



GANDHI:  
ENTRY INTO FREEDOM  
STRUGGLE AND HIS  
IDEOLOGY

## GANDHI IN SOUTH AFRICA

- Gandhi went to England for his studies in 1881 and qualified for the Bar.
- Returned to India in 1891.
- Began practicing in Bombay High Court.
- Not being a success as a lawyer shifted to Rajkot.
- Sailed to Durban in 1893:
  - In connection with a legal case of Dada Abdulla and Company, an Indian firm, doing trade in South Africa.
  - Contract for one year stay.
  - But he stayed upto 1914 with two breaks in between.
- **Conditions of Indians at South Africa:**
  - About 2 lakhs Indians lived in South Africa at that time.
  - Most of them indentured freed labourers.
  - Some merchants with their clerks and assistants.
  - Suffered from racial disabilities with regard to:
    - ◆ Rights of citizenship,
    - ◆ Trade and
    - ◆ Ownership of property.
  - Every Indian contemptuously called 'coolie' (labourer).
  - Without a permit, Indians not allowed to walk on footpaths or to be out at night.
  - Prohibited to travel in first and second class railway compartments and were forced at times to travel on the footboard of trains.
  - Not permitted to enter hotels exclusively reserved for Europeans.

- In Transvaal, Indians were asked to do trade or reside in specific areas which had highly unhygienic surroundings.
- Indentured labourers had to pay £ 3 as poll tax.

### Gandhi's Campaign I

- Against a proposed Bill of Natal Government to disfranchise Indians.
- Gandhi declared that bill as '*first nail into Indians' coffin*'.
- To infuse solidarity into heterogeneous Indian community, he formed an association '**Indian Natal Organization**' in 1893.
- Indian National Congress in India passed a resolution against the Bill.
- In England, sections of Indians supported Indian cause.
- 400 Natal Indians submitted a petition against the bill.
- However, Bill was passed by Natal Legislature.
- Gandhi petitioned to Colonial Secretary in London to disapprove the bill.
- Bill was held. Later, with some amendments, it was passed and approved.
- According to New bill: '**No native of countries (not of European origin), which had not hitherto possessed elective institutions founded on parliamentary franchise, to be placed on voter's list unless they obtained exception from Governor General**'.
- **Brief visit to India:**
  - Attended Calcutta session of Congress 1901 and succeeded in piloting a resolution on condition of Indians in South Africa.
- **Return to South Africa in 1902**
  - Stayed for 12 years continuously.

- ❑ In 1903, started a weekly 'Indian Opinion'.
- ❑ in 1904, Gandhi shifted to a place near Durban called Phoenix.
- **Transvaal Government Bill (Asiatic Registration Bill)**
  - ❑ Every Indian - man, woman or child above eight - was required to register and to give finger and thumb impressions on the registration form.
  - ❑ Whoever failed to register before a certain date would be guilty of an offence for which he could be punished or deported.
  - ❑ At any time, an Indian could be asked to produce his registration certificates and police officers were permitted to enter into Indian's house to check his papers.
- **Voice Against The Bill**
  - ❑ Gandhi organized a meeting at Empire Theatre in Johannesburg.
  - ❑ Despite opposition from the Indians, bill was passed.
  - ❑ Gandhi led a delegation to England, but his effort failed.
  - ❑ New Law to take effect from July 1, 1907.
  - ❑ Gandhi adopted a new technique known as 'Satyagraha'.
  - ❑ An organization called 'Passive Resistance Association' was formed which asked Indian people to boycott the permit offices.
  - ❑ Gandhi was sentenced to two-months imprisonment.
  - ❑ Indians taken registration form numbered 519 by November 30, 1907.
- **Gandhi-General Smuts Meet**
  - ❑ Arranged by his friend Albert Cart right.

- ❑ Gandhi accepted Smuts proposal that the registration law would be repealed if Indians registered voluntarily.
- ❑ Smuts backed out from his words.
- **Gandhi restarted Satyagraha**
  - ❑ A large number of Indians consigned their registration certificates to flames.
  - ❑ Transvaal Government enacted the Immigration Law which aimed at excluding new immigrants from India.
  - ❑ Gandhi announced that Satyagraha would also be directed against this law.
  - ❑ Gandhi was Arrested and kept in Transvaal prison.
  - ❑ Financial support to Association by Indian National Congress and many rich people in India like Ratan Tata, Nizam of Hyderabad etc.
  - ❑ Later on, Satyagrahis shifted to a place named as 'Tolstoy Farm'.

### Gandhi's Campaign-2

- Supreme Court judgment of 1913 invalidating all marriages which had not been performed according to Christian rites and registered by the Registrar of Marriages.
- Gandhi began a march across Transvaal border with a big contingent of Satyagrahis on November 6, 1913.
- Gandhi was arrested.
- In India, Gopal Krishna Gokhle toured throughout India to mobilize support for Gandhi's movement.
- Lord Hardinge, Viceroy of India, demanded an impartial enquiry into charges of atrocities leveled against South African government.
- Finally, Smuts offered compromise:
  - ❑ Poll tax of £3 on freed labourers was abolished.