visited India and met the great leader Mr. Ferozshah Mehta. He narrated to him about the situation in South Africa. As per his advice, he prepared a draft copy to be given to the reporters, which described the plight of the Indian people in South Africa and the atrocious laws made by the government with nothing but the racial discrimination in mind.

This draft was handed over to the reporters. It was also sent to the noted Congress leaders. Afterwards, he visited Pune and met Lokmanya Tilak, Mahadev Govind Ranade, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and

Bhandarkar and explained the status of affairs in South Africa. In Pune, a meeting was called by Tilak and Gokhale, under the chairmanship of Mr. Bhandarkar and they declared to support the movement started by Gandhiji in South Africa.

Gandhiji has mentioned that he regarded Ferozshah Mehta like Himalaya, while he regarded Lokmanya Tilak like an unfathomable ocean. Gopal Krishna Gokhale impressed him like the clean and clear Ganga river.

After getting support from the Indian leaders, Gandhiji returned to South Africa. In those days, the white people in South Africa had tried to create an atmosphere against him. His opponents claimed that Barrister Gandhi was creating a wrong picture of South Africa and it was necessary to teach him a lesson. The boat carrying Gandhiji arrived in the Durban port on 19 December 1896. Around two thousand white people gathered at the port when they came to know that Gandhiji had arrived at Durban. They shouted slogans that Gandhiji should not be allowed to enter, and due to this Gandhiji had to remain on the boat for 23 days.

Finally, on 13th January, Gandhiji was asked to remain on the boat and other passengers were allowed to disembark. The officials tried to calm down the opponents and Gandhiji was asked to disembark in the company of an official. The opponents were ready with tomatoes and eggs which they showered on him. Some of them assaulted him with the intention of killing him. Under these circumstances a Parsi person, Mr. Rustumji asked him to stay in his house, but the frenzied people threatened to burn the house

itself. Rustomji had a police uniform with him. Gandhiji donned the uniform and walked through the mob and not a single person suspected anything ! This was the second attempt on his life. The first attempt had been done by Meer Alam, a pathan, in South Africa, due to some misunderstanding.

In 1902, Gandhiji once again visited India, to attend the National Conference of the Indian National Congress which was held at Kolkata. Mr. Dinshaw Wacchaw was the chairman of this conference. In this conference, Gandhiji gave the information about the fight for justice started by the Indians in South Africa and as a result, for the first time the National Congress passed a resolution supporting the Indian people in South Africa. In this way, Gandhiji tried to present the plight of the Indian people in South Africa at the global level. During his stay in Kolkata, he tried to meet Swami Vivekanand. However, Swami Vivekanand was very ill at that time, so he could not meet Swamiji.

ॐ

CHAPTER 2

The fights and protests put up by Gandhiji in South Africa The principle of 'Satyagraha'

Gandhiji decided to unite the Indian people in South Africa to put up a fight against the government who treated them with racial discrimination. For this, he developed the principle of 'Satyagrah'. Gandhiji had been very influenced by the thoughts of Leo Tolstoy. He had borrowed the principle of 'Passive resistance' from Tolstoy. Gandhiji called it 'civil disobedience' or 'Savinay Pratikar'. This concept further developed into 'Satyagrah'.

As per Gandhiji's principles, when a person is doing 'Satyagrah', there is no place for any hatred against any person. He said that we should oppose the principles, not the persons, and that before embarking upon the 'Satyagrah' process, we must first listen to the other party and then we should present our opinion before them. Only if there is no possibility of compromise, then the fight or 'Andolan' (protest movement) should start. The fight or 'Andolan' should be totally without violence.

With these principles, Gandhiji started his work. He visited England with one of his friends, to convince the people in England, that the Indian people in South

Africa had a right to lead a life with self-esteem. In England, he met various prominent leaders and tried to explain the situation in South Africa. However, the leaders did not at all respond. Hence after returning to South Africa, he founded the 'Passive Resistance Association'. Through this organization, he used the weapon of 'Satyagrah' and started the movement of 'civil disobedience' i.e. 'Savinay Kayadebhang'. As soon as the movement was started, the government arrested him and filed a lawsuit against him.

Gandhiji's uniqueness

When the lawsuit was presented before the court, Gandhiji requested the judge that along with him, lawsuits had been filed against many others. He stated that they all agreed about their crimes and the judge would give suitable punishments. However, he requested the judge that as his friends had participated in the movement against the law as per his request, he should be given a greater punishment as compared to them. The judge was very much surprised to hear this, because normally any person going to jail would have requested for reduction in punishment and Gandhiji had requested exactly the opposite.

While declaring his decision, the judge said that there was no such provision in the law, so the punishment for all would be the same. As per the judge's order, all of them were punished with two months' imprisonment. This was on 27 October 1909.

Phoenix Ashram

Gandhiji established the 'Phoenix Ashram' in 1904, to start the fight against the tyranny of the government

in South Africa. As this ashram was near the Phoenix railway station, it was named the 'Phoenix Ashram'. This ashram is 300 miles away from the city of Johannesburg. The volunteers of the movement used to stay in this ashram. Here, Gandhiji used to explain his principles to them. At one point, he realized that whatever he was explaining to the volunteers in the movement also needed to reach the Indian people in South Africa.

There was only one way to do this. He had to publish a newspaper. He took over the 'Indian Opinion' weekly in 1904. The weekly magazine was being published in the past also. Gandhiji used to offer financial help for this magazine from his own income. Now he took over the administration of the weekly magazine. This magazine was published in English, Hindi, Gujarathi and Tamil languages, because the number of persons knowing these languages was very large. Through the 'Indian Opinion' Gandhiji presented the problems of the Indian people in South Africa. Besides these, he also wrote about the concept of 'Satyagrah', its principle, Ahimsa (Non-violence), importance of vegetarianism.

Gandhiji has mentioned that he was very fond of 'Indian Opinion'. This tiny newspaper brought about awareness in the Indian people in South Africa, on a very large scale. After establishing the Phoenix Ashram, he decided to stop his legal practice. In those days, he used to earn around 5 to 6 thousand pounds per month, which was a very large sum indeed. He abandoned this income and became a fulltime worker for his movement.

Each person staying in the Phoenix Ashram was given a sum of 3 pounds every evening. Even Gandhiji

also accepted only 3 pounds for himself. He managed to meet all the expenses with this sum of 3 pounds. Phoenix Ashram became the platform for the workers of the movement where hard work and discipline were given supreme importance.

Tolstoy Farm

As Phoenix Ashram was far away from Johannesburg, Gandhiji started Tolstoy Farm in 1100 acres near Johannesburg. Just like Phoenix Ashram, Tolstoy Farm was also a laboratory for his experiments. In this laboratory, Gandhiji experimented about farming, health, education and diet. Whatever he could learn from these experiments is documented in his booklet, viz. 'Hind Swarajya'. He wrote this booklet in 1909. He wrote this booklet during his travel from England to South Africa. He has enumerated his entire philosophy and programs in this booklet in a very lucid and simple language.

The wisdom earned through experience

The movement against the government was a learning process for Gandhiji too. He learnt a lot from these experiences. General Smut started a drive to defame Gandhiji so that his movement would not be successful. He sent Mr. Kartwright, editor of the newspaper 'Transwall Leader' to meet Gandhiji and try for some compromise. General Smut proposed that if the Indian people voluntarily registered themselves then in future the government might think about withdrawing the 'Black Law'. Mr. Kartwright presented this proposal to Gandhiji. As per his principles, Gandhiji trusted Kartwright and asked the Indian people to

register themselves in the Registrar's office. However, the Indian people did not like this. Meer Alam, a Pathan, attacked Gandhiji with a lathi (baton) but Gandhiji was saved.

Many people suggested that Gandhiji should lodge a complaint against Meer Alam and request for police action against him, but Gandhiji did not agree. He was firm on his opinion that if Meer Alam would spend some days with him, he would be convinced about Gandhiji's opinion. As per the promise given to Kartwright, he also obtained the license. However, whatever happened next was not expected at all.

General Smut did not honor his promise. He firmly refused to withdraw the Black Law. Gandhiji had promised the Indian people because he had trusted Mr. Kartwright, but he declared that he was not able to fulfill his promise. Gandhiji realized that he had been cheated, and hence he decided to start the 'Satyagrah' (protest program) once again.

Kasturba participates in the movement

The government, with the objective of racial discrimination, had passed the law regarding marriages, due to which the Indian people had become restive. Gandhiji decided to start a severe protest 'Andolan' (protest movement) against it. At this time, he decided that women also should join the movement. For this, he explained the situation to his wife Kasturba and requested her to join the movement so that other women would also join it. When other women heard about Kasturba's participation, they joined the protest movement. Kasturba was arrested. She was shifted to the prison at Petermoritzberg along with the other

women participants.

In this prison, the conditions were very bad and the political prisoners were treated like common criminals. When Kasturba was released from the prison, she fell ill. One of the participants Valliamma died. Gandhiji wrote about this saying that Valliamma is a Hutatma in the protest movement against racial discrimination.

The beginning of the final fight

When he realized that the government in South Africa, with its laws of racial discrimination, would not withdraw the black laws, Gandhiji decided that the time had come for starting the final fight against the government. Before initiating the final fight, he invited Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale to South Africa. Gandhiji thought that as Mr. Gokhale had vast experience and was a very prominent personality, if he arrived in South Africa and provided guidance then the fight would become very powerful. Mr. Gokhale accepted the invitation and visited South Africa in 1912.

Huge crowds of Indians flocked to his meetings held in Capetown, Johannesburg, Pritoria. Due to Mr. Gokhale's arrival, the Indians were overjoyed and their confidence level also increased. Mr. Gokhale discussed about the racial discrimination law with General Botha and General Smut. General Botha and General Smut promised to withdraw the law. After this, Mr. Gokhale returned to India. However, General Smut and General Botha did not fulfill the promise given to Mr Gokhale. Gandhiji wrote a detailed letter to Mr Gopal Krishna Gokhale and informed about the chain of events. Immediately, in 1913 Mr. Gokhale again visited South Africa. He again discussed the

matters with General Smut and General Botha and forced them to withdraw the tax.

The Long March

Barrister Gandhi realized that the British government in South Africa gave various promises but never fulfilled them and he would have to find a way out. Barrister Gandhi had expanded his area of work. He had united the workers working in the mines and formed their union. There were a large number of Indian workers working in the mines. In South Africa, the workers doing the job of cleaning and sweeping were Indian dalits (the word 'dalit' refers to the people belonging to the lowest strata of the caste system of the society).

Gandhiji had united them also and formed their union. Now he decided to start a final protest movement (andolan) with the participation of all these workers and organized a Long March. He started the Long March from Johannesburg, which was the center of all such movements. 5 thousand people had participated in this long march. It was very difficult to make arrangements for these participants. He formed volunteer groups to look after this responsibility. There were volunteers to cook and serve meals to the participants. One group was only for the cleaning work. On 6 November 1913 this long march reached Charlstown.

The British administration tried to stop the long march with the help of baton charge and sent horse ridden troops to disperse the long march. However, the participants of the long march protested using the 'Ahimsa' (non-violence) way of protest. During this march Barrister Gandhi was arrested three times during the four days of the march. Legal suits were

filed against him and he was acquitted too. Afterwards, he was sent to prison for three months. However, the long march was not discontinued.

The volunteers in the movement continued the march. Some of them were arrested and sent to the mines to work as laborers. Then Barrister Gandhi asked the mine workers to go on strike and join the long march. Due to this the mines had to be shut down. Afterwards Barrister Gandhi ordered the sweepers and cleaning workers of the municipal corporations to go on strike. So the sweepers and cleaning workers joined the strike. As the sweepers went on strike, in all the cities there was filth and dust everywhere and this became harmful for the health of the people.

The British government was in a fix. The cornered government ordered shooting on the long march, so as to frighten the volunteers participating in the long march. Lot of people were injured in the shooting and some of them died. The news of the shooting reached the outer world and throughout the world the atrocities of the British were denounced.

Due to the worldwide criticism and the worsening situation in South Africa, at last the South African government decided to conduct a series of talks with Barrister Gandhi. The British government held talks with him and agreed to all the demands made by Barrister Gandhi. After this, on 21 January 1914 Gandhiji decided to withdraw his protest movement (andolan). In this protest movement, the Indian people in South Africa finally attained victory.

When Gandhiji was in prison, General Smut used to visit him. He used to carry out the inspection of the prisoners. Once during his visit, Barrister Gandhi

obtained his foot print on a piece of paper and he prepared leather sandals for him. During his stay in the prison, Barrister Gandhi learnt sewing and preparing articles from leather. He also learnt a lot of other arts while in prison. When he was released, he visited General Smut and gave the sandals to him as a gift, which Gandhiji had himself prepared for General Smut. General Smut was overwhelmed by the thought that this was the same person whom he had put in prison and tortured him, and now the same person was offering a gift of sandals.

Gandhiji developed the principle of 'Satyagrah' (a form of protest program) when he was in South Africa. As per this principle, the 'satyagrahi' (one who participates in the protest program) is not supposed to hate anybody. Gandhiji's behavior with General Smut was according to this principle. General Smut never actually used the sandals. He prepared a showcase for the sandals and kept the sandals in the showcase.

General Smut has written that no power in the world would be able to defeat the Satyagrahi andolan of Gandhiji. Afterwards, General Smut donated the sandals given by Gandhiji to him, to the Mahatma Gandhi Museum at Johannesburg. Even today, these sandals are there. In the Mahatma Gandhi Museum, Gandhiji's books, newspaper clippings of the news items published in those days, photographs and some items used by Gandhiji have been preserved.

Barrister Gandhi always felt that he would have to return to India after finishing the protest movement (andolan) in South Africa. Similar to the Indian people's problems in South Africa, the black African people also had to face severe problems. The British government

always used to torture these black people too. When Gandhiji was in South Africa, he used to say that the black people also should put up a fight against the injustice that they had to suffer. With his initiation, in 1912 the 'African National Congress' was founded. In this way, Gandhiji inspired the people in South Africa to fight against injustice.

Gandhiji's entire psychological and philosophical thought development process occurred in South Africa. While expressing his thoughts about Gandhiji, the great leader of South Africa's freedom movement Mr. Nelson Mandela has said, that, ' India gave us Barrister Gandhi. We gave India Mahatma Gandhi.' .

Gandhiji decided that his work in South Africa was now over and that he should return to India and participate in the freedom movement going on in India, so he decided to return to India.

१०

CHAPTER 3

Arrival in India

Gandhiji arrived in Mumbai, India, on 5 January, 1915. When he arrived in India, the Indian public had arranged a grand welcome for him. Gandhiji arrived in India as a hero, as a successful warrior. The Acharya at Haridwar's Kangadi Gurukul was the first to mention Gandhiji as 'Mahatma'. After the welcome in Mumbai, he directly came to Pune. He was eager to meet his mentor, Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Mr. Gokhale welcomed Gandhiji and discussed the affairs in the country. He advised Gandhiji, that if he wanted to participate in the Indian politics, then first he should see the situation in all parts of the country, understand it.

Gandhiji told him that he wanted to start an 'Ashram' immediately. On this, Mr. Gokhale replied that the Ashram could be established anywhere, he would offer help for the same. He called his colleague Dr. Dev and gave instructions. On 21 May 1915, Gandhiji started the ashram at Kocharab in Gujarath. It was named as 'Satyagrah Ashram'. In this ashram, there were 25 inhabitants. 13 were Tamilians and there were 5 children too. All of these were Tamilians and had arrived from South Africa. Gandhiji wanted to start his work here with the help from his old colleagues. However, Mr. Gokhale did not survive to see this

ashram. He expired on 19 February 1915.

As per the advice of his guru Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Gandhiji tried to visit each and every part of the country to understand the situation there. He thought that first of all he would visit the country and only then form his own opinions. He preferred to visit the rural parts of the country. When he visited the villages, he met the Dalit (downtrodden or from the lowest level in the caste system of the society) communities and had a dialogue with them. After this he decided his course of action.

Gandhiji's first public speech

His political declaration

Gandhiji gave his first public speech on 6 February 1916 at Banares. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya had initiated the process of establishing an university at Banares. This university was named as Banares Hindu University. This university was founded on 4 February 1916. On 6 February, the foundation stone ceremony of the university building had been organized.

For this special occasion, India's Viceroy Lord Herding, senior leader Annie Bezzant, Maharaja of Darbhanga Sansthan had been invited. He also had invited the Sansthanik (heads of the princely states), Jahagirdar (landlord), merchants and prominent personalities for this ceremony and they all attended the program. He had also invited Gandhiji for this occasion. Pandit Malaviya had invited Gandhiji as he was now famous as a barrister who had spent some years in South Africa. Gandhiji gave a small speech at this occasion, but it became very famous. It was as if he had stated his political declaration in

his speech. His small speech created a great uproar in the country.

In his speech, Gandhi stated that :

1) The Banares Hindu University should have a system of providing education in the mother tongue to the students, so that the children from poor families would be able to have education in their mother tongues.

2) I visited the Vishvanath Temple. The area around the temple is very dirty. How can God stay in such filth? We need to keep free India very clean.

3) While moving about in the city of Banares, I observed that there are a lot of secret police roaming around in the city. Why is Lord Herding so frightened that he has employed so many police officers? Isn't it better to be dead than constantly living in fear?

4) The British should leave India and let us live in a free country. They should ensure that when they leave the country there would not be any violence.

5) I wish to tell the Sansthaniks, Jahagirdar, Vatandar and Jamindars in the audience that when the country acquires freedom, all of them will have to act as the trustees of the wealth. They should never forget that the ornaments and costly robes that they are wearing have been earned through the hard work of the farmers.

While Gandhiji was speaking, there was a commotion in the audience. Ms. Annie Bezzant tried to stop his speech. Lord Herding was very upset. Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya was very much disturbed and did not know what to do. The Sansthaniks got up and started leaving the venue. However, Gandhiji continued with his speech. He presented his thoughts very clearly

and completed his speech.

A detailed report of his speech was published in the papers. Everybody thought that the Barrister who had arrived from South Africa was telling them something new. In his very first speech, Gandhiji waged a war on three different fronts. He declared that the British had to leave the country, so he made his stand clear about the British. He declared that after freedom, the Sansthaniks would have to become the trustees of their wealth. Such a thought had never been put forth before .

In those days, there were around 565 Sansthans (princely states) in India. The heads of these states considered themselves as the kings and some bigger princely states also had their own armies. They had their own flags too. They used to think that when the British would leave, they would again become the kings of their states. Gandhiji shocked them with his views. One more group in the society was not very happy with Gandhiji. This group consisted of the officers who were working with the Sansthan (princely states).

These officers and clerks were necessary to look after the everyday proceedings of the Sansthan. Also, a separate set of officers was needed for maintaining the accounts. All these officers were now worried. If, when India would be a free country, these princely states would be merged in free India, then what would be their fate? The officers working in the Sansthans (princely states) were mainly Brahmins. This section of the society opposed Gandhiji. They thought that Gandhiji was going to make them jobless and homeless.

In this way, in his very first speech, Gandhiji made

very clear whom he was going to support and also declared whom he was going to oppose. In the later period, the Sansthaniks opposed Gandhiji in every possible way. The Muslim Sansthaniks backed the Muslim League party and those who were Hindus backed the organizations like Hindu Mahasabha, Rasthriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

The first speech made by Gandhiji created a lot of critics and opponents for him, but this speech also gave him a 'Shishya' i.e. student. In March 1996, a student, Mr. Vinayak Narhar Bhave, had arrived at Banares, to study Sanskrit. In those days, everybody in Banares was discussing about Gandhiji's speech. The learned and wise men were also talking about it. Mr. Bhave talked with the people, tried to understand their views, read Gandhiji's speech and then wrote a letter to Gandhiji.

At that time, Gandhiji was in the Satyagrah Ashram in Kochrab, Gujarath. After receiving the letter, Gandhiji wrote a letter to Mr. Bhave and requested him to come and meet him. Immediately Mr. Bhave arrived at Kochrab and met Gandhiji. They were very happy to meet each other. Gandhiji told Bhave that he (Bhave) belonged to Maharashtra and that Maharashtra was the land of Shivba (Shivaji Maharaj), Tukoba, Dnyanoba, therefore, from that day onwards Mr. Bhave would be called 'Vinoba'. In this way, Mr. Vinayak Narhar Bhave was transformed into 'Vinoba Bhave'. Throughout his life, he was known as 'Vinoba'.

Gandhiji's strategies

Through his speech in Banares, Gandhiji proclaimed his political declaration. Now he needed to prepare

the strategy. For this, he decided to implement the guidelines given by his guru Mr. Gopal Krishna Gokhale. He started his journey through the country, visited various places, talked with the people and tried to understand their problems.

The very first observation that he had noted was that India was a country of villages. There were around five lakh villages in the country and if he wanted to make a start it should be from the village level. For this, he had to understand the village life. Gandhiji started his work with the village at the centre of all activities. He observed that vast poverty existed in the villages. In the villages, there would be some rich Jamindars (landlords) but everybody else was very poor. The condition of the dalit (from the lowest strata of the caste system of the society) people was even worse. He observed that the dalit community had to depend upon the savarna (the upper strata in the caste system in the society) people for everything and the savarna people ill-treated them. The dalit people did not have a right to the drinking water, they were not allowed to enter the temples and worship their god.

In the areas where there had been famine, the situation was even worse, because there even the savarna people were not getting drinking water, so the condition of the dalit people was unthinkable. Gandhiji observed all these things and felt very sad. Kasturba and Mahadevbhai have recorded an incident which made a deep impression on Gandhiji's mind.

At that time, they were in a village in Bihar. At noon time, they felt very thirsty and so knocked on the door of a hut and requested, 'can you please give us water to drink?'. Somebody from inside the hut said 'Yes,

please wait'. The door opened slightly and the water vessel was offered to them, but the woman in the hut did not come out. Kasturba accepted the vessel. Then another vessel was given for Mahadevbhai too.

Kasturba said that she wanted to thank her, could she come out ? The woman replied, 'I cannot come outside, because there was only one good sari in our house and my mother in law had worn it and gone for work. I have no decent clothes to wear so I can not come out.' Kasturba and Mahadevbhai were shocked to hear this. The plight of the poor living in the villages in those days is apparent from this.

Gandhiji was appalled by the situation that he would have to fight on so many fronts. In future, the British would return to their own country but what would happen after they leave? What is our agenda for the millions of people staying in the villages? What about the uplift of the dalit people? These questions continuously pestered him.

Gandhiji also thought that there was one more important issue which was about the status of women. In those days, in our society, all the women, even the women from the Brahmin community were not given proper treatment. They did not have any rights. Their entire life and work was within their home.

In those days, the main occupation was agriculture. The farmers used to cultivate their land in a traditional way. The income from the agriculture was not much. Whatever was cultivated in the field, a major portion had to be given to the Jamindar (landlord) and money lender. The farmers did not own the land, they were only farm laborers working in the fields.

Europe had witnessed a great industrial revolution,

but no such industrial revolution had happened in India. In Europe many cities were industrialized, however in India only a few cities like Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Surat, Kanpur had some industries. Cotton mills had been established there. These mills were owned mostly by the British and the local rich Marvari persons. In these cities, a huge number of people worked as workers in the mills.

In 1858, the administration of India was transferred from the East India Company to the Queen of England. The Company government was replaced by the Queen's government. This government took a major decision. As per this decision, the government passed the Armaments and Weapons License Act. The government implemented this law and confiscated the armaments and weapons that the people had with them. The entire country became devoid of any type of armaments or weapons.

Only the Sansthanik (head of princely states) had the weapons, because they had their own armies. The government had given them permission to have their own armies. The government had appointed a 'political agent' to supervise the Sansthaniks. He used to keenly observe the princely states and if anybody acted against the Queen's government then he would immediately inform his officers. The British ensured that the Sansthaniks (heads of princely states) would live in great comfort. They would indulge in a lifestyle which would include hunting, dance and enjoying life.

The Sansthaniks tortured their subjects and levied taxes. So their subjects hated them. They did not support them. So on one hand the British had taken away the weapons of the Sansthaniks and the general

population and on the other hand they themselves had acquired modern weapons. They had acquired modern rifles, cannons and had an excellent and disciplined army. This was the situation in the country at that time.

How was the political atmosphere in those days? Lokmanya Tilak headed the Congress party. Tilak had very hard political opinions. He had again and again put forth his stand that the British should leave India. He had entered into an agreement with Barrister Mohmad Ali Jinnah for the participation of the Muslim people in the freedom movement. This was made at Lucknow in 1916 so it was called as the 'Lucknow Agreement'.

As per this agreement, 30 percent of the seats in the Council would be reserved for the Muslim people. Separate constituencies were created for the Muslim people, where the voters would be Muslim and the candidates also would be Muslim. Due to this agreement, the Muslim people joined the freedom movement. This was what Lokmanya Tilak wanted.

However, this perspective of Lokmanya Tilak about the social problems was indeed not good for the people in general. He opposed the social reforms, so the people of the 'Satyashodhak' movement were very upset with him. The 'bahujan' community (people belonging to the lower strata of the caste system of the society) was in search of a new leadership.

In 1920 Lokmanya Tilak expired. A vacuum was created in the Indian politics. Gandhiji came forward to fill the vacuum. The 'bahujan' community welcomed him as they got their leader. However, during the same period, many followers of Lokmanya Tilak had

enrolled in Hindu Mahasabha under the leadership of Mr. N. C. Kelkar.

At that time, many different groups were also trying to carry on protest movements with the use of weapons. A special mention needs to be done of the 'Gadhar movement'. The Hindustani Sikh community, staying in Canada, collected weapons and tried to fight against the British government. This was called as the 'Gadhar movement'. However, the Gadhar volunteers were captured in the Kolkata port. The British sent them to Andaman for life imprisonment. The 'Gadhar Movement' is a very important milestone for the freedom movement.

After the revolution in Russia, the Russian dynasty was uprooted and the communist movement was started in Russia. Inspired by the Russian revolution, people were trying to start the labor movement and the Communist movement in India. Such was the situation in India in those days and Gandhiji had to find a way for himself and unite the people for the freedom movement.

With this sole objective, Gandhiji visited all parts of the country. He met people and tried to understand their plight. At one point, he decided that if he wanted to work in this country then he would have to dress like them, so he abandoned his Gujarathi clothes and started wearing only a simple cotton dhoti along with a cotton cloth worn like a shawl.

४०

CHAPTER 4

Gandhiji's protest movements for farmers

The British had made the country weaponless, but the government had acquired huge weapons. Under these circumstances, Gandhiji decided to use the weapon of 'Satyagrah' (non-violence way of protest) to fight against the British. He had developed this weapon in South Africa. The method of 'Satyagrah' was implemented with the principle of 'Ahimsa' i.e. non-violence. In South Africa too, the government had amassed weapons while the people were weaponless. Still, in the end the people had conquered victory. He decided to use this method of 'Satyagrah' in India too.

Gandhiji started his movement after thoroughly understanding the problems of the farmers. In those days, in the Bihar state, the government had made it compulsory for the farmers to cultivate indigo. They needed indigo for cleaning the cloth manufactured in the cotton mills in England. As indigo was not cultivated in England they needed it from India. So the British government compelled the farmers in Bihar to cultivate indigo and made it mandatory for them to reserve one third of their fields for cultivation of indigo. This method was called 'Teen Kathiya'.

British government wanted to levy water tax to those farmers who would use the water from the rivers and nallah for their farms. The farmers met Gandhiji and told him about their plight. Gandhiji promised them that he would try to solve this problem. Accordingly, in 1917 Gandhiji arrived in Bihar along with his colleagues. He talked with the farmers and tried to understand their situation.

The farmers told him that after cultivating indigo, the land would become infertile so the farmers were not really ready to cultivate indigo, while the British government had compelled them to cultivate indigo. Gandhiji studied the problem in detail and finally decided to fight to support the farmers and oppose the British, by staging a 'Satyagrah'.

This 'Satyagrah' was organized at Champaranya in Bihar. Farmers from all over the country had arrived at Champaranya to support the farmers in Bihar. Finally, under the leadership of Gandhiji, this fight was successful and as per Gandhiji's demands, on 13 June 1917 the government agreed to appoint a committee to study the problems. This committee met the farmers and understood their problems. The committee informed the government about the problems faced by they farmers. On 18 October 1917, the government declared that it had accepted the demands made by the committee.

1. The compulsion for cultivating indigo (Teen Kathiya method) should be withdrawn.

2. There should be an agreement between the farmers and the government which should be acceptable to the farmers and should not be signed under compulsion. The period of the agreement should

be three years.

3. The increase in the Khand (tax) should be reduced by 20 to 25 per cent.

4. The tradition of 'Vethbigar' (this tradition was similar to the tradition of slaves where the laborers used to work for their employer throughout their lives, with very meager or no salary) should be stopped .

5. The farmers should pay only the amount agreed in the agreement, to the government. The government should not expect or compel for any additional amount.

In this way, Gandhiji was successful in his first protest movement in Champaranya, against the British government. This event made him famous throughout the country.

Due to this, Gandhiji became well-known as the leader of the farmers.

The Satyagrah at Kheda

Kheda is a district in Gujarath. In those days, six hundred villages belonged to Kheda. During 1918, there was a severe famine in that area. The district faced acute water shortage. There was no fodder available for the cattle. There was no food available for the people. The first world war was coming to an end. Due to this war, which had gone on for four years, the British government had faced tremendous financial crunch. Britain needed money. The British government tried to raise money from the British colonies spread over the world.

It is a common practice that whenever there is famine, the taxes are not levied, or if the taxes have to be levied then they should be in proportion of the crop yields. However, British government kept aside

all such norms. The officers were ordered to levy the same taxes in the states where there was famine. The officers started collecting the levies. This added to the agony of the people because those who did not even have enough food for themselves, how could they pay any taxes? The officers started threatening the people and told them that they would confiscate their belongings if they would not pay the taxes.

When the burden became unbearable for the farmers, they approached Gandhiji. Gandhiji hailed from Gujrath. He accepted the leadership for the protest of farmers. He said that this would be an opportunity for him to serve Gujarath. Gandhiji decided to conduct a 'Satyagrah' . He told the farmers not to pay any tax. The police might come and confiscate their belongings, crops and houses as well as the cattle, but the farmers would not pay the taxes. He told them not to indulge in any violence but not to pay the taxes.

This protest movement went on for six months. As was his tradition, Gandhiji sent letters to all the authorities including the government at Delhi and tried to explain the true situation. He also stressed that he and the farmers were firm about their stand. When the government realized that the farmers were not going to withdraw their protest at all, the government itself agreed to stop the recovery of the tax.

After Champaranya, the Kheda andolan (protest movement) became very famous and the news about this reached all corners of the country.

The protest against taxes at Bardoli

Bardoli is in Gujarath. The farmers in and around

Bardoli, started the 'Sarabandi Andolan' (protest movement against the taxes) in 1928 under the leadership of Gandhiji. The British Government had suddenly increased the taxes by 25 percent, without taking the farmers into confidence. So the farmers were shocked and they decided not to pay the tax. When the farmers did not pay the taxes, the government appointed 'Pathans' (armed personnel) for recovery of the taxes. In those days, the money lenders used to employ the Pathans for recovery of the loans. These Pathans used to recover the dues and employed atrocious methods for the same. They were infamous for these methods. The government entrusted the work of recovery of taxes to these 'Pathans'. The entire farmer community became restless. When these pathans started their atrocious methods of recovery by visiting various villages, the farmers met Gandhiji and told him about the situation.

Gandhiji decided to use the method of 'Satyagrah' here too. The farmers declared that they would never pay the additional tax. During this protest movement, one more person joined the movement. His name was Mr. Vallabhbai Patel. He was a lawyer. However, he abandoned his practice and became a fulltime volunteer for the protest movement. He became a leader of the farmers.

The 'andolan' (protest movement) continued peacefully. In the end, the government had to take a note of the protest and the government appointed a committee to look into the matter. The committee studied the problem and submitted its report. As mentioned in this report, the increase of 25 percent in the taxes was brought down to 6 percent. Also, those

who were imprisoned during the protest movement were immediately released unconditionally.

In this way, during the period of 1916 to 1918 Gandhiji fought for the farmers in Champaranya in Bihar and Kheda in Gujarath and the farmers received justice. Then in 1928, Gandhiji led the protest movement against the increase in taxes at Bardoli. Due to these three protest movements, he became famous throughout the country.

ॐ

Chapter 5

Gandhiji's labor movement

When Gandhiji was in South Africa, he had fought for the rights of the workers. However, after arriving in India, he had mainly concentrated on the problems faced by the farmers. In Gujarath, there were some cotton mills in the city of Ahmedabad. There were around 50 thousand workers working in these mills. In 1918, the workers faced such a situation that they had to participate in the protest movement.

The British government had decided to reduce the salaries of the mill workers by 35 percent, to recover the expenses made in the first world war. This was a huge reduction in salary. Their salaries were meager and now they faced the reduction in salary. The workers became restless. On top of this, the employers declared that there would be no bonus. This added to the dismay of the workers. Finally, noting that the workers were very unhappy and agitated, the employers declared that the dearness allowance would be increased, but it was too late. The workers had decided to go on strike. The workers approached Gandhiji. They presented their problems before him. Gandhiji agreed to lead the protest movement, only on four conditions :

1. Under any circumstances, they would not indulge in violence.

2. Those who wanted to continue working, would be allowed to work.

3. The laborers would not beg for food.

4. Even if the strike would go on for a longer period, they should be firm on their demands. They should do some other work for their livelihood.

The workers agreed to these conditions. However, as the strike went on and on the workers became restless. On the 18th day of the strike, Gandhiji realized the gravity of the situation. He called a meeting of the workers and declared that he would embark upon a 'fast unto death' to support the strike. He immediately started his fast. When Gandhiji actually started his 'fast unto death', the workers once again united and decided to continue the strike.

There was a great pressure on the British government due to Gandhiji's fast. The government declared that they were ready to hold talks with the workers. Accordingly, the talks were held. The employers agreed to give a 35 percent rise in wages to the workers. On the third day of the fast, Gandhiji withdrew the strike and ended his fast. In this way the 21 day strike came to an end. Now, Gandhiji was known as the leader of the workers too. Gandhiji founded the workers' union viz. 'Textile Labor Association'.

१०

Chapter 6

Efforts for increasing people's participation in the protest movement

Gandhiji had observed that only the men were participating in the protest movements. In these, there would be a large number of men from the upper classes of the society. The women and the dalit (the people from the lowest ranks of the caste system of the society) would never participate in these. He felt that unless these also participated in the protest movements, it would not be possible for the protest movement to reach the nooks and corners of the country and unless the protest came up from all parts of the country, it would be difficult to influence the British. So Gandhiji felt that special efforts were needed for this.

He decided that if the participation of the people was to be increased, the people must be offered simple programs in the beginning. Though the programs would be simple, they would be conducted with much larger strength so as to ensure that the programs would be successful. When the people would see that their programs had succeeded they would become confident. Gandhiji used this method. Normally, a common man is not ready to go to prison. He is afraid of the prison. It was necessary to remove this

fear of the prison.

Hence after due thought, Gandhiji prepared a program which could be implemented by all the common people. He told them that people should get up early in the morning, hold the tri-color flag and have a march in their own area, keep their surroundings clean. This was a very simple program. This program could be implemented by anybody and also they people would be able to continue with their daily activities. There was no financial loss in this. There was also no question that the British would object to this. Hence, the 'morning march' ('Prabhat ferī') and the cleanliness drive programs became very famous in a very short time. Due to this, the participation of the people increased.

Prohibition on alcohol

When Gandhiji had a dialogue with the women, he realized that for them the number one enemy was not the British, but the number one enemy was alcohol. The head of the family would go to work every day and in the evening spend his entire earnings on alcohol. If the head of the family would not give any money for the household expenses, then how was the housewife supposed to look after the house? As there was no money, everybody in the family suffered.

Gandhiji understood the plight of the women and he gave them a simple program. He told the women that in the evening they should go in the area where there were liquor shops, and sing 'bhajan's (devotional songs). This program was very successful. The people felt shy to visit the liquor shops as they first had to pass from the place where women who would be singing

the devotional songs. So the number of customers to the liquor shop started decreasing.

In the next stage of the program, he asked the men participating in the program to stage protest at the place where the liquor was manufactured. These volunteers started conducting lectures on the ill effects of liquor. This made a lot of difference. The heads of the families started giving some money for the household expenses. The family members could now have a decent meal. Due to this program, the women from the society joined Gandhiji's protest movements. The women thought that due to the influence of Gandhiji, now they were able to have decent meals. The women, who had come out of their houses for the first time for the 'morning march' (prabhat feri) were now capable for participating in freedom movements.

Increasing the participation of the dalit (downtrodden) people

Gandhiji earnestly thought that the people from the lowest rung of the society should participate in the movement. For this, Gandhiji asked them to join his ashram and one such couple was asked to stay in the ashram. This news spread everywhere and some of Gandhiji's supporters were dismayed as they were of very orthodox traditions. They told him that if the dalit people (persons belonging to the lowest rank in the social caste system) were allowed in the ashram then they would not provide financial support to the ashram. Gandhiji replied in very clear words that even though their financial support would stop he would still continue to accept the dalit people in the ashram. Gandhiji was very firm on his stand. In the end, the

opponents had to agree with him.

Whenever Gandhiji would visit any town, he would make it a point to stay in the dalit slums in that town so that he could witness their way of life. Swami Vivekanand had also done this. So the journalists from India and abroad as well as the writers and leaders also now had to visit the dalit slums. Gandhiji wanted that all these people also should understand the plight of the lives of the dalit people. His wish was fulfilled in this way. The dalit community started a dialogue with Gandhiji. Gandhiji put forth that the volunteers who participated in the national movement should accept at least one dalit girl child in their home and bring her up along with their own children. Due to this, the dalit people felt affection for Gandhiji.

The right to cover their heads

In those days, in India, the dalit people were not allowed to cover their heads and they were supposed to move around bareheaded. Also there was a tradition that the dalit people should not wear new clothes, they should not wear gold ornaments. The society also had unwritten rules about who should wear which type of caps i.e. the men belonging to the Brahmin community should wear a 'Pagadi' or a silk cap, the men from Kshtriya community should wear a 'pheta' (turban) while a 'vaishya' man was allowed to wear a cap.

However, only the dalit people were not allowed to wear any cap. Gandhiji noticed this. When he had been in the jail in South Africa, as per the jail rules he had been given a cap to wear. He made some changes in the design of that cap and designed a

white cap made from 'khadi' (cotton) which would be suitable to the atmosphere in India.

Later, this cap was known as 'Gandhi topi' (Gandhi cap) and it became a symbol of the national movement. He urged the volunteers joining the national movement to wear such caps and in response to his appeal, many people started wearing such caps. Those leaders who used to wear other forms of headgear such as turban, pagadi or a silk cap, now started using the 'Gandhi cap'. The dalit people who had joined the national movement also started wearing the 'Gandhi cap' very easily and not a single person from the upper castes of the society objected to this. We can describe this as the dalit people got the freedom to cover their heads. Today, we may not grasp the gravity of this but in those days, this was a very difficult achievement and the dalit people could do this due to Gandhiji's national movement. As a result, it helped to change their mindset about the national movement.

In those days, the dalit people faced a lot of problems in their daily lives and one of these problems was that they were not allowed to enter the temples and offer prayers. This had happened in the case of some of the great Marathi saints also. Sant Dnyaneshwar, Sant Tukaram were allowed to enter the temples but other saints like Chokhoba, Savata Mali, Gora Kumbhar were not allowed inside the temples. Gandhiji felt that the dalit people should also be allowed to enter the temples.

At Vardha, Mr. Jamnalal Bajaj had built a temple of 'Laxmi-Narayan' at his own expenses. He was the owner of that temple and he and his family members used to visit the temple regularly and offer prayers. As

he was very much influenced by Gandhiji's thoughts and at the insistence of Vinobaji (Mr. Vinayak Bhave), Mr. Jamnalal Bajaj declared that the dalit people would be allowed to enter his temple. This was the first temple which allowed the dalit people inside it. The year was 1928.

The knack of rapport with people

Gandhiji consciously made efforts to bring people from all states and all communities in the national movement. He also tried to make people from all trades and businesses participate in the movement. He took extra efforts to have rapport with people from all corners of the country. From the North West part of the country, he had Khan Gafar Khan's support while from Northern India, Motilal Nehru, Pandit Nehru, Govind Vallabh Pant etc. were with him. Moulana Abdul Kalam Azad from Bihar, Subhashchandra Bose, Chittaranjan Das from Bengal, Vallabhbhai Patel from Gujarat, Vinoba Bhave, Shankarrao Dev, Kakasaheb Gadgil etc. from Maharashtra, Gangadharrao Deshpande and Nijlingappa from Karnataka and Chakravarti Rajgopalachari from Tamilnadu had joined his movement.

There were many others in this list. Whenever Gandhiji would visit any town or village, he made efforts to get at least one volunteer from that place. He had mentioned that he got maximum number of supporters from Maharashtra. He described Maharashtra as the cluster of volunteers. We can understand how and why people were attracted towards Gandhiji from the following example.

On one occasion Gandhiji had visited Katak,

where there was a famous lawyer. His name was Chttaranjandas. He was very rich. In those days, his monthly income was minimum rupees fifty thousand. He used to travel in his six-horse carriage to the court. Gandhiji visited him at his house and asked him to join the national movement. Gandhiji told Mr Chttaranjandas that if he would join the movement, then people from this part of the country also would join. Mr Chttaranjandas was so impressed by Gandhiji's talk that he immediately agreed to join and declared that he would abandon his legal practice and would have the office of the national movement in his own house.

After Acharya Vinoba Bhave, another person to remain with Gandhiji till the end was Mr. Mahadevbhai Desai. Mahadevbhai's father, Mr. Haribhai was a teacher. He wished that his son would become a lawyer and have a good legal practice and support the family. But this was not the destiny. Mahadevbhai visited Gandhiji's ashram and he was very much impressed with the atmosphere there and with Gandhiji's personality. He felt that he would also stay in the ashram.

During the same period, in 1917, the political conference of the Congress was held at Godhra in Gujarath. Lokmanya Tilak, Mohmad Ali Jinhah, Gandhiji had attended this conference. Mahadevbhai also attended the conference and met Gandhiji. He told him that he wanted to stay in the ashram. Gandhiji said, 'You can come and stay there from tomorrow itself.'. On the next day, Mahadevbhai, along with his wife Durgaben went to the ashram and stayed there. Till his death he worked as secretary for Gandhiji. He

had to write the daily dairy. Gandhiji would narrate and Mahadevbhai would write. Gandhiji has mentioned that Mahadevbhai had a very good command over English language. Mahadevbhai was with Gandhiji in the 1942 movement and he was sent to prison in the Agakhan Palace with Gandhiji. Later, he died in this prison.

There is one more example. Commrade Madhavrao Bagal was an artist. He had trained as a painter at J.J. School of Art for seven years. He was staying at Kolhapur. He belonged to a very rich family. He spent his time in painting. In 1927, Gandhiji visited Kolhapur for a meeting and Madhavrao had an opportunity to talk with him. Gandhiji asked him, 'what is your vocation?'

Madhavrao answered very enthusiastically that he painted the nature drawings. Gandhiji replied that it would be better if his art was of any use for the common man. It was essential to do something for the common man. Gandhiji's sentence brought about a sea change in Madhavrao's life. He started thinking about this. He started spending less time in painting and drawing and started reading and finally participated in the national movement. In the later days, he was a very prominent leader in the freedom movement.

Whoever spent some moments in Gandhiji's company would be changed forever and stayed with him and his philosophy till the end. There are many such examples. Gandhiji thought that it would be very convenient to mingle with the common people if he would change his Gujarathi attire, so he preferred to wear only a cotton dhoti and a cotton towel worn as a shawl.

Great outreach through great social work

The political protest movements (andolan) do not happen every day. It was necessary to engage the volunteers in some work during the period between two movements. Keeping this in mind, he took up many such programs, which included the night school, campaign for prohibition on alcohol, campaign for removal of the tradition of un-touchability and his various experiments in agriculture. He also gave a serious thought to the cooperation movement. He felt that the cooperation movement was necessary for the society's progress and it must reach all corners of the country. Later, his supporter, Mr. Vaikunthbhai Mehta worked for this cause till the end.

Gandhiji was not very pleased with the education system that the British had introduced in the country, so he introduced a new education system and started schools at the national level. He groomed teachers to teach in these schools. He introduced and encouraged the theme of 'Gramodyog' (industries in the villages) so that income generation activities would be established in the rural area.

He insisted that the people staying in the villages must get jobs in their own villages. He was of the opinion that the work of development of the country should start from the village level and not at the city level. Accordingly, he worked for this cause and many supporters and volunteers supported him in this. These volunteers later joined the national movement and hence his national movements also were successful.

४०

CHAPTER 7

Protest Movement Against Rowlet Act

The 'Jalianwala Baug massacre' is a major milestone in India's freedom movement. In 1919, the British made the 'Rowlet Act' applicable to India. Mr. Rowlet, an officer in the British government had prepared this act and so it was named after him. According to this act, it would be possible for the British to arrest any person in India, without proper investigation. If this act would come into existence, then the British would be able to arrest anybody who would oppose the British government. The Congress opposed this law.

On 6 April 1919, a 'protest day' was observed throughout the country. All the cities and villages came to a standstill on that day. In those days, the national movement had gathered momentum in Panjab county. Two young leaders, Dr. Saifuddin Kichalu and Dr. Satyapal, were arrested under the Rowlet Act. This caused an uproar throughout the country. Both these leaders belonged to Amrutsar and one of them was a Hindu while the other was a Muslim. In Amrutsar, the number of people belonging to the Sikh community was more, but they had accepted the leadership of these two leaders. This single fact can give us an idea about the atmosphere of congeniality that existed

between people belonging to various castes.

A protest meeting was called at Jalianwallah Baug, Amritsar on 13 April, 1919. 13th April was the day of 'Baisakhi' in Punjab, which was an important festival. On this day of festival, a meeting was arranged so people attended the meeting in large numbers. There is only one gate to this baug (garden) and on all other sides there are stone walls. There are wells inside to provide water for the trees in the garden. The Police Chief, General Dyer arrived at Jalianwallah Baug with his police troops to terrorize the people. He ordered the policemen to stand at the entrance gate of the garden, which was the only gate for the garden, and started rampant firing on the people who had gathered there.

There was a havoc and the people tried to get out of the garden but it was not possible as the policemen were already stationed there. Some of the people jumped in the wells and died while some tried to climb the walls to get out. However, they were killed by the police. More than thousand people died and about three to four thousand people were injured. Children died due to suffocation. The injured people were crying for help in the garden but General Dyer did not send doctors to help them. Later, it was clear that he had done this to terrorize the volunteers of the freedom movement.

This incident amply proved the evil intentions of the British government. The British had claimed that they were trying for the progress of this 'backward' country. They claimed that for this they had introduced the railway, telegraph and postal services etc. However, all their claims were proved to be nothing but blatant

lies, due to the single incident of the Jalianwallah Baug massacre.

Gandhiji immediately condemned this incident. The British government had conferred upon him the title of 'Kaisar-E-Hind' for his work in South Africa. He returned this. Ravindranath Tagore also returned his awards. So there were cries of protest against the British government all throughout the world.

As a remedial measure, the British government appointed a committee to look into the matter. However, the Congress did not approve the committee because not a single Indian was appointed on the committee. Gandhiji decided to establish a separate committee to investigate the Jalianwallah Baug incident so that the truth would be known to all. He entrusted this task to Pandit Motilal Nehru. This committee published its report. The report proclaimed that the British were guilty.

१०

CHAPTER 8

The Non-Cooperation Movement

Lokmanya Tilak expired on 1st August 1920. After his demise, Gandhiji led the national freedom movement. Gandhiji declared that the country would be free within the next one year. To achieve this, he used the method of non-cooperation movement. As like all the previous protest movement, this movement was also going to be implemented in a non-violence way. Gandhiji had observed that only a few British were at the top positions in the government. In those days, there would be a Collector, one District Chief and one District Judge for one district. All their subordinate employees, viz. the officers, staff and police were Indians. If these Indian employees stopped work and declared non-cooperation with the government, then the British would have to leave the country. Under this principle, he started the non-cooperation movement in 1921.

About this movement, Gandhiji had declared that :

1. The students should boycott the government schools and colleges. They should enroll in the schools and colleges which had been established by the volunteers participating in the freedom movement.
2. People should not lodge their complaints in the legal courts or in the police stations. The volunteers should form their own regional committees and conduct

the legal proceedings.

3. The awards conferred by the government should be returned. Also, people should not accept any designation in any organization as a member appointed by the government.

4. People should not attend the ceremonies organized by the government.

5. People should not join the British army. They should not fight on behalf of the government in any war.

6. People should not participate in the elections declared by the government. Congress should take proper action against those who would participate in the elections.

7. People should boycott the foreign goods and they should manufacture these goods indigenously.

This was the program given by Gandhiji to the country.

The people supported this program with great enthusiasm. Many of them left their jobs and schools. They stopped using the foreign goods and started using the products that were manufactured in India. This was a good beginning. However, the pace of this program was very slow. Whenever a movement was taken up, Gandhiji would present his principles before the people, which included non-violence (ahimsa), Satyagrah, removal of untouchability. He insisted that women should participate in the freedom movement. He took special efforts to ensure that this movement would also be supported in the rural areas of the country and he was successful in this.

However, due to an incident that happened in Chaurichoura village in Gorakhpur district of Uttar

Pradesh, Gandhiji had to withdraw his non-cooperation movement. In the regions of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the people always carry a baton (stick) with them whenever they attend any public meeting. This is a general tradition in those areas. For the meeting conducted at Chourichoura also, the people attending the meeting had brought the sticks with them and the police got the news that people had gathered there and they had sticks with them. As this was the general tradition, there was no need to panic, but the police thought otherwise and they opened fire on the people who were on their way to the meeting.

After sometime, their bullets were finished and they had to return to the police station. When the people saw that the policemen were running back to the police station, they chased the police, they locked the police in their own police station and burnt the police station in the mood of frenzy. In this fire, 21 policemen, including one supervisor (Jamadar) died. This incident happened in 1922. Gandhiji came to know about this incident when the news was published in the newspapers on the next day. He was very much disturbed by this news. Non-violence was his main principle, while the people had burnt alive 22 persons in this incident. He thought that if they were going to achieve their target of freedom for the country through such violent acts then it was of no use. Due to this, he declared that he was going to withdraw his protest movement of non-cooperation. In this way the non-cooperation movement was withdrawn on its own.

There were a lot of discussions throughout the nation on Gandhiji's stand about this, some people were for and some were against him, but Gandhiji

was firm about his stand. The government declared that Gandhiji was responsible for the non-cooperation movement and the violence in Chaurichoura and he was sent to prison for 6 years' imprisonment. However, after 2 years, in 1924 he was acquitted.

१०

CHAPTER 9

The Conference of Congress in Belgaum

In 1923, the conference of the Congress party was organized at Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh. Mr. Mohmad Ali was the chairman. A senior leader, Mr. Gangadharrao Deshpande from Belgaum attended the conference. In the last session of the conference, he suggested that the next conference should be organized in the city of Belgaum. The Congress Committee agreed to this and decided to hold the next conference in 1924 at Belgaum. The most important decision was that the Congress Committee requested Gandhiji that he should be the chairman for this conference and Gandhiji agreed to this.

Great leaders such as Jamnalal Bajaj, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Pandit Motilal Nehru, Mr. Rajgopalachari, Vallabhbhai Patel, Dr. Kichalu, Pandit Madanmohan Malaviya, Lala Lajapatray attended the conference held at Belgaum. Another volunteer in the freedom movement, Sardar Kisan Singh had arrived at Belgaum from Lahore, along with his son Bhagat Singh, to attend the conference. He wished that his son should meet the national leaders. The same boy, Bhagat Singh later became the leader of the youth and fearlessly faced death for the country.

The conference in Belgaum was very successful and it became a turning point for the politics in India.

Gandhiji arrived in India in 1915. The speech that he made in the meeting held at Benaras in 1916 was his political declaration. In 1917 he successfully led the protest movement of the indigo farmers at Champaranya. In 1918, he had successfully led the protest movement for the farmers at Kheda in Gujarath. In the same year, he led the protest movement of the mill workers in Ahmedabad and this also met with success.

In 1919, he declared a nation-wide protest against the Rowlet Act. He returned the 'Kaiser - E - Hind' award conferred on him, in protest of the government for the brutal firing at Jalianwallah Baug. In 1921, he started the non-cooperation movement which was withdrawn in 1922. In this way, during the period 1916 to 1922 he was consistently pursuing the protest movements. It is most difficult for any protest movement to maintain the continuity and Gandhiji had made it possible. So it was natural that he would be invited as a chairman of the Congress.

Gandhiji changed the principles and methods of Congress

Till now, Gandhiji had tried to implement his political and social programs on his own. Now, it would be possible to implement all these programs officially through the Congress party. As soon as Gandhiji had the authority, he changed the ways and methods of the Congress totally.

As a first step, he declared that the political parties should not only focus on the politics but should also

involve in the social movements. When Congress was established, in the earlier period, after the conference of Congress, at the same venue the conference of Samajik Parishad (the conference for the social issues) would be held. This had been the tradition. However, Lokmanya Tilak did not agree to this and ensured that this tradition would be stopped through his colleagues and volunteers.

Thirty years after this, Gandhiji insisted that all the issues about the social reforms should be included in the agenda of Congress itself. e.g. Gandhiji insisted that the subject of removal of un-touchability should also be the subject of political movements. There should be no un-touchability in free India. Gandhiji was firm on this stand. He had also appealed that the Congress party workers should give shelter to at least one girl child belonging to the Dalit community and provide for her education.

Whenever Gandhiji would visit any town or village, he would stay in the slums of harijan (dalit) people. In the Dalit community also there are strata defined and the status of persons belonging to certain strata was considered as lower than others. The Bhangi (sweepers) community was supposed to be the lowest, hence Gandhiji would stay in the Bhangi colony. He would invite the journalists to visit him there. He also wanted that the foreign nationals who wanted to meet him should visit the colony. This shows how Gandhiji was firm about his principles and thoughts.

He also had put forth the thought that the participation of women in the freedom movement should increase. If 50 per cent of the society consists of women, then how would the freedom movement

gear up if the women did not join? With this view, he appealed to the women to join politics. These two facts were very important for the politics but the orthodox community was dismayed due to this.

Upholding Democracy

He advocated that, in free India, every adult woman and man must have the right to vote. The government should be established with the participation of all and everybody should have equal opportunity in the decision process. This was a very important view, because in those days the women and the dalit people (people belonging to the lowest strata of the caste system of the society) did not have the right to vote, because as per the laws only those who owned any property and those who paid any taxes had the right to vote. There would be no property in the name of the women and the dalit people, so it was not possible for them to have the right to vote. Gandhiji promised them that they would also have a right to vote. Due to this, the persons belonging to these classes also joined the freedom movement very enthusiastically.

The points put forth by Gandhiji were as follows :

- The country should create provinces as per the languages spoken there and they should have total freedom about their internal issues.
- There should be prohibition on alcohol and on consuming drugs.
- The expenses on the military should be only to the limit that would be necessary for the internal protection for the country.
- The mechanism for justice should be simple and

cheap. The Supreme Court should be in Delhi.

- There should be an Investigation Commission to investigate the monopoly of the Western world in respect of the business and trade.

- All the laws giving unlimited authorities should be dismissed.

- The princely states (sansthan) should not be pressurized by the central government. If the people in these princely states wanted to join India, they should be allowed to do so.

- The jobs should be given on the basis of quality. The examinations for government jobs and the jobs in military should be conducted in India.

- All the religions should have freedom and they should respect the other religions.

- For some period, the official language of the government administration should be the regional language. For the central government, parliament, privy council the official language of correspondence should be Hindustani and the script should be Devnagari. For the international politics, the language should be English.

Gandhiji presented these points before the people. These points make it amply clear that Gandhiji's view was a global view and not limited only to the insistence that the British should leave India. He always stressed the points of removal of un-touchability, justice for women and amicable relations between the Hindu and Muslim people.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, India was not an industrialized country. There were many artisans in the country. They were governed by the laws and customs of their own castes. Gandhiji felt

that they should join the mainstream. He felt that they should not only get the right to vote but they also should have their separate constituencies so that their problems would be discussed.

As Gandhiji became the chairman of Congress, his national leadership was confirmed. As a result, the people also accepted his political and social program. However, there were some people in the society who were studying his views closely. They thought that if this program is successful then in the democratic atmosphere in the country, their importance would be reduced and they would cease to exist. These mainly consisted the officers working in the administration of the princely states (sansthan) as well as the landlords (Zamindar), Jahagirdar, Vatandar.

There was a class of people who were working in the administration of the British government. This class mainly consisted of the Brahmin people. Whosoever might be the chief of the princely state (sansthan), this class would have the command over all the administration. They had influence in the British Government's administration also. All these people were closely observing Gandhiji's views and movements since 1916. However, in 1924 they were outraged. They were afraid that if Gandhiji's political views and movements met with success then the country would be run by the democracy of the Bahujan (the common people who had no rights till then) and then they would lose their influence and importance.

They felt that something needed to be done to safeguard their own existence. With this feeling, in 1925, on the day of Vijayadashmi, Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar founded the Rashtriya Swayamsevak

Sangh, at Nagpur. Another reason why he thought that establishing such an organization was very much necessary was that during the same period, the communist movement had gathered momentum.

In 1920, the national workers' union viz. All India Trade Union Congress was founded. Leaders who had joined this union, such as Mr. Dange, Mr. Mirajkar had been influenced by the revolution that had taken place in Russia in 1917. There were also many other groups of people who were thinking on the same lines. Dr. Hedgewar and his colleagues must have been aware about this and hence he founded the Sangh.

१०

CHAPTER 10

Gandhiji and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh

If Gandhiji had not returned to India from South Africa, there would be no reason for forming the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (Sangh). Till the time the politics in India was under the influence of Lokmanya Tilak, Dr. Hedgewar or any other person had not even thought about this. However, when Gandhiji started the politics in the interest of the bahun (common people or the people belonging to the lowest strata in the caste system) then these people became restless. This fact must be noted.

Direct opposition to Gandhiji

Under the leadership of Dr. Hedgewar, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh adopted the stance of directly opposing Gandhiji. Gandhiji had designed a cap, which was later known as the 'Gandhi cap', which was a symbol for the protest movement. This cap was made from Khadi (cotton) and to wear this white cap denoted the participation in and support to Gandhiji's program.

The leaders and volunteers who used to wear different types of headgears such as turban, pagadi and silk caps now started wearing the Gandhi cap. One such example is that of Mr Gangadharrao Deshpande

of Belgaum. He was a colleague of Lokmanya Tilak. He used to wear a turban. When he joined Gandhiji's programs, he started wearing Gandhi cap. There were many such examples. Dr. Hedgewar designed a black cap as a symbol for his programs and movements. The black cap denoted the direct opposition, to the white cap. Even today, the Sangh volunteers wear this cap. This shows the ingenuity of Dr. Hedgewar in propagating the thought.

Gandhiji gave the tri-color flag, Gandhi cap to the movement. Along with these, he also created a slogan for the movement, viz.' Vande Mataram' (salute to the motherland). Millions of people chanted this slogan while flooding the prisons of the country. The British were terrified of this slogan so much that whosoever chanted this slogan would be sent to prison. The British prison officers would beat them brutally. Even today, some of these freedom fighters are alive in our country. In this atmosphere, the Sangh purposely avoided participating in the freedom movement.

Sangh had the view that their volunteers should get education and get jobs in the government services. Dr. Hedgewar felt that if the fight for freedom under the leadership of Gandhiji was prolonged it would be better, because then they would be able to grab maximum number of government jobs. He also designed his strategies accordingly. He had also thought that even after freedom, the nation would be run by the common people (bahujan) but the administration would be under their control. Hence, the Sangh volunteers distanced themselves from the freedom movement and they also used to oppose the freedom movement wherever possible.

Dr. S.H. Deshpande, who had worked with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh for many years, sought an appointment with the erstwhile chief of Sangh, Sarsanghchalak M.S. Golwalkar and requested that they should also participate in the freedom movement. However, Mr. Golwalkar did not agree to this. He avoided further discussions with the remark that the goals and objectives for the Sangh were different and that Dr. Deshpande should try and understand them. Dr. S.H. Deshpande has mentioned this in his book 'Sangh Sthapaneteel Alp Dnyaat Itihaas' (The less known history about the establishment of the Sangh). In this way, the Sangh was aloof from the freedom movement.

Sangh rejects 'Vande Mataram'

'Vande Mataram' (salute to the motherland) had become a slogan for the freedom movement. This slogan had become so popular that people started greeting each other with this slogan. The satyagrahi (volunteers) chanted this slogan while entering the prisons and in the prisons also they chanted 'Vande Mataram'. The prison authorities beat them for chanting the slogans. In those days, Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh avoided chanting 'Vande Mataram'.

Sangh was of the view that if they would be sent to prison for chanting 'Vande Mataram' then it would be better not to do so. However, when some of the Sangh volunteers started asking about 'Vande Mataram', the leaders in the Sangh decided that a song should be prepared for the Sangh, which would have similar meaning.

This task was entrusted to Mr. N. N. Bhide from Nagpur, who was a professor of Sanskrit. He wrote

the song 'Namaste Sada Vatsale Matrubhumi' (Always salute to you my motherland). This song was sung by Yadavrao Joshi in 1939, in the Sangh volunteers' camp held at Nagpur. Since then this song is sung at the Sangh branches. In this way, the Sangh found out an alternative to 'Vande Mataram'. The Sangh, which was not ready to say 'Vande Mataram' before independence, now insists that 'Vande Mataram' should be made compulsory. The meaning of this obvious enough.

Avoiding to say 'Vande Mataram' was understandable enough but Sangh did not stop just there. It is seen that the Sangh had made fun of 'Vande Mataram' also.

If one person would say 'Vande Mataram', then to make fun of him, others would say 'Shendi Kataram'. Even this teasing had some meaning, and we should understand the meaning. 'Shendi' means a strand of hair on the head of a man and it was a symbol of Hinduism. Sangh wanted to suggest that if a person would get involved with Gandhiji's programs and participate in his programs then he would lose the Hinduism.

'Vande Mataram' was also teased as 'Khis Kataram', which meant that if any person got involved in Gandhiji's programs and went to the prison, he would not be able to complete his education, he would have no means of earning and would suffer financial losses.

In the national movement, new inspirational songs were being written. One such song was 'Ved Mantrahoon amha Vandya Vande Mataram' ('For us the words 'Vande Mataram' are more sacred than the ancient scripts viz. ved mantras'). This song was written

by noted writer G. D. Madgulkar in those days. This shows the popularity of the words 'Vande Mataram'.

The Sangh also kept on spreading misunderstanding about Gandhiji at the grass root level. One such example is noteworthy. This was in the meeting of the volunteers.

Teacher : Who came to India first of all, the Muslims or the Christians?

Volunteer: (thinks for some time and then says) The Muslims entered India first.

Teacher: Whom Gandhiji is asking to leave India?

Volunteer: The British, i.e. the Christians.

Teacher : Who should leave India first?

Volunteer: The Muslims came here first, so they should leave first.

Teacher: Is Gandhiji right or wrong?

Volunteer: Gandhiji is wrong, because he is asking the British to leave India.

In this way, the volunteers were misled about the freedom movement of Gandhiji. There is no written proof about this but those who have worked for years together in the Sangh can give this information.

Gandhiji stressed upon the unity between Hindus and Muslims, while Sangh stressed upon spreading hatred about the Muslims. The Sangh tried to find out ways to defame Gandhiji's programs and movements so that the youth would stay away from the same, but it is seen that the people supported Gandhiji. The people supported Gandhiji because they agreed with his thoughts his philosophy.

Sangh tried to implement the strategy of direct or indirect opposition to the freedom movement so that the nation would not get independence and they would

be able to grab the opportunities for education and jobs in the government. This would mean that they would have total control over the administration from the village level to the national level. If this happened, they would have total control on the entire nation and would be able to preserve their influence, which had continued for centuries. The Sangh was working towards this objective. The Sangh was creating an atmosphere which was encouraging the conflicts and riots between the people belonging to different castes and religions. As a result, such riots took place which created a deterrent for the freedom movement.

In those days, the Sangh had the capability to participate and accelerate the freedom movement. In 1948 when a ban was declared on the Sangh, 48 thousand volunteers throughout the country protested against the ban and demanded that the ban should be withdrawn. They were arrested for this protest and were sent to prison.

However, the Sangh did not participate in the freedom movement, so there was never any incident of the Sangh volunteers getting arrested. Dr. Hedgewar proclaimed a 'satyagrah' himself, at a personal level, and went to prison, but he did not ask the volunteers of his organization to participate in the freedom movement.

It should also be noted that there were some others too, who opposed Gandhiji's programs and movements.

Opposition from the Sansthaniks (heads of the princely states)

At that time, there were 565 princely states

(sansthan) in the country. Some of the sansthaniks were Hindu while some were Muslim. While the head of the princely state might belong to any religion, the administrative officers were Brahmins. The thoughts that Gandhiji had put forth in 1916 would lead to the merging of all the princely states in the country after freedom and the wealth of the sansthaniks would be used for reconstructing the new India. Due to this, some of the sansthaniks were afraid that Gandhiji would confiscate their wealth. Some of them had started shifting the wealth abroad. The sansthaniks always opposed him.

Gandhiji had always initiated 'andolan' (protest program) against those sansthaniks who would be against the people and would torture the people. To oppose Gandhiji, the Hindu sansthaniks supported Hindu Mahasabha and Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh in their princely states.

Also, the Muslim sansthaniks supported the Muslim League and other similar organizations in their princely states and this created a deterrent for the freedom movement. Hence we can see that the Sangh grew much more in the Sansthans (princely states) as compared to other places in the country.

Hindu Mahasabha opposes Gandhiji

The issue of removal of un-touchability was a major point in Gandhiji's social agenda. Gandhiji stressed upon this a lot. He tried his best to understand the way of life of the Dalit people. He felt that the tradition of 'un-touchability' was a blemish on our social life and its removal was very important. Sangh and Hindu Mahasabha did not agree at all with these thoughts.

Hindu Mahasabha opposed to any kind of social reforms. Hindu Mahasabha upheld the militarization of the nation. However, Gandhiji did not support the idea of the militarization of the society. Gandhiji's thoughts about this issue were totally different. Gandhiji wanted to have unity between the Hindu and Muslim people and had been working for this goal. Hindu Mahasabha opposed the notion of unity between the Hindu and Muslim people and therefore it is seen that Hindu Mahasabha had always continuously opposed Gandhiji's politics.

Opposition from Muslim League

Muslim League consistently opposed Gandhiji. The rich people from the Muslim community were the leaders in Muslim League. There were Sansthanik (heads of the princely states), Jahagirdar and Zamindars in these. They were afraid that after freedom for the nation, Gandhiji would ask them to forgo their wealth. Also, as per the Lucknow agreement between Lokmanya Tilak and Mr. Jinhah, 30 per cent of the seats were reserved for the Muslims, but they were not sure whether in free India Gandhiji would allow the same. This was one of the reasons why Muslim League opposed Gandhiji.

In this way, on one hand Gandhiji was trying to involve the entire nation in the protest movement against the British, while Rasthriya Swayamsevak Sangh, Hindu Mahasabha, Muslim League, Sansthaniks were opposing the national program of Gandhiji. They tried to find many ways to do the same.

४०

CHAPTER 11

A Revolutionary Milestone for The National Movement

Due to the thoughts and philosophy of Gandhiji and due to the national movements of the workers initiated by the Communist Party of India, established in 1925, the national movement approached a turning point, where it was felt that the British should definitely leave India, but it should also be clear what would be the nature and spirit of free India. As the workers' unions spread in the nation, the atrocities of the government also increased.

In 1928, the British government appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Sir John Simon, to study the situation in the country. This committee was known as the Simon Commission. There was not a single Indian appointed on this committee. Gandhiji and the communists declared that only if an Indian person was appointed on this committee, they would have a dialogue with the committee, otherwise they would boycott the Simon Commission. As the British did not agree to appoint any Indian on the Commission, the national movement declared an 'andolan' (protest movement) at the national level to oppose the Simon Commission.

When Sir John Simon arrived at Amrutsar, there

were huge protests staged against him. Mr. Lala Lajapatrai was the leader of the protestors and he was seriously injured during the baton charge by the police. He succumbed to the injuries and died subsequently. The entire nation was outraged. There were protest marches with black flags, organized throughout the country against Sir Simon. Gandhiji had a major role in organizing the protest movements against the Simon Commission.

In those days, he would conduct on an average nine public meetings every day. The means of travel would not be available, still he would travel by motor car, bus, railway, bullock cart or a horse ride and travel throughout the country.

While this protest movement was going on, the British government started arresting the Communist leaders. They were alleged to have formed a plot against the queen's government. Prominent leaders, such as Com. Dange, Com. Mirajkar, Com. Jogalekar, Com. Ghate, Com. Nimkar were arrested. Gandhiji had protested against the arrest of these leaders and shown his sympathy for the labor leaders. In this way he had shown that he supported the labor movement, so it was natural that the right wing leaders would be dismayed.

On this background, in 1929 the national congress conference was conducted at Lahore. The resolutions passed in this conference were revolutionary and they determined the path for the national movement. In this conference, a resolution demanding the complete and unconditional freedom for the country was passed.

Gandhiji himself was rather not so sure about this resolution. He was not so sure as to whether

we should ask for the complete freedom or for the freedom of the colony (British colony). However, the representatives who attended the conference were firm on the stand that they should demand the complete freedom. Accordingly, Pandit Javaharlal Nehru presented the resolution demanding complete freedom for the country. The resolution was passed with majority.

A detailed discussion was held on the resolution. After the discussion, many points were clear. It was very important to know what would be the nature of the country after independence. The national leaders explained to the common people that the decision arrived in the conference was that the country would have democracy, it would be a secular country, the country would adopt the socialistic ideology. The entire nation was elated after this resolution. Many people came forward to join the freedom movement on their own. The participation of the people increased. The people thought that they would have a say in the governance of the country in the future.

४०

CHAPTER 12

Dandi March The Salt Satyagrah

While the people throughout the nation were increasingly participating in the freedom movement, the British government declared that a tax would be levied on the salt. So the farmers who were producing salt would have to pay the tax and as a result, the salt would become costly. The national movement decided to oppose this tax and started a nationwide program for awareness for the people about this issue. One point is notable here that the different leaders became the presidents of the Congress in different years, but the leadership was always with Gandhiji.

In 1924, Gandhiji was the president of Congress, but thereafter he did not accept the chairmanship of Congress. However, the responsibility for leadership was always with him. In the protest march against the tax levied on the salt, he designed a strategy for the participation of the women in the protest march.

Salt is a daily household necessity and is needed for all the recipes. So Gandhiji made an emotional appeal to the women. ' From tomorrow, if you cannot use salt, the food cooked by you would be tasteless, so you should join in the protest movement. ' This appeal had instant results. The women throughout the

nation were enraged. They declared that they were ready to go to prison with the men. The women were ready to participate in the protest marches on the roads. The researchers of the national movement are of the opinion that the Salt March was the first march where the women participated in large numbers. The entire nation supported this protest.

Dandi March

Dandi March was an important milestone protest march for Gandhiji. Gandhiji designed the strategy for this march in such a way that the tax levied on salt would be dismissed and the entire nation would join in this civil disobedience activity. He decided to hold a march from the Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi village. He declared that he would not return to the Sabarmati Ashram till the country became independent and he started his march. He entrusted Vallabhbhai Patel with the responsibility of campaigning in the villages which Gandhiji was going to visit during the march, make arrangements for the stay and meals for the participants. Vallabhbhai, along with some supporters started this task, but the British arrested him.

Gandhiji took an important decision about the march. At Chourichoura, the protest march had to be dismissed due to the shooting. To avoid a similar situation for the Dandi March, he took along with him 79 supporters who had complete faith in non-violence and satyagrah. On the morning of 12th March 1930, Gandhiji started from Sabarmati. To reach Dandi village, he had to cross 45 other villages and had to cross the river Narmada by boat.

In every village that they visited, the villagers would

welcome them. Gandhiji was always asked to deliver a speech in every village. People were very eager to listen to him. In this way, he reached Dandi village on 5th April. He kept on walking continuously for 24 days. At Dandi village he stayed overnight. On the morning of 6th April, he had a bath in the sea and physically held the salt in his fist. The news of Gandhiji's action and satyagrah spread throughout the nation. The Dandi village faced scarcity of drinking water, so he decided to stay at the nearby village of Koradi for that day. He continued to hold meetings in the nearby villages.

The British government did not take much notice of this protest march of Gandhiji, so he decided to loot the salt from government salt factory at Dharasana village. As decided, on 6th May, Gandhiji reached Dharasana and looted the salt. After this, the British arrested him and imprisoned him at the Yerawada prison. The issue of leadership had to be solved. Before his arrest, Gandhiji had appointed his colleague Abbas Tayyabji as the leader. Tayyabji was a retired judge. However, he was also arrested. After Tayaabji's arrest, Smt. Sarojini Nayadu became the leader of the protest movement. The British government arrested her too. Gandhiji's supporter from South Africa, Mr. Immamsaheb then led the protest movement but he was also arrested.

After arresting the leaders, the British police started baton charge on the satyagrahi (those who had participated in the protest movement) people. The lathi (baton) charge was so atrocious that the supporters had to arrange for a temporary hospital to treat the satyagrahi people. After this the British police became

even more aggressive and they started throwing the injured satyagrahi people directly in to the salt water, so they suffered further. One such satyagrahi, Mr. Atmarambhai was thrown in to the salt water 20 times by the police, but not a single satyagrahi opposed the police in any way. The entire protest (satyagrah) was staged with the principle of non-violence as Gandhiji wished it to be.

The news about the successful Salt march at Dandi reached the entire nation and abroad too. The people of the country also supported the movement by organizing protest march in their own villages. In the coastal area, thousands of people participated in the satyagrah. The participation of women was conspicuous. This was the first time in the history of the nation that women had participated in the protest movement. The people were not afraid anymore. The people were not afraid of going to prison.

The news of Gandhiji's arrest reached the Vayavya Sarahadda Prant, a province in the North-West region of the country. Khan Abdul Gafar Khan was the leader there. He was also known as 'Sarahadda Gandhi'. He organized protest march in Sarahadda province in protest of Gandhiji's arrest. The British police opened direct fire on the march. Due to this, there were dead bodies of the satyagrahi persons lying on the road. Afterwards some people came forward and after identifying their relatives, conducted the last rites for some of them, but there were still a very large number of bodies for whom nobody came forward to identify them.

The police poured petrol on such dead bodies whom nobody had claimed and burnt them. They did

not bother to consider that by doing this they would outrage the people. The entire nation as well as people all over the world denounced this act of the police. In the end, the British government had to withdraw and reduce the tax levied on salt. In this way, Gandhiji was successful in this andolan (protest march).

Sangh becomes restless

The Salt March was successful. The British government reduced the tax levied on salt. The Indian people were also slowly becoming confident that they were capable of organizing the protest movements successfully. However, Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar was once again very much disturbed by witnessing this. He thought that if the common people participated in the freedom movement in this way, they would certainly achieve the goal of independence for the country, but the emerging social system would not be beneficial for him or people like him. One more reason for Dr. Hedgewar becoming restless was the protest movements organized by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar.

Dr. Bahasaheb Ambedkar had organized satyagrah (protest) on the issue of drinking water at Mahad, in March 1927. The Mahad Municipal Corporation had passed a resolution that the Dalit people would be allowed to use the water from the lake in the town, however this was not implemented. He organized a satyagrah, visited the lake and touched the water in the lake, to insist that the decision should be implemented and the Dalit people should be allowed to use the water from the lake.

Due to this, the orthodox Hindu people were outraged. They threw stones at the satyagrahi people

and on the next day they 'purified' the lake by 'Gomutra'. This incident amply describes the mindset of the orthodox people in those days.

When Dr. Bahasaheb Ambedkar studied the problems of the Dalit people in detail, he realized that all these issues had resulted because of the book 'Manusmriti'. He declared that he would burn a copy of this book to protest against the philosophy proclaimed in this book and on 25th December, he publicly burnt the copy of the book.

After this incident, in Maharashtra, there were a lot of atrocities against the Dalit people. Afterwards, Dr. Babasaheb demanded that the Dalit persons of the society should be allowed to enter the temples. For this demand, he staged a protest 'satyagrah' in front of the 'Kala Ram Temple' at Nashik, on 3 March 1930. On one hand, through the medium of Gandhiji's protest movements the concept of democracy was stressed while on the other hand the Dalit movement was also growing.

Dr. Hedgewar was very much disturbed due to this atmosphere. He called his colleague Dr. Munje and discussed with him about the situation in the country. In the end, he suggested that Dr. Munje should immediately go to Italy and meet Mussolini. Accordingly, in 1931, Dr. Munje went to Italy to meet Mussolini. Benito Mussolini was against democracy. He was a great supporter of fascism.

In Italy, Dr. Munje visited the Academy of Fascism founded by Mussolini. Mussolini had established this organization to study how fascism could be introduced in Italy. Dr. Munje stayed at the academy and studied in detail the philosophy of fascism and the ways

and methods of fascism. Mussolini had designed his strategies for Italy. Dr. Munje studied these strategies and discussed in detail with Mussolini, about how he would be able to introduce fascism in India on his return.

He returned to India, with a vow to introduce the fascist regime in India. Immediately after returning to India, he met with Dr. Hedgewar and presented the report of his tour. Afterwards, a meeting was called in Nagpur on the subject of 'Fascism'. This meeting was arranged under the chairmanship of Dr. Hedgewar.

Dr. Hedgewar and Dr. Munje had accepted the philosophy of fascism to oppose the national movement that was taking shape in the country under the leadership of Gandhiji and to oppose the principles of democracy, socialism and secularism that emerged from this movement. They accepted the philosophy of fascism as the base and started the work of strengthening their movement throughout the nation, through the platform of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.

१०

CHAPTER 13

Gandhiji and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar

Gandhiji was making all out efforts to ensure that the national movement would be supported from all corners of the nation and people from all constituents of the society would participate. He felt that unless all the Dalit people and the women in the society supported the freedom movement, the movement would not really become effective and hence he also wanted the support from Dalit people and the women.

In 1920, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar emerged as a new leader. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar had completed his education abroad and now he wished to work for the justice to the Dalit community. He thought that if and when the British would leave India and the local leaders would be at the helm of affairs, still the problems faced by the Dalit people would not be solved. He had the experience of the treatment given by the 'savarna' (people belonging to the upper classes in the caste system of the society) Hindu people and he had learnt a lot from it. He organized three consecutive protest programs (andolan) for the problems faced by the Dalit people.

In those days, the Dalit people did not have access to drinking water. If they approached the common

source of water available in the village, they were insulted. To protest against this, Dr. Ambedkar fought for the issue of drinking water for the Dalit people. The Municipal Council of Mahad had passed a resolution that the water from the lake in the village should be made available for the Dalit people, but this resolution was not implemented.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar declared a protest (satyagrah) on 20 March 1927 at this venue. He appealed to all the Dalit people from Maharashtra, to arrive at Mahad. Accordingly, thousands of Dalit people flocked to Mahad. At the place of the protest program (satyagrah) there was a huge stage created, and some supporters suggested that there should be a photo of a leader there. Dr. Babasaheb told them that if they wanted any photograph then they should display the photo of Gandhiji there. As per his instructions, Gandhiji's photo was displayed there.

This shows that Dr. Babasaheb respected Gandhiji and his work. He believed in his programs. Dr. Babasaheb, along with his supporters, went to the lake and touched the water and history was created. Due to this, the orthodox Hindu people were outraged. They threw stones at the satyagrahi people and on the next day they 'purified' the lake by 'Gomutra'. Dr. Babasaheb was aggrieved by this action by the orthodox persons but he became ready once again, for the protest programs, with even greater grit and determination.

When Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar studied the problems of the Dalit people in detail, he realized that all these issues had resulted because of the book 'Manusmriti'. Therefore, he declared that he

would burn a copy of this book to protest against the philosophy proclaimed in this book and on 25th December, he publicly burnt the copy of the book. His supporters from the 'savarna' (higher classes of the society) category also supported him in this protest program. A colleague of Dr. Babasaheb, one Mr. Sahasrabudhe presented the resolution of burning the book of 'Manusmruti' and then the symbolic burning of the book 'Manusmruti' was performed.

After this incident, in Maharashtra, there were a lot of atrocities against the Dalit people by the 'savarna' people. However, the Dalit people continued to support Dr. Babasaheb. For the next two years, Dr. Babasaheb organized a campaign throughout Maharashtra and made all out efforts to make his stand clear to his supporters.

When he was sure that the supporters were now ready for the protest movement, Dr. Babasaheb demanded that the Dalit persons of the society should be allowed to enter the temples. In those days, the people belonging to the 'Dalit' community were not allowed to enter the temples and offer prayers. Specific 'boundaries' were determined for them in the premises of the temples. Dr. Babasaheb decided to protest against this tradition.

For this demand, he staged a protest 'satyagrah' in front of the 'Kala Ram Temple' at Nashik, on 3 March 1930. Accordingly, Dr. Babasaheb and his supporters arrived at Nashik on the evening of 2 March. On 3 March, they organized a huge procession in the city and approached the Kala Ram temple.

The 'savarna' (people belonging to the upper classes of the caste system of the society) had made all

arrangements to ensure that the 'dalit' people would not be able to reach the temple. All of them were stopped before reaching the temple. The 'savarna' people threw stones at the 'dalit' people, many were injured. When the injured and enraged participants of the protest program (satyagrah) were returning once again there was stone pelting but they did not back out.

This protest program (satyagrah) was going on for five years. From all corners of the country, supporters arrived there and staged protest in front of the temple and returned. Afterwards, in 1935 Dr. Babasaheb arranged a meeting in Yevala town. In this meeting, in his speech he said that he had no choice about which religion he would belong to at the time of his birth, but surely at the time of his death he would not be belonging to Hindu religion. Due to this declaration, throughout the country, the people started thinking about the problems faced by the Dalit people and it was the consensus that while striving for freedom for the country, it would not be correct to neglect the problems faced by the Dalit people.

The Pune Treaty

In 1930, on 12 March, the Salt March was organized and on 3 March, the protest program (satyagrah) of Kala Ram temple was staged. This can give us an idea about the atmosphere in that period. One more incident also took place during the same time. The Prime Minister of England, Mr. Ramsey McDonald declared the 'Communal Award' for India. To understand the details of this 'Communal Award' we have to first understand the details of the 'Lukhnow

Agreement ' in 1916.

This was an agreement between Lokmanya Tilak and Barrister Mohamed Ali Jinnah. Loknamya Tilak had initiated this. According to this agreement, 30 per cent of the seats would be reserved for the Muslim community in the council. Also, there would be separate constituencies for them. Separate constituencies meant those constituencies where the number of Muslim people would be more. In such constituencies, only the Muslim candidate would be allowed to contest the elections. He could belong to any party. Also, the voter should be Muslim only.

This was the proposed procedure for elections. The British also were of the opinion that there should be separate constituencies for various other castes and religions. The principle behind this was that if the society would be divided in to various castes and religions then it would be better for the British. They also declared that there should be separate constituency for the Dalit people.

Gandhiji did not like this idea of separate constituencies. He was afraid that in future if all the castes desired to have separate constituencies then the entire nation would be divided in castes and sub-castes. When this award was published he was in Yerwada jail. The British government had put him in jail for the Salt March. In the prison, Gandhiji started his fast in protest of this award.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar determined his own strategy for this. Initially, he insisted on having separate constituencies, but did not follow up with his demand. After conducting talks with Gandhiji, he obtained reserved constituencies instead of separate

constituencies. In the set up of separate constituencies, they would have got 71 constituencies, but by the provision of reserved constituencies, they got 151 constituencies. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar handled the entire issue very skillfully and got more number of seats. When Dr. Babasaheb agreed for the reserved seats, Gandhiji withdrew his 'fast unto death' on the 22th day.

It can be seen that Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Gandhiji had influenced each other by their own ways of protest movements, which played a major role in their methods and philosophy. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar insisted that if the caste system in India was to be demolished then there should be inter-caste marriages. He has clarified his view in his book 'Annihilation of Caste'. Gandhiji also supported this view in the later years.

Gandhiji said that only if a 'savarna' (belonging to the upper castes of the society) volunteer marries a girl belonging to the 'dalit' (belonging to the lower castes of the society), then he would attend the marriage ceremony. This shows that the social viewpoints of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar and Gandhiji were supportive of each other. Both of them insisted that we needed a society where there would not be any castes.

When it was clear that the nation was going to attain independence in the near future, the issue of the constitution of free India was discussed. In one such discussion, Pandit Nehru told Gandhiji that they needed an expert legal consultant for designing the constitution of the nation. In response to this, Gandhiji told him that there was nobody else who understood the constitution as thoroughly as Dr. Babasaheb

Ambedkar.

As per Gandhiji's suggestion, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was appointed on the Constitution Committee and afterwards he headed the Draft Committee. Gandhiji had felt that only if Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was a member of the Constitution Committee, the Dalit people and the women of the country would be able to get justice, as per the provisions in the constitution of the country. Therefore he insisted that Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar should be a member of the committee and Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar was appointed as a member of the Constitution Committee.

१०

CHAPTER 14

1940 Protest Program : Individual Satyagrah

In 1939, the second world war started. Gandhiji opposed this war. He felt that the war was detrimental for the entire human race and so it should be stopped. When Gandhiji opposed the war, the British government declared a ban on speeches and declared that anybody giving a speech against the war would be arrested. On this, Gandhiji declared that such an order by the British government was against their freedom of expression and again he started his protest movement. He declared a 'satyagrah' at individual level for the protection of the freedom of speech.

Till then, all the satyagrah (protest movements) had been with the participation of people, but this was by one person. Gandhiji selected Mr. Vinoba Bhave as the first such 'satyagrahi'. He had the first such satyagrah at Pavnar on 10 October 1940. The British government arrested him. When he was released from the prison, he again had the satyagrah and was arrested again. After his arrest, throughout the country around 25 thousand volunteers broke the ban on public speeches and had satyagrah (protest program). This proved that the entire population was now ready to protest at individual level also. ❧

CHAPTER 15

1942 : Quit India Movement

After arriving in India, Gandhiji had tried to maintain consistency in the protest programs for freedom. He united the farmers and presented their problems. He led the labor workers' movement to get justice for them. He appealed to and got the support from the women and the Dalit people for his programs. Due to this, the movement spread throughout the nation. He connected the political protest programs with the social problems. The most important task that Gandhiji was able to achieve was that he removed the fear about prison from the mind of the common man. The common man was now ready to go to prison after participating in the protest rallies. The women were also ready to do this.

When Gandhiji felt that the entire nation was ready to take the final step, he decided to do so. During 1939 to 1945, world war II was fought and the British were involved in the same. Due to this war, the financial condition of Britain was deteriorated to a great extent. It was becoming more and more difficult for them to maintain their kingdom. Mr. Subhashchandra Bose had started his efforts to start a war against Britain by forming his own army from countries other than India. Under these circumstances, Gandhiji was preparing his strategy.

On 8 August 1942, the conference of Congress was held at Gawalia Tank ground in Mumbai. In this conference, they ordered the British to 'Quit India'. A resolution was passed in this conference, which stated that the British should quit India. When various leaders gave the speeches on this resolution, everybody stressed that the British should leave India. The leaders stressed that after independence, the power would be in the hands of the farmers who toiled in the fields and the workers who worked in the factories. Gandhiji went one step ahead and declared that everyone should now think of himself/herself as if he/she was already free and live accordingly. They should not obey any law imposed by the British.

Gandhiji presented two slogans for this final protest program. The first was 'Quit India' and the second was 'Do or die'. He had declared that the protest program would commence on the next day, i.e. on 9 August, at the Gawalia Tank ground. However, in the early hours of 9 August, British government arrested many of the leaders, so it was not clear what would happen on 9th August.

As per the planning, on 9th August, in the morning, the tri-color flag was to be hoisted at Gawalia Tank ground. The leaders were imprisoned. There was huge police force deputed on the ground. Suddenly a young lady, Ms. Aruna Asafalli arrived at the Gawalia Tank ground. Before anybody could understand what was happening, she went inside and hoisted the tri-color flag and started the protest program, and disappeared immediately. Afterwards, she remained underground while leading the protest programs.

After the incident of 9th August, the entire nation

was outraged. At three different places in the country, parallel governments were formed. They declared that they were free. These governments were formed in West Midnapur in Bengal province, Balia in Uttar Pradesh and Satara district in Maharashtra. Out of these, the governments formed at West Midnapur and Balia did not last for long. However, at Satara, the parallel government was going on till independence.

From 9 August 1942 to 15 August 1947, the Satara district was not under the British rule. The government was led by leaders like Krantisinh Nana Patil, Kranteveer Nagnaath Anna Nayakavadi, Krantiveer Bapu Laad. At other places in the country, other people also established their own parallel governments. Due to these activities, the British government was in trouble. The 'Quit India' movement spread to the farthest places of the country. The people burnt the post offices and the work in the government offices came to a standstill. The legal courts were closed. The railway tracks were uprooted. People used all possible ways to protest against the government and the government was at a loss to combat these on so many fronts. Another important fact was that women also had joined this protest movement.

In February 1946, the naval sailors at the Mumbai dock went on a strike ('The Royal Indian Navy Revolt'). The mill workers in Mumbai went on indefinite strike to support the naval officers. The naval sailors and the mill workers united and started a fight against the British. Now due to the Naval sailors' strike the British government was in a fix. The government realized that their own soldiers were against them. The Naval sailors' strike is indeed an important milestone in the

history of India's freedom movement.

After the non-cooperation movement, Gandhiji had withdrawn the movement by referring to the incident at Chourichoura. In the protest movement in 1942, there was a lot of violence, but Gandhiji did not think about withdrawing the movement. This must be noted. He now had the sole objective of getting freedom for the country. 'Non-violence' (ahimsa) was an important principle for him, and a protest movement conducted without violence was a part of his strategy. When he felt that people were now ready for the final fight, he did not insist on non-violence.

When the protest movement of 1942 commenced, there were two very sad incidents that occurred in his private life. Gandhiji was arrested and imprisoned at Agakhan Palace in Pune. A prison was formed there. Mahadev Bhai had accompanied him. After three days, his wife, Kasturba was also arrested and brought there. Mr. Pyarelal and Dr. Sushila were also there. On 15 August, Mahadev Bhai died in the prison. He had had a heart attack about six months ago. However, he had neglected it and had joined Gandhiji in his protest movements. As per law, the dead body of the prisoner must be handed over to his/her relatives. However, the British did not agree to do so. Therefore, Gandhiji carried out the last rites for Mahadev Bhai at Agakhan Palace. He felt extremely sad about this and said that in fact Mahadev Bhai would have carried out the last rites for him, but due to ill-fate, he was carrying out the last rites for Mahadev Bhai.

Gandhiji felt very sad as the British government declared that Gandhiji was responsible for the acts of violence going on in the country. During the period

10 February to 21 March 1943, he observed fast for 'hriday praktikaran'. Kasturba ji was under tremendous stress due to the death of Mahadev Bhai and Gandhiji's fast. Her health was deteriorating rapidly. Kasturba ji had never taken any allopathic medicines. She always used to take only Ayurvedic medicines. It was decided to invite a vaidya (ayurvedic doctor) for her from Gaziabad. However, he was too late. When he arrived, Kasturba ji's health had deteriorated still further and she died in the prison on 22 February 1944. The British government offered to bear the expenses for her last rites, but Gandhiji rejected such help. He carried out the last rites of Kasturba ji at his own expenses.

At that time, the entire nation was participating in the freedom movements, the political strategies were gathering momentum. During this period, Gandhiji suffered two major losses as Mahadev Bhai and Kasturba left for their heavenly abode. However, Gandhiji did not lose courage. The protest movement which had started on 9 August 1942 was going to continue till the country would be independent, and in fact, it did continue.

४०

CHAPTER 16

The Appalling Riots at NOUKHALI

The nation became independent on 15 August 1947. However, the leadership of the nation was not successful in maintaining the unity of the nation. The nation had to face partition. Due to this partition, there were huge communal riots in the provinces near the boundary. The riots at Nouxhali are considered as the most horrendous of them all.

Since 1940, the Muslim League started insisting about a separate nation i.e. Pakistan. Gandhiji did not agree for the partition of the country. He maintained that the country should not be divided and he was firm on this stand till his death. On 16th August 1946, the Muslim League declared 'Direct Action'. For this, the leader of Muslim League, Surhvardi had made all the preparations. Petrol and weapons had been collected and the hooligans were ready. The declaration about 'Direct Action' was done in Kolkata.

The Muslim people directly attacked the Hindu people. During the first three days of the riots, the Hindu people were killed in large numbers and also their properties were destroyed. This act of atrocity is recorded in the history as the 'Great Kolkata Killing'. In Kolkata city, the number of Hindu people was more than the number of Muslims and so after the fourth day the Hindu people became aggressive and they

killed many Muslims. This stopped the atrocities of the Muslim League to some extent.

Now the Muslim League focused on Noukhali. In the Noukhali town, the Hindus were in minority and the number of Muslims was more than 90 per cent. There were horrendous acts of atrocity against the Hindu people who had been staying there.

Gandhiji was very distressed to hear the news from Noukhali. He decided to visit Noukhali and stop the riots. He arrived at Noukhali. He was shocked to see the situation there. He visited 45 villages around Noukhali. He travelled for 116 miles. To prevent him from visiting these areas, he was attacked by hooligans and thorns and broken glass was thrown on his way to these villages. Sometimes even human excreta was also thrown on these roads to deter Gandhiji from approaching these villages. However, Gandhiji used to clean everything with his own hands and proceed. The news about the riots saddened him very much.

All the dispensaries in that area were closed, so he formed groups of volunteers and erected small huts at various places. Dr. Sushila Nayyar was entrusted with this responsibility. Dr. Sushila helped a lot of people in the riot ridden areas, even when there was a threat for her own life. The main inspiration for such noble work was of course from Gandhiji. Gandhiji himself went from Chandipur to Noukhali barefoot. This 'peace march' of Gandhiji was successful. The rioters abandoned their weapons. The people who had run away from their homes returned to the villages.

Describing Gandhiji's extreme courage, Lord Mountbatten has expressed that Gandhiji had achieved a feat which would not have been possible even for

an army of 50 thousand soldiers.

Gandhiji's experiments about his principles and philosophy went on under these circumstances too. They continued even during the riots at Noukhali. Manu, a young girl, used to accompany him during the march to Noukhali. She used to maintain a diary about the events that had happened during the day. Gandhiji used to read the account of the events and would sign below it. As per this diary, there is a mention about one incident where Gandhiji was staying at Narayanpur, in a weaver's house. Manu had forgotten the stone which Gandhiji used for scrubbing his feet, in the previous village.

Gandhiji asked Manu to go alone to that village and bring the stone. Manu was only 16-17 years old. The riots were still going on. However, she went alone to that village. She started at about nine thirty in the morning and returned at about 1.30 p.m. When she returned, Gandhiji Said, 'Today you have passed the test of bravery. I have been carrying this stone with me for the last 25 years.'. Meeraben had given this stone to Gandhiji.

After ending the riots at Noukhali, Gandhiji arrived in Kolkata. The riots were still going on there. He decided to stay in Kolkata to end the riots. On 15th August 1947, Gandhiji was in Kolkata. He did not attend the independence ceremony in Delhi. In Kolkata, he observed a fast for 73 hours. He made the Hindus and Muslims promise him that there would be peace. Responding to his appeal, the Hindus and Muslims conducted joint meetings. Processions were organized. When Kolkata was peaceful, Gandhiji started for Delhi.

१०

CHAPTER 17

Gandhiji's Relations with THE COMMUNISTS

Generally, there are no discussions held about Gandhiji's relations with the communists. In 1915, when Gandhiji returned to India from South Africa, at that time the labor movement in India was gathering momentum. It was spreading throughout the country. In India, the labor movement was founded by Mr. Narayan Meghaji Lokhande. He was a 'satyashodhak' and was a colleague of Mahatma Phule. He had founded the mill workers' union in Mumbai in 1884 and fought to get justice for them. After this, labor movements were initiated in other cities of the country.

In 1920, ITUC was founded. Some of the leaders who had participated in this labor movement, adopted the communist philosophy and became the leaders of the workers and worked for uniting the workers throughout the country. In this process, in 1925 the Communist Party of India (CPI) was established. They had the objective to bring about a revolution in the country based on the principle of Marxism and made all out efforts to achieve this objective.

The British government passed two laws on 8 April 1929. The aim behind these was to prevent the growth of the workers' movement which was growing

in the country. The first was the 'Trade Safety Bill' and the second was the 'Public Safety Bill'. Under these laws, the British arrested 33 communist volunteers and charged them with sedition. They were charged that they were involved in a conspiracy to unite the workers and stage a revolt against the Queen's Kingdom. They were sent to the prison in Meerut. These included Com. Dange, Com. Mirajkar, Com. Nimbkar, Com. Jogalekar, Com. Shoukat Usmani, Mr. Sohansing Josh. All these were Indians, while two British volunteers were also arrested viz. Mr. Benjamin Bradley and Mr. Philip Sprat.

On 27 October 1929, Gandhiji went to Meerut to meet the communist volunteers. He held detailed discussions with Com. Dange. Com. Dange asked a direct question to Gandhiji. He asked that as there had been violence at Chourichoura, Gandhiji had withdrawn the non-cooperation movement. Whether he would do the same again? Gandhiji replied that now no protest movement would be withdrawn. Gandhiji acted accordingly in the later years. Gandhiji talked with the communist volunteers in the prison and showed his willingness to help them. Accordingly, Pandit Nehru started a funding scheme for the communist volunteers who were in prison.

Pandit Motilal Nehru and Pandit Javaharlal Nehru had expressed their willingness to represent those charged in the Meerut conspiracy in the court of law. This clearly shows that the relations between Gandhiji and the communists were amicable and they helped each other.

Congress was not just a party, it was a nationwide movement. In this movement, there were people with

different ideologies. The communists were also a part of Congress. Com. Shripad Amrut Dange was a member of the National Executive Council of the Congress. Com. Nimbkar was the secretary of the Mumbai Pradesh Congress Committee, while Com. K. N. Jogalekar was the treasurer. Com. E. M. S. Nambudripad was a leader of Kerala Congress. This means that even though in those days the number of communist workers was less, they were respected in the Congress and were handling responsible positions.

However, in the later years, there were some people who were anti-communist and they tried to mislead Gandhiji by telling him some details, which were not true. One such point was that the communists must be getting help from abroad. To have a clarification, Gandhiji wrote a letter to the communist party's office. Gandhiji wrote in that letter that he wanted to have a look at their accounts.

In those days, Com. P. C. Joshi was the General Secretary of the party. Com. Basavpunnayya was the office secretary. His wife, Com. Leela used to maintain the accounts. The party's main office was in Mumbai. Com. P. C. Joshi wrote to Gandhiji that he could visit the party's office and see the accounts. A date was also fixed. However, as Gandhiji was busy in some other important work, he asked Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel to visit the party's office. Accordingly, Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel visited the office of the Communist Party of India and he went through the books of accounts maintained by them. He was satisfied with what he saw and reported the same to Gandhiji. Due to this incident, any misunderstanding that Gandhiji might have had about the communist workers was removed.

Even though the Communist Party of India was a part of the freedom movement initiated by the Congress, they also had their own separate existence. As a part of politics, the communist leaders criticized Congress and Gandhiji and the Congress leaders also criticized the communists. This was natural. However, this does not mean that Gandhiji and the communists were enemies of each other. On the contrary, there are many examples which indicate that the philosophies of Gandhiji and the communists were complementary to each other.

Gandhiji has discussed about the communism in his writings. He had clearly mentioned that the philosophy of socialism was a very high level philosophy indeed. The point that was most important for Gandhiji was that of violence. He maintained that a socialistic social system should be created without any act of violence. In his book, 'The India in my dreams', he has mentioned that in fact he himself was a true communist.

The word 'exploitation' occurs frequently in the communist philosophy. It is a very important word. Gandhiji used to say that exploitation is another form of violence and it must stop.

However, there is a difference in the philosophy of Gandhiji and the communist philosophy and the difference is that Gandhiji asked the owners of the wealth to become the trustees of their wealth. He told them that they should think of themselves as the trustees of their wealth and behave with the workers accordingly. The communist philosophy states that the owners amass the wealth by exploiting the workers, hence there should not be any class of owners in

the society and the entire wealth should belong to the workers only. The similarity between Gandhiji and communists was that both of them wanted a social system where there would be no exploitation.

१०

CHAPTER 18

Gandhiji's Economics

For Gandhiji, the common man in the society would always be at the focus. He said that if we are going to design any financial program, then we should always have the common man in the society, at the focus of the program. When any program is implemented, once again we should consider how the program has affected the common man. If the unhappiness and sorrow of the common man has diminished even by one degree and there is any hope for a smile in his life, then we can say that the program was successful, but on the other hand if the common man's situation has remained as it was before the program, then we can say that the program has failed. He used to explain his philosophy about the economic programs in such simple words.

While touring throughout the country, he had seen thousands of hungry and thirsty people. Hence, he would always say that if God really wanted to arrive in this country, then he should arrive in the form of 'Bhakri' (bread). He clearly maintained, that the main questions before this country were of poverty, hunger and clothing and so for the removal of these problems he designed his own program.

The program included Gram Swarajya (autonomous system at the village level), Gramodyog (industries

at the village level). He felt that all the reforms must start at the village level, because our country was a country of villages.

Gandhiji has said that there is enough food for the needs of every human being and for the animals and birds on the earth, but it is difficult to satisfy the greed of a person. If we consider the present state of our country, we are reminded once again of Gandhiji's words. Those who are greedy, have continued to exploit the people and nature for their own greed.

As per one estimate, only 20 per cent of the population controls 80 per cent of the wealth of the country and the remaining 20 per cent wealth is distributed over 80 percent of the people. If this disparity goes on increasing, then a day will come when only a handful of people will have control over the entire wealth of the country and they will run the country as per their wish. All this is happening due to greed. Gandhiji had opposed this right from the beginning.

It is also said that Gandhiji had opposed the mechanization. However, this statement is only half-true. Gandhiji did not oppose mechanization but he said that the humans should not become slaves of the machines. If the man becomes a slave of the machine, then there is chaos. Today, our country has accepted mechanization on a very large scale, without giving a thought to our population and it has resulted into an explosion in the number of unemployed persons. While thinking about industries, the way we think about the production, in the same way we have to think about how many jobs are going to be created due to this industry? Priority should be given to providing work to

the people. It can be seen that Gandhiji had pursued this consistently.

When it was apparent that the country would acquire independence in the near future, the industrialists in Mumbai prepared a plan of development. This plan is known as 'Bombay Plan'. This plan included huge roads, big factories, huge dams etc. Gandhiji looked at the plan and kept it aside. The industrialist asked him, 'Don't you believe in mass production?'. Gandhiji promptly replied, 'I believe in production by masses.'. Gandhiji's words are true, even today.

There is tremendous production being churned out from the factories by using ultra modern machinery, but these machines have made man useless. We can see that this is 'jobless growth'. Gandhiji has explained his thoughts about this in his book 'Hind Swaraya'.

१०

CHAPTER 19

Religion and Gandhiji

Gandhiji was a religious person and he had mentioned that he was a Sanatani Hindu. The word 'Sanatani' may create a lot of confusion. Gandhiji called himself a 'sanatani', so the Dalit people had some doubts about his thoughts and philosophy, but there is no reason for doubt. Gandhiji felt that 'sanatani' meant 'nitya nootan' i.e. always re-inventing itself. Some persons who uphold the principle of 'Hindutva' say that Gandhiji was biased towards the Muslims. However, if they are asked to give any example where Gandhiji gave special treatment to the Muslims, they are unable to do so. In this way, people belonging to various idealisms alleged him in various ways, due to which a person who is really eager to study the whole scenario may get confused.

If we take a look at Gandhiji's daily routine, we can definitely say that Gandhiji was a religious person. His day always started with a prayer and ended with a prayer. In the evening prayer, he would give a sermon on a verse (shloka) from 'Bhagvadgita'. He had adopted the principles from Hindu religion as well as from other religions as well, which were beneficial for the entire human race and he tried to implement these in his daily life. From the Hindu religion, he accepted what was good and he abandoned what was wrong.

He used to say that un-touchability is a blot on the Hindu religion and that he would try to eradicate it. He said that the eradication of un-touchability would be the beginning of the unity of the entire human race.

He had adopted the principles of compassion and power of reasoning from Mahatma Buddha and from the Jain religion he accepted the principle of non-violence i.e. 'ahimsa'. In this way, he accepted a lot of principles from the philosophies of a lot of religions.

He had opined that religion is an entirely personal issue, there can be as many religions as the number of persons and the perception of God can be different for different people. While talking about the ancient scriptures of Ved, he had said that he did not believe in the concept that the Vedas were created in heaven and that the words in Vedas could not be changed (aparivartaneeya). He felt that just like Vedas, the philosophy put forth by different religious holy books was also equally important.

Gandhiji said that he was totally against persons from one religion hating persons from any other religion. While explaining the principle of secularity, he has clarified that the free India would not be a Hindu nation but it will be an Indian state because it will not belong to the majority of any one religion or sect, but would be governed by the representative elected by the citizens.

Gandhiji felt that a person should be religious but he/she should not use religion for politics. Gandhiji was religious by nature, but in his public life he did not let religion influence any of his activities. He was truly secular. Gandhiji had initiated protest movements so that the Dalit people would be allowed to enter

the temples, hence he had visited the temples. But there are no references found about pooja and other rituals performed by him in the temples.

Once, Mahadevbhai and Kasturba went to visit the temple in Jagganathpuri and told Gandhiji about the same on their return. Gandhiji expressed deep distress about this and warned them not to do it again. This shows that Gandhiji was against performing any rituals.

Today, we can see that many personalities in politics apply 'gandh' (a saffron colored paste) on their foreheads. They wear different types of threads on their wrists and there are many rings with different colors adorning their fingers. All these threads and rings are worn as per the advice from some astrologer. Many of the politicians take advice from such astrologers, who offer guidance to them. During his entire life, Gandhiji did not adopt any such practice. He led not just one or two but dozens of political movements in the country. From time to time, there were assaults on his life, but he did not go to any astrologer and mantrik for advice and guidance. He made it very clear from his own way of life that a person can be religious and still he/she can reject any type of rituals.

Gandhiji also proved from his own way of life, that the persons who are really religious, only those persons are truly secular. It is seen that the persons who are not religious in the true sense of the word, use the religion for politics. As an example of this, we can see that Barrister Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who had adopted a modern life style and was a follower of the western life style, had never visited the masjid and did not bother much about how the 'namaj' prayer was to be performed. However, he did make use of Islam

in India's politics and it caused the partition of India.

There is another example of a person who was religious by nature but believed in secularism. His name was Moulana Abul Kalam Azad. He was a great researcher of Koran and the philosophy of Islam. However, he had opposed to the use of religion in politics. If a person is really religious by nature, normally such a person does not hate the religions of others. On the contrary, he/she respects the religions of other people. However, those persons who want to make use of the religion for their politics and political aspirations, their entire political framework is based on hatred. These persons are not at all religious. If we have a look around us today, we can understand this.

Gandhiji had travelled throughout the country from Kashmir to Kanya Kumari and from Gujarath to Arunachal and also till Peshavar. He had made all out efforts to understand the situation there, and the problems faced by the people staying in the country. Gandhiji tried to stress upon the point that in India, there are many religions, many sects, hundreds of spoken languages, different traditions. In such a case, how can we even think about forcing the philosophy, traditions and rituals of one single religion for the entire population of the country. Therefore, every person should follow his/her own religion but should not hate others, but love others.

He tried to imbibe these principles in the entire Indian population and he was successful in it. He could initiate a gigantic fight against the British, with the participation from all people of the country. This was possible only due to the secular principles adopted by him.

ॐ

CHAPTER 20

Gandhiji's Journalism

All the leaders have always felt that if they want to spread their thoughts and philosophies to reach the people then they must do so through the medium of their own newspaper. Lokmanya Tilak had published 'Kesari' and 'Maratha' newspapers. Mr. Narayan Meghaji Lokhande, a Satyashodhak leader started the 'Deenbandhu' newspaper. Moulana Azad started the 'Al Hilal' newspaper in Urdu. Dr. Ambedkar's 'Bahishkrut Bharat' newspaper was very effective. Gandhiji also had used the medium of journalism to express his views and opinions.

When he had started his work in South Africa, he felt the need of a newspaper. At that time, the 'Indian Opinion' weekly magazine was published there. He supported this weekly magazine. In 1904, he took over the administration of this newspaper. In the same newspaper, he used to publish articles in four languages, viz. Gujarathi, Hindi, Tamil and English. The content would be the same but the languages would be different. He was very fond of this weekly magazine.

This magazine was instrumental in bringing about awareness in the Indian people in South Africa. The residents of the Phoenix Ashram used to take part in the administration of this paper. This paper of a

great help for Gandhiji, to initiate and establish protest movements in South Africa against the government which was having racial discrimination. Most of the articles in this newspaper were written by Gandhiji himself.

When Gandhiji returned to India, he again felt the need for a newspaper. In 1919, he started two newspapers, viz. 'Young India' and 'Nav Jeevan'. In 1933, he started the newspaper 'Harijan'. In 1940, the British declared a ban on these newspapers. These newspapers provided a platform to give a momentum to the freedom movement and he also discussed various philosophical points such as truth, non-violence (ahimsa), Satyagrah in these newspapers. He also presented his thoughts about economics, and the thoughts and views about religion mainly from these newspapers. Gandhiji preferred to write in the newspapers as compared to writing books. It is said that he had written about 40 thousand pages of the articles. One wonders about how Gandhiji must have found time and peace of mind to write these articles, as he would either be in prison or participating in the freedom movements. How he must have done the time-planning for reading, research needed for such articles is yet another point altogether.

४०

CHAPTER 21

Gram Swarajya and Agriculture

Gandhiji had realized that our nation was a nation consisting of a very large number of villages and the number of towns and cities was very small. There were only a few metropolitan cities. So he came to the conclusion after his research that the real 'Swarajya' would be the 'gram swarajya' (governance at the village level).

He had recorded three observations about the villages :

- 1) The lack of cleanliness in the village.
- 2) People did not have enough to eat and so there was malnutrition.
- 3) Ignorance

He, therefore, felt that to have 'swarajya' (independence) meant to remove the above lacunas. Gandhiji was aware of the fact that though apparently this task seemed easy it would be very difficult to achieve. In the rural areas of the country, the main occupation was agriculture. In some cities, some industries had been established. However, the number of such industries was very small considering the vast spread of the country, hence in the concept of 'gram swarajya' it was necessary to give due thought to agriculture.

Cleanliness mainly depends upon availability of

water. If water is not available then it would be difficult to maintain cleanliness inside the house as well as outside. If there is no cleanliness then the diseases would increase. Hence he stressed that in every village, there should be proper management for drinking water. In those days, the rivers, lakes, streams and wells were the only sources of water. He had written that there should be sufficient number of wells in every village in proportion of the population of the village and all the people from all religions and castes should have access to these sources of water. If water would be available, then it would be possible for the people to have daily bath, washing clothes and to maintain cleanliness in the house. He had also mentioned the necessity of proper disposal of the waste water.

He had observed that the problem of malnutrition was a major problem in the rural areas of the country. People needed sufficient and nutritious food and water. He felt that proper systems should be established to ensure this. We can get this from agriculture but it would not be sufficient, so every village should have some cottage industries which would provide work for the persons in the village. The villagers would get some income and their financial status would improve and as there was employment available in the village itself, they would not leave the villages.

He felt that whatever was needed for the villagers should be produced in the village itself so they would not have to depend upon others. He has written that when the western companies had not introduced their goods in our markets everything was ok, however when the companies from the western countries arrived in

our markets, they captured our markets and our entire economic system was disturbed.

He had always given a serious thought to agriculture. He felt that the 'godhan' (cows) were very important for the agriculture in our country. He had seen that over the years, due to the division of the ancestral property, the farmer has less and less area available for cultivation of crops. He cannot earn enough only on the basis of agriculture. On this, he had suggested a way out. He had suggested that hundred families from a village should come together and have collective farming. They should maintain livestock on a collective basis so that they would be able to look after the cows and the agriculture also would be profitable. In this way, Gandhiji promoted the collective farming.

The socialistic social system also recommends the collective farming. Mr. J. C. Kumarappa, who was a staunch promoter of Gandhian philosophy had suggested the cooperative farming. He had mentioned that if we could have major industries run on cooperative basis, such as sugar factories and banks then why couldn't we have cooperative farming?

While speaking about the villages, Gandhiji had mentioned that the cities were exploiting the villages. He opined that such exploitation was also a type of violence and it should be stopped.

Gandhiji was very disturbed when he observed that there was tremendous ignorance in the villages. He insisted that the people in the villages must have access to good education and proper education systems should be developed for the rural areas. For this, he developed his 'Nai Taleem' (new education) education system. It is also known as 'Vardha

Education System'.

His entire focus would be on labor. He insisted that education should increase the respect for labor. As the people in the villages did not have access to education, the rural population was riddled with various wrong practices of blind faith.

He thought that if these people are to be freed from these, there should be a primary school, health centre and a cultural centre for the students and villagers. He has written that such a village would be an ideal village.

He has mentioned that every village should have its own grassland for its livestock, where the animals could graze. Every village should have its own army of Gram-sainiks who would protect the water, grassland of the village. The entire village should come together and elect a committee, the 'Panch committee', who would look after the work of settlement of the disputes, arranging public programs, so that the villagers can lead a peaceful life.

Gandhiji stressed that the development of the nation should start at the village level. However, today we see that a lot of importance is given for the development of the cities and developing 'smart' cities.

ॐ

CHAPTER 22

What Exactly is Gandhism?

Gandhiji never wrote down a separate philosophy which would depict his principles. We have to find it from his articles published in the newspapers. The researchers have done this job. There are some principles which can be stated as the main principles of Gandhism :

1. **Protesting against injustice** : Gandhiji says that it is wrong to do injustice, however it is also wrong to tolerate injustice. One must protest against injustice.

2. **Protest against injustice with the help of non-violence ways**: Gandhiji stressed that when we are protesting against any injustice, we should not use violence. He had suggested various ways to protest against injustice. 'Satyagrah' was one such way.

3. **For achieving your goals you must use ways which are free from corruption** : The ways that you choose to achieve your goals must themselves be free of corruption. You should not achieve your goals using wrong methods and ways.

4. **Respect for physical labor** : Those who are doing physical labor must get respect in the society.

5. **The persons and the society should be free from fear** : Every person in the society should be able to lead a life which is free from fear. Also, everybody should have the right to express himself/herself. The

society also should be free from fear.

6. The mechanism of production and the governance of the provinces should be de-centralized : Only a handful of persons should not have total control over the production and governance of the country.

7. In the society, there should be no discrimination and classes. All the persons belonging to various castes and religions should be treated equally.

8. Ethical behavior is the base for all the religions and all should adhere to ethical behavior.

9. Truth is the ultimate value.

10. There should be complete balance between the nature and man.

ॐ

CHAPTER 23

Who Murdered Gandhiji? And Why?

It is always stated, with due stress, that Mr. Nathuram Godase and his colleagues murdered Gandhiji, because they thought that Gandhiji was responsible for the partition of the country and that after the partition, Gandhiji had insisted that India should give Rupees 55 crores to Pakistan, and for this demand he observed a fast, so India had to give Rupees 55 crores to Pakistan. Mr. Nathuram Godase and his colleagues were enraged due to this and they murdered Gandhiji.

Recently, we have witnessed public praise for Mr. Nathuram Godase. The speakers who are showering praise on Nathuram Godase are also tarnishing the image of Gandhiji. On 30th January, 2019, at Aligarh, Smt. Pooja Pande, the secretary of Hindu Mahasabha disfigured the photo of Gandhiji by firing two rounds from a toy pistol on his photo. A balloon filled with red liquid was hidden behind the photo, which was so arranged that it appeared that there was blood flowing out when the balloon burst.

While all this was going on, there were slogans shouted denouncing Gandhiji and praising Nathuram Godase.

During the campaign for the parliament elections,

the BJP candidate Pradnya Singh Thakur very clearly stated, while talking with the journalists, that 'Nathuram Godse was a patriot, he is a patriot and he will be a patriot. '

In Maharashtra, through the drama 'Mee Nathuram Godse Boltoy', the praise for Nathuram and ridicule of Gandhiji was going on for a long time.

Due to this, it is felt that some persons are purposely trying to tarnish the image of Gandhiji. By doing so, they are trying to hide the true history and therefore it is felt that we must know the exact details about who murdered Gandhiji and why.

There were in all eight attempts on Gandhiji's life. Out of these, two incidents happened when he was in South Africa.

1) The first attempt of murder happened out of misunderstanding. In South Africa, Gandhiji had started protest movement against the racial discrimination. Mr. Meer Aalum had some misunderstanding about him and he attacked Gandhiji to kill him. Gandhiji was injured but he did not initiate any legal proceedings against Mr. Meer Aalum. After some time, the misunderstanding was cleared and Mr. Meer Aalum became a diehard follower of Gandhiji.

2) On 13 January 1897, in Durban city in South Africa, there was again an attempt to kill Gandhiji. He had visited India at that time and was returning to South Africa. When the news of his arrival at Durban port spread in the city of Durban, two thousand white men gathered at the port and asked the captain to hand over Gandhiji to them. The captain anchored the boat at the port and let all the other passengers depart. However, Gandhiji was detained. When the captain came ashore

along with Gandhiji, the people started throwing rotten eggs and tomatoes at him. Some people attacked him. At that time, Mr. Rustumji, a friend of Gandhiji, helped him. He took Gandhiji to his residence. With his help, Gandhiji disguised himself as a policeman and came out of the house and walked through the crowd and escaped. Barrister Gandhi had initiated a protest movement for the rights of the Indian people staying in South Africa, and the white men had made this attempt on his life, out of the rage and hatred.

Attempts of murder in India

First attempt : The first attempt on Gandhiji's life was done at Pune, on 25 June 1934. He was attending a meeting on that day at the Council Hall. The subject was about the removal of untouchability. When he was on his way to the venue of meeting, a bomb was thrown on his car. However, the bomb fell on the motor car which was next to his car and he was saved. This was a plot for murder, with proper planning. Those who did not agree with Gandhiji's views about removal of untouchability had planned this plot. Mr. Pyarelal has written about this incident that those who had planned his murder in 1934, the same persons finally murdered him in 1948.

Till 1934, there had been no concept or discussions about Pakistan and so there was no question about giving Pakistan Rupees 55 crores.

2) The second attempt on Gandhiji's life was in July 1944 at Panchgani. When he was released from the prison, he was staying for some days at Panchgani. Mr. Nathuram Godase arrived at Panchgani, with some of his colleagues. He arranged a protest march against

Gandhiji. At the time of the evening prayers, Nathuram attacked Gandhiji with a knife. Mr. Bhilare Guruji, who was a volunteer at the venue, caught him and the attack was avoided. As per Gandhiji's instructions, Mr. Nathuram Godase and Mr. Narayan Apte were released, without filing a complaint with the police. Gandhiji sent a message to them that Nathuram and Apte, along with their colleagues, should discuss with him and stay with him for some time. However, they did not accept the invitation for discussion and Godase and his friends left for Pune.

Third attempt : In September 1944, the third attempt for murder was done by none other than Nathuram himself. At Sevagram, Nathuram attacked Gandhiji. Nathuram and his colleagues were sure that Gandhiji would never file a complaint against them and this had emboldened them. When Godase and Thatte attacked Gandhiji at Sevagram, the volunteers stopped them and they confiscated the knife which was carried by them.

Fourth attempt : This attempt of murder was on 29 June 1946. Gandhiji boarded a train at night from Mumbai to go to Pune. This railway was named as 'Gandhi Special'. On the railway track between the stations of Karjat to Neral, some people had put huge rocks on the railway tracks with the intention that the railway train would meet with an accident and Gandhiji would die. However, the railway motorman Mr. L. M. Parera showed great presence of mind and ensured that there would be no accident. So Gandhiji reached safely at Pune.

Fifth attempt : This attempt was made after independence. In those days, Gandhiji was staying at Birla House in Delhi. Mr. Nathuram Godase, Gopal

Godase, Narayan Apte, Karkare, Badage, Kistayya arrived in Delhi with the intention of killing Gandhiji. They conducted a inspection of Birla House and a plot was designed. All of them were assigned specific duties and on 20 January 1948, at the time of the evening prayer, they executed the murder plot by bomb explosion. However, after the bomb explosion, all of them were confused and forgot their assigned duties. So this fifth plot of murder was unsuccessful. On the same day they returned to Pune. While this was going on, Gandhiji was very calm. He did not file a complaint with the police. One can understand why Gandhiji had rejected to file a complaint in the police, however it is difficult to understand what the Home Ministry of independent India was doing at that time. Was it not the responsibility of the Home Ministry to protect Gandhiji?

Last attempt : Mr. Nathuram Godse and his colleagues arrived again at the Birla House on 30th January. At fifteen minutes past five in the evening, Gandhiji started for the prayer venue, with Abha and Manu. Usually, a Sikh volunteer would always be walking before them, and he would clear the crowd. However, on this fateful day he was absent. Gandhiji started for the Prayer venue. He accepted the greetings of people with folded hands. Nathuram stood directly before him and said , 'Namaste, Bapu.'. Manu said, 'Brother, Bapu is getting late for the prayers.'. Nathuram pushed her away and she fell down. At this moment she looked at Nathuram. She had seen him in the afternoon.

Exactly at 17 minutes past 5 o clock, Nathuram opened fire. Gandhiji collapsed uttering the two words 'Hey Ram'. Nathuram Godase and his colleagues were

successful in murdering Gandhiji. The entire world was shocked by this incident.

On many occasions, Gandhiji had talked about his death. About one year before the murder, on 30 January 1947, Gandhiji had told Manu that he felt that 'if I die while lying in a bed, then be sure that this man was not a 'Mahatma' at all. If somebody shoots while I am going for the prayers, then I should be able to utter the name of 'Ram' and I should have no ill feelings about the murderer.'

Even afterwards, he had expressed his thoughts about his own death to many others. One day before the murder also he had expressed the same thoughts to Manu. Gandhiji met his own death exactly as he had wished to die.

9 persons were charged with the murder of Gandhiji and a case was filed against them.

1) Nathuram Vinayak Godase (37 years), Shaniwar Peth, Pune.

2) Narayan Dattatraya Apte (34 years), Budhwar Peth, Pune

3) Vishnu Ramchandra Karkare (37 years) Paradeshi Ali, Ahmednagar.

4) Digambar Ramchandra Badage(39 years) Narayan Peth Pune

5) Madanlal Kashmirilal Pahava (20 years) Refugee camp, Ahmednagar.

6) Shankar Kistayya (20 years) Narayan Peth, Pune

7) Gopal Vinayak Godase (27 years) Khadki, Pune.

8) Vinayak Damodar Savarkar (65 years) Shivaji Park, Mumbai

9) Dattatraya Sadashiv Parchure (40 years) Station Road, Gwalior.

Following three persons were declared as absconding.

10) Gangadhar Sakharam Dandavate

11) Gangadhar Jadhav

12) Suryadev Sharma

The main defendants in the case, Mr. Nathuram Vinayak Godase and Mr. Narayan Dattatraya Apte in Gandhiji's murder case were sentenced to death and on 13 November 1949, they were hanged till death in the Central Prison at Ambala.

1) Vishnu Ramchandra Karkare - Life imprisonment

2) Madanlal Kashmirilal Pahava - Life imprisonment

3) Shankar Kistayya - Life imprisonment

4) Gopal Godase - Life imprisonment

5) Vinayak Damodar Savarkar - Not guilty

6) Digambar Ramchandra Badage- Turned approver

Gandhiji's murder and 55 crores

At the time of the partition of the country, two nations viz. India and Pakistan were created. These two newly independent nations signed agreements. At that time, the nation had 375 crores of rupees as reserves. It was agreed that out of these, India should have 300 crores and 75 crores should be given to Pakistan. This agreement stated that rupees 20 crores should be given as immediate help and the remaining amount of rupees 55 crores should be given after some time. This was the first agreement entered into by these two independent countries.

Gandhiji had never agreed with the partition of the country. When this agreement was signed, Gandhiji was not there. He did not participate in the negotiations for this agreement. We must take into account that, at that time he was busy in the task of ending the racial

riots which had arisen throughout the country.

As per this agreement signed by both the countries, India had to give rupees 55 crores now. There is a misrepresentation spread in the country that Gandhiji insisted that this sum of rupees 55 crores should be given to Pakistan and for this demand Gandhiji went on a fast, and Nathuram became very angry due to this and he murdered Gandhiji. This is entirely false.

Gandhiji had started his fast in Delhi on 13 January 1948. There had been racial riots at Delhi at that time. The entire city of Delhi was on fire. Gandhiji made an appeal to stop the riots and started his fast. He declared that he would go on fasting till the riots would come to an end and the people in Delhi could have a normal life again.

Due to this, all the leaders were worried. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel sent a message through his secretary Mr. V. Shankar to Gandhiji and asked him what he should do. Gandhiji replied, 'Give rupees 55 crores to Pakistan'. This was an opinion expressed by him during his fast. However, the goal of his fast was not at all for giving 55 crores to Pakistan. He had started the fast to establish normalcy in the city of Delhi. Mr. Pyarelal Nayyar, D.G. Tendulkar, Moulana Azad, Ram Manohar Lohiya have written about 'that' fast by Gandhiji. However, none of them have mentioned that Gandhiji had observed the fast for the demand that India should give rupees 55 crores to Pakistan.

Nobody can agree to the reasoning that Nathuram murdered Gandhiji, because Gandhiji had asked to give Rupees 55 crores to Pakistan. The reasons why he murdered Gandhiji are entirely different.

Gandhiji's views and stand for opposing the

Sansthaniks (heads of the princely states), the movement initiated for allowing the Dalit people inside the temples, his efforts towards the removal of untouchability, his views that the workers should have a say in the governance of the country, the philosophy of secularism adopted by Gandhiji was not acceptable to Nathuram Godse and his friends and so they thought of murdering Gandhiji. This is the truth. There is no proof that Gandhiji went on a fast demanding that Rupees 55 crores should be given to Pakistan.

Gandhiji had never asked for police protection. When he had visited Noukhali for stopping the racial violence, his own life was in danger but even at that time he had rejected the police protection. When there were attempts on his life, he never filed a complaint with the police. He had forgiven his own attackers. He invited them to have a dialogue with him.

The world famous scientist and philosopher Mr. Albert Einstein had remarked about Gandhiji's philosophy of life, that the future generations would find it very difficult to believe that such a person had actually lived on this earth!

४०

References

- 1) Adnyaat Gandhi : Narayanbhai Desai : Samakaleen Prakashan, Pune.
- 2) Mahatma Gandhi and Gandhi Vachane : Prasad Kulkarni : Samajvadi Prabodhini, Ichalkaranji.
- 3) Mahatma Gandhi Jeevan Charitra : D. N. Shikhare : Sakal Prakashan, Pune.
- 4) Zot : Samajik Nyayavar : Editor : Uttam Kambale, Publisher : Dr. Ravsaheb Kasabe, Gourav Samiti.
- 5) Mahatmyachi akher : Jagan Phadnis : Mehta Publishing House, Pune.

PHOTOGRAPHS



Entering an auditorium in South Africa



Dialogue with the colleagues in South Africa



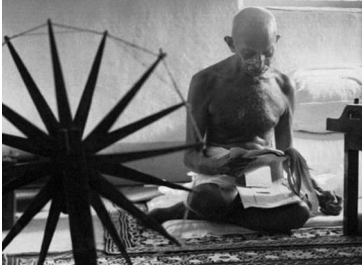
The women mill workers at Lancashire (England) welcome Gandhiji with a lot of enthusiasm



Leading the historic 'Dandi March'



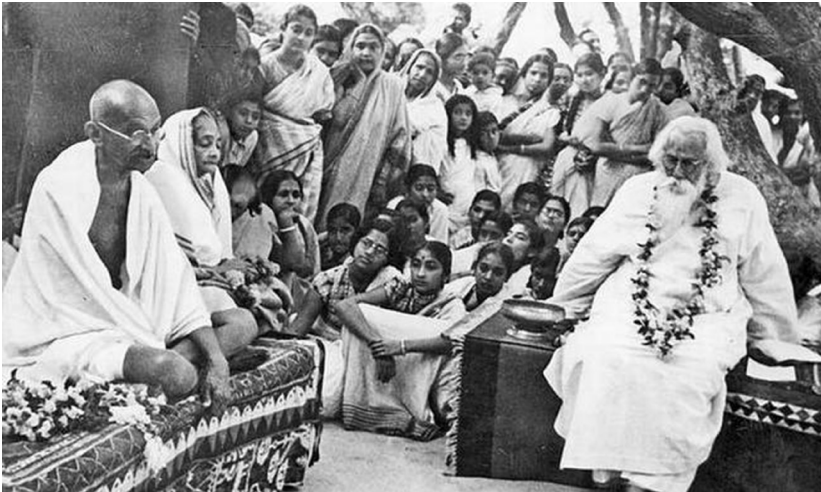
With Nehru and Sardar Patel
at a Congress meeting



Spinning cotton
on the charakha
(spinning wheel)



Gandhiji during his
tour of the country



With Ravindranath Tagore at Shanti Niketan



Arriving at a meeting, with Sarojini Naidu



Mahatma Gandhiji and Dr. Ambedkar,
participating in the Round Table Conference

Nobody can agree to the reasoning that Nathuram murdered Gandhiji, because Gandhiji had asked to give Rupees 55 crores to Pakistan. The reasons why he murdered Gandhiji are entirely different.

Gandhiji's views and stand for opposing the Sansthanks (heads of the princely states), the movement initiated for allowing the Dalit people inside the temples, his efforts towards the removal of untouchability, his views that the workers should have a say in the governance of the country, the philosophy of secularism adopted by Gandhiji was not acceptable to Nathuram Godse and his friends and so they thought of murdering Gandhiji. This is the truth. There is no proof that Gandhiji went on a fast demanding that Rupees 55 crores should be given to Pakistan.

Gandhiji had never asked for police protection. When he had visited Noukhali for stopping the racial violence, his own life was in danger but even at that time he had rejected the police protection. When there were attempts on his life, he never filed a complaint with the police. He had forgiven his own attackers. He invited them to have a dialogue with him.

The world famous scientist and philosopher Mr. Albert Einstein had remarked about Gandhiji's philosophy of life, that the future generations would find it very difficult to believe that such a person had actually lived on this earth!



Dada Purav Research And Training Institute