



# HISTORY BIOGS

## FIGURES FROM HISTORY

### *Gandhi*

An Indian lawyer who used nonviolent resistance and persuasion to lead the successful campaign for India's Independence from colonial British rule He inspired movements for civil rights and freedom across the world.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on the 2nd of October in 1869.

Born and raised in a Hindu family in coastal Gujarat, Gandhi trained in the law at the Inner Temple in London, and was called to the bar at age 22 in June 1891.

He was unable to start a successful law practice in India, so he moved to South Africa in 1893 to represent an Indian merchant in a lawsuit. He then lived in South Africa for 21 years. It was here that Gandhi raised a family and first employed nonviolent resistance in a campaign for civil rights.

In 1915, aged 45, he returned to India and soon set about organising peasants, farmers, and urban labourers to protest against excessive land-tax and discrimination.

He became the leader of the Indian National Congress in 1921, and started campaigns against poverty, expanding women's rights, promoting religious tolerance, and, above all, achieving Swaraj (self-rule). Gandhi then adopted the dhoti, a short woven garment with hand-spun yarn, as a mark of respect and solidarity with India's poor.



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1



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At this time he lived in a self sufficient community, eating simple food, and undertaking long fasts, as a means of both meditation and political protest. h

He led the common Indians in challenging the British-imposed salt tax with the 400 km (250 mi) Dandi Salt March in 1930 and in calling for the British to quit India in 1942. He was imprisoned many times and for many years in both South Africa and India.

In August 1947, Britain granted independence, but split India into two areas, with the Hindu-majority still in India and the Muslim-majority in the Pakistan. As many displaced Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs made their way to their new homes, religious violence broke out. Gandhi visited the affected areas, attempting to calm the people. He undertook several Hunger strikes to stop the violence.

The last of these peaceful protests was in Delhi on 12th of January 1948 when he was 78 years old. Although the Government relented, as did the religious rioters, the belief that Gandhi had been some how biased in in his defense of both Pakistan and Indian Muslims spread among some Hindus in India. Among them was a militant Hindu Nationalist, who assassinated Gandhi by firing three bullets into his chest at an interfaith prayer meeting in Delhi on the 30th January 1948.

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2



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*Gandhi*

COLOUR  
ME IN!



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3