

## A Study of Women's Involvement in India's Freedom Movement the Quit India Movement (1942-1947)

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### **ABSTRACT:**

Gandhiji started the "Bharat Chhodo Andolan," also known as the Quit India Movement, in August 1942. The All India Congress Committee submitted a petition calling for the immediate end of British rule, which was accepted as a resolution on August 8th, 1942 in Bombay. Every One of the people of this country became motivated by Gandhiji's "Karo ya Maro" ("Do or Die") motto to dream of a free India. Congress sought to organise a massive, nonviolent effort on the largest possible scale. The Congress was thus declared illegal by the British authorities, and the majority of its leaders were imprisoned before they could even begin mobilising people. However, the people continued to be irresistible; there were demonstrations and uprisings everywhere.

**Keywords: Movement, Bharat Chhodo Andolan, Quit India Movement, Unstoppable;**

### **Introduction:**

#### **Political Conditions of the Period**

The Second World War in Europe began in the year 1939. England formally declared war on the German Reich on September 3, 1939, ostensibly to defend its independence and weaker countries. However, Britain, on whom she depended, was opposed to India gaining her independence. India was forced to follow England's predetermined foreign strategy since it lacked its own.

On the same day, Lord Linlithgow, the then-Governor General of India, declared war on Germany (September, 3 1939). Congress' official ministries withdrew as a sign of protest after being kept in the dark. The Indian National Congress had said in its election programme as early as 1936 that it was "opposed to Indian involvement in an imperialist war." 1 The Indian National Congress' working committee, which met in September 1939, emphasised this position even further. The Working Committee argued that although it unequivocally opposes the Nazi government's recent violence against Poland in Germany, the Indian people must decide whether India should be at war or at peace

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because "the declared wishes of the Indian people have been deliberately ignored by the British government." Gandhiji was taken into custody on August 9, 1942, and before he was released, he gave the country three simple yet powerful words: "Do or Die." Millions of people adopted this message as their mantra, turning it into a source of steadfastness and commitment that was eventually required at the altar of liberty. Hartals were in Bombay, Ahmadabad, and Poona when word of Gandhiji's arrest reached them. By August 11, 1942, this virus had spread over the whole planet.

Universities closed due to a shortage of students; people also organised processions, rallies, and demonstrations. Agriculture labour influenced employment in Bangalore, Mysore, Kanpur, Bombay, Kanpur, Indore, and Bangalore. The programme also had an impact in agricultural regions. In other places, people declared themselves to be free; courts, buildings, and police stations were all taken. Flags were flown above the secretariat, courts, and other government agencies. The government apparatus was paralysed in various regions, namely in Bihar, the Central Provinces, Andhra, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Assam, and portions of Bengal.

#### **State wise Involvement of Women View:**

##### **Assam**

Women from this province played a significant role in this movement. They may have taken control of the fight for independence due to their sudden, unbridled zeal for it. According to Mitra and Chakraborty in "Rebel, India," "the war fought by Assam to free the bonds of slavery is essentially a struggle for Assam's femininity." Under the leadership of Smt. Annupriya Barua and Sudhalata Dutta, the women's group was born out of the abuses of the police and military. Women went to the terrified regions and applauded and supported the populace. Once again, it was left to the women to lead processions in locations like Gohapur, Barapujia, Thok, and Brahampur in the face of the military and armed police. "Free India's Fighting Force" was established in Assam. Women joined this team as well, and they took over management of the facilities. They coordinated Red Cross First Aid events and provided warm clothes, bandages, and a variety of other supplies to the employees and citizens across Assam. Later, the group was disbanded by the government, but the ladies continued to labour there. 6 Tezpur is another location in Assam where women from neighbouring villages participated in a procession through the town while singing, shouting, and raising the tri-color.

##### **Bengal**

Since the beginning of the movement for independence, Bengali women have taken part. The residents of Midnapore District made a significant contribution to the 1942 movement. For the Japanese invasion, the Tamlauk sub-division had prepared. They gathered a volunteer army made up of both men and women. To provide instruction to individuals joining the ranks, many camps were created. Relief committees were established locally. Additionally, a Khadi Center was established, employing 4,000 spinners. These were mostly women.

**Uttar Pradesh**

The Congress office was taken by the police when the Government implemented harsh measures. A group of female students broke into the office on August 10, 1942, and seized control of it. Numerous groups of female students visited the neighbourhoods and offered the locals whatever assistance and support they could. At the point of bayonets, women from respected Hindu households, including the mothers of newborn children, were ordered to leave their homes. They were requested to give up their accessories. In other instances, the jewellery on their bodies had to be forcefully removed. An Ahir lady was shot down in the Samanwal hamlet of District Ghazipur while evading the army. It was reported from Banaras that the women who had been mistreated by the police told heartbreaking tales. In other instances, the ladies were pulled along by their long hair, made to do sit-ups, and refused nourishment. In one instance, a youngster was burned alive in front of his mother. Some women were subjected to torture in order to reveal their husbands' whereabouts. Banaras Hindu University expelled nine students for actively supporting the campaign.

**Punjab**

The Punjab reacted enthusiastically to Mahatma Gandhi's invitation; pupils, both boys and girls, stepped forth in the field without hesitation. One hundred and four students were detained on November 10, 1942, in the city of Lahore. There were twenty-two females in this group. The girls distributed the badges with bravery. Even the police presence was ignored by the girls, and they didn't enter the police vehicle until their principal instructed them to.

**Women Reformers During the Movement****Sarojini Naidu**

During this time, Mrs. Naidu of the Dharasasna Salt Raid renown was once again active. Sarojini Naidu worked arduously over the course of these few years to strengthen relations between the two groups.

She talked at gatherings and on numerous venues. She added, speaking at a political convention in Vellore (Madras), "The Hindus and Muslims are the two eyes of the country. If both eyes were fixed together on the Swaraj picture under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, freedom would be theirs ere long." On December 3, 1940, Sarojini was detained for participating in the solo Satyagraha that Vinoba Bhave had started. On December 11, 1940, she became unwell and needed to be freed. As soon as Sarojini's health allowed her, she began working in politics. Immediately after the passage of the Quit-India resolution on August 9, 1942, she was detained once again. After being released from the Aga Khan Palace in March 1943, Sarojini's health was in shambles, and she didn't do anything for 10 months.

**Khurshed Behn**

In 1940, Khurshed Behn, a well-known volunteer Army organiser from 1930, travelled to the North-West Frontier Province to preach non-violence to the locals.

She talked to the Pathans, Pirs, Maliks, and Khans while travelling from village to village, educating them on the brutal nature of abduction. She interacted with Hindu community members, inspiring courage and bravery in them as well. She requested permission from the government to cross the border at the end of the year because she wanted to visit the tribal region of Walo Tangi. She alerted the authorities of her plan to cross the border after waiting for a response from it. She was detained on December 4, 1940, while attempting to cross the border, and she underwent a trial. She was ordered to pay a fine of 1,000 rupees or serve three months in jail if she didn't.

**Kasturba Gandhi**

Bombay was present when a martyr died. On February 24, 1944, Kasturba Gandhi, who had assisted Gandhiji in the liberation movement, passed away in captivity. She was unable to even get the necessary medical care. Gandhiji had to communicate extensively before allowing the doctors of her choosing to attend to her.

**Hansa Metha**

Early in life, Hansa Mehta jumped into the battle for independence. She travelled around India visiting women to raise awareness among them after being greatly impressed by the leaders of the day. However, the British Government disapproved of this. Inquilab Zindabad was shouted by the crowd when Kamla Nehru and Hansa Metha arrived at the Delhi Railway station, according to an article in *The Abhodaya* from August 30, 1930. The railway officials pulled this prank by sending locomotives to muffle the shouts. The engines were designed to continuously chirp.

**Sucheta Kriplani**

When Sucheta Kriplani was a professor at Banars University in 1934, she developed an interest in politics. Her passion was further heightened by her marriage to Acharya J.B. Kriplani, the All India Congress's general secretary at the time. She quit her position at the Banares University and started becoming involved in politics. The Congress started the Individual Satyagraha in 1940, and she was one of the selected individuals who was allowed to participate in it before being detained.

**Conclusion:**

The news that Congress leaders had been imprisoned ignited the flame, and all the supporters of freedom flocked to the highways. Random hartals, protest gatherings, and strikes happened all around the nation. Due to the fact that the leading members of the Congress had all been imprisoned, the Quit India Movement was essentially without a leader. Two female patriots, Aruna Asif Ali and

Usha Mehta, put up a radio transmitter named the "Voice of Independence" to spread information about the battle for freedom. Many more women participated in on the processions, meetings, protests, and strike planning. The devout way on which the magnificent triumph chariot advanced was created by the freedom advocates without regard for their own life. There is a summary of several women who joined the Quit India Movement and gave their lives and unwavering commitment to serving India.

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