



Class - 12th

Indigo

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MBC – Mridul Bhaiya Classes





INDIGO

About the Author : Louis Fischer

A Jewish – American Journalist Began his career as school teacher later became a Journalist & Famous International reporter.



In 1942, he was permitted to stay for a week, near Mahatma Gandhi's ashram.

'The Resolute Peasant' – Raj Kumar Shukla

- In 1917, Gandhi ji was at annual convention of the Indian National Congress party in Lucknow.
- Raj Kumar Shukla was a poor emaciated peasant or sharecropper at Champaran.
- Rajkumar wanted Gandhi Ji to visit his district and look into the peasant's condition. (Injustice of the landlord system in Bihar).
- After a lot a tenacity, Gandhi told him to come Calcutta and take him from there.

Visit to Rajendra Prasad's House

- Shukla & Gandhi ji went to Patna, Bihar to meet Rajendra Prasad (a lawyer) but he was out of town.
- The servants knew Shukla as a poor peasant who pestered Rajendra Prasad to help the Indigo Sharecropper
- Servants did not allow them to drink water from the well as they thought they were untouchable.



Visit to Muzaffarpur

- Gandhi decided to visit Muzaffarpur before Champaran.
- Gandhi sent a telegram to professor JB Kriplani.
- He came along with large number of students went to station to receive Gandhi.
- Gandhi stayed in Muzaffarpur for two days in the home of Professor Malkani, a government school teacher.
- The stay was an extraordinary thing. Indians were afraid to show sympathy for advocates.

Gandhi scolded the lawyers

- News of Gandhi arrival spread like wild fire.
- Sharecroppers from champaran began arriving in large numbers.
- Gandhi scolded the lawyers for charging a huge fee amount.
- Gandhi concluded that peasants were crushed and fear stricked that they didn't go to law courts.

The Share Cropping Arrangement

- Most of the cultivating land was owned by Englishmen.
- The peasants were forced to plant 15% of their holdings with indigo and Surrender the entire indigo harvest as rent.
- Germany developed 'Synthetic indigo'.
- They asked for compensation from the sharecroppers for being released from the 15% arrangement
- This arrangement was annoying, so many farmers signed willingly to be released from the agreement.



- Some of the share croppers felt cheated, unhappy and asked for their money back.

Gandhi Disobeys the official order

- Gandhi ji visited the secretary of the British landlord to collect the facts but got no information.
- Gandhi ji then visited the British Commissioner and reported that he was bullied and asked to leave Tirhut.
- Gandhi proceeded to Motihari, the capital of Champaran.
- Many people greeted him. He used a house as headquarters to continue his investigation
- Suddenly, the report came that a farmer has been maltreated in a nearby village.
- Gandhi decided to check the matter himself.
- He was ordered by a police superintendent's messenger to return to the town and quit Champaran.
- Gandhi disobeyed the order. As a result, he was summoned to appear in the court the next day.

Demonstration of the Peasants

- Gandhi ji telegraphed Rajendra Prasad to come from Patna with influential friends and sent instructions to ashram.
- He also gave full report to the Viceroy.
- Next day, several peasants reached Motihari and started their demonstration around the courthouse.
- They all came only to support Mahatama Gandhi which gave Gandhi ji hope of the beginning of their liberation.



- Gandhi ji controlled the crowd and gave them proof that the British tyranny will no longer be borne.
- The government was baffled
- Gandhi ji confessed that he broke the law but only because of the voice of his conscience.
- The judge didn't deliver the judgement for days & allowed him to remain at liberty.

Gandhi Influences the lawyers

- Gandhi ji asked lawyers what they would do if he was sent to jail.
- The senior lawyer replied that they would go home.
- The lawyers then realised that if Gandhi ji could go to jail for the sake of the peasants it would be shameful for them.
- The lawyers told Gandhi that they were ready to follow him to jail.
- Gandhi exclaimed, "The battle of Champaran is won".

Civil Disobedience Triumphs,

- Gandhi was informed that the Lieutenant Governor of the province has ordered the case to be dropped.
- Evidences against landlords were collected.
- Civil Disobedience had triumphed for the first time in modern India.

Lieutenant – Governor Summons Gandhi

- In June, the Lieutenant – Governor, Sir Edward Gait summoned Gandhi.
- Gandhi ji prepared plans for Civil Disobedience.
- The Lieutenant – Governor, after having four meeting with Gandhi, appointed as officials commissions.



- In the commission, there were landlords, some government officials and Gandhi ji himself who was the sole representative for the peasants.

Gandhiji agrees to 25% compensation

- There were many evidence against landlords.
- Landlords expected Gandhi ji to demand full repayment of the money which was illegally taken from the share croppers.
- Gandhi ji asked for only 50% & the landlords offered 25%
- To everybody's surprise, GANDHI AGREED.

Why Gandhi ji agreed for 25% Compensation

- Gandhiji believed that what mattered was that the landlords were obliged to surrender the part of the money.
- It was all about their prestige.
- They behaved as lords above the law, but after this incident, the peasants saw that they had rights and persons to defend them.
- Peasants learned courage. Which mattered most at that time.

The Poor Conditions of Champaran

- Gandhi ji wanted to improve the cultural and social backwardness in the champaran villages
- He called for volunteers to help.
- His wife Kasturba & youngest son also arrived to help.
- Primary schools were opened in six villages.
- Kasturba taught personal cleanliness and community sanitation.
- Gandhi ji sent regular instructions by post and asked for financial accounts.

Self Reliance – The Making of a Free India



- Charles Freer Andrews, an English pacifist became a devoted follower of Gandhi
- Gandhi's lawyer friends wanted Andrews to help them.
- Gandhi ji strongly opposed the suggestion.
- Andrew's help was showcasing the weakness of their hearts.
- Self-Reliance, Indian Independence and help to the sharecroppers were all bound together.

SUMMARY

This Chapter Is An Excerpt Of :

“The life of Mahatma Gandhi”.

First time, the author met Gandhi in 1942 in Sevagram ashram in Maharashtra. How I build desire to free India from British in 1917.

In 1916, Gandhi went to attend an annual meeting of Indian National Congress in Lucknow which had 2301 representatives & many visitors.

Then a poor, emaciated (weak) peasant (farmer) named Raj Kumar Shukla came to meet him. He introduced himself & wanted Gandhi to visit Champaran (District of Bihar).

There was An ancient arrangement at Champaran, where peasants were sharecroppers. The landlords used to give their lands to these sharecropper for cultivation and grant them with very less percent of their produce. Raj Kumar Shukla was also a sharecropper. He was illiterate but 'resolute person'. He travelled Lucknow to the Congress to complain against the injustice.

After discussing the issue, Gandhiji replied, (declined) by saying that he had an appointment in 'Kanpur' and was committed to go other parts of India Raj Kumar Shukla still followed Gandhi and asked him to fix a date. Gandhiji was impressed by the determination of Raj Kumar Shukla.

Gandhiji then invited RKS to Calcutta. After passing few months, RKS reached there and they both took a train to Patna. RKS took GJ to Rajendra Prasad's



house who was a lawyer & later became the president of congress party. Rajendra Prasad was not available at home but his servants knew RKS was a peasant and had arrived several times to pasture. Rajendra P to help sharecropper. The Servants allows them to stay at the grounds but did not permit to draw water from the well as untouchability was quite privilent at that time. They could not meet RP & planned to go Muzzafarpur which was on the way to Champaran to obtain the complete information about the sharecrooppers.

Gandhi ji sent a telegram to Professor JB Kriplani in Muzaffarpur. Train arrived there at mid night on 15th April, 1917.

Kriplani ji along with students were waiting at the railway station for them.

Gandhi Ji was impressed the way he was welcomed by Kriplani. People at that time were scared to help freedom fighters. The advent of Gandhi ji spread really quick & his mission's news spread like wild fire and people joined to see him.

Lawyers of Mujaffarpur briefed him about the case and the fees they used to charge GJ scolded the lawyers for taking big amount fees. They decided to stop taking the peasants case to courts. They wanted to make sharecroppers free from fear. Most of the land was owned by Englishmen in Champaran. The main commercial crop there was 'INDIGO'. These men forced the peasant to cultivate Indigo on 15% of their land and Surrendered their entire harvest as rent. Later, the landlords learned that Germany had developed. Synthetic indigo so they asked for compensation from the sharecroppers for being released from the 15% arrangement. Some peasants signed & some engaged lawyers. But when the sharecroppers heard the news they felt cheated and wanted their money back. GJ wanted to collect the facts and visited the secretary of the British landlord's association the Secretary denied to give any information to on outsides. Then, he went to the commissioner of the Tirhut division Gandhi ji procceded to Motihari, the capital of Champaran. Many people greeted him. He continued his



investigation using a house as head quarters. Then, a report came that a peasant was tortured in nearby village. GJ went to look for the matter.

On his way he was ordered by a police superintendent's messenger to return back to his town. He even received an official notice to quit Champaran. Gandhiji disobeyed the order and was summoned to appear in the court next day.

He telegraphed Rajendra Prasad to come to Patna with influential friends and sent instructions to the ashram. He shared a full report to the viceroy.

Several thousands peasants reached Motihari and started demonstrating the court house. This gave GJ a hope of liberation from the fear of the British. The officials of British felt powerless but GJ helped to regulate the crowd. The government was baffled.

The trial was also delayed. GJ confessed that he broke the law but only because of the voice of his conscience. The magistrate asked GJ to get a bail prepared but he refused. The judge didn't deliver any judgement for days and GJ was allowed to remain at liberty.

Next GJ influenced lawyers. Including Rajendra Prasad he proved his dedication to help sharecroppers even after going to jail. This boosted the lawyers and they all were ready to help him.

"The Battle of Champaran is won" said by GJ. He wanted people to follow the laws and wanted to serve the nation. Next, GJ divided the lawyers into groups and decided their sequences. After few days, GJ received a written letter by Lieutenant Governor which says that the case of GJ was dropped. For the first time Civil Disobedience was triumphed.

GJ next set an inquiry to know all the problems of sharecroppers. He collected all the evidences of the tortured peasants after this. Landlords, also started protesting opposing peasant's protest.

In June, GJ went to meet Sir Edward Gate and made detailed plans of Civil Disobedience movement. GJ had four prolonged interviews with Lieutenant Edward Gate. A commission was hired to know everything about the tortures on



peasants. In that commission, there were landlords, some government officials & GJ himself. Who was the only presenter for peasants.

GJ stayed in Champaran for 7 months and then started taking small visits of Champaran.

Big evidence were collected and landlords agreed to return the money back to peasants. GJ asked to refund only 50% of the money. A British missionary was observing the Champaran mission. The representatives of landlords agreed to give back only 25% of the money GJ agreed to it which he explained late that the refund amount did not matter Landlords had been obliged to surrender some part of the money but also surrendering their prestige.

Few year later, Britisher abandoned the whole village & the lands were given the local peasants.

GJ wanted to improve the poor conditions of Champaran for that he called his wife ' Kasturba & his youngest son to help '. Primary schools were opened in six villages. Kasturba taught women there cleanliness GJ sent regular instructions by post & asked for financial accounts.

Everything Gandhi did tried to mould a new free Indian, who could stand on their own feet & thus make India free. An English pacifist, Charles freer Andrews became a devoted followers of Gandhi. Gandhi's lawyer friends wanted Andrews to help them but he opposed the suggestion. It will show the weakness of their hearte GJ taught of self reliance & helped the share croppers.



This Chapter Ends here !! But not your work

Go to Practice Questions, Solve Dpps attend MCQs and revise the notes after some 2nd 4th and 7th day

To get 95+ you have to keep on revising what you studied.

[Remember Consistency and HardWork Gives Great Result]

NOTES MADE BY



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