

Our Bapu



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Text :**Ajith Venniyoor**  
Illustration: **Suresh Kumar**  
Design: **Bhattathiri**



**Jawahar Bal Manch**  
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## **Our Bapu**

(Children's literature)

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## Preface

**W**e are passing through a very special period. We are witnessing people of different generations – those who participated in freedom struggle, those born after independence, those born after the silver, golden and platinum jubilee years of attaining freedom – mingle with one another and lead a very peaceful and contented life.

One hundred and fiftieth birth anniversary of father of our nation Mahatma Gandhi and of his wife Kasturba passed by. Fifty-seven years have elapsed after the death of the builder of modern India, Jawarharlal Nehru. We are entering the seventy fifth year of attaining independence.

We are now enjoying the freedom in this democratic country because of the legendary fight against the British by our forefathers/ancestors. But sadly, we are slowly forgetting those who got us this freedom. Of late, we are witnessing wilful efforts to malign the leaders and the martyrs of the freedom struggle. These activities are not only an insult to the history of our country but also an injustice to the future generations.

The efforts put forth by our predecessors will prove to be a leading lamp and imparting energy in the difficult life ahead. This series of narrations about our heritage and

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freedom struggle in book form is a humble effort by the Jawahar Balmanch to impart knowledge to the children. We are starting this ambitious project by publishing illustrated books on the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, vision of Jawarharlal Nehru, brief narration of the freedom struggle etc. We sincerely hope that these books will help in imparting an affection towards our mother land and fair understanding of our history and heritage among the children. Materials for further understanding will follow soon. Balmanch is the largest children's organisation having wide reach throughout the length and breadth of our country. publishing similar literature in all Indian languags is in the anvil.

Familiarising our own history and heritage among the children and youth is the aim of these publications. These are being published with limited resources to enlighten our children. Hoping that you will support us and point out if there is any lapse/mistake that need to be corrected.

**Dr.G.V.Hari**  
Chairman  
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## A Pilgrimage through Historical Moments

**T**he Non-Cooperation movement was the first mass movement against the British colonial rule in India. This was also the first Satyagraha protest experiment, after Gandhiji came to the forefront of our freedom movement. The protest energised the whole nation in a very short time and trembled the very roots of the British state. While

the protest raged like wild fire, it took the confidence of all Congress workers to a new level.

This was Gandhiji's new protest weapon, sharpened and conditioned in the anti-apartheid struggles in South Africa. The British India saw this new protest weapon in the 1920s with the Non-cooperation movement. "This was a new protest that gave impetus and imagination to the whole nation which was bowed and bend down by the foreign rule. It inspired the nation to stand upright and fight for its dignity", said Jawaharlal Nehru. The spirit of dissent, which was engendered by the Non-cooperation movement, enabled the people to question many of the injustices around them.

In order to spread the message of the protest, Gandhiji travelled all across India and also visited Kerala as part of it. He visited Kerala in 1920, which was then divided and spread across Thiruvithankoor, Kochi and Malabar. He was able to tie them to the larger thread of the larger national movement and today we proudly celebrate its 100th anniversary.



# Who was Bapu



**M**ohandas was born into a well known Gandhi family that belonged to the Porbandar district of Gujarat, on the 2nd of October, 1869. His grandfather Uttamchand Gandhi and father Karamchand Gandhi had been the chief ministers to the state of Gujarat.

- Mohandas' father was an honest and brave political leader and mother Putlibai Gandhi was a devout and kind person.
- His childhood days were filled with adventures of all kind. Gandhi even took wrong decisions on the persuasion of his friends. But upon realisation of his mistakes, he was always ready to confess and accept his flaws.
- Born into a vegetarian family, Mohandas once ate meat in

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the false belief that the Britishers were able to rule us by the strength of the meat they ate. This idea planted by one of his friends, made him to wish for strength to fight against the Britishers and eventually led him to consume meat.

The thought of lying to his parents, later prevented him from committing frauds.

Once when Mohandas's brother was trapped in a financial crises, he stole a small portion of gold from his brother's jewelry to pay off the debt. This incident haunted his young mind for a long time. Finally he decides to spill the beans to his diseased father, who was bedridden. Mohandas confessed his guilt in a paper and asked punishment for the same.



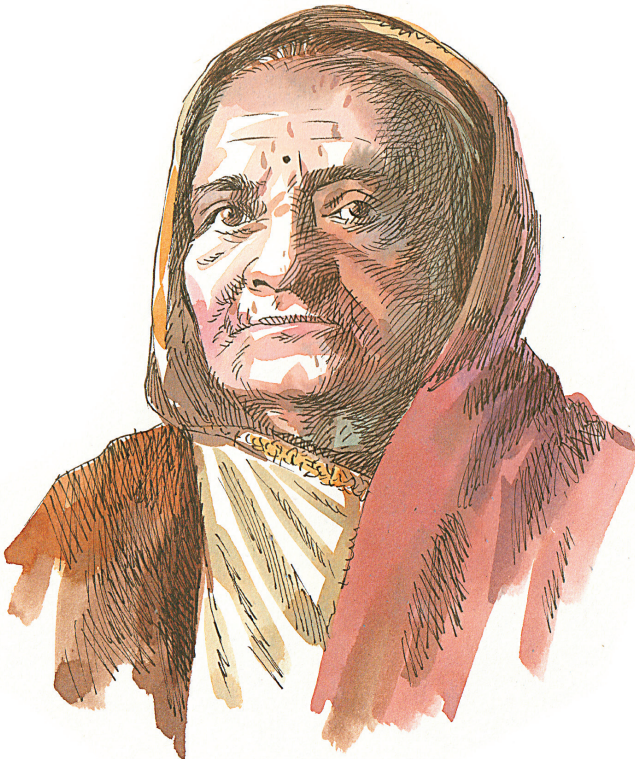
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In an incident where his teacher compelled him to copy a word, which he spelled wrong during the dictation, from a student next to him, he refused to do so.

The drama of Harishchandra, that he saw during his childhood inspired him towards this impulse of truth. Also the visual portrayal of Shraavan Kumar, a character from Ramayana, during a program, doubled his respect and reverence for his parents and elders.

The family had decided to make him a lawyer. As such he was sent to one of his father's friends in England to study for the Barrister exam. All the arrangements for the same was done by his elder brother.

Mohandas reassured his mother, who was afraid that he would take up wrong paths in life. He strived till the



end of his life to maintain this promise.

- He completed his barrister studies in 1891 and returned to the court of Bombay. His mother had passed away by the time.
- He practiced as a lawyer in Bombay and Rajkot for a short period of time. It was during this time that he got an invitation to South Africa through one of his elder brother's friends. It was to argue a case for a merchant named Dada Abdullah.
- The young barrister Gandhi had to face insults and abuses from the whites, who called him a 'Cooly Barrister'
- Gandhiji, who was once travelling in the first class compartment of the train was kicked out by a white man. After spending the whole night in the station, he decided to fight against this injustice. As a result, in 1894, he gathered the black population there to form the Natal Indian Congress.
- Several strikes and protests were conducted successfully and that gained him popularity throughout the world. This integrated the blacks and the ideals of self respect, national spirit, fraternity, non-violence was promoted and through it the idea of 'satyagraha' was first tested in South Africa.
- M. K. Gandhi returns to India in 1914 and met with Gopal Krishna Gokhale. He advised Gandhi to take a detour of the Indian subcontinent, before selecting his





mode of operation. His journey through the villages of India changed him into a new man.

- The sights of hunger and disease affected him deeply and he choose to serve the people. By constructing an Ashrama on the banks of river Sabarmati, he tried to create a new way of living, that set an example for others.
- People belonging to all groups like from different classes and caste were equally welcomed in his ashrama. The jobs and daily chores were divided among the inmates and completely systematic. He taught the importance of labour and the beauty of simple life.
- His activities towards the freedom struggle kick started in 1917 with the Champaran satyagraha in Bihar. It was a farmers strike against the white owners.
- In 1918, the Ahmedabad mill strike to increase the worker's wages was also conducted successfully under the leadership of Gandhiji. Through the struggles and

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protests led by Gandhiji, the workers union were given a new dimension and significance.

- On April 13, a peaceful gathering at Jallianwala Bagh, Punjab, which gathered peacefully to protest against the oppression of the Britishers, were mercilessly attacked by the British army, who opened fire upon the crowd, killing thousands of innocent people.
- In 1921, the non-cooperation movements started by assembling young men, women and farmers to form the Indian National Congress. This later turned into a multilateral people's movement. Gandhi was forced to withdraw the non-cooperation movement, when it turned into violence. He couldn't stand by while his cherished ideals of nonviolence and peaceful protests for the right cause was taken apart in an irrational act of violence in Chauri Chaura.
- Gandhiji was labelled a traitor and jailed by the British parliament in 1922 for 6 years. Even after that he was jailed in 1929 for violation of law. But still 'Bapu' remained an inspiration for all Indians in spite of all hardships.
- Gandhiji initiated the salt Satyagraha or 'Dandi March' in 1930 to protest against the salt tax and stated that salt is a natural resource to which everyone has equal right. This shook the British rule in India to its roots.

Along with various protests, Bapu also tried to encourage Khadi production and through it tried to create self-dependency and dignity to the villages of India. He also tried to bring the backward caste to the forefront through Harijan empowerment programs. He tried to unify people by eliminating untouchability. He also called



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upon people to fight against liquor and drugs.

- On January 26, 1930, India celebrated the Poorna swaraj day. The ideals of Poorna Swaraj became a rallying call in the Quit India Protests in 1942. Along with Bappuji and Kasturba, many others were sent to jail. Kasturba died on Feb 22, 1944 in jail. Mahadeva Desai who was considered like his son also died in the jail. But Gandhiji remained unfazed.
- While Bappuji was in jail, many followed him and continued the protests. On August 15, 1947 the Britishers



left India. Gandhiji's heart was torn into two parts as India was partitioned into two nations. His heart became weak seeing the religious riots where Hindus and Muslims were killing each other. He fought till the end to maintain the equality and integrity of our nation. During those intense struggle, Gandhiji was shot dead by a religious fanatic on January 30, 1948. Bapu as he fell down to his death, shot three times with a pistol, uttered his prayer of equality and love, 'Hey Ram'.

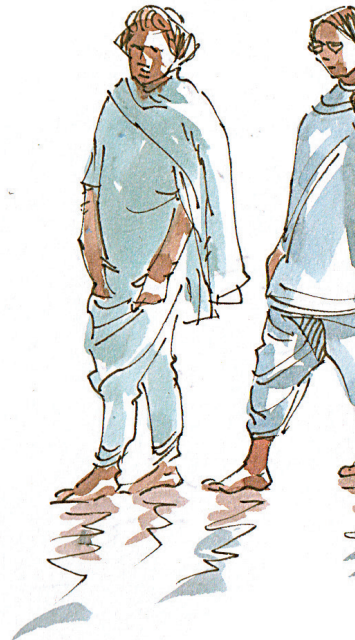
- We all agree that means are as important as our goals. But how many of us are willing to sacrifice our life and make that very life the epitome of ideals and die fighting for it? Bapuji lived and laid his life for these ideals.

# Pathways

- 1869** October 2: Was born in Porbandar in Gujarat. Father Karamchand Gandhi and mother Putlibai.
- 1876:** joined a primary school in Rajkot
- 1881:** joined a high school in Rajkot
- 1883** married Kasturba
- 1887:** passed matric examination and joined in Samaldas College in Bhavnagar
- 1888:** Reached Southampton, England
- 1888:** Enrolled at the Inner Temple, Inn of Court
- 1891:** Called to the Bar
- 1893:** went to South Africa to join as the legal advisor of dada Abdulla and company
- 1894:** started practicing as a barrister in supreme court of Natal in South Africa. Established Natal Indian Congress
- 1899:** created Indian Ambulance Corps to take care of the injured soldiers from Boar war
- 1904:** Started Phoenix village near Durban to create unity of religion. Started the newspaper Indian Opinion
- 1906:** called for protest against Asiatic Registration bill which was presented in the Parliament of Transvaal
- 1913:** organised big resistance rally against the exploitation of Indians in South Africa by organising Indian coal labourers and peasants
- 1914:** came back to India

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- 1915:** created the Satyagraha ashram in Ahmedabad
- 1917:** Relocated the Satyagraha ashram to Sabarmati. Started the Satyagraha protest in Champaran to help the peasants in the cotton industry. Arrested
- 1919:** the nationwide non-cooperative movement against the Rowlatt act.
- 1921:** calls for the boycott of the foreign goods
- 1922:** sent to jail for six years for protesting against the British government
- 1924:** released from jail after conducting a 21 day fast for Hindu-Muslim unity. Became the chairman of Congress in Belgaum session.
- 1929:** Calls for Poorna Swaraj was passed in Lahore Congress conference
- 1930:** Salt Satyagraha and Dandi Yatra. Arrested for the breaking of rule. Nationwide hartal is organised.
- 1931:** released from jail. Gandhi-Irwing negotiations. Goes to London for the round table conference
- 1932:** arrested again in Bombay and spends jail life in Yerwada jail. Started protest against the discrimination between savarna and avarna hindus inside the jail. The British government accepts all Gandhi's recommendations and the protest is called off. Released from jail.
- 1933:** continues Satyagraha programs from Vardha. Organises the





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programs to elevate the conditions of harijans.

**1937:** becomes the chairman of the educational conference in Wardha. Basic Education drafted

**1944:** Kasturba and secretary Madhavi Desai dies in the jail.

**1945:** Simla conference. Negotiation with Lord Wavell

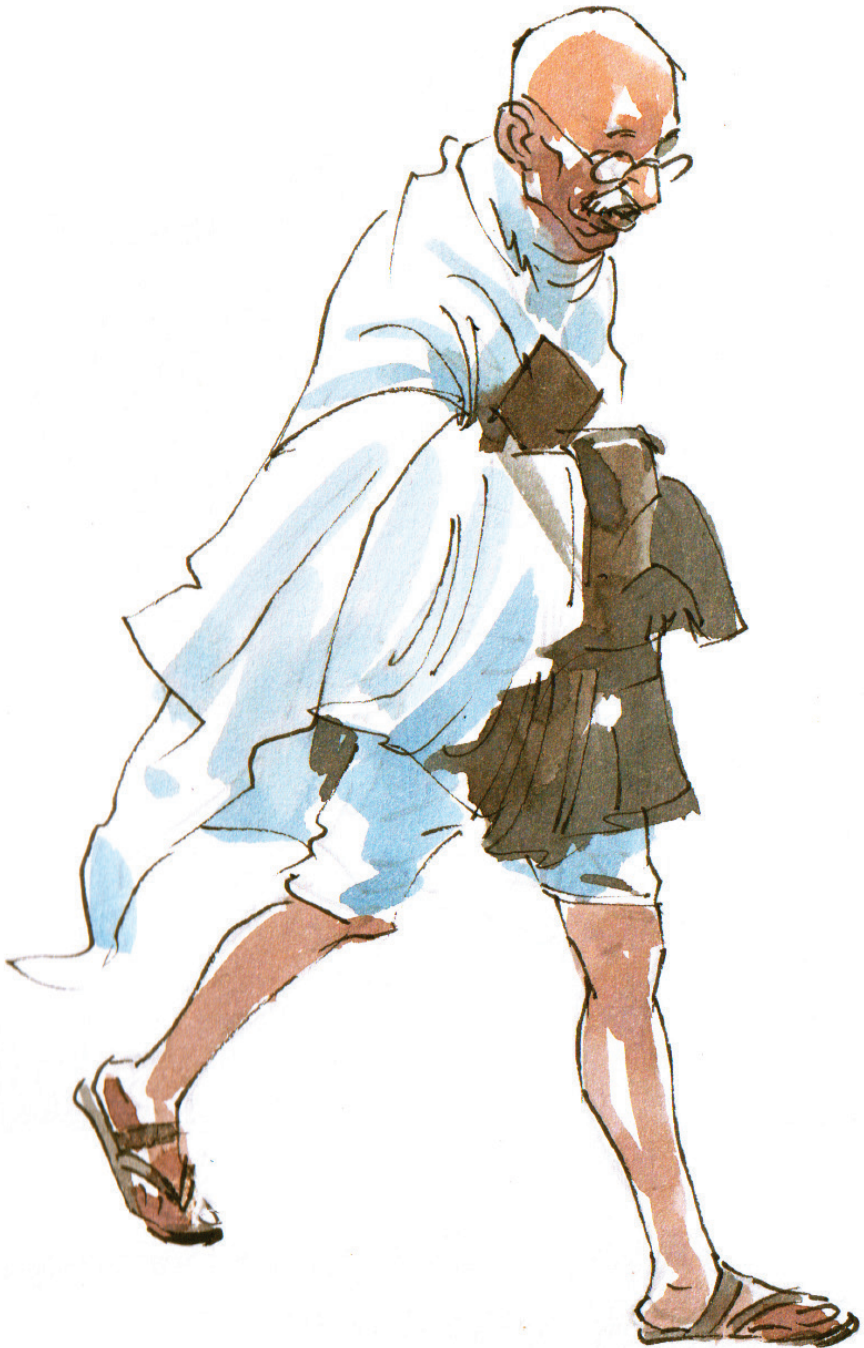
**1946-47:** arrival of British Cabinet Mission. Strongly protests against the partition of India. Travel to Kolkata to find solution to mass riots. Organises Satyagraha in Kolkata for Hindu-Muslim unity

**1948:** January 13: starts fasting in Delhi for religious and community unity.

**1948:** assassinated on January 30 in the Birla house while participating in a prayer program



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# The Brave Struggles of Bapu

**B**apu's life was always lived through brave struggles. For Bapu, satyagraha as always been the means of protest from South Africa till Indian got freedom. Bapu always held truth strongly and conducted his struggles in a non violent manner.

- Bapu's experiments with Satyagraha began in South Africa. According to the law, the Indian descendants had to give 25 gold sovereign as tax or had to go back according to the government. Almost 3,000 people started the protest in the leadership of Bapu. 200 people including Bapu were sent to jail. But as the protest became more widespread, the government had to concede. Subsequently the law was cancelled. But as the protest was cancelled, government went back from their decision.
- As the government went back from their decision, Bapu restarted the satyagraha again on August 16 1908. The protestors publicly burned the agreement. Although, the protestors were subjected to inhuman treatment by the government yet they did not give up.
- Bapu began another satyagraha and began a 'padayathra' from Transvaal border to the Natal border to network



border. Although all of the protestors including Bappu was arrested, they were set free on January 14, 1914. The protest became a success as all the recommendations were agreed upon by the government.

- Gandhiji's first major victory in India was the Champaran protest, where the indigo farmers where exploited cruelly by the British plantation owners. The resounding victory in Champaran brought the national attention to Gandhiji.



Bappu opined against the export of Indian workers as contract workers to British colonies. As the picketing of Bombay port became obvious to the authorities in May, 1917, they relented and invited Gandhiji for discussions. Subsequently after the discussion, the contract was retracted.

- Gandhiji next led the cause of the mill employees of Ahmedabad in February 1918. The low wages of the



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workers were increased by 35% after the protest.

- In 1919, there was nationwide protest against Rowlatt act which blatantly denied the citizen rights. This was followed up in the next year as the non-cooperation movement which includes hartals, sayhyagraha and prayer sessions. All the positions and honours given by the Britishers were returned back and all Government institutions were boycotted by the protestors. Bappu was arrested and sentenced to six years in prison.
- 1924 Bappu gave leadership to the struggle against untouchability and the travel freedom of the lower class in Vaikom. This led to the famous temple proclamation act in 1936.
- Bapu also fought against the incessant increase of taxes in Bardoli, where he led the farmers union. As a result of the protests, the taxes were withdrawn.
- The civil disobedience movement took off in 1930 and in January 26 the Poorna Swaraj day was celebrated. Gandhiji next led the epic Dandi march and the salt sayhyagraha against the imposed taxes in March 12 1930.

# Epic Struggles of Gandhiji



1930: The Civil Disobedience movement was strengthened. January 26th was celebrated as the Poorna Swaraj Day. The epic Dandi march which began in March 12th was watched closely by the world. The British state had to concede and make the laws fairer.

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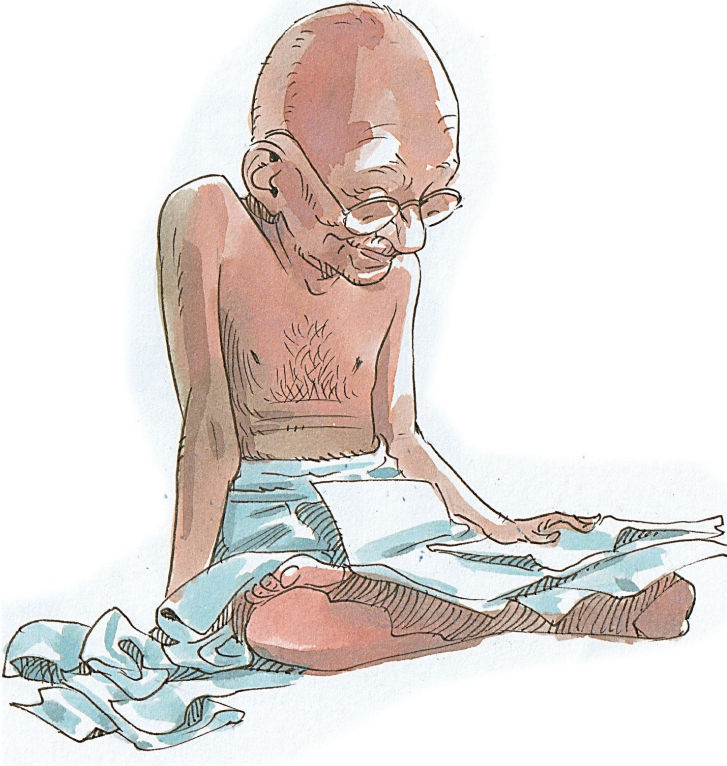
- 1931: Gave leadership to the fight against the summer time tax in Karnataka. The state had to accept the protestor's demands.
- 1932: The foreign cloths boycott and tax boycott movements were strengthened. One lakh people were arrested.
- 1933: The Civil disorders movement started.
- 1940: Acharya Vinobhave became the First Sathyagrahi of new phase in Civil Disobedience movement.
- 1942: The Quit India movement began. The movement gave momentum to the attainment of India's freedom. Gandhiji declared: Do or Die.
- 1946: Gandhiji started a foot pilgrimage from Noakhali to put an end to the Hindi-Muslim riots. While the while country was celebrating the new won freedom, Gandhiji spend his day in Kolkata fasting for Hindu Muslim friendship and peace.



# Seven Sins

One of the factors that kept Bapu different from other leaders was his extraordinary and resolute adhering to his principles.

- The aim of many Indian national leaders was to regain freedom. While for Bapu, it was important to think about how we will live as a society once we were granted freedom. He thought about how should education, trade, industry, science and technology etc should be used in such a society.



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- Bapu tried to understand loss of values in society through his pursuit of truth. He termed them as the seven Sins. He wrote that they applied to all individuals' actions and had the ability to destroy the social fabric of the community.
  1. Politics without Principles
  2. Wealth without work
  3. Business without morals
  4. Education without character
  5. Pleasure without Conscience
  6. Science without Humanity
  7. Religion without sacrifice
- Bapu considered politics without principle as aberration. To him thoughts and deeds were inseparable. He believed that a person cannot do right in one department whilst attempting to do wrong in another department.
- Wealth without work refers to profiteering without any actual labour. It encompasses all activities such as gambling, speculation, etc. The great depression caused by stock market crash and the 2008 financial crisis highlight the dangers and impermanence of acquiring wealth without labor.
- Pleasure without conscience can be disastrous. It would encourage habits without moral reasoning. It would also result in the increased use of alcohols, drugs, etc.
- Commerce without morality would result in over-exploitation of one particular section of the community

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at the cost of another. This would result in increased tension among communities and social friction.

- Knowledge without character is more harmful than half knowledge. Without character knowledge can be used for destructive purposes.
- Similarly, science without humanity would be blind to humanity. Though the foundation of nuclear energy and nuclear weapons are atomic energy both cater to very different objectives.
- Religion Gandhi believed was to be about love, compassion and sacrifice. He believed that sacrifice was the ultimate form of devotion.
- He worked to eliminate these seven Sins and advised his followers to fight against them constantly.
- If we think about contemporary problems in our society, we can identify the roots of all the issues in these seven Sins. So we have to think about how to eliminate these in our personal and societal life.

# Constructive Programmes

## The Manifesto for a Non-Violent Life

**G**andhiji had broad and precise ideas about independence. For him, independence was not about getting freedom from the Britishers. For him, even for a villager to feel independent, she must feel that she is the master of her destiny. Only this lead to Poorna Swaraj.

To make our freedom strong, we have to remove all kinds of evil and injustices around us. The freedom struggle should begin with fighting the evil inside and around us. This always has to be non violent.

Just like a violent revolution, which requires practise and training, a Non-Violent revolution also requires the same. Gandhiji created an eighteen-point manifesto for the training of all the patriotic freedom fighters. He submitted this in front of Congress and the nation. So what's this?

### **1. Religious Harmony**

Every patriotic freedom fighter must mingle and exist in harmony with everyone, invariable of their religion. They must be able to see other religions as their own religion. Inclusive religious equality must be the basic principle of secularism



## **2. Fighting against untouchability**

It's a great sin to observe untouchability against a human being for the sake of her being born in a particular caste or community. The savarna Hindus should remember the centuries of cruelty dealt to them and should work to empower them to the forefront of the society.

## **3. Fighting against Liquor**

Liquor is the basis of all societal maladies. Every citizen who dreams of societal progress must not become a slave to it. They must constantly fight against liquor and drug addictions.

## **4. Encouraging Khadi**

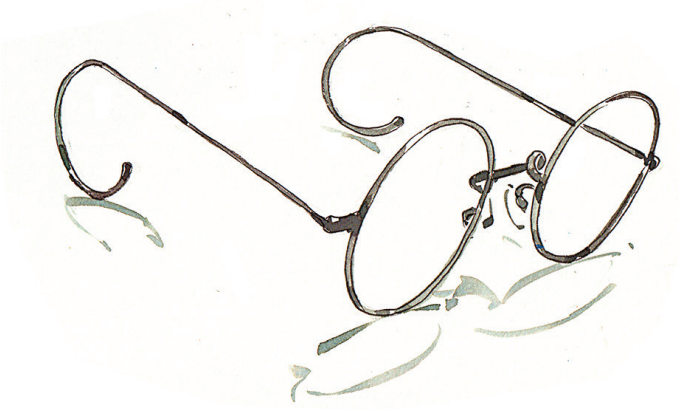
In order to regain integrity and self sovereignty, we must be able to have self dependence on all fronts. Khadi must be made a basic product in all villages to create a economy bereft of exploitation. This would also generate employment for millions of Indians.

## **5. Village Economy**

Instead of encouraging the larger industries that would pollute our air, water and soil, we must encourage every villager to develop a small scale industry which would bolster our local economy making use of their unique skills. Self dependence is a non-negotiable factor in our independence.

## **6. Cleanliness of our Villages**

Gandhiji gave paramount interest to cleanliness. For a



healthy mind, body and society, cleanliness is the most important factor. Everyone must make sincere efforts to regain the health of the planet

## **7. Basic Education**

Gandhiji realised that India can only progress through an educational policy which gives importance to vocation, physical work and self dependence. With this end in mind, he gave birth to the new education policy.

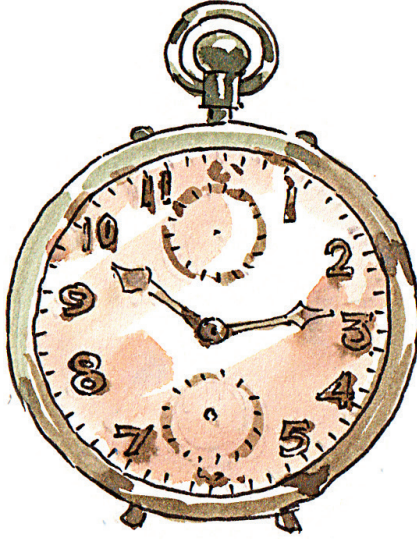
## **8. Education of the Elderly**

Education is a lifelong process. It's not enough that we merely know letters and language. One must know about one's culture and traditions. Only constant education can help improve our lives.

## **9. Woman Empowerment**

Woman should not be held inside her home in the guise of blind superstitions and exploitative rituals. They have to come to the forefront of the freedom struggle and this





can only be made possible by right education. By making men equally aware and responsible about this, Gandhiji made them part of Indian freedom struggle.

## **10. Health Education**

Our educational policies must give importance to both the mental and physical health of each individual.

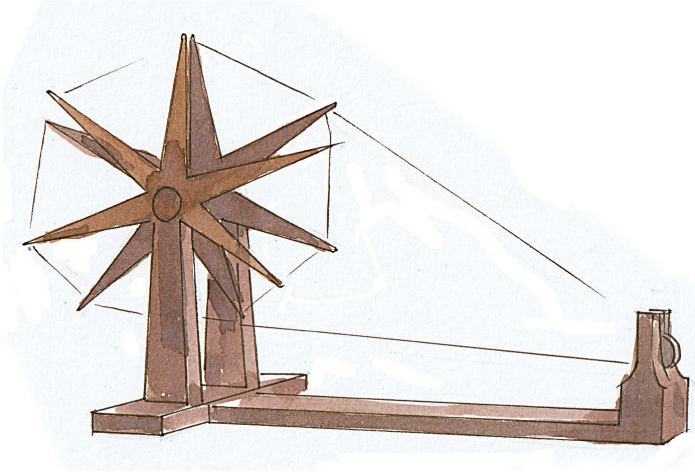
## **11. Local Languages**

The local languages which are slowly becoming extinct because of the popularity of English language has to be studied and preserved. This is required to develop and maintain the national legacy and to prevent an exploitative new class.

## **12. National Language**

In order to maintain national integrity, there must be a common policy for the usage of different languages in





our country. Hindi can be tried as a solution as a national language to bridge this gap.

### **13. Economic Equality**

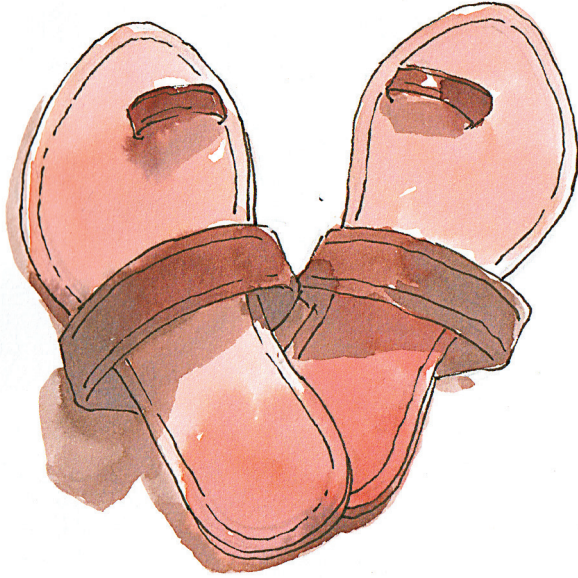
Our freedom cannot have any meaning if the economic gap between the rich and poor is not reduced. Hence the rich must make an effort towards eliminating this economic class difference. Gandhiji's Trusteeship programme is a solution towards this, where every individual works towards this end with a mind of sacrifice.

### **14. Farmers**

Farmers who are backbones of our the village economy are facing a lot of unprecedented hardships. Special efforts must be made to support their livelihood.

### **15. Workers**

The working class who are reeling from the exploitation by the feudal class must be freed from it. Gandhiji showed



a model for this by bringing together the peasants of Champaran Satyagraha and Ahmedabad mill workers.

## **16. Tribal population**

The tribal population of India, who has a unique tradition and culture, must be protected from both exploitation and neglect. For this Gandhiji created Aadhima Jathi Sevaka Sanghom.

## **17. Care for the People with Leprocy**

The cruel treatment meted out to the leper people must be stopped and steps must be taken to make them part of the national rebuilding programs. Gandhiji was the first person to create programs to eradicate Leprocy and also take care of the leper people.

## 18. Students

Policies must be created to bring students into the right path by correcting and solving the shortcomings of the present educational system. Programs among students to make them part of the national rebuilding programs must be initiated.

To foster such interests among the citizens, Gandhiji initiated programs from 1923 onwards. Eg: Akhila Bharatha Charkha Sangham, Harijan Sevak Sangham, Hindi Prachar Sabha, Aadhima Jathi Sevak Sangham etc.



