



Special Issue

Indian Independence Day



As Bhagavan said

"The land of Bharath is verily akin to an orange fruit. The different creeds and communities are but its parts. But the people of Bharath have the vision to see unity behind the diversity. They consider it a great boon and blessing to be born in Bharath - the cradle of wisdom."

Today living in free India we have actually forgotten the cost our freedom fighters have paid to achieve this independence. We hardly remember our struggle for freedom but history tells us that it was not achieved in one day. Series of events took place before we realized what freedom is all about. According to history it was the impact of English education in India, which led the foundation and growth of nationalism, which eventually resulted in freedom of thought and expression. Liberalism also came side by side. In the third quarter of the nineteenth century there was a strong reaction against the sweeping current of Western culture and influence. The barrier was mainly due to the growing knowledge of ancient India's rich cultural heritage and glory. It was India's strong past on which Indian nationalism was built. The spirit of Indian nationalism was intensified by the growing discontent and disaffection with British rule due to the racial arrogance of the rulers. The result of those discontents and dissatisfaction among Indians gave rise to the first major mass movement for India's freedom the Revolt of 1857 or the so-called Sepoy Mutiny. The cause behind this mutiny was the discontent and anger in the army. The British rule exploited the economic and administrative part of the country and led to discomfort and anger among the Indian population.

The series of major events that resulted in India's independence are the partition of Bengal in 1905, the Swadeshi Movement that was an economic boycott of foreign goods in support of domestic product. World Wars I and II, which weakened the power of British rulers. Mahatma's successful civil disobedience movement all over the country against the Salt Laws. His Salt March at Dandi, Gujarat, in December 1930 spread to various parts of the country and last but not least the "Quit India" movement in 1942 and its nationwide impact. These are some of the vital events, which shook the base of British rule in India. India's independence was accompanied by the largest demographic movement in recorded history, with over seventeen million people crossing the border between what was then designated Muslim-majority Pakistan and Hindu-majority India. After three centuries of colonial rule, India declared independence from Britain on 15 August 1947. This declaration was the final culmination of a long struggle for Indian nationalism, a movement that ardently demanded Swaraj, or self-rule, from British colonial governance.

"At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new...India discovers herself again."

- Jawaharlal Nehru
(on Indian Independence Day, 1947)

After more than two hundred years of British rule, India finally won back its freedom on 15th August, 1947. All the patriotic hearts rejoiced at seeing India becoming a sovereign nation and the triumph of hundreds and thousands of martyred souls. It was a birth of a new nation and a new beginning. The only fact that marred the happiness of the fruits by the blood of martyrs was the fact that the country was divided into India and Pakistan and the violent communal riots took away a number of lives. It was on the eve of 15th of August, 1947 that India tricolor flag was unfurled by Jawahar Lal Nehru, the first Prime Minister of India, on the ramparts the Red Fort of Delhi.

On the occasion of Independence Day every Indian should remember the prayer written by **Rabindranath Tagore** -



"Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high Where knowledge is free - Where the world is not being broken up by narrow domestic walls - Where the words come out from the depths of truth - Where tireless striving stretches its arms towards perfection - Where the clear stream of reason has not lost itself in the dreary desert sand of dead habit Where the world is led forward by thee - Into ever widening thought and actions - Into that heaven of freedom let My country awake."

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