



Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

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Why in News

The Prime Minister of India **commemorated 102 years** of the **Jallianwala Bagh tragedy** that took the lives of hundreds of innocent Indians.

Recently, on the occasion of **130th Foundation Day of the National Archives of India**, an exhibition “**Jallianwala Bagh**” was inaugurated, to mark the **Jallianwala Bagh massacre centenary**.

Key Points

- **About:**
 - The Jallianwala Bagh massacre took place on **13th April 1919 in Amritsar, Punjab**.
 - The tragedy, also known as the **Massacre of Amritsar** exposed the inhuman approach of the British when the British troops under **General Reginald Edward Dyer** opened fire into an unarmed crowd.

- **Preclude to the Event:**

- The massacre of **April 1919 wasn't an isolated incident**, rather an incident that happened with a multitude of factors working in the background.
- During **World War I (1914–18)** the British government of India enacted a series of **repressive emergency powers that** were intended to combat subversive activities.
- The **Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act of 1919** popularly known as **Rowlatt Act (Black Act)** which was passed on 10th March, 1919, authorized the government to imprison or confine, **without a trial**, any person associated with seditious activities which led to nationwide unrest.
- On 13th April 1919, a crowd of at least 10,000 men, women and children gathered in Jallianwala Bagh to request the release of **Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal.**

The two prominent leaders who were a symbol of Hindu-muslim unity, organised a peaceful protest against the Rowlatt act. They were arrested and taken out of the city.

- **Brigadier-General Dyer** on hearing about the meeting, deployed his troops and ordered them to open fire. The only exit to the park was sealed and indiscriminate firing took place killing hundreds of innocent civilians.

- **Post Jallianwala Bagh Incident:**

- The shooting was followed by the **proclamation of martial law in the Punjab** that included public floggings and other humiliations. Indian outrage grew as news of the shooting and subsequent British actions spread throughout the subcontinent.
- The **Bengali poet and Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore renounced the knighthood** that he had received in 1915.
- Mahatma Gandhi gave up the title of **Kaiser-i-Hind**, bestowed by the British for his work during the **Boer War**.
- On October 14, 1919, the **Disorders Inquiry Committee** was formed to inquire about the massacre. It later came to be known as the **Hunter Commission** after the name of **chairman, Lord William Hunter**. It also had Indian members.

The Hunter Commission in 1920 censured Dyer for his actions and was directed to resign from his appointment as Brigade Commander.
- The Indian National Congress appointed its own non-official committee that included **Motilal Nehru, C.R. Das, Abbas Tyabji, M.R. Jayakar, and Gandhi** to look into the shootings.
- Gandhi soon began organizing his first large-scale and sustained nonviolent protest (satyagraha) campaign, the **Non Cooperation Movement (1920–22)** which proved a step in the direction of ending the British rule of India 25 years later.

Source: PIB