

The Quit India Resolution

Introduction

The Quit India Resolution was passed by the Congress in August 1942 during the Second World War. Britain needed Indian support in the war but refused to grant independence. In response, Gandhi launched a mass movement with the slogan “Do or Die”, demanding that the British leave India immediately. It became the biggest struggle against colonial rule since the 1857 revolt.

Causes of the Resolution

The failure of the Cripps Mission disappointed both Congress and the Muslim League. Britain had declared war on behalf of India without consulting Indian leaders. People faced economic hardships like food shortages, poverty, and inflation. British policies angered Indians as resources were used only for war. Growing nationalism and Gandhi’s influence encouraged people to resist British control.

Role of Gandhi and Congress

Gandhi played the central role by giving the inspiring slogan “Do or Die.” He encouraged non-violent protests, strikes, and boycotts against British rule. The Congress strongly supported Gandhi and demanded immediate independence before cooperating in the war. The resolution showed the unity and determination of Indians to achieve freedom.

British Reaction

The British responded with harsh repression. Gandhi, Nehru, and other Congress leaders were immediately arrested. Thousands of protesters were jailed, while police used violence and banned public meetings. Despite restrictions, protests spread widely across India, showing the strength of Indian nationalism.

Outcome of the Movement

The Quit India Movement did not bring immediate independence. Congress leaders remained in jail until the end of the war. However, it united Indians, strengthened the spirit of nationalism, and attracted international attention. Britain realized that ruling India without Indian cooperation was impossible.

Importance in the Freedom Struggle

The Quit India Resolution was the last major mass protest against British colonialism. It united people under one slogan and weakened British authority. It prepared the ground for independence by showing the determination of Indians. The movement became a symbol of courage, sacrifice, and unity, paving the way for independence in 1947.