

# TOWN OF CHAURI CHAURA: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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## Abstract

*February 5, 1922, in the pages of history, they are known as the Chauri-Chaura scandal. During the non-cooperation movement, Gandhi ji started a huge mass movement on the basis of truth and non-violence. The movement became violent as soon as it reached Chauri-Chaura in Gorakhpur and a police post was set on fire. By this event, Mahatma Gandhi and the Indian National Congress had launched a campaign for non-violent non-cooperation, which had gained enough momentum to exist against British colonial rule as a legitimate threat. Soon after the riots, Gandhi condemned the action as a crime and by 12 February the Indian National Congress stopped non-cooperation at the national level.*

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**Introduction:** In India, like Vietnam and many other colonies, the development of modern nationalism is linked to the anti-colonial movement. People began to discover their unity in the process of their struggle with colonialism. The feeling of being oppressed under colonialism provided a shared bond that bound many different groups together. But each class and group felt the effects of colonialism differently, their experiences were diverse, and their notion of freedom was not always the same. The Congress, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, tried to put these groups together within a movement. But unity did not emerge without struggle.

In the year 1922, Gandhi ji started a huge mass movement against British rule to achieve independence on the basis of truth and non-violence. The mass movement that took the oath of non-violence turned violent in Chauri-Chaura of Gorakhpur in the then United Province (present-day Uttar Pradesh). Hurt by an inhuman act of policemen, the protesting crowd became furious and set a police checkpoint on fire. 22 policemen were killed in it. This incident is known as Chauri-Chaura incident in the pages of history. After this scandal, it was the first time that the foundation of the British government was shaken. Injured by this violent act, Gandhi ji withdrew the non-cooperation movement at the Congress meeting in Bardoli on 12 February 1922, but the anger of the revolutionaries had shaken the foundation of the British government. Actually, foreign writers consider this movement of Gandhi ji as successful. The American writer Louis Fisher wrote that the non-cooperation movement proved to be negative in terms of peace but very positive in terms of influence. After the revolution of 1857, the non-cooperation movement rocked the foundations of the English state.

**Method:** In this systematic review, all the existing published studies, newspapers articles and research paper related to the incident of Chauri-Chaura were collected following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews. Articles and images (black and white) in English and Hindi from 1922 to 2019 were retrieved from the Scientific Information Databases, Various books and Journal related of Pubmed, and Elsevier, and

PubMed/Medline, Scopus (international databases). Relevant article and report references were found through electronic search and reviewed manually.

**Result:** According to the document, on 8 February 1921, Gandhi ji visited Gorakhpur for the first time. After this, a large number of people started joining their non-cooperation movement from here. The Congressmen of the district at that time called themselves 'national workers'. People affected by the movement boycotted the government liquor shops. At the same time, the British stopped giving toddy (juice from the palm tree) a major source of their revenue. A large number of people started using Gandhi hats and Khadi clothes, except imported clothes. The British government sent the 'Prince of Wales' to India to handle the situation arising out of this movement in India, but the movement gained further momentum as a protest. About 15 thousand volunteers were enlisted from Gorakhpur city alone. Chauri-chaura village of Tappa Ketauli of Pargana Dakshin Haveli, situated on the Kachhi road of Gorakhpur-Deoria, was discussed in the course of this movement.



#### CHAURI- CHAURA INCIDENT (ORIGINAL IMAGES)

After thorough investigation into the incident, on 7 February the Superintendent of Police, Gorakhpur sent the information of the Chauri-chora incident to DIG CID UP. On 7 February, the then newspaper 'Leader' was informed about the action taken by the government after the incident of Chauri-chaura. After this, its information was given to Delhi headquarters. The information stirred the headquarters. The Home Department sent a telegram from Delhi to local governments and administration. According to the wire document - According to an order issued by the government of the United Provinces, officers of all districts are instructed not to conduct aerial firing and also to prevent their subordinates from doing so. After the incident, the commissioner of Gorakhpur sent a telegram to India Home Delhi giving information about Chauri-chaura incident. It was informed that Chauri-chaura police station was attacked by an organized mob of about two thousand volunteers and villagers and the police station building was burnt down. It was also told that the situation is very serious and the Company Army should be sent to Gorakhpur.



*Chauri Chaura in Gorakhpur, a peaceful demonstration in a bazaar turned into a violent clash with the police. Hearing of the incident, Mahatma Gandhi called a halt to the Non-Cooperation Movement.*

Hundreds of people were accused by the police for the Chauri Chaura incident. On January 9, 1923, a 418-page judgment by Judge H.E. Holmus of Gorakhpur Sessions Court pronounced the death sentence of 172 convicts. Two released to two years imprisonment and 47 to the benefit of doubt. Against this decision, District Congress

Committee Gorakhpur filed an appeal in Allahabad High Court on behalf of the accused, whose number was 51 and year 1923. This appeal was advocated by Pt. Madan Mohan Malviya. The trial began by Chief Justice Sir Grimaud Pearce and Justice Peigut. The judgment came on 30 April 1923 under which 19 accused were given death sentence, 16 were given black water, and the remaining were sentenced to eight, five and two years. Three were sentenced to two years for inciting a riot and 38 were released.

An exhibition of historical records was organized on behalf of Uttar Pradesh State Archives of Culture Department of the state on the occasion of Chaurachaura Centenary celebrations. In this exhibition, various documents related to Chaurichaura incident were displayed. This included group photos related to the appearance of the accused in the incident of Chaurichaura, wire sent by the Commissioner of Gorakhpur to the Home Department Delhi to the Deputy CID of UP on behalf of the Superintendent of Police and many other historical documents.

Current viewpoint of Indian Government: Prime Minister Narendra Modi is going to inaugurate the ceremony organized on the occasion of completion of hundred years of Chauri-Chaura event on February 4, 2021. The Uttar Pradesh government is organizing this centenary celebrations on the completion of hundred years of the Chauri-Chaura incident. A postage stamp will also be released on this occasion. This program will be organized in all 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh. In memory of the Chauri-Chaura incident, this ceremony will be held throughout the year and will conclude on 4 February 2022. Under this, different types of competitions will be organized.

### Conclusion with Highlights:

Gandhi ji felt that the movement was turning violent in many places and satyagrah is needed to be properly trained before they could prepare for major conflicts. Within the Congress, some leaders were tired of large-scale conflicts by now and wanted to participate in elections to the provincial councils established by the Government of India Act of 1919. He felt that it was necessary to oppose British policies, argue for reform and also demonstrate that these councils were not truly democratic. C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru formed the Swaraj Party within the Congress to argue for a return to council politics. But young leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose pressed for a more radical mass movement and complete independence.

Adopting a policy of non-cooperation against the British rule, Gandhiji started a huge mass movement. This movement received special support from the people of urban and rural areas. This movement was proving successful in all the provinces of the country. Proceeding with the policy of non-cooperation, this mass movement reached Chauri Chaura in the then United Provinces of present Uttar Pradesh on 4 February 1922. Here the police started lathi-charging, stopping a large group involved in the movement. Revolutionaries outraged by this act of police clashed with the police in its retaliation. They set a police post on fire. After this incident, 22 policemen and 3 civilians were killed. In the pages of history, this incident is known as Chauri-Chaura incident.

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- Thanedar Gupteshwar Singh, Deputy Inspector Armed Police Force Prithvi Pal Singh, Head Constable Vashir Khan, Kapil Dev Singh, Lakhai Singh, Raghuvveer Singh, Visheshar Ram Yadav, Muhammad Ali, Hassan Khan, Gadabakhsh Khan, Jama Khan, Magaru Chaubey, Rambali Pandey, Kapil Dev, Indrasan Singh, Ramlakhan Singh, Mardana Khan, Jagdev Singh, Jagai Singh, and Chowkidar Bazir, Ghinsai, Jathai and Katwaru Ram, who came to the police station to collect their salaries, were killed that day.
- Gorakhpur District Congress Committee Deputy Chairman Pt. Dasaratha Prasad Dwivedi had informed Gandhiji in writing by writing a letter about the incident. Taking this incident as violent, Gandhiji postponed his non-cooperation movement.

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