

MAHATMA GANDHIJI



Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (2 October 1869 – 30 January 1948) was the preeminent leader of Indian independence movement in British-ruled India. Employing nonviolent civil disobedience, Gandhi led India to independence and inspired movements for civil rights and freedom across the world. The honorific Mahatma applied to him first in 1914 in South Africa—is now used worldwide. He is also called Bapu in India

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Where & when born

Born on 2nd October 1869 in Porbandar, Gujarat State to Putlibai Gandhi & Karamchand Gandhi. Married to Kasturba Gandhi.

Brief history of the person -personal

Born and raised in a Hindu [merchant caste](#) family in coastal [Gujarat, western India](#), and trained in law at the [Inner Temple](#), London, Gandhi first employed nonviolent civil disobedience as an expatriate lawyer in South Africa, in the resident Indian community's struggle for civil rights. After his return to India in 1915, he set about organizing peasants, farmers, and urban labourers to protest against excessive land-tax and discrimination. Assuming leadership of the [Indian National Congress](#) in 1921, Gandhi led nationwide campaigns for easing poverty, expanding women's rights, building religious and ethnic amity, ending [untouchability](#), but above all for achieving [Swaraj](#) or self-rule.

Career in political

Gandhi period of stay in South Africa to assist Indians in opposing a bill to [deny them the right to vote](#). Even though he was not successful in getting rid of the bill, his campaign was successful in drawing attention to the grievances of Indians in South Africa. He helped found the [Natal Indian Congress](#) in 1894, and through this organisation, he moulded the Indian community of South Africa into a unified political force. Gandhi adopted his still evolving methodology of *Satyagraha* (devotion to the truth), or nonviolent protest, for the first time. Gandhi's ideas took shape, and the concept of *Satyagraha* matured during this struggle. In 1910, Gandhi established an idealistic community called 'Tolstoy Farm' near Johannesburg, where he nurtured his policy of peaceful resistance. After blacks gained the right to vote in South Africa, Gandhi was proclaimed a national hero with numerous monuments. Gandhi returned to India in 1915. He brought an international reputation as a leading Indian nationalist, theorist and organiser. He joined the Indian National Congress and was introduced to Indian issues, politics and the Indian people primarily by [Gopal Krishna Gokhale](#). Gandhi took leadership of the Congress in 1920 and began escalating demands until on 26 January 1930 the Indian National Congress declared the independence of India. The British did not recognize the declaration but



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negotiations ensued, with the Congress taking a role in provincial government in the late 1930s. Gandhi and the Congress withdrew their support of the Raj when the Viceroy declared war on Germany in September 1939 without consultation. Tensions escalated until Gandhi demanded immediate independence in 1942 and the British responded by imprisoning him and tens of thousands of Congress leaders. Meanwhile the Muslim League did co-operate with Britain and moved, against Gandhi's strong opposition, to demands for a totally separate Muslim state of Pakistan.

Leadership qualities

In 1919, Gandhi soon became the All-India Muslim Conference's, most prominent spokesman for Khilafat Movement and attracted a strong base of Muslim support with local chapters in all Muslim centres in India. His success made him India's first national leader with a multicultural base and facilitated his rise to power within Congress, which had previously been unable to influence many Indian Muslims. In 1920 Gandhi became a major leader in Congress.

Critical moments in the Movement of Civil Rights

When the British introduced a tax on salt in 1930, Gandhi [famously led a 250-mile march to the sea](#) to collect his own salt. Recognising his political influence nationally, the British authorities were forced to negotiate various settlements with Gandhi over the following years, which resulted in the alleviation of poverty, granted status to the 'untouchables', enshrined rights for women, and led inexorably to Gandhi's goal of 'Swaraj': political independence from Britain.

During the first years of the [Second World War](#), Gandhi's mission to achieve independence from Britain reached its zenith: he saw no reason why Indians should fight for British sovereignty, in other parts of the world, when they were subjugated at home, which led to the worst instances of civil uprising under his direction, through his 'Quit India' movement.

Placed under increasing pressure, by his political contemporaries, to accept Partition as the only way to avoid civil war in India, Gandhi reluctantly concurred with its political necessity, and India celebrated its Independence Day on 15th August 1947.

Principles & Practices

Gandhi principle and practices of True Nature & Honest, Non-Violence, Non-Cooperation against British Rule & Institutions, Swaraj and expanding initiatives against untouchability, alcoholism, ignorance, and poverty won the hearts of many Indians and international personalities. This made him a national leader soon and by virtue of this, he became father of nation.



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Although Gandhi was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize five times, he never received it. In the year of his death, 1948, the Prize was not awarded, the stated reason being that “there was no suitable living candidate” that year. Gandhi's life and teachings have inspired many liberationists of the 20th Century, including Dr. Martin Luther King in the United States, Nelson Mandela and Steve Biko in South Africa, and Aung San Suu Kyi in Myanmar.

Awards and achievements

Gandhi dedicated his life to the wider purpose of discovering truth, or Satya. He tried to achieve this by learning from his own mistakes and conducting experiments on himself. He called his autobiography The Story of My Experiments with Truth

Sources

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