UNIT 13: INDIAN NATIONAL MOVEMENT FROM 1939 TO 1947

UNIT STRUCTURE

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13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to-

- discuss the August Offer,
- discuss about the Quit India Movement,
- analyse the role of Subhas Chandra Bose and Indian National Army in the National Movement.

13.2 INTRODUCTION

In the last unit you have already studied about the Indian National Movement under the leadership of Gandhi. In this unit we are going to discuss about the last part of this movement. All of you have a minimum idea of World War II, is not so? In this war Britain was also a party. Britain entered the war in defense of freedom and democracy. So they wanted India to support them in the war. India's war for freedom got a momentum at this point of time. We will have a clear idea of different stages of post-war development of national movement from 1939-1947 after going through this unit.

13.3 AUGUST OFFER

In 1940, the position of Britain in the war began to deteriorate. It appealed to the people of India to help them in fighting the war. But the Indians demanded a provincial government comprising of various parties and independence as their goal.

In August 1940, Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy of India, after consultations with all the political parties of India, on behalf of the British Government, issued a statement known as August Offer. Its important features were the followings

- The statement promised the establishment of full-fledged responsible government in India on the Dominion model after the war.
- A representative Assembly will be convened to frame a new Constitution for India.
- Gave assurance to the Muslim League that British Government would not accept any Constitution to which important political parties like Muslim League were opposed
- As an interim measure for the duration of the war, the Viceroy would establish a War Advisory Council in which a certain number of Indian representatives will be invited to join.

The Congress rejected the August Offer, because it made mere promises of some concessions in the future. In order to make the British realise that Indians were not willing to cooperate with it in its war effort, Gandhi started individual Satyagraha.

13.4 QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT

The Second World War changed the political scenario of Indian politics. August Offer could not fulfil the Indian's hope. At this juncture Cripps Mission was sent to India in 1942. The mission failed as it did not bring the promise of independence. The failure of the Cripps mission ushered a period of political anxiety in the country. Gandhiji openly declared that there could be no friendly understanding between Britain and India. He suggested on April, 1942 the immediate withdrawal of the British from India.

Cripps Mission-In March, 1942 the British War Cabinet sent Sir Stafford Cripps with new consti-tutional proposals. But the Cripps Mission failed.

The 'Quit India' resolution was adopted by the All India Congress Committee in Bombay on 8th August, 1942. Gandhiji now was in a militant mood and was in favour of a mass struggle on the widest possible scale. However, the congress leadership got no time to implement the resolution. In the very next day all the important leaders including Gandhi were arrested. Before he was arrested on 9th August, 1942, Gandhiji gave the message - 'Do or Die' to the masses.

Despite Gandhiji's appeal to the people to remain non-violent, the brutal repression led to violent rebellion. The people started hartals, strikes in factories and took other media of protest. People disrupted transport services and communication, burnt out railway and police station. Thus, people could not remain nonviolent everywhere.



LET US KNOW

The Quit India Movement also came to be known as 'August Revolution' since it had occurred in the month of August, 1942.

Yet the movement could not continue for long. The Muslim League and Communist party opposed this movement. The movement failed because of lack of co-operation among the people, lack of proper organization and absence of a clear cut programme.

The government was successful to crush the movement. However it would be wrong to suppose that the movement was a dismal failure because it was suppressed by the government within two months. On the other hand the violent mass upsurge in 1942 left nobody in doubt that the freedom battle in India had begun in right earnest. Now there was no going back from the demand of complete independence to India. The movement thus contributed greatly to Indian national movement.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: In which year Quit India Resolution was adopted?

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Q 2: The government was successful in suppressing the Quit India Movement. (State True/False)

.....

13.5 SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE AND INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY

Most of you have heard the name Subhas Chandra Bose. He was revered as a national hero. He was a brilliant student of the University of Calcutta and a member of the Indian Civil Service. He resigned his attractive career to serve the cause of India's freedom.

Subhas Chandra Bose had fundamental differences with Gandhi in respect of both policy and tactics. He was shocked when Gandhiji suspended the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1934. He was also the president of the Indian National Congress twice. But he could not adjust himself with the Congress High Command and finally resigned from the Congress in 1939 and formed a new party called 'Forward Block'.

Figure - 13.1



Subhas Chandra Bose

Source : Google image

In 1939 Second World War broke out. Bose found it to be a convenient opportunity to strike a blow at the English for attaining the freedom of India. Indian Government arrested him in July, 1940 under the



World War II-The WorldWar II was fought between Axis Powers comprising Germany, Italy and Japan) and Allies (Britain and France and joined later on by U.S.S.R. and U.S.A) It started in 1939.

'Defence of Indian Rule'. However, in 1941 he escaped from India, hrough Peshawar and Russia and reached Berlin (Germany). The Indian community in Germany acclaimed him as their leader *(Netaji*) and greeted him with 'Jai Hind'. In February 1943, he left for Japan to organize an armed struggle against the British with Japanese help. With the help of Ras Bihari Bose, who was an old revolutionary nationalist, Subhas Chandra Bose formed the 'Azad Hind Fauj' or Indian National Army (I.N.A) in Singapore and gave it the famous battle cry: '*Chalo Delh*i'. The main aim of I.N.A. was to conduct a military campaign for the liberation of India.



LET US KNOW

Before the arrival of Subhas Chandra Bose, the idea of Indian National Army was first conceived by Captain Mohan Singh, who was an officer of the British Indian Army.

Figure - 13.2



Jubiliant INA and Japanese troops after capturing a post on the Indo-Burmese border

Source : Google image

Subhas Chandra assumed the supreme command of I.N.A. The Indian residents in South-East Asia and the Indian soldiers and officers captured by the Japanese forces in Malaya, Singapore and Burma mainly constituted the I.N.A. The I.N.A. Brigade, assisted by the Japanese army advanced up to the Indian border. In March 1944 the Indian flag was hoisted in Kohima (Nagaland).

But the political scenario of world politics changed in 1944-45. With the collapse of Japan in the Second World War, the I.N.A. too met defeat. It is reported that Subhas Chandra Bose lost his life in an air crash. The intense patriotism of Subhas Chandra Bose and the idealism of the Indian National Army inspired the people in a great manner.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Name the party which was formed by Subhas Chandra Bose in 1939.

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Q 4: In 1944 where did I.N.A. hoist the flag of India?

.....

Q 5: In which year Second World War broke out?

.....

Q 6: Who issued August Offer?

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13.6 LET US SUM UP

After going through this unit, you have learnt about the

- August Offer and its failure to solve the Indian problems.
- the Quit India Movement.
- However a proper reading of this unit has also helped you to develop an idea on Subhas Chandra Bose and I.N.A.



13.7 FURTHER READING

1) Bandyopadhyay, Sekhara. (2004). From *Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India.* New Delhi, India: Orient Longman.
2) Chandra, B., Mukherjee, A., Panikkar, K.N. & Mahajan, S. (Ed.). (1988). *India's Struggle for Independence 1857-1947.* Delhi, India: Penguin.
3) Majumdar, R.C., Raychaudhuri, H.C. & Datta, K. (1978). *An Advanced History of India* (4th Ed.). New Delhi, India: Macmillan India

13.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to the question No. 1: 1942

Answer to the question No. 2: True

Answer to the question No. 3: Forward Block

Answer to the question No. 4: Kohima

Answer to the question No. 5: 1939

Answer to the question No. 6: Lord Linlithgow

13.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A) Very Short Questions (Answer each question within 50 words)

Q.1: Which session of Indian National Congress adopted the resolution of Quit India?

Q.2: What is the name of Quit India Movement?

Q.3: Who formed Forward Block?

B) Short Questions (Answer each question within 150 words)

Q.1: Why did the Quit India Movement fail?

Q.2: Write a short note on INA.

Q.3: Why did the Indians reject the August Offer?

A) Long Questions (Answer each question in between 300-500 words)

Q.1: Discuss about the Quit India Movement.

Q.2: Analyse the role of Subhas Chandra Bose in the national movement.

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