

Q.1) Though Subhas Chandra Bose differed with the Congress leadership, his contribution to India's freedom struggle was no less significant. Examine. (150 words, 10 marks)

Introduction

Despite ideological friction with the Congress, Subhas Chandra Bose significantly broadened the contours of India's freedom struggle through militant nationalism and global alliances. As Leonard Gordon notes, "Bose wanted to seize freedom, not wait for it."

Body

Points of Difference with Congress Leadership

- 1. Disagreement over methods:** Bose opposed Gandhian non-violence, favouring armed resistance.
Example: Advocated direct action against the British, unlike Congress's negotiation-based approach.
- 2. Conflict during presidential tenure:** His assertive leadership clashed with Congress conservatives.
Example: Resigned as INC President in 1939 after opposition from Gandhi's camp.
- 3. Formation of Forward Bloc:** He created a new party after Congress sidelined him.
Example: Forward Bloc aimed to consolidate all leftist and anti-imperialist forces.
- 4. Authoritarian and socialist inclinations:** Bose admired and sought support from totalitarian regimes.
Example: Sought alliance with Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan to accelerate India's liberation.

Independent Contributions to the Freedom Struggle

- 1. Leadership of INA:** Bose led the INA in armed resistance against British forces.
Example: INA's campaigns in Northeast India marked a direct military challenge to colonial rule.
- 2. Azad Hind Government:** He set up a symbolic independent government.
Example: Recognised by 11 countries, issued its own currency, stamps, and judiciary.
- 3. Diaspora mobilisation:** Bose united overseas Indians to support India's cause.
Example: Tokyo and Singapore speeches built morale and secured support.
- 4. Use of slogans and propaganda:** He used strong messages to inspire nationalism.
Example: "Jai Hind" and "Give me blood, I will give you freedom" became enduring national slogans.
- 5. INA Trials and unrest:** The trials provoked massive nationalist sentiment and protests.
Example: Sparked 1946 Naval Mutiny and protests in Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta.

Limitations

- 1. Reliance on Axis powers:** Bose's alliance with fascist regimes raised moral and strategic concerns.
Example: Ties with Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan drew criticism for undermining democratic values.
- 2. Limited mass base within India:** INA lacked large-scale support from Indians on home soil.
Example: Despite symbolic value, INA's military campaigns failed to ignite coordinated nationalist uprising.

Conclusion

Conclusion

Though Bose diverged from the Congress's moderate line, his parallel efforts created a nationalist surge that shook colonial foundations. As historian *Sugata Bose writes*, "*His legacy lies in daring to dream of a free India beyond compromise.*"

Q.2) Revolutionary activities outside the Congress framework added a radical edge to India's freedom struggle. Critically analyse. (150 words, 10 marks)

Introduction

Revolutionary activities injected militancy and urgency into India's freedom struggle, challenging the moderate approach of the Congress. As Bhagat Singh stated, "Revolution is an inescapable necessity." These activities expanded the struggle's ideological and tactical diversity.

Body

Radical Edge Brought by Revolutionary Activities

- 1. Advocacy of armed struggle:** Revolutionaries believed in violent overthrow of British rule.
Example: Anushilan Samiti carried out bomb attacks in Bengal.
- 2. Ideological radicalism:** Revolutionaries introduced socialist and anti-imperialist ideas into nationalism.
Example: HSRA promoted class struggle alongside independence.
- 3. Symbolic propaganda by deed:** Martyrdom and dramatic acts inspired mass political consciousness.
Example: Bhagat Singh's Central Assembly bombing in 1929.
- 4. International inspiration and coordination:** Revolutionaries sought help from global anti-imperialist movements.
Example: Hindu-German Conspiracy during WWI attempted armed revolt.
- 5. Youth mobilisation:** Revolutionaries attracted passionate young Indians dissatisfied with Congress methods.
Example: The Youth Congress adopted some revolutionary slogans later.
- 6. Expansion of the struggle abroad:** Indian diaspora revolutionaries organised anti-British activities overseas.
Example: Ghadar Party in North America sought to incite mutiny among Indian soldiers.

Limitations of Revolutionary Activities

- 1. Organisational fragmentation:** Lack of unified leadership weakened sustained impact.
- 2. Limited mass support:** Secretive nature prevented wide popular participation.
- 3. Harsh British repression:** Early suppression decimated revolutionary groups.

Conclusion

Though limited in scale, revolutionary activities added a vital radical dimension to India's freedom struggle, influencing both popular sentiment and Congress strategies. As Jawaharlal Nehru noted, "Revolutionary nationalism shook the country awake," broadening the path to independence.

Q.3) Assess the role of press and literature from different regions in mobilising nationalist sentiment during the freedom struggle. (150 words, 10 marks)

Introduction

The nationalist press and regional literature played a vital role in spreading political awareness and uniting people across India against British rule through newspapers, journals, and literary works in different languages.

Body

Functions of Press and Literature in the Struggle

- 1. Dissemination of nationalist ideology:** Created political awareness among masses.
Example: Newspapers like Kesari (Marathi) and Amrita Bazar Patrika (Bengali) popularised Swadeshi ideas.
- 2. Critique of colonial policies:** Questioned British exploitation and repressive laws.
Example: Tilak's Kesari opposed the Age of Consent Act and sedition laws.
- 3. Platform for public discourse:** Enabled debates on Swaraj, non-violence, and revolution.
Example: Young India and Harijan published Gandhian views on caste and rural upliftment.
- 4. Use of vernacular languages:** Reached grassroots people and enhanced inclusivity.
Example: Tamil weekly India by Subramania Bharati inspired nationalist pride.
- 5. Bengal's literary renaissance:** Writers like Bankim Chandra and Tagore stirred patriotic feelings.
Example: 'Anandamath' introduced 'Vande Mataram' as a nationalist hymn.
- 6. Punjab and Urdu press:** Sikh press mobilised for Gurdwara reform and political awareness.
Example: Zamindar by Maulana Zafar Ali Khan promoted political consciousness.
- 7. Hindi and Urdu literature:** Writers like Premchand depicted rural hardships under colonialism.
Example: Stories such as "Poos ki Raat" evoked empathy and nationalism.

Challenges Faced by Press and Literature

- 1. Censorship and repression:** The colonial government imposed strict Press Acts to curb nationalist writings.
Example: The Press Act of 1910 aimed to silence anti-British voices.
- 2. Financial difficulties:** Many nationalist publications struggled due to lack of funds and advertisements.
- 3. Risk of imprisonment:** Editors and writers often faced arrest and harassment for their views.
Example: Bal Gangadhar Tilak was imprisoned for his writings.

Conclusion

The press and regional literature were essential in building a national spirit and motivating people to join the freedom struggle. Despite challenges, they inspired hope and courage among Indians to fight for independence.

Q.4) How did regional struggles during the Gandhian phase contribute to the Indian freedom movement? To what extent did they align with or diverge from the broader strategies of the Indian National Congress? (250 words, 15 marks)

Introduction

During the Gandhian era, regional struggles gave grassroots energy to the freedom movement. While many followed Congress' methods, others charted their own paths, creating both synergy and tension within the nationalist framework.

Body

How regional struggles contributed to the freedom movement

- 1. Mass mobilisation:** Regional agitations connected ordinary people to the freedom cause.
Example: Bardoli Satyagraha united peasants in Gujarat under a disciplined protest.
- 2. Focus on local issues:** Movements addressed day-to-day grievances under colonial rule.
Example: Eka Movement in UP fought against unfair rent and moneylenders.
- 3. Strengthening Gandhian methods:** Many adopted non-violence, boycott, and satyagraha.
Example: Salt Satyagraha in coastal areas like Tamil Nadu and Orissa used local participation.
- 4. Emergence of grassroots leaders:** Regional figures inspired political consciousness.
Example: Alluri Sitarama Raju became a symbol of tribal resistance in Andhra.
- 5. Cultural integration:** Use of songs, theatre, and local dialects deepened national appeal.
Example: Assamese and Kannada songs turned freedom into a cultural movement.
- 6. Resistance during national pauses:** Local struggles maintained pressure between major campaigns.
Example: Peasant unrest in Bihar and Bengal between Civil Disobedience phases.

Alignment with Congress strategy

- 1. Shared non-violent principles:** Most movements followed Gandhi's peaceful approach.
Example: Awadh's no-tax campaigns under Baba Ramchandra echoed Congress goals.
- 2. Broadened Congress outreach:** Regional activism extended Congress' rural and tribal base.
Example: Champaran Satyagraha introduced Congress to peasant concerns.
- 3. Support during national calls:** Regions responded enthusiastically to Gandhi's mass movements.
Example: Kerala and Maharashtra saw widespread participation in Quit India (1942).

Divergence from Congress strategy

Tendency towards violence: Some regional protests turned militant, clashing with Gandhian ideals.
Example: Chauri Chaura incident led Gandhi to halt the Non-Cooperation Movement.

Independent ideological paths: Groups like Kisan Sabhas pursued class-based struggle.
Example: Bihar's Kisan Sabha focused more on land reforms than Congress agendas.

Tensions with central leadership: Regional leaders sometimes acted without Congress consent.

Example: Telangana revolt had communist overtones that unsettled Congress leaders.

Conclusion

Regional struggles during the Gandhian phase were both allies and challengers to Congress. While they fuelled the mass movement and rooted it in reality, their divergence at times showed the complexity of uniting India under one nationalist vision.

Q.5) Critically examine the role of women in India's freedom struggle, highlighting their participation across different phases of the movement. (250 words, 15 marks)

Introduction

Women actively participated in India's freedom struggle, from early revolts to mass movements. Their courage shaped the nationalist movement. *As Gandhiji said, "When women, who have been suppressed for centuries, rise, they can become a force stronger than any weapon."*

Body

Early Phase (1857 to early 1900s)

- 1. Armed resistance during 1857 revolt:** Women led military resistance against colonial forces.
Example: Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi and Begum Hazrat Mahal of Awadh led troops in battle.
- 2. Assertion in princely and feudal territories:** Women challenged colonial encroachment on regional sovereignty.
Example: Rani Chennamma of Kittur resisted British annexation as early as 1824.
- 3. Reformist-nationalist bridgework:** Early women reformers promoted education and socio-political consciousness.
Example: Pandita Ramabai advocated women's rights and indirectly influenced national awakening.
- 4. Participation in early global activism:** Diaspora-based women contributed to India's voice abroad.
Example: Madame Bhikaji Cama unfurled India's flag in Stuttgart and published nationalist content in Paris

Revolutionary and Non-Cooperation Phase (1905–1930)

- 1. Involvement in secret societies:** Women joined revolutionary groups to take up direct action against colonial targets.
Example: Pritilata Waddadar and Kalpana Dutt engaged in armed resistance in Bengal.

2. **Nationalist literature and awakening:** Women inspired public sentiment through poetry and publications.
Example: Sarala Devi Chaudhurani promoted swadeshi and national pride through writings.
3. **Participation in Ghadar and early international movements:** Women activists abroad funded and organised freedom efforts.
Example: Women in the Ghadar Party in North America supported revolutionary activities.
4. **Entry into Gandhian protest campaigns:** Women's involvement began to scale up in civil disobedience efforts.
Example: Women joined hartals, picketing, and bonfires of foreign cloth during Non-Cooperation Movement.

Gandhian Mass Movements and Final Phase (1930–1947)

1. **Leadership in Salt and Civil Disobedience movements:** Women became mass leaders and frontline protestors.
Example: Sarojini Naidu led the Dharasana Salt March; women broke liquor and salt laws nationwide.
2. **Role in Quit India and underground activities:** Women organised secret operations and defied police crackdowns.
Example: Aruna Asaf Ali went underground and raised the flag during the Quit India Movement.
3. **Participation in tribal and peasant agitations:** Women mobilised rural masses against colonial and feudal oppression.
Example: Godavari Parulekar led Adivasi revolts in Maharashtra against landlords and British.
4. **Presence in political institutions and leadership:** Women shaped political discourse in both Congress and non-Congress spaces.
Example: Annie Besant led Home Rule efforts; Rajkumari Amrit Kaur was part of the Constituent Assembly.

Challenges to Women Freedom Fighters

1. **Patriarchal restrictions and social stigma:** Many women were discouraged from public life and faced opposition from their families.
Example: Participation often led to estrangement, loss of marital status, or ridicule.
2. **Gendered invisibility in historical records:** Their contributions were often overshadowed by male counterparts.
Example: Despite their active roles, women rarely featured in official leadership hierarchies.
3. **Dual struggle against colonialism and Gender discrimination:** Women had to fight both the British Empire and entrenched gender norms.
Example: Even within nationalist circles, women were often seen as auxiliaries, not equals.

Conclusion

Across all phases, Their journey was not just about national liberation but also about asserting their right to participate in shaping the country's future. Their legacy continues to inspire the struggle for gender justice and inclusive democracy.

IASBABA