

# **BRIEF NOTE ON HOME RULE LEAGUE MOVEMENT**

## **Background**

For India to get independence it had to go through many reforms, changes, revolutions. Some proved to be efficient enough to rise the spark of revolution among the countrymen and giving them the boost that it needed so that they would come together as a nation to uproot the prevailing and dominant British Raj. Revolutions and movements failed so miserably that it is better not to consider them and learn from the loopholes that lead to its failure.

Of many such reforms and movements was the Indian Home Rule League Movement that took place as a result of First World War and because of it the home rule league movement was initiated across India. To look and say it in the broader sense it was a movement in alignment to the Irish Home Rule Movement.

As for why the movement took place in India and who sparked the flames of this movement in India, we shall look into that in short amount of time. As for now it is safe to say that the movement resulted in giving the stage for the people of India to speak for its independence and speak for its home rule, or we can call it the self-governing movement.

It gave the people of India to speak for their independence, and set a background for their fight and road to freedom. As mentioned earlier that the movement took its form during the events of the First World War and so it was around for the time period of 1916 to 1918.

The Home Rule League movement was initiated under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Annie Besant. Annie Besant was a prominent activist from the theosophical society whereas Bal Gangadhar Tilak was one of the prominent leaders at times of the First World War, positioning strong opinions for the freedom of the country and its countrymen.

It was during the time period of 1916 to 1918 that some of the prominent leaders along with Annie Besant the active participant and also the leader of the theosophical society organized the home rule league movement in order to position their thoughts on the self-governing nature of India. Some of the prominent leaders were Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, Sir S. Subramanian Iyer and few others.

They planned to make it a national gathering where people of India could come forward and talk about India's system of self-governing or as the home rule means. It is essential to note that this was during the British Empire time when they proposed the idea and it was within that period and situation that they wanted the home rule or the self-governing for India.

The initiative of starting the movement led to many incredible changes which were otherwise not possible. Few of the most prominent changes that were visible at the early stage of the introduction of the home rule movement were the unification of the two of the prevailing political parties, and they were the All India Muslim League and of course the emerging dominant party Indian National congress.

The advent of the home rule movement led to unification of the above-mentioned parties which led to the significant implementation of the idea of transforming India into the self-governing body. This was achieved through presenting ideas, holding meetings, holding stages where people of India would give speech about the ideas and ideals of a self-governing or home rule system. Many Indians participated in the petition that was being signed to propose this movement in front of the legislative body sitting at Britain.

### **The Indian Home Rule Movement**

The movement was initiated under the guidance of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Annie Besant who made this movement a success and made it work in order to spark the flames of freedom in the hearts of Indian citizen, it won't be wrong to state that the beginning of the movement led to the very foundation of the people of India to ask, voice and fight for their freedom.

The first league was formed under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak who started the movement in Bombay in the year 1916 in the month of April. And the second league was initiated was worked upon by Annie Bessant who formed it in September in the same year, that is, 1916.

The first league as it was initiated, formed and worked under the leadership of Bal Gangadhar Tilak was executed in the places such as central province, parts of Maharashtra and Karnataka. On the other hand, Annie Besant who was also an active participant of the Home Rule Movement introduced the idea in the other regions of India.

The movement proved to be just the catalyst that was required in order to wake the feared voices of Indian countrymen. One of the prominent work that the movement

was able to achieve was the successful reconciliation of the two prominent leagues of the India, All India Muslim League under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Indian National Congress under the leadership of Nehru and Gandhi.

However, when Annie Besant was taken as a prisoner and was put behind the bars then the movement did not stop or lose its influence it rather rose to another level which made the people of India even more motivated with the rage of providing India with the self-governing system. She was arrested in 1917. After this incident the effect and the prevalence of the movement reached some new places such as Orissa, Bihar, and Punjab.

These places witnessed a passive participation of the people of India and even saw an increase in the active participation of the parties. The arrest of Annie Besant and the increase in popularity of movement led to a statement released by the British government stating that there is an increase need of realization of the needs of the India and its self-governing ideas and it was a progressive step towards its responsibilities.

However, after the departure of Bal Gangadhar Tilak to England to further progress in the home rule system of India, the movement was weakened to an extent, soon enough the decline of the movement was seen when Mahatma Gandhi rose to fame with his non-cooperation and non-violent ideas. The Indian Home Rule Movement soon emerged with the INC to come up as one party and in the year 1920 Gandhi was chosen by its members as its president.

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