

CHAPTER- 5

INDIGO

QUESTIONS FROM TEXTBOOK SOLVED

THINK AS YOU READ

Q1. Strike out what is not true in the following:

(a)Rajkumar Shukla was:

(i)a sharecropper (ii)a politician

(iii)delegate (iv)a landlord.

(b) Rajkumar Shukla was:

(i) poor (ii)physically strong

(iii) illiterate.

Ans: (a) (ii) a politician

(b) (ii) physically strong

Q2. Why is Rajkumar Shukla described as being 'resolute'?

Ans: He had come all the way from Champaran district in the foothills of Himalayas to Lucknow to speak to Gandhi. Shukla accompanied Gandhi everywhere. Shukla followed him to the ashram near Ahmedabad. For weeks he never left Gandhi's side till Gandhi asked him to meet at Calcutta.

Q3. Why do you think the servants thought Gandhi to be another peasant?

Ans: Shukla led Gandhi to Rajendra Prasad's house. The servants knew Shukla as a poor yeoman. Gandhi was also clad in a simple dhoti. He was the companion of a peasant. Hence, the servants thought Gandhi to be another peasant.

THINK AS YOU READ

Q1. List the places that Gandhi visited between his first meeting with Shukla and his arrival at Champaran.

Ans: Gandhi's first meeting with Shukla was at Lucknow. Then he went to Cawnpore and other parts of India. He returned to his ashram near Ahmedabad. Later he went to Calcutta, Patna and Muzaffarpur before arriving at Champaran.

Q2. What did the peasants pay the British landlords as rent? What did the British now want instead and why? What would be the impact of synthetic indigo on the prices of natural indigo?

Ans: The peasants paid the British landlords indigo as rent. Now Germany had developed synthetic indigo. So, the British landlords wanted money as compensation for being released from the 15 per cent arrangement. The prices of natural indigo would go down due to the synthetic Indigo.

THINK AS YOU READ

Q1. The events in this part of the text illustrate Gandhi's method of working. Can you identify some instances of this method and link them to his ideas of Satyagraha and non-violence?

Ans: Gandhi's politics was intermingled with the day-to-day problems of the millions of Indians. He opposed unjust laws. He was ready to court arrest for breaking such laws and going to jail. The famous Dandi March to break the 'salt law' is another instance. The resistance and disobedience was peaceful and a fight for truth and justice...This was linked directly to his ideas of Satyagraha and non-violence.

THINK AS YOU READ

Q1. Why did Gandhi agree to a settlement of 25 per cent refund to the farmers?

Ans: For Gandhi the amount of the refund was less important than the fact that the landlords had been forced to return part of the money, and with it, part of their prestige too. So, he agreed to settlement of 25 per cent refund to the farmers.

Q2. How did the episode change the plight of the peasants?

Ans: The peasants were saved from spending time and money on court cases. After some years the British planters gave up control of their estates. These now reverted to the peasants. Indigo sharecropping disappeared.

UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

Q1. Why do you think Gandhi considered the Champaran episode to be a turning-point in his life?

Ans: The Champaran episode began as an attempt to ease the sufferings of large number of poor peasants. He got spontaneous support of thousands of people. Gandhi admits that what he had done was a very ordinary thing. He declared that the British could not order him about in his own country. Hence, he considered the Champaran episode as a turning-point in his life.

Q2. How was Gandhi able to influence lawyers? Give instances.

Ans: Gandhi asked the lawyers what they would do if he was sentenced to prison. They said that they had come to advise him. If he went to jail, they would go home. Then Gandhi asked them about the injustice to the sharecroppers. The lawyers held consultations. They came to the conclusion that it would be shameful desertion if they went home. So, they told Gandhi that they were ready to follow him into jail.

Q3. "What was the attitude of the average Indian in smaller localities towards advocates of 'home rule'?"

Ans: The average Indians in smaller localities were afraid to show sympathy for the advocates of home-rule. Gandhi stayed at Muzaffarpur for two days at the home of Professor Malkani, a teacher in a government school. It was an extraordinary thing in those days for a government professor to give shelter to one who opposed the government.

Q4. How do we know that ordinary people too contributed to the freedom movement?

Ans: Professor J.B. Kriplani received Gandhi at Muzaffarpur railway station at midnight. He had a large body of students with him. Sharecroppers from Champaran came on foot and by conveyance to see Gandhi. Muzaffarpur lawyers too called on him. A vast multitude greeted Gandhi when he reached Motihari railway station. Thousands of people demonstrated around the court room. This shows that ordinary people too contributed to the freedom movement in India.

TALKING ABOUT THE TEXT

Discuss the following:

Q1. "Freedom from fear is more important than Legal justice for the poor."

Do you think that the poor of India are free from fear after Independence?

Ans: For the poor of India means of survival are far more important than freedom or legal justice. I don't think the poor of India are free from fear after Independence. The foreign rulers have been replaced by corrupt politicians and self-serving bureaucracy. Power-brokers and moneylenders have a field day. The situation has improved in cities and towns for the poor but the poor in the remote villages still fear the big farmers and moneylenders. The police and revenue officials are still objects of terror for them.

The poor, landless workers have to still work hard to make both ends meet. Peasants and tenant-farmers have to borrow money from rich moneylenders on exorbitant rates of interest, which usually they fail to repay due to failure of monsoon or bad crops. Cases of small farmers committing suicide are quite common. If this is not due to fear, what is the reason behind it?

Q2. The qualities of a good leader.

Ans: A good leader has a mass appeal. He rises from the masses, thinks for them and works for them. He is sincere in his approach. He is a man of principles. Truth, honesty, patriotism, morality, spirit of service and sacrifice are the hallmarks of a good leader. He never mixes politics with religion or sect. He believes in working for the welfare of the nation and does not think in the narrow terms of class, caste or region. Corruption and nepotism are two evils that surround a leader in power. The life of a good leader is an open book. There is no difference between his words and actions. Such good leaders are very rare. What we find today are practical politicians, who think of achieving their end without bothering about the purity of means. The law of expediency gets the better of morality.

WORKING WITH WORDS

1. List the words used in the text that are related to legal procedures.

For example: deposition

Ans: Notice, summons, prosecutor, trial, plead, guilty, order, penalty, sentence, bail, judgement, prison, case, inquiry, evidence, commission.

• List other words that you know that fall into this category.

Ans. Complaint, complainant, decree, defendant, witness, prosecution, defence, sessions, jury, verdict, decision.

THINKING ABOUT LANGUAGE

Q1. Notice the sentences in the text which are in 'direct speech'. Why does the author use quotations in his narration?

Ans: The following sentences in the text are in 'direct speech'.

(a) He said, "I will tell you how it happened that I decided to urge the departure of the British. It was in 1917."

(b) Gandhi recounted. "A peasant came up to me looking like any other peasant in India, poor and emaciated, and said, 'I am Rajkumar Shukla. I am from Champaran, and I want you to come to my district!'"

(c) Gandhi said, "I have to be in Calcutta on such-and-such a date. Come and meet me and take me from there".

- (d) "It was an extraordinary thing 'in those days,'" Gandhi commented, "For a government professor to harbour a man like me."
- (e) He said, "I have come to the conclusion that we should stop going to law courts. Taking such cases to the courts does little good. Where the peasants are so crushed and fear-stricken, law courts are useless. The real relief for them is to be free from fear."
- (f) "The commissioner," Gandhi reports, "proceeded to bully me and advised me forthwith to leave Tirhut".
- (g) "But how much must we pay?" they asked Gandhi.
- (h) One woman took Kasturbabai into her hut and said, "Look, there is no box or cupboard here for clothes. The sari I am wearing is the only one I have".
- (i) "What I did", he explained, "was a very ordinary thing. I declared that the British could not order me about in my own country".
- (j) He said, "You think that in this unequal fight it would be helpful if we have an Englishman on our side. This shows the weakness of your heart. The cause is just and you must rely upon yourselves to win the battle. You should not seek a prop in Mr ' Andrews because he happens to be an Englishman".
- (k) "He had read our minds correctly," Rajendra Prasad comments, "and we had no reply ... Gandhi in this way taught us a lesson in self-reliance".

The choice of the direct form strengthens the effectiveness of narration. The author uses quotations to highlight certain points which may not appear so effective in reporting indirectly.

Q2. Notice the use or non-use of the comma in the following sentences:

(a) When I first visited Gandhi in 1942 at his ashram in Sevagram, he told me what happened in Champaran.

(b) He had not proceeded far when the police superintendent's messenger overtook him. (c) When the court reconvened, the judge said he would not deliver the judgement for several days.

Ans: (i) When the subordinate clause comes before the main clause, a comma is used to separate it from the main clause.

(ii) No comma is used when the main clause comes before the subordinate clause.

THINGS TO DO

1. Choose an issue that has provoked a controversy like the Bhopal Gas Tragedy or the Narmada Dam Project in which the lives of the poor have been affected.

2. Find out the facts of the case.

3. Present your arguments.

4. Suggest a possible settlement.

Ans: Extension activity : To be attempted under the guidance of the teacher.

MORE QUESTIONS SOLVED

SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Who was Rajkumar Shukla? Why did he come to Lucknow?

Ans: Rajkumar Shukla was a poor peasant from Champaran district in Bihar. He had come to Lucknow, where a Congress session was being held, to complain about the injustice of the landlord system in Bihar.

Q2. Where is Champaran district situated? What did the peasants grow there? How did they use their harvest?

Ans: Champaran district of Bihar is situated in the foothills of the Himalayas, near the kingdom of Nepal. Under an ancient arrangement, the Champaran peasants were sharecroppers. They had to grow indigo on 15 per cent of the land and give it to the English estate owners as rent.

Q3. How did the development of synthetic indigo affect the English estate owners and the Indian tenants?

Ans: The English estate owners saw that indigo cultivation was no longer profitable. They wanted money from the sharecroppers as compensation for being released from the 15 per cent arrangement. They obtained agreements from their tenants to this effect and extorted money illegally and deceitfully.

Q4. How did the Indian peasants react to the new agreement released them from sharecropping arrangement?

Ans: The sharecropping arrangement was troublesome to the peasants. Many of them signed the new agreement willingly. Some resisted and engaged lawyers. Then they came to know about synthetic indigo. The peasants wanted their money back.

Q5. Why do you think Gandhi was not permitted to draw water from Rajendra Prasad's well at Patna?

Ans: The servants of Rajendra Prasad thought Gandhi to be another peasant. They did not know him. They were not certain whether he was an untouchable or not. They feared that some drops from his bucket might pollute the entire well. So, he was not permitted to draw water from the well.

Q6. Why did Gandhi decide to go first to Muzaffarpur before going to Champaran?

Ans: Gandhi wanted to obtain more complete information about conditions than Shukla was capable of imparting. Muzaffarpur lawyers, who frequently represented peasant groups in courts, brief Gandhi about their cases.

Q7. Why did Gandhi chide the lawyers? What according to him was the real relief for the sharecroppers?

Ans: Gandhi chided the lawyers for collecting big fee from the poor sharecroppers. He thought that taking such cases to the court did little good to the crushed and fear-stricken peasants. The relief for them, according to Gandhi, was to be free from fear.

Q8. How did Gandhi begin his mission in Champaran ? How far did his efforts prove successful ?

Ans: He began by trying to get the facts. First, he visited the secretary of the British landlord's association. He told Gandhi that they could give no information to an outsider. Then Gandhi called on the British official commissioner of the Tirhut Division. The commissioner tried to bully Gandhi and advised him to leave Tirhut.

Q9. How did Gandhi react to the commissioner's advice? Where did he go and how did people react to his arrival?

Ans: Gandhi did not leave Tirhut division. Instead, he went to Motihari, the capital of Champaran. Several lawyers accompanied him. At the railway station, a very large crowd of people greeted Gandhi.

Q10. Where did Gandhi want to go? What happened to him on the way?

Ans: Gandhi wanted to go to a nearby village where a peasant had been maltreated. He had not gone far when the police superintendent's messenger overtook him and ordered him to return to town in his carriage. Gandhi obeyed the order and returned with him.

Q11. 'In consequence, Gandhi received a summons to appear in the court next day.' Which events of the previous day led to this state of affairs?

Ans: The police superintendent's messenger served an official notice on Gandhi. It ordered him

to quit Champaran immediately. Gandhi signed a receipt for the notice. He wrote on the receipt that he would disobey the order. Hence, he was summoned to appear in the court.

Q12. What according to Gandhi was the beginning of the poor peasants' 'Liberation front fear of the British' ?

Ans: The next morning the town of Motihari was black with peasants. They had heard that a Mahatma who wanted to help them was in trouble with the authorities. They spontaneously demonstrated, in thousands, around the courthouse. Gandhiji called their action of protest as their liberation from fear of the British.

Q13. Why did Gandhiji feel that taking the Champaran case to the court was useless?[Delhi 2014]

Ans: Gandhiji felt that taking the Champaran case to the court was useless. Because the real relief for the peasants would come only when they become fearless. The peasants were in acute panic.

Q14. What was the "conflict of duties" in which Gandhi was involved?

Ans: First, he did not want to set a bad example as a law breaker. Second, he wanted to render the "humanitarian and national service" for which he had come. He respected the lawful authority, but disregarded the order to leave to obey the voice of his conscience.

Q15. What according to Rajendra Prasad, was the upshot of the consultations of the lawyers regarding the injustice to sharecroppers?

Ans: They thought that Gandhi was a total stranger. Yet he was ready to go to prison for the sake of the peasants. On the other hand, the lawyers were the residents of nearby districts. They also claimed to have served these peasants. It would be shameful desertion if they should go home then.

Q16. "Civil disobedience had triumphed, the first time in modern India." How?

Ans: A case against Gandhi was initiated for disregarding government orders. The spontaneous demonstration of thousands of peasants baffled the officials. The judge was requested to postpone the trial. Gandhi refused to furnish bail. The judge released him without bail. Several days later Gandhi received an official letter. The case against him had been dropped. Thus, civil disobedience had triumphed.

Q17. What do you think, led Gandhi to exclaim "The battle of Champaran is won"?

Ans: Gandhi was ready to go to jail fighting against the injustice to the sharecroppers. Many prominent lawyers had come from all over Bihar to advise and help him. At first, they said they would go back if Gandhi went to prison. Later, they had consultations. They told Gandhi they were ready to follow him into jail. This support made Gandhi extremely happy and confident. This confidence led him to exclaim that the battle of Champaran was won.

Q18. How did Gandhi and the lawyers try to secure justice for the sharecroppers?

Ans: They started conducting a detailed enquiry into the grievances of the peasants. Depositions by about ten thousand peasants were written down. Notes were made on other evidence. Documents were collected. The whole area came alive with the activities of the investigators. The landlords raised loud protests.

Q19. What was the reaction of Gandhi and his associates when he was summoned to the lieutenant governor?

Ans: In June, Gandhiji was summoned to Sir Edward Gait, the Lieutenant Governor. Anything could happen. Gandhi met his leading associates before going. Detailed plans for civil

disobedience were chalked out in case he should not return.

Q20. What was the outcome of the four protracted interviews Gandhiji had with the Lieutenant Governor?

Ans: An official commission of enquiry into the sharecroppers' situation was appointed. This commission consisted of landlords, government officials and Gandhi as the sole representative of the peasants.

Q21. Why did the big planters agree in principle to make refund to the peasants?

Ans: The official inquiry assembled a huge quantity of evidence against the big planters. The crushing evidence forced the big planters to agree in principle to make refund to the peasants.

Q22. What amount of repayment did the big planters think Gandhi would demand? What did Gandhi ask? What amount was finally settled?

Ans: They thought Gandhi would demand repayment in full of the money they had extorted from the sharecroppers. Gandhi asked only 50 per cent. The planters offered to refund up to 25 per cent. Gandhi was adamant on 50 per cent. The deadlock was broken when Gandhi agreed to a settlement of 25 per cent refund to peasants.

Q23. How did the refund-settlement influence the peasant-landlord relationship in Champaran?

Ans: Before the settlement of the refund, the planters had behaved as lords above the law. Now the peasant saw that he had rights and defenders. He learned courage. Within a few years, the British planters abandoned their estates. The peasants became masters of the land. There were no sharecroppers now.

Q24. Which other spheres besides political or economic fields received Gandhi's attention during his long stay in Champaran?

Ans: The cultural and social backwardness of the Champaran areas pained Gandhi. He appealed for teachers. Several persons responded to his call. Primary schools were opened in six villages. Kasturba taught the ashram rules on personal cleanliness and community sanitation. With the help of a doctor and three medicines, they tried to fight the miserable health conditions.

Q25. "This was typical Gandhi pattern" observes Louis Fischer. What do you learn about Gandhian politics from the extract 'Indigo'?

Ans: Gandhi's politics was intermixed with the practical, everyday life of the millions of Indians. This was not a loyalty to abstractions. It was a loyalty to living human beings. In everything Gandhi did, he tried to mould a new free Indian who could stand on his own feet and thus make India free.

Q26. How did Gandhi teach his followers a lesson of self-reliance?

Ans. During the Champaran action, Gandhi's lawyer friends thought it would be good if C.F. Andrews stayed on in Champaran and helped them. Gandhi opposed this idea as it showed the weakness of their heart. Their cause was just and they must rely upon themselves to win this unequal fight. They should not seek the support of Mr Andrews because he happened to be an Englishman.

LONG ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. What solution to the problems of the poor did Gandhi suggest? How far did the Champaran movement help in this direction?

OR

"The real relief for them is to be free from fear", remarked Gandhi. What do you think, was "the beginning of their liberation from the fear of the British" ?

Ans. The sharecropper peasants had to grow indigo on 15 per cent of their holdings and surrender the indigo harvest as rent to the landlord. When Germany developed synthetic indigo, the British planters started extracting money illegally and deceitfully as compensation from the peasants for being released from the 15 per cent arrangement. The peasants were made to sign new agreements and pay money. The planters behaved as lords above the law. Many peasants engaged lawyers at hefty fees and went to courts.

The Muzaffarpur lawyers briefed Gandhi about the peasants for whom they frequently represented in courts. Gandhi realised that these peasants were badly crushed and fear-stricken. Freedom from fear was more important than legal justice for them. Gandhiji was ready to court arrest for them. Thousands of peasants demonstrated spontaneously around the court. The government had to release Gandhi without bail. This voluntary uprising of the peasants marked the beginning of their liberation from the fear of the British.

Q2. Why was Gandhi summoned to appear in the court? How did he gain his liberty ?

OR

'Civil disobedience had triumphed, the first time in modern India.' Relate the events during Gandhi's stay in Champaran that led to the triumph.

Ans. Gandhi had reached Motihari, the Capital of Champaran, to study the problems of the sharecropper peasants. He was on his way to a neighbouring village, where a peasant was ill-treated. On the way, he was stopped by the police superintendent's messenger and ordered to return to town. When he reached home, he was served with an official notice to quit Champaran at once. Gandhi wrote on the receipt that he would disobey the order. So Gandhi received a summons to appear in the court the next day.

Next morning the town of Motihari was black with peasants. Thousands of peasants demonstrated voluntarily outside the court. The prosecutor requested the judge to postpone the trial. Gandhi protested against the delay. He read out a statement pleading guilty. He asked the penalty. The judge announced that he would pronounce the sentence after a two-hour recess. He asked Gandhi to furnish bail for that period. Gandhi refused. The judge released him without bail. After the recess, the judge said that he would not deliver the judgement for several days. Meanwhile he allowed Gandhi to remain at liberty.

Several days later Gandhi received a letter. The case against him had been dropped. Thus, civil disobedience had triumphed, for the first time in India.

Q3. Give an account of Gandhi's efforts to secure justice for the poor indigo sharecroppers of Champaran.

OR

"Indigo sharecropping disappeared." Which factors do you think, helped to achieve freedom for the fear-stricken peasants of Champaran?

Ans. Gandhi went to Champaran on receiving reports of exploitation of the poor sharecropper peasants at the hands of British planters. He began by trying to get the facts. The British landlords as well as the Commissioner of Tirhut were non-cooperative. Lawyers from MuZaffarpur briefed him about the court cases of these peasants.

Gandhi and the lawyers collected depositions by about ten thousand peasants. Notes were made on other evidence. Documents were collected. The whole area throbbed with the activities of the investigators and forceful protests of landlords.

The lieutenant governor summoned Gandhi. After four protracted interviews an official commission of inquiry was appointed to look into the indigo sharecroppers' condition. Gandhi was the sole representative of the peasants. The official inquiry assembled huge quantity of evidence against the big planters. They agreed, in principle, to make refunds to the peasants. After consultation, a settlement of 25 per cent refund to the farmers was agreed on. This was

a moral victory of the peasants. They recognised their rights and learned courage. Within a few years the British planters gave up their estates. These now went back to the peasants. They became the masters of land. Thus, indigo sharecropping disappeared.

Q4. How did Gandhi work for rural uplift during his stay in Champaran

Ans. Gandhi wanted to do something to remove the cultural and social backwardness in Champaran villages. He appealed for teachers. Two young disciples of Gandhi, Mahadev Desai and Narhari Parikh and their wives volunteered themselves for work. Several others responded from distant parts of the country. Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi and Devdas, Gandhi's youngest son, arrived from the Ashram. Primary schools were opened in six villages. Kasturba taught the ashram rules on personal cleanliness and community cleanliness. She also talked to women about their filthy clothes.

Health conditions were miserable. Gandhi got a doctor to volunteer his services for six months. Only three medicines were available: Castor oil, quinine and sulphur ointment. Anyone who showed a coated tongue was given a dose of castor oil; anybody with malaria fever received quinine plus castor oil; anybody with skin eruptions received ointment plus castor oil. Thus, Gandhi never contented himself with large political or economic solutions. He worked for total uplift of villages and the poor sections of the society.

Q5. 'Self-reliance, Indian independence and help to sharecroppers were all bound together.' Elucidate on the basis of reading 'Indigo' by Louis Fischer.

OR

'The Champaran episode was a turning-point in Gandhi's life. Explain with examples from 'Indigo' by Louis Fischer.

Ans. Gandhi stayed in Champaran for a long time. The Champaran episode was a turning point in his life. It was during this struggle in 1917 that he decided to urge the departure of the British.

Champaran episode did not begin as an act of defiance. It grew out of an attempt to make the sufferings of large numbers of poor peasants less severe. Gandhi concentrated on their practical day to day problems. He analysed the root cause of the problem-fear, and tried to eradicate it. The voluntary demonstration of the poor peasants against the government for putting Gandhi in trouble was the beginning of the end of their fear of the British.

In everything Gandhi did, he tried to mould a new free Indian who could stand on his own feet and thus make India free. He taught his lawyer friends a lesson in self-reliance by opposing the involvement of C.F. Andrews, an Englishman in their unequal fight. His help would be a prop. This would reflect their weakness. Their cause was just and they must rely on themselves to win the battle. Thus self-reliance, Indian independence and help to sharecroppers were all bound together.

Q6. Justify the appropriateness of the title 'Indigo' to this extract.

Ans. The title 'Indigo' is quite appropriate, to the point and suggestive. It at once focuses our * attention on the central issue-the exploitation of the indigo sharecropper peasants at the hands of cruel British planters. They compelled them through a long term agreement to raise indigo on 15 per cent of their landholding and surrender the entire indigo harvest as rent. After the development of synthetic indigo by Germany, the British planters extracted money from the peasants as compensation for being released from the 15 per cent agreement. The peasants who wanted their money back had filed civil suits. The planters who behaved as lords above the law and were dreaded by the poor were obliged to surrender part of money and with it part of their prestige.

The extract also points out the work done by Gandhi and his associates to improve the economic, political, cultural and social life of the indigo sharecroppers. Their education, health and hygiene also received due attention. The plight of indigo sharecroppers, then- struggle

under Gandhi's leadership and ultimate victory when Indigo sharecropping disappeared from important landmarks. Thus, the title 'Indigo' is highly suggestive and apt.

Q7. What impression do you form about Gandhi on reading the chapter 'Indigo' ?

Ans. The chapter 'Indigo' pays a tribute to the leadership shown by Mahatma Gandhi to secure justice for oppressed people through convincing argumentation and negotiation. Gandhi had a magnetic attraction and great persuasive power. He could draw people of all classes to himself and make them partners in the freedom movement. Even ordinary people were inspired to make contribution to the freedom movement.

Gandhi emerges as a champion of the downtrodden and the oppressed. Rural uplift was his favourite programme. His knowledge of legal procedure and respect for law is also highlighted. He does not want to be a lawbreaker. At the same time he wants to render the humanitarian and national service in obedience to the higher law of our being, the voice of conscience. He also appears as a polite and friendly person. Gandhi's ability to read the minds of others made them speechless. He believed in self-reliance, just cause and purity of means to achieve India's Independence.

Q8. Why is the Champaran episode considered to be the beginning of the Indian struggle for Independence? [All India 2014]

Ans. The Champaran episode began as an attempt to ease the sufferings of a large number of 'peasants. He got spontaneous support of thousands of people. Gandhi declared that the British could not order him about in his own country. Under his leadership, the peasants became aware of their rights. Raj Kumar Shukla, a farmer of Champaran helped him a lot in bringing about the change. Other peasants too fought courageously and contributed in their own way to the movement. It resulted in their winning the battle of Champaran. The effects of Gandhi's method of non-violence and non-cooperation proved very fruitful in this movement. Hence, it can be said that the Champaran episode is the beginning of the Indian struggle for independence.

VALUE-BASED QUESTIONS

Q1. Patriotism is in political life what faith is in religion. John F Kennedy said, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country". Those who sacrifice their comfort for the welfare of the state get recognition. Write an article on the topic 'Patriotism'.

You can take ideas from the following hints:

"They thought, amongst themselves, that Gandhi was totally a stranger, and yet he was prepared to go to prison for the sake of the peasants; if they, on the other hand, being not only residents of the adjoining districts but also those who claimed to have served these peasants, should go home, it would be shameful desertion."

Ans.

Patriotism

**Breathes there the man with soul so dead,
who never to himself hath said,
this is my own native land! —Scott**

Patriotism implies love for one's nation. A patriot is ready to sacrifice his comfort for the service of his nation. It was for his country's sake that Sardar Bhagat Singh kissed the gallows. It was for the love for their land that Shivaji, Rana Pratap and Guru Govind Singh suffered untold hardships. True patriots respect other nations and religions but don't allow anyone to insult their nation. A great philosopher said, "It is not gold that makes a nation great. It is the sacrifice and martyrdom of patriots that raises a nation to the heights of glory." India is a land where patriots are in abundance. It got its freedom only because of the efforts of its patriots. Patriotism is a religion and an ideal. It is an ideology that guides the people of a nation. It is a

feeling and a bond that unites the people of various sects, beliefs and backgrounds together. A patriot must not be narrow minded. He should develop an international progressive outlook. It would be pertinent to quote the words of Seneca here "No one loves his country for its size or eminence, but because it is his own."

Q2. Undoubtedly, only a socially just country has the right to exist. In the modern world justice is a concept. Muscle is the reality. Corruption has become the way of the world. The destitute are exploited ruthlessly. People feel that 'to make a living, craftiness is better than learnedness'. Write an article on the topic mentioned above taking ideas from the given lines: "Gandhi protested against the delay. He read a statement pleading guilty... when the court reconvened, the judge said he would not deliver the judgement for several days."

Ans.

Corruption in Contemporary India

Corruption has engulfed all the educated, skilled and semi-skilled workers. Corruption means dishonesty and illegal behavior especially of the people in authority. A person resorts to corruption because of his poverty, lack of moral strength and other psychological and financial problems. Moreover, the path of righteousness is full of thorns. Some of the youngsters are misguided by the friends to multiply their benefits within a short span of time. One should always remember that corruption starts from the top. If the head of the family is corrupt, the other members will also imitate his actions. Our politicians and bureaucrats are corrupt and unscrupulous. They don't have any moral authority. Such corrupt politicians and bureaucrats should be punished and the honest persons should be rewarded if we intend to create a congenial atmosphere in our country. The system of justice is outdated and obsolete. It is said that 'justice delayed is justice denied'. People do not get justice in the court of law. If corruption is not checked, the poor will be exploited without any inhibition.

Q3. Obstacles determine the quality of life. Hermits feel convinced that 'sweet are the uses of adversity'. Problems are opportunities. Elucidate the saying taking ideas from the given lines: "Events justified Gandhi's position. Within a few years the British planters abandoned their estates, which reverted to the peasants. Indigo sharecropping disappeared."

Ans.

Sweet are the Uses of Adversity

The Bible proclaims that 'Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward'. Adversity is the first path that leads towards the truth. Emerson opines that 'every calamity is a spur and valuable hint'. But one cannot forget the truth that 'there is no wind that always blows a storm'. Problems are only opportunities in work clothes. Every individual aspires to attain phenomenal success in this era of consumerism. No one can refuse to accept the fact that material pleasures and prosperity bring happiness. But one cannot dare to ignore the significance of trying circumstances. One wishes to be away from the situations which can be troublesome and irksome. But one must not despair in those situations and should face the music of life. Prosperity makes a person lazy and ease loving. Adversity, on the other hand, though trying and full of hardships, has a chastening effect. One's character and personality become dynamic and vibrant if one fights bravely against the odd circumstances. It will not be wrong if we say that "as gold shines in fire, man shines in adversity.

**"If you are distressed by anything
external, the pain is not due to
the thing itself, but to your own
estimate of it; and this you have
the power to revoke at any moment" —Marcus Aurelius**

Q4. Education sets the tone of a nation. Joseph Addison has rightly said, "What sculpture to a block of marble, education is to the soul". But the quality of education is deteriorating gradually. Discuss the defects of our education system in your own words. Do remember the

following expressions:

"Gandhi never contented himself with large political or economic solutions. He saw the cultural and social backwardness in the Champaran villages... He appealed for teachers."

Ans.

Defects of our Education System

"Education is the ability to listen to almost anything without losing your temper or your self-confidence". Education does not mean teaching people to know what they do not know; it means teaching them to behave as they do not behave, says John Ruskin. The prime objective of our education system is to develop a child's over all personality. It should train not only the mind, but also the body and soul. Unfortunately, our present education system fails to achieve these objectives. The present education system does not make a child creative. It makes him a crammer. A child/pupil has to mug up nearly 200-300 pages a year to pass his examination. Students are not given any practical training. They never go to laboratories to verify the theories. Moreover, the present admission system has become the laughing stock of society. The school authorities have a provision for those tiny tots who seek admission to pre-nursery. This is the height of absurdity. We need not the people who can only read and write. Our nation requires engineers, scientists, technicians and doctors. Vocational education is the need of the hour but not at the cost of values. An educated man should not have only bookish knowledge. He must have the knowledge of practical things. Maria Montessori conceived that 'The first idea that the child must acquire in order to be actively disciplined is that of the difference between good and evil; and the task of the educator lies in seeing that the child does not confound good with immobility, and evil with activity.