**Thematic Essay six: Actions of leader and Human rights violation**

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| **Introduction: Human rights** are **rights** inherent to all **human** beings, whatever our nationality, place of residence, sex, national or ethnic origin, color, religion, language, or any other status. We are all equally entitled to our **human rights** without discrimination. However, throughout history human rights of various groups have been violated. For example, the human rights were violated under the Apartheid system in south Africa and the Human rights of the Indians were violated under the British Government in India.  |

**Human Rights Violation One: Apartheid in South Africa**

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| **Historical Background of Apartheid in South Africa**  | **Nelson Mandela’s actions to end Apartheid**  |
| * In 1948, white South Africans began a policy of apartheid or racial “separateness”. A small white minority controlled the large native population of black Africans. Blacks could not travel freely, use many public facilities, or marry whites. They passed several laws to segregate blacks and whites in south Africa.
* The first apartheid law was the [Population Registration Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Population_Registration_Act) of 1950, which stated racial classification and introduced an identity card for all persons over the age of 18, specifying their racial group. This caused difficulty, especially for colored people, separating their families when members were allocated different races.
* The second pillar of grand apartheid was the [Group Areas Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Group_Areas_Act) of 1950. Until then, most settlements had people of different races living side by side. This Act put an end to diverse areas and determined where one lived according to race. Each race was allotted its own area, which was used in later years as a basis of forced removal.
* The [Prohibition of Mixed Marriages Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prohibition_of_Mixed_Marriages_Act) of 1949 prohibited marriage between persons of different races, and the [Immorality Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Immorality_Act) of 1950 made [sexual relations with a person of a different race](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miscegenation) a [criminal offence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Criminal_offence).
* Under the [Reservation of Separate Amenities Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reservation_of_Separate_Amenities_Act) of 1953, municipal grounds could be reserved for a particular race, creating, among other things, separate beaches, buses, hospitals, schools and universities. Signboards such as "whites only" applied to public areas, even including park benches. Blacks were provided with services greatly inferior to those of whites, and, to a lesser extent, to those of Indian and colored people.
* [Education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_South_Africa) was segregated by the 1953 [Bantu Education Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bantu_Education_Act), which crafted a separate system of education for African students and was designed to prepare black people for lives as a laboring class. In 1959 separate universities were created for black, colored and Indian people. Existing universities were not permitted to enroll new black students.
 | * Nelson Mandela, a leader in the anti-apartheid movement became the leader of the ANC ( African National Congress). The black and colored people of South Africa protested against this inequality led by Mandela.
* The following year, the ANC adopted the a plan to achieve full citizenship for all South Africans through boycotts, strikes, civil disobedience and other nonviolent methods. Mandela helped lead the ANC’s 1952 Campaign for the Defiance of Unjust Laws, traveling across the country to organize protests against discriminatory policies, and promoted the manifesto known as the Freedom Charter, ratified by the Congress of the People in 1955. Also in 1952, Mandela and Tambo opened South Africa’s first black law firm, which offered free or low-cost legal counsel to those affected by apartheid legislation.
* During this time many violent attacks and sabotages had been taken place against the white by the black South Africans. Several years later, the apartheid government falsely convicted Nelson Mandela for sabotage, treason and violent conspiracy and the unfair trial that would put him behind bars for nearly three decades.
* While in confinement (jail) Mandela earned a bachelor of law degree from the University of London and served as a mentor to his fellow prisoners, encouraging them to seek better treatment through nonviolent resistance. He also smuggled out political statements and a draft of his autobiography, “Long Walk to Freedom,” published five years after his release.
* In 1989, white South Africans elected a new president, F. W. de Klerk. His goal was to transform South Africa and end its isolation. In February 1990, he legalized the ANC and also released Nelson Mandela from prison. These dramatic actions marked the beginning of a new era in South Africa. Over the next 18 months, the South African parliament repealed apartheid laws that had segregated public facilities and restricted land ownership by blacks.
* President de Klerk agreed to hold South Africa’s first universal elections, in which people of all races could vote, in April 1994. Nelson Mandela Won the election and became the first black President of South Africa.
* In 1996, after much debate, South African lawmakers passed a new, more democratic constitution. It guaranteed equal rights for all citizens. The constitution included a bill of rights modeled on the U.S. Bill of Rights. The political changes that South Africa had achieved gave other peoples around the world great hope for the future of democracy
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| **Human Rights Violation Two: India’s**  | **Independence Movement** |
| **Historical Background if Human rights violation in India**  | **Mohandas Gandhi’s actions to gain independence for India** |
| * Great Britain (England) colonized India as a source for natural resources. The British Controlled Indian Politics and economy. The British treasured India more for its potential than its actual profit. The Industrial Revolution had turned Britain into the world’s workshop, and India was a major supplier of raw materials for that workshop. Its 300 million people were also a large potential market for British made goods. It is not surprising, then, that the British considered India the brightest **“jewel in the crown,”** the most valuable of all of Britain’s colonies. British law forced India to supply raw materials such as tea, indigo (a dye), coffee, and cotton. The law also forced Indian manufacturing out of business.
* The British set up restrictions that prevented the Indian economy from operating on its own. British policies called for India to produce raw materials for British manufacturing and to buy British goods. In addition, Indian competition with British goods was prohibited. For example, India’s own handloom textile industry was almost put out of business by imported British textiles. Cheap cloth and ready-made clothes from. England flooded the Indian market and drove out local producers.
* Indians could not held government offices, run their own factories, and had to obey unfair British laws. They also had to buy clothes, salt, and tea from the British. Indian workers provided the British with inexpensive labor in the tea, opium, cotton, indigo plantations for long hours, often under terrible working conditions. Many Indians resisted the unfair trading practice of the British government and wanted independence from England.
* As economic problems increased for Indians, so did their feelings of resentment and nationalism. In 1857, gossip spread among the sepoys, the Indian soldiers, that the cartridges of their new Enfield rifles were greased with beef and pork fat. To use the cartridges, soldiers had to bite off the ends. Both Hindus, who consider the cow sacred, and Muslims, who do not eat pork, were outraged by the news. Indian soldiers or sepoys led a revolt against the British and many Indians lost their life during the Sepoy Mutiny because they could not fight against the Britain’s advanced army and technology.
* In 1919 the British passed the **Rowlatt Acts**. These laws allowed the government to jail protesters without trial for as long as two years. To Western-educated Indians, denial of a trial by jury violated their individual rights.
* **To protest the Rowlatt Acts, around 10,000 Hindus and Muslims protested against the unfair British Rules. Most people at the gathering were unaware that the British government had banned public meetings. However, the British commander at Amritsar believed they were openly defying the ban. He ordered his troops to fire on the crowd without warning. The shooting in the enclosed courtyard continued for ten minutes. Official reports showed nearly 400 Indians died and about 1,200 were wounded**
 | * The massacre at Amritsar set the stage for **Mohandas K. Gandhi** (GAHN•dee) to emerge as the leader of the independence movement. Gandhi’s strategy for battling injustice evolved from his deeply religious approach to political activity. His teachings blended ideas from all of the major world religions, including Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity.
* Gandhi attracted millions of followers. Soon they began calling him the Mahatma (muh•HAHT•muh), meaning “great soul.” Noncooperation When the British failed to punish the officers responsible for the Amritsar massacre, Gandhi urged the Indian National Congress to follow a policy of noncooperation with the British government. In 1920, the Congress Party endorsed **civil disobedience**, the deliberate and public refusal to obey an unjust law, and nonviolence as the means to achieve independence. Gandhi then launched his campaign of civil disobedience to weaken the British government’s authority and economic power over India.
* **Boycotts:** Gandhi called on Indians to refuse to buy British goods, attend government schools, pay British taxes, or vote in elections. Gandhi staged a successful boycott of British cloth, a source of wealth for the British. He urged all Indians to weave their own cloth. Gandhi himself devoted two hours each day to spinning his own yarn on a simple hand wheel. He wore only homespun cloth and encouraged Indians to follow his example which is known as the Homespun movement. As a result of the boycott, the sale of British cloth in India dropped sharply.
* **Strikes and Demonstrations** Gandhi’s weapon of civil disobedience took an economic toll on the British. They struggled to keep trains running, factories operating, and overcrowded jails from bursting. Throughout 1920, the British arrested thousands of Indians who had participated in strikes and demonstrations. But despite Gandhi’s pleas for nonviolence, protests often led to riots.
* **The Salt March** In 1930, Gandhi organized a demonstration to defy the hated Salt Acts. According to these British laws, Indians could buy salt from no other source but the government. They also had to pay sales tax on salt. To show their opposition, Gandhi and his followers walked about 240 miles to the seacoast. There they began to make their own salt by collecting seawater and letting it evaporate. This peaceful protest was called the **Salt March**.
* India finally gained independence from Great Britain 1947. However, the differences between Hindus and Muslims divided India in three different nations: India, Bangladesh, and Pakistan.
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