



Quit India Movement

For Prelims: Quit India Movement, Mahatma Gandhi, Freedom Struggle, Indian national Army.

For Mains: Successes and Failures of Quit India Movement.

Why in News?

On 8th Aug 2022, India completed **80 years of [Quit India Movement](#)** also known as **August Kranti**.

What was the Quit India Movement?

- On 8th August 1942, [Mahatma Gandhi](#) called to end **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”**.

What caused the Movement?

- **Failure of [Cripps Mission](#):** The immediate cause for the movement was the collapse of Cripps Mission.
 - Under Stafford Cripps, the mission was sent **to resolve the Indian question of a new constitution and self-government**.
 - It failed because it **offered India not complete freedom but the Dominion Status** to India, along with the [partition](#).
- **Indian Involvement in World War II without prior consultation:**
 - The British assumption of unconditional support from India to the 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**.
- **Shortage of Essential Commodities:**
 - The economy was **also in shatters as a result of World War II**.

What were the Demands of the Movement?

- 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.

What were the Phases of Movement?

- **First Phase:**
 - **First Phase**, urban revolt, marked by strikes, boy cott and picketing (protesting), 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.
- **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.**
- **Third Phase:**
 - The last phase witnessed the **formation of national governments or parallel governments** in isolated pockets (Ballia, Tamluk, Satara etc.)

What were the Successes and Failures of the Movement?

- **Successes:**
 - **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 the British, ultimately paving the way for India's independence.**
- **Failures:**
 - **Brutal Repression:**
 - The movement **saw violence in 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.

UPSC Civil Services Examination Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Q. With reference to 8th August, 1942 in Indian history, which one of the following statements is correct?

- (a) The Quit India Resolution was adopted by the AICC.
- (b) The Viceroy's Executive Council was expanded to include more Indians.
- (c) The Congress ministries resigned in seven provinces.
- (d) Cripps proposed an Indian Union with full Dominion Status once the Second World War was over.

Ans: (a)

Q. With reference to Indian freedom struggle, consider the following events: (2017)

1. Mutiny in Royal Indian Navy
2. Quit India Movement launched
3. Second Round Table Conference

What is the correct chronological sequence of the above events?

- (a) 1 - 2 - 3
- (b) 2 - 1 - 3
- (c) 3 - 2 - 1
- (d) 3 - 1 - 2

Ans: (c)

- Royal Indian Navy Mutiny: It broke out in February 1946, when a section of non-commissioned officers and sailors known as Ratings revolted against British officers. It started as a strike demanding better food and accommodation. The mutiny came to an end with the intervention of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. The mutineers surrendered on 23rd February 1946.
- Quit India Movement: Mahatma Gandhi decided to initiate a new phase of the movement called Quit India Movement against the British in August 1942. He gave the slogan, 'do or die' to the masses and asked them to protest non-violently. Gandhi and other leaders were jailed at once, but the movement took its own course.
- Second Round Table Conference: A Second Round Table Conference was held in London during September 1931 to December 1931. Here, Gandhi represented the Indian National Congress (INC). It was the only Round Table Conference in which INC participated. Therefore, option (c) is the correct answer.

Source: PIB

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