CHAPTER II

ROWLATT SATYAGRAHA

The beginning of the year 1919 drew the attention of the country towards the question of Rowlatt bills. The Rowlatt Bills were the postscripts to the policy of balance between conciliation and repression which the British had evolved during the war. The rulers feared the loss of coercive power against conspiracy and political outrage when the Defence of India Act lapsed after the war. A Committee was therefore, appointed in December, 1917, led by Mr. Justice Rowlatt, to review the situation. "Its report, published on July 19, 1918, described Bengal, Bombay and the Punjab, disturbed by emigrants returned from America, as centres of dangerous conspiracy. In the light of these dangers the Committee recommended that the Government should have emergency powers to deal with any area officially proclaimed subversive. Despite the opposition of the Indian members of the Legislative Council, Lord Chelmsford, the Viceroy of India assented to the bill on 21st March, 1919."¹

The reaction to the bills was immediate and vigorous throughout India. The response has been described by Rushbrook as follows:

"To the educated class in general the Act stood as something symbolic, the very embodiment of past resentment and future fear as full confirmation of these

likely, if baseless, apprehensions that India was to be thwarted in her legitimate aspirations, as proof unquestionable that henceforth the sympathetic policy pursued by the administration towards the political developments of India would be replaced by a regime of iron oppression.

"The masses identified the Act with their own sufferings, reading into it all their deep-seated disappointment at Govt.'s failure to perform an economic miracle in the reduction of prices." 2

The reaction to the Rowlatt bills in the Punjab was of a vigorous and emphatic kind. It ultimately resulted in a tragic and terrible event namely, the Jallianwala Bagh massacre which changed the future course of politics in India.

"The agitation against the Act commenced in February and ultimately extended to every town of importance in the Central and South-east Punjab. In its earlier stages it was largely in the hands of the Provincial Congress Committee and of such bodies as the 'Indian Association' of Lahore'. The most prominent of their members being in nearly every case, Pleaders and Vakils, but they found a ready sympathy in the commercial and trading classes also. The leaders took their tone from the articles in the provincial press, which from the first showed its determination to inspire the most uncompromising opposition to the Act." 3

The first reaction was voiced by the press, both English

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2 L.F. Rushbrook - India in 1919 Report; Calcutta, 1920, p. 31
3 V.N. Dutta - New Light, op. cit., p. 239.
*Martial Law Commission Case - decided 5th July, 1919.*
and vernacular, which condemned the provisions of the bills in an emphatic tone. It called upon the members of the Legislative Council, the leaders and the general public to take up the question and oppose it with one voice. 'The Tribune' commented in its issue dated 21st January, 1919:

"The recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee ..., the Govt. must be aware, evoked a storm of indignant protest in the country and many men of professedly moderate views whole-heartedly joined in the condemnation. But the Govt. of India appear to have attached little or no importance to these expressions of popular opinion and to have framed the bills more or less exactly on the lines suggested by the Committee."

The 'Punjabee' of 21st January, 1919 apprehending the danger if the bills were passed against the wishes of the general public wrote:

"Its (Committee's) recommendations have been condemned in the strongest possible terms, as it is apprehended that, if given effect to, they would rather than checking the revolutionary movement help in its growth by interfering with the fundamental rights of the Indian people, by impeding the healthy growth of public opinion, and by placing the liberty of individuals at the mercy of an unsympathetic and unprogressive bureaucracy."

The bills were brought forward at an inopporune time when the people were expecting relief and rewards on the

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4 The Tribune, 21st January, 1919.

termination of the war. Mr. V.J. Patel, speaking about them in the Legislative Council said:

"They are inopportune, and they should not have been brought forward at this juncture. The wonder is that the blunder in this case is being perpetrated at a time, when the country, judging from outside signs, is quite tranquil, and when the Government itself has just emerged triumphant out of a colossal struggle. At such a time what one ordinarily expects is legislation of which the obvious effect would be to add to the happiness and contentment of the public, to expand its liberties, to secure its greater well-being - whether political, social or economic. Instead what the public in India is being offered is legislation which usually accompanies or follows a state of panic, legislation of which one sure effect would be to vest increased power in the executive, to restrict some of the most cherished rights of the people and to take away some of the most valued safeguards of the liberty of the subjects." 6

On 1st. February, 1919 the Secretary of the All India Congress Committee sent a circular to the Secretaries of the District Committees in the whole country, saying that "the Hon'ble Pt. M.M. Malaviya desires that protest meetings against the said bills should be held as soon as possible throughout the country and resolutions wired to the Government of India." 7

The call issued was immediately taken up in Lahore where a public meeting was held under the auspices of the Indian Association on 4th February, 1919, at Bradlaugh Hall, to

6 The Tribune, January 22, 1919.

protest against the bills. "This first meeting in Lahore was due to the general pressure of public opinion rather than to the machinations of any particular person, and by the time Gandhi launched his passive resistance movement the agitation had become, to quote 'The Tribune', "An all India movement", and one of exceptional vigour." The meeting was attended by leading men of all classes of people, prominent among them being Mr. Manohar Lal, M.A., Bar-at-law, who presided, Rai Bahadur Bakshi Sohan Lal, Messrs Duni Chand, Dr. Gokal Chand Narang, Dharam Das Suri, Rambhaj Dutt Chaudhary, Ganpat Rai and Nanak Chand. "The stage, the pit and the galleries were packed with people, and the proceedings were conducted throughout with a perfect unanimity and a strong and deep rooted feeling of protest against the proposed bills." Four resolutions supported whole-heartedly by the audience were passed, protesting against the bills, urging the Government to withdraw them and if the Government did not concede then asking the non-official members of the Legislative Council and the public to oppose them.

The immediate effect of the meeting at Lahore was seen at Amritsar where a meeting was held on 5th February and then again on 9th February when Dr. Gokal Chand Narang came from Lahore and spoke on the Rawlatt Bills. Meetings were also held in the important towns of Lyallpur, Ferozepur and Multan districts.

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9 The Tribune, February 7, 1919.
These meetings were confined to urban areas and there were no signs of protest in the rural areas - the people in these areas being unaware of the Rawlatt bills. "Outside half a dozen large cities of the province - Lahore, Amritsar, Jullundur, Lyallpur, Multan, Ferozepur - there had been little or no feeling on the subject of either the new reforms or the Rawlatt bills and the people as a whole are interested solely in local and economic issues." 10

In the meantime Gandhi started his Satyagraha movement which he said is intended to replace methods of violence and was a religious movement, a process of purification and penance. It sought to secure reforms or redress of grievances by self suffering. The movement was started at Ahmedabad on 24th 1919. The Satyagraha vow was drafted by Gandhi himself, which ran as follows:

"Being conscientiously of the opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No.1 of 1919 and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No.2 of 1919 are unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice, and destructive of 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 hereafter appointed may think fit, and we further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property." 11

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On 1st March 1919, a meeting of the signatories to the satyagraha pledge was held at Bombay under the presidency of Gandhi to form a Sabha and appoint an executive committee. The next day Gandhi issued a manifesto inaugurating Satyagraha and Civil Disobedience to laws.

In the Punjab, the first meeting in connection with the proposed Satyagraha was held in Lahore on March 9. A few days thereafter, i.e. on March 23, a similar meeting was held in Amritsar. The meeting was addressed by Dr. Kitchlew and Pandit Rambhaj Dutt of Lahore.

In order to further his Satyagraha Movement against the Rawlatt bills which became law in March, 1919 Gandhi decided to observe a special day as a day of mourning throughout India. He decided that hartals should be observed, i.e. there should be complete suspension of business. March 30, the last Sunday of the month was fixed for the purpose.

At Amritsar a meeting was held on 29th March, at which hartal was declared for the following day. Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal, who had played a prominent part since the beginning of the agitation were again conspicuous and evoked a great enthusiasm among the audience of approximately 50,000. After the meeting Dr. Satyapal was served with an order under the Defence of India Act, prohibiting him from speaking in
public in consequence of a speech he had made at the meeting held on March 23.

Similar meetings were held in various towns of Ferozepur, Jhang and Multan districts, declaring hartal for the following day.

On 30th March, complete hartal was observed in Amritsar. There was a general closing of shops and many persons were seen wearing black ribands. No disturbance took place and the day was generally looked upon as a holiday. A meeting was held in the evening in the Jallianwala Bagh at which Mahatama Gandhi's message was read.

"The two meetings of the 29th and the 30th March, excited the feelings of the public very much and their behaviour at the meetings and after their dispersals showed that they were full of hatred and contempt towards the Government."¹²

Hartals were also observed at Fazilka, Hoshiarpur, Panipat, Karnal, Multan and a number of other towns. The hartal at Amritsar and Multan was so complete that it was hailed as a triumph for its organisers by the Lahore press.

At Lahore the hartal was not held on the 30th March, since it was postponed for the 6th April, although it had

earlier been planned. The kitchens in most of the college hostels were to be closed on Saturday night and students were to fast for 24 hours. Notices were pasted at the D.A.V. College, calling on students to appear on Sunday in black turbans and to go barefooted. A public meeting was to be held in the Bradlaugh Hall. At the last minute the hartal was postponed for the 6th April on account of directions issued in this connection by the Satyagraha Sabha, Bombay.

The week from 30th March to 6th April was devoted to the preparations for the hartal on the 6th April. Meetings were held at various places under the auspices of the Congress Committees where they existed to take a decision with regard to the proposed hartal. In other places they were held either in Arya Samaj temples or in Bar Rooms and Committees were formed to promote the hartal. Important leaders visited various places and lectured on passive resistance. The daughter of L. Munshi Ram (later Swami Shradhanand) visited Ludhiana, Swami Satya Deo, a follower of Gandhi visited Amritsar, and Dr. Kitchlew and Pandit Dina Nath delivered lectures at various places in Jullundur district. Shop to shop visits were made to promote the hartal. Thus no efforts were spared to make the hartal a complete success. In Multan it was decided to boycott the welcome which the Municipal Committee had decided to give to the 230 Punjabis who had recently returned from active service in Egypt and Palestine.
In Delhi there had been a clash of the people and the police on 30th March. The police had opened fire, as a result of which a few persons had died. When the news reached the Punjab it had a great effect upon the people. "The Delhi disturbances added fuel to the fire. The few who had lost their lives by defying the law were exalted into 'martyrs' and glorified in the press. Meanwhile the attitude of the extremist press became more violent and in Lahore and Amritsar posters appeared urging the populace at Amritsar to "Kill and Die" and warning the British officials at Lahore that there will be a great ghadr (rebellion) at Lahore on 6th April - our National Day. Be prepared to meet all that awaits to befall you Englishmen on that day.

The Government was alarmed at once and in Lahore the Superintendent of Police forbade processions in streets for one month under the Police Act. In Amritsar Dr. Kitchlew, Pt. Kotu Mal, Dina Nath and Swami Anubhava Nand were served with orders not to speak in public on 4th April — similar to the one which had already been served on Dr. Satyapal. In Multan the D.C. called fifteen prominent members of the Hindu-Muslim Panchayat and warned them that violence in enforcing the hartal would be treated as criminal. In Gujranwala also the D.C. warned the leaders and told them that they would be held responsible.

After the violence at Delhi referred to above,
the press tried to impress upon the people the non-violent aspect of the satyagraha movement and urged upon them to remain peaceful.

In view of the disturbances at Delhi, the local Congress Committee of Amritsar decided not to hold the hartal on the 6th and the Deputy Commissioner was informed accordingly by some prominent citizens in the afternoon of the 5th. However, Drs. Satyapal and Kitchlew were in favour of observing the hartal. "Anyhow a secret meeting was called at Dr. Satyapal's house and by 9-10 a small party, swelled to 200 by sightseers was going round the town proclaiming the hartal by beat of drums. After 2 P.M. notices were posted to the same effect." 13

**Hartal of the 6th April**

The 6th of April witnessed hartals in almost all the important towns of Punjab particularly that of the Central Punjab. At some places attempts were made to enforce the hartal, but these attempts remained unsuccessful. At many places partial hartal was observed or it was observed only for two or three hours. At places like Hoshiarpur the hartal was apparently observed but the shopkeepers continued to supply articles to customers in a clandestine manner. The hartals

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on the whole remained peaceful and non violent and there was no clash with the police.

"There was little evidence of any coercion by those interested in the hartal; in very many cases there had been so little previous organization or canvassing that it might almost be described as spontaneous, and where persuasion was needed, the response was ready and unhesitating. More than one Indian Officer of the Government was struck by the unanimity with which all the classes of townspeople — even the lowest — joined in the closure of shops or abstained from labour."

In Amritsar where the hartal was organised only in the preceding evening, it was a complete success — it was a triumph of organisation. In the evening a large public meeting was held, which was attended by forty to fifty thousand people. This meeting was about the best, from the point of view of attendance, that was ever held at Amritsar and everything passed off peacefully.

College students took an important part in the organisation of the hartal. Subscriptions were raised for the purchase of mourning badges and poems about the Act were composed and recited in the hostels. The most significant of

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of their contribution was in the form of posters which appeared in the streets of Lahore and urged people to observe the hartal whole-heartedly. Some of the posters were as follows -

"Think for a while that your country has to face a mountain of troubles and yet you refrain from helping her. Who would like to be so wretched as not to keep fast and close shops on Sunday, the 6th instant, and not partake in the distressed conditions of the country. May they go to hell who will not suspend their business and keep fast."

While another said:

"Open your eyes, 0' children of Bharat, See what tyranny is being done to your country. These tyrants are determined to annihilate you. Remember - if you don't give up your lives, each child of yours will be laid low by the guns of the tyrants."

In Lahore also the hartal was complete. Large groups of people were seen parading on the streets and shouting 'Gandhiji ki Jai' and forcing people to take off their caps and head dresses.

In the morning of the 6th groups of people assembled at the Ravi and came back to the town in small parties which soon turned into a procession down Anarkali Bazar, carrying a black flag with Gandhi's picture on top of it.

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The Tribune described the completeness of the hartal in the following words:

"Those who had the eyes to see know how complete was the suspension of business, how absolute the hartal that has from time immemorial been a recognised weapon of the weak to draw the attention of the strong to their genuine grievances.... From north to South, from east to west, one paraded through the streets in deep sadness and dark gloom amid shops closed and places of business with shutters down.... All the markets in the city, the grain markets, the fruit markets and vegetable markets and the druggists shops suspended business. Public hackney carriages and tongas refused to be in evidence or to ply inspite of stringent orders from the Municipal Office. No porters would work on the day of national mourning and, it is said, gentlemen alighting from the trains had to carry their own luggage." 16

In the week between 30th March and 6th April 200 hartals were held throughout India. Of these the largest share was that of the Punjab, where 73 hartals took place, there being 66 in United Provinces and comparatively few in other provinces, thereby showing that about 1/3rd of the total number of hartals were in the Punjab. 17 "If the national protest day under the advice of Mahatama Gandhi was celebrated throughout India, we doubt if it was observed with more completeness or greater enthusiasm anywhere else than it was in the Punjab." 18

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16 The Tribune April 8, 1919.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
There had been some demonstration of Hindu-Muslim unity during the hartals of 6th April which was further strengthened by celebrating the Ram Naumi festival on the 9th April, as the day of Hindu-Muslim Unity. In the past the festival was celebrated all over the Punjab with great enthusiasm by the Hindus and it usually resulted in communal troubles. This year the day was celebrated both by the Hindus and the Muslims with absolute unanimity. Hindus and Muslims drank from the same cup and, instead of religious slogans, shouts of "Gandhi ki Jai" and "Hindu Muslim Unity Zindabad" were raised.

In Amritsar Dr. Kitchlew and Satyapal had held informal conferences of leading Hindus and Muslims to devise ways and means to prevent feelings of hostility between the two communities. It was resolved that Ram Naumi should be made the occasion for a ceremonial demonstration of Hindu-Muslim Unity. The Secretary of the Ram Naumi Committee wrote to the Superintendent of Police of Amritsar that police arrangements would not be needed at the mela and that volunteers, both Hindus and Muslims, would guide the traffic and make other arrangements connected therewith.

At Amritsar the Hindus drank formally out of vessels held by the Mohammedans; at Lahore drinking booths were erected for the common use of both the communities; at Batala
many people had the words 'Allah' and 'Ram' or 'Allah' and 'OM' stamped on their clothes as a mark of unity. The celebration of Ram Naumi jointly by the Hindus and the Muslims added much to the general excitement. "It is clear that the spirit which produced the subsequent disorder was bred in the three days which followed the hartal of the 6th" — such was the official view of the celebrations. The officers viewed the day with disdain and fear for the future. They were confirmed in their feelings that some strict action was called for.

**Internment of Kitchlew and Satyapal**

The hartal on the 6th greatly upset the authorities, especially those of Amritsar. The hartal was viewed by them not merely as a part of passive resistance but as a preliminary stage of some revolutionary outbreak. Miles Irving, the Deputy Commissioner of Amritsar, reviewing the situation after the 6th, said — "They (the leaders) were working up for some kind of mischief for some future time which I could not foresee. It struck me that the leaders of the movement were disciplining the mob with a view to some concerted form of passive disobedience to authority which would paralyse Government." He wanted to take action against them (the leaders) for he

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believed that their presence would lead to some sort of rebellion. He asked for an increase in the military force in the city. About the leaders he wrote - "Who are at the bottom of this I cannot say... Kitchlew himself I regard as the local agent of very much bigger men — who those are can only be guessed from their rage at the Rawlatt Acts which strike at the root of organised anarchic crime."

The Government took immediate action upon this letter and ordered deportation of Dr. Kitchlew and Dr. Satyapal from Amritsar and their internment in Dharamsala - another district town in the Punjab. Since the order was within the powers of the local Government under the Defence of India Act, sanction from the Government of India was not required. Although Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal had not defied the orders restricting them from speaking in public, yet the order for their deportation was passed. The order was passed in the evening of the 9th and the D.C. decided to deport them in the morning of the 10th. The Government was afraid of the influence they had, but did not care for reaction of the people to this order against such influential people. The public had already shown its resentment and anger against the earlier orders, restricting them from speaking in public, when at a meeting held on the 6th April, the Congress Committee of Amritsar passed a resolution.

requesting the Government that the orders against Dr. Satyapal and others be rescinded. The 'Punjabee' wrote in this context "They had, of course, recently addressed a number of meetings but nobody knows that their speeches or actions exceeded in any way bounds of law.... Nothing could be more unjust or unfair than this." The Government, as per their experience of 1907, where the deportation of Sardar Ajit Singh and Lala Lajpat Rai had quieted the situation, believed that the deportation of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal would have the same effect.

In consultation with some officers, including Capt. Massey, the officer commanding the station, the D.C. decided to send for Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal to his place at 10 O'Clock in the morning on the 10th, and to have them taken from there by motor car by the Superintendent of Police (Mr. Rehill), with a small escort. Arrangements were made in consultation with the officer Commanding for dealing with any disorder which might take place. A labour corps was in cantonment two miles away; the British infantry at the Amritsar garrison were to be kept in reserve at the Ram Bagh gardens; and mounted pickets were to be posted at the Rego Bridge (which leads to the fort), at the Hall Gate bridge, and at the

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21 The Punjabee 8th April, 1919 in Punjab Native Newspaper Report.
hospital level-crossing. It was further arranged that the Civil Surgeon, Lt. Col. Henry Smith, I.M.S., C.I.E., should, in case of need, use his motor ambulance and collect European women and children in the Fort. Written orders were passed by the D.C. though not publicly promulgated, to the effect that whereas he had reason to believe that a mob from the city would attempt to approach the District Courts with the intention of overawing by force or by show of criminal force the constituted authorities, no group of persons exceeding five would be allowed to cross the railway line. These orders were given to three European Magistrates, the crossing were pointed out to them, and they were told to keep back any crowd, peacefully if possible, but by military force, if necessary.

The Government's apprehension of trouble as a consequence of the deportation is further evident from the orders which Capt. Massey gave to the officer at the fort to have his gun in position, to have a machine-gun ready to cover English women and children in case they stood in need of protection, and finally not to hesitate to open fire if the mob made for the fort or attacked the railway station.

At about 11.30 A.M. the news of the deportation spread in the city like wild fire and shops began to be closed and the crowds started collecting. "The reaction was so sudden and spontaneous that it is hardly an exaggeration to say
that all the shops were closed within a quarter of an hour."

"By-the-bye, by their sturdy independence, lofty patriotism and active participation in public movements, the two gentlemen had, long before the advent of satyagraha, established their place in the hearts of their fellow townsmen." So the deportation of such influential and respected men caused alarm in the public. A large crowd gathered in the Hall Bazar and made its way through the Hall Gate and over the Hall Bridge, at the farther side of which there was a mounted picket. The crowd wanted to reach the Civil Lines to meet the D.C. and to express their resentment over the deportations. The crowd went over the bridge to cross the railway lines. "The appearance of the crowd was extremely hostile. People were saying, "They have taken away our leaders "where is the D.C.? We will tear him to pieces." I understood that the common object of the mob was to secure the immediate release of Kitchlew and Satyapal and to kill the D.C. if they could succeed." The feeling of the crowd is further evident from the evidence of another witness Dr. Muhamad Abdullah Fauq, who stated that he was with the crowd and the cries were that they must see the D.C., ask him where their leaders were, and if he would not grant

22 Civil and Military Gazette April 13, 1919.


*This point that the crowd was saying that they will tear the D.C. into pieces has not been supported by any other witness.
their release, insist on them also being taken to the same place.\textsuperscript{25}

One significant fact was that this angry crowd did not take note of the Europeans while proceeding towards the Civil Lines. Mr. Jarman, a municipal Engineer, who passed by the crowd said - "I was cycling into the city at 12.45 p.m. and met a crowd coming towards the Hall Gate. They took no notice of me."\textsuperscript{26}

When the crowd reached the Fort Bridge, a mounted military picquet stopped the crowd from crossing the railway lines and entering the Civil Lines. Mr. Beckett who had come there to act as Magistrate on duty tried his best to convince the crowd that it would not be allowed to cross the bridge and reach the Civil Lines, but he could not make himself heard. The crowd, on the other hand, succeeded in pushing back the picquet making the horses restive and uncontrollable by hitting them with sticks. Then the crowd started stoning the picquet. It is said by some that before the stone-throwing the soldier had fired in the air. At the same time the D.C. reached the place. Mr. Beckett went to get reinforcement, Capt. Massey went to Ram Bagh to bring the infantry. At the same time a picquet under Capt. Dickie

\textsuperscript{25}Congress Inquiry Committee Report, Vol.II, p.32.

\textsuperscript{26}C. & M. Gazette April 13, 1919.
and some infantry under Lt. Brown arrived. At this, the D.C. left the spot. The crowd continued to throw stones in order to pursue the picquet to allow them to cross. Mr. Comor, an Assistant Commissioner told Capt. Dickie that it was his duty to disperse the crowd and to open fire. On this two British soldiers opened fire and fired three or four shots. The effect of this was that the crowd came to a standstill but did not disperse. Shortly after that Mr. Plomer, Deputy Superintendent of Police, arrived from the Police Lines with 24 foot police and 7 Sawars. The police had muskets loaded with buckshot shots at the ready position about 40 yards away from the crowd. On this some local lawyers volunteered to take back the crowd. Mr. Plomer gave them a chance and the lawyers succeeded in taking them back in the direction of the Telegraph Office. The Fort Bridge and the Hall Bridge were then occupied each by a small infantry and a third picquet was kept in reserve. By this time a large crowd had gathered on the Road Bridge. The D.C. was called there. The D.C. and Mr. Plomer made persistent efforts to force back the crowd and warned them that firing would be opened if they did not go back. They did not fire as two Indians were trying to force back the crowd. But at that very time the crowd made a rush and started stoning the picquet. The non-commissioned officer-in-charge was given the order, and the crowd was fired upon and between 20-30
casualties occurred. This incident took place at about 2 p.m.... This is what Mr. Maqbool Mohammad, High Court Vakil, who together with Mr. Salaria, was trying to reason with the crowd, says with reference to the second firing — "Salaria and I shouted out to the D.C. and the officers to get back and not to fire, as we still hoped to take the crowd back. A few of the crowd threw wood and stones at the soldiers. The soldiers at once opened a volley of fire without any warning or intimidation."27

The crowd which was forced to return from the Hall Bridge and Road Bridge was different from the crowd which had gone towards the bridges in the morning. The morning crowd had shown no feeling of hatred for the Britishers, and, in spite of great enthusiasm and excitement, had remained non-violent. The second crowd returned full of contempt for the Government and the Britishers. They were now bent upon taking revenge upon the Government in particular and the Britishers in general. They came back with sticks, lathis and sandals and smashed various government buildings. Mr. Jarman says - "I heard a crowd rushing back about one O'Clock crying "They have killed two of us. Bring lathis..." The crowd that had been shouting quickly returned in increased numbers. The first

building demolished was the Post Office in the Town Hall. The office was at the back of mine. They broke the windows, looted the place, and set fire to it. They left the post office and came to my office and smashed the windows. I had a loaded revolver, but happily the police arrived on the scene, under their very capable leader. I heard him give the order to charge and the crowd went away."

The crowd then went to the National Bank where Mr. Stewart the Manager and Mr. Scott the Assistant Manager were brutally beaten to death, and their bodies were burnt in a pile of bank furniture. The building itself was sacked and burnt. The crowd then proceeded towards the godowns where large quantities of piecegoods were stored and resorted to looting. The Alliance Bank was also attacked, the Manager Mr. G.M. Thompson was murdered, thrown into the street and then burnt under the pile of bank furniture. As the building was owned by Indians it was not destroyed — an incidence of marked racial hatred. The Chartered Bank was also attacked, and glass panes and other articles were smashed. An attempt was being made to set it on fire when the Deputy Superintendent of Police arrived with 25 constables and dispersed the crowd. This took place before the second

firing at the Hall Bridge.

The crowd which was dispersed from the road bridge and foot bridge was joined by a crowd from Aitchison Park and attacked the Telegraph Office. Telephone instruments were smashed into pieces and the telephone exchange was destroyed. This put out of order the whole telephone system of the town. Capt. Massey had earlier in the morning ordered a picquet in the telegraph office, which rescued the telegraph master, but with recourse to 18 rounds of firing. The mob also damaged and looted the Railway Goods yard and murdered Guard Robinson of the North Western Railway. Sergeant Raulands, electrician to the military work, was also murdered.

The racial hatred of the mob could be gauged from the fact that no European of either sex was spared by them. The mob attacked Miss Sherwood, a lady missionary, who was bicycling in a narrow street in the city. She was attacked and knocked down. When she tried to take refuge in a house the door was slammed on her face. She was again knocked down. She was left in the street by the mob believing that she was dead. Later she was given refuge by some Hindus. Another incident of racial hatred was the search made for Mrs. Eadson, a lady doctor in the Zenana Hospital. It is said that she was heard saying that the Hindus and the Muslims had got what they deserved. The search was made twice but both times she was able to conceal herself.
The Indian Christian Church and the Religious Book Society's depot and hall were burnt. An attempt was also made to burn the Church Missionary Society Girls School, but the attempt was foiled by the police. The acts of demolishing the buildings and murdering the Europeans were stopped by the afternoon, but the looting in the bank continued till evening.

One significant action of the mob was their attempt to isolate Amritsar from the outside world. Telegraph wires were cut, and a party set out to damage the railway line towards Lahore. In this, however, they could not succeed on account of fire from the Railway Police. Bhagwantala Railway Station — about a mile away from the Golden Temple — was set on fire and its godown was looted. Later, during night, the Chheharta Railway Station was attacked by a mob of villagers, but they only broke the lamps. At about 10 p.m. a reinforcement arrived from Lahore. In the evening the crowd assembled in Khair Din's mosque where a Sikh and a Muhammadan openly preached murder of Europeans and told the people that the British Raj had ended. Rioters were seen patrolling the city with lathis in their hands. There was complete lawlessness in the city. The number of persons killed on April 10 was approximately ten.

The people on the 11th wanted to take out the dead
bodies in a procession for cremation/burial. They had the intention to cremate or bury them in the Jallianwala Bagh. Some young lawyers came to the Civil Lines for making the arrangements. The Commissioner told them that only small parties would be allowed to go to the burial ground and that they would be allowed to go after 2 O'clock and they will have to return by 4 O'Clock. These orders were carried out - the dead were taken from Khair Din's mosque out by the Sultanwind Gate. Large crowds followed them but only within the city and not further. At the same time rumour were being circulated that Lahore Fort and Anarkali had been occupied by the Indian Troops who had rebelled. The D.C. gave these lawyers a notice to be distributed in the city. The notice ran as follows: "The troops have orders to restore order in Amritsar and to use all force necessary. No gathering of persons or processions of any sort will be allowed. All gatherings will be fired on. Respectable persons should keep indoors."37

On the 11th a meeting was held and volunteers were appointed to go round the bazars, as watchmen, with long bamboo sticks of which 3 or 4 hundred were purchased for this purpose. Though excitement was witnessed among the crowd, on the whole the crowd remained peaceful and no incident of violence or breach of law occurred.

37 Disorders Inquiry Committee Report - Amritsar.
On the other hand, the Government of India, in consultation with the authorities of Delhi, Bombay and the Punjab took steps under the Defence of India Act to prohibit Mr. Gandhi from entering Delhi or the Punjab. On the 9th when he was travelling from Bombay to Delhi in a train, he was served with the order which he refused to obey and was arrested at Palwal in the Punjab, and was sent back to Bombay. This order coincided with the order for the deportation of Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal. The Governments of Delhi and Punjab feared that Gandhi's entry into their area would kindle violence amongst the public. But far from lessening the trouble it precipitated the events. "The worst occurrences were in the Punjab and Amritsar in particular where the news about Gandhi coincided with the arrest of two Punjabi politicians Drs. Kitchlew and Satyapal," In the context of the arrest of Gandhi, 'the Tribune' wrote:

"Needless to say, there will be universal feeling of deepest and most genuine sorrow that suffering in the shape of arrest and deportation, to be followed, presumably by imprisonment, should thus come to one of the greatest gentlest and most spiritually minded men that ever lived - and that at a time when he is so little able to bear it physically... With the arrest of Gandhi the campaign inaugurated by him against the Rowlatt Act begins in right earnest." 31


31 The Tribune, 11th April, 1919.
The effect of these two incidents, the arrest of Gandhi and the news of the incidents and firing in Amritsar was immediate in Lahore. It made the atmosphere, which was already highly charged, extremely tense and almost explosive. The news arrived in Lahore in the evening. The civil authorities quickly arranged for troops to aid the police if need arose. Piquets were stationed at the Telegraph Office, the Gymkhana Club (where there were a large number of European ladies), at the Government House and at European hotels. The main object of the authorities was to prevent the crowd from entering the Civil Lines. As soon as the news spread (and it spread like wild fire), crowds began to assemble at various places in the city, shops were closed and slogans of "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai" were raised. A large number of people emerged from the Lahori Gate with a black flag in front of them, as a sign of mourning and proceeded along the Anarkali Bazar to the Mall. Mr. Lucas, Principal of the Forman Christian College, who saw the crowd described it as a highly excited crowd comprising a large number of students. The crowd met Mr. Fyson, the District Magistrate, Mr. Cocks, Deputy Inspector General of Police, C.I.D. and Mr. Clarks, Deputy Superintendent of Police, near the 'O'Dwyer's soldiers' Club'. Mr. Fyson asked the crowd to retreat but they refused and passed round him. One of the mob caught him. As the mob was becoming uncontrollable, Mr. Fyson gave orders to open fire. From a
dozen to thirty shots were fired with the result that one man was killed and about seven wounded. At this the mob started retreating and the orders were given to cease fire.

The mob, though dispersed, gathered again in large numbers near the Lahori Gate where there was already a crowd. Mr. Clarks and his party made efforts to disperse the crowd but with no success. Ultimately with the cavalry brought by Mr. Broadway the crowd was pushed back to the Circular Road where the crowd became very dense. Mr. Broadway estimated the crowd to be between 15 to 20 thousand. The crowd threw stones at the officers injuring Mr. Broadway. Seeing the situation out of control Mr. Fyson was called, but before his arrival Mr. Broadway ordered fire and two or three rounds of buckshots were fired. This firing checked the crowd only in that particular quarter. The rest of the crowd remained turbulent and continued their attack. Mr. Rambhaj Dutt Chaudhary an eminent, public leader made strenuous efforts to control the crowd but to no avail. At this time the crowd was so excited and enraged that they did not pay any heed to Ch. Rambhaj Dutt. Even Mr. Fyson's warning that fire would be opened was not heeded. Finally an order to open fire was given. Eighteen men were wounded out of which 3 died later. The crowd then dispersed.

On the morning of 11th April, all the shops were closed. A large crowd of about 25,000 Hindus and Muslims collected in the Badshahi Mosque. At the gate of the mosque was hung
a banner with the inscription, "The King who practises tyranny cuts his root underneath". The people in various offices stopped work and declared it to be a day of mourning. "I found that the clerks of the Accountant General's office had struck and refused to work. Some of the clerks would not resume work on the ground that it was a national mourning day, but the majority alleged that they were anxious to go back to their houses as they were afraid of the same being looted. With the consent of the Accountant General almost all the clerks, except those of the currency office, were given leave for the day, after some heated discussions." At about 1.30 p.m. a meeting was held in the Badshahi mosque in which Rambhaj Dutt, Mohaim Shah Taj Din and Khalifa Shuja-ud-din took part. First there were Muslim prayers. Then Shuja-ud-din made a speech to dissuade the people from observing hartal but said that the military or the police should not come. He read out Gandhi's message from a newspaper. His speech was moderate. Rambhaj Dutt spoke in a rather violent manner. He said that he himself was present at the disturbances on the 10th and that the police had fired at crowd after they had retreated. He characterized this action as perverse and tyrannical and said that the king should depend not on arms but on management. He further said that Germany had fallen because of internal rebellion. People were anxious to know answers to some

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questions which were written on pieces of paper. The questions were, shall we open the shops or not? shall we go to the office or not? And should we follow the instructions of Mr. Gandhi that orders contrary to conscience should be disobeyed. Rambhaj suggested the formation of a Committee, for he said that he alone was unable to answer these questions. He advised the people not to go to the Mall Road for five days, and that no students should go to school and colleges. Then Allah Din started speaking. At the same time Harkishen Lal, Dharam Das Suri, Duni Chand and Piyare Mohan Dattatreya arrived on the scene. They were greeted with the shouts of Gandhi Ji Ki Jai" etc. Harkishan Lal gave a subscription of Rs. 10,000 towards the committee for the langar khanas, as the hartal made them essential. It was decided that the hartal should be observed the next day also. The people left with usual shouts of "Delhi Ke Shahidon Ki Jai" "Amritsar Ke Shahidon Ki Jai". "The procession in which men armed with lathis and dandas were leading passed through the Hira Mandi to the Gumti Bazar. On the way pictures of Their Majesties, the King and Queen on the house of Raghbir Nath Sahai were destroyed by the mob. The mob then pulled down, picked and defaced a sign board of one Fakir Chand, Contractor, bearing pictures of Their Majesties, the King and the Queen. Then there were shouts, "Hai Hai George Mar Gaya."\[33\]

A conspicuous feature of the procession was the Pandas Fauj. This body paraded the streets of Lahore in the evening of the 11th. "They marched "two deep" carrying their sticks as if they were rifles at the slope or tract. At constant halts they knelt, by numbers, as if in a firing position. On numerous occasions Chanan Din (the leader) made inflammatory speeches proclaiming that he and his band were rebels and looked, not to His Majesty, the King, but to Germany, Turkey and Kabul as their suzerains. He invoked the assistance of God and of these powers to overthrow the British Government. He also made reference to the Rowlatt Bill. Chanan Din's speeches were applauded by the mob, and the Fauj as it passed along was joined by recruits who were supplied with sticks."  

In order to regain control over the city, the authorities sent a column of some 800 police and military under Col. Frank Johnson. This force was supported by two aeroplanes in case the troops on the march should be bombed or fired upon from the houses. Notice was given of the consequences of any such action. Police and military men in groups of 20 were sent out to various parts of the city.

On the 12th a meeting was held again in the Badshahi  

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Mosque. The crowd was armed with lathis and took no notice of the warnings of authorities to disperse. A Muslim Magistrate was sent to clear the mosque. They came out of the mosque but collected in Hira Mandi from where they refused to disperse. Mr. Fyson gave warnings that they would be fired upon but the crowd was adamant. Instead of dispersing, they started throwing stones at which fire was opened. Eight rounds were fired in all and the crowd began to disperse. One man was killed and 28 were wounded.

In the afternoon some moderate leaders who were not involved in the hartal got into touch with the promoters of hartals and meetings and tried to bring about a compromise with the Government. The organisers laid down these terms - withdrawal of troops from the city; release on bail of all persons arrested and the restoration of the wounded.

The intermediaries arranged a meeting on the 13th at Town Hall at which both the leaders and the D.C. were to be present. But the meeting ended without any results. The leaders reiterated their demands, but the D.C. insisted on the shops being opened as a proof of a good faith. The D.C. warned that martial law would be promulgated. The meeting having failed the hartal continued and subscriptions were collected for langars and for cheap food shops. The district was proclaimed under Seditious Meetings Act and
notices were given forbidding assembly of more than ten persons. At night the Wagah Railway Station on the Amritsar line was sacked and burnt and a train was derailed.

On the morning of 14th April the Government of the Punjab, acting under the Defence of India Act, deported Ch. Rambhaj Dutt, L. Duni Chand, and L. Harkishen Lal from Lahore. The hartal continued but no public meetings were held. Telegraph wires were cut so that Lahore was isolated except by wireless.

The disorder steadily spread to the villages. Some excitement was witnessed in some other places of the Punjab also. Partial hartals were observed on the 10th in Gurgaon, Palwal, Hissar etc. and meetings were held at Ludhiana and Sialkot. The spread of the news of Amritsar resulted in further disturbances - in places like Kasur and Gujranwala. News of a violent kind spread everywhere.

**General Dyer and Amritsar**

On General Dyer's taking the charge of Amritsar on 11th April, the city came under military control, yet normal conditions could not be restored. "The D.C. in his evidence said that it was freely said that it might be the Raj of the Sarkar outside (Amritsar) but inside it was 'Hindu-Mussalman Ki Hakumat'. On the 12th April a strong column under

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General Dyer marched round the city as crowds were reported to be collecting outside it. These were made to go back peacefully and the troops arrested some persons connected with the incidents of the 10th. General Dyer says that the bearing of the inhabitants was most insolent and many spat on the ground as the troops passed. At one point - the Sultanwind Gate - there were shouts of 'Hindu Mussalman ki Jai'. The mob was dispersed with great difficulty. The advisability of opening fire was considered but General Dyer thought that he should first warn people by proclamation. According to O'Dwyer - "a state of rebellion, riot and loot had been prevalent in Amritsar between the 10th and the 13th and property to the extent of about 30 lakhs had already been looted. Villagers from the surrounding country gathered into Amritsar on the 12th and the 13th to take a hand in the loot." But the real reason for the pouring of village people into Amritsar was the Baisakhi festival which was celebrated every year on the 13th of April very enthusiastically in the sacred city of the Punjab.

On the morning of the 13th of April, General Dyer went through the city in company with the district Magistrate and some others, and had a proclamation read out by a Naib

36 Ibid.

Tehsildar to the people who were summoned by beat of drum at a considerable number of places. "From an examination of the map showing the different places where the proclamation was read out it is clear that in many parts of the city the proclamation was not read. The proclamation was drawn up in English and was as follows:

"It is hereby proclaimed to all whom it may concern that no person residing in the city is permitted or allowed to leave the city in his own or hired conveyance or on foot without a pass. No person residing in Amritsar city is permitted or allowed to leave his house after eight. Any persons found in the streets after eight are liable to be shot. No procession of any kind is permitted to parade the streets in the city or any part of the city or outside of it at any time. Any such processions or any gatherings of four men would be looked upon and treated as an unlawful assembly and dispersed."

It is said that the people did not take this proclamation seriously and remarks were made that it was false and the General would not fire. Simultaneously with this proclamation, a counter-proclamation was being read out at the instance of one Hansraj, to the effect that a meeting would be held in the afternoon at Jallianwala Bagh. This meeting had also been announced at the earlier public meeting which had been held on the 10th in Dhobi Khatikan area.

"The notification by the military authorities, which

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followed the announcement, to the effect that Martial Law was introduced, and that all meetings were prohibited, it is clear from evidence before us, did not reach the bulk of the people at Amritsar. It appears to have been proclaimed only in the following places: (i) near Hathi Gate, (ii) Lohgarh Square (3) Dhobi Khatikan (4) Khatri Sant Singh (5) Khatri Sufaid (6) Khatri Karam Singh (7) Lakkar Mandi (8) Quila Bhangia (9) Bagh Jhanda Singh (10) Hall Bazar. Thus the more populated areas appear to have been left out."39

At about one O'clock General Dyer received news that people were planning to hold a meeting in the Jallianwala Bagh. He did nothing to prevent the meeting. On being asked, he said, "I went there as soon as I could. I had to think the matter out. I had to organise my forces and make up my mind as to where I might put my picquets. I thought I had done enough to make the crowd not to meet. If they were going to meet, I had to consider the military situation and make up my mind as to what to do, which took me a certain amount of time."40

At about 4 O'clock in the afternoon, General Dyer received definite information that a meeting was being held at Jallianwala Bagh. He then proceeded through the city.


He left piquets at pre-determined places. Then he proceeded straight to Jallianwala Bagh, with 25 Gurkhas and 25 Baluchis armed with rifles, 40 Gurkhas armed with Khukries and two armoured cars. On arriving at Jallianwala Bagh, he entered with this force by a narrow entrance which was not sufficiently wide to allow the armoured cars to pass. They were consequently left in the street outside.

Jallianwala Bagh was not in the literal sense of the word a Bagh (which means a garden). It was a rectangular piece of unused land, surrounded almost entirely on all the sides by back walls of buildings. The entrances and exits to it were few and imperfect. On entering the Bagh, General Dyer found a large crowd assembled and being addressed by a man on the raised platform. According to the report sent by Dyer to the Adjutant General after the massacre the crowd numbered about 6,000, but it is probable that the crowd was much more numerous. The crowd was a mixed crowd comprising both the city dwellers and the villagers, the participants in the earlier agitation and the innocents. No one in the crowd had fire-arms though some of them may have been carrying sticks. There is no evidence as to the nature of the address to which the audience was listening. Many people had come to listen to L. Kanhya Lal, whose name was announced as a speaker in the morning. However, L. Kanhaya Lal himself denies having ever been asked or having consented to preside
at any such meeting. "He is a respectable pleader of long standing, 75 years old, and he is very popular (Statement 29). We have no doubt that his statement is correct. We believe that his name was used to draw a large crowd".\(^{41}\)

As soon as General Dyer entered the Bagh he stationed 25 troops one side of the higher ground at the entrance and 25 troops on the other side. Without giving the crowd any warning, which he did not think necessary as they were defying his orders, he gave orders to open fire and the firing was continued for ten minutes. Inspite of the fact that the crowd began to disperse as soon as the firing was opened, the firing continued and 1,650 rounds were fired by the troops. An investigation conducted by the Government with the help of the Allahabad Sewa Samiti revealed that the number of dead was approximately 379. Of these 87 were strangers or villagers. "No figure was given for the wounded but their number may be taken as probably three times as great as the number of killed." "The firing was so terrific and slaughter so complete that it took two days to remove the dead and the wounded and the walls of the houses, especially towards the South and the east were riddled with bullets".\(^{43}\) Dyer made no arrangements for


\(^{42}\)Ibid., Vol.II, p.45.

\(^{43}\)Ibid., Vol.I, p.56
removing the wounded and left them lying there. Their condition was made worse on account of the Martial Law order which had forbidden people from coming out in the streets after 8'O Clock." On being questioned as to whether he had taken any measures for the relief of the wounded, General Dyer explained that the hospitals were open and medical officers were there. The wounded only had to apply for help. But they did not do this because they themselves would be in custody for being in the assembly. I was ready to help them if they applied."\(^{44}\)

After the firing at Jallianwala Bagh no serious outbreaks occurred in Amritsar. However, shops remained closed for some days, but normal life gradually returned.

Mr. M.R. Jayakar, a member of the Congress Committee which was appointed to look into the Punjab disturbances, believed that "the Jallianwala Bagh meeting was a plan of revenge worked through Hansraj. There is no doubt that the Europeans in Amritsar desired to avenge the murders of the 10th, by bombarding the city or by taking an equally drastic measure. The stopping of electric supply and the cutting off of water connection on the 11th, though there was no disturbance of any sort on that day or the next, are indication in that direction."\(^{45}\) General Dyer did nothing to prevent

\(^{44}\)Ibid., Vol. II, p.47.

\(^{45}\)M.R. Jayakar Papers, Punjab Inquiry II.
the meeting, nor did he, on his own admission, take any steps to communicate with the organisers of the meeting and warn them, though he knew for several hours beforehand that it was going to take place.\textsuperscript{46} The fact that the English wanted to take revenge is further proved by the evidence of L. Dhadan Das, a respectable citizen of Amritsar. He went to the authorities and found them all angry. "All were in excited temper, so much so that Mr. Sangmour is reported to have said that for every European life one thousand Indians would be sacrificed. Some suggested bombarding of the town."\textsuperscript{47}

The meeting at the Jallianwala Bagh was announced twice — once on the 12th and then again on the 13th — and both times at the instance of Hansraj. From the very beginning, he took a keen interest in the meeting. Though the meeting was to begin at 5 o'clock, he was seen in the Bagh at 2 o'clock and looked after even such minute arrangement as the cleaning of the Bagh. There is evidence that some C.I.D. officers came to the Bagh and had a talk with Hansraj and concealed themselves in the surrounding houses. They appear to have known beforehand of the impending catastrophe, for they warned one of the witnesses

\textsuperscript{46}B.G.Harniman: \textit{Amritsar and our Duty to India}, op.cit., p.

\textsuperscript{47}Congress Inquiry Committee Report(Statement 1), Vol.I, p.58.
who appeared before the Congress Inquiry Committee, not to remain in the Bagh, as the soldiers would come and fire on the people. There is further evidence that some of the people who were trying to leave the garden, before the arrival of the soldiers, were told by the C.I.D. officers not to go away, as Kanhyia Lal was coming shortly. Likewise, after the arrival of the soldiers and before the firing commenced, a few cautious individuals who were trying to run away through the main gate, were pressed back into the Bagh.

When the soldiers entered the Bagh through the main gate, there was stir among the people at their sight and they got up and started running. At this stage, Hansraj shouted to the people to be seated and not to run away. He told them that Government would never fire on them, with these words he waved his handkerchief, came down from the platform and on the pretext of proceeding to speak to the military, disappeared in the direction of the soldiers, leaving no traces to show where he went or how he saved himself.

A piquet was also stationed at Sultanwind Gate, which was at a considerable distance from the Bagh. The piquet had been apparently posted to deal with any strangers, who might have successfully escaped from the carnage in the Bagh. "As a matter of fact, we find that some individuals
running away through the gate were fired upon.... On all these facts it is suspected that the meeting had been planned by Hansraj and his associates with a view to making a large number of people gather at the Bagh. Whether the authorities at Amritsar were parties to this plan and guided it in their desire for revenge, we are unable to say, as we have not enough evidence before us to support a definite finding. But it is at any rate perfectly clear that General Dyer took the fullest advantage of the meeting, in effecting, on the inhabitants of Amritsar, as complete a punishment as was needed to satisfy their lust for revenge. ¹⁴⁸

After-Effects of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre

Till this event the agitation connected with the Rowlatt Act was confined to principal towns and cities but this event spread the agitation to almost the whole of the Punjab. Of all the blunders committed by the Punjab officials this shooting of the crowd at Jallianwala Bagh was the worst. The 13th of April happened to be the Baisakhi day and as is usual the rural population turned up strong to celebrate the fair in the sacred city of the Sikhs, and made up the bulk of the people referred to above. It is these people, who knew nothing either of the

¹⁴⁸ M.R. Jayakar - Punjab Inquiry II.
Rowlatt Act or the Satyagraha or of any notification prohibiting meetings, who were shot down and those who escaped carried the news of the tragedy to distant towns and villages.

Gujaranwala was a town of 30,000 inhabitants. Though at a meeting called at the initiative of pleaders and barristers a hartal was decided upon for the 6th of April, but it was not successful owing to the weak response of the people. The only thing which made the people active and responsive was the news of the disturbances in Amritsar and Lahore on the 10th. The signs of uneasiness were seen on the 12th when a desire was exhibited to observe hartal which was finally decided on the 13th for the 14th. The occurrence at Lahore and Amritsar had made the authorities very cautious, and all available police were called into the headquarters, making a force of 50 men.

The hartal would have been of a limited character and non-violent but for a news, which spread like wild fire, that a slaughtered calf was hung up from a girder on the railway bridge on the Lahore side. Hindu-Moslim relations were perfectly friendly at that time and the people therefore, suspected that that was the work of someone in the C.I.D. This gained strength from the fact that there were several Hindu temples in that vicinity. The effect of this news was most unfortunate on the public.
Soon thereafter some people informed the crowd that they had seen a slaughtered pig on the other side of the station. On hearing this the people flared up.

There had already been a hartal in the bazar, all the shops being closed. The mob stoned a train going to Wazirabad, set the Gurukul bridge on fire, and attacked communications. The mob, armed with crow bars, hammers, lathies and railway implements for breaking up the line reached the Grand Trunk Road where it came face to face with Mr. Heron and other officers and a police guard. The mob refused to disperse and wanted Mr. Heron to salute them by taking off his hat. One man who had come close up made a sudden attack on Mr. Heron and stone-throwing began. Mr. Heron on his own responsibility ordered his men to fire and himself fired his revolver. This firing took place at 11 O’Clock, wounded two or three and the mob retreated but stone-throwing continued and people kept chasing Mr. Heron. One man was threatening to kill Mr. Heron since he had shot his brother.

Meetings were being held in the city since morning and when some men wounded by the firing at the railway line were brought to one of these meetings the temper of the crowd got worse. At the Post Office another crowd had collected, which burnt the building and the mob did not allow the fire engine to come. All water connections were
out. The mob then indulged in other acts of destruction and arson like burning the tehsil building, the church, the dak bungalow and the district courts. The police force was inadequate and the Police Lines were themselves attacked. The mob was being dispersed by firing but they assembled again. The mob then proceeded to wreck the Industrial School. At this time three aeroplanes despatched from Lahore arrived.

The aeroplanes had been sent off as the speediest method of meeting the demand for assistances about 1 P.M. It was at about 3.10 p.m. that the first machine arrived, and saw the church, the Railway Station and the goods yards on fire. The state of the town is shown by the evidence of Capt. (now Major) D.M.M. Carberry, M.C., D.I.F.C., Flight Commander, No. 31. Squadron, whose aeroplane arrived first. At heights varying from 100-700 ft. he flew over Gujranwala and the villages within an area of three miles to reconnoitre the position. He saw that the Railway Station was burning and also goods in the goods shed. There was a train up on the line which appeared to be on fire as well. The station was crowded with people and there were large number of people around it, on the roads leading from the city to the Civil Lines and in the streets of the city. The European Church and four houses in the Civil Lines on the east of the railway were also burning.

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Instructions had been verbally given to Major Carberry by Lt. Col. F.F. Micchin, D.S.O. M.C. Wing Commander, who had himself received them verbally from the General Staff of the 16th Division. They were to the following effect:

That the native city was not to be bombed unless necessary;

That crowds were to be bombed if in the open; that gatherings near the local villages were to be dispersed if coming or going from Gujranwala.

Major Carberry first took action outside the town of Gujranwala. He dropped three bombs on a party of about 150 Indians which were making for Gujranwala. One of the bombs failed to explode while the other two scattered the party. Three people were seen to be falling - a boy and a woman were killed. A little later two bombs were dropped on a party of some 50 men going back from Gujranwala. Only one bomb burst but did not cause any harm. When the aeroplane was returning to Gujranwala, the Major observed a party of about 200 Indians in a field near a large red building on the north-western side of the town. This was the Khalsa High School and Boarding House. A bomb was dropped wounding many. In the town two bombs were dropped which burst. He also fired 100 or 150 rounds upon parties of Indians coming from the Railway Station and going towards Civil Lines. Out of the other two aeroplanes one did not take action and the other fired, 25 rounds upon a gathering
of 20-30 persons. Col. O'Brien, Deputy Commissioner, Gujranwala, says that the total casualties in Gujranwala, on the 14th, including those killed by bombs and machine-guns and shot by police, were 11 killed and 27 wounded.

Out of the three aeroplanes the work of only the first is noteworthy. Major Carberry violated the instructions given to him by bombing the Khalsa School and Boarding House and the town. The coming of the aeroplanes must have come as a great surprise to the people. They would have no time to think of the meaning of the presence of them and to escape before they could start throwing bombs.

The next day another aeroplane under Lt. Dodkins viewed the conditions between Lahore and Gujranwala and fired with machine-gun twice to disperse crowds.

A conspicuous feature of the disturbance at Gujranwala was the activity of large numbers of youths of the school age i.e. 12 to 14. They occupied the front ranks of the crowd armed with springs of kerosene oil which were used for incendiary purposes for attacks on Government buildings.

Another place which witnessed the effect of Lahore and Amritsar was Kasur - a town of 25,000 inhabitants situated in the Lahore district. Before the 10th the town was peaceful and witnessed no signs of hartal. It is said that the people of Kasur were being taunted for their ineffectiveness and the Lahore and Amritsar traders warned them of boycotting
their bundles. "The events at Kasur on Saturday were the
direct outcome of the riots at Amritsar with which Kasur
has very close business relations.\textsuperscript{50}

Some emissaries also came from Amritsar to promote
the hartal. So a hartal was observed on the 11th at the
instance of a local shopkeeper Nadir Ali Shah, who, at the
head of a procession of schoolboys and one teacher, went
about the town forcing the shopkeepers to close the shops.
Next morning crowd under the leadership of Nadir Ali Shah
formed a procession in the manner of Muharram carrying a
chhopoy with a black flag symbolising the funeral of liberty
and beating their breasts and making cries of lamentation.
The crowd was peaceful but grew violent as a speech was made
by Nadir Ali Shah in which he exhorted the people to remove
the knife which was at their throats. This led to acts of
destruction, instruments in the Telegraph Office were put
out of order, furniture was set on fire, the Railway booking
office was ransacked and disordered, an oil shed was
burnt and telegraph wires were cut. Some European
passengers, alighting from the trains coming from Ferozepur,
Lahore and Patti were attacked. The mob then looted Mandi
Post Office and set on fire the main Post Office. Then they

\textsuperscript{50}C & M Gazette - 16th April, 1919.
went to the Police Station in a highly agitated and violent mood. Mr. Mitler, the Sub-divisional Officer, and the Deputy Superintendent of Police, who arrived there gave orders to fire. Fifty seven shots were fired in all — four men died and several others were wounded. The strength of the crowd was estimated to be 1500-2000. In the afternoon of the 12th troops arrived from Ferozepur and checked the situation. Martial law was declared on the 16th.

There were disturbances in other places also like Lyallpur and Ferozepur. In the Lyallpur district a serious outbreak appears to have been imminent from the 13th to the 16th April. The horrid tales of Amritsar, Lahore and Gujranwala inflamed the people of Layllpur as of so many other towns.

Having seen the success of the economic pressure at Kasur it was applied in other places like Ferozepur. "Rumours attribute the earlier disturbances to the fact that Delhi, Lahore and Amritsar decided to dishonour hundies from important places, should they not join the passive resistance movement."

Meanwhile the news of the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy spread to various places. There was serious disorder at

\[51 \text{C. & M. Gazette, April 18, 1919.}\]
fourteen other places along the railway line in the Gujranwala District alone including all the urban centres, Wazirabad, Akalgarh, Hafizabad, Ramnagar, Sheikhupura, Chuharkhana and Sangla.

On the 11th attempted dacoities occurred in the villages of Hakowal and Jagdeo Khurd in Amritsar and there was a similar danger at Tarn Taran. At Hafizabad a serious attack was made on a European traveller in a passenger train. Hartal was also observed on 14th and 15th and telegraph wires and signals were damaged. Much damage was done to the railway communications at Sheikhupura and Sangla, and at Moman the station was burnt and looted by a mob of villagers. On the 15th the mob at Chuharkhana damaged rails about 1½ miles Dhaban Singh station were torn up and telegraph wires cut.\(^{52}\)

At Wazirabad hartal had already been decided upon for the 15th. This resolve was strengthened by the news of the disturbances at Gujranwala. On the 14th, a mob went towards a village, Nizamabad, pulled down telegraph wires and damaged railway bridges and crossing gates. They sacked and burnt the house of a Church missionary.

Elsewhere sporadic attacks were made on the communications: telegraph wires were cut near Sialkot; at Pathankot and Okahara attempts were made to interrupt

\(^{52}\)Congress Inquiry Committee Report, op. cit., Vol. II, p. 82
the railway line; at Bahadurgarh a railway bridge was set on fire; there was a strike at Jakhal and Tohana, and the staff came out for a time at Samasata

To check this agitation the Government applied repressive measures. Seditious Meetings Act and Section 15 of the Police Act were applied in various places. Martial Law was proclaimed in Gujranwala District on 16th April, 1919, and in Gujrat district on 19th April, and in Lyallpur on 24th April. Thus by 24th April Martial Law had been proclaimed in the districts of Amritsar, Lahore, Gujranwala Gujarat, and Lyallpur. On 15th April a proclamation was issued declaring Martial law throughout the Lahore District. The hartal still continued - only some shops opened in the suburbs. On the 17th an order under the Martial law was issued requiring the general opening of shops. The shops opened on the 18th.

II

General Characteristics of the Agitation

A most important part in spreading the agitation against the Rowlatt Bills was played by the Press all over the country. By publishing the decisions of Mahatma Gandhi and the Satyagraha Sabha they provided a link between the central and provincial organizations. "If we look for a special organisation created ad hoc in the Punjab
we shall not find it. It was not necessary. There was the Satyagraha conspiracy on the one side and there were the local organisations on the other, ready to receive and eager to obey, its mandates or suggestions. The main link between them was supplied by the press, which lent the whole of its great influence with the educated classes to the furtherance of the movement. By this means the ideas of the leaders were passed on to the local heads, and emissaries, or copies of newspapers carried them into outlying centres and in some cases even into the villages."

Some of the Delhi papers like the 'Congress', the 'Inqilab' and the 'Vijaya' were very popular amongst the people of the Punjab. In the beginning of June, 200 copies each of the 'Congress' and the 'Vijaya' were being received daily in only one town, namely Bhiwani in the Hissar District. The very first issue of the 'Inqilab' produced considerable excitement in Lahore. These papers also discussed the problems of the Punjab and hence their popularity increased. The 'Inqilab' wrote: "(Sir M.O'leer's Rule) has made the people forget the tales of tyranny and oppression of ancient times. The knife of barbarism began to be used on the throats of the Indians." The 'Congress' also described

53 Home Pol.B. 1920, No.373.

the reign of O'Dwyer in the following words - "His (O'Dwyer's) despotic and tyrannical method of administration has revived the memory of the barbarious ages .... His greatest achievement is that he totally deprived the Punjab of its national life. He mercilessly throttled poor Urdu newspapers. Such was the influence of these papers that on 19th April, 1919 the D.C. of Ferozepur wired to the Government of Punjab - "In the interest of the situation here I suggest your moving Government to forbid the circulation of 'Congress' and 'Inqilab'. 56 At that time, over 1,000 copies of these papers/coming into the province. These papers were sold in numbers at every important railway station.

The provincial press also took up the cause of Satyagraha and made it popular amongst its readers. The interval between the publication of the Rowlatt bills and their consideration by the Legislative Council was devoted by the press to an effort to force the non-official elected members into some striking act of dissent such as their resignation in a body or their boycott of the Council. "It is an important point to notice that it was the press that started and led the agitation and not the members of the Council, although the subsequent speeches in the Council

certainly stimulated the press to further excesses.”

When finally the bill was passed the 'Waqt' of Amritsar wrote - "Gird up your loins to secure your freedom.... Remember that while it is a sin to usurp any one's rights, it is a still greater sin to let oneself be cowed by anyone for no reason. Act with perseverance and courage and take the Satyagraha vow.”

On the next day, the 'Waqt' published a cartoon showing the Secretary of State in the act of handling the order of liberty to India, when a black cobra, released from a basket by Mr. Rowlatt, bites her.

The repressive policy already adopted against the press was further tightened. The Government was particularly hostile to 'The Tribune'. J.P. Thompson, Chief Secretary to the Punjab Government, during the course of his evidence said: "I think most people in the Punjab will agree that 'The Tribune' has been more responsible than any other single agency for the anti-British feeling and it was on this account that we stopped our advertisements in the paper.”

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7 Ibid.


After the riots in Delhi that had taken place on 30th March, 1919, the Government was particularly strict with some newspapers and orders were passed against them. "Apart from the general order under the Defence of India (Consolidation Rules, 1915) directing the submission for pre-censorship of all reports of and references to, the present disturbances, it has been found necessary to direct the compulsory pre-censorship of the 'Tribune', 'Punjabees' (owned by Hon'ble Rai Bahadur Ram Saran Dass) 'Partap' (a new Arya political journal which has since ceased), 'Arya Gazette', 'New Herald' and the 'Waqt' (Home Rule paper of Amritsar, also now defunct). The 'Aftab' has been further made to publish an unqualified withdrawal of a mischievous Note on Rowlatt Act and its compulsory pre-censorship is being ordered."60

In the Punjab the Congress was not well organised. It did not have branches in many towns - not to speak of rural areas. Moreover, the Home Rule League had not been successful in the Punjab. In other parts of India the Rowlatt Satyagraha was organised through the Congress or Home Rule Leagues. Work was done in the Punjab through the Indian Association in Lahore, through the Congress in places where it existed, and through the Arya Samaj organisation. The Arya

60 Home Pol. Deposit July, 1919 No. 46.
Samaj was the best organised public body in the province. Their perfection was described as such - "Their propaganda system is wonderful. They entertain a staff of skilled preachers who itinerate; they employ high class singers and musicians who set forth the doctrine of the Samaj in a manner most attractive to amateurs of music; and their meetings and anniversaries are advertised in the most efficient way by means of posters, circulars and personal appeals." The Arya Samajists had their centres in places where the whole villages followed the Arya creed.

Since the beginning of the year 1919 the Punjab Provincial Congress Committee had tried to strengthen itself and to improve its organisation. There were two reasons behind it. One was that at the Delhi Congress it had been decided to enlist the masses in the Congress fold; and the second was that the December, 1919 session of the Congress was to be held at Amritsar and the Punjab leaders wanted a wide representation in it. At the same time came the Rowlatt Bills and it was felt that a broad-based organisation was essential, if the bills were to be opposed fully. Therefore, the leaders started forming the District Congress Committees in various districts.

61 Punjab Disturbances 1919, Ambala Division Rohtak District.
The formation of the District Congress Committee at Lyallpur is given here by way of example. On 30th January, 1919, a District Congress Committee was formed at Lyallpur. The Committee had 33 men and with the exception of one it consisted entirely of Lyallpur men. It contained 21 Mohammedans and 5 Sikhs, the rest being Arya Samajists. It had 18 pleaders, 5 medical practitioners, 2 petition-writers, one manager of an Arya Book Depot and a small number of shopkeepers and traders. The members of this Committee remained in touch with members of District Congress Committees at Amritsar, Jullundur and Delhi by regular visits to these places. Such good relations were built that Mr. Asaf Ali, a Barrister of Delhi and a propagandist of Home Rule League, the Congress and Hindu Muslim Unity, took up the cause of some of the Lyallpur traders and hence attracted the attention of Lyallpur traders in particular and of people in general towards the advantage of joining the Congress. This Committee began to agitate over the Rowlatt Bills and thereby increased largely its membership. "I attribute the disorders in Lyallpur town itself and its immediate neighbourhood to the direct action of the District Congress Committee who were helped by arrivals from and letters from other towns - more particularly Lahore, Amritsar and Delhi.\(^{62}\)

\(^{62}\)Punjab Disturbances in 1919 Lyallpur District.
In some places regional organisations were better organised and had more influence than the Congress, e.g., Hindu Muhammedan Panchayat in Multan and the Indian Association in Lahore. The Hindu-Muhammedan Panchayat had come into prominence after the part it had played in the "Thalla Takht Posh" question when it successfully put pressure on the Municipal Committee and its pleaders and other members to resist official suggestions for raising municipal incomes. The Panchayat comprised a few retired officials and a number of small merchants, of whom some were Mohammedans.

The hartal in Multan was held at the initiative of the panchayat rather than of the Congress. Five important members of the Congress, however, supported enthusiastically the decision of the panchayat to observe hartal on Sunday, the 30th March. The hartal of 30th was a complete success. The panchayat was wholly distinct from the Congress, but in this instance they worked together.

Gandhi's name also played an important part in enlisting the people for the movement. "Somehow Mahatama Gandhi had attained the same position as the prophet had and every word that he uttered was supposed to be his command. People knew his previous history - what he had done in Africa; the sacrifices that he had made, the sufferings that he had passed through. Naturally the people had great respect for
him, great reverence for him and for his word."  

In the politically advanced towns the effect of the decision at the national level and the call of Gandhi for Satyagraha was immediate. The movement was organised by local men in the province, though they were under the influence of Satyagraha Sabha in Bombay and followed its decisions - "I have no doubt we shall get on to the Chief agents in the movements within the province, but my present view is that the principals are outside the Punjab. They have shown extraordinary organisation in some ways and, a wonderful capacity to enlist any local group of malcontents. Evidence is coming in which tends to show that emissaries from outside the province visited Punjab shortly before outbreaks in various places. Still the organisation was in the hands of local leaders, though they followed the decisions of the Satyagraha Sabha. That was the case in all parts of India. "At the present stage political opinion in India tends to be Indian

63 Oral Transcript Dr. Gokul Chand Narang.

64 Home Pol.B May 1919 No. 184 Copy of a Private letter dated 21st. April, 1919 from M.O. Dwyer to Viceroy.

65 Ibid.
rather than provincial. There is no independent political opinion in Punjab. Educated Punjabis are, for the present, importing their political ideas from the more advanced provinces. The result of Gandhi's call for Satyagraha and of observing a hartal was effective only in a few places which were politically advanced and had the necessary organisation to make it a success like in Lahore and Amritsar.

In Lahore the Indian Association was well organised and had acquired fame for organising meetings to discuss any important issue. There were important men like Duni Chand who organised the meetings of the Indian Association of Lahore, L. Harkishen Lal who had acquired fame as a big businessman and as the founder of the first Indian bank in Punjab. He had been elected president of the political conference which was to be held at Jullundur on 18th and 19th April, 1919.

In Amritsar the movement came completely in the hands of Doctors Kitchlew and Satyapal and the Congress lost hold over it. The Congress decided against observing the hartal on the 6th after the disturbances in Delhi, but at a meeting called at the instance of Kitchlew and Satyapal it was decided to observe a hartal and it was a complete success.

66 Punjab Disturbances 1919 - Ambala Division, Hissar District.
There was great connection and link between Lahore and Amritsar, the events of one place affecting the other. When in Amritsar it was decided to observe hartal on the 6th, a similar step was decided upon in Lahore. "On the 5th April, some persons came to me and informed me that a large number of shops will keep open on the 6th. In the afternoon the same day some of the same persons came to me again and told me that two parties, one from Amritsar and the other from Delhi side, joined by local men had come and spoiled our work...." On the night of 5th these parties were reported to have gone round the city bazars abusing the Government officials, Municipal Commissioners and title holders.

The news of complete hartal at Amritsar on 30th March and a local feeling that Lahore should not lag behind also contributed to the success of the hartal of the 6th.

Amritsar which was the centre of trade and commerce applied pressure on the merchants in other places by threatening to break relations with them which had a great

effect in enlisting the merchant community of the other places. After the 6th of April one Sundar Lal of Kasur went to Amritsar to arrange disposal of his goods, but they were not accepted there and he was told that no articles of Kasur would be sold in Amritsar. Similarly Sheikh Ghulam Farid of Kasur despatched his articles from Kasur and sent Railway Receipt to Abdul Rahim and Karam Illahi of Lahore who refused to accept it. There were other instances which were brought verbally from Amritsar, when the Kasur people went there on the 9th April to witness Ram Naumi Day, and before the 11th it was rumoured that Kasur had been boycotted by other cities on account of non-observance of hartal on the 6th. It brought a great pressure on Kasur people.68

Similar pressure was applied by Delhi in the places nearer to it. As Delhi had been part of Punjab, close links still existed between these places and Delhi. There was considerable commercial pressure upon the Banias in Gurgaon by the Banias in Delhi to observe hartal by refusing hundis. In addition there were threats to break off other connections like marriage. Apart from this emissaries were sent from Delhi to stir up the people. "Ballabagarh tehsil being part of the old Delhi district, has all its connections with Delhi

and the Banias here are much under the influence of Delhi Banias. When hartal was started at Delhi great pressure was brought to bear on the local Banias to join in. 69

In one place, Ladwa, there was no idea to close shops up to mid-day, on 6th April, but at noon after the receipt of mail letters the shops were instantly closed. "These letters, it is generally believed, came from Delhi and contained orders to close. Panipat, Karnal and Kaithal are also reported to have received similar letters." 70

At a meeting held in Delhi on 3rd April, 1919, it was decided to arrange visits by emissaries. Emissaries were sent to Rohtak, prominent among whom was Maulvi Bashir Ahmed. They convened a meeting at which inflammatory speeches were delivered. The proximity of Rohtak to Delhi and the existence of a convenient train service did much to intensify the influence of larger towns. It appears that throughout the disturbed period the crowds flocked to Delhi from Rohtak and other towns in the district such as Sonepat and Bahadurgarh, listened to speeches of agitators, acquainted themselves with the development of events and returned home in the evening to detail all that they had seen and heard. "In many cases

69 Punjab Disturbances 1919, Gurgaon District, Ballabgarh Tehsil.
70 Punjab Disturbances 1919, Karnal District.
they armed themselves with copies of the pamphlets and hand
bills issued by Delhi political organisations and of the
'Vijaya' and The 'Congress' newspapers published from
Delhi which, prior to the issue of orders for censorship were
potent agents of mischievous propaganda."71

There was close contact of the leaders of districts
nearer to Delhi with the Delhi leaders. Chaudhry Piru Singh,
who was Manager of the Arya Samaj Gurukul at Matindu and was
largely responsible for the trouble at Bahadurgarh, and Chaudhry
Chhotu Ram, an important leader of Rohtak, had close contacts
with Swami Shraddhanand throughout the disturbances.

Even after the disturbances when the Martial Law was
declared, the Government was uneasy about the influence of
Delhi. Sir M.O'Dwyer wrote in a private letter to the
viceroy on 21st April, 1919 - "I am still uneasy about the
South East Punjab - Rohtak, Karnal etc. which the Delhi
people, Hindus (Munshi Ram & Co.) Mohammedans (Ansari & Co)
are making strenuous efforts to entangle..."72

After the hartal of 6th April, people from Lahore,
Amritsar and other places, where hartal had been held,
went to other places to induce the people to join in. "This

71V.N.Dutta: NewLight, op.cit. Statement of Government
of Punjab, p.478.

part of the country did not seem to be affected very much regarding what was going on until about April 10th when some agitators came in to stir up the people regarding events that had occurred at Delhi and other places.... Had not outsiders come in things would likely have passed off quietly."^73

All sorts of rumours were floated with regard to the Rowlatt Act. It was represented in such a way as to show that every class of the people — rural, urban, middle-class and workers — would have to suffer under it. It was believed that under the Rowlatt Act any police officer could imprison anyone without trial for any offence. As a result, the catch phrase "na vakil, na dalil, na appeal" was on many lips. It was said that all assemblies of more than three or four persons would be prohibited and that in some mysterious way even women and children would be made to suffer.

Another rumour which really affected the people and was seen as an interference in their daily life was that Government intended to impose a tax on marriage — the father of the bride will have to pay Rs. 100/- and the father of the bridegroom Rs. 25. No marriage would be allowed to take place unless the parties had been medically examined by a Government Officer.

To enlist the farmers there were rumours like a farmer will be required to surrender half the produce of his land, and half the ploughing animals in his possession. The Zamindar owning over 60 bighas will have the surplus confiscated by the Government.

The D.C. of Lyallpur was himself told by shopkeepers, who were closing their shops on the 6th April, that the reason for doing so was that Government had passed a law forbidding more than four persons to meet together. A manifesto issued by a number of prominent landholders after the disturbances had referred to rumours that Government would charge fees on birth, death and marriage ceremonies, that no land holder would be allowed to keep more than a few acres of land and that Government would take a 1/4th share of the produce.74

The people wanted to rebel against the Government, so they did not worry about the provisions of the Rowlatt Act. They used it only as a pretext for the agitation.

During the disturbances it was rumoured that in the Lahore Fort Indian soldiers had revolted and that they had put up their own flag instead of the British flag (Union Jack). During the period of the disturbances the following strong rumours were current in Ferozepur which had a most disquietening

effect on the railway staff besides on the minds of the rural population (1) that the Lt. Governor had been murdered and the Government House reduced to ashes; (2) the Fort at Lahore had fallen and was in the hands of the public; (3) that the Golden Temple at Amritsar had been bombarded by our troops.75

"The use of bombs by aeroplanes had naturally given rise to a number of rumours. It was a popular rumour that Lahore and Amritsar have been bombarded. 76

Similar rumours were prevalent in other places and they gave the impression that the power of the British Government had ended. In some places people wanted to rebel but could not do so because of the fear of British power and as soon as they learnt that there was no need to be afraid they rose against the Government. The Commission which dealt with the Aulakh Case state that they "violently prevented an attempt to put out fire, gave vent to treasonable cries, announcing that Lahore, Amritsar and Chuharkana had been burnt, and that the British Raj was extinct."77

75 D.I.C. Report Vol.4, Written Statement of Mr.V.O. Raigmor, District Traffic Superintendent N.W.R.


77 Selections from the Report on the Punjab Disturbance April,1919, Gujranwala District.
Rumours in the city easily spread due to the absence of private newspapers. Some newspapers had been closed by the Government, some had closed down themselves. The Punjab Government did not allow representatives of Indian press, and even the press in Punjab was gagged; therefore, due to lack of non-official information, rumours spread.

Many posters were pasted in different places — specially in Lahore — to inflame the feelings of the people. It seemed most probably to be the work of the students. The following is a sample of the material of the posters —

"The Lamentation of Bharat Mata
Ah! The tyrant is ready with the gallows to kill me. Oh Hindus and Muhammedans, my two sons! Will you not help to rescue your mother from this misery? Is this the return that will give me for my feeding and bring you up, that fearing the tyrants you too will remain quiet? No, never, my sons are not cowards. Sons like Mahatma Gandhi and Mr. Shaukat Ali are still alive, they will rescue me from the gallows. Oh the inhabitants of Punjab! you should also follow these two Mahatmas and should comply with this order of theirs. On Sunday next, the 6th of April you should observe a fast for 24 hours, and the suspension of all business is faith and Dharma. This can do good to your country, otherwise, remember, you will be ruined." 78

Till the 10th the disturbances were confined to the towns. It was only after the news of the firing in Amritsar and

Lahore on the 10th spread that the rural folks joined the movement. At places the Baisakhi festival led to the spread of the agitation.

It was not until the 14th that any signs were noticed that Gujrat was likely to join the movement. On that date two inflammatory notices were found pasted in the city - possibly written by students returning from Lahore - stating that a meeting would be held on the following day at which Europeans and Christians would be massacred. Early in the same morning a band of Baisakhi travellers from Wazirabad had returned shouting 'Gandhi ki Jai' and similar slogans, but were immediately dispersed to their homes.

Since schools and colleges were closed in Lahore and Amritsar under orders of the government, students from these cities returned to their respective towns and villages in the province. They gave account of the disturbances there and being influenced by the agitation they tried to organise the same in their home towns and villages. This can be seen from the important part played by them in Lyallpur, Gujranwala, Kasur, Hoshiarpur etc.

In some places it was believed that people went disguised as Brahmcharis and Sadhus to spread the agitation. The authorities at Sangla believed that a Brahmchari who stayed there was an Arya Samajist in disguise who preached rebellion. Similar was the belief of the authorities at
Chuharkana.

Of course, some people belonging to villages nearer to Amritsar and Lahore joined the movement to take advantage of the chaos and confusion that prevailed, and to loot the Government property. Loot from Amritsar was found in remote villages of Jullundur and Lyallpur. At Attari in the Amritsar district moveable columns arrested 5 men in possession of loot.\(^7\)

Throughout the strike attempts were made to include the Railway staff and at times there were chances of a strike all over N.W.R. but it did not come. "On the 6th and then from 10th to 13th the Railway Stations at Amritsar and Lahore were visited by students and others, many of whom were wearing black bands or other distinguishing badges. Attempts were made to induce the railway employees to go on strike. "Four men armed with formidable dagger were actually caught in the act of holding up railway shop hands and preventing them from going to work and threatening them with violence. One of the offenders turned out to be a clerk in the office of the Chief Examiner of Accounts, N.W.R."\(^8\) The attendance of the staff at Moghulapura railway station gradually decreased from 8th April to 16th April.

\(^7\) Home Pol. B. May, 1919, No. 184.

There were attempts to organise a strike all over N.W.R. and the words "the Rowlatt" were to be used as signals. On 11th April an employee of Lahore sent a verbal message to Delhi that Lahore city was being looted and that the troops were about to declare against Government announced that the railway employees had also decided to strike and that staff on other railway should be asked to follow suit. The message was received at Delhi ... The message forwarded from Delhi was intercepted at Bina and Agra fort on the 12th and at Kharagpur and Patna on the 13th in the following form (I drew particular attention to the wording of it) on receiving the words "the Rowlatt" Indian military soldiers decided to strike in Punjab as East Indian railway and Oudh and Rohilkund railway... The invitation to strike met with response only on N.W.R. on this railway strikes occurred at the following stations - Delhi Kishangaj, Shakurpur, Jadobad, Bhatinda, Bhawalpur, Samasta, Khaneval, Ambala and Multan City (all important junctions in the Punjab).

"The first rumour conveyed to me regarding a general railway strike was on the 12th April. None to my previous knowledge was contemplated.\footnote{D.I.C. Report Vol.4 Lahore and Kasur Written Statement Mr. V.O.R gnor, District Traffic Superintendent, Lahore.}"

On the 11th and 12th April, 1919, I noticed something wrong with my staff. "There was extensive whispering going on
and a certain amount of passive resistance. The first inkling I received of the strike idea being widespread was from Kasur at 10 P.M. On the 12th I gave my name as Bandra (Mulkraj Bandra) Kasur enlightened me in many things. It struck me as if everything was prepared throughout the line for 14 hours. On the 13th for a general strike.  

The whole of the N.W.R. staff depended upon Lahore to strike. Lahore was not only the largest and most important telegraph office on the railway but controlled the main circuits to all the most distant and important offices on the system such as Karachi, Ambala, Rawalpindi etc., and in consequence its influence during the recent disturbances was most marked. This has been brought to light by numerous and repeated enquiries on the lines from various offices as to when Lahore was going out on strike and I am convinced that had this office not remained loyal a more or less general strike amongst the signalling staff throughout the railway would have followed which might have extended to other branches of the staff.  

Traders also played an important part especially the traders at Amritsar by applying commercial pressure, on

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82 D.I.C. Report Vol. 4, Mr. C.B. Harding, Deputy Superintendent, Railway Telegraphs.

83 D.I.C. Report Vol. 5. Written Statements - Mr. G. Burlingam, Superintendent Railway, Telegraphs, N.W.R.
them. They gave them notices either to join the hartal or to vacate their houses. Because of this pressure the Government servants were forced to join the hartal.

The following table will show the participation of different classes convicted by special tribunals:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artisans and Menials</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urbans</td>
<td>77.7% (of the total convicted for rioting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zamindars</td>
<td>Less than 15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literate</td>
<td>Over 50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>20% (confined to a small group of villages near Lahore e.g. Wagah)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following is an analysis showing ages, occupations etc. of persons convicted by Summary Court, Lyallpur.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number convicted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 30</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 20 and up to 30</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literate</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illiterate</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sikhs</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muhammadans</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>...</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government service (including pensioners)</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>1 (postman)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade and commerce</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students school boys and teachers</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculturists</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans and Labourers</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous</td>
<td>...</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The movement in the beginning prior to 10th was well in the hands of the leaders, it was non-violent and anti-Government but not anti-British. The Britishers walked without any fear amongst the crowds. Till then it seemed as if the aim of the agitation was to give a show of their strength and to put sufficient pressure on the Government to repeal the Rowlatt Act. It seems that either due to lack of time or organisation the leaders did not make any effort to enlist the rural areas in their movement. The choice of time i.e. the harvest season was such that peasants could not be expected to participate. It is also probable that Gandhi's call for satyagraha came earlier than was expected by the leaders.

Till the 6th if the impulse came from without the actual conduct of affairs was almost everywhere in the hands of local leaders, and the character of the agitation
varied in proportion to their individual influence and activity, there seems to have been little in the nature of concerted action among (Kitchlew, Satyapal in Amritsar, Rambhaj, Duni Chand in Lahore). Elsewhere there was no local leader who stood out conspicuously. "The aim of the agitation at this stage probably extended no further than a desire on the part of local leaders to put such pressure on Government as would force it to withdraw the Rowlatt Act."^{86}

It was only when Dr. Kitchlew and Satyapal were arrested and then the troops used fire against the agitating crowd that the people grew violent and anti-British and became out of control of the leaders. The mob became violent only when their brothers were killed as they shouted. "They have killed our brothers, we will kill them." The agitation till the 10th was witnessed only in few places like Lahore, Amritsar, Multan etc. It was only when the news of the happening of 10th at Lahore and Amritsar and then the Jallianwala Bagh reached the other places, those places took part in the agitation.

On the 10th also when the people went to get their leaders released they had no intention to be violent as they went unarmed. "The mob came out unarmed save for the stones it picked up on the way but on being fired on it dispersed and

re-assembled in a suspiciously short time with iron-pointed lathis and other strikes."

So it can be said that the agitation was fully disciplined and non-violent till the 10th it was only when the Government deported their two favourite leaders that they grew agitated. When they tried to get them released they were fired upon. Again on the 13th when they were holding a peaceful assembly they were fired in an inhumanly way. This led to the spread of the movement in the other parts of the Punjab. From the very beginning the Government of Punjab adopted a very venegeful attitude towards this movement and wanted to suppress it with all the powers in its hands. During the agitation all powers came in the hands of the local government and they adopted a strict policy. D.A. Low calls it a striking feature of the events i.e. the breakdown of communications between the Government of India and the various provincial Governments. "It was this development which, more than anything else, left the local authority with a free hand and one can argue that the substitution of O'Dwyer's arrogance by Lloyd's (O'Dwyer's counterpart in Bombay) patience and restraint could have avoided the Jallianwala Bagh episode." 88

87 Ibid., p.280.

There was systematic attempt during the disturbances to tamper the means of communications i.e. the railway and telegraphs. Following is the statement showing number of separate outrages committed on the telegraph lines etc. On each date during the recent disturbances in the Punjab. The number given is only approximate as it is not now (29th August, 1919) possible to quote accurate figures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number of outrages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10th April, 1919</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12th April, 1919</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13th April, 1919</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14th April, 1919</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15th April, 1919</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16th April, 1919</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17th April, 1919</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18th April, 1919</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19th April, 1919</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20th April, 1919</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20th April, 1919</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21st April, 1919</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>54</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It seems when the movement went out of the control of the leaders who wanted to keep it non-violent, the masses resorted to the tactics of the Ghadrites - destruction of Government property, destruction of railway lines and telegraph wires.