



Gandhi's work in South Africa

Published On: 07-06-2023

Why is in news? Indian Navy will participate in a commemorative event to mark 130 years of the start of struggle against apartheid

- The Indian Navy will participate in a commemorative event to mark **130 years of the start of struggle against apartheid at the Pietermaritzburg, Railway Station** near Durban.
- INS Trishul, a frontline warship of the Indian Navy is visiting Durban from 06 to 09 Jun 23 to commemorate the 130th anniversary of the **7th Jun 1893** incident at Pietermaritzburg, Railway Station as **also 30 years of re-establishment of diplomatic relations between India and South Africa.**
- Mahatma Gandhi had **arrived in Durban, South Africa, in 1893** to serve as **legal counsel to the merchant Dada Abdulla.**
- On **07 June 1893**, during a **trip to Pretoria in the Transvaal**, he first arrived at Pietermaritzburg station.
- Gandhiji who was seated in the first-class compartment after having purchased a ticket, was evicted from the compartment at the behest of a European since as per him **'coolies' and non-whites were not permitted in first-class compartments.**
- The incident is considered to be the trigger which **led to Gandhiji's fight against racial oppression and to the birth of Satyagraha**
- The story of Mahatma Gandhi's travails at Pietermaritzburg Railway Station acquired another life on April 25, 1997 when, in a moving ceremony at Pietermaritzburg Railway Station, presided by Nelson Mandela, then President of South Africa, the Freedom of Pietermaritzburg was conferred posthumously on Mahatma Gandhi.
- Gathered together to right a century-old wrong, President Mandela recalled "Gandhi's magnificent example of personal sacrifice and dedication in the face of oppression".
- INS Trishul's visit to Durban is in continuation with the Indian Navy's celebration of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahostav by celebrating key moments that shaped India's Independence struggle.
- The ship during its visit to Durban, will participate in a commemorative event at Pietermaritzburg Railway Station which would include paying floral tributes at the Gandhiji Plinth and a performance by the IN band.
- The ship will also participate in other professional and social engagements during the visit.

Gandhi's work in South Africa:

- He organised **non-violent protests against the racial discrimination** directed towards the native Africans and Indians in 1894.
- He organised the **Indian Ambulance Corps** for the British during the outbreak of the Boer War in 1899, so that the British could understand humanity but the ethnic discrimination and torture continued on Indians.
- He set up **Phoenix Farm near Durban** where Gandhi trained his cadre for peaceful restraint or non-violent Satyagraha. This farm is considered the birthplace of Satyagraha.
- He also set up another farm which was called **Tolstoy Farm** which is considered as **the place where Satyagraha was moulded into a weapon of protest.**
- The **first non-violent Satyagraha campaign** of Mahatma Gandhi was organised in September 1906 to protest against the **Transvaal Asiatic ordinance which was constituted against the local Indians.** After that, he also held Satyagraha against the Black Act in June 1907.

- He was sentenced to jail for organising the non-violent movement in 1908 but after meeting with General Smuts, who was a British Commonwealth statesman, he was released.
- He was sentenced to a three-month jail in Volksrust and Pretoria in 1909. After his release, he went to London to seek the assistance of the Indian community there but his effort was in vain.
- In 1913, he **fought against the override of non-Christian marriages**.
- He organised another Satyagraha movement in Transvaal **against the oppression that Indian minors were suffering from**. He led around 2,000 Indians across the Transvaal border.

Movements started by Gandhi in India:

1. Champaran Sathyagraha in 1917
2. Kheda Sathyagraha in 1918
3. Khilafat movement
4. Non Cooperation Movement – 1920-1922
5. Civil Disobedience Movement- 1930-1932
6. Quit India Movement - 1942