



Quit India Movement

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Why in News

On 8th Aug 2020, India completed 78 years of **Quit India Movement** also known as **August Kranti**.

- Taking inspiration from the Quit India Movement, the Prime Minister gave a call for the **revival of its spirit** of the Quit India Movement by coining a new slogan ***kareng aur karake rahenge*** in place of Gandhi's slogan of *karo ya maro* (Do or Die).
- The aim of this slogan is to achieve the goal of building a **“New India”** by **2022**.

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:**
 - The **immediate cause** for the movement was the **collapse of Cripps Mission**.
 - The British assumption of unconditional support from India to 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.
 - 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.
 - 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.)
- **Spontaneous Violence:** The movement saw **violence** at some places which was not premeditated.
- **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.

- **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 will endanger internal security during the war.
 - Meanwhile, Subhas Chandra Bose, organised the **Indian National Army** and the Azad Hind government from outside the country.
 - As **C Rajagopalachari** was not in favour of complete independence, he resigned from the INC.

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 Cripps Mission to India in **March 1942**.
- Under Stafford Cripps, the mission was sent to **resolve the Indian question of a new constitution and self-government**.
- **Main proposals** of the mission were:
 - An Indian Union with a **dominion status** would be set up; it would be free to decide its relations with the Commonwealth and free to participate in the United Nations and other international bodies.
 - **A constituent assembly** would be convened after the war to frame a new constitution.
 - Members of the assembly **partly elected** by the provincial assemblies and partly nominated by the princes.
 - Any province not willing to accept the constitution would be given **‘the same full status as the Indian Union’**, - designed to appease the Muslim League’s call for Pakistan.
 - The constitution making body and the British Government would negotiate a **treaty to effect the transfer of power** and to safeguard racial and religious minorities.
- The Indian National Congress, however, was not satisfied as its **demand for immediate complete independence had been rejected**.

- Mahatma Gandhi said that Cripps' offer of Dominion Status after the war was a "**post-dated cheque drawn on a failing bank**".

Outcomes

- The Quit India movement was **violently suppressed** by the British – people were shot, lathi-charged, villages burnt and enormous fines imposed.
- Over 100000 people were arrested and the **government resorted to violence** in order to crush the agitation.
- The Britishers declared the **INC** to be an **unlawful association**.
- New leaders like **Aruna Asaf Ali** emerged out of the vacuum of leadership.
- 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** the, ultimately paving the way for **India's independence**.

Source: IE