CHAPTER-V

Early Satyagraha Movements in India

Introduction:

After his return to India from South Africa in 1914, Gandhi tried his method of Satyagraha on what may be called a mass scale for the first time in Champaran. The Champaran enquiry was a bold and unique experiment with truth and ahimsa. The Champaran experiment forms a vital chapter in the development of the Satyagraha method in India. When we examine the history of Champaran and Kheda Satyagraha, we shall see that whatever the Non-co-operation Satyagraha Movement has done or proposes to do is to be found in these movements. Before Gandhi set his foot in Champaran, the tenantry of the district had at times carried on strong agitation and had some times attempted Non-co-operation also. But the foundation of that agitation and Non-co-operation was not based on ahimsa (non-violence). ¹

It is referred that speeches made by Gokhale in 1905 and Lokamaaeya Tilak in 1907, indicate non-co-operation was a live policy in those years. However, non-co-operation in India may be taken as commencing with the Satyagraha Campaign organized by Mahatma Gandhi after his return from South Africa.
The Champaran Satyagraha of 1917:

Gandhi’s involvement with the cause of the ryots (peasants) against the European and the English Planters who had become landlords in Champaran, almost accidentally, led to his entry into Indian politics, in 1917. Historically, Gandhi experimented with his concept of Satyagraha for the first time, on Indian soil. The experiment was successful and the Champaran struggle laid the foundation of the Gandhian way in India’s freedom struggle.

When the crown took over the administration in 1858, the government allied itself with the Planters, the foreign agents for the sake of expediency. It is well known that the government allowed it’s civil and military servants to buy landed property under certain terms and conditions.  

The Greek word “indikon” deformed into anglicized indigo was not a crop totally unknown in India; it was cultivated mostly in western and southern India. However, it was neither a commonly cultivated crop nor was it of any particular use to the Indian people. The East India Company started exporting Indigo from Surat to England as a part of their business prepositions and it turned out to be a flourishing trade.

Some Indigo Planters obtained permanent bases from the owners of land such as the Bettiah Raj. This led to the appearance of a body of powerful European middlemen, “dalal” in Bengali, on the economic scene who did not confine themselves to growing of indigo alone, but stretched their hands in order to exploit the poor ryots.
The largest area under indigo cultivation was in Champaran. Nearly 50% of the district indigo planters exercised zamindari rights over these lands through lease holding. In 1917, Champaran district contained 2,846 villages. Most of these villages were leased out to the European Planters by their owners such as, Bettiah Raj, Ramnagar Estate and the Madhuban Estate.4

Champaran is a corrupt form of the word Champaranya. It was an administrative district situated in the northwestern corner of the Province of Bihar and Orissa in British India. To its north are the Himalayan mountains and the territory of Nepal; on its west is the district of Gorakhpur in the United Provinces; to its east, is the district of Muzaffarpur and to its south the district of Saran.5

The main grievances of the peasants were in regard to the ‘tinkathia’ contract. As the ‘tinkathia’ contract indicates, the ryot was bound by law because of the terms and conditions were worked out in their own favour by the Planters influencing the local government, to plant three out of every twenty parts of his land with indigo for his landlord. The system came to be known as ‘tinkathia’ because three kathas out of twenty, which made an acre, had to be under indigo cultivation. There was no choice; and the profit went entirely to the indigo Planters who were participating in world markets.

The main grievances of the tenants were as follows:

1) The contract, which the tenants were made to enter into with the planter regarding indigo, was not voluntarily accepted by them but they were coerced.
2) Some advance of money used to be forced upon them for growing indigo.

3) They had to give their valuable time to the cultivation of indigo while it could have been more profitably employed in growing other crops.

4) Their best lands were taken up for indigo growing. Sometimes even land on which another crop was growing used to be taken up for growing indigo and the standing crop destroyed.

5) There was no certainty about the indigo crop with the result that the tenants very often could not repay even the advance, which became a heavy burden on them.

6) The underlings of factories used to oppress them.

7) The factory owners and managers also used to employ force and beat them.

The 'tinkathia' system itself was evil and in essence, violent because of the rank injustice and degradation it extended to one group of people by another, to the ryots by the European Planters. The crop was not evil. The ryot was compelled by force, impositions and immoral means to cultivate indigo. The ryots submitted because they were poor, they needed the money to survive, there would be violence to teach them a lesson if they did not comply. It is important to point out that the government of the day was fully aware of the state of affairs but did not make any attempt to redress the situation.
In 1860, the Government of India appointed an Indigo Commission, which helped to some extent to ensure protection to the ryots, but only in Bengal. Bihar still continued to remain neglected. Discontent deepened among the ryots and often took the shape of disturbances, demonstrations organized by the ryots, which lasted for months. It is important to note that Champaran became a scene of constant trouble. The villagers supported them and joined in presenting petitions to the Lt. Governor and the Governor-General demanding enquiry and the appointment of a commission to redress their grievances. The petitions were ignored, but the government was fully aware of the gravity of the situation. The poor in the villages along with the ryots suffered because of the highhanded and self-serving ways of the planters. They refused to grow indigo; there were riots, murders, looting of properties.

In 1898, a German Scientist discovered Badische, an artificial dye that gave a hard blow to indigo trade of the planters. In a panic, the planters looked around for a means to continue to exploit the situation even if circumstances compelled them to give up indigo cultivation. Clearly, the German discovery had made indigo cultivation in Bihar more a burden than a lucrative commercial proposition from 1900.

The planters now tried every means to stop indigo cultivation, imposed on the ryots for letting them off indigo cultivation, imposed “abwabs” (miscellaneous contributions) and made the ryots pay these in order to compensate themselves for the loss of indigo market and consequently, the profit of indigo trade. The Planters turned a negative situation into one in their
favour by unfair means, illegal exactions quite blatantly. The ryots got nothing out of stoppage of indigo cultivation there still were limitations on the freedom of choice of crop for cultivation; the illegal exactions under euphemisms such as “hunda”, “abwabs”, “pani kharcha”, and so on, continued unabated; the ryots continued to be treated with indignity and injustice. Once again, there appeared signs of discontent and a determination on the part of the ryots to stand up in some way, against the planters. Bloomfield’s murder in 1908 was an event, though violent and not laudable, might be considered to be a signal of this determination.

Towards the end of 1908, rather a serious situation developed in Bettiah sub-division. The ryots joined together to protest and lead demonstrations against the planters as a class. Violence became a part of these demonstrations and disturbances.7

Unauthorized levies such as, “pani kharcha” (water levy), ill treatment of factory workers in indigo works, forcible taking away of bullocks and carts from the ryots, forcible exactions of money, refusal of the planters to give receipts- all these evils spread all over Bihar wherever the planters operated.

The newspaper “Pratap” of Kanpur in March 1916 published an article on the “Atrocities of Indigo Planters in Champaran” and rather boldly invited complaints against the Planters from all sections of the people. Besides the Pratap, the ‘Abhyudaya’ published the Champaran matters, in Allahabad and the ‘Bharat Mitra’, in Calcutta.
For the first time, politically, Brijkishore Prasad raised the Champaran question in the Council in 1915, and brought to the notice of the members and the government, specific acts of injustice, extortion, and cruelty towards the ryots. The persistence of Brijkishore Prasad and his conviction that the distressing situation of the ryots must come to the public forum can be seen in the motion he proposed in the Legislative Council on April 7, 1915, asking for an enquiry into the indigo planter-ryot situation in Champaran. The motion was defeated by 27 to 4 votes. Finally, perhaps to gain time, the government entrusted the work of enquiry to J. A. Sweeny, an ICS Officer.

Three points stand out from the brief survey above. One, the Planters systematically exploited the ryots and never relented their highhanded, unjust and cruel treatment. Two, the government was fully aware of the situation and privately expressed their views as is clear from the files and private papers now available. But the government never took any stand against the Planters, nor did they make the slightest attempt to uphold justice, order and legality. Finally, racial bitterness increased as time passed. The Planters and the ryots became two species of human beings in the eyes of the former and the government. Both sides remained uncommunicative, unequal and hostile.

The name of Rajkumar Shukla has become historically linked with that of Gandhi and with Champaran. Champaran is of immense significance in Gandhi’s life and work in India. Rajkumar was a Brahmin, forty-two years old and a well-to-do cultivator in Champaran. For some time he had served as a muhairir in the Bagicha Mahal of Maharani Janak Koer, the then proprietor of
Bettiah Raj. Later, he took up the management of the landed property in Champaran of an owner who lived in Allhabad. Thus he had a first-hand knowledge of the condition of the ryots there.

When Rajkumar Shukla came upon the scene in 1916 and involved both the Indian National Congress and Gandhi in the affairs of Champaran, the situation had deteriorated very considerably and it seemed as though there were no room for hope.

Gandhi's name had become well known in India by 1916-17 because of his work for the oppressed and the underdog, the deprived and the degraded. His fight, non-violent, but relentless, in South Africa against deliberate injustice and double standard of the government of South Africa, and his commitment to upholding human dignity in every respect - socially, economically, and politically - were widely known in India.

It is important to remember that when Gandhi came to attend the Congress meeting in December at Lucknow in 1916, there were 2,301 delegates and innumerable visitors there. Rajkumar Shukla was also a member delegate. When he met Gandhi he said "One day will be enough, and you will see things with your own eyes." He patiently followed Gandhi who had to go to Kanpur from Lucknow, then to Sabarmati and finally, caught up with him at Calcutta. Rajkumar was eager that Gandhi should head a local investigation and pressed the issue patiently, until Gandhi and he actually arrived at Patna early in 1917."
Gandhi's presence assured two important points: one, his presence was heralded by the people and the leading Biharis and electrified the atmosphere as it were. Two, Gandhi would adopt a new means to achieve the objective of removing injustice and exploitation that had been the lot of the Bihari ryots despite appeal, agitation and lawsuits.

Gandhi had gone to Bihar declaredly in a spirit of enquiry. He had made it perfectly clear in his letter of April 13, 1917 from Muzaffarpur, to L.F. Moorhead, Commissioner of Tirhut Division that he was anxious to test the accuracy of the statements made to him by various friends regarding indigo matters.

However, the British Raj regarded him as a "dangerous man", an agitator whose presence in the district could not be viewed with equanimity. Gandhi had received, and was receiving a large number of letters from the oppressed ryots. He was anxious to know the point of view of the Planters as well. In response the President of the Planter's Association declared that he had no business there, if he wanted to communicate with the Planters he better do so in writing. Gandhi's mission of enquiry into the Champaran affairs was taken as "anti-government" and "anti-landlord" who were European Planters.

Gandhi used one of the usual means of transport, an elephant "as common in Champaran as a bullock cart in Gujarat." in order to visit a ryot who had been ill-treated and the message had reached him. This was on April 16, 1917. He was served with a notice under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code. Gandhi took the notice, considered it and then responded by saying that
he was unable to leave the district, that he would ‘submit’ to the order by
“suffering” the penalty of disobedience: “My desire is purely and simply for a
general search for knowledge. And this I shall continue to satisfy as long as I
am left free.” He reiterated that indeed there was a reign of terror prevailing
in Champaran. He was so distressed that he informed the Viceroy that he was
returning the Kaiser-I-Hind medal (Gold), which had been awarded, to him for
his humanitarian work.

Gandhi stayed on to await summons to the court. The trial opened, but
the magistrate postponed the trial and judgment without giving any specific or
coherent reason. Gandhi requested the magistrate not to postpone the case “as I
wanted to plead guilty to having disobeyed the order to leave Champaran”
Then came the unexpected message before Gandhi appeared in the court again,
that the case against him had been withdrawn.

The 18th of April 1917 is a memorable day in the history not only of
Champaran, but also of the whole of India. It was on this day that Mahatma
Gandhi was preparing himself to go to jail for the sake of the poor and
suffering people of the province of Bihar. On this day the whole of India was to
get her first lesson and her first modern example of Satyagraha, which was to
open new floodgates of light and of vision before her. It is an old saying that no
harm can come to the true, but a practical demonstration of this was to be given
to the world on this day by Mahatma Gandhi.

Gandhi appeared before the Magistrate sharply before 3 O’clock. The
Magistrate told him that he would pass orders on 21st April 1917, but that he
would release him in the meantime on a bail of Rs. 100. Gandhi said that he had no bailer and could not offer bail. The Magistrate was again in difficulty and found a way out by offering to release him on his personal reorganization.

The Government of India believed that the matter was going to attract the attention of the press. They became terribly concerned. This was the immediate reason why the case against Gandhi was withdrawn without seemingly any apparent reason on the 20th April 1917 at about 7 p.m.

It would be relevant here to remember that no one knew Gandhi in Champaran. No emissary of the Congress has come to launch Gandhi there. As a matter of fact, the Congress was practically unknown to the people.

Gandhi had not been on trial; the Government of India was on trial, in essence and the British Raj was being challenged in a unique way. Gandhi did not deviate from his goal that of helping the oppressed ryots became a matter of historical importance. The Government promised to appoint a Commission of Enquiry.

At the behest of Viceroy Chelmsford, Gandhi was included in the Commission as a member because “it is not denied that Gandhi’s enquiry was inspired by substantial grievances.” Gandhi’s stand had been vindicated. Truth and non-violence as he saw them prevailed.

The main recommendations of the Commission were incorporated in the Champaran Agrarian Act of 1918:

1) The rents fixed at a reduction of 20% or 26% according to the indigo factories concerned.
2) The ‘tinkathia’ system was abolished.

3) A tenant could contract to deliver to his landlord a specified weight of a particular crop to be grown on the land of his tenancy or any portion thereof.

When asked why he did not demand 100% refund of illegal exactions from the Planters, which they regularly imposed on the ryots, Gandhi pointed out that even a refund of 25% of the money the Planters had stolen from the ryots had damaged their prestige. He realized such a compromise was the best foundation for better relations in future.

The Agrarian Act did not lull Gandhi into inaction. He was convinced that the real and a long-term solution of Champaran problem was education of the ryots. Neither mere legislature measures nor administrative action could solve their problem truly. Gandhi, therefore, created a band of volunteers to carry on this work of education. Schools were founded where the daily attendance on the average was over 69. A Hindu-Muslim Committee was formed to organize village health and education, which decided to teach hygiene through religious teaching and instructions at meetings held both by the Hindus and the Muslims. A great stress was laid on cleaning village water supplies. The Servants of India society lent a medical doctor, Dr. Dev for six months to help and guide the work.

Among the volunteers was Kasturba Gandhi who now worked with the volunteers as one of the Fifteen and courageously undertook not only to teach in Hindu albeit rudimentary Hindi and numerical, “but also hygiene and good
manners.\(^\text{14}\) Gandhi in his Autobiography certifies these classes as successful which inspired the ladies to develop self confidence.

Kasturba had become a comrade at work, a dependable source of information and a true helper in Gandhi's work at Champaran, a historically important work in India. Very few know the extent to which Kasturba dedicated herself to this work because Kasturba was not equipped with enough resources either in teaching Hindi or Gujarati.

What was the impact of Champaran in India's history? As Gandhi himself discerned "the country thus had its first direct object lesson in civil disobedience."\(^\text{15}\) He did his best to prevent the Champaran struggle from assuming a political complexion. He avoided newspaper reporter but assured the newspaper editors that he would keep them informed with written reports.

The Champaran events brought out unknown talents, and gifts latent in human beings. Scholars and professionals lawyers such as, Rajendra Prasad, J.B. Kripalani, Mozharul Huq and others turned themselves into clerks in service of the ryots, taking down their statements accurately, traveling from village to village in uncomfortable means of transport or just by walking. They become truly a community of people’s servants.

Was Champaran a victory? Gandhi’s first Satyagraha on Indian soil bore fruit. The Champaran Agrarian Act of 1918 was passed. The miseries of the ryots were attended to legally whether they were much reduced will remain a controversial subject. The Amrita Bazaar Patrika hailed him as a hero: "So Mr. Gandhi has gained........ God Bless Mr. Gandhi and his work. How we wish
that we had only half a dozen Gandhis in India to teach our people self-abnegation and selfless patriotism."\textsuperscript{16}

In the Gandhian way there is no victory or defeat. There is always a solution to a problem, short term or long term; there is conflict resolution. Champaran particularly resolved the conflict by getting a more equitable law passed by the government. Champaran drew the attention of the well to do Indians to the utter misery of the ryots. Champaran brought social welfare work in the villages through the volunteers who responded to Gandhi’s appeal for such help. Champaran gave some hope to the fear-stricken people of the villages.

Gandhi had emerged; and Gandhi was on his way to play that memorable role in India’s history that would be of world significance.

\textit{Ahmedabad Labour Satyagraha:}

In Champaran Gandhi tried to inculcate in peasants the lessons of a non-violent struggle against oppression of the planter-landlord. Before the constructive work in Champaran assumed full swing, Gandhi had to come back in response to an appeal from Anasuyabehn on behalf of the textile workers of Ahmedabad. Gandhi felt that it was not possible to guide the movement of the Ahmedabad weavers from distant Champaran. So he decided to go to Ahmedabad and get first hand knowledge of the affair.\textsuperscript{17}
During the latter half of 1917 Ahmedabad was visited by plague of a virulent type. Just by way of encouragement to stay and work, the mill owners had been giving for some months to their weavers a daily bonus of twelve annas to a rupee over and above their daily wages of which the monthly average was Rs. 23. When the plague was over, the employers attempted to withdraw the bonus, though the prices of commodities had gone up considerably. Gandhi was in a delicate situation. The rich men of Ahmedabad use to contribute towards the expenses of the ashram. Ambalal Sarabhai, who led the fray on behalf of the mill owners of Ahmedabad, had friendly relations with Gandhi. The saving grace was that Anasuya Behn was pitted against her brother and had stoutly espoused the workers’ cause.

The dispute was referred to arbitration, Gandhi, Shankarlal Banker, and Vallabhbhai Patel, acting as the representatives of weavers, and Sheth Ambalal Sarabhai together with Sheth Jagabhai and Chandulal Chimanlal representing the mill owners. Mr. Chatfield, the collector was chosen to act as umpire. But before the committee could commence its work, the unwilling mill owners declared a lockout on February 22, in which they persisted till March 11. When they opened the Mills, it was the turn of the weavers to go on strike. They wanted 50% increase in their wages. But the mill owners had offered the small increment of 20% pointing out that in Bombay the weavers monthly average did not exceed Rs.28. Gandhi after careful investigation, thought 25% to be a reasonable mean and persuaded the weavers to accept it. They obeyed, but the mill owners remained adamant.18
Gandhi, the devotee of non-violence took the first step of requests, entreaties and supplication. In the event of its failure, the methods of non-violent struggle are to be applied. Gandhi found the mill owners' adamant and unbending. They used to say, "Our relations with labourers are those of parents and children.... How can we brook the interference of third party? Where is the room for arbitration?" The principle of compromise and arbitration is essential in Gandhi's philosophy of non-violence.... It eliminates violence and compulsion, which may be present even in peaceful struggles. It teaches people tolerance and conciliation.

After the failure of the first step, i.e., of entreaties and arbitration, Gandhi had no option but to advise the labourers to go on strike, which should then be considered an unavoidable step in the technique of non-violent struggle. It was a sort of non-co-operation to secure the ends of justice. Gandhi explained to them the steps and procedure of a successful strike. His list of conditions is indicative of application of non-violence in the field of industrial strike, an anti-thesis of Marxist warfare. He advised the strikers:

1) Never to resort to violence,
2) Never to molest blacklegs,
3) Never to depend upon alms,
4) To remain firm, no matter how long the strike continued, and to earn bread, during the strike, by any other honest labour.

Gandhi never preached violence or class struggle based on class hatred like the Marxists. He told the mill hands that they should not be angry with
their employers nor harbour any grudge against them. They should like true Satyagrahis, change the heart of the adamant capitalists by their self-imposed suffering. The attainment of this was possible if we possessed single-minded devotion, self-discipline, firmness and purity.\textsuperscript{22} When Gandhi asked the workers never to molest the blacklegs, he had the freedom of every individual in his mind. An adherence to truth and non-violence required from it's following that they should not inflict injury even on foes or provoke violence by adopting negative attitudes. His third advice to the labourers, as never depending on alms, was also in keeping with his philosophy of non-violence. His non-violence is soul-force which springs from the strength of soul. Begging and alms taking weakens the soul, perverts the individual and dries the founts of self-respect, self-sacrifice and spirituality in him. His fourth condition of staying "firm, no matter how long the strike continued, and to earn bread during the strike, by any other honest means", meant that the labourers were to imbibe the lessons of self-help.\textsuperscript{23} In contrast, the Marxist Labour Unions sanction the use of force to prevent black-legging, raise subscription from the public for strike, and use militant method: to coerce the mill owners.

The terms and conditions were explained to the workers who pledged at a general meeting not to resume work till their grievances are removed and the mill owners agreed to refer the dispute to arbitration. The strikers held daily meeting under the shade of a tree on the bank of the river Sabarmati. The thousands attended it, and Gandhi reminded them of their pledge and their duty to maintain peace and self-respect. Peaceful processions paraded the streets
of the city carrying banners bearing the inscription “Ek-Tek” (Keep the Pledge).  

The strike lingered on for twenty-one days. In the meantime Gandhi tried hard to find out some solution but to no avail. The attitudes hardened and a deadlock ensued. The strikers began to show signs of flagging. Their attitude towards the blacklegs became more and more violent and menacing. The attendance at the daily meeting began to dwindle by degrees; despondency and despair were writing large on the faces of those who did not attend. In fact, the strikers began to totter. Troubled by this state of affairs, the Mahatma set to thinking furiously as to what his duty was in the circumstances. One morning, in a meeting of the labourers, the light dawned on him and he flung a surprise by his vow of observing fast “Unless the strikers rally and continue the strike till a settlement is reached or till they leave the mills altogether, I will not touch any food.”

Anasuyabehn and a number of strikers shared the fast with Gandhi on the first day, March 12. But he dissuaded them from continuing it further. The fast electrified the workers and resorted their morale. The mill owners, too, were touched. At the end of three days, arbitration was agreed to and Gandhi broke his fast. The employers celebrated the occasion by distributing sweets among the labourers, and a settlement was reached after 21 days’ strike. At the meeting held under the very tree where the pledge had been taken, both the mill owners and the commissioner were present to celebrate the settlement.
principles evolved by the Mahatma. He pointed out a new way of leading the proletariat towards their desired goals. The new way comprised active non-violence, self-sacrifice and Satyagraha. The Textile Labour Association now believed, not in class war but in truth and Ahimsa. The association ran schools, libraries, hospitals, cinemas and gymnasiums for the welfare of the labour-world. By means of exhibitions and pictures it imparted lessons on health, hygiene and rearing of children. Gandhi tried to change the entire outlook of the workers. Fast in public cause was used for the first time. It was a weapon of self-sacrifice, the use of which in a non-violent struggle could ensure the success of Satyagraha.

No breathing time was in store for Gandhi. Hardly was the weavers' strike over, when he had to attend to the grievances of the peasants in Kheda.

*The Kheda Satyagraha:*

A condition approaching famine had arisen in the Kheda district owing to a widespread failure of crops. The patidars were considering the question of getting the revenue assessment for the year suspended. Amritlal Thakkar, G.K. Deodhar and N.M. Joshi of the Servants of India Society had already inquired into and reported the matter to the commissioner before Gandhi gave any definite advice to the cultivators. Mohanlal Pandya and Shankarlal Parikh had thrown themselves into the fight. Vithalbhai Patel set up an agitation in the
Bombay Legislative Council and more than one deputation had waited upon the Governor in that connection.

The cultivators’ demand was so moderate as to make out a strong case for its acceptance. Under the land revenue rules, if the crops were four annas or under, the cultivators could claim full suspension of the revenue assessment for the year. According to the official figures, the crop was said to be over four annas. The contention of the cultivators, on the other hand, was that it was less than four annas.31

Gandhi personally visited over fifty villages and met as many men there as he could, inspected the fields belonging to them and after a searching cross-examination of the villagers, came to the conclusion that their crops were under four annas. He suggested that an impartial inquiry committee should be appointed. The Government turned down the suggestion, and insisted upon applying coercive measures for the collection of revenue. The final suggestion that Gandhi made was that although, in the majority of the cases, people were entitled to full suspension, half suspension should be granted throughout the district, except for the villages which showed, by common consent, crops over six annas. As the Government refused to grant the reasonable demand, Gandhi advised the patidars to resort to Satyagraha on March 22, 1918.

Besides the volunteers of Kheda, Gandhi’s principal workers in this struggle were Vallabhbhai Patel, Shankarlal Banker, Anasuya Behn, Indulal Yagnik and Mahadev Desai. Gandhi fixed up his headquarters at the Nadiad Ananthashram.
The Satyagrahis signed the following pledge:

"Knowing that the crops of our villages are less than four annas, we requested the Government to suspend the collection of revenue assessment till the ensuing year, but the Government has not acceded to our prayer. Therefore, we, the undersigned, hereby solemnly declare that we shall not, of our own accord, pay to the government the full or the remaining revenue for the year. We shall let the Government take whatever legal steps it may think fit and gladly suffer the consequences of our non-payment. We shall rather let our lands be forfeited than that by voluntary payment we should allow our case to be considered false or should compromise our self-respect. Should the Government, however, agree to suspend collection of the second installment of the assessment to pay will pay up the whole or the balance of the revenue that may be due. The reason why those who are able to pay still withhold payment is that, if they pay up, the poorer ryots may in a panic sell their cattle or incur debts to pay their dues, and thereby bring suffering upon themselves. In these circumstances we feel that, for the sake of the poor, it is the duty even of those who can afford to pay to withhold payment of their assessment." The number of Satyagrahis rose to over 2,000.

The commissioner gave a threat of confiscation of lands: "Those who are contumacious, will get no lands in the future. Government does not want their names on their records of rights. Those who go out shall never be admitted again."
In the initial stage, the Government did not take strong action. But as the peasants' firmness showed no signs of wavering, the authorities resorted to coercion. The officials sold their cattle and seized whatever movables they could lay hands on. Penalty notices were served, and standing crops were attached. This unnerved the peasants, some of whom paid up their dues, while others desired to place safe movables in the way of the officials so that they might attach them to realize the dues.33

The Kheda received a great deal of publicity, and the Gujarati merchants from Bombay and elsewhere sent contributions for the success of the struggle. Little did they know that in non-violent struggle money is not the main consideration. “Money is the thing it least needs,” said Gandhi.34 From his Satyagraha camp at Nadiad, he issued fifteen instructions to the Volunteers on April 17, 1918.35 These instructions are revealing as these throw light on the methods of non-violent struggle. These merit a detailed description:

1) The Volunteers must remember that, as this is a Satyagraha Campaign, they must abide by truth under all circumstances.

2) In Satyagraha, there can be no room for rancour, which means that a Satyagrahi should utter no harsh words about any one, ...

3) Rudeness has no place in Satyagraha. Perfect courtesy must be shown even to those who may look upon as their enemies..........

4) The volunteers must remember that this is a holy war... So all the rules, which are essential for living a religious life, must be observed here too.
5) We are opposing the intoxication of power, that is, the blind application of law, and not authority as such....

6) We are to apply here the same principle that we follow in a domestic quarrel. We should think of the Government and the people as constituting a large family and act accordingly.

7) We are not to boycott or treat with scorn those who held different views from ours. It must be our resolve to win them over by courteous behaviour.

8) We must not try to be clever. We must always be frank and straightforward.

9) When they stay in villages, the volunteers should demand the fewest services from the village-folk. Whenever it is possible to reach a place on foot they should avoid using a vehicle. We must insist on being served the simplest food...

10) In their spare time, they should try to make good the deficiencies, in education etc., of the villagers.

11) They should create opportunities to teach the village children.

12) They should inculcate the rules of good health in the villages.

13) They should put a stop to quarrelling among villages.

14) They should read out to the people, when the latter are free, books, which promote Satyagraha.

15) At no time and under no circumstances is the use of arms permitted in Satyagraha. It should never be forgotten that in this struggle. The
highest type of non-violence is to be maintained. Satyagraha means fighting oppression through voluntary suffering. There can be no question here of making anyone else suffer....

Gandhi laid special emphasis on fearlessness, Gandhi and his volunteers moved from village to village asking people to "realize that officials were not their masters but servants of the people."36

He tried to teach them the "duty of combining civility with fearlessness". If people resorted to incivility, it would spoil their non-violent struggle like a drop of arsenic in milk. "Civility", according to Mahatma, "does not mean the mere outward gentleness of speech cultivated for the occasion, but an inborn gentleness and desire to do the opponent good."37

With a view to steeling the hearts of those who were frightened, Gandhi advised the people to remove the crop of onion from a field, which had been wrongly attached. Mohanlal Pandya volunteered to remove the crop from the field and in this seven or eight men joined him. They were convicted and sentenced. Peasants besieged the court on the day of hearing. A procession escorted the convicts to jail, and on that day Mohanlal Pandya earned from the people the honoured title of "Dungli chor", "Onion thief". Gandhi believed that the attachment of the standing crops, though in accordance with the law, was morally wrong, and was nothing short of looting. Therefore it was the duty of the people to remove the onion in spite of the order of attachment. The arrest of Mohanlal Pandya and his companions added to the people's enthusiasm.
Gandhi believed “When the fear of jail disappears, repression puts heart into the people”. He wanted the people to outgrow the fear of imprisonment. Pandya and his companions did not appeal against the conviction, as their policy was to avoid law-courts.

The struggle prolonged and the people also showed signs of exhaustion. However, the Government declared, “If the well-to-do patidars paid up, the poorer ones would be granted suspension.” This proved to be a signal for compromise, an essential weapon in the armoury of non-violence. All though the unexpected termination of the struggle was celebrated “as triumph of Satyagraha” Gandhi was far from happy for it lacked the essentials of a complete Satyagraha.

The Kheda Satyagraha marked the beginning of an awakening among the peasants of Gujarat, the beginning of their true political education; Kheda campaign compelled the educated public workers to establish contact with the actual life of the peasants. They learnt to identify themselves with the latter. They found their proper sphere of work, their capacity for sacrifice increased. The struggle gave India its ‘Iron Man’-Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Public life in Gujarat became instinct with a new energy and a new vigour. The lesson was indelibly imprinted on the public mind that the salvation of the people depends upon themselves, upon their capacity for suffering and sacrifice.
The Rowlatt Bills:

When World War broke out the ultra-extremists in India undoubtedly hoped for a British defeat which would enable them to throw off the foreign yoke. This hope was amply manifested in Bengal where the anarchical element entered into conspiracy with Germany to bring about a revolution in India. To cope with this revolutionary movement, the Defence of India Act was widely used in Bengal, with considerable success. The Act, however, automatically expired six months after the termination of the war, and in order to have something on the statute book to take its place, if necessary, the Rowlatt Bills were introduced in the beginning of 1919.42

The Rowlatt Bills came as a surprise as they were sprung upon an indignant, angry and dissatisfied people. These Bills took their popular name from the President of the Sedition Committee. The Government of India appointed this committee on 10th December 1917 with Mr. Justice Rowlatt as president to report on what were termed as 'Criminal conspiracies connected with revolutionary movements in India', and advise about legislation to deal with them. The committee was required to sit in camera. Its report was presented on 15th April 1918.

The committee prepared a fairly detailed account of the organization and doings of young revolutionaries operating in different regions of India. After a comprehensive survey of the existing political situation, the committee recommended special legislation, which sought to curtail the liberty and legal
rights of the people in a manner very drastic in nature. Consequently, two Bills were prepared on the basis of these recommendations. The one that actually passed into law was the Anarchical and Revolutionary Crimes Act, 1919. It made provision for speedy trial of offenses by a special court, consisting of three high court judges. There could be no appeal against decisions of this court and the provisional government was empowered to search a place and arrest a suspected person without warrant and keep him in confinement at any place in the country.  

The public had no knowledge of the nature of the evidence given before the committee or over the names of those who gave it. The witnesses were not cross examined on behalf of the people who were unrepresented. The Bill was finally passed on 18th March 1918, and three important members of the Imperial Legislative Council, M. M. Malaviya, M.A. Jinnah and Mazarul Haque resigned. The Bill was strenuously opposed throughout the country by Indians of all shades of opinion. As could be anticipated, the Bill was criticized in numerous public meetings.

Several Indian newspapers leveled severe criticism against this Bill. The Bombay Chronicle called it as 'repression in excelsis'. The Hindu wrote, 'the Indian public would read the proposed provisions with shame, indignation and disgust.' The Amrita Bazaar Patrika called it a 'gigantic blunder which would arouse the worst passions of a peaceful law-abiding people.' The New India described it as 'mostrous'.
In spite, however, of the serious protest, the motion that the Bill be referred to a select committee, was carried, and the amendment, that its consideration be deferred till six months after the term of office of the Legislative Council, was defeated on 6 February 1919; 22 voted for the amendment and 35 against it. The passage of the Rowlatt Bills in the final shape of an act raised a storm and a huge and massive opposition unprecedented in the history of India.48

The response to Gandhi's call for Satyagraha was spontaneous and phenomenal. His message for the people of India reached the four corners of the country even though the Congress Organization had not become so strong and widespread. On 24th February 1919, a Satyagraha Pledge under the signatures of Gandhi, Vallabhbhai Patel, Chandulal Manilal Desai, Anasuyabai Sarabhai and others was issued as protest against the Bills. 'Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. I of 1919 and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No.II of 1919 are unjust, subversive of the principle of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community as a whole and the state itself is based, we solemnly affirm that, in the event of these Bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a committee to be here after appointed may think fit and the further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property'.49
On 26th February, the Congress leadership issued instructions to the Satyagraha volunteers to be carried on by them while seeking support of the people for the national cause. Volunteers were required to read and explain the Satyagraha Pledge to every intending signatory before taking his signature to the vow for the national cause. The pledge was in three parts. The first part laid down the aims and objects of the pledge. It declared that the signatories were of opinion that the Rowlatt Bills were unjust, subversive of the principle of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals. In order to be able to make this statement one must fully understand the Rowlatt Bills, hence it was the duty of the volunteers to explain the Bills clearly to the intending signatory.\footnote{50}

The exact vow to be taken by the Satyagraha volunteers formed the second part of the pledge. The signatory had to solemnly affirm that he would refuse civilly to disobey certain laws. Besides volunteers were required to explain to every intending signatory that he must be prepared to bear every kind of suffering and to sacrifice, if necessary, both his person and property. He was also made to understand that he must be prepared to carry on the struggle single-handed even if left alone.\footnote{51} The third part of the pledge declared that the Satyagrahi would fearlessly adhere to the principles of truth and ahimsa. He must not misrepresent anything or hurt anybody's feelings. Volunteers must urge upon people necessity of fully realizing the grave responsibility of adhering to truth and ahimsa before signing the pledge. Volunteer must not
speak of things they did not understand and must not hold out false hopes to anybody.52

Gandhi started the Satyagraha Sabha, the members of which were pledged to disobey the Rowlatt Act, if it was applied to them, as well as other objectionable laws to be specified from time to time. In other words they were to court goal openly and deliberately. On 11 March, Gandhi once again reminded the Viceroy of the serious repercussions the passage of Rowlatt Bills would lead to in the country.

Initially, 30th March 1919 was fixed for the national protest, but the date was changed to 6th April. It was a simple, yet unique programme of mass action-24-hour fast as a necessary discipline, the stopping of all work, the closing of all markets and business places and the holding of public meetings.53

On 7th April 1919, Gandhi launched a daily-entitled Satyagrahi in defiance of the Indian Press Act. The paper had not been registered in accordance with the law. Gandhi explained to the subscribers 'so there can be no annual subscription. Nor can it be guaranteed that the paper will be published without interruption. The editor (M.K.Gandhi) is liable at any movement to be arrested by the Government and it is impossible to ensure continuity of publication.... This paper will, therefore, exist so long only as the Rowlatt legislation is not withdrawn.'54

The Satyagraha Sabha issued a final guideline to the Satyagraha volunteers on 7th April 1919 along with a list of prohibited literature, which
should be made use of by them in public meetings. This prohibited literature was as follows.\textsuperscript{55}


2) Sarvodaya or Universal Dawn – M.K.Gandhi.


4) The Life and Address of Mustafa Kamal Pasha.

In selecting this kind of prohibited literature, the Satyagraha Sabha had a few important considerations in view. Such a literature used by the Satyagrahis was to cause as little disturbance as possible among the governors and the governed.

Another unique feature of the Satyagraha was that it was to be as independent of financial support as possible.\textsuperscript{56} Moreover, when the copies of the prohibited literature were confiscated by the government, satyagrahis were required to make more copies themselves or by securing the assistance of ‘willing friends’ and to make use of it until it was confiscated by giving readings to the people from it.\textsuperscript{57}

A large number of protest meetings were organized in various parts of the country. The social discontent got wider circulation in Lahore, Amritsar, Delhi, Ahmedabad, Bombay, United Provinces, Central Provinces and Calcutta. The rural areas, except in the Punjab and Gujarat were not effected by this agitation.
Jallianwala Bagh Tragedy:

In the Punjab, Amritsar was second in importance to Lahore, though in some respects it was more important even than Lahore. Its population in 1919 was 1,60,000. It is the city of the Golden Temple, the greatest place of worship for the Sikhs.

The Jallianwala Bagh, where the ghastly tragedy took place on 13th April 1919, is situated almost in the heart of the city. The word Bagh is a misnomer. 'Jalle' is the caste name of original owner, 'wala' is the genitive termination; and the Bagh meaning a garden, is, in fact, an open piece of waste land surrounded by houses. It was, at that time, a private property owned in common by several people. It was an irregular quadrangle, indifferently walled, and in most cases, the back walls of the houses surrounding it enclosed the quadrangle.58

By about 11 a.m April 10, 1919, information of arrest and deportation of Dr. Kitchlew and Satyapal became known in the city. The ardent followers of the deportees went round urging the people to close their shops and assemble in the Aitchison Park, with the intention of proceeding to the Deputy Commissioner's House and demanding their release.

Another mob of some thousands made a determined attempt to wreck its vengeance on British Banks and Christian religious buildings inside the city and to murder every British they came across.
The National Bank of India was attacked and its Manager, Mr. Stewart was brutally murdered in one room and his assistant, Mr. Scott, was heaped on the bodies and set on fire. The bank building was set fire too, and the store goods were burnt open and their contents (piece-goods) looted. The Chartered Bank was then attacked and the furniture and fittings smashed up, but every effort to break open the safe failed. The Alliance Bank was similarly attacked: the crowd breaking open the entrance, rushed upstairs into the office rooms. Mr. G. M. Thomson, the Manager, fired through a gap in the door and killed one of the rioters. He then ran up the steps, to the top of the roof where he was followed by the mob. Driven from the roof, he came down the steps leading to his office, where he was seized, beaten and left for dead. Hearing that he was still alive, the mob rushed up again and finished him off and threw his body into the street below, there they heaped office furniture on it and set fire to it. The Bank safe was burst open and the contents, notes and cash were looted. The Religious Society’s Book Depot and Hall were burnt. The Town Hall, and the sub post offices at the Golden Temple, Majith Mandi and Dhab Basti Ram were looted. 59

Besides Miss Sherwood, a mission lady, was caught in the heart of the city while on her way to a girls’ school and was beaten with shoes and sticks till she fell down exhausted when she was rescued by some Hindus living in the same quarter and carried to their house. Outside the city, the mob set fire to Indian Christian Church, the bare walls of which only remained standing. The
Normal Girls’ School was attacked and Cloths, books etc., set on fire inside the building.\textsuperscript{60}

A day prior to the tragedy at Jallianwala Bagh, a meeting attended by about 100 persons, was arranged in the campus of the Hindu Sabha School at Amritsar with the initiative of Hans Raj. The idea was to have discussion about the arrests of Dr. Satyapal, Dr. Kitchlew and other local leaders and also to devise ways and means for the line of action to be taken in the near future.\textsuperscript{61} The discussion led to a decision, which was announced by Hans Raj that a meeting was to be held the next day in the campus of the Jallianwala Bagh under the Presidentship of Lala Kanheya Lal, an esteemed resident of the town. It was also made clear that a statement from Dr. Kitchlew would be read by his wife before the assembly of the people there. This decision was given a wide publicity in the whole city the next day before noon. Kanheya Lal denied before the Hunter Committee his having been approached by anybody for presiding over the meeting of 13 April. It seems that his name was simply advertised to attract the audience to gather in a large number in the Bagh.

Soon after his arrival at Amritsar, Brigadier-General Reginald Edward Harry Dyer halted at the railway station where he called a meting of the local officials including the district Magistrate and the Superintendent of Police. He was apprised of the earlier events in the city, especially about Miss Sherwood who was shabbily treated by the local mob. Dyer felt much concerned about the loss of European lives, damage to government property and last but not least about Miss Sherwood.
In order to have a spacious place for himself and his force, Dyer shifted his headquarters from railway station to Ram Bagh so that he could have a better glimpse of the civil population. Many ringleaders were arrested and punished severely. Several of them were chained and put under army custody. Besides Dyer warned not to hold any public meeting.

On April 13, General Dyer marched through the city with the civil officials and by the beating of drum got the following official order announced at many places. 'It is here by proclaimed to all whom it may concern that.... No person residing in Amritsar city is permitted to leave his house after 8-00 p.m. any person found in the streets after 8-00 p.m. is liable to be shot....'. Soon after this proclamation, two persons were deputed to go round the city to announce a counter-proclamation, moderately with a bang of tin, telling the people of Amritsar about a mass meeting to be arranged in the precincts of the Jallianwala Bagh on 13 April at 4-30 p.m. under the presidentship of Kanheya Lal an eminent advocate of the town.62

According to the available evidence, prior to General Dyer's arrival the audience estimated at 20,000. Hans Raj and a few others were standing on the improvised platform. An airplane was hovering over the meeting before the arrival of the troops. Hans Raj announced in the audience not to be afraid. The audience included many boys and children, and some men had come with infants in their arms. The people assembled there had no lathis or any kind of weapon with them. Besides some C.I.D men were there at the meeting.
A few minutes before the sunset, Dyer with the company of young officers, Briggs and Anderson, fifty riflemen, forty Gorkhas armed with their traditional weapons, the kukris and two armed cars, marched towards the Jallianwala Bagh with the clear intention of teaching the severest lesson of life to the peaceful assembly of the people. Undoubtedly the entrance of the Bagh was too narrow and, therefore, the armoured cars were parked out of the lane.

The main resolutions passed in the meeting dealt with two important issues—the first dealing with the severity of the application of the Rowlatt Bills and the second in connection with the firings of the previous day.

Dyer had a minute glimpse of the assembly of the people in the Bagh where the seventh speaker, Durga Das was speaking from the platform. The earlier six speakers were Rai Ram Singh, Dar Singh, Abdul Majid, Brij Gopi Nath, Hans Raj and Gurubaksh Rai. Dyer who was in independent command of the force under him was not to consult anybody at this point of time. He had already made up his mind to act in a way, which might be a lesson giving to the people of the Punjab. Not losing even a minute, he at once ordered his sepoys to adopt kneeling position, a usual posture for a soldier to fire. The firing order was given and the numerous volleys of shots began to pierce into the bodies of the people in the Bagh. It continued for about 10 minutes till the ammunition was exhausted. It panicked the crowd and they ran pell-mell in all directions. Even the assurance from Durga Das that the firing consisted of blank shots did not satisfy anybody. In a moment, men were falling dead and wounded on the ground.
When the firing ceased, nothing except dead bodies was visible in each and every corner of the Bagh. Some dead bodies were lying outside the Bagh. It so happened that the wounded persons, who tried to run, could not survive and fell dead after a vain attempt to save themselves. The wounded were crying for help but nobody around the locality of the Bagh dared peep out of their houses for fear of being shot dead. No medical aid was available for them. They also breathed their last on the next few hours. Many lives could have been saved with the timely provision of medical aid. The Bagh thus looked like a mini battlefield, which was full of numerous corpses and wounded persons.

There had been no agreement on the exact figures of those killed in this ghastly tragedy. Dyer estimated between 200 and 300 and official figures were 379 killed and over 1,200 wounded. Swami Shradhanand gave the figures as 1,500 killed, but Madan Mohan Malaviya stated that 1000 were killed. It is however probable that when 1,650 rounds were fired, the loss of lives must have been to the tune of a few hundreds and a much more number must have been wounded.

Dyer gives an unconvincing reason to the fact that the mob, which was considerable in number on account of the celebration of the Baisakhi day, would have become unmanageable and would have overpowered him and his small force rendering him to be too late to control the critical situation in the city. This was simply a working of his mind, which was not based on any kind of logic.
The aftermath of the tragedy was much more horrible. The regime of General Dyer perpetrated numerous kinds of other punishments, which were degradation personified. The water supply and the electric supply to the people of Amritsar were stopped thus putting them to unthinkable harassment. More than two persons were prohibited from any kind of meeting. Vehicles were commandeered and military authorities fixed prices of commodities. The censoring of the press was so strict that the ingress and egress of people to and from the Punjab was rigidly regulated. The sufferings of the student community at Lahore were unprecedented during the period of Martial Law. They suffered unbearable indignities, indescribable harassments and indiscriminate floggings at the hands of the authorities. The punishments were tantamount to expulsions, rustications, detention, forfeiture of scholarships, forfeiture of fee concessions and refusal of readmissions.

When the news of the tragic event percolated out of Punjab, India was convulsed, and there was an outburst of criticism and condemnation and a serious expression of the sense of dissatisfaction and anger against the British Raj for its inability to maintain perfect law and order without using illegal, highly questionable, inhuman, treacherous and atrocious means. There arouse quick and spontaneous demands from numerous quarters of the country for the recall of Michael O’Dwyer and Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy of India. Severe and drastic punishments were called for General Dyer and other administrators of Martial Law and the immediate release of Political and other innocent prisoners arrested and convicted before and during the Martial Law.65
General Dyer was cashiered and a majority in the House of Commons condemned his action. The House of Lords however, vindicated him by a majority vote. A huge fund was raised in England: his friends and well-wishers presented the collected amount along with a sword to him as a mark of approbation of his military services in India.

On 18th April 1919, Gandhi gave a press statement in which he suggested the temporary suspension of Satyagraha. He was indeed not very happy while giving such an advice. Exactly after a week of the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy, the members of the All-India Congress committee held a crucial meeting on 20-21 April in Bombay under the presidency of no less a leader than Madan Mohan Malaviya. The significant resolutions passed were as follows. The A.I.C.C protested against the passing of the Rowlatt Act and urged upon the Secretary of State for India to advise His Majesty the King-Emperor to disallow it. It emphatically deplored and condemned all acts of violence against persons and property which were committed at Amritsar and other places and appealed to the people to maintain law and order and to help in the restoration of public tranquility and it urged upon the government to deal with the situation in a sympathetic and conciliatory manner, immediately reversing the policy of repression.66

On 31st May 1919, Rabindranath Tagore informed the Viceroy that he might be relieved of his title of Knighthood in view of the policy followed by government in dealing with the troubles in the Punjab.67
On 14th October 1919, the Governor-General-in Council, with the approval of the Secretary of State for India, decided to appoint a committee to investigate the disturbances in Punjab, Delhi and Bombay and pinpoint their causes and the measures taken to cope with them. The President of the Disorders Inquiry Committee was Lord William Hunter, ex-Solicitor-General and the senator of the college of Justice in Scotland; and the other members were G.C. Rankin, Judge of the High Court, Calcutta; W.F. Rice, Additional Secretary to the government of India, Home Department; Major General George Barrow, Commanding the Peshawar division; Pandit Jagat Narayan, Thomas Smith, both members of the Legislative Council United Provinces; Chimanlal Harilal Setalvad, Advocate, High Court, Bombay; and Sardar Sahibzada Sultan Ahmed Khan, Muntazim-ud-Daula, Member for Appeals, Gwalior State. The secretary of the committee was H.G. Stokes, Secretary to the government of Madras. The committee, which was to conduct its inquiries in public as well as in camera, was required to submit its report to the Government of India.68

In their final findings, the members of the committee were not unanimous in their opinion: obviously the report, although published in one volume, had two phases—the first dealing with the majority report agreed upon by William Hunter, G.C. Rankin, W.F. Rice, George Barrow and Thomas Smith, and the second dealing with the minority report signed by Jagat Narayan, C.H. Setalvad and Sultan Ahmed.69 The majority report dealt with the
occurrences in Delhi, Bombay Presidency, Punjab, declaration of law and the kind of administration in these provinces.

The members did not agree in the view that the riots in the Punjab were in the nature of a rebellion. To suggest that they had the elements of a revolution and might have rapidly developed into one was an exaggerated view of the events, which was not justified.

The Committee criticized the action of General Dyer thus: ‘General Dyer’s action in firing on the crowd at Jallianwala Bagh is open to criticism in two respects. (First) that he started firing without giving the people who had assembled a chance to disperse and (Second) that he continued firing for a substantial period of time after the crowd had commenced to disperse.’ The Committee also opined that ‘General Dyer thought that he had crushed the rebellion and Sir Michael O’ Dwyer was of the same view. There was no rebellion which required to be crushed we feel that General Dyer by adopting an inhuman and un-British method of dealing with subjects of His Majesty the King Emperor, has done great disservice to the interest of British rule in India. This aspect it was not possible for the people of the mentality of General dyer to realize.’

The leaders of the Indian National Congress did not expect a true picture of the tragedy at Jallianwala Bagh and the atrocities perpetrated on people after the promulgation of Martial law in the Punjab. They therefore appointed a committee on 14th November 1919 and its members were M.K.Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Fazalul Haq, C.R.Das and Abbas Tyabji and K. Santanam was the
secretary. They were to examine, sift, collate and analyse the evidence already collected by and on behalf of the sub-committee regarding the tragic events which occurred in April 1919 in some of the districts of the Punjab, and to supplement such evidence, where necessary, and thus to present their conclusions.

The Congress Committee entered upon their work on 17 November 1919 and concluded their findings on 20th February 1920. They examined the statements of over 1700 witnesses and selected for publication about 650 statements. Every admitted statement was verified by one of them and was accepted only after they were satisfied as to the bona fides of the witness. It is evident that some of the witnesses had made very serious allegations against officials.71

The Committee, in the end, strongly recommended for the repeal of the Rowlatt Act; for relieving Michael O’ Dwyer of any responsible office under the Crown; for relieving General Dyer, Colonel Johnson, Colonel O’Brien, Bosworth Smith, Rai Sahib Sri Ram Sud and Malik Sahib Khan of any position of responsibility under the crown; for local inquiry into corrupt practices of the minor officials; for the refund of the fines collected from people who were convicted by the special tribunals and summary courts and for removal of punitive police.

The report of the committee did not escape notice of the press. Where as the Times of India72 emphasized the expert character of the report based necessarily on incomplete and not well-shifted data, the Bombay Chronicle73
stated thus: 'It has been written in such a spirit of detachment, studied
moderation, sense of truth and responsibility that the conclusions of report
ought to command the universal acceptance not only of Indians but of all
Englishmen also'.

The decision to hold the thirty-fourth session of the Indian National
Congress at Amritsar was deeply attached with the toughing sentiments
generated by the tragic incident in the Jallianwala Bagh a few months earlier.
The city, an historic one on numerous counts, had gained much publicity after
April 1919 when the tragic happenings were featured in the press and in
numerous political and social meetings at several places in the Punjab and
elsewhere. Under the Presidentship of Motilal Nehru, Undoubtedly the session
was well attended. There were 7,031 delegates who assembled on 27th
December 1919 at the pandal in the Aitchison Park, opposite the railway lines,
in Amritsar.74

In his presidential speech, Motilal Nehru mentioned about the ‘popular
cries’ in the Punjab, which put the main provisions of the Act in a nutshell. ‘No
Vakil, no appeal, no daleel’. The launching of Satyagraha was another
significant item in Motilal Nehru’s speech. He applauded the trenchant
criticism leveled by Mahatma Gandhi in his numerous speeches, statements
and writings against the Rowlatt Bills, with his incessant efforts, the masses of
India were suddenly awakened and the message of Satyagraha entered the
humblest home. He was quite sure that unless the people adhered to truth and
discard fear, they could not get rid of 'slave psychology', the outcome of generations of repression which had been our 'sad inheritance'.

Motilal Nehru touched upon the question of Khilafat, which he stated was one of the significant issues of the day. He made it clear by saying that 'The entry of Turkey in the war was a most momentous event from the Indian Muslims’ point of view.

Numerous resolutions passed at this session of the Indian National Congress. The members of the Congress thus dispersed with the deep feelings of sympathy for those who had suffered inexplicable insults, indignities, tortures and economic losses. It felt much concern about their arrests, convictions, deportation and deaths. It made the people realize that the cause they were pleading was for their innocent and non-violent brethren. This kind of feeling soon spread in every nook and corner of India.
The widespread reaction against Rowlatt Act of Government dishonesty presented a new opportunity for Hindu-Muslim co-operation. Demonstrations against the Rowlatt Bills marked the first time that new techniques of mass political campaigning were used, with a limited degree of success, on an all-India basis. But violence broke out during the demonstrations, and the government responded with severe repression, especially in the Punjab. During the year that followed, the Khilafat and Punjab grievances became linked as two compelling reasons for Muslims and Hindus to join in opposing the government.

Regional, linguistic, class and sectarian differences had always divided Muslims in India. This lack of homogeneity is a factor, which needs to be borne constantly in mind while examining the actions and pronouncements of the Khilafat leaders. But Indian Muslims had a common denominator, Islam, and with it a set of symbols of solidarity: the community of believers, the ulmah; its symbolic head, the Caliph; its central place of pilgrimage, Mecca; its scripture, the Quran; its sacred law, the Sharia; and its local reference point, the mosque. This common faith and common set of symbols offered a way to articulate a common identity based on religion, and the means for an astute set of political leaders to mobilize Indian Muslims as a political constituency. The Khilafat movement was principally a campaign by a particular group of Indian Muslim leaders to unite their community politically by means of religious and
cultural symbols meaningful to all strata of that community. As such, it can be viewed as a quest for "pan-Indian Islam".76

The year 1919 was one of trial and error in Indian politics. The Hindu-Muslim entente came into existence, as did two new Muslim political bodies: the All India Khilafat Committee and the Jamiat al-Ulamma-e-Hind. These two bodies largely supplanted the Muslim League on the Indian Muslim political scene until the end of the Khilafat movement. Then, in 1920, debate within the Khilafat Committee and the National Congress led to abandonment of the timeworn technique of petitioning the government for political concessions in favour of the new strategy of non-co-operation. From this new organizational and strategic base, a mass political following could be mobilized.

This two-year process, leading up to the agreement on a mass movement of non-co-operation, was by no means a smooth one. Disagreements among the leadership persisted, differences of strategy supervened, and misunderstandings arose as to meanings of statements, which varied according to the exponent and the audience.77 The Khilafat was a symbol, which meant different things to different people, but the anti-British nature of the symbol provided some consistency, and on this basis the Hindu-Muslim alliance was built.

At the outbreak of the World War when the Indian Muslims found Turkey arrayed against Britain they felt uneasy. For them, it was a "problem in loyalties".78 The British sensed the Muslim dilemma. To assure them of the safety of the Khalifa and the Khilafat, the Government issued proclamations
and made statement. Lloyd George made the most important statement, the then Prime Minister of England, on the 5th January 1918. It ran as follows: “Nor are we fighting to destroy Austria-Hungary or to deprive Turkey of its Capital or of the rich and renowned lands of Asia Minor and Thrace, which are predominantly Turkish in race.” The Indian Muslims laid great store by the British Prime Minister's assurance. It helped to augment recruitment among them. They formed a sizable portion of the Indian Army. Out of the three hundred and sixty thousand recruits in the Punjab one-half were Muslims.

After the War, the Allied powers - England, France, Italy and even Greece- tried to grab as much Turkish territory as possible. Practically, the whole of Thrace except a small belt round Constantinople, Mesopotamia, Palestine, Syria and other Arab territories were taken out of the Turkish Empire. By the treaty of Sevres, British repudiated the pledge given to the Indian Muslims during the war and the Sultan of Turkey became virtually a prisoner in his palace under the control of the army of occupation.

Gandhi and other leaders of the Indian national movement supported the Muslim demand regarding the Khilafat for various reasons. First, it was a breach of the solemn pledge given by the British Premier to the Indian Muslims; secondly, it helped the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity; thirdly, many non-Muslim Indian nationalists viewed the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire as envisaged in the peace terms and the assumption of mandatory powers by England and France in Mesopotamia and Syria as potential danger to the Indian freedom movement; fourthly, it "furthered the anti-imperialistic
struggle”, and lastly, many felt that as fellow-citizens, it was the duty of non-Muslim Indians to help the Muslims in their hour of difficulty.  

Mahatma Gandhi felt “most keenly the awful position” and preached Satyagraha as “the only remedy” to salvage the situation. On September 18, 1919, Gandhi addressed the Khilafat meeting in Bombay, which adopted a resolution expressing anxiety over the dismemberment of Turkey and demanded the fulfillment of British promises. The October 17, 1919 was observed as ‘Khilafat Day’. The word ‘Khilafat’ bore a very strange meaning in most of the rural areas. People thought it came from Khilaf, an Urdu word meaning ‘against’ and so they took it to mean, “opposed to Government”. There was a strange mixture of nationalism, religion and mysticism.

All India Khilafat Day was to be the first test for those who wanted to organize a mass demonstration of Indian Muslim unity on the Khilafat question. Arrangements for the day showed a considerable degree of centralized planning, as well as the inevitable personal and local variations. The Bombay Committee, and the well lined pocked of Seth Chotani, helped finance meetings as far away as Calcutta. A publicity committee traveled to the major cities and issued statements to the press, posters, and handbills. The statements included a moderate appeal by Dr. Ansari for fasting and prayers by Muslims all over India, but hartal only if proper arrangements were made to ensure its peaceful and voluntary character. Mahatma Gandhi issued a similar statement to Hindus.
Khilafat Day was a huge success. The bazaars of India did little business on that day. In Bombay, both Shias and Sunnis offered special prayers for the continuation of the Caliph's temporal powers. Gandhi joined the Bombay Khilafat Committee leaders in addressing a public meeting following the prayers, where the Lucknow resolutions were reaffirmed. A mass meeting of approximately 20,000 Muslims and Hindus on beach marked the observances in Madras. In Calcutta a mass meeting at Town Hall addressed by Fazalul Haq overflowed into the square outside. Elsewhere in Bengal, there were meetings in most district towns and in some villages in the Muslim majority rural areas. Delhi had the biggest “monster meeting” of them all. Some 50,000 assembled to hear speeches by Dr. Ansari, Mufti Kafayatullah, Swami Shradhanand, and Asaf Ali, a barrister and secretary of the local Khilafat Committee. In the hinterland of Sindh, the pirs or local religious leaders were active in organizing protest meetings in villages.

In general, Khilafat Day demonstrated that the Muslim leadership was beginning to reach a broader audience, at least among the urban, newspaper-reading population. The rural and illiterate Muslims still remained outside the political range, with the exception of Sindh and some areas of Bengal. Hindu-Muslim unity was also in evidence in various places, but inevitably in Khilafat Day was predominantly Muslim.
Conclusion:

After the successful Satyagraha career in South Africa, Gandhi introduced the concept of Satyagraha to India in Champaran region. He initiated his Satyagraha campaign with local problems and aspirations. Though at the outset they seemed to be regional problems, still they had repercussions on national scale. In fact Gandhi was setting different examples to show the way of confronting the mighty British Empire. By initiating regional Satyagraha movements, Gandhi introduced different components of Satyagraha methods.

The forced cultivation of indigo by means of might, impositions and other immoral acts was the first concern of Gandhi. Through self-assessment he found the facts and figures of Champaran region. When he was asked to leave the place, he simply ignored and readily accepted the punishment for doing so. Thus he ignited among the Indian masses that disobeying for the just cause is not an offence but the right of every citizen. At the same time he vanished the fear of going to jail.

In the case of Ahmedabad mill hands’ strike, Gandhi had to agitate against his own friends who were supposed to be financiers to his Ashram. He demonstrated the different techniques of arbitration, strike, fasting and other peaceful means of protest. He comprehended them, the qualities of morality, self-sacrifice, and teamwork atmosphere.
In Kheda also Gandhi laid special emphasis on fearlessness, awareness, self-suffering and sacrifice. Though the struggle ended with coercion between Government and peasants, Gandhi was not much happy with the proceedings of the struggle.

It would thus be clear from the description on the three struggles, the Satyagraha in Champaran, Ahmadabad Mill hands’ Strike and Kheda Campaign- that Gandhi came to evolve fully the technique of non-violent Satyagraha. He equipped the armoury of non-violence with its essential weapons such as Satyagraha, constructive programme, fast, compromise and mass-contacts. He used these weapons with success in limited regions.

These local movements were followed by national crisis like passing of Rowlatt Bill, which curtailed the liberty and legal rights of the people in a manner very drastic in nature and the inhuman atrocities of Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. Both these events and subsequent Khilafat question paved the way for Nonviolent Non-cooperation Movement.
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