



# Introduction

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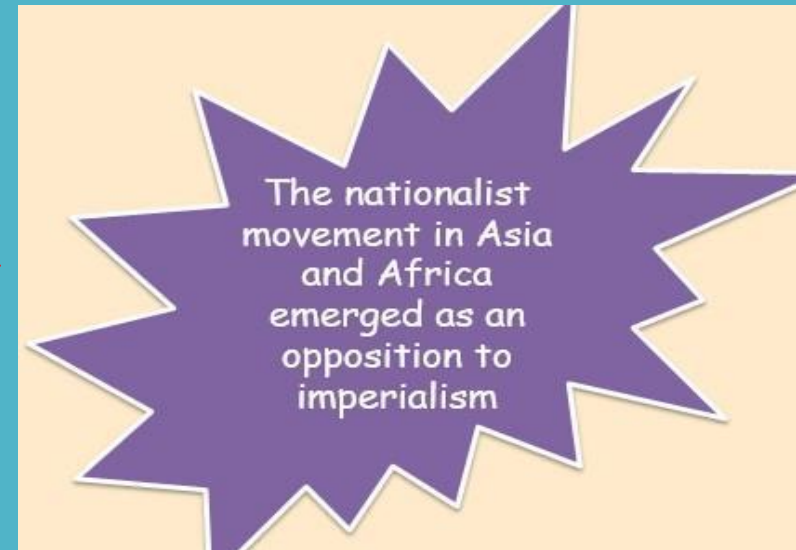
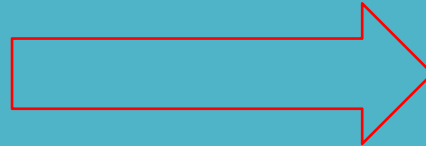
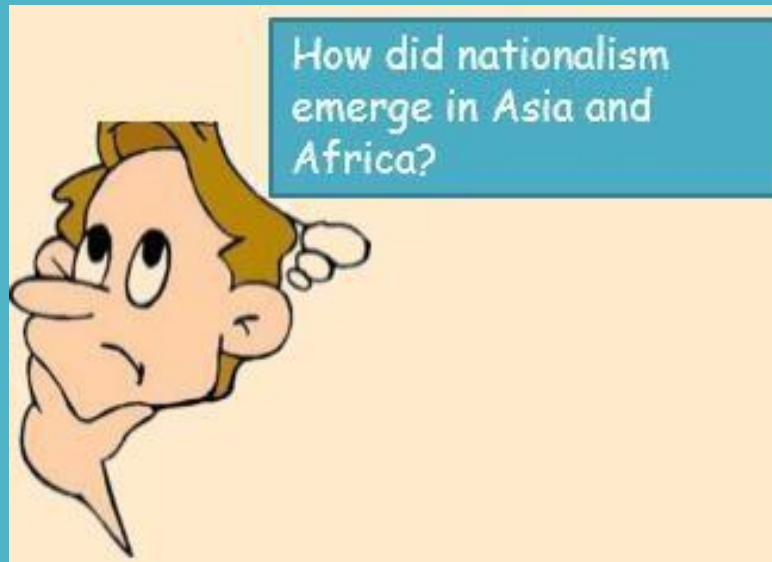
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# **Chapter 2: Nationalism in India**

# Chapter 2: Nationalism in India

## Introduction



# Chapter 2: Nationalism in India

## Introduction

People of India began to discover their unity in the process of their struggle against the British.



The sense of oppression under the colonial power gave Indians a shared bond that tied many different groups together leading to the emergence of nationalism.

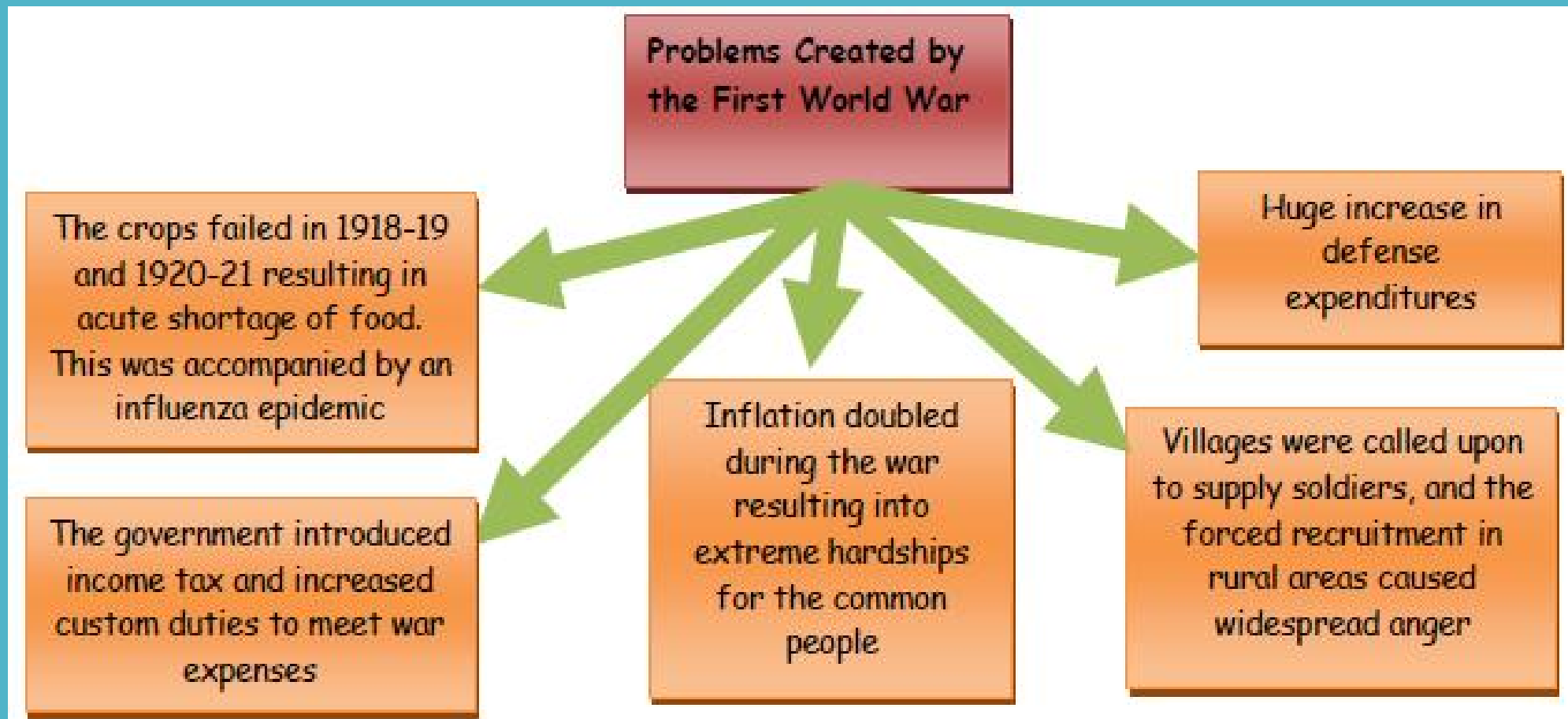
# Chapter 2: Nationalism in India

## Introduction

**Growth of nationalism in India is associated with the anti-colonial movement. The Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi made the Indian National Movement a mass movement. In the second decade of the twentieth century, India was facing several problems due to the First World War (1914-18). The war created a new economic and political situation.**

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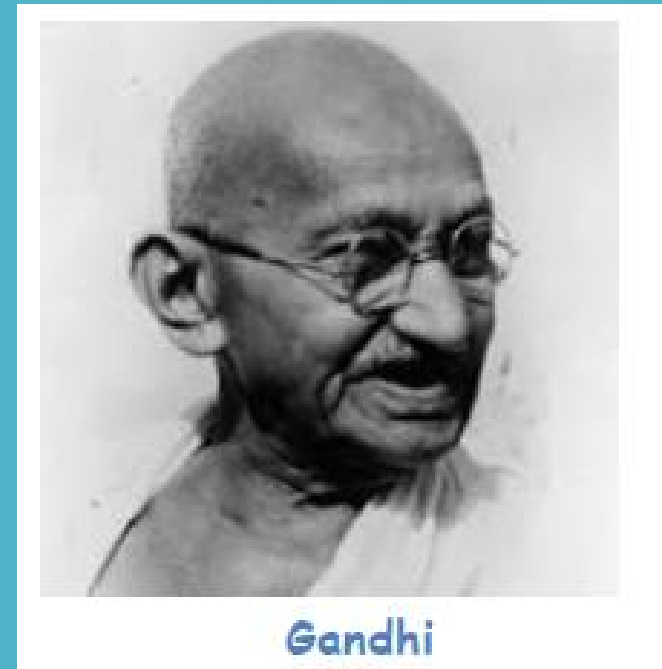
## Problems Created by the First World War:



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## Gandhi and his Idea of Satyagraha:

While people were facing these hardships, Gandhi emerged on the Indian political scene with his unique tool of 'Satyagraha'.





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## Gandhi and his Idea of Satyagraha:

Satyagraha according to Gandhi was a unique weapon to fight injustice. It was a novel method of mass agitation. It stressed on the principle of truth, non-violence, tolerance and peaceful protests. Gandhi had already organised a successful satyagraha movement in South Africa. He also organised it successfully at Champaran in Bihar (1916), Kheda in Gujarat (1917) and Ahmedabad in Gujarat (1918).

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## The Rowlatt Act:

The Rowlatt Act was passed in 1919 in the Imperial Legislative Council. This Act empowered the British Government to arrest nationalists and imprisoned them for two years without any trial. Gandhi launched a movement against this unjust Act. Shops were closed and workers of the railway workshop went on strike. Rallies protesting against this Act were organised in various cities.

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## The Rowlatt Act:

Alarmed by the large participation of people in the movement, the Government arrested prominent leaders from Amritsar. Gandhi was barred from entering Delhi. On 10 April 1919, the police fired on a peaceful procession. People retaliated by attacking banks and railway stations. On 13 April, a large crowd assembled at Jallianwala Bagh protesting against the arrest of some of their leaders who criticised the Government for passing the Rowlatt Act. General Dyer blocked the exit of the Bagh and fired on the unarmed crowd. This resulted in the deaths of hundreds of people.

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The Rowlatt Act:



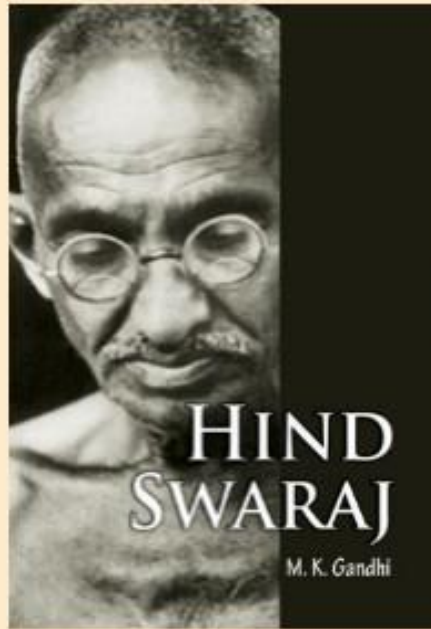
A pictorial representation of the  
Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

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## The Rowlatt Act:

People in many north Indian towns protested against the killings at Jallianwala. The Government brutally suppressed these protests. It humiliated and terrorised the people. People who protested were forced to rub their noses on the ground, crawl on the streets and salute all British officers. As villages around Gujranwala in Punjab began to be bombed and the violence began to spread, Gandhi decided to call off the movement.

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"The British rule was established in India with the cooperation of the Indians. If Indians refused to cooperate, the British rule in India would collapse within a year and swaraj will be established."

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## Non-Cooperation Movement:

- Gandhi believed that if Indians do not cooperate with the British, the latter will have to leave India. He proposed to the people that government titles should be surrendered and people should resign from civil services, government-run educational institutions and legislative councils. It also included the boycott of foreign goods.

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## Non-Cooperation Movement:

- The resolution on Non-Cooperation Movement was passed in Nagpur in December 1920.
- After the movement was launched, thousands of students left government schools and colleges in many cities. Teachers from these schools resigned, and lawyers gave up their practices.
- The council elections were boycotted in most provinces except in Madras where the Justice Party participated in the elections.



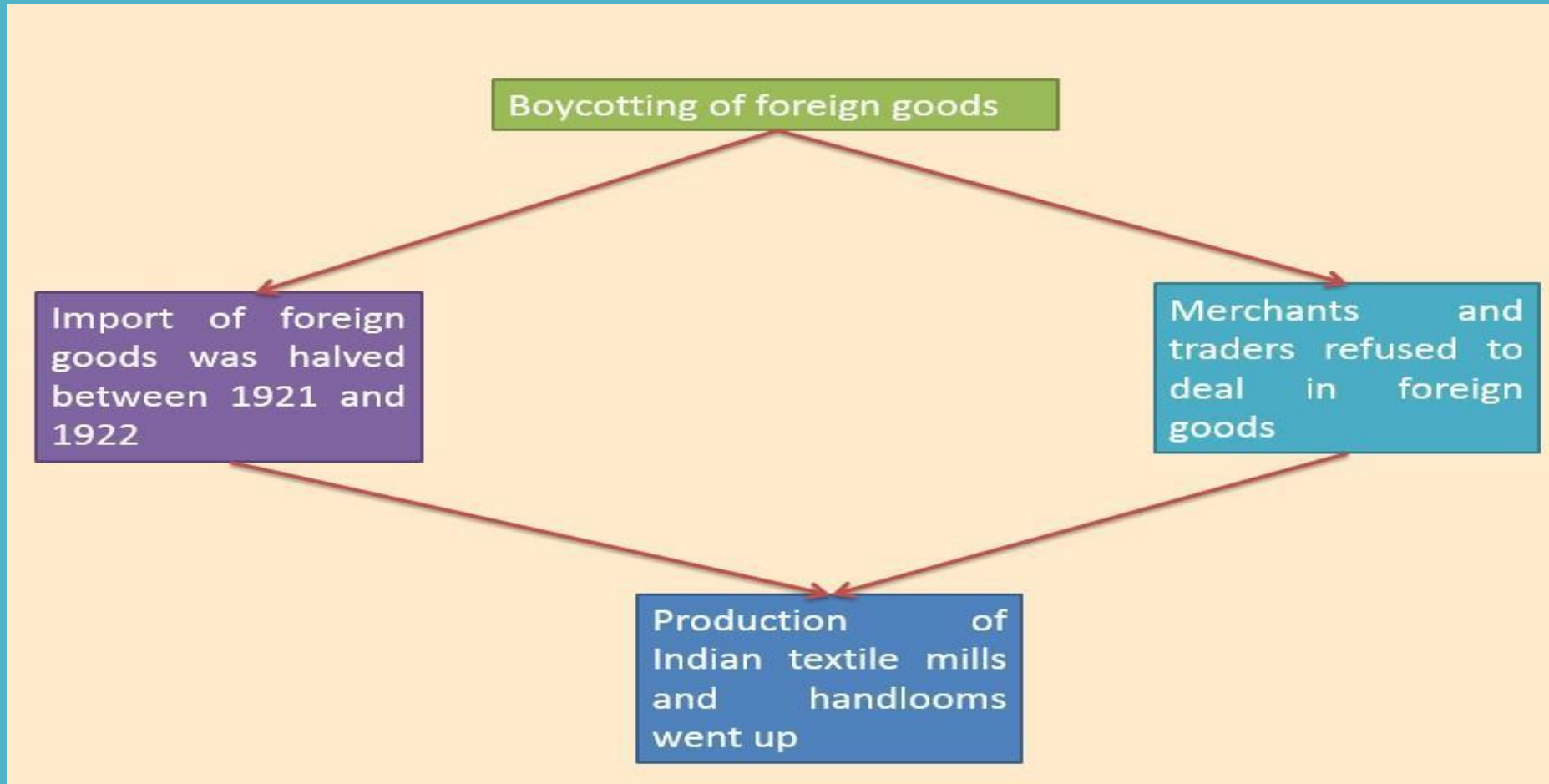
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## Non-Cooperation Movement:

- As a part of the movement, foreign goods were boycotted and stress was laid on the use of swadeshi products. This led to decline in the import of foreign cloth and gave a boost to the Indian textile industry.
- The movement however slowed down in the cities as khadi cloth was more expensive than mill cloth and people could not afford to buy it. Many students and teachers again joined government schools and colleges as there were only a handful of Indian educational institutions.

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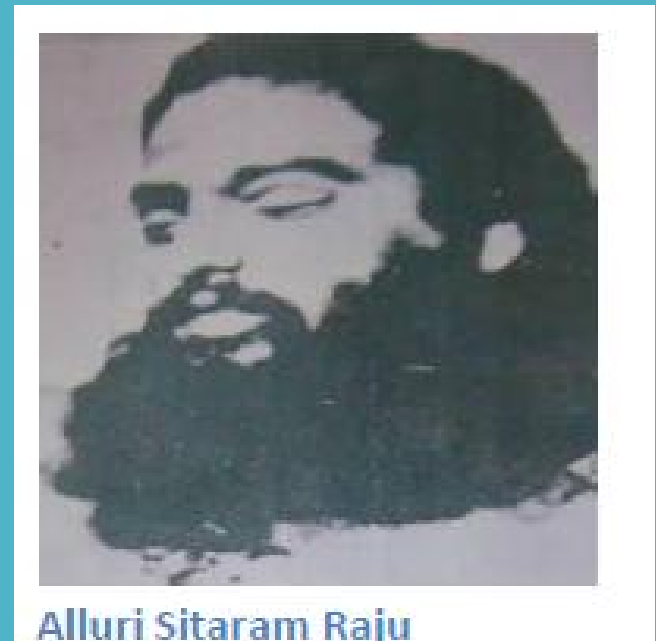
## Economic Impact of the Movement:



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## The Non-Cooperation Movement among the tribal Population:

- The movement soon spread among the tribal regions of India. Various tribes protested against the Government because the British denied their traditional rights in the forests and they were also forced into the 'begar' (forced) labour.



Alluri Sitaram Raju

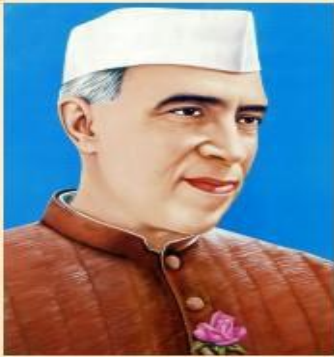
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## The Non-Cooperation Movement among the tribal Population:

- The colonial government had closed large forest areas, preventing people from entering the forests to graze their cattle, or to collect fuelwood and fruits. This infuriated the tribals.
- Alluri Sitaram Raju inspired the tribals to participate in the movement and wear khadi clothes. However, he believed that India can be liberated only by using violence.
- The Gudem rebels attacked police stations and vowed to carry guerilla warfare for attempting swaraj. However, Alluri Sitaraman Raju was captured and executed in 1924.

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## Rebellions in the Countryside:



- In June 1920, Jawaharlal Nehru went around the village trying to understand the grievances and issues of the peasants
- Within a month, 300 branches of *Kisan Sabha* were set up around the area
- The movement in Awadh became the part of the Indian national movement
- 1921, the house of talukdars and merchants was attacked, bazaars were looted and grain hoards were taken over
- Many local leaders declared that Gandhi wanted non payment of taxes and that the land had to be redistributed equally among the poor

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## Meaning of 'Swaraj' for the Plantation Workers:

Plantation workers equated the concept of 'swaraj' with their basic rights which were denied by plantation owners.

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## Meaning of 'Swaraj' for the Plantation Workers:

Thousand of workers defied authorities and left plantations and headed home

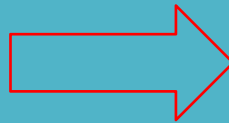
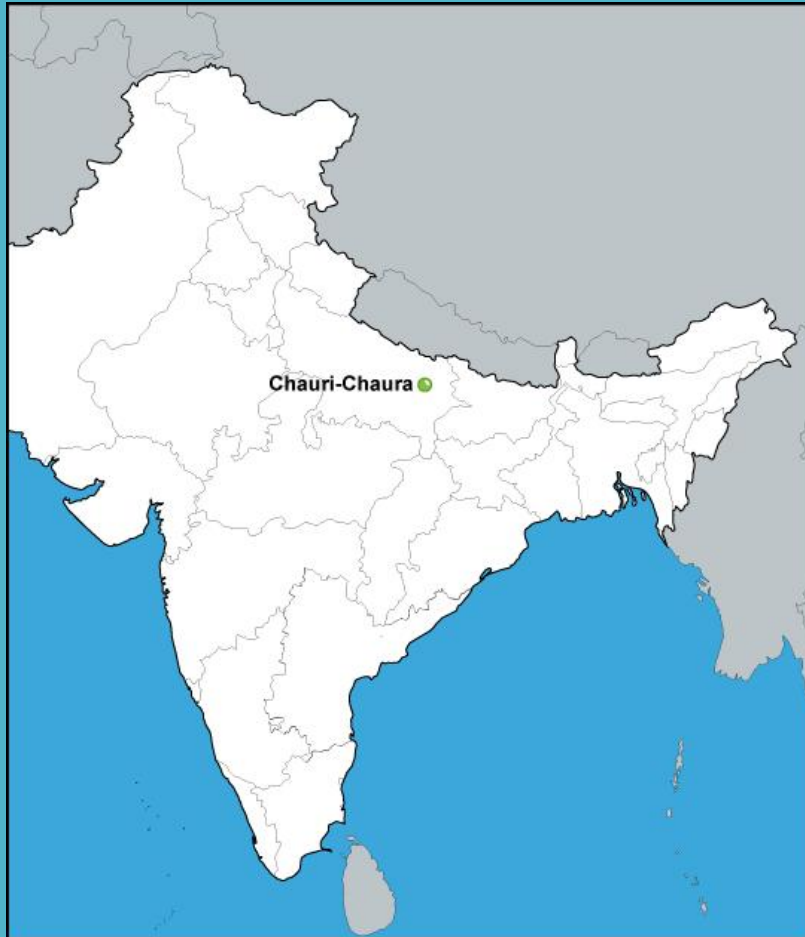
They believed that Gandhi Raj is coming and they will be given lands in their villages

They were not able to reach home, they were caught by the police and were mercilessly beaten

- Vision of the movements were not defined by the Congress
- Workers and tribals interpreted *Swaraj* in their own terms

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## Withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation Movement:



Gandhi withdrew The Cooperation Movement in Non- 1922 when a group of protestors became violent and killed 23 Indian policemen at Chauri Chaura in Uttar Pradesh.



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## Towards Civil Disobedience:

In February 1922, the Non-Cooperation Movement was withdrawn because Mahatma Gandhi felt that it was turning violent. Some of the leaders wanted to participate in elections to the provincial councils. Swaraj Party was formed by CR Das and Motilal Nehru. In the late 1920s Indian politics again shaped because of two factors. The first effect was the worldwide economic depression and the second effect was the falling agricultural prices.

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## Towards Civil Disobedience:

The Statutory Commission was set up to look into the functioning of the constitutional system in India and suggest changes. In 1928, Simon Commission arrived in India and it was greeted by the slogan 'Go back Simon'. In December 1929, under the presidency of Jawaharlal Nehru, the Lahore Congress formalised the demand of 'Purna Swaraj' or full independence for India. It was declared that 26 January 1930 would be celebrated as Independence Day.

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Factors shaping the Indian politics in late 1920s:

Two factors shaped the Indian politics towards late 1920s.

- The first was the impact of worldwide economic depression, Peasants were the worst suffers as the prices of their agricultural goods reduced drastically.



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## Factors shaping the Indian politics in late 1920s:

- The second factor was that at this time, Tory government in Britain appointed a committee under Sir John Simon to look into the functioning of the constitutional system in India and suggest changes. Political parties opposed the Commission because it did not have any Indian as a member.

In this background, the Congress under the president ship of Nehru declared 'Purna Swaraj' or an independent India as an ultimate aim of the Congress.

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## The Civil Disobedience Movement:

Gandhi on 31 January, 1930, sent a letter to Viceroy Irwin stating eleven demands. While some of these demands were of general interests, some were specific. The most stirring of all demands was the demand to abolish 'Salt Laws'. Gandhi chose salt as it was used by people of all sections of the society and was an essential food item. When demands were not fulfilled, Gandhi started his famous 'salt march'.

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## The Civil Disobedience Movement:

On April 11, 1930, he reached Dandi, a coastal village of Gujarat and violated the law by manufacturing salt marking the beginning of the Civil Disobedience Movement. During this movement people were asked not only to refuse cooperation with the British but also to break colonial laws.



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## The Civil Disobedience Movement:

People participated in the Movement in the following ways:

- People across the nation broke the salt law, manufactured salt and demonstrated in front of government salt factories
- Foreign cloth was boycotted and liquor shops were picketed
- Peasants refused to pay revenue and chaukidari tax
- Village officials resigned and people living in countryside violated forest laws

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## Repression of the Government:

- The government began arresting Congress leaders. This in turn led to violent clashes at many places
- When Gandhi was arrested during the course of the movement, industrial workers in Sholapur attacked police posts, municipal buildings and structures that symbolised the British rule
- The government responded with brutal repression. Peaceful satyagrahis were attacked, women and children were beaten and around 100,000 people were arrested.



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## Repression of the Government:

Under such situation Gandhi signed the Irwin pact and decided to call off the movement. While Gandhi agreed to participate in the Second round Table Conference, the government agreed to release the political prisoners. However, the talks during the Second Round Table Conference did not succeed. When Gandhi returned and came to know about the arrest of prominent Indian leaders- Nehru and Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, he re-launched the Civil Disobedience Movement.

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## Participation of Various Communities in the Civil Disobedience Movement:

### Rich peasant communities

- The rich peasant communities like the Patidars of Gujarat and the Jats of Uttar Pradesh – were active in the movement
- They were hit hard by the Great Depression and found it extremely difficult to pay the government's revenue demands.
- For the rich peasants the fight for swaraj was a struggle against high revenues. But they were disappointed after the Movement was withdrawn without revising any revenue rates

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## Participation of Various Communities in the Civil Disobedience Movement:

### Poor Peasants

- The poor peasants not only wanted the revenues to decrease but also wanted the unpaid rent to the landlord to be remitted
- The radical movements pertaining to poor peasants were often led by the Socialists and the Communists.
- However, the Congress was not willing to support 'no rent' campaigns in most places and hence the relationship between the poor peasants and the Congress remained uncertain

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## Participation of Various Communities in the Civil Disobedience Movement:

### Business Class

- During the First World War, the business class had made huge profits and had become powerful. The industrialist class led by known industrialists such as Purshottamdas Thakurdas and G. D. Birla supported the Movement and criticised the colonial control over the Indian economy.
- They gave financial assistance and refused to buy or sell imported goods.
- For most industrialists, Swaraj was a time when the government's restrictions on business would end.

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## Participation of Various Communities in the Civil Disobedience Movement:

### Industrial Class

**Industrial Working Class**

Largely did not participate in the Civil Disobedience Movement except in Nagpur

It was because industrialists had good ties with the Congress

Some workers supported Gandhian programmes such as boycott and Swadeshi

Strikes by railway workers in 1930

The Congress was reluctant to include workers' demand as part of its programme of struggle

It felt that it would alienate the industrialists and divide the anti-imperial forces

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## Participation of Various Communities in the Civil Disobedience Movement:

### Women

Women actively participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Women came out in large numbers and participated in protest marches, manufactured salt and picketed shops selling liquor and foreign goods. However, for a long time, Congress was reluctant to allow women to hold any position of authority within the Congress as most Congressmen along with Gandhi were of the views that primary duty of a woman was to look after home and children.

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Participation of Various Communities in the Civil Disobedience Movement:



Women actively participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement

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## Limits of the Civil Disobedience Movement:

- The 'untouchables' or the 'dalits' remained aloof from the Congress during the Civil Disobedience Movement. The Congress had ignored them for the fear of offending the higher caste Hindus.
- Dr. B.R. Ambedkar organized the dalits into the Depressed Classes Association in 1930. He demanded separate electorates for the dalits in the Second Round table Conference. The British accepted the demands but Gandhi was against this concession as he believed that separate electorates for dalits would slow down the process of their assimilation into society.



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## Limits of the Civil Disobedience Movement:

- Ambedkar accepted Gandhi's position and signed the Poona Pact in September 1932. The dalits were given reserved seats in provincial and central legislative councils, but they were to be voted in by the general electorate. The dalits however, apprehensive of the Congress led national movement.

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## Limits of the Civil Disobedience Movement:

- Various Muslim associations in the country did not completely support the Civil Disobedience Movement. After the Khilafat Movement, they felt alienated from the Congress. The Muslims demanded a separate electorate for themselves. They believed that the Congress had same interests as the Hindu Mahasabha and thus did not support it. They demanded reserved seats in the Central Assembly which was opposed by the Hindu Mahasabha.

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## Gandhi as a Social Reformer:

Gandhi was not only an exceptional political leader but was also a social reformer. He worked for the upliftment of the people belonging to the lower classes.

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## Gandhi as a Social Reformer:



Regarded dalits as the children of the God

Organised satyagrah to secure their entry into temples and access to public wells, tanks, roads and schools.

He himself cleaned the toilets to dignify the work of the lower caste

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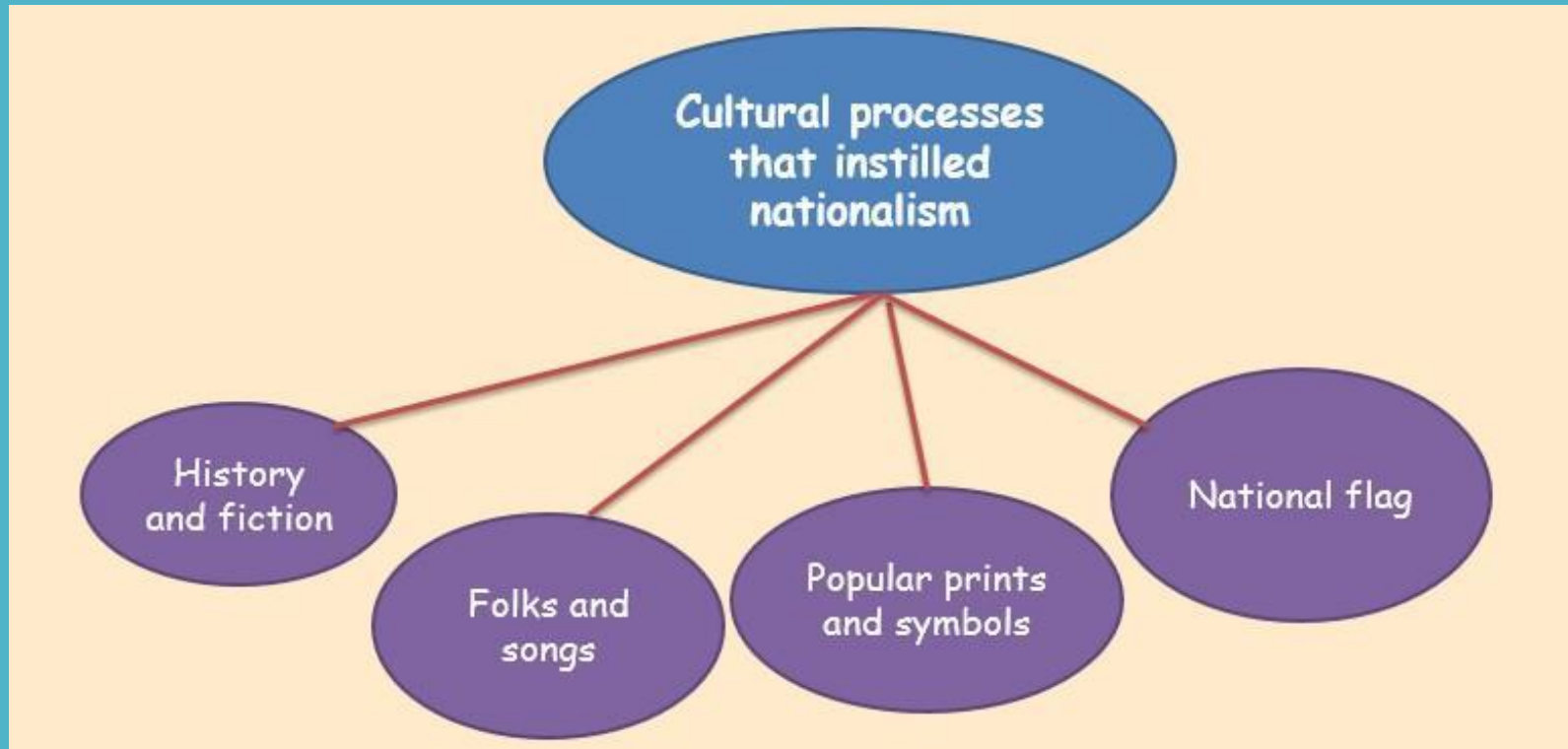
## The Sense of Collective Belonging:

The feeling of nationalism and the idea of collective belonging to the nation emerged in India because of the several factors:

- When people fought collectively to oppose the British in various movements and struggles, the feeling of nationalism was born.

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## The Sense of Collective Belonging:



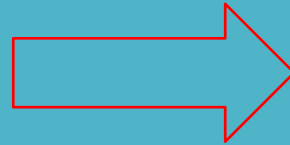
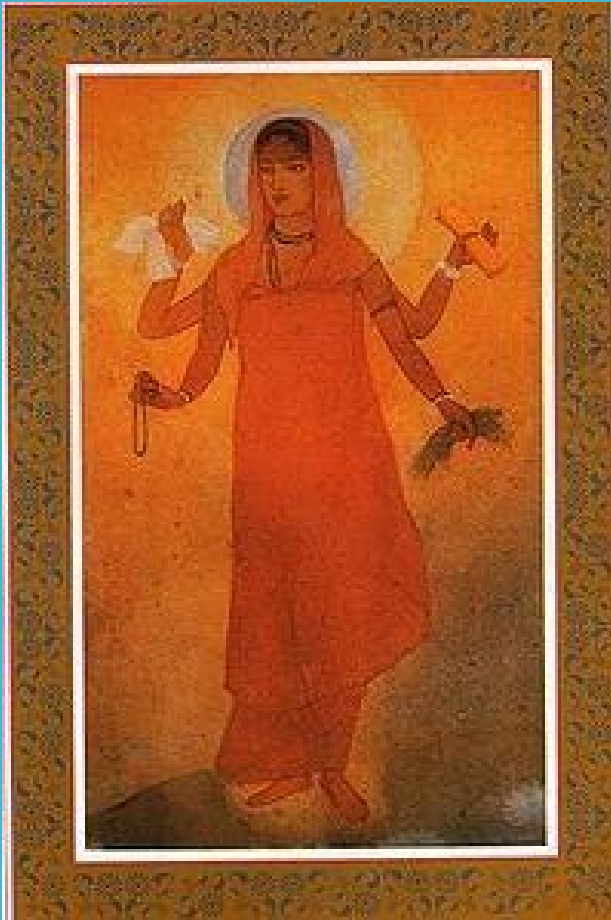
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## The Sense of Collective Belonging:

- Nationalism also grew as a result of various literary and artistic activities. The idea of India came to be associated with the image of 'Bharat Mata'.

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## The Sense of Collective Belonging:



Moved by the Swadeshi Movement, Abindranath Tagore painted Bharat Mata as an ascetic figure who is calm, composed, divine and spiritual. The image of the 'Bharat Mata' aroused nationalist feelings amongst the Indians.



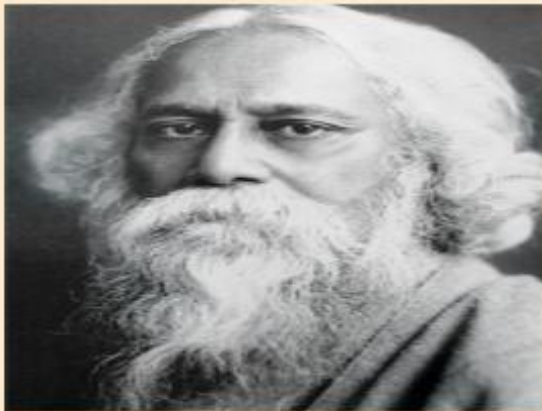
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## The Sense of Collective Belonging:

- The Novel 'Anandmath' written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay included the famous song 'Vande Matram' which instilled the feeling of nationalism amongst the hearts of the people.
- Ideas of nationalism also developed through a movement to revive the Indian folklore. Nationalists in the country toured several villages and collected folklores and folk tales to discover national identity.

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## The Sense of Collective Belonging:



Rabindranath Tagore

### IN BENGAL

Rabindranath Tagore began collecting hymns, folk tales, nursery rhymes and songs for creating the collective feeling of nationalism.

### IN MADRAS

Natesa Shastri published a massive four volume folk tale named 'The Folklore of South India' as a part of national literature.



Natesa Shastri

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## The Sense of Collective Belonging:

- Various symbols were also used by the national leaders to inspire people. During the Swadeshi movement in Bengal, a tricolour flag (red, green and yellow) was designed. It had eight lotuses representing eight provinces of British India, and a crescent moon, representing Hindus and Muslims.

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## The Sense of Collective Belonging:

- In 1921, Gandhi designed the 'Swaraj Flag'. It was a tricolour flag and had a spinning wheel in the centre. It represented the Gandhian ideal of self-help.



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## The Sense of Collective Belonging:

- Reinterpretation of history played an important role in creating a feeling of nationalism. The British historians described Indians as backward, primitive and incapable of governing themselves. In response, the Indian historians wrote about the glorious Indian past. They asserted that before the colonial rule, India made advancements in the fields of art, architecture, science, mathematics, religion and culture.

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## The Sense of Collective Belonging:

Her economy began to decline only after the establishment of the colonial rule in India.

All the above factors instilled a sense of nationalism among the Indians. However, the efforts to unify people were not without problems. When the Hindu rule of ancient India began to be glorified and images were drawn from Hindu iconography, the people of other communities began to feel alienated.

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