

Modern Indian History Timeline 1857-1947

A date-first last-minute revision sheet covering major movements, Acts, Congress milestones and the final transfer of power for SSC, UPSC, state PSC and teaching exams.

90 years Timeline span	46 Dated milestones	7 Major Acts	5 Revision phases
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Method note: events are condensed into exam-recall language. Dates are selected for high-yield chronology, not to imply that modern Indian history begins only in 1857.

How to use this PDF

Use active recall: hide the answer column, attempt the question or formula from memory, then mark the exact reason for an error. Recheck the linked official source when an examination authority changes its syllabus or instructions.

NCERT/ePathshala - Nationalism in India: <https://epathshala.nic.in/topicc.php?id=1066CH02>

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1. From revolt to Swadeshi: 1857-1909

Date	Event	Why it matters
10-11 May 1857	Revolt begins at Meerut; rebels move to Delhi	Marks the opening of the large 1857 uprising in north India.
1858	Government of India Act transfers rule to the Crown	East India Company rule ends; Secretary of State for India created.
1861	Indian Councils Act	Expanded legislative councils and began limited association of Indians with law-making.
1875	Arya Samaj founded; Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College established	Important social-religious and educational developments.
1876	Indian Association founded	Early all-India political association linked with Surendranath Banerjea and Ananda Mohan Bose.
1878	Vernacular Press Act	Restricted Indian-language press; repealed in 1882.
December 1885	First session of Indian National Congress in Bombay	W. C. Bonnerjee presides; organised national political platform emerges.
1892	Indian Councils Act	Enlarged councils and introduced an indirect electoral principle in limited form.
16 October 1905	Partition of Bengal takes effect	Triggers Swadeshi and boycott mobilisation.
1906	All-India Muslim League founded at Dhaka	A major new political organisation enters late-colonial politics.
1907	Surat split in Congress	Moderate and extremist wings separate organisationally.
1909	Indian Councils Act (Morley-Minto reforms)	Expanded councils and introduced separate electorates for Muslims.



2. New politics and mass mobilisation: 1911-1929

Date	Event	Why it matters
1911	Partition of Bengal annulled; imperial capital shifted to Delhi	Administrative and symbolic change announced at Delhi Durbar.
9 January 1915	M. K. Gandhi returns to India	Later commemorated as Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.
1916	Home Rule Leagues and Lucknow Pact	Home-rule campaigning grows; Congress-League agreement reached.
1917	Champaran Satyagraha	Gandhi supports indigo cultivators in Bihar.
1918	Ahmedabad mill dispute and Kheda Satyagraha	Early Gandhian labour and peasant interventions.
1919	Rowlatt Act; Jallianwala Bagh; Government of India Act	Repression, mass outrage and dyarchy reforms shape a turning point.
1920	Non-Cooperation and Khilafat mobilisation	Congress adopts a mass programme of surrendering honours, boycott and national institutions.
5 February 1922	Chauri Chaura incident	Violence leads Gandhi to suspend the Non-Cooperation movement.
1923	Swaraj Party formed	C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru favour council entry to obstruct colonial governance.
1927-28	Simon Commission appointed and arrives in India	All-British commission faces widespread boycott.
1928	Nehru Report and Bardoli Satyagraha	Constitutional proposal and successful no-tax peasant campaign.
December 1929	Lahore Congress adopts Purna Swaraj	Jawaharlal Nehru presides; complete independence becomes the declared goal.



3. Civil Disobedience to wartime crisis: 1930-1940

Date	Event	Why it matters
26 January 1930	Independence Day observed	Public pledge follows the Lahore resolution.
12 March-6 April 1930	Dandi March	Salt law becomes the opening focus of Civil Disobedience.
5 March 1931	Gandhi-Irwin Pact	Civil Disobedience suspended; Gandhi agrees to attend the Second Round Table Conference.
March 1931	Karachi Congress	Resolution links political freedom with fundamental rights and economic justice.
24 September 1932	Poona Pact	Agreement on reserved seats after debate over separate electorates for the Depressed Classes.
1934	Civil Disobedience movement withdrawn	The mass phase closes while constitutional and organisational work continues.
1935	Government of India Act	Provincial autonomy and an unrealised all-India federation form its central design.
1937	Provincial elections and Congress ministries	Provincial autonomy operates in several provinces.
1939	Second World War; Congress ministries resign	India is declared at war without consultation with Indian leaders.
March 1940	Lahore Resolution	Muslim League formally advances a demand for independent states in Muslim-majority zones.
August 1940	August Offer	British wartime constitutional proposal is rejected by major nationalist forces.



4. Quit India to independence: 1942-1947

Date	Event	Why it matters
1942	Cripps Mission	Post-war dominion-status proposal fails to secure agreement.
8 August 1942	Quit India resolution	Congress launches the final great mass movement under the call 'Do or Die'.
21 October 1943	Provisional Government of Azad Hind proclaimed	Subhas Chandra Bose leads the government and reorganised INA effort.
1945	Wavell Plan, Simla Conference and INA trials	Negotiation deadlock and public mobilisation around INA prisoners.
February 1946	Royal Indian Navy uprising	Ratings' revolt spreads from Bombay and signals deep wartime discontent.
March-May 1946	Cabinet Mission	Proposes a Union framework and Constituent Assembly process.
2 September 1946	Interim Government takes office	Jawaharlal Nehru heads the interim executive.
9 December 1946	Constituent Assembly first meets	The constitution-making body begins work.
3 June 1947	Mountbatten Plan	Announces the transfer-of-power and partition framework.
18 July 1947	Indian Independence Act receives royal assent	Creates the legal basis for the two Dominions.
15 August 1947	India becomes independent	Colonial rule ends amid Partition and mass displacement.



5. Constitutional Acts comparison

Year	Act	One-line exam hook
1858	Government of India Act	Crown rule; Secretary of State for India; Company rule ends
1861	Indian Councils Act	Legislative councils expanded; portfolio system recognised
1892	Indian Councils Act	More council members; limited indirect election principle
1909	Indian Councils Act	Larger councils; separate Muslim electorates
1919	Government of India Act	Dyarchy in provinces; bicameral central legislature
1935	Government of India Act	Provincial autonomy; proposed federation; three legislative lists
1947	Indian Independence Act	Partition and creation of the Dominions of India and Pakistan

Do not merge these pairs

Pair	Difference
1909 vs 1919	1909 is remembered for separate electorates; 1919 for provincial dyarchy.
1919 vs 1935	1919 creates dyarchy in provinces; 1935 replaces it with provincial autonomy and proposes federation.
Non-Cooperation vs Civil Disobedience	Non-Cooperation emphasised boycott and withdrawal; Civil Disobedience openly broke selected colonial laws.
August Offer vs Cripps Mission	August Offer was a 1940 wartime declaration; Cripps brought a 1942 draft declaration with post-war dominion status.
Cabinet Mission vs Mountbatten Plan	Cabinet Mission tried to preserve a Union framework; Mountbatten Plan accepted partition.



6. Five-phase recall ladder

Phase	Story	Anchor years
1857-1885	Revolt, Crown rule, early associations	1857 - 1858 - 1861 - 1878 - 1885
1885-1916	Moderates, Swadeshi, split, reform, Home Rule	1885 - 1905 - 1906 - 1907 - 1909 - 1916
1917-1929	Gandhian entry, Rowlatt crisis, Non-Cooperation, Simon boycott, Purna Swaraj	1917 - 1919 - 1920 - 1922 - 1928 - 1929
1930-1939	Civil Disobedience, pacts, 1935 Act, ministries, wartime resignations	1930 - 1931 - 1932 - 1935 - 1937 - 1939
1940-1947	Lahore, Cripps, Quit India, INA, Cabinet Mission, transfer of power	1940 - 1942 - 1943 - 1945 - 1946 - 1947

Blank recall run

Year/date	Event from memory	Cause or consequence



7. Source and scope page

NCERT/ePathshala chapter - Nationalism in India: <https://epathshala.nic.in/topicc.php?id=1066CH02>

NCERT history syllabus for Classes XI-XII: <https://www.ncert.nic.in/pdf/syllabus/08HGPES%20%28XI-XII%29.pdf>

This original chronology summarises high-yield dates. It does not reproduce NCERT prose or claim that one event had only one cause or consequence. Use full textbooks for evidence, interpretation and regional histories.

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Independent study aid. NCERT and the latest official exam syllabus remain the controlling learning sources.