CHAPTER - IV

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The Women of India had contributed remarkably in various non-violent movements started for India's freedom. Their non-violent movements can be broadly analysed in three different phases namely Non-Cooperation Movement (1920 – 1922) and Civil Disobedience Movement (1930 – 1934) and Quit India Moment. Before discussing these mass movements, The Civil Disobedience Movement started in the year 1930 and continued till 1934. Most of the people of our country, especially the intelligential, were convinced that the method of persuasion could not work effectively. They felt inclined to use the strong language of agitation to compel the British Government to listen to their demands. The British Government had already rejected the Nehru Report of 1928 and repression was going on as usual. The Congress therefore was left with no alternative but to start a Civil Disobedience Movement.\(^1\)

Gandhiji was authorized to work out the details of the programme of Civil Disobedience in consultation with the working committee, and the All India Congress Committee. It was in this way that the last days of December, 1929 gave birth to the Civil Disobedience Movement. As the first step of the movement, the Congress Working Committee drafted a declaration of Independence to be read at the public meetings in the whole country on

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\(^1\) K.B. Keswani, *History of Modern India (1819-1964)*, Bombay, 1990, pp.139 - 140.
26 January, 1930. It was a declaration which was as momentous in the history of colonial countries subject to the western powers as the Americans Declaration Independence issued just on the eve of America’s War on Britain.²

In India, the Salt Tax, far from being introduced by the British Government, dates back to the very earliest times. Mention of it is made in the Shastras. It was levied by the Mughal emperors who made so much out of it that the duty was more than double the cost of production. In the time of Emperor Akbar salt cost was two and a half times as much, compared with the prices of the principal food grains, as it did by the same standard at the beginning of this country. After the Mughal Emperors the salt – tax continued in one form or another down to the time of British Rule. The plain truth of the matter is that the British did not introduce the tax but accepted it as an existing source of revenue and overhauled and regularized the whole system. By doing so and by a scientific management of the sources of production they have secured an even distribution throughout India of edible salt of good quality at a more or less uniform price. If the government monopolies were removed and production left to private dealers it is quite certain that the public would not be able to obtain it at so low a price or so even in quality.³


On 15 February 1930, the Congress Working Committee meeting held at Ahmedabad resolved to start the Civil Disobedience Movement. It was another weapon of the Congress Party to fight against the British. And this session authorized Mahatma Gandhi’s Civil Disobedience Programme. The programme of Civil Disobedience Movement included, the violation of Salt Law, boycott of the educational institution by the students and offices by the Government employees, picketing of shops dealing with liquor, opium and foreign goods and bonfire of foreign cloth and non-payment of taxes.

The Civil Disobedience Movement inspired and brought many Indian women to participate. Initially Gandhi was reluctant to involve women directly with the main scene of action and it was not worthy that the group of followers who accompanied him to Dandi was an all-male contingent. Most remarkable of all was the attitude of women, many Indian ladies of good family, high intellectual, middle and upper class women were mobilized into action in their own humble ways. They assured truly subcontinental dimensions and witnessed deeply moving and unprecedented scenes in every nook and corner of the country.

4. Young India, dated 30.01.1930.
It was then that Gandhiji finally decided that it should take the form of dis-obeying the salt law which made it illegal for individuals to manufacture salt. Government acquired a monopoly over its manufacture and it also levied a duty on salt so manufacture and this resulted in its being sold to the people at a high price. Many people ridiculed him for having chosen the defiance of that law for overthrowing the British Rule in India but subsequent events showed that it proved to be the most effective weapon in the process of gaining freedom. Salt was an article of common consumption. Defiance of Salt Law made a powerful appeal on every man and woman. It is also easy to defy the law regarding its manufacture, and naturally it enabled large numbers of people to participate in the movement. On 2 March 1930 Gandhiji wrote a letter to the Viceroy informing him that he would break the Salt law and thus started the Civil Disobedience Movement.

On the other side, the Civil Disobedience Movement was planned to function into three phases. The first phase of the movement constituted from Gandhiji’s march to Dandhi on April 1930 until about the mid of May. The second phase lasted from June 1930 till the general unrest and disobedience of the law in July, which was the most difficult for the

governments and their officials. The third phase was from July to the settlement of 5 March 1931.\textsuperscript{9}

On March 12, he undertook with seventy nine inmates of his Sabarmathi Ashram for the famous historic march to Dandi in the Surat District.\textsuperscript{10} He walked through the villages on the way. Thousands of villagers met him during his March and this gave him an opportunity of telling them what they should do and how they should proceed with their work. He however asked them not to defy the Salt Law until he himself broke it at Dandi. It was on April, 6 that he reached Dandi.\textsuperscript{11} Early in the morning he and his followers bathed in the sea after prayers and he solemnly picked a handful of salt on the sea coast and symbolically broke the salt law.\textsuperscript{12}

When the Dandi March was on progress, a number of people joined with him. He passed through 300 villages. By the time Mahatma Gandhi reached Dandi, he had the whole nation, aroused and expected waiting restlessly for the final alarm. It was a movement that was to remain unsurpassed in the history of the Indian National Movement for the

\begin{footnotes}
\item[10] NNPR, \textit{Andhra Patrika}, dated 12.03.1931, Madras, p.398.
\end{footnotes}
countrywide.\textsuperscript{13} By the entry of Mahatma Gandhi, the Civil Disobedience Movement had taken off as an agitational Campaign. Throughout India it had acquired strength and popularity when the Government of India had not anticipated. And behind the popular enthusiasm was the cutting edge of violence.\textsuperscript{14}

When the movement became very popular, the common people largely joined in this. Immediately on 6 April 1930, Mahatma Gandhi was arrested, at that time he nominated Smt. Sarojini Naidu to head of the Movement.\textsuperscript{15} On 15 May 1930, Sarojini Naidu led the raid on the Dharsana Salt works. Though she and her comrades were arrested, they were released on the same day; enabling Sarojini Naidu to lead another batch of 25,000 raiders on the same salt works on 21 May. This was the occasion for one of the most remarkable demonstrations of the spirit of non-violence gathered by Gandhiji Movement, as the volunteers remained absolutely peaceful despite to serve provocation and appalling atrocities inflicted on them by the police.\textsuperscript{16}

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\textsuperscript{13} Bipan Chandra, \textit{India's Struggle for Independence}, New Delhi, 1989, pp.272 - 276.
\textsuperscript{14} David Arnold, \textit{The Congress in Tamilnadu: Nationalist Politics of South India 1919-1937}, New Delhi, 1977, p.137.
\end{flushright}
Perception of women in society underwent a sea-change during the Salt Satyagraha Movement. Mahatma Gandhi made an appeal to Indian women to come out from their household seclusion and advised them to participate in the political movement to end the British rule in India. It should be noted here that prior to 1930, only a few women mostly from the families of leaders took part in political movement. But during the Salt Satyagraha women increasingly enrolled themselves as volunteers.\footnote{Young India, dated 30.04.1930.}

At that time, a lot of women participated in this movement from different places and provinces. K. Hurshedbhehn, Mirdula Sanuthai, Hansa Metha, Avabujgavau Gokhale, Shantabai Vengsantan, Durgabai, Lilavathi Munshi, Captain Sisth Perinbehn, Goshibehn, Avantikabai Gokhale, Jamkidevi, Lukanji, Anajuyabai Kale, were the prominent women leaders who led the Satyagraha in their own provinces.\footnote{B.R.Nanda, (ed), Indian Women: From Purdah to Modernity, New Delhi, 1990, p.23.}

The women of South India also took part in the movement. The people of all the regions such as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, the Coastal belt of Andhra Pradesh and Kerala, which constituted the Madras Presidency fully responded to the call of Gandhiji. They all joined the movement in the first
week of April 1930. On 13 March 1930 Monster meeting was held at Thiruchirappalli. The movement gathered momentum and the response to it from different districts was very appreciable. On 3 April 1930 it was decided that Vedaranyam was the central place for the Salt Satyagraha. Immediately the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee moved its headquarters from Madras to Thiruchirapalli and put the activities of this committee under direct control of its secretary, T.S.S. Rajan of Thiruchirappalli. On 5 April, the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee met at Thiruchirappalli and elected C. Rajagopalachari as President. C. Rajagopalachari and K. Santhanam were assigned the responsibility to launch the regional Salt Satyagraha campaign by Tamil Nadu Congress Committee convened at Vellore in North Arcot District and confirmed Vedaranyam as the place for the Satyagraha. Considering this, constant preparation was started in Tamil Nadu to launch the movement. In the Tamil Districts, the salt law has not yet began yet broken, the volunteers about hundred strong headed by Rajagopalachari began its much advertised march to Vedaranyam near cape calimere where it is proposed to scrape salt from adjoining swamps. This party includes of few recruits from other districts, viz, Madura, Thiruchirappali and Tirunelveli. Out of fourteen districts, movement flourished in a splendid manner in Madras, Madura, Coimbatore,

Dindugal and Tirunelveli. Rajagopalachari and hundreds of people took part in the movement, and all of them were arrested.\(^{20}\)

C. Rajagopalachari had been convicted under section 145 I.P.C and section 14 of the Madras Salt Act. He was sentenced to undergo simple imprisonment for six months and asked to pay a fine of Rs.200 and in default to undergo simple imprisonment for a further period of three months.\(^{21}\) During this time Rukmini Lakshmipathi, Vice President of Tamil Nadu Provincial Congress Committee, accompanied C. Rajagopalachariar in his march to Vedaranyam to break the Salt Laws in 1930. She was also arrested and given to one year imprisonment. As a matter of fact in Madras she was the first lady to be arrested in connection with Salt Satyagraha.\(^{22}\)

In Madras Durgabai Ammal, led the leadership of lady Satyagrahis.\(^{23}\) Several ladies under the inspiring leadership of


\(^{21}\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.687, Under Secretary Safe File, dated 31.05.1930.

\(^{22}\) Tamil Nadu Archives, *History of Freedom Movement*, Bundle No. 65 ; Government of Madras, G.O.No.687, Under Secretary Safe File, dated 31.05.1930 ; *Young India*, dated 22.05.1930 ; *Indian Ladies Magazine*, dated July 1930, p.610 ; *The Hindu*, dated 15.05.1930; *Stri Dharma*, Vol.16, 1933 (September to October) ; Government of Madras, G.O.No.1683, Public (Confidential) Department, dated 17.10.1935 ; *The Hindu*, dated 07.08.1951.

\(^{23}\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.952, Public (Confidential) Department, dated 16.09.1931 ; *The Hindu*, dated 04.06.1931.
Durgabai Ammal and Smt. Prakasam volunteered to join the Satyagraha movement and they also gave their jewels to the Satyagraha fund. Durgabai Ammal, the Madras "dictator", was charged under section 117 I.P.C. read with section 74 of the Madras Salt Act, to nine month simple imprisonment and the three month simple imprisonment under section 188 I.P.C. Some of the notable women leaders who were arrested were Unnava Lakshmibayamma, Lakshmi Narasamma, Vedantam Kamala Devi of Kakinada and several others.24

On 25 April 1930, about hundred volunteers accompanied by Durgabai Ammal and Varaga Ammal reached the Seashore to produce contraband salt. At this time hundred police surrounded "the females and having so ringed them belabored them brutally". They were beaten and forcibly dragged. The female volunteers sustained injuries. As a result Durgabai Ammal criticized the police atrocities before 800 people who gathered in the beach. She later on gave publicity in the press about the atrocities of police. After this she led a batch of nine lady volunteers on 5 May 1930 to the Santhome Beach, Mylapore. While they were manufacturing salt, the policemen arrived at the spot, broke the pots and the ovens and seized the water.

L. Krishna Bai and P. Kameshwari Ammal the members of the Madras League of Youth went to Calicut and conducted a public meeting.

They publicly announced in the meeting that "A warrant has been issued for the arrest of Durga Bai by the District Magistrate, North Arcot. She will be taken to Vellore by car early on Monday Morning". They also said that "A petition signed by citizens of Madras consisting of Visalakshi Ammal, L.Krishna Bai, M.E. Cousins, Ammu Swaminathan was presented by V.Ramdoss Pantulu to the Chief Presidency Magistrate today to protest against his recent order under section 144 I.P.C.".  

Saraswathy Pandurangan, Congress Volunteer also vigorously participated in the Salt Satyagraha Movement. She was the first lady to participate in the Salt Satyagraha Movement in Madras. She started her Salt Satyagraha with her husband at Puzhal which is a village near Redhills. Anjalai Ammal from Madras also participated in this movement.

Angachi Ammal and Saraswati Ammal were in the evening of 28 May 1930 at about 5.45 p.m. at the Santhome Beach members of an assembly of forty to fifty persons met in defiance of an order under section 144 Cr.P.C. The Chief Presidency Magistrate felt that the meeting would cause a breach of the peace. Therefore he lawfully commanded the crowd to disperse. But they disobeyed the order of the Magistrate and therefore they were liable to be convicted of an offence under section 151 I.P.C. They were


convicted and sentenced to undergo six month simple imprisonment and area classed in "B" Class.\(^{27}\)

In Coimbatore, Savithri Ammal, Padmavathi, Bagiyalakshmi Ammal, Kamalammal vigorously participated in the movement. Gounder Chamundi, Iyar Rama, and Radha of North Arcot district and Sakunthala Bai at South Arcot district were some of the other active participants at the Salt Satyagraha Movement.\(^{28}\)

In Tirunelveli district, Raklalammal of Koilpatti was an active participant of the Salt Movement. She was born in 1867 and she was an educated woman. She joined in the National Movement in 1920. She participated in the Salt Satyagraha, and arrested and courted imprisoned. Moreover Lakshmi, Savithri and Bhilal Ammal also participated in this movement. Seetha of Nilgiri District, Nannubai Ammal and Thiyal Nayagi Ammal from Tanjore District, Kunjammal of Ramanathapuram District, Padmavathy Asher of Tiruppur were the permanent participated in the Salt Satyagraha.\(^{29}\)

\(^{27}\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.2483, Law (General) Department, dated 12.06.1930; G.O.No.3050, Law (General) Department, dated 18.08.1932.


In Salem district, R.C. Caveri, Alamelu Ammal, Angachiammal and Sakuntala Bai Gurjali participated in the Salt Satyagraha Movement and they were arrested and jailed. Caveri and Alamelu Ammal were sentenced for six month imprisonment, Angachiammal for nine months and Sakuntala Bai Gurjali for four months. Varagalu Ammal of Kanchipuram was convicted for participating in the Salt Satyagraha on 27 July 1930. She was arrested and imprisoned for six months. In Thiruchirapalli district, Devia Ammal and Padmasini Ammal took part in the Salt Satyagraha Movement. Both of them were arrested and were kept in the Vellore Jail for one year rigorous imprisonment.

During the Salt Satyagraha, countless women participated in the freedom struggle. Especially, Delhi, Bengal and Bihar Women's soles were highly commendable and it proved from the Jail records that the Lahore female jail was filled with salt Satyagrahis. The women in the beginning played a prominent role in organizing young people into the Vaanara Senai (Monkey Army). From the foregoing pages it is seen that the women of Tamil Nadu did not lag behind, and they played a prominent part in the

freedom movement by organizing young people into what was called as the Vaanar Sena (Monkey Army). The dynamic energy of these youngsters was diverted into systematic and disciplined activity, instead of participating them the riot. The organization sowed the seeds of patriotism in the minds of young boys and girls.\textsuperscript{34}

A statistical report shows that the total number of people arrested and sentenced in jail from Madras were 3,490 of which the women Satyagraha were 291. The women who were arrested in the movement were badly treated; they were given jail sentence from four months to two years. They were ill treated in the Coimbatore, Vellore and Cuddalore Jail. Women had no special consideration, they were also paid the penalty for their faults. If they failed to pay the penalty, they were imprisoned for four months.\textsuperscript{35}

The Salt – Satyagraha (1930) was followed by foreign cloth boycott movement. The movement gathered momentum very soon. Thousands of ladies even from the orthodox and aristocratic families fled out of their houses to picket the liquor shops. All of them were arrested and imprisoned. Boycott of foreign textiles was also arrested on an extensive scale. At Dharasana, 2,500 Satyagrahis raided a salt depot. The police as

\textsuperscript{34} Manmohan Kaur, \textit{Women In India's Freedom Struggle}, New Delhi, 1985, p.38.

\textsuperscript{35} Rajan Mohan, \textit{op.cit.}, 1999, p.299.
usual resorted to merciless repression. Many people were badly wounded, some of them died also as a result of lathi-blows by the police.  

The boycott of foreign cloth proved successful beyond all calculations. In 1930, the import of foreign cloth was reduced to one-fourth of the figures of the previous year. Sixteen English-owned textile mills at Bombay had to be closed. It proved a blessing in disguise to Indian mills. The peasants also carried out no tax campaign with great zeal.

Angachi Ammal and some other leaders were also seen hawking khaddar in the street. An ambulance party headed by Kamala Bai, Sakuntala Bai and three first aid men were also in attendance. Most of the bazaars and shops in Broadway, China Bazaar and Rattan Bazaar were opened as usual in the morning. A large crowd collected near the king's statue and kept shouting "Gandhi-ki-Jai" and asked the shop-owners to close their shops. But the only shop that remained open in this locality was "Somoo Mudali & Co". The crowd which was augmented by those returning from the "Flag Salutation Ceremony" on the High Court Beach, threatened the owner to close the shop and on this non-compliance indulged in stone-throwing resulting in some damage to property.

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K. Nageswara Rao, E. Krishna Ayyar, P.S. Bashyam Chetti, Angachiammal and B.S. Sarma also participated. The total number of people participated was more than three hundred. The "pledge of Independence" was read by K. Nageswara Rao.\(^{39}\) Krishna Bai is the wife of Hari Rao of Mylapore, Kamala Bai is the wife of Lakshman Rao, Zamindar of Melmandi, Tinnevely, who was residing at Mylapore.

They picketed the G. Cunnayya Chetty shops, Rattan Bazaar road 7 February 1931. So, they were found guilty and sentenced under section 143 I.P.C., 188 I.P.C. by disobeying and 144 Cr.P.C. and undergo simple imprisonment for a period of six Months. Both of them were classified as "A" Class prisoners.\(^{40}\)

Sivaraja Subbammal, the mother of N. Rama Rao, Kameswarammal and Yamini Purna Tilagamma were charged that on the evening of 25 February 1931 as they participated in an assembly of about 200 persons at G. Cunniah Chetty's shop in Ratan Bazaar road likely to cause a disturbance of the peace and refused to disperse. They were convicted and sentenced to six month simple imprisonment.\(^{41}\)

\(^{39}\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.387, Public (General) Department, dated 20.04.1931.

\(^{40}\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.1133, Law (General) Department, dated 15.03.1930; G.O.No.648, Law (General) Department, dated 13.02.1931.

\(^{41}\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.1133, Law (General) Department, dated 15.03.1930; G.O.No.1062, Law (General) Department, dated 07.03.1931.
S. Janammal, daughter of the late V. Bashyam Iyengar, Krishna Bai, a graduate and a professor in the Allahabad University belonging to a zamindar family in Tirunelveli District, Sarada Bai, the grand daughter of T. Madhava Rao were picketed in front of the K. Chellaram shops and Junus Sait shop. They were convicted and sentenced to under section 151 I.P.C., and sentenced them each to six month simple imprisonment. They were placed in "A" class prisoners.

Indira Bai, wife of Madhava Rao and Gomothiammal, wife of Harihara Sarma were picketed G. Chellaram’s shop. They were convicted under section 151 I.P.C., and sentenced them each to six month simple imprisonment. They were classified as "A" class prisoner.\(^{42}\)

The sub- Divisional Magistrate sentenced Padmavathi Asher and Bagyalakshmi Ammal to pay a fine of Rs.100 each, in default to suffer simple imprisonment for six weeks each. As the fines were not recovered, they were imprisoned. Padmavathi Asher was the wife of a big cotton merchant at Tiruppur.

Bagyalakshmi Ammal, the wife of the late V.V.S. Iyer was a politician of some repute. Both the ladies were accustomed to a high mode of living and have been classified under class "A". This case was transferred to

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\(^{42}\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.1061, Law (General) Department dated 07.03.1931.
the file of this court by stationary sub Magistrate, Pollachi under section 349 I.P.C. The other eight accused were charged by the Tiruppur Police with offence under section 188 and 151 I.P.C.

There was only one witness for the prosecution who was the Sub- Inspector of Tirupur. He deposes that the stationary Sub- Magistrate, Palladam on being informed that arrangements had been made to hold a "Flag Salutation" procession through the streets of Tiruppur to the public bathing ghat where a ceremony was to be held, passed an order under section 144 Cr.P.C. on 29.11.1930, prohibiting the procession and ceremony on the grounds that they would cause obstruction and annoyance to the general public.43

K.Natesa Ayyar, M.L.C., of Colombo with his wife Meenakshiammal, intended to launch a salt tax campaign in the near future, with Rameswaram as headquarters to enable volunteers from Madura and Ramnad but more particularly Ceylon, to take part. A party of Salt Satyagraha under the leadership of Meenakshiammal came from Colombo. Natesa Ayyar also came to Talaimannar with the party. The party consisted of S.V.Fernanda, S.Ramaswami Ayyar, K. Velayadha Nair, D.M. Devcotta and Mrs. Meenakshiammal and proceeded to Madura. From there, they intend to

43. Government of Madras, G.O.No.721, Law (General) Department, dated 17.02.1931.
go to Vedaranyam. Their Chief aim was for the boycott of foreign-cloth and prohibition.  

Pichamuthu Ammal, the daughter of Pichamuthu from Madurai, was the Member of Madurai Town Congress Committee. She was one of the leading Medical practitioners in Madurai. She was convicted and sentenced to suffer simple imprisonment for six months by the Sub Divisional Magistrate, Trichinopoly recommended that she might be placed in the "B" class.  

Padmasini Ammal, wife of Srinivasa Varda Ayyangar delivered a speech against Simon Commission at Madurai on 16 February 1929. She was one of the participants in the movement; and hence she was convicted and sentenced to undergo six month simple imprisonment 4 December 1930.  

K. Meenakshi Ammal was the daughter of Komaraswami Chettiar. She was charged for an offence under section 3 of Act XXII of 1922 for having addressed a gathering of about 2000 people including some policemen, women workers of the congress. They were assaulted and the

44. Government of Madras, G.O.No.743, Under Secretary Safe File, dated 12.10.1931

45. Tamil Nadu Archives, History of Freedom Movement, Bundle No.65 ; Government of Madras, G.O.No.4735, Law (General) Department, dated 10.11.1930; G.O.No.745, Under Secretary Safe File, dated 12.10.1931.

men in the police department had to resign their appointments and thereby caused disaffection to His Majesty Government and livelihood of the members of the police department to commit breach of discipline or withhold their services. She was admitted into the jail on 18 July 1930 as "C" class prisoner. Ever since her admission, she was suffering from loss of appetite and inability to digest her food. She was kept in the hospital for a few days. Under treatment both with medicine and diet her condition got better and was sent back to the block.47

The British Government knew it well that Congress was the premier political party of India and its co-operation was essential for solving the constitutional problem of the country. The government realized the need of arriving at a settlement with the Congress. In pursuance of this policy and in order to create congenial atmosphere for negotiations, the Government lifted the ban on the Congress and released all the leaders including Mahatma Gandhi unconditionally on 17 February 1931. It was followed by protracted correspondence between Gandhiji and Lord Irwin. Though the mediation of Sapru and Jayakar, a pact was concluded between Gandhi and Irwin on 5 March 1931.48 According to this pact, the Government agreed to withdraw all ordinances and cases pending against the political workers; to release all

47. Government of Madras, G.O.No.4076, Law (General) Department, dated 25.09.1930.

political prisoners excepting those who were guilty of violence; to permit the persons living within a certain distance from the sea-shore to collect or manufacture salt without being taxed, to permit peaceful picketing of shops selling liquors, foreign goods and opium; to restore the property seized in connection with the Civil Disobedience Movement and to return all the movable and immovable property forfeited in lieu of land revenue.\textsuperscript{49}

Mahatma Ji also on behalf of the Congress, agreed to suspend the Civil Disobedience Movement; not to press for enquiry into police excesses; to take steps to associate Congress with the Round Table Conference, and to withdraw all boycott plans.\textsuperscript{50}

Gandhiji returned from the Round Table Conference with empty-hand. Yet, he was not filled with any disappointment. The conference closed on 1 December 1931. Kamaladevi Chattapadhyaya accompanied by her secretary Sofia Somji on behalf of the Women’s Seva Dal, but met with little success. Speaking at Salem on 2 December she urged her audience to be prepared for further resumption of Civil Disobedience.\textsuperscript{51}

Gandhiji landed on the soil of Bombay on 28 December 1931.\textsuperscript{52}

The political scene in India was in no way less acute and agitated than the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{49} Ibid.
  \item \textsuperscript{50} R.C. Agarwal, \textit{op.cit.}, p.221.
  \item \textsuperscript{51} Government of Madras, \textit{Fort Nightly Report}, January to December, 1931.
  \item \textsuperscript{52} The \textit{CWMG}, Vol. 48, 1971, p.434.
\end{itemize}
failure of London talks. In the absence of Gandhiji, the viceroy resorted to repression as a matter of policy. He believed not in settlement with but suppression of the Congress. He violated the Gandhi – Irwin pact. The Conservative Party which was in office in England also favoured a stern attitude towards Indians and particularly the Congress.53

When the Government showed no readiness to change its attitude, the Congress working committee decided to restart the movement. But on 2 January 1932 Gandhiji got a telegram from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy, which turned down the request of Gandhiji to meet the viceroy and threatened to take severe action against the leaders and followers of the Civil Disobedience Movement. Gandhiji wrote back to the Government his intention and firm determination to resume the Civil Disobedience Movement accepting full responsibility for the consequences. Thus, the battle lines were redrawn. The Gandhi – Irwin pact became dead.54

However this time, unlike Lord Irwin, Lord Willington hurried to arrest Gandhiji on 4 January 1932 in pre-emptive strike against the Indian National Movement and resorted to the various draconian ordinances declaring all Congress Organizations as unlawful and repressing almost all

53. Ibid.
However, this pre-emptive strike of the British Government met with the severest type of Civil Disobedience Movement all over India.\footnote{Government of Madras, G.O.No.683, Public Department, dated 16.05.1932.}

In Madras City, C. Rajagopalachari was charged and convicted under section 4 of the ordinance of 1932 that they were loitering together at the business centres of Madras city on 9 January 1932 and dissuading people by distributing hand bills with an appeal to the public at large to disobey the law, to boycott foreign cloth and British goods and to carry on Civil Disobedience Movement. C. Rajagopalachari had to undergo six month simple imprisonment. He was placed in "A" class prisoner in jail.\footnote{The CWMG, Vol. XLIX, p.1.}

Ambujammal is the daughter of a leading Advocate and ex-Advocate General S. Srinivasa Iyengar. Janammal is the daughter of late V.Bashyam Iyengar, Justice of the Madras High Court. Kamala Bai belonged to a respectable middle class. They were first went near Chellaram's and Cunniyah Chetty's shops. On reaching there, they distributed the leaflets, so that the shopkeepers closed the shops. After the two shops were closed, they went to the front of Gobindram's shop situated further north and distributed

\footnote{Government of Madras, G.O.No.209, Law (General) Department, dated 20.01.1932; G.O.No.684, Public (General) Department, dated 16.05.1932; G.O.No.3359, Law (General) Department, dated 13.10.1933; G.O.No.3761, Law (General) Department, dated 21.11.1933.}
the leaflets, and just as that shop was being closed. Ambujammal and Janamammal were convicted under section 4 of ordinance V of 1932, to six month simple imprisonment and a fine of Rs.50/- each, in default one week simple imprisonment and placed in "A" class. Another one L. Kamala Bai was convicted under section 4 of Ordinance V of 1932, to Six month simple imprisonment, she was placed in "B" class prisoner.  

On the same day, the four women like Kamal Devi Aria, Kamachee Ammal, Angachi Ammal and Neelaveniammal wife of one Natarajan the Editor of "Tamil Nadu" a Tamil Weekly, were charged under section 4 of ordinance V of 1932, that they loitered in front of the foreign cloth shop of G. Chellaram in Flower Bazaar road and dissuaded people from entering the shop to buy foreign cloth and goods. They were convicted under section 4 of ordinance V of 1932 on 18 January 1932 and sentenced each of them to undergo simple imprisonment for six months. They were placed in "B" class prisoner in jail.

Sakuntala Bai is the daughter of M. Raghava Mudaliar. She was an educated lady having studied up to the second year in the L.M.P. course in the Rayapuram Medical School. She was an active Congress  

Worker and Director of the Madras Congress Association. She participated in a meeting at the Radio Station at the Marina and addressed the gathering telling them to boycott foreign goods and concerns. Shakunthala Bai was sentenced under section 17(2) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act 1908, on 11 February 1932 to one year simple imprisonment and fine of Rs.50/- in default one month simple imprisonment. She was placed in "B" Class.\(^{60}\)

V. M. Kothainayagiammal was a member of the Madras District Congress Committee. She wrote books and sold them for circulation. She was an Editor of journal called ‘Jaganmohini’. She had good relations with persons belonging to high posts and belonged to respectable families. She studied Tamil as well as English. At about 4.40 p.m on 27 February 1932, she carried black flags bearing the inscription, "Lothian, Go Back" and was marching in a procession along with about fifty other people crying out “Lothian go back, Lothian go back”. The procession was seen at the junction of the Broadway with the China Bazaar Road. She was charged under section 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendment Act XIV of 1908. She was convicted and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for six months and to pay a fine of Rs.100/- or to suffer rigorous imprisonment for one and half months. She was placed in "A" class prisoner.\(^{61}\)

\(^{60}\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.661, Law (General) Department, dated 18.01.1932 ; G.O.No.1306, Law (General) Department, dated 01.04.1932.

Rukmini Lakshmipathi is the wife of A. Lakshmipathi. She was well educated and travelled in Europe as a delegate of the Women's Association. She was an active Congress Worker. She was the Vice-President of the Madras District Congress Committee and member of the Madras Tamilnadu Provincial Congress Committee and of the All India Congress Committee also. On 12 March 1932 at about 5.15 p.m, Rukmini Lakshmipathi and some others numbering about twelve went in a procession along with the China Bazaar Road, holding a national flag and singing national songs, and were asking people to boycott foreign cloths. She was guilty of an offence under section 17(1) of the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Act and Sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for six months and to pay a fine of Rs.100/- or in default to suffer rigorous imprisonment for one and half months more. She was placed in "A" class prisoner.62

P. D. Asher and his wife Padmavathi Asher were leading cotton merchants of Tiruppur and belonged to a rich family. Padmavathi Asher was the dictator of the Coimbatore District Congress. As the counter petitioners were taking active interest after the revival of the Civil Disobedience Movement in Tiruppur, it was found necessary to restrain their activities and to this end on order under section 144 Cr. P.C. was obtained from the District Magistrate Coimbatore on 6 January 1932. They were convicted under

section 107 1.P.C and 144 Cr.P.C was served in person a notice with their signature dated 10 January 1932 expressing their deliberate intention if defying the said order by starting a procession with national flags etc., in Trippur on 12 January 1932. They were convicted and committed to the Central Jail at Coimbatore and the Presidency Jail for women at Vellore. Padmavathi Asher was classified into "A" class imprisonment.  

Govindammal, wife of Ayyamuthu Goundan Punjaipuliyampatti was charged under section 188 I.P.C for having disobeyed the order of 15 January 1932 issued by the Sub-Magistrate, Satyamangalam prohibiting meetings, speeches and processions in pursuance of the Civil Disobedience Movement inaugurated by the Congress in and around the village of Punjaipuliyampatti for a radius of seven miles. She went on the road to Coimbatore from the Khadhar shop at Punjaipuliyampatti with national flag singing national songs on 18 January 1932. So, she was convicted and sentenced to suffer imprisonment for six months.  

Savithri Ammal and Janaki Ammal were active Congress Workers in Coimbatore District. Savithri Ammal was a member of the Hindustan Seva Dal. They were picketed in the Taluks office and dissuading people from bidding and which resulted in some bidders going away in an


64. Government of Madras, G.O.No.1196, Law (General) Department, dated 23.03.1932 ; G.O.No.2121, Law (General) Department, dated 28.05.1932.
action falling under section 4 of the ordinance V of 1932 and 17(1) of the Criminal Law Amendent Act 1908 and 171 I.P.C. They were convicted by sub-
Divisional Magistrate, Pollachi on 11 February 1932 and were sentenced to suffer Rigorous Imprisonment for six months under the former section and Rigorous Imprisonment for two years under the latter, the sentences to run concurrently. They were classified as "B" class prisoner.  

Muthulakshmi Ammal and Kamalambal were charged and under section 17(1) of the Ordinance x of 1938 alleging that the Coimbatore Town Congress Committee which has been declared unlawful by Government. The reason was they, on 21 September 1932 at 9.55 a.m. Picketed town the cloth shop of Viswanatha Ayyar in Coimbatore town by loitering in front of it and obstructing intending purchasers from the shop and carrying on business in that shop.  

When examined under section 243 C.P.C., Kamalambal was convicted in January last under section 188 I.P.C for disobeying, in furtherance of the Civil Disobedience Movement, an order under section 144 I.P.C. Ambujammal stated that she had picketed not under any Mandate from the Town Congress Committee, but only on her own initiative. Ambujammal

65. Government of Madras, G.O.No.1080, Law (General) Department, dated 17.03.1932.

also stated that the ordinance X of 1932 was not in force. Bagirathi Ammal was convicted under section 188 I.P.C and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for six months. She was recommended to be placed under "B" class. Allammal of Periyanaickanpalaiyam was charged to under section 7(1)(b) of Act XXII of 1932 on 23 January 1933. She was convicted and sentenced to simple imprisonment. Finally she was released on 22 July 1933.

Govindammal was the wife of Ayyamuthu, an employee in the All India Spinners Associations, Tiruppur. She was charged under section 17(11) Criminal Law Amendment Act. She was convicted and sentenced to six month rigorous imprisonment on 7 August 1933 and was placed in "c" class prisoner.

Lakshmiammal was the wife of Srinivasa Ayyangar, Tiripur. Her son was an employee in All India Spinners Associations, Tiruppur. B.S.Sundaram, husband of Sumithra Ammal was an employee in All India Spinners Association, Tiruppur. They were charged under section 17(1) Criminal Law Amendment Act. Both ladies were convicted and sentenced to


68. Government of Madras, G.O.No.600, Law (General) Department, dated 16.02.1932.

69. Government of Madras, G.O.No.2825, Law (General) Department, dated 26.08.1933.

six month rigorous imprisonment. They were placed in "c" class female prisoner.\footnote{71}

Parvathavarthani Ammal was the wife of M.K. Sundararaman, aged about twenty was born of a well-to-do Sourastra family in Madura town. She was well-versed to read and write Tamil. She picketed the foreign cloth shops in East Chitrai street and South Masi street in the evening 27 January 1932 and thereby committed offences punishable under section 17(1) of Act XIV of 1908 and section 4 of ordinance V of 1932. She was convicted and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for six months and was classified as "B" class prisoner.\footnote{72}

A. Pichamuthuammal, daughter of Rev. Pichamuthu led the lady volunteers and picketed the foreign cloth shops at East Chithirai and South Masi streets on the evening of 27th January 1932. She loitered about these shops and by words and gestures dissuaded the intending purchasers from transacting purchases from the shops and hereby caused loss to the shop owners. Most of the foreign cloth shops in the two streets were closed. She was convicted under section 4 of Ordinate V of 1932 connected with the civil Disobedience Movement and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for one year under section 17(2) of Act XIV of 1908 and rigorous imprisonment

\footnote{71}{Ibid.}

\footnote{72}{Government of Madras, G.O.No.604, Law (General) Department, dated 16.02.1932; G.O.No.603, Law (General) Department, dated 16.02.1932; G.O.No.2531, Law (General) Department, dated 31.07.1933.}
for six months under section 4 of Ordinance V of 1932. She was placed in “B” class prisoner.\textsuperscript{73}

Ratnammal, daughter of Muthupillai from Madurai, was convicted under section 4 of Ordinance 1932 and 17(1) criminal Law Amendment Act of 1908 and sentenced to 4 month rigorous imprisonment. She was placed in "C" class and sent to women’s Jail, Vellore, then she was transferred from "C" class to "B" class prisoner.\textsuperscript{74}

S.M.K.Kamakshiammal wife of S.M.Kumarasami Ayya, not only picketed the foreign goods shops at East Chittrai Street, but also distributed leaflets advocating the boycott of foreign cloths. She was convicted and sentenced to under go six month rigorous imprisonment and to pay a fine of Rs. 100/-.She was placed in "C" class prisoner in the jail at Vellore.\textsuperscript{75}

Thayammal and Sitalakshmi belonged to Devadasi community. Thayammal was a member of the Madurai Patepayer's Association. She was also a member of the Tamilnadu Provincial congress committee and the Madurai District Congress Committee. She was the President of the

\textsuperscript{73} Government of Madras, G.O.No.598, Law (General) Department, dated 16.02.1932.

\textsuperscript{74} Government of Madras, G.O.No.2771-A, Law (General) Department, dated 02.06.1932 ; G.O.No.2253, Law (General) Department, dated 08.06.1932; G.O.No.3189- A, Law (General) Department, dated 05.07.1932.

\textsuperscript{75} Government of Madras, G.O.No.1070, Law (General) Department, dated 16.03.1932.
Bharata Sevika Samithi, Sitalakshmi was the Secretary of that Association. Thayammal and Sitalakshmi picketed the Foreign Cloth shops at Madurai. They were convicted and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for one year for an offence under section 4 of Ordinance X of 1932 and they were placed in “B” class.\(^{76}\)

Manjammal, wife of Ramamaram Raja of Rajapalayam, was convicted under section 4 of Ordinance C of 1932 on 13.04.1932 at about 3 p.m. She picketed the foreign cloth shop of Ramasami Nadar exhorting those who came for purchasing cloths, and persisting them in so doing in spite of warning by the police. When the charge sheet was read out to her, she admitted to the fact of picketing and had no reason to urge against conviction. Manjammal was the first woman to picket at Rajapalayam. She was convicted and sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for six months and to pay a fine of Rs.200/- in default to rigorous imprisonment for one month. She was placed in “B” class.\(^{77}\)

Kalyani Ammal, wife of T.V. Swaminatha Sastri, Kamalam, wife of Krishnasami Ayyangar, Padmavathi Ammal wife of M.S. Rangasami Ayyangar were active members of the Congress Movement. These three

\(^{76}\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.1539, Law (General) Department, dated 15.04.1932.

\(^{77}\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.2602, Law (General) Department, dated 11.07.1932.
ladies picketed foreign cloth shops of Narayanasami Iyer and his neighbours, dissuaded intending purchasers from entering into and dealing at those shops. They were charged by the Circle Inspector of Police, Trichy Town under section 4 of the Molestation and boycotting ordinance No. V of 1932 and section 188. I.P.C. and 144 C.P.C Both of them have been convicted and placed in "B" Class.\(^78\)

Kamatchi Ammal, daughter of Rao Bahadur K. Seshu Ayyar picketed foreign cloth shops at Bazaar Street and persuaded people not to buy foreign cloth with a view of cause loss to the foreign cloth shop-keepers. She was convicted under section 4 of ordinance V of 1932 and sentenced to pay a fine of Rs.200/- in default to undergo simple imprisonment for two months. She declined to pay the fine and has been committed to the Jail at Vellore. She was placed in "B" class female prisoner.\(^79\)

In Tirunelveli, because of the impact of the Civil Disobedience Movement, women's participation in the picketing of liquor shops increased aggressively.\(^80\) Lakshmi of Srivaikuntam, picketing a foreign cloth shop and was a member of an unlawful association and dictator of a Taluk Congress Committee, she was molested under section 4 of the ordinance v of 1932.

\(^78\) Government of Madras, G.O.No.1228-A, Law (General) Department, dated 29.02.1932; G.O.No.937, Law (General) Department, dated 08.03.1932.


She was convicted and imprisoned in the central jail at Cannanore. She was also sentenced by the Sub Divisional Magistrate, Tuticorin, to undergo rigorous imprisonment for six months and to pay a fine of Rs.50 with rigorous imprisonment for six weeks.\textsuperscript{81}

Subbammal of Sevandakulam, the fifth Dictator of the Tuticorin Taluk Congress Committee was declared as a member in an unlawful association. She was arrested but released after warning. She was guilty, and assisted in the management of the unlawful association singing and distributing notices, which were incidentally of a most objectionable type. However, she was sentenced by the sub-Divisional Magistrate, Tuticorin for eighteen month imprisonment and a fine of Rs.100.\textsuperscript{82} Like Subbammal, one Ganapathi alias Janaki of Tuticorin, was arrested and sentenced to undergo Rigorous Imprisonment for six months and to pay a fine of Rs.50/-\textsuperscript{83}

Ganthimathi Ammal of Tuticorin was the seventh dictator of the Tuticorin Taluk Congress Committee. She was picketing the shop of Palavesa Pulavar and making small speeches. She was convicted and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for seven days, causing obstruction in public street (town nuisance) section 3 clause 5 of Act III of 1889.\textsuperscript{84}

\textsuperscript{81} Government of Madras, G.O.No.1475 [18(S)], Law (General) Department, dated 27.04.1933.

\textsuperscript{82} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{83} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{84} Government of Madras, G.O.No.167 1[3(S)], Law (General) Department, dated 23.04.1932.
Perianachi Ammal of Tuticorin, is a cooly working in the salt pans at Sevendakulam. She was picketing the shop of Plavesa Pulavar and making small speeches. She was convicted and sentenced to undergo rigorous imprisonment for seven days, the causing obstruction in public street (town nuisance) sector 3 clause 5 of Act II of 1889.\textsuperscript{85}

Lakshmiammal, she is the daughter of the Village Munisiff of Alagiapandiapuram in Tirunelveli Taluk, and is the second wife of Dr.C.Sankara Ayyor. He is a popular medical practitioner in Kallidaikuruhi. Lakshmiammal, Dictator of the Tamilnadu Congress Committee. This Committee along with its dictator has been declared by the local Government as an unlawful association under the Criminal Law Amendment Act in the Fort.St. George Gazette on 9 January 1932. Likewise, the Tirunelveli District Congress Committee, its dictator and volunteers have been declared as an unlawful association in the Fort.St. George Gazette on 7 January 1932. Lakshmiammal was sentenced to simple imprisonment for one year and to pay a fine of Rs.300.\textsuperscript{86}

Sornathammal is a Tirunelveli District Congress Volunteer. Warning notices issued by the District Magistrate were duly served on

\textsuperscript{85} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{86} Government of Madras, G.O.No.918, Law (General) Department, dated 07.03.1932.
Lakshmiammal and Mahadeve Ayyar. Notwithstanding, on 29 January 1932, at about 4 p.m. Lakshmiammal and Sornathammal organised a meeting in the Tirunelveli town in furtherance of the objects of the said unlawful associations. Sornathammal took part in organizing the meeting and also attended it holding a khaddar tri-coloured national flag.

Sornathammal was sentenced to undergo Rigorous imprisonment for one year and to pay a fine of Rs.300. Many other women, like V.Sundarathammal, Sayammal, and Raklal Ammal also participated in the foreign cloth boycott movement. They were kept in Trichirapalli Central Jail, Vellore and Cannanore Jails.

On 3 May 1930, M.E. Cousins and another European lady named "Udayavanam" enquired about the Satyagraha and she reported to have sustained injury by bayonet charge. She was the wife of James Cousins an Irish poet and Theosophist. She was a Bachelor of Music (London) and she was connected with the Women's Indian Association, Madras. She was also an Honorary Magistrate at Saidapet for sometime.

87. Ibid.
M.E. Cousins, besides propaganda work in connection with Swadeshi Movement, was crooking up the Branches of the Women Indian Associations by extensive correspondence to do their mite in that direction. She used to say that the Women's Indian Association was always in favour of Swadeshi and Swaraj. She held up for praise the example of Kamaladevi and Durga Bai of the extremists among the members of the Women's Indian Association and convicted in connection with the Salt Campaign.

M.E. Cousins made similar speech at an open air meeting held in the Triplicane Beach on 7 December and also distributed leaflets to the same effect. Hence she was arrested and convicted in the Present Civil Disobedience campaign. She was charged under section 108 Cr.p.c and convicted on 10 December 1932 to one year simple imprisonment on refusing to execute a bond for Rs. 10,000 with two sureties of Rs.5000 each and to undergo simple imprisonment for one year. She was placed in "C" class political prisoner.

Ambujammal was the daughter-in-law of the brother of T.Vijayaraghavachariar. She was a non-habitual prisoner of good character, who by social status, education and habits of life has been accustomed to a

91. Government of Madras, G.O.No.36, Public (Confidential) Department, dated 09.01.1933.

superior made of living and she has not been convicted of any of the offences mentioned in Rule 1 (3) of the classification of the criminal rules of practice. She was placed in class "A" class prisoner in jail.  

Women were drawn into the Political life, especially during the Swadeshi Movement (1904-1911). In Madras, a group of women formed the Women's Swadeshi League. Ambujammal was one among the founders of this League and her participation was seen prior to the formation of a separate women's established organisation. The Primary aim was to encourage hand spinning and weaving. Later many of the members became trained volunteers in the demonstrations, which were a part of the nationalist struggle. They acted as stewards on demonstrations and led the singing and helped those who were injured in lathi charges by the police. The members of this League were also active in picketing foreign cloth, in which Ambujammal stood out as one of the foremost women from the South who picked foreign cloth shop in Madras and courted arrest.

In Madras, the youth League was formed with Rukmini Lakshmipathi as the head, to help the Congress in its propaganda work. Other women like Krishnabai, and Kameshwari also started a separate


National Association for women, and they wanted Ambujammal and her aunt to join.

Accordingly, the association worked on Gandhi's principles of Khadi propaganda, spinning on the Charkha and conducting Hindi classes. This was named as "Womens Swadesi League". Ambujammal was the Treasurer for this and since her father did not have any objection on her serving the society. She worked whole heartedly in it.

In Madras city, some lady members belonging to Swadeshi League including Durga Bai and Krishna Bai, carried out Swadeshi propaganda. During this time the Swadeshi Exhibition was held at Madras Mahajana Sabha Hall on 25 June 1930. The following women like Mrs. Cousins of the Women's Indian Association. Vishalakshi, Secretary of the Youth League, Mrs. Dadabhai, Sakuntala, Anusuya and L. Krishna Bai were present.

M.E. Cousins welcomed the suggestion of the chairman as excellent. She emphasized the need for propaganda for boycott of British goods among women and youths. She expressed the opinion that they should concentrate their energies on propaganda in the city. The members of the

95. Tamil Nadu Archives, History of Freedom Movement, Bundle No. 65; Government of Madras, G.O.No.672, Under Secretary Safe File, dated 12.06.1930.

Exhibition Committee were following; they are M.E. Cousins, Janammal and Ambujammal.  

The Tamilnadu Youth Conference met at Madura on 6 June under the Presidency of Rukmini lakshmipathi. The most significant resolution passed was that referring to the boycott of foreign goods, specially British goods regarding which a separate report has been made to the Government of India.

In Madras city, Women are said to be getting tired of picketing and have a grievance against the city Boycott Committee which has apparently been depleting the funds of the "Women's Swadeshi League". As fore shadowed in her last report, Satyamurthi has contrived to get elected as president of the ensuring Tamil Nadu Provincial Congress at Madurai.

As regards the Congress side of the bargain, the picketing of foreign cloth shops has been continued in Madras city but is now confined to women under the leadership of Durgabai and M.E. Cousins and apparently with only the qualified approval of the local Congress leaders.

Visalakshi Ammal of the League of Youth, Madras, and one or two others, proceeded to Tiruppur for propaganda in connection with Swadeshi Movement.

97. Ibid.
The women not only picketed the foreign cloths, but they also participated aggressively in the picketing of the liquor shops. The liquor boycott brought the government revenues from excise duties crushing down, it also soon assumed a new popular form, that of cutting of the heads of Palmyra trees. The success of the liquor and drugs boycott was obviously connected with the popular tradition of regarding abstinence as virtual such as a symbol of respectability. The depth of this tradition was shown by the fact that the lower castes trying to move up in the caste hierarchy invariably tried to establish their upper caste status by giving up liquor and eating of meat.¹⁰⁰

The liquor boycott brought the government revenues from excise duties crushing down, it also soon assumed a new popular form, when young mothers and widows and unmarried girls, became a familiar sight as they stood from morning to night outside the liquor shops and opium dens and shops selling foreign cloth, quietly but firmly persuading the customers and shopkeepers to change their ways.¹⁰¹ The boycott programme was caustically carried on with the help of women. The picketing of liquor shops had been done to a very large extent by women and was an indication of the extent to which the nationalist movement had changed the order of things in Madras Presidency. No more than persuasion was employed, but in the picketing of liquor shops women volunteers faced insults from prospective customers as well as beaten by the police. Seclusion and Purdahs were abandoned,

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¹⁰¹ *Stri- Dharma, op.cit.*, p.302.
and women came out in the open for picketing of liquor shops. Women volunteers faced insults from prospective life.\textsuperscript{102}

In Madras Rukmani Ammal, Savithiri, Sakunthala and Saraswathi were the leading women who participated in the picketing of liquor shops.\textsuperscript{103} In Coimbatore District, the boycott of the toddy shop was very serious in which the government lost the revenue of Rs.1.25 lakhs. To compensate the loss, the government handled crucial methods in Coimbatore, Pollachi and Udumalaipet Volunteers. Repressive orders were passed and many were arrested and put in prison. In the Civil Disobedience Movement, women were some of the worst sufferers. Women volunteers who were arrested in connection with the picketing campaign were given crucial punishments. They were kept in the Vellore jail, and were ill -treated. Even the married women were asked to remove "Kumkum" or "Saffron" from their forehead. They were given "C" class rooms in the jail.\textsuperscript{104} In some cases the women were savagely set upon, beaten or insulted by the police with the object of preventing them from participating or to frighten them and others from such activities. They were taken to lonely places and were left there without help. They were beaten, abused, raped and assaulted.\textsuperscript{105}

\textsuperscript{102} M.S. Vairanpillai, \textit{Are we two Nations? Nationalist in Indian Politics}, Lahore, 1946, p.180.

\textsuperscript{103} \textit{Stri- Dharma}, \textit{op.cit.}, p.302.

\textsuperscript{104} Government of Madras, G.O.No.3219, Law (General) Department, dated 01.09.1932.

\textsuperscript{105} M.S. Vairanpillai, \textit{op.cit.}, p.190.
The Congress Government beckoned women to every form of national service. They did most of the picketing work. They went to prison. They were often chosen as the dictators of the local committees. The whole nation was restored to strikes, hartals and picketing became the every day affairs and paralyzing day to day work of the government.\textsuperscript{106}

For Indian women, the Civil Disobedience Movement provided the most liberating experience to participate in different capacities in the same, and the period constitute their first major entry into the public spheres of political activities. The active participation of women in this stirring era forms a distinct landmark and represents a path-breaking advance in Indian women in close association with the Congress Movement. It is noteworthy that by now women themselves were keen to play active roles and some of them demanded and verily "pressurized" Gandhi to associate women as an integral member of the Satyagraha Army.\textsuperscript{107}

Many women emerged as Congress 'Dictators' of different districts and provinces. They displayed remarkable organizational capacity and leadership ability in furthering the nationalist programme. Women were motivated to patriotic sentiment and wished to see the end of foreign rule from their motherland. For Tamil women, the movement was the most liberating


\textsuperscript{107} Aparna Basu, \textit{Role of women in Indian Struggle for freedom}, New Delhi, 1976, p.37.
experience and could truly be said to have marked their entry into the public space.\textsuperscript{108}

On 14 July, 1933, Mahatmaji called off mass Satyagraha but allowed the people to court arrest individually.\textsuperscript{109} The enthusiasm of the people was already waning and violence was on the increase. On wise considerations Gandhiji withdrew the Movement completely on 7 April 1934 and invited the people to work for the removal of untouchability and for the implementation of the other items of the constructive programme.\textsuperscript{110}

In conclusion, it can be safely asserted that women's activism during the Civil Disobedience Movement was remarkable. They participated with indomitable courage, dedication and determination to provide immense sustenance to the movement. Though the intensity of action varied among different provinces, yet Gandhi's call had clearly evoked momentous response from women in every region of the country. They came out from their traditional seclusion and broke the Salt Law, marched in processions, participated outside foreign cloth and liquor shops.\textsuperscript{111} Hither to women's participation was smaller in number but now they came forth in thousands and participated with increasing favour and courted arrest. According to the Government reports a total of 3,648 women were arrested during the Second

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{108} D. Janaki, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 80.
\item \textsuperscript{109} K.B. Keswani, \textit{op.cit.}, p.145.
\item \textsuperscript{110} Geoffrey Ashe, \textit{op.cit.}, p.332.
\item \textsuperscript{111} Bharti Thakur, \textit{op.cit.}, p.125.
\end{itemize}
phase alone, i.e. from January 1932 to April 1933. Indeed, it would be no exaggeration to assert that the Civil Disobedience era witnessed an intense participation of women all over the sub continent.

Tamil women had the largest show in it. Inevitably the Indian National Congress unambiguously acknowledged the conspicuous and crucial contribution, which women made to nationalist cause during the Civil Disobedience Era. The increasing participation of women processions and public meetings gradually compelled the government to formulate some sort of policies to deal with the women Satyagrahis.

The entry of women in large scale into the Civil Disobedience Movement gave a new enlightenment to many other women who began to participate the further national Movement such as the Individual Satyagraha and Quit Indian Movement.