CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

The Eastern U.P. constituted by Benares, Ghazipur, Ballia and Azamgarh is not only known as culturally and traditionally a rich Bhojpuri region but it was also politically sensitive. During the national movement particularly in Gandhian phase (R.C. Majumdar, Freedom Struggle in India, Vol. III), the people of this region were in the forefront of the nationalist movement. They participated in Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22) and Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-33) at large scale. People’s grievances against the colonial government assumed such a proportion that during Quit India Movement, they rebelled against the British government and in Ballia district they even formed a nationalist government under a local Congress leader Chittu Pandey. This study shows that the Quit India was neither a spontaneous movement nor a failed rebellion as argued by some of the historians.

In the present study, the concern is on ‘who constituted the masses that paralysed the functioning of government in Eastern U.P.?’. Who led them or influenced them? Why were the masses joining the movement? When people cutting across different strata participate in a movement we call it a mass movement. A movement acquires a mass character only when it expresses the creative genius and energies of the people. The popular element composing the sans-culottes in the French revolution was the peasant, craftsmen, journeymen and the labourers. In the case of Eastern U.P., I have tried to recognize and categorize the masses in the terms of community, class, caste and gender. In 1930s the social base of the Congress widened and it succeeded in mobilizing, the youth, the women, the urban petty bourgeoisie, the urban and the rural poor, urban and rural artisans and large section of peasantry and small landlords. Constructive works of Gandhiji and Congress played an important role. Mass movement can be of different nature. It could be passive resistance against the oppression of state/authority in the form of prayer, petition and protest. It could take militant form when masses attack the sign and symbols of state, e.g. police station, railway station, post office, kutcheri (court), communication network, etc. There could be many intermediate form of protest between complete passivity and open rebellion. The militant mode of protest could turn violent
and riotous where masses turn into ‘crowd’ giving rise to collective action of more spontaneous kind with definite objective of redressing a common wrong. During the Quit India movement, the violence against individual was minimal. There is no doubt that the nationalist current became predominant and was the most significant articulation of the mass political activity during the Quit India movement. Crowd behaviour was not purely spontaneous, violent and destructive in nature and we find that crowd action was constrained by the superimposition of nationalist ideas. In Eastern U.P. people systematically selected most mass activities even in the absence of ‘elites’ or leaders. The political maturity of the crowd behaviour was reflected in the selective nature of attacks on the symbols of colonial state and on people loyal to it. The effectiveness and validity of the nationalist strategy lay in the active participation of the masses in the movement. But British officials, seem to have adopted Burke and Taine approach to describe the people’s resistance, and, termed them as professional goondas, rioters, gang, saboteurs, attackers and mob [NAI, Home Poll, F.No. 18/8/42, 1942; F.No. 18/9/42, 1942].

The present study also deals with different aspects and transformation of the Economy, Society and Polity of the period in districts of Benares, Ballia, Ghazipur and Azamgarh, which also geographically formed the part of the Indo-gangetic plains. In the economy section, we ascertain the overwhelming agricultural nature of Benares, Ballia, Ghazipur and Azamgarh. Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, 80% of the workforce in these Bhojpuri speaking areas was engaged in agriculture and its allied work. A mere 5% workforce was involved in manufacturing. In Benares division, Benares city was most industrialized. Cotton weaving and sugar refining were the two important industries of the area. Ghazipur was famous for two industries – the preparation of opium for export and distillation of otto of roses and other perfumes. Khattris were important traders of the region. This part of Eastern U.P. was marked by the clear dominance of a few landowning communities e.g. Rajputs, Bhumihars and Brahmans. Ahirs, Kurmis and Koeries were the lower status castes and economically they were tenants at will or poor peasants. Chamars and other untouchable castes were agricultural labourers and menial workers.

Eastern U.P. is a caste-based society. Four tiered Varna system is most fully articulated in this region. The four upper castes are Brahmins, Khatriyas, Vaishyas and Kayasthas. It is
interesting to note that the caste system was prevailing among Muslims also. Ahirs, Koeries, Baniya, Bhars, Dusad, Bind and Chamars were other important caste of the region. Hindu and Muslim Population had a reciprocal relationship. The society was caught in a vicious web of religious superstitions and social obscurantism (Bipin Chandra et al.). The priest exercised overwhelming and unhealthy influence on the people. Idolatry and polytheism helped to reinforce the position of priest. The position of women was very depressive. The birth of the girl was unwelcome; her marriage was burden and her widowhood inauspicious. The killing of infant girl, sati, human sacrifice, self-immolation, thuggi and other superstitions had degraded the Indian social traditions (Chandra, Bipan et al.). The literary writings of Prem Chand (e.g. Sawa Ser Genhu, Mukti Marga, Pus ki Raat, Thakur ka Kuan and Godan) and Rahi Masoom Raza (e.g. Aadha Gaon and Neem ka Ped) also depict such spectrum of society in Eastern U.P.

Eastern U.P. has been politically vibrant since the First War of Independence in 1857. Mangal Pandey, the hero of this war belonged to Ballia. After the foundation of Congress in 1885, the people of Eastern U.P. took active part in its political activity. Till 1942, eight annual Congress sessions took place in U.P. Out of these, venue of four sessions were in Eastern U.P. itself. After 1915, Gandhiji visited this part of U.P. many times. In 1920's he was not only seen as a mass leader but the Mahatma with a miraculous working power (Shahid Amin). Congress was also active in the area. Mass activism of Kisan Sabha and Socialist Party seem to have picked up momentum.


With the establishment of BHU, Kashi Vidyapeeth and other educational institutions, a political consciousness also started among the youth of Eastern U.P. Frequent visits of
national leaders – Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Shaukat Ali, Swami Satyadev, Motilal Nehru and Jawaharlal Nehru to this part of U.P., helped in mobilizing the masses for the freedom movement.

Prayag Mahila Vidhyapeeth, Kanya Pathshala, Arya Mahila School and Karamat Hussain Educational Institutions helped in awakening the women masses of Eastern U.P. Annie Besant, Mrs. Rameswari Nehru, Renuka Ray, Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, Basanti Devi, Urmila Devi, Suniti Devi, Kasturba Gandhi, Hemprabha Mazumdar and other women remained active in Eastern U.P. Mrs. Bhanti Devi, sister of Khadan Lal became the first women Congress worker of Kashi. Hazra Begum and Mahadevi Verma encouraged rural women to take part in the political process. Most of the women joined the political struggle because like the men, they were inspired by patriotism and wanted to see the end of foreign rule from their motherland.

This study also highlights and discusses the launching of Quit India Movement. As soon as the World War II broke out, the Government of India decided to join the war and the colonial administration did not consult the Indians for its war efforts. Congress ministries resigned as a protest against the war policies of the Government of India. After Ramgarh Congress (1940), Gandhiji launched Individual Satyagraha. It was launched solely to establish and assert the right of freedom of speech. It had a dual purpose. While giving expression to the Indian people’s strong political feeling, it also exposed the British war efforts which were not in the interest of the masses. This was the period when Congress was expanding the social base through constructive work in U.P. On national level, Individual Satyagraha was started with Vinoba Bhave making anti-war speech at Paunar in Maharashtra on 17 October 1940. Individual Satyagraha was a major hit in U.P. where 15,000 Satyagrahi got arrested. Maulana Azad, Jawaharlal Nehru, GB Pant, Justice K.N. Katju, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, S K Datta Paliwal, Ajit Prasad Jain and others were very active during the movement. After the arrest of prominent Congress leaders, U.P. CSP leaders Mohanlal Gautam and Acharya Narendra Dev took charge of the movement.

Swami Bhagwan and Ramendra Verma also tried to revolutionize the movement. Ekh Sangh (Sugarcane Grower’s Union) helped in arousing the peasants for Individual Satyagraha. Shanti Kumar Singh, Dev Narayan Singh, Jata Shanker, Mustafa Khan,

This was the time when Benares Hindu University and Kashi Viodyapeeth became the pivot of left activities in Eastern U.P. R.D. Bhardwaj, Biswanath Mukherji, Abani Lahiri, Bimal Kumar Shah were organizing the students. K.M. Ashraf was taking too much interest to organize the students of U.P. Balram Singh, Secretary, U.P. Provincial Students' Federation was also in touch with the European Students' Group. Veer Karan Batra, Hit Narain Singh, Digambar Yashwant Lele, Kundan, Amulya Gopal Bhattacharjee and Ram Avtar Sharma were the leaders of the Communist and Revolutionary section of the students. British officials were keeping constant track on them. [NAI, Home Poll., F.No. 75/8/41, 1941; 75/10/41, 1941]. These student leaders were mobilizing the youth in Eastern U.P.

This part of U.P. where all these activities were taking place was identified as place of great tradition. Benares as pilgrimage centre was attracting crores of people. These people interacted with local masses in a big way. The area was also marked by Hindi Literary Identity and modern progressive thought. Writings of Prem Chand, Mahadevi Verma and others were disseminating the mechanism of working of colonial economy among the masses of Eastern U.P. Writings in Aaj, Sangharsh, Hind Kesri, Ranbheri, Ranbigula, The Daily Sansar, Hans and others, which had a remarkable number of readers, were helpful in bringing people in touch with the political process.
After the failure of Cripps Mission, Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji passed the Quit India resolution. By this time, Raghupat Sharma, Acharya Narendra Dev, Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Sampurnanand, Acharya Jugal Kishore, Kamalapati Tripathi, Acharya Kriplani, Rajaram Shastri, G.B. Pant, Ram Manohar Lohia, Mohanlal Saxena and others had prepared the ground for the movement in Eastern U.P.

The study also presents incisive insights into People's Activities in the region: Benares, Ghazipur and Azamgarh. Addressing the gathering in the open session on 8 August 1942, Gandhiji declared nothings short of complete freedom will satisfy Indians and asked every Indians:

"from this moment onwards to consider your self a free man or woman, and act as if you are free and are no longer under the heel of this (British) imperialism".

By giving his mantra of 'Do or Die' he asked Indians not to rest till freedom is achieved. He further asked them to prepare to lay their lives in the attempt to achieve freedom. On 9th August all the prominent Congress leader including Gandhiji were arrested. Many provincial and District level leaders who had evaded arrest at Bombay, returned to their native place and began to organize the people in various manners to oppose the colonial administration at District, Pargana and Village level. After 9th August 1942, there was a tremendous mass upsurge at various places of the country. The movement acquired larger magnitude in Eastern U.P.

Benares had a historical tradition of rebellion against the colonial rule. Chait Singh’s rebellion against Warren Hastings, Mangal Pandey in 1857, after Bengal division of 1905, Rash Behari Bose, Sachindranath Sanyal, Bhupendranath Sanyal, Maneendranath Banerjee, Manmathnath Gupta, Surendra Bhattacharya, Devenarayana Mukherjee, Vinayak Rao Kapli, Girijia Babu, Rajendra Lahiri, Sushil Lahiri and Chandrasekhar Azad actively contributed in freedom movement in this area. In 1942, the movement started from B.H.U. campus making it out of bounds for the British administration. Dr. K.N. Gairola who was an active Congressman was commissioned by Jawaharlal Nehru to organize the students for the freedom movement. He was assisted by Prof. Radhe Shyam Sharma and Mr. Raj Narain [NAI, Home Poll, F.No. 3/66/43, 1943, New Delhi, p.3]. The movements started in the form of procession and hartal. All joined the procession
(congressmen, students, and locals). B.H.U. gates were closed; attempt was made to hoist
the national flag on Criminal Court. On 11th August, National Flag was hoisted on the
Court building thereby liberating it. This was reminiscent of the fall of Bastille on 14 July
1789. By 14th August, B.H.U. students fanned out in different direction of the region to
spread the message of mass movement. After that, attack on rural police station, railway
station, post offices and other colonial symbols got momentum. Bindeswari Pathak and
Ramakant Mishra and many others were injured in Police lathi charge. Aerodrome at
Rajwari and Ibbatpur were damaged by the crowd. Shiv Ram Pandey and Paras Ram
Pandey were carrying the Congress work secretly in rural areas. They got direction from
U.P. dictator – Kesho Deo Malviya. The Congress Party of Benares was well organized
to lead the movement. Following were very active during the movement in the Benares
region: Thakur Das (organizer of the movement for Benares Division), Damodar Das
(Thatteri Bazar, organizer for the rural part of Benares district, Satyendra Kumar Basu
(organizer for the Benares city), Chaudhary Laxmi Chand, Dr. Miss Thungamma (with
her brothers’ daughter Sumati Bolar), Ramakant Misra, Prof. Radhe Shyam, Dr. Gairola,
Vireshwar Iyer, Mahavir Singh, Pt. Ram Surat Misra, Pt. Jugal Kishore Dubey and
Markandi Singh.

Chetganj, Teliaganj, Teliana Crossing, Sonarpura, Harishchandra Ghat, Benares Cantt.,
Dashaswamedha Ghat in urban areas and Keshopur, Dhanapur, Cholapur, Sakaldiha,
Babatpur, Khalispur, Agarnath, Manesaur, Saiyid Raja, Railway Crossing, South of
Saiyad Raja, Dighavat, Mughalsarai, Lohadih, Sewapuri and Lilrapur in rural area
became centre of people’s resistance in Benares area. On 16th August, 8 to 10 thousand
peasants and young people liberated Dhanapur police station under the leadership of
Kamata Prasad Vidhyarthi. Mahangu Singh, Hira Singh, Raghunath Singh, Satya
Narayan Singh, Vishwanath, Bhaggu Koeri and others were very active in Benares.
Chakia region of the district also remained centre of rebellion. Besides, Aaj and Hans,
series of Rambheri–Ranadanka, Ranachandi, Chandika, Defiance, Redflame and
Jwalamukhi were published to encourage the masses for the participation in the
Babu, Shanta Saran Mehrotra, Damodardas Shah and Vishwanath Sharma were involved
in the above nationalist writings. Derailment of goods train, removal of fish plates,
burning of railway stations, burning of seed department, burning of police stations were important people’s action in this part of U.P. ‘No Rent’ campaign was also started.

Congress movement in Ghazipur started under the guidance of Bhagwat Misra. Local leaders like Nageswar Rai, Vishwanath Sharma, Ganga Pandey, Madhav Shukla (Poet), Yugal Kishore Sharma, Shambhu Nath Pathak, Ram Swarup Pandey, Ram Sundar Goswami, Damodar Shastri, Laxmi Narayan Pandey, Girija Pandey, Ram Dutt Rai, Shiv Poojan Rai, Vireshwar Nath Rai strengthened the movement. Muslim League’s influence was checked by Jamat-ul-Ulema under the leadership of Maulana Abul Hasan and Ahhar Party under the leadership of Ghulam Rabbani. Movement started on 10th August by closing the market and educational institution. The rumour that Gandhiji had declared ‘the independence of the country’ further radicalized the movement in Sherpur – Mohammedabad area of Ghazipur. By 11th August all symbols of colonial government came under attack. The people’s enthusiasm soared by the singing of Madhav Shukla’s poem:

"Sari duniya kaanp uthegi, doshi dil hil jaayega,
Aaj Bharti hunkaron se, London bhi tharrayega,
Aaj parva hai swarajya ka, Gandhi yug ka mela hai,
Utho Bharti jald naha lo, swatantrata ki bela hai"

(Whole world will tremble and guilty heart will quiver,
Today with India’s clarion call, even London will tremble,
Today is the celebration of Swarajya, it’s Gandhi’s moment,
Get up Indians; take quick bath, its dawn of freedom).

By 12th August, students took control of all railways stations between Saidpur and Ghazipur. On 14th August, students under the leadership of Baladan Pandey and Master Kamla Lal; general masses under the leadership of Ram pandey and Shambhunath Pathak (Mastana); and women under the leadership of Vidya Devi gheraad the Saidpur Tehsil and declared its independence. Aftre that Nandganj, Badhwa, Gahmar, Saidpur-Bhitri, Sadat, Jamunia, Dildar Nagar, etc. railway stations were paralyzed by the masses. At Nandganj, the crowd numbered 30,000. People of Mohammedabad tehsil showed much heroism. Sherpur and Patkania village became famous for people’s bravery. On 18th August, Dr. Shivpujan Rai of Sherpur village led the crowd from Sherpur, Hariharpur and other villages to hoist the flag on tehsil building. By this time almost all the police station, e.g. Sadat, Chanapur, Qasimabad, Dildarnagar, Ghazipur kotwali, etc. were
dismantled by local crowd. By 19th August the whole of Ghazipur came under the control of local people. They ran the government for three days from 19 to 21 August 1942 (Ghaziapur District Record; U.P. District Gazetteer). In the district at every place, Congress workers set up Panchayat for the maintenance of peace and the defence of people. Although the period of liberation was a short one but the people breathed a sigh of relief at the end of tyranny of the British rule in Ghazipur.

The magnitude of people’s action in Azamgarh is well known in the words of R. H. Niblett (District Collector and Magistrate of Azamgarh). He wrote:

“There was trouble everywhere, but chiefly in the Eastern part of the district. In the police circle of Madhuban and Tarwa, the civil authority was in fact completely subverted, and the police could not function beyond the limits of their headquarters.” [Niblett, R.H., The Congress Rebellion in Azamgarh (1957)].

The movement started with the arrest of Sitaram Asthana (local MLA of Azamgarh), Uma Shankar Mishra of Captainganj, Krishna Madhav Lal of Nevada and Lallan Prasad Verma. It picked up when Algu Rai Shastri returned from Bombay on 11th August and Chandrashekhar Asthana arrived on 12th August from Kashi Vidyapeeth. People took out procession and all the educational institutions except Shibli George Intermediate College went on strike. On 12th August, a meeting took place in the presence of local leaders – Arjun Singh, Shivram Rai, Akshaywar Shastri, Phulbadan Singh, Ramadhan Ram, etc. It was unanimously agreed that efforts should be made to mobilize the people in the tehsil and mandals to revolt simultaneously in the whole district so that roots and branches of imperialism in Azamgarh could be axed at one go, rendering it impossible for the government machinery to carry out any fire brigade action. People’s Raj in Madhuban has already shown how more than 65,000 people encircled R.H.Niblett in Madhuban Police Station. Ramabriksh Chaubey, Mangal Dev Shastri (BHU student) and Sundar Dev Pandey were the leading star of this incident. People’s resistance in Tarwa, Kajha, Mau, Phulpur and other region have been discussed in detail. Statement of casualties and damage done in people’s movement from 9 August to 15 September has been given in a table. A separate table showing destruction of land records in United Province has also been given.
The present study has also highlighted the role of women during Quit India movement in Eastern U.P. I have shown how Swarup Rani Nehru, Vijayalaxmi Pandit, Sucheta Kriplani, Hazra Begum, Poornima Banerjee, Rameshwari Nehru, Uma Nehru, Kamla Nehru and others were active in U.P. Gauri Devi, Kishori Devi, Lakshmi, Sajjan Devi, Mahnot, Seva Mitra were prominent women faces of Benares during the national uprising. In Sonarpura area of Benares, Giribala Devi came out of her house and stopped the mounted British soldier when they were engaged in people's repression. A well planned attack on kotwali, kutcheri and other administrative building were done by women delegates [NAI, Home Poll, F.No. 18/8/42]. This was the time when Indira Gandhi was arrested in Allahabad while taking part in children procession [NAI, Home Poll, F.No. 18/9/42]. On 15th August, prominent women of India appealed to the masses to take part in people's movement. On 19th August, government forces faced a stiff opposition from the women students when they tried to take over BHU. Jhangai railway station near Benares was looted and burnt by the crowd led by a girl [NAI, Home Poll., F.No. 3/16/42]. The bravery shown by the sister-in-law of Algu Rai Shastri at Amila in Azamgarh was remarkable. Some soldiers broke into her house, collected entire paraphernalia, heaped it in the courtyard and were about to set fire to it, when the lady rushed forward, jumped on the heap and roaring like a lioness said: “burn me first and then the appendages”. At this the soldiers went off with their heads hung down in shame.

The role of lower caste, dalit and muslim has been highlighted and discussed in the thesis. Nirohu Bhar, Chanthi Noniya, Chhigan Chamar, Lotwan Bind and many others are important Dalit names who participated in the movement in Benares. Most of the Ahir caste in Ghazipur took part in the movement. On 15th August, Ghauspur Aerodrome was attacked by the members of Ahir caste. Caste profile of the nationalists has been given for Madhuban, Tarwa and Kajha incidents.

Benares and Azamgarh are weaving centres in Eastern U.P. Lower caste muslim families worked in these centres. They supported the movement whole-heartedly by going on strikes whenever asked for it. Jammat-ul-Ulema had declared its entire support for the movement. U. A. Ansari, Niamullah, Ahmad, Alamgir Khan, Alijan, Fulman Khan, Hanef Darzi, etc. were prominent Muslim faces in Eastern U.P. who took part in the movement.
People’s movement resulted in British repression and atrocities under the command of M.H.B. Nethersole, and Marsh-Smith. Unarmed masses were fired upon. Village after village were burnt down. Fines were imposed on the innocent population. Women were raped and even innocent children were killed by the British forces [NAI, Home Poll., F.No. 3/79/42, 1942]. The British atrocities were no less than a sign of savagery.

The nature of leadership and social composition of the movement has also been discussed. After Word War I, the Congress grew into well-knit mass organization. Gandhiji through his experience and foresight evolved a new technique of non-violent, non-cooperation, fast and satyagraha. These were the tools by which he tried to manage all the risk of the masses from the colonial power. He provided the Congress organization with a mighty leadership that stood it in times of stress and dangers in 1920-21, 1930-34 and again in 1940-41. Prolonged British exploitations of the Indian masses had created a crisis; a volcano which was waiting to erupt at any moment. On 9th August, well planned and organized war between the oppressor and the oppressed, between the ruler and the ruled, between exploiter and the exploited broke out. War time economic deterioration further enhanced anti-attitude of the masses against the imperialism. At this point of time forgetting all barriers of caste, creed, class, religion, community and political affiliation, the masses came on one platform, e.g. Gandhi / Congress platform to paralyze the British administrative system.

District administration offices, tehsil buildings, courts, post offices, court of ward camp, civil area, liquor shops and other symbols of colonial government were attacked because they were the representative of micro-physical presence of the British administrative institution.

Police stations, Police chowki, Kotwali, Land Records Offices, Patwari and pro-British Zamindars were attacked because they were the representatives of British coercive forces and exploitation. Thus, the people’s action virtually dismantled the infrastructure of British imperialism.

Like the French Revolution, here also every section of society, e.g. peasants, students, teacher, unemployed youths, labourers, doctors, advocates, small income groups
(shopkeepers, milk vendors, street hawkers, petty traders, workers) became the backbone of the movement making it a holistic one.

The people’s resistance took the form of mass upsurge at Ballia making it the epicenter of Quit India Movement in Eastern U.P. Suraj Prasad, Uma Shankar Misra and Ram Anant Pandey mobilized the masses to take out procession in support of the movement. From urban areas, the message of mass upsurge spread into the rural areas. People’s activities under the leadership of young students – Parasnath Misra liberated Belthra from the colonial rule. Swarajya was declared in Bansdih Tehsil under the leadership of Gajadhar Lohar. We see the victory of ‘passive resistance’ in Bairia areas, 40 miles east of Ballia. In this part of the district, the whole area has been divided into mandals and mandals have been divided into halka. The aim of Halka Committee was to make Gram Committee in each village. All these were done to unite the masses against the colonial rule. People’s activities in Sahatwar, Rasra and in other police stations forced British officials to leave enabling people to hoist the Swarajya falg on the government buildings. Mass upsurge in Ballia reached its final stage when on 19th August the National Government was formed. Chittu Pandey was proclaimed Swarajya Ziladhish (Independent District Magistrate), the ‘de facto’ ruler of Ballia. These agitational activities finally resulted in British atrocities.

The people in Eastern U.P. responded to the movement in a violent manner. Cutting across different strata, they participated in the movement. Besides political parties, peasants, workers, students, women, dalits, muslims and government officials participated in the movement. Massive people’s participation made ‘Quit India’ as the greatest mass upheaval since 1857. Most of the people’s action took place in the rural region because movement had a great support from the peasant class and the rural youth. The intensity of the movement was less in urban areas because there was a heavy presence of British officials, e.g., police and military forces. At this point of time masses were not guided by their leaders or their political affinity but they were only seeing the colonial government as a trespasser in their economic, social and political freedom. So, all of them, irrespective of their affiliation were aiming to get rid of the exploitative imperialist government.
The resistance and protest against the British imperialism was targeted against the colonial symbols: district administrative offices, tehsil buildings, land record offices, patwari, pro-British zamindars, courts, post offices, court of ward camp, civil area, liquor shops, and other symbols of colonial government. These were attacked because they represented the micro-physical presence of the British administration. Tehsil offices and land revenue records were destroyed by the people because these were institutional sites of colonial economic structure. Land records and land revenue were a source of peasant’s misery. These records were usually placed in tehsil offices. Colonial state was a distant abstract for the common masses. Tehsil building, revenue records and patwari were seen as a real physical presence of the colonial state.

All means of communication, e.g. rail, road, air, wires were destroyed. By paralyzing the colonial communication system, people were showing three things: a) they wanted to disrupt the colonial state control, b) by doing this they were negating the legitimate authority of the colonial state, and, c) they just negated the colonial modernity. People’s action in Eastern U.P. virtually dismantled the infrastructure of British imperialism. All these actions show that they had no lure for the techno-modernity. They just wanted to come out of the colonial tutelage.

We have tried to identify the participants on class, castes and gender basis. The role of lower castes, dalits, women and muslims have been highlighted in this work. Gauri Devi, Kishori Devi, Lakhsmi, Sajjan Devi, Mahnot, Seva Mitra, Snehlata, Giribala, and others were active women participants. Nirohu Bhar, Chauthi Noniya, Chhigan Chamar, Lotwan Bind and most of the Ahir castes participated in the movement. Jamaat-ul-Ulema had declared its entire support for the movement. U.A.Ansari, Niamullah, Ahmad, Alamgir Khan, Alijan, Fulman Khan, Haneef Darzi, etc. were prominent muslim faces in Eastern U.P. who took part in the movement.

The mass movement having such a political and social base cannot be called spontaneous. The Congress and the Left parties were working among the masses since 1920s. Masses were trained to take part in such movement in the form of Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22), Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-34) and Individual Satyagraha Movement (1940-41). There might be ideological differences in
the working of different political parties but everyone was treating the British government in India as a foreign government, which had to go. When time came in 1942, and the Congress asked the British government to quit, then people came on a common platform to give a final blow to the coercive colonial administration.

The large scale people's action and the massive participation of the masses during Quit India Movement in Eastern U.P. itself marked the success of the movement. It was mass action and their participation which created a fear in British mind, and they were forced to quit in 1947.