

## 10 Companies that played key role in India's freedom struggle and the Swadeshi movement

This report highlights top 10 companies that played key roles in India's freedom struggle and the Swadeshi movement.


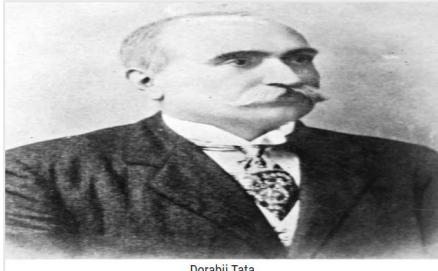
India will mark its 79th Independence Day on **August 15, 2025**. But many companies played key roles in India's freedom struggle for instance, Gour Mohan Dutta in 1929 he started GD Pharmaceuticals inspired by the Swadeshi movement to make India self-reliance. His cream Boroline matched foreign quality and became a symbol of self-reliance, loved for its fragrance and healing touch.

S.No.	Company	Visual and Source
1.	<p><b>Gour Mohan Dutta's Boroline Became a Swadeshi Icon Born from the Fight for Self-Reliance</b></p> <p><b>Name of the company:</b> GD Pharmaceuticals</p> <p><b>Year of Formation:</b> 1929</p> <p><b>Founder:</b> Gour Mohan Dutta</p> <p><b>Famous Products:</b> Boroline antiseptic cream</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Gour Mohan Dutta once imported foreign goods in Kolkata, but when the Swadeshi movement spread, he wanted to help India become self-reliant. He started GD Pharmaceuticals at home to make products as good as foreign ones so that people didn't have to buy from abroad. His most famous creation, Boroline, became a symbol of this dream and is still loved for its fragrance and healing touch.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Financial Express</a> , <a href="#">Company About Page</a></p>
2.	<p><b>Margo Soap Became a Swadeshi Symbol to Reduce India's Dependence on Foreign Goods</b></p> <p><b>Name of the company:</b> Calcutta Chemical Company</p> <p><b>Year of Formation:</b> 1916</p> <p><b>Founder:</b> Khagendra Chandra Das</p> <p><b>Famous Products:</b> Margo soap</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Khagendra Chandra Das came from a nationalist family and was deeply inspired by the Swadeshi movement after the partition of Bengal. Wanting to reduce India's dependence on foreign goods, he founded Calcutta Chemical Company and created Margo soap using neem, a traditional Indian ingredient. It became a household name and a proud example of making high-quality Indian products for Indians.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Scribblers</a>, <a href="#">Kolkata Fusion</a></p>

<p>3.</p>	<p><b>Arvind Mills Was Founded as a Swadeshi Effort to Reduce Dependence on Imported Cloth</b></p> <p><b>Name of the company:</b> Arvind Ltd. (originally Arvind Mills)</p> <p><b>Year of Formation:</b> 1931</p> <p><b>Founders:</b> Kasthurbhai Lalbhai, Narottambhai Lalbhai, Chimanbhai Lalbhai</p> <p><b>Famous Products:</b> Textiles, Denim, Knits, Woven fabrics</p> <p><b>Description:</b> In 1931, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi’s call for Swadeshi, the Lalbhai brothers from Ahmedabad started Arvind Mills to make world-class textiles in India. Their goal was to reduce dependence on imported cloth and prove that Indian mills could match the best in the world. Between 1935 and 1938, their fine butta voiles were even exported to Switzerland and the UK, showing that Swadeshi products could win hearts both at home and abroad.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Arvind Ltd. About Page</a></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Sulekha Ink Was Created as a Swadeshi Alternative to End Dependence on Foreign Inks</b></p> <p><b>Name of the company:</b> Sulekha Works</p> <p><b>Year of Formation:</b> 1934</p> <p><b>Founders:</b> Shankaracharya Maitra, Nani Gopal Maitra (based on ink formula by Satish Chandra Dasgupta)</p> <p><b>Famous Products:</b> Sulekha ink, Fountain pen ink (Krishnadhara, Royal Blue), fountain pens</p> <p><b>Description:</b> In 1932, Mahatma Gandhi asked chemist Satish Chandra Dasgupta to make a Swadeshi ink so India wouldn’t have to depend on foreign ones. He created ‘Krishnadhara’ and passed the recipe to the Maitra brothers, who started Sulekha Works in 1934 in Rajshahi. The brand became a symbol of self-reliance, with bottles proudly carrying Gandhiji’s photo, and at its peak dominated the ink market in eastern India. Even after years of decline, Sulekha has revived, making world-class inks and pens once again.</p>	 <p><a href="#">New Indian Express</a></p>

<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Godrej's Vatni Soap Became a Swadeshi Product that Carried the Map of Undivided India</b></p> <p><b>Name of the company:</b> Godrej</p> <p><b>Year of Formation:</b> 1897</p> <p><b>Founder:</b> Ardeshir Godrej</p> <p><b>Famous Products:</b> Vatni soap</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Godrej, founded in 1897 by Ardeshir Godrej in Bombay, joined the Swadeshi movement in 1905, starting with locks and later venturing into soaps in 1918. Inspired by Bal Gangadhar Tilak and the Swadeshi Vastu Pracharini Sabha, it launched the iconic "Vatni" soap in 1926, named after 'Vatan' (motherland) and wrapped in green-and-white packaging featuring the map of undivided India, kept unchanged even after partition.</p> <p>Godrej's ads attacked foreign soaps for using animal fats and unhygienic materials, while promoting indigenous sandalwood and neem. The brand replaced foreign women with Indian women in ads, gained endorsements from leaders like Tagore, Annie Besant, and Rajagopalachari, and used nationalist symbols like the lotus and patriotic slogans like "Skin, Beauty, and Cleanliness are India's Heritage". It also contributed ₹30 lakh to the Tilak-Swaraj Fund, a significant share of Bombay's total donations.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Indiaculture Gov</a>, <a href="#">The better India</a>,</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>Parle Was Founded as a Swadeshi Alternative to Expensive British Biscuits</b></p> <p><b>Name of the company:</b> Parle Products</p> <p><b>Year of Formation:</b> 1929</p> <p><b>Founder:</b> Mohanlal Dayal Chauhan</p> <p><b>Famous Products:</b> Parle-G biscuits, confectionery</p> <p><b>Description:</b> In 1929, inspired by the Swadeshi movement, Mohanlal Dayal Chauhan set up the first Parle factory in Vile Parle, Mumbai, to make affordable Indian biscuits and sweets. Using German machinery and just 12 workers, he aimed to offer Indians a quality homegrown alternative to the expensive British biscuits. The name 'Parle' came from its location, and over time, its creations, especially Parle-G became a beloved taste across generations.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Times of India</a>, <a href="#">Storyboard 18</a>, <a href="#">Your story</a></p>

<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Luxmi Tea Began as a Swadeshi Challenge to British Control of India's Tea Trade</b></p> <p><b>Name of the company:</b> Luxmi Tea</p> <p><b>Year of Formation:</b> 1912</p> <p><b>Founder:</b> Paresh Chandra Chatterjee</p> <p><b>Famous Products:</b> Orthodox Tea, Fresh Cut Tea, Silver Tips Imperial Tea</p> <p><b>Description:</b> In 1912, freedom fighter Paresh Chandra Chatterjee started Indian Tea and Provisions in Tripura to challenge British control over India's tea trade. At a time when estates were run by the British and exports went straight to England, he found ways to sell tea to Indian buyers, inspiring others to grow locally. What began as a Swadeshi act of self-reliance is now Luxmi Tea, a global brand with estates in India and Africa, known for its quality brews.</p>	 <p><a href="#">The Better India, About page</a></p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company Was Founded to Break British Control Over Sea Trade</b></p> <p><b>Name of the company:</b> Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company (SSNC)</p> <p><b>Year of Formation:</b> 1906</p> <p><b>Founder:</b> V. O. Chidambaram Pillai</p> <p><b>Famous Products/Services:</b> Passenger and cargo steamer services between Thoothukudi (Tuticorin) and Ceylon (Sri Lanka)</p> <p><b>Description:</b> In 1906, freedom fighter V. O. Chidambaram Pillai started the Swadeshi Steam Navigation Company to break British control over sea trade and passenger transport. Funded entirely by Indians, SSNC bought two ships, Gallia and Lowoe, to run between Thoothukudi and Ceylon, challenging the powerful British Indian Steam Navigation Company. Despite heavy repression by the British, SSNC became a source of pride and inspired nationalist spirit, proving that Indians could compete in global trade.</p>	 <p><a href="#">The Hindu, Times of India</a></p>

9.	<p><b>Cipla Was Founded as a Swadeshi Effort to Make India Self-Reliant in Medicines</b></p> <p><b>Name of the company:</b> Cipla</p> <p><b>Year of Formation:</b> 1935</p> <p><b>Founder:</b> Khwaja Abdul Hamied</p> <p><b>Famous Products/Services:</b> Affordable generic medicines, HIV/AIDS treatment at low cost, Tamiflu generic during avian flu</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Cipla, founded in 1935 by Khwaja Abdul Hameed in Bombay, aimed to make India self-reliant in medicines. Hameed was inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's Swadeshi movement. Hameed met Gandhi Ji during the Non-Cooperation Movement, Gandhi ji in 1939 visited Cipla which was seen as an endorsement.</p> <p>In a market dominated by imported European drugs, Cipla offered affordable Indian-made alternatives and rose to prominence during World War II by filling gaps left by reduced British imports.</p> <p>It advertised products like Jalmar, Cafimidon, and Cremozon using Indian women instead of foreign models, urging people to “have confidence in themselves” and choose Indian medicines. On the eve of independence, it ran ads with the tricolor and slogans like “Cipla Keeps the Flag Flying” and “Equal World Status,” framing buying Cipla as a patriotic act tied to the struggle for Swaraj.</p>	 <p><a href="#">Daily Brief</a>, <a href="#">Economic Times</a>, <a href="#">India Culture</a></p>
10.	<p><b>Tata Oil Mills Company Promoted Swadeshi Through Soaps Like Hamam and 501 as Alternatives to British Brands</b></p> <p><b>Name of the company:</b> Tata Oil Mills Company (TOMCO)</p> <p><b>Year of Formation:</b> 1917</p> <p><b>Founder:</b> Dorabji Tata</p> <p><b>Famous Products/Services:</b> 501 soap, Hamam</p> <p><b>Description:</b> Founded in 1917 by Dorabji Tata, Tata Oil Mills Company (TOMCO) aligned its mission with the Swadeshi goal of building Indian-owned industries. Through its Hamam and 501 soaps, it offered Indian alternatives to British brands like Lever’s Sunlight, promoting national pride and self-reliance. Ads featured Indian women in traditional attire, khadi clothing, and Swadeshi symbols like the spinning wheel, with taglines such as “Have you tried using 501 soap for washing Khaddar?” and “It’s Truly Swadeshi.” By linking everyday products to the khadi movement and nationalist sentiment, TOMCO turned soap into a quiet but powerful act of resistance against British economic dominance.</p>	 <p>Dorabji Tata</p> <p><a href="#">India Culture</a></p>