



Quit India Movement

Why in News

On 8th Aug 2021, India completed 79 years of Quit India Movement also known as August Kranti.

Key Points

▪ About:

- 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, now popularly known as August Kranti Maidan.**
- **Aruna Asaf Ali** popularly known as the '**Grand Old Lady**' of the Independence Movement is known for **hoisting the Indian flag** at the Gowalia Tank Maidan in Mumbai during the Quit India Movement.
- The **slogan ‘Quit India’** was **coined by Yusuf Meherally**, a socialist and trade unionist who also served as Mayor of Mumbai.
 - Meherally had **also coined the slogan “Simon Go Back”.**

▪ Causes:

- **Failure of [Cripps Mission](#):** The **immediate cause** for the movement was the collapse of Cripps Mission.
 - **About:** Under **Stafford Cripps**, the **mission was sent to resolve the Indian question** of a new constitution and self-government.
 - **Reasons Behind Cripps Mission:** Japanese aggression in South-East Asia, keenness of British Government to secure the full participation of India in the war, mounting pressure from China and the United States, as well as from the Labour Party in Britain, **led British Prime Minister Winston Churchill to send the Cripps Mission to India in March 1942.**
 - **Reasons for Collapse:** It failed because it **offered India not complete freedom** but the **Dominion Status to India**, along with the partition.
- **Involvement of India in World War II without prior consultation with the leaders:**
 - The British assumption of unconditional support from India to British in [World War II](#) was not taken well by the [Indian National Congress](#).
- **Prevalence of anti-British Sentiment:**
 - The **anti-British sentiments** and **demand for full-independence** had gained popularity among Indian masses.
- **Centralisation of Many Small Movements:**
 - The two decades of **mass movement** which were being **conducted on a much more radical tone** under the leadership of the various associated and affiliated

bodies of the Congress, like **All India Kisan Sabha, Forward Bloc etc.** had already **prepared the ground for the movement.**

- There were militant outbursts happening at several places in the country which got channelized with the Quit India Movement.
- **Shortage of Essential Commodities:**
 - The economy was also in shatters as a result of World War II.

▪ **Demands:**

- The demand was **to end the British rule in India** with immediate effect to get the cooperation of Indians in World War-II against fascism.
- There was a demand to **form a provisional government** after the withdrawal of the Britishers.

▪ **Phases:** The movement had three phases:

- **First Phase, urban revolt,** marked by strikes, boycott and picketing, which were quickly suppressed.
 - There were strikes and demonstrations all over the country and workers provided the support by not working in the factories.
 - Gandhiji was soon imprisoned at Aga Khan Palace in Pune and almost all leaders were arrested.
- In the **second phase, the focus shifted to the countryside,** which witnessed a major peasant rebellion, marked by destruction of communication systems, such as railway tracks and stations, telegraph wires and poles, attacks on government buildings or any other visible symbol of colonial authority.
- The **last phase** witnessed the **formation of national governments or parallel governments** in isolated pockets (Ballia, Tamluk, Satara etc.)

Successes of 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.

▪ **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 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.

▪ **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 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.
 - The League was not in favour of the British leaving India without partitioning the country first.
 - The Communist party supported the British since they were allied with the Soviet Union.
 - The Hindu Mahasabha openly opposed the call for the Quit India Movement and boycotted it officially under the apprehension that the movement would create internal disorder and would endanger internal security during the war.
- 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.

Source: PIB

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