

REVIEWING HISTORY



The downside of Nationalism

Non-cooperation Movement was one of the major steps taken by the masses under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi in the Indian Independence struggle. But the movement had to be called off due to an unfortunate event at Chauri Chaura in Uttar Pradesh, which triggered the Nationalism spirit of the masses.

What triggered the event?

On February 4, 1922 protestors started protesting against the liquor shops at a local market at Chauri Chaura in terms of boycotting British goods. When the protestors marched towards the main police chowki, the policemen in charge tried to halt the protest. As the crowd was out of control, the policemen opened fire which killed some protestors. This enraged the protestors further who circled the police chowki and set it ablaze. Twenty-two policemen were burnt alive including the sub-inspector.



What were the circumstances that led to the event?

During 1920-21, a nationwide revolt termed as Non-cooperation Movement was launched. It protested the authoritarian laws like the Rowlatt Act of 1919. Rowlatt Act restricted the freedom of self-government for Indians in their own nation. The Movement was based on the terms of Civil disobedience and Satyagraha and was to be directed in peaceful manner.

What were the immediate consequences of the event?

Mahatma Gandhi condemned this horrifying event and called off the Non-Cooperation Movement. Feeling guilty of leading the movement, he went on a five-day fast. This also affected the Civil Disobedience Movement and the Congress leaders had to give up any immediate action of resistance against the British. The British government was furious after the incident and charged the protestors with severe trial in the court of Law.

Though the incident was unfortunate and regrettable in the National Freedom Struggle, many historians brushed it off as a minor episode of violence. The incident not only failed to serve any political implications against British, but also maligned the pages of the glorious war of Indian Independence.

Father of Indian Renaissance



The Man

Born on 22 May 1772, Raja Ram Mohan Roy was known as the "Maker of Modern India". Being a great scholar and independent thinker, he was honoured with the title of 'Raja' by the Mughal Emperor. At a tender age of 15, Ram Mohan Roy mastered various languages and later gained a deep knowledge of Upanishads and Hindu Philosophy. Ram Mohan Roy was a prominent person in the literary circles of Bengal. His Bengali translations of various scriptures dignified the language as well. He had a high regard for Hinduism but felt a need to wipe out the misinterpretation of the religion. He was thus against idol worship and orthodox Hindu rituals.

The Organisation

Raja Ram Mohan Roy is fondly known for his organisations – The Brahmo Samaj and Atmiya Sabha. In 1828, Raja Ram Mohan Roy founded the Brahmo Samaj, which was one of the first Indian socio-religious reform movements in India. The main objective of the Samaj was to expose the religious hypocrisies and the growing influence of Christianity on the Hindu society. Ram Mohan Roy influenced many of his friends with his way of thinking. This resulted in an association named 'Atmiya Sabha' (Society of Friends). The society encouraged religious discussions in abolishing the various orthodox Hindu practices like idol worship and misinterpreting religion in the name of superstitions.

The Mission

Raja Ram Mohan Roy played a major role in the abolition of Sati and fought for the rights of women. He campaigned for widow re-marriage and the right for women to hold property. He actively opposed Sati system and finally in 1829, after many efforts, the Sati System was abolished. Ram Mohan Roy also supported education, particularly among women. He believed that English language education was superior to the traditional Indian education system. Thus he opposed the use of government funds to support schools teaching Sanskrit in 1822. He founded a school based on English education.

