

Home Rule Movement

The years from 1916-1918, witnessed the full fledged spread of the [Indian Independence movement](#), particularly the Home Rule Movement, the purpose of which was to attain a dominion status of India and freedom from the British rule. This movement was propagated by [Freedom Fighters](#) like Annie Beasnt and Bal Gangadhar Tilak. It became a crucial part of the [Indian History](#).

What Caused the Beginning of the Home Rule Movement?

- The Government of India Act 1909 was not up to the aspirations and expectations of Indians. The split of the Congress Party in 1907 and the imprisonment of Bal Gangadhar Tilak in 1908, signified a lull in the [national movement](#).
- The revival of the national movement was brought with Bal Gangadhar Tilak's release and the advent of Annie Beasant, an Irish socialist, writer and orator. Annie Beasant who came to India in 1893, supported the Irish and Indian home rule movements.
- While the Indian leaders were split in their opinion on whether or not to support Britain in the war, Annie Besant believed "England's need is India's opportunity".
- Tilak who had just been released from exile in Mandalay, understood the growing importance and need for a revival of the [nationalist movement](#) in the country.
- Having understood the growing importance of the Congress Party, his first task was to seek readmission to the party as the extremists led by Tilak had quit the Congress earlier.
- In the Congress session of December 1915, upon Annie Beasant's persuasion, the extremists were allowed to rejoin the party. However, Besant and Tilak could not convince Congress to support their decision to set up home rule leagues.
- Annie Beasant set up her Home Rule League in September 1916 and Tilak had set up his league in April 1916.

Foundation of Home Rule Movement

With the establishment of two Home Rule League by Tilak and Annie Beasant, the purpose of Home Rule Movement was even clearer. Although the two leagues worked in close association, they didn't come together to avoid falling out.

The two leagues worked with the common goal of achieving independence for India, with an understanding between both wherein Tilak worked in Maharashtra (except Bombay), Karnataka, Berar and the Central Provinces and Besant's league covered the rest of the country. The headquarters of Tilak's league was in Delhi and it had 6 branches, while Besant's league functioned with 200 branches.

What were the Goals of the Home Rule Movement?

The Home Rule Leagues had identified certain important objectives which were essential to achieve -

- Self-government in India.
- Promotion of political education
- Discussion to set up agitation for self-government.
- To reinstate confidence among Indians to speak against the government's policies.
- A larger political representation for Indians in the British government.
- Revival of political activity in India.

To achieve the above mentioned goals, various means were used. Like -

- The leagues organised demonstrations and agitations and regular public meetings to create a sense of nationality within the country and also alarm the British.
- As a result of this, Annie Besant was arrested in 1917, this created a nation-wide protest and even moderate leaders joined the league. Besant was eventually released in September 1917.

What led to the Decline of the Home Rule Movement?

- The leagues could not gather support among Muslims, Anglo-Indians and non-Brahmins as they were of the opinion that home rule would lead to rule of the upper caste Hindu majority.
- Some of the moderates were satisfied with the government's assurance of reforms as given in the Montague Declaration and hence did not take the movement further.
- Annie Besant was not able to provide firm leadership to her followers as she herself was divided in her opinion.
- In September 1918, Tilak went to England to pursue a libel case against Sir Ignatius Valentine Chirol
- Due to Tilak's absence and Besant's inability to lead the people, the movement started collapsing.
- Eventually, with the rise of Mahatma Gandhi as a leader, the movement merged with Congress.

Watch : [HFS8/P3: Home rule movement 1916 to Govt. of India Act 1919 - YouTube](#)

FAQs

1. **When was the Home Rule Movement established?**

The home rule movement functioned from 1916-1918.

2. **Who were the leaders of the Home Rule Leagues?**

Annie Besant and Bal Gangadhar Tilak.

3. **How many branches did each Home Rule League have?**

The headquarters of Tilak's league was in Delhi and it had 6 branches, while Besant's league functioned with 200 branches.

4. **When was Annie Besant imprisoned?**

Annie Beasant was imprisoned in 1917.

5. Who was Annie Beasant?

Annie Besant, an Irish socialist, writer and orator. Annie Beasant who came to India in 1893, supported the Irish and Indian home rule movements.