



Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

Why in News

The Prime Minister will inaugurate the **newly renovated Jallianwala Bagh complex and museum** in Amritsar (Punjab).

Key Points

▪ About:

- The complex is a memorial **dedicated to those who were killed on 13th April, 1919** on orders of Brigadier General Reginald Edward Dyer.
- The tragedy, **also known as the Massacre of Amritsar**, exposed the inhuman approach of the British when the British troops under General 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 (South African War, 1899-1902).
- The **sole Indian representative at that time in the Viceroy's Executive Council - Chettur Sankaran Nair (1857-1934)** - resigned from his post in protest.

- **Lord Chelmsford** was the **Viceroy**.

- On 14th October, 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.

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