

Be Mains Ready

Q. The 'Quit India' movement, more than anything, united the Indian people against British rule. Discuss. (150 Words).

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Approach / Explanation / Answer

- Explain about the Quit India movement in brief.
- Discuss the success of the movement in uniting Indian people against British rule.
- Also discuss the failure of the movement.
- Conclude suitably.

Answer

On 8th August 1942, Mahatma Gandhi gave a clarion call to end the British rule and launched the Quit India Movement at the session of the All-India Congress Committee in Mumbai.

Gandhiji gave the call “Do or Die” in his speech delivered at the Gowalia Tank Maidan.

Causes of the movement

- The immediate cause for the movement was the collapse of Cripps Mission. The mission failed because it offered India not complete freedom but the Dominion Status , along with the partition.
- The British assumption of unconditional support from India to the British in World War II was not taken well by the Indian National Congress.
- The anti-British sentiments and demand for full-independence had gained popularity among indian masses.
- Shortage of Essential Commodities: The economy was in shatters as a result of World War II.

Successes of the Movement

- **Rise of Nationalism:** A greater sense of unity and brotherhood emerged due to the Quit India Movement. Many students dropped out of schools and colleges, people gave up their jobs and withdrew money from the banks.
- **Women Participation:** Women took active participation in the movement. Female leaders like Usha Mehta helped set up an underground radio station which led to the awakening about the movement.
- **Rise of Future Leaders:** Underground activities were taken by leaders that included Ram Manohar Lohia, J.P. Narayan, Aruna Asaf Ali, Biju Patnaik, Sucheta Kriplani, etc which later emerged as prominent leaders.
- **Paved the way for Independence:** While the Quit India campaign was crushed in 1944, with the British refusing to grant immediate independence, saying it could happen only after the war had ended, they came to the important realization that India was ungovernable in the long run due to the cost of World War II.

- It changed the nature of political negotiations with the British, ultimately paving the way for India's independence.

Failure of the Movement

- **Brutal Repression:** The movement saw violence at some places which was not premeditated.
 - The movement was violently suppressed by the British – people were shot, lathi-charged, villages burnt and enormous fines imposed.
 - Over 1,00,000 people were arrested and the government resorted to violence in order to crush the agitation.
- **Lack of Support:** Muslim League, the Communist Party of India and the Hindu Mahasabha did not support the movement. The Indian bureaucracy also did not support the movement.
 - Meanwhile, Subhas Chandra Bose, organised the Indian National Army and the Azad Hind government from outside the country.
 - Many Congress members like C Rajagopalachari resigned from the provincial legislature as they did not favour Mahatma Gandhi's idea.

The Quit India movement was the spontaneous participation of the masses compared to the other Gandhian movements like non-cooperation and civil disobedience. The great significance of this historic movement was that it placed the demand for independence on the immediate agenda of the national movement.

After 'Quit India' there could be no retreat. Independence was no longer a matter of bargain. And this became amply clear after World War-II

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