

Activists and their Prison Connections

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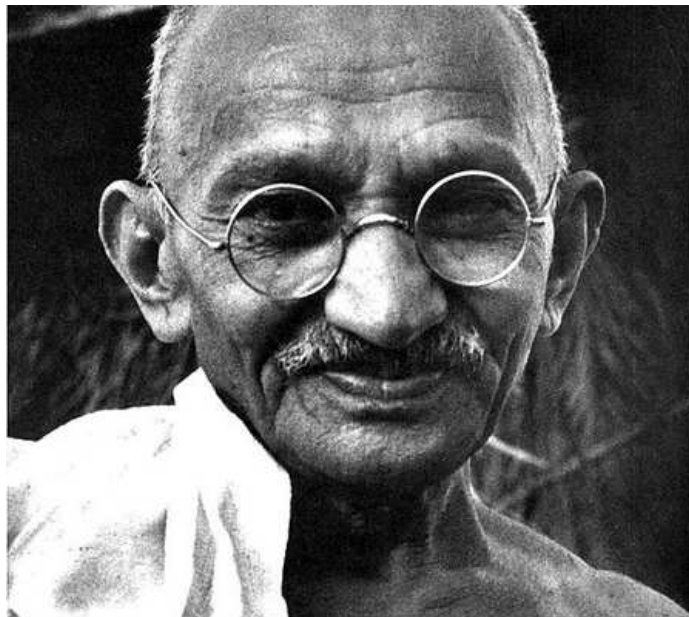


The mass of Anna supporters at the Tihar jail, where social activist, [Anna Hazare](#) has been lodged, was a testimonial to the fact that putting a revolutionary in prison hardly makes a dent in their pursuit of a greater cause.

[Anna Hazare](#) has become a modern champion of what has been an integral part of the socio-political struggle of various legendary figures— going to jail.

Let us go down the bylanes of history and take a look at some of the world's most influential leaders/activists who made the “jailhouse rock” with their presence.

Mahatma Gandhi



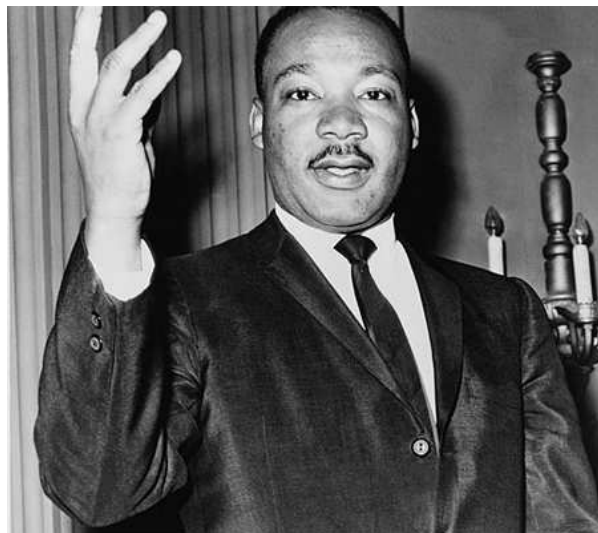
Father of the Indian nation and global symbol of non-violence, [Mahatma Gandhi](#) was arrested in 1918 for allegedly creating unrest among aggrieved farmers in Champaran who were tired of paying exorbitant taxes to the British government. After his detention, thousands of protestors thronged the jail premises and put immense pressure on the authorities who, grudgingly, released Gandhi. The immediate effect of the act was the cancellation of more tax collection until the end of the drought in the region.

Ho Chi Minh



Ho Chi Minh was a Vietnamese activist who travelled to China to seek help from the country to defend his nation from French colonialism. The Chinese were suspicious of his intentions and put him behind bars instead. When in jail, he penned a collection of songs and poems which are considered to be a part of world heritage. He managed to be released from prison and post it, he chartered a journey where he toppled the French Union and went on to become the Prime Minister and, later, President of Vietnam.

Martin Luther King Jr.



The famous slogan "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere," that protestors all over the world use, was a line that Martin Luther King Jr. wrote from prison. The line was a part of the famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail" that the American civil rights activist penned when he was jailed for his social and [political activities](#).

Today, we remember him as one of the greatest heroic leaders ever, despite the fact that he was jailed more than 25 times.

Nelson Mandela



Nelson Mandela is one of the most prominent leaders in the world today and is looked up to by people and [social activists](#) from all over. However, the path to the success he has seen, and the change he has brought about, hasn't been an easy one. Mandela spent 27 years in prison for his fight against apartheid in his native country.

It was his stay in prison that made him more and more popular across the globe and after years of imprisonment, Mandela was released in the year 1990. He went on to become the President of South Africa and win the Nobel Peace Prize in 1993, apart from over 250 awards that he won in his lifetime.

Aung San Suu Kyi



Aung San Suu Kyi is a Burmese opposition political leader who had been kept in house arrest for 15 years by the Burmese government before it came to an end last year. Her imprisonment had such an impact on the world that she became the universal face for Human Rights. Her speech, "Freedom From Fear" continues to inspire people, around the world, who have been fighting for their rights.