



Mains Practice Question

Q. Examine the impact of global events on Indian freedom struggle and how India's independence influenced other countries. (250 words)

01 Feb, 2019 GS Paper 1 History

Approach

- Discuss the impact the global events had on Indian freedom struggle and how they shaped it in a definite way
- Discuss how India's freedom and ideals inspired other countries to fight for their independence and other injustices.

Introduction

- India's independence from the British Raj can be said to be the most significant movement in its modern history.

Body

The First World War (1914-1918) had a great impact on the National Movement in India:

- **Resentment among the Indians:** The British government declared India as an ally and a belligerent. Indian people and resources were used in this war. It created great resentment among the Indians especially when they were not even consulted before joining the war.
- **Anguish among the Muslims:** The British were fighting against the Turkish Empire which was ruled by the Caliph (Khalifa). The Muslims had great respect for the Caliph. The Indian Muslims joined the Caliphate (Khilafat) Movement for the defense of Turkey against the British.
- **Home Rule Movement:** Annie Besant joined the Congress in 1914. In 1916 she along with Bal Gangadhar Tilak started the Home Rule Movement. The Home Rule League demanded self government to the Indians.

Impact of Second World War and the National Movement:

- The Labour Party, which had come to power in Britain after the end of the World War, lifted the ban on the Congress and elections were declared in India which paved the way for the powerful Indian leaders to come back in the game.
- Britain was economically exhausted after the war. She was dependent on other countries to borrow food and raw materials for factories. The British, facing such grave problems back home, did not have the energy and resources to hold India and the enthusiastic Indians who were determined to achieve independence.
- The American government pressurized Britain to grant India its due independence because the Allied Powers stood for freedom and democracy.
- After the Second World War was over, Britain was involved in the Cold War in support of the United States. Had Britain not granted India her independence, Russia could always point out the hypocrisy adopted by the Allied Powers.
- After the conclusion of the Second World War, people from all over the world developed bitterness

towards imperialism and wars. They stood for rights, equality and humanity more than ever. They believed that granting India and the colonies independence would improve their economic condition and thus create welfare.

Impact of Russian Revolution: New ideologies such as Marxism and Socialism inspired many socialist and communist groups and they attracted peasants and workers and made them an integral part of national movement.

India's independence influenced other countries:

- India's independence in 1947 inspired nationalist movements and provided a model for decolonization and independence all over the world. By 1950, the old colonial order seemed to have lost its force, its historical relevance.
- India's independence acted like a catalyst for other countries to demand freedom. The British had to lose the colonies too, reducing the once mighty kingdom to a humble island.
- The change was most striking in Africa. France granted independence to almost all its African colonies in a single year, 1960; Britain, more gradually, from 1957 to 1965 (Libya-1951, Ghana-1957, Morocco-1956, Nigeria-1960)
- The influence was felt on South East Asian countries also (Myanmar-1948, Indonesia-1949).
- India's freedom struggle gave the ideals of non-violence to the world inspiring the leaders elsewhere in the world, most probably Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela being the most prominent.

Conclusion

- Gandhi's contribution to the Indian freedom movement cannot be measured in words. He, along with other freedom fighters, compelled the British to leave India. His policies and agendas were non-violent and his words were the source of inspiration for millions.
- The Indian independence became a lighthouse for the peaceful freedom fight in the world.

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