

UPSC Civil Services Examination

Subject – UPSC GS-III

Topic – Chauri-Chaura Incident

What is Chauri-Chaura Incident?

On 5 February 1922, participants of the Non-cooperation movement clashed with police resulting in the deaths of about 22 policemen and 3 civilians at Chauri Chaura in the Gorakhpur district in the United Provinces (present-day Uttar Pradesh).

This article will update you with all the information related to the famous Chauri Chaura incident that took place on February 5, 1922.

The Chauri Chaura incident is a decisive moment in the history of the Indian freedom struggle. Therefore, it is an important part of the [UPSC syllabus](#).

The Chauri Chaura incident and the reaction of Mahatama Gandhi give a deep insight into the workings of Gandhi's mind and his ideology. So, aspirants of UPSC exam must be well versed with this incident as it can be asked in the [UPSC 2020](#) prelims or mains.

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Chauri Chaura Incident - Series of Events



- The Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi had launched the [non-cooperation movement](#) on 1st August 1920.
- This was supposed to be a peaceful and non-violent movement wherein people would relinquish their government jobs and titles, stop going to government schools and colleges, not serve in the army and also refuse to pay taxes as an extreme measure.
- The aim of the party was Swaraj or self-government.
- The people readily participated in the movement and it saw partial success at least in the participation level.
- However, an incident at Chauri Chaura changed the course of the movement. On 2 February 1922, people were protesting against high meat prices at the marketplace. They were beaten by the police and many of their leaders were arrested and detained at the Chauri Chaura police station.
- The volunteers planned another protest against the police.
- On 5 February, about 2500 people marched towards the Chauri Chaura market in order to picket a shop selling liquor.
- One of their leaders was arrested. A group of people then marched towards the police station demanding the release of the arrested leader.
- The police fired shots in the air hoping to disperse the crowd. However, the crowd became agitated and started pelting stones at the police.
- Things were getting out of hand and the sub-inspector at the station came forward and fired at the crowd killing three people. This incensed the people who then charged at the policemen who were heavily outnumbered. The police station was set ablaze by the people and all the policemen and officials inside were charred to death.
- The British government in response, imposed martial law in the area and arrested hundreds of people.
- Gandhi went on a fast for five days after the incident for his 'role' in the event. He withdrew the movement on 12 February officially since he felt that the people were not ready to take up a non-violent movement. He also felt that adequate training was not provided to the people to show restraint in the face of violent attacks.
- Many Congress leaders like [Motilal Nehru](#) and Chittaranjan Das were against the calling off of the movement as they felt that success was being gained in the country.
- The government responded promptly bringing to trial about 228 people in connection with the case. 6 of them died in police custody. After the 8 month-long trial, 172 people were sentenced to death.
- The verdict was met with severe resistance across the country. In 1923, the Allahabad High Court which reviewed the sentences confirmed 19 death sentences, 110 life imprisonments, and the remaining were sentenced to long jail terms.

- In 1923, the British government constructed a memorial to the dead policemen.
- In 1973, a Shaheed Smarak was constructed in memory of the 19 executed persons.

Quick Facts about Chauri-Chaura Incident for UPSC

What preceded the Chauri-Chaura Incident?	A manifesto announcing Gandhi's doctrine of non-violent Non-Cooperation movement preceded the Chauri-Chaura incident
Where is Chauri-Chaura?	It lies in Indian state of Uttar Pradesh (UP)
Was there any political or social consequence of the Chauri-Chaura incident?	172 people out of 225 accused were sentenced to death, however, 19 were hanged to death and remaining were transported
Who is Bhagwan Ahir in relation to the Chauri-Chaura incident?	He was the army pensioner, living in Gorakhpur (UP), who was beaten up by the British police, leading to sentimental uproar and then the Chauri-Chaura incident
What was the major event related to the Chauri-Chaura incident?	The withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation movement in February 1922
What is the marxist interpretation of the Chauri-Chaura incident?	A mass wave of revolutionary unrest in India in 1919 (evident from the labour unrest and strike wave of 1919-20 and peasant protests in UP and Bihar) worked as a kind of popular groundswell virtually forcing the leadership to a radical posture...Gandhi and the Congress bigwigs sensed that a revolutionary mass movement was in the offing. They decided to take over the leadership to keep the movement a 'controlled' affair and 'within safe channels'. The movement was called off just when the masses seemed to be taking the initiative

Chauri Chaura event is a historical event related with India's independence struggle. See previous [‘This Day in History’ here](#).

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