

## Chapter

# 17

## Civil Disobedience Movement 1930–34 (Civil Disobedience Movement, Round Table Conferences 1930–32 and Communal Award 1932)

The Civil Disobedience Movement was the next mass movement launched by the Congress after a gap of 8 years and on the withdrawal of Non-cooperation Movement in February 1922. There were several factors that prepared the ground for the CDM, starting from the sudden withdrawal of the Non-Cooperation movement to the non-acceptance of Nehru Report by the British government.

### RUN UP TO CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT (CDM)

#### Calcutta Session of Congress (December 1928)

You may recall that during the Congress Session at Calcutta in December 1928, the Congress had given an ultimatum to the British government and had resolved in one voice that in case the government did not accept the Nehru Report by 31<sup>st</sup> December 1929, the Congress would declare complete independence as its goal and would also launch a civil disobedience movement to achieve that goal.

#### Lahore Session of Congress (December 1929)

On the expiry of this grace period, on 31<sup>st</sup> December 1929, during the annual session of the Congress held at Lahore, the Congress declared Purna Swaraj as its goal and announced the launching of a civil disobedience movement under Gandhiji. In mid-February 1930, the Working Committee met at Sabarmati Ashram and invested Gandhiji with all powers to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement, at a time and place of his choice.

#### Gandhi's Eleven Points (January 1930)

However, Gandhi was not sure about his plan of action and tried to negotiate with the government once again before launching the movement. He formulated "Eleven Points" of administrative reforms and placed them before Lord Irwin in a letter dated 31<sup>st</sup> January 1930. He insisted that there would be no need for any agitation if his eleven points were accepted, which constituted for him the substance of purna swaraj. The Eleven Points included the following:

1. Abolition of Salt Tax and also the government's salt monopoly

2. Reduction of the Rupee Sterling ratio
3. Reduction of Land revenue by half and it be subjected to legislative control
4. Reduction of Salaries of highest grade services by half
5. Reduction of military and civil service expenditure by half
6. Protection for Indian textiles (protective tariff) and coastal shipping
7. Discharge of all political prisoners.
8. Total prohibition of alcohol.
9. Reforms in CID (Criminal Investigation Department)
10. Change in Arms Act, allowing popular control of issue of licenses and right of Indians to carry arms
11. Accept Postal Reservation Bill

Many national leaders looked at the Eleven Points as a climb down from the demand of purna swaraj. Jawaharlal Nehru in his Autobiography questioned whether Gandhi's purna swaraj was different from theirs? If not then what was the point for these eleven points when they were already talking in terms of complete independence? Further, **Government's response** was out rightly negative and Lord Irwin made no assurance for acceptance of Gandhi's Eleven Points.

Gandhi wrote, "On bended knees I asked for bread and received a stone instead. The English nation responds only to force and I am not surprised by the viceregal reply."

### CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT (1930 TO 1931)

#### Dandi March (12<sup>th</sup> March to 6<sup>th</sup> April 1930)

Seeing the uncompromising attitude of the government, Gandhi now decided to start the movement. On **12<sup>th</sup> March 1930**, Gandhi started his historic '**Dandi March**' from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi Beach (nearly 375 km or 240 miles), accompanied with 78 followers. On 6<sup>th</sup> April 1930, Gandhi reached Dandi, picked up a handful of salt and broke the salt law as a symbol of defiance to British laws. Gandhi declared, "The British rule in India has brought about moral, material, cultural and spiritual ruination of this great country. I regard this rule as a curse. I am out to destroy this system of government. Sedition has become my religion." Subhas Bose had compared the Salt March to **Napoleon's March to Paris**.



Salt March (1930)

#### Programme of the Movement

This included the following in addition to the pledge of non-violence and truth.

- Disobedience of Salt law wherever possible
- Refusal to pay taxes to the government
- Boycott of law courts, colleges and government service
- Picketing of shops selling liquor and foreign cloth

**Gandhi:** "There is no article like salt outside water by taxing which the State can reach even the starving millions, the sick, the maimed and the utterly helpless. The salt tax constitutes therefore the most inhuman poll tax the ingenuity of man can devise"

#### Why Gandhi Chose Salt to Register a Protest?

The choice of salt initially puzzled many people. Later it appeared that Gandhi succeeded in spinning a fine strategy around the issue of salt. Salt tax was a universal grievance and affected all people of all classes, rich and poor. It was most ubiquitous of all taxes for the poor and carried with it implications of loyalty and mutual trust. In this sense, it had a far reaching emotional appeal. Salt manufacturing could also afford a paltry yet psychologically important income for the poor through self-help, much like khadi. Like khadi again, it offered to the urban adherents the opportunity of a symbolic identification with mass suffering.

Further, breaking of the salt law represented humble beginning of civil disobedience and its countrywide violation made an impressive demonstration of the power of non-violent struggle. Later, manufacture of salt became a part of Gandhi's constructive program as manufacture of khadi.



Gandhi at Dandi, South Gujarat, picking salt on the beach at the end of the Salt March, 5 April 1930. Behind him is his second son Manilal Gandhi and Mithuben Petit.

#### Salt Satyagraha

While Gandhiji was marching to Dandi, the Congress leaders worked out the logistics of the salt satyagraha. They enrolled volunteers, formed grass root Congress Committees, collected funds and toured villages and towns to gain support. Once Gandhiji gave the indication from Dandi, the salt laws were broken all over the country:

- In Tamil Nadu: **C. Rajagopalachari** led a salt march from Trichinopoly to Vedaranniyam on the Tanjore coast and was arrested on 30<sup>th</sup> April.
- In Malabar: **K. Kelappan**, the leader of Vaikom Satyagraha, walked from Calicut to Payannur to break the salt law.
- In the North-East: A group of satyagrahis walked from Sylhet in Assam to Noakhali in Bengal to make salt and break the law.
- In Andhra: Several bands of satyagrahis marched from villages to coast to break the salt law. A number of **sibirums** (military style camps) were established to function as head offices of salt satyagraha.



Gandhi, Mithuben Petit and Sarojini Naidu (extreme right) during Salt Satyagraha.

## Government Repression and Popular Upsurge

Throughout 1930, the government's attitude remained ambivalent. The government found itself in a classic dilemma of 'damned if you do, damned if you don't'; a dilemma the Gandhian strategy of non-violent civil disobedience was designed to create. "If we do too much, the Congress will cry 'repression', if we do too little, the Congress will cry 'victory'" —this was how the government dilemma was expressed. Either way it ensured erosion of British hegemony.

However, seeing the rapid spread of the movement, the government was left with little choice and it soon took to brutal repression. As reported by the American journalist **Webb Miller** — "unresisting men were methodically bashed into bloody pulp". The torture inflicted upon unresisting satyagrahis resulted in arousal of sympathy and respect which rapidly converted into participation.

### Arrest of Jawaharlal Nehru

On 14<sup>th</sup> April 1930, Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested for breaking the salt law and his arrest was met with massive demonstrations and clashed with the police. The government tightened its repressive machinery and arrested most of the other Congress leaders as well. This resulted in the weakening of Gandhian confines of civil disobedience and there were several outbursts of violent forms. Some major outbursts were:

**Chittagong Armory Raid:** On 18<sup>th</sup> April 1930, the Bengal revolutionaries carried out the Chittagong armoury raid. In fact, in Bengal, the whole history of civil disobedience was accompanied by revolutionary terrorism with 56 incidents in 1930. The Chittagong leader Surya Sen managed to remain underground with the help of villagers, mostly Muslims.

**Peshawar Upsurge:** On 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1930, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan was arrested provoking a massive upsurge. Khan had been active in NWFP for several years and had set up a band of non-violent revolutionaries, the **Khudai Khidmatgars** (Servants of God) or the **Red Shirts** (because of the colour of their shirts) who played an active role in the CDM.

The Peshawar upsurge is memorable as it was here that a platoon of **Gharwal Rifles** (Hindu soldiers facing a Muslim crowd) refused to open fire and became a symbol of communal unity and patriotism. This incident was proof that nationalism had begun to enter the Indian army, the chief instrument of British rule in India.

**Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement:** In 1929, the Khudai Khidmatgars ("Servants of God") movement, led by Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan (1890–1988), mobilised to oppose the British in India's Northwest Frontier Province in non-violent way. Gaffar Khan and the Khudai Khidmatgar movement inspired thousands of Pashtuns (also called Pathans), who were known as fierce warriors, and others to lay down their arms and use civil resistance to challenge British rule.

Although Gaffar Khan's initial reform efforts predated his involvement with Gandhi and the Indian National Congress (INC), he later formed a formal alliance



Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, popularly known as Bacha Khan.

with them and became a formidable force during and following the INC's civil disobedience campaign of 1930–31, helping the INC win provincial elections in 1937.

Ghaffar Khan, who is also known as Badshah Khan and the 'Frontier Gandhi' or "Sarhadi Gandhi" formed the world's first nonviolent army, a force of perhaps 100,000 Pathans.

Members of the movement were known as "Red Shirts" or "Surkho Posh" because of the red uniforms they wore.

Gaffar Khan was offered presidency of the Indian National Congress in 1931 which he refused saying that he was a simple soldier and would like to serve. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was against the partition of India and he was many times targeted for being Anti-Muslim.

In 1947, a plebiscite resulted in the Frontier Province becoming part of the newly independent Pakistan. Ghaffar Khan's dissatisfaction with Pakistan later led him to favour the creation of an autonomous Pakhtunistan and he was consequently imprisoned by the Pakistani government.

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was named "Amnesty International Prisoner of the Year" in 1962. He was nominated for Nobel Peace prize in 1985. In 1987 he became the first person who won **Bharat Ratna** without being an Indian national. (Another Foreign national to receive Bharat Ratna is Nelson Mandela, 1990). He died in Peshawar in 1988 while he was under house arrest.



Followers of the Khudai Khidmatgar (Servants of God). Also known as "Red shirts" or "surkh posh".

### Arrest of Gandhi

However, on 4<sup>th</sup> May 1930, the Viceroy finally ordered the arrest of Gandhi (he was sent to Yerawada Jail). His arrest unleashed a massive wave of protest. In Bombay, swarms of people just spilled onto the street forcing the police to withdraw.

### Sholapur Upsurge

The most massive demonstration took place on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1930 in the industrial city of Sholapur (Maharashtra). The textile workers who dominated the town went on strike, burnt liquor shops and attacked all symbols of government authority.

### Dharsana Satyagraha

On 21<sup>st</sup> May 1930, Sarojini Naidu (first Indian woman to become President of the INC), Imam Saheb (Gandhiji's co-worker from South African struggle) and Gandhiji's son Manilal led a band of 2000 satyagrahis to defy salt laws at the Dharsana Salt Works in Gujarat. Police had already cordoned off the area. As the satyagrahis moved forward, the police attacked them with their steel tipped lathis. The injured were taken away by their comrades as another column of satyagrahis took their place, to be beaten to pulp and carried away.

Webb Miller gave an account of the Dharsana Satyagraha in these words—"In 18 years of my reporting in 20 countries, during which I have witnessed innumerable civil disturbances, riots, street fights and rebellions, I have never witnessed such harrowing scenes as at Dharsana".

By June end, The Congress Working Committee was declared illegal and Motilal Nehru, who was functioning as the Congress President, was also arrested.

## Forms of Protest

Though salt satyagraha and its more potent form-non-violent heroism (Dharsana satyagraha) stole the show as main form of protest, other forms of protest quickly emerged. Various other socially non-divisive issues were also taken up. These included the following:

### Boycott of Foreign Cloth and Liquor

A prominent role was played by women, students and youth in the boycott of foreign cloth and liquor. Bombay was particularly affected. Congress sentries were placed in business districts and ensured that the boycott was not flouted by merchants and dealers. Those who flouted were brought in line by social boycott, fines by their own associations and Congress black-listing.

### Non-payment of Land Revenue in Ryotwari Areas

For instance, in Gujarat in districts of Kheda, Surat and Broach, people took to no-tax movement and the tax refused here was the land revenue.

### Anti-chowkidari Tax Movement in Zamindari Areas

The chowkidars were guards who supplemented the police in rural areas. They were paid out of tax levied on villages and were much hated as they often acted as spies for the government and retainers for the landlords. The anti-chowkidari tax agitation first began in land locked Bihar where salt satyagraha did not have much scope. Monghyr, Saran and Bhagalpur districts were particularly affected. It also called for resignation of chowkidars. **Rajendra Prasad** and **Abdul Bari** from Patna emerged as main leaders.

In Bengal too, when salt making became difficult with the onset of monsoon, form of protest shifted to anti-chowkidara and **anti-Union Board agitation**.

### Forest Satyagraha

In Maharashtra, Karnataka and Central Provinces, people took to forest satyagraha i.e. peaceful violation of forest laws restricting tribal and peasant rights to free fodder, timber and other forest produce. Other areas with large tribal population were also affected.

### Anti-Cunningham Circular Agitation

In Assam, a powerful agitation by students against the infamous '**Cunningham Circular**' was launched which prohibited students from participating in political activities associated with the national movement.

## No-revenue No-rent Campaign

In UP, a no-revenue, no-rent campaign was started and Agra and Rae Bareilly emerged as important centres. The no-revenue agitation was carried out by the zamindars and involved non-payment of land revenue to the government. The no-rent agitation was carried out by the tenants and involved non-payment of rent to the zamindars.

## Defending the Honour of the National Flag

All over the country, people defended the honour of the national flag even in the face of severe brutalities. They had taken to heart Jawaharlal's message when he unfurled the national flag at Lahore, "Now that this flag is unfurled, it must not be lowered as long as a single Indian, man, woman or child lives in India."

## Other Forms of Protest

Various other forms of protest also emerged during this agitation. These included:

- **Prabhat Pheris** in which men, women and children went around at dawn singing nationalist songs.
- **Patrikas**, or illegal news-sheets, were circulated all over the country to defy the hated Press Act.
- **Magic lanterns** were used to carry the nationalist message to the villages.
- **Vanar senas** or monkey armies of children were organised (At one instance, even the girls wanted their own **manjari sena** or cat army!).

The government struck back through large-scale confiscations of property, yet thousands of peasants stood their ground and the rumour spread that British Raj was coming to an end.

**Note on Cunningham Circular:** J.R. Cunningham was the then powerful director of public information of Assam. He issued a circular in 1930 imposing a blanket ban on any anti-British and pro-swadeshi activity by students. He also ordered them to sign an undertaking to the effect that they would have to quit their schools and colleges if they participated in anti-government demonstrations or movements and forced the students and guardians to furnish assurances of good behaviour. Refusing to oblige, thousands of students throughout Assam left their institutions of learning. There were about 400 such students in Guwahati alone.

A group of philanthropists came to the rescue of these students and decided to start a swadeshi school in the city on the lines of national schools being established in Calcutta, Sylhet, Habiganj, Karimganj, Silchar and elsewhere in the country. The Kamrup Academy was conceived with Rai Bahadur Kalicharan Sengupta as its founder president.

**What is the difference between no-revenue and no-rent movement?** No revenue or No-tax movement is directed against the government while the no-rent movement affects the landlords (as rent is paid by tenants to landlords).

## Impact of Protest

- Imports of foreign cloth and other foreign goods fell considerably.
- Government income from liquor, excise duties and land revenue crashed.
- Elections to legislative Assembly were boycotted.

## Participation

The movement got spontaneous response from various parts of the country and different classes of people participated, particularly the peasants with their own class demands.

**1. Peasants:** The CDM saw a massive participation of peasants with thousands of them violating laws, facing lathis and courting arrest.

**2. Business groups:** The movement also received massive support from business groups. Business groups such as Ahmedabad mill owners, Bombay merchants and petty traders and Calcutta Marwaris headed by **GD Birla** extended exemplary solidarity and demonstrated the sympathy of Indian capitalists with the national movement. Several merchants took collective oath to stop importing foreign goods till the time the movement lasted. The result was a massive decline in import of British cloth—from 1248 million yards in 1929–30 to only 523 million yards in 1930–31 (this decline also reflected the effect of Depression in Europe).

**3. Women:** Participation of women was the most remarkable feature of this movement. Women from professional, business and peasant families participated in large numbers. They left the seclusion of their homes, marched shoulder to shoulder with men in processions, picketed shops, faced lathis and even went to jail. It was clear that the Indian women were struggling for domestic and national liberty at the same time.

Gandhiji played a significant role in increasing the participation of women in the national movement which proved to be the most liberating experience for them until then. According to him, woman was a companion of man, equal in capabilities and intellect. He even considered women to be more suited for the satyagraha protest. In fact, Gandhian forms of agitation did not involve any drastic violation of traditional image of women, rather it was the “male image” that was in some ways “feminized”, with his emphasis on non-violence, self-sacrifice and suffering.

The participation of women in revolutionary activities in Bengal met with sharp criticism though. Rabindranath Tagore, a celebrated activist for women rights, wrote a novel **Char Adhyaya** (1934) in which he condemned this “unfeminine” role of women.

**4. Tribals:** The tribals actively participated in Central Province, Maharashtra and Karnataka.

**5. Urban intelligentsia:** Support from this class was also much less than what was seen during the Non-Cooperation Movement. There were very few instances of students leaving colleges or lawyers giving up practice. Militant educated youth was more attracted to revolutionary terrorism in Bengal and north India (particularly to Bhagat Singh, whose popularity briefly rivalled that of Gandhiji).

**6. Workers:** Participation of workers remained low and the CDM did not coincide with any major labour upsurge. The Congress also did not include industrial or communications strike in its programme.

**7. Muslims:** Muslims largely kept aloof from the CDM, yet their participation was not insignificant. They participated in large numbers in NWFP, middle class Muslims participated in Bengal, the Muslim weavers in Bihar, Delhi and Lucknow and lower classes of Muslims were also effectively mobilised.

## Regional Variations

In terms of spread of the movement, there were significant regional variations across the country. Gujarat emerged as the classic heartland of Gandhian satyagraha, particularly Kheda, Bardoli and Ahmedabad. The Gujarati community of Bombay city also participated with great enthusiasm. Coastal Andhra and Bihar also emerged as significant strongholds.

The movement reached the easternmost corner of India upto Manipur and Nagaland. In Nagaland, **Rani Gaidinliu** emerged as the brave heroine of the movement who followed the path showed by Gandhi and rebelled against the British rule. The young Rani, aged 16 was arrested in 1932 and imprisoned for life. She spent her youthful years in Assam jails, and was released only in 1947 by the government of free India.

There was evidence of limited participation in regions where Congress organization was weak or Gandhian ideas had made little inroads. These included Maharashtra, Karnataka and Central Provinces. The pattern of participation was most complex in Bengal. Certain regions like Midnapur and Bankura saw the development of powerful Gandhian rural movements while other regions remained ridden with communal riots and revolutionary activities.

**Gaidinliu (1915–93):** At the age of 13, Gaidinliu joined the Heraka religious movement which later turned into a political movement seeking to drive out the British from Manipur and the surrounding Naga areas. An advocate of the ancestral Naga religious practices, she staunchly resisted the conversion of Nagas to Christianity. She was arrested in 1932 at the age of 16, and was sentenced to life imprisonment by the British rulers. **Jawaharlal Nehru** met her at Shillong Jail in 1937 and gave her the title of “Rani”.



## Decline of First Phase of CDM

Throughout 1930, the government's response had been ambivalent, and repressive measures were carried out after much vacillation. In the meantime, the Simon Commission Report was published (June 1930) and being a regressive document, it further upset even the moderate political opinion.

**Let Us Recall:** In May 1929, Labour Party headed by Ramsay MacDonald came to power in Britain. The effective boycott of the Simon Commission had opened many eyes and Viceroy Irwin was called to London for deliberations. Upon his return to India, Irwin famously declared on 31<sup>st</sup> October 1929 that as per the new government, natural progression to Dominion Status is implicit in Montagu Declaration of 1917. He also gave assurance of Round Table Conference to enlist the concurrence of all sections in India, as soon as the Simon Commission submitted its report.

On 9<sup>th</sup> July 1930, Viceroy Irwin reiterated the suggestion of a Round Table Conference as a conciliatory gesture, and also reiterated the goal of Dominion Status. He also tried to explore possibilities of peace between the Congress and the government. Accordingly, the Nehrus, father and son, were taken to Yerawada jail to meet Gandhi and hammer out a settlement. Gandhi rejected the idea of Congress participating in the RTC, yet the gesture ensured the participation of certain sections of Indian political opinion in London in the month of November 1930.

By September–October 1930, the movement began to show signs of fatigue—peasant and tribal militancy shot up, enthusiasm of merchants fell sharply and many of them broke their earlier pledges of not to sell foreign goods. Support from peasants too declined in the face of large scale confiscations by the government. Almost all leading Congressmen were put behind bars. On the other hand, the revolutionaries were active in full swing and the communists were rallying the labour and organising strikes, making Gandhi increasingly grow apprehensive of anarchy.

In November 1930, the First Round Table Conference, first conference between the Indians and the British as equals, took place in London to discuss the Simon Commission Reports. The Congress boycotted the RTC and its proceedings proved to be quite meaningless. The British government grew anxious to secure Congress participation. Accordingly, on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1931, the British Prime Minister and the Viceroy of India unconditionally released Gandhiji and the other Indian leaders so that they could meet at the residence of the ailing leader Motilal Nehru and deliberate and agree to participate in the next Round Table.

In this context, Gandhi decided to retreat.

### FIRST ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE (LONDON, 12<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 1930 TO 19<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 1931)

In all, three Round Table Conferences (RTCs—1930, 31 and 32) were held in London to discuss the Indian constitutional question after taking into account all shades of Indian political opinion. The Indian National Congress participated only in the Second Round Table.

The First Round Table Conference, the first conference between the Indians and the British **as equals**, was opened officially by Lord Irwin on 12<sup>th</sup> November 1930 in London **to discuss the Simon Commission Reports**. It was chaired by British



The First Round Table Conference was inaugurated by King George-V on 12<sup>th</sup> Nov 1930 in London.

Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald of Labor Party. The First Round Table was boycotted by the Congress as it had launched the Civil Disobedience Movement. In all 89 persons were invited to attend the conference. Of these, 16 represented British political parties. The British Indian delegation comprised of 58 members who represented various parties and interests in India. The Congress and Indian business leaders kept away from the conference. Many of them were in jail for participating in Civil Disobedience Movement.

### Participants

The government handpicked 'safe men' to represent India and the Indian States. Prominent Indian publicmen who participated were:

- Muslims- Agha Khan III (**leader of British Indian delegation**), Muhammed Shafi, Maulana Muhammed Ali, Fazlul-Haq and Muhammed Ali Jinnah
- Sikhs- Sardar Sampuran Singh, Sardar Ujjal Singh
- Hindu Mahasabha- BS Moonje, MR Jayakar
- Depressed Classes- BR Ambedkar
- Christians of India- KT Paul
- Parsis- Homi Mody
- Liberals- TB Sapru, CY Chintamani, Srinivas Sastri, Chimanlal Harilal Sitalvad, JN Basu
- Labour- NM Joshi, B Shiva Rao
- Justice Paty- Arcot Ramasamy Mudaliar, Sir AP Patro
- Women- Begum Jahanara Shahnawaz
- Landlords- Maharaja Kameshwar Singh of Darbhanga (Bengal)
- Sindh-Shah Nawaz Bhutto, Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah
- Princely states- A contingent of 16 members (rulers or their nominees) including representatives of Alwar, Baroda, Bhopal, Bikaner, Jammu and Kashmir, Patiala, Hyderabad, Mysore and Gwalior.
- Main British Participants included Ramsay MacDonald, chief spokesman of the British government (Labour) and Samuel Hoare (Conservative)

**Note:** The princes, led by **Maharaja of Bikaner**, expressed their desire to join an All India Federation.

### Outcome

The Conference took two significant initiatives set out in a "Command Paper"— Firstly, it recommended the formation of an **All India Federation** of British Indian Provinces and the Indian States. Secondly, it also recommended a **responsible government at the centre** with certain 'reservations and safeguards' for the transitional period to maintain the British control over defence, external affairs and economy. At the same time, BR Ambedkar demanded separate electorates for the untouchables

Even though the Conference was attended by some prominent Indian leaders, they could not be considered as real representatives of people whose destiny the conference was to decide.

Thus the conference appeared more as a gathering of communalists and reactionaries and its proceedings proved to be quite meaningless. The British government grew anxious to secure Congress participation.

### TRUCE PERIOD

#### Gandhi-Irwin Pact (or Delhi Pact, 5<sup>th</sup> March 1931)

On 14<sup>th</sup> February 1931, Gandhi-Irwin talk was initiated by the efforts of Sir TB Saprū and Sir MR Jayakar. The fortnight-long talks culminated in the Delhi Pact on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1931, also known as Gandhi-Irwin Pact. The pact was signed by Gandhi on behalf of the Congress and by Irwin on behalf of the government making it the **first pact** between the Congress and the government on an equal footing.

As per the Pact, the Congress agreed to the following:

- Withdraw the CDM immediately and effectively in all respects.
- Participate in the next Round Table Conference (with Gandhi as the sole representative of the Congress).
- Withdraw the boycott of British goods forthwith.

The government agreed to the following:

- Withdraw ordinances promulgated in relation to the CDM.
- Release political prisoners against whom there were no allegations of violence.
- Return confiscated land not yet sold to third parties.
- Lenient treatment to government employees who had resigned from the service.
- Remit penalties that had not been realized.
- Pay indemnities to those who had suffered in the movement.
- The government would not amend the salt act but will permit the collection and manufacture of salt freely to the people living within a specified area from the sea-shore.
- The government also conceded the right to peaceful picketing.

#### Ambivalent Response to the Gandhi-Irwin Pact

The Pact became a subject of much controversy. It was seen variously as a betrayal of peasant interests, as a proof of Gandhi's fear of mass movements turning radical and even as a sign of uncertain mood of Indian bourgeoisie.

In the Congress Working Committee, the response to the Pact was largely divided. Many hailed it as a victory since the Viceroy had to negotiate a settlement on terms of equality and curtesy with Gandhi. However, many others saw it as a failure since Gandhi agreed to attend the Second Round Table Conference, more or less on British terms. **Gandhi's request for remitting the death sentence of Bhagat Singh, Sukh Dev and Rajguru was turned down** by the Viceroy and the three were hanged on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1931. The rather sudden halt of the movement without attaining the goal of purna swaraj disappointed many leaders of the Congress. The peasants of Gujarat, who had sacrificed their life and property, felt let down (though they were returned after the Congress Ministry assumed office in Bombay in 1937).

Despite the above, the vast masses of Indian people saw the pact as a victory over the government. Thousands of those released from jail were treated back home as soldiers returning from a victorious battle. For the masses, it was a truce and not a surrender, a time for their soldiers to rest and prepare for the next round.

#### Comparison with Non-Cooperation Movement

The objective this time was purna swaraj and not just remedying two specific wrongs and attainment of a vaguely worded swaraj. Further, the method of agitation involved active defiance of laws and not just non-cooperation with the administration.

However, participation of certain sections of people was much less—fewer lawyers gave up practice, fewer students left schools and colleges. No major labor upsurge occurred. Muslim participation was nowhere near what was seen during Non-Cooperation. However, the movement received a far greater support from peasants and business groups. The total number of jail goers reached 92,214 (three times more than the figure in 1921–22).

#### Karachi Special Congress Session (29<sup>th</sup> March 1931, presided by Sardar Patel)

A special session of the Congress was called at Karachi to ratify the Gandhi-Irwin Pact. The session was held only a few days after the execution of Bhagat Singh and Gandhi was shown **black flags** throughout his way to Karachi.

#### Congress Resolutions at Karachi

1. While dissociating itself from and disapproving of political violence in any shape or form, the Congress admired the 'bravery and sacrifice' of the three martyrs.
2. Delhi Pact was ratified.
3. The goal of purna swaraj was reiterated.
4. The Karachi Session also adopted two significant resolutions—one on **Fundamental Rights** and the other on **National Economic Programme** (originally drafted by Jawaharlal Nehru), which made the session particularly memorable. By means of these two resolutions, for the first time, the Congress defined what swaraj would mean for the masses. The resolution declared—“In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions.”

#### Karachi Declaration on Fundamental Rights and the National Economic Programme

The declaration on fundamental rights guaranteed basic civil rights of free speech, free press, free assembly and freedom of association, equality before the law irrespective of caste, creed or sex, neutrality of the state in regard to all religions, elections on the basis of universal adult franchise, and free and compulsory primary education.

The resolution on National Economic Programme promised substantial reduction in rent and revenue, relief from agricultural indebtedness and control of usury, better conditions for workers such as living wage, limited hours of work and protection of women workers, the right to organise and form union to workers and peasants, and state ownership or control of key industries, mines and means of transport. It also laid down that the culture, language and script of the minorities shall be protected.

Even though the declaration was moderate in content, it made a significant beginning and several items entered the Congress program for the first time. In fact, the **Karachi Declaration** formed the basic document of Congress' socio-economic program for later years.

### Second Round Table Conference (London, 1<sup>st</sup> September to 1<sup>st</sup> December 1931)



The Second Round Table Conference in London, October 1931. British Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald is seated to the right of Mahatma Gandhi. Fourth from the left in the foreground is Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, representative of the "Depressed Classes".

#### Gandhi Participates in the Second RTC

##### Special Note

In the intervening period between Gandhi-Irwin Pact (March 1931) and the 2<sup>nd</sup> RTC (December 1931), there occurred a change of government both in India and Britain. In April 1931, **Lord Willingdon** succeeded Lord Irwin in Delhi. On 26<sup>th</sup> August 1931, MacDonald's Labour Cabinet resigned and a new coalition government dominated by the Conservatives was formed under him. **Sir Samuel Hoare**, a leading conservative, became Secretary of State for India. This change of government in Britain brought about a change of attitude and hardened the government stand.

Now, both the political as well as financial forces in Britain were opposed to any political or financial concessions to India. Winston Churchill strongly objected to the British government negotiating with the 'seditious fakir'. The **Daily Mail**, a Conservative daily wrote- "Without

India, the British Commonwealth would fall to pieces. Commercially, economically, politically and geographically it is our greatest imperial asset. To imperil our hold on it would be the worst treason any Briton could commit."

Accordingly, when Gandhi sailed for London on 29<sup>th</sup> August 1931, nothing much was expected from the Conference as the great **Gujarati poet Meghani** wrote: "Chchello katoro jerno aa: pi jao Bapu!" (Even this last cup of poison, you must drink Bapu!) The Congress had boycotted the First RTC in which Ramsay Macdonald had made the novel offer of responsible government at the centre but with a series of 'reservations and safeguards' to maintain the British control over defence, external affairs and economy.

Accepting this as the framework for discussion, Gandhi participated as the sole Congress representative at the second RTC.

#### Participants

A majority of Indian delegates were handpicked by the government and comprised of the loyalists, communalists, careerists, lace hunters, big landlords and representatives of princely states. They were used by the government to neutralise Gandhi over the basic question of freedom for India.

Most of the prominent participants of the first session returned to attend the second session. The new faces included great nationalists and political leaders like **Gandhi, Madan Mohan Malviya, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu and Ali Imam, the great poet Muhammed Iqbal, capitalist GD Birla and SK Dutta (a prominent Indian Christian).**

Chief spokesman of the British government was Sir Samuel Hoare.

The princes, led by Maharaja of Patiala, now revised their ideas and wanted a confederation instead of a federation. However, some of the premier states remained firm on the idea of a federation.

#### Outcome

The session ended with MacDonald's announcement. It was as follows:

- Two Muslim provinces—Sind and NWFP
- Formation of Indian Consultative Committee
- Three Expert committees—finance, franchise and states;
- The prospect of a unilateral communal award if Indians failed to agree

Gandhi suggested the same scheme as earlier suggested by the Nehru Report. Aware of the complexity of the communal problem, Gandhi also suggested that the communal settlement be kept pending till the constitutional settlement had been arrived at. This suggestion gravely displeased the minority representatives and hardened their stand further. The Muslim representatives continued to insist on separate electorates. Thus despite Gandhi giving a **carte blanche to Jinnah**, the communal problem could not be resolved.

In this way, Gandhi's participation in the second RTC ended in a fiasco. He found himself involved in endless squabbles with Muslim leaders, BR Ambedkar (leader of the Scheduled Castes) and the Indian Princes, much to the satisfaction of the British.

## Changed British Government Sees Gandhi-Irwin Pact as a Mistake

Gandhi returned to a changed political situation in India. While Gandhi was away to London, the new Viceroy Lord Willingdon as well as the higher officials in India realized that the Delhi Pact had been a mistake—it had signed a truce with the Congress on equal footing and considerably lowered British prestige while raising that of the Congress. They now decided to reverse it all—**“no pact, no truce, no Gandhi-Viceroy meetings” became the watchwords** of the government. It was decided to launch a hard and immediate blow to the revival of national movement, and arrest Gandhi from the very outset.

## The Government Unleashes a Reign of Terror

On 24<sup>th</sup> December 1931, Abdul Gaffar Khan was arrested and the government severely repressed the Khudai Khidmatgars in NWFP along with the peasants (the Khudai Khidmatgars were leading the peasants against the government’s policy of extracting revenue through cruel means). On 26<sup>th</sup> December 1931, Jawaharlal was arrested while he was going to Bombay to meet Gandhi.

Thus, on 28<sup>th</sup> December 1931 when Gandhi landed in Bombay, the political situation had completely changed. The Congress Working Committee met the next day and decided to resume the CDM. On 31<sup>st</sup> December 1931, when Gandhi asked the Viceroy for a meeting, he refused a trend which was to continue for the next five years. Instead Gandhi was soon arrested on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1932.

On the same day, Viceroy Willingdon launched a new policy to deal with the movement known as the policy of **‘Civil martial law’** which involved passing of sweeping ordinances banning all Congress organisations. Civil liberties ceased to exist and the authorities could seize people and property at will. Within a week, all leading Congressmen were put behind bars.

## CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AGAIN (SECOND CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE, 1932–34)

Nevertheless, the CDM was restarted and received popular response from the angry people. However, the second phase of the CDM did not evoke a similar response from the people as the earlier phase had done and it became apparent that this movement would not continue for long. Moreover, the agitation and severe repression went hand in hand for some time. Bombay city and Bengal emerged as British nightmares due to the support of Gujarati traders and revolutionary terrorists respectively. Lakhs of people took to picketing of shops selling liquor and foreign cloth. Simultaneously, the government unleashed a reign of terror. Congress offices and funds were seized; all Gandhi ashrams were cordoned off by police. Nationalist literature was banned. Agitators were beaten up and their properties confiscated. Prisoners in jail were tortured and conditions in jail were made particularly harsh for women with the hope of scaring them away from satyagraha.

In the face of abominable torture, the movement was effectively crushed within a few months. Afterwards, it just lingered on.

## Communal Award and Poona Pact

### Communal Award (16<sup>th</sup> August 1932)

Meanwhile, on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1932, MacDonald announced the proposal on minority representation, known as the “Communal Award” or **“MacDonald Award”**. It was yet another expression of the British policy of divide and rule. The Muslims, Sikhs and Christians had already been recognized as minorities. The communal award **declared even the depressed classes as minority and entitled them to separate electorate**, thus separating them from the rest of Hindus. It recommended to—

- double the existing seats in provincial legislatures;
- retain the system of separate electorate for the minorities;
- grant weightage to Muslims in provinces where they are in minority;
- reserve 3 per cent seats for women in all provincial legislatures except in the NWFP;
- recognize depressed classes as minority community and make them entitled to the right of separate electorate; and
- allocate seats to labour, landlords, and traders and industrialists

### Congress Response

This was in sharp contrast to the constitution proposed by the Congress which would include in the fundamental rights a guarantee to the minorities of protection of their culture, religion and language. It also rejected separate electorates and insisted on universal franchise. Communal electorates encouraged communal feelings (that separate communities have interests different from general body of Indians), and obstructed the growth of common national consciousness.

Yet, the Congress had earlier accepted separate electorates for Muslims as part of 1916 Congress League Pact, as a compromise with the Muslim League. Hence, even though the Congress strongly disagreed with the communal award, yet it was not in favour of changing the award without the consent of the depressed classes and so **it decided neither to accept nor reject it**.

### Gandhi’s Response

On the other hand, the award was strongly opposed by all nationalists, including Gandhi. Gandhi strongly opposed separate electorates for the depressed classes, whom he regarded as an integral part of Hindu society. He felt that it provided no answer to the degraded position of these classes. According to him, what was needed was not separate electorates but root and branch eradication of untouchability. But once the depressed classes were treated as separate community, the question of abolition of untouchability would not arise and would ensure that untouchables would remain untouchables in perpetuity.

### Poona Pact (24<sup>th</sup> September 1932)

To persuade BR Ambedkar (the Depressed Classes leader), Gandhi, then in Yerawada jail, sat on a fast unto death on 20<sup>th</sup> September 1932. Almost everywhere, 20<sup>th</sup> September was observed as a day of fasting and prayer, temples and wells were thrown open to the depressed classes.

Ambedkar, MC Rajah and Madan Mohan Malaviya got together to persuade Gandhi. On 24<sup>th</sup> September 1932, the Poona Pact was concluded between Gandhi and Ambedkar, who had grown anxious to save Gandhi's life. The pact averted the political breach between the so-called 'Caste Hindus' and the 'Scheduled Castes'. The following was agreed upon:

- There would be no separate electorates for depressed classes and Ambedkar accepted the principle of joint electorates.
- Number of seats reserved for the depressed classes in provincial legislatures would be increased from 71 in the Award to 147; and to 18 per cent of the total in central legislature.
- A certain percentage of seats allotted to the general non-Muslim electorate would be reserved for the depressed classes
- The Congress also accepted that even in civil services, the depressed classes would be given adequate representation.

### Gandhi's Harijan Campaign

Gandhi was determined not to let the divisive intentions of government to succeed. From jail itself, he began his whirlwind campaign against untouchability:

- In September 1932, from jail itself, he formed the All India Anti-Untouchability League, and
- In 1933, he started the weekly, *Harijan*.
- In August 1933, he was released and shifted to *Satyagraha Ashram in Wardha* as he had vowed in 1930 not to return to Sabarmati ashram (Ahmedabad) unless swaraj was won.
- During November 1933 to July 1934, he conducted a Harijan tour of the country, propagating removal of untouchability and collecting money for his newly established *Harijan Sevak Sangh*.
- Gandhi also undertook two fasts—on 8<sup>th</sup> May and on 16<sup>th</sup> August 1934 to convince the people of the seriousness of his efforts. The fasts stirred emotions across the nationalist rank and file and the one on 8<sup>th</sup> May was even opposed by Kasturba Gandhi (his wife).

Throughout his campaign, Gandhi was accused by orthodox and reactionary elements for attacking Hinduism. These elements also offered to support the government against the Congress. The government in turn obliged them by defeating the *Temple Entry Bill in August 1934*.

During his Harijan work, Gandhi stressed on certain themes. He argued that untouchability had no sanction in the Hindu Shastras. And the Shastras should be ignored if they went against human dignity. He also believed that there was nothing sinful about Varnashram as there was about untouchability. Another theme in Gandhi's speeches was the need for caste Hindus to do 'penance' and make amends for the injustice done to the Harijans over centuries. This also explains why he was not hostile to his critics, including Ambedkar, who distrusted him. He hoped to win them over some day by appealing to their reason and their hearts.

The Harijan work of Gandhi and the Congress also gradually carried the message of nationalism to the Harijans (who were also agricultural labourers in many parts of India) and ensured their participation in national and peasant struggles.

### Third Round Table Conference (17<sup>th</sup> November to 24<sup>th</sup> December 1932)

The third and last round table conference began on 17<sup>th</sup> November. It was attended by only 46 delegates and was *boycotted* by the Indian National Congress as well as the Labour Party in Britain.

#### Participants

Main participants included Agha Khan III, BR Ambedkar, NM Joshi, Ramasami Mudaliar, Begum Jahanara Shah Nawaz, TB Sapru, Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas among others.

#### Outcome

After the Third Round Table Conference, the British government prepared a *White Paper* on the new constitution of India. The White Paper, published in March 1933 contained four major proposals—Federation, Provincial Autonomy (responsible government in provinces), dyarchy at the centre and safeguards which vested special powers in the central and provincial executive. The Paper was criticised by all Indian parties as it fell short of complete independence.

Consequently, a Joint Select Committee was appointed under the chairmanship of the Marquess of Linlithgow. In November 1934, the Committee produced a majority report. On the basis of this report, a bill was introduced in the British Parliament which was passed by substantial majority. On receiving the Royal assent on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 1935, it became the famous Government of India Act of 1935 (Covered in the upcoming chapters).

### Decline of Civil Disobedience Movement

The Second CDM did not evoke a similar response from the people as the earlier phase had done and was also given a heavy blow by government repression. With the weakening of the movement, there emerged voices within the Congress advocating a return to council entry and revival of Swarajist Party. Congressmen such as Asaf Ali, S. Satyamurty and Dr. MA Ansari were in favour of council entry. In 1933 Satyamurty formed the Madras Swaraj Party. On the other hand, council entry was opposed by Acharya Narendra Dev and Purushottamdas Tandon. Both the sides tried to tilt the congress opinion though not without Gandhi's consent.

Several big Indian business groups also began to collaborate with the British. For instance, the Bombay Mill owners concluded the *Lees-Moddy Pact* in October 1933, siding with Lancashire in the presence of fear of Japanese competition (From 1932 onwards, GD Birla and Thakurdas also pressed the Congress for a compromise).

In this context, Gandhi in jail now began to think in terms of truce and compromise. In May 1933, he temporarily suspended the movement and *formally withdrew it in April 1934*. Once again, he advised the nationalists to direct their energies towards constructive work, which now incorporated Harijan work as its central theme (this was Gandhi's response to the MacDonald Award of 1932). Yet another section of the Congress decided to go back to council politics.

## SIGNIFICANCE OF CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT

True, another heroic struggle of the people of India had come to an end without achieving its immediate goal. Gandhi's decision to withdraw the movement dismayed many including Jawaharlal. Subhas Chandra Bose and Vithalbhai Patel (elder brother of Sardar Patel) declared that "the Mahatma as a political leader had failed".

Equally true was the fact that Viceroy Willingdon and his men had failed to understand the nature of Indian National Movement. Brutal repression of the Indian people had completely shattered their faith in the British rule and further strengthened their resolve for freedom.

True, the CDM failed to achieve its immediate goal of purna swaraj, yet the sacrifice of the people had not been in vain. The socio-economic demands of the people, particularly the peasants were incorporated in the congress programme for the first time and signalled the growing assertiveness of these sections of Indian society.

Once again, the prisoners released from jail in 1934 were given a hero's welcome. Once again, it was time to rest and reorganise. That the people had only been cowed down by brute force and still had faith in the Congress was demonstrated by the election results of 1937, in which the congress swept the polls in most provinces.

HN Baraillford, a British journalist assessing the result of the movement wrote - "the Indians had freed their own minds, they had won independence in their hearts".

## AFTERMATH

In 1935, the Government of India Act was passed which was retrogressive in many aspects, having been passed at a time when the British seemed triumphant. However, the Government's victory was short-lived as the Congress swept the polls in most provinces in 1937 general elections.

Another significant development was the **emergence of the Left** as the Civil Disobedience had raised the expectations of the people but they could not be met with the Gandhian or even revolutionary strategy. Hence, a group of people disillusioned by Gandhi as well as the revolutionaries began to move towards the left alternatives—the Communists and the Socialists.

Jawaharlal Nehru emerged as the new leader with his radical socio-economic program. By 1934, a socialist ginger group within the Congress had been formed and the Congress was forced to make concessions to the left, if it wanted to retain control.

## Prelim Capsule

## Civil Disobedience Movement (1930–34)

Date	Event	Important Details
December 1929	Lahore Congress Session	Congress authorised to start CDM.
January 1930	Gandhi's Eleven Points	Gandhi placed 'Eleven Points' of administrative reforms before Lord Irwin and tried to negotiate with the government once again before launching the CDM.
12th March 1930	Civil Disobedience begins	Gandhi started his historic ' <b>Dandi March</b> ' from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi (240 miles, 24 days), accompanied with 78 followers and thus began CDM.
6th April 1930	Gandhi breaks salt law	Gandhi reached Dandi, picked up a handful of salt and broke the salt law as a symbol of defiance to British laws. <b>C Rajagopalachari</b> led a salt march from Trichinopoly to Vedaranyam on the Tanjore coast. Forms of protest included salt manufacture and resignations on a wide scale, boycott of foreign cloth and liquor, non-payment of land revenue in Ryotwari areas, anti-Chowkidari tax movement in zamindari areas (Bihar), and Forest Satyagraha, i.e. peaceful violation of forest laws.
18th April 1930	Chittagong armoury raid	Carried out by the Bengal revolutionaries led by Surya Sen.
—	Role of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan	Khan had been active in NWFP for several years and had set up a band of non-violent revolutionaries, the <b>Khudai Khidmatgars</b> (Servants of God) or the Red Shirts (because of the colour of their shirts) who played an active role in the CDM.
—	Anti-Cunningham Circular agitation	In Assam, a powerful agitation by students against the infamous ' <b>Cunningham Circular</b> ' was launched which prohibited students from participating in political activities associated with the national movement.
—	No-revenue No-rent campaign	Was started in UP, Agra and Rae Bareilly emerged as important centres.

—		Participation of women was the most remarkable feature of CDM.
November 1930–January 1931	First RTC (London)	Chaired by British PM Ramsay MacDonald of Labour Party. First conference between the Indians and the British as equals. Boycotted by Congress as it had launched the CDM, its proceedings proved to be quite meaningless and the British government grew anxious to secure Congress participation. It recommended- 1) Formation of an All India Federation of British Indian Provinces and the Indian States. 2) A responsible government at the centre with certain 'reservations and safeguards' for the transitional period. (In all, three RTCs were held in London to discuss the Indian constitutional question. INC participated only in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> RTC. Ambedkar attended all the three RTCs).
25th January 1931	Gandhi released	Truce period begins.
14th February 1931	Gandhi–Irwin talk initiated	By the efforts of Sir TB Sapru and Sir MR Jayakar.
5th March 1931	Gandhi–Irwin Pact (Delhi Pact), End of First Phase of CDM	The fortnight long talks culminated in the Delhi Pact. In context to the pact, Sarojini Naidu termed them as "The Two Mahatmas". The pact was signed by Gandhi on behalf of the Congress and by Irwin on behalf of the government. First pact to be signed between the Congress and the government on an equal footing. As per the Pact, the Congress agreed to withdraw the CDM immediately and participate in the next RTC.
29th March 1931	Special Congress Session at Karachi	Was called to ratify the Gandhi–Irwin Pact. Was presided by Sardar Patel. Adopted resolutions on Fundamental Rights (Jawaharlal Nehru with the help of M. N. Roy) and National Economic Programme.
April–Aug 1931	Change of Government	Lord Irwin replaced by Lord Willingdon as Viceroy. MacDonald's Labour Cabinet was replaced by a new coalition government dominated by the Conservatives. Sir Samuel Hoare became Secretary of State for India. Changed government adopted a hardened stand, saw Delhi pact as a mistake.

September–December 1931	Second RTC (London)	Congress participated and was represented by Gandhi. Gandhi gave a carte blanche to Jinnah, yet the communal problem could not be resolved.
September 1931	Government Repression	While Gandhi was away to London, Willingdon decided to launch a hard and immediate blow to the revival of national movement. Policy of 'Civil martial law' was launched & involved passing of sweeping ordinances banning all Congress organizations. Gandhi was arrested as soon as he returned from the RTC (4 Jan 1932).
28th December 1931	Gandhi returned from London	Gandhi returned to a changed political situation.
29th December 1931	Second CDM launched	4 Jan 1932, Gandhi was arrested and the movement was effectively crushed within a few months. Afterwards it just lingered on.
16th August 1932	Communal Award (MacDonald Award)	MacDonald announced the proposal on minority representation, known as the Communal Award. It declared depressed classes as minority and entitled them to separate electorate. The Congress strongly disagreed with the communal award, yet it decided neither to accept nor reject it. 20 Sep 1932, Gandhi (in Yerawada jail) sat on a fast unto death to oppose the Communal Award.
24th September 1932	Poona Pact	Was concluded between Gandhi and Ambedkar with the efforts of Ambedkar, MC Rajah and Madan Mohan Malaviya.
November–December 1932	Third RTC	It was attended by only 46 delegates and was boycotted by the INC as well as the Labour Party in Britain. In March 1933, a White Paper was published & contained four major proposals-Federation, Provincial Autonomy, dyarchy at the centre and safeguards. White Paper later became the basis of the Govt. of India Act of 1935.
April 1934	CDM withdrawn	In May 1933, Gandhi temporarily suspended the movement and formally withdrew it in April 1934.



## Previous Years' Questions – Preliminary Exam

- The Poona pact which was signed between the British government and Mahatma Gandhi in 1932 provided for [UPSC 1997]
  - The creation of Dominion status for India
  - Separate electorates for the Muslim
  - Separate electorates for the Harijans
  - Joint electorates with reservation of Harijans
- With reference to Indian freedom struggle, which one of the following statements is not correct? [UPSC 2003]

- The Rowlatt Act aroused a wave of popular indignation and led to the Jallianwala Bagh massacre
- Subhash Chandra Bose formed the Forward Bloc
- Bhagat Singh was one of the founders of Hindustan Republican Socialist Association
- In 1931, the congress session at Karachi opposed Gandhi Irwin pact

- Who among the following drafted the resolution on Fundamental Rights for the Karachi session of Congress in 1931? [UPSC 2005]

- Dr BR Ambedkar
- Jawaharlal Nehru
- Dr. Rajendra Prasad
- Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

- At which Congress Session was the Working Committee authorised to launch a programme of Civil Disobedience? [UPSC 2005]

- Bombay
- Lahore
- Lucknow
- Tripuri

- Consider the following statements:

[UPSC 2005]

- In the first Round Table Conference, Dr Ambedkar demanded separate electorates for the depressed classes.
- In the Poona Pact, special provisions for representation of the depressed

class people in the local bodies and civil services were made.

- The Indian National Congress did not take part in the Third Round Table Conference.

Which of the statements given above are correct? Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- 1 and 2
- 2 and 3
- 1 and 3
- 1, 2 and 3

- Consider the following statements:

[UPSC 2009]

- The discussions in the Third Round Table Conference eventually lead to the passing of the Government of India Act of 1935.
- The Government of India Act of 1935 provided for the establishment of an all India Federation to be based on Union of the provinces of British India and the Princely States.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct? Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- 1 only
- 2 only
- Both 1 and 2
- Neither 1 nor 2

- Which one of the following began with the Dandi March? [UPSC 2009]

- Home Rule Movement
- Non-Cooperation Movement
- Civil Disobedience Movement
- Quit India Movement

- For the Karachi session of Indian National Congress in 1931 presided over by Sardar Patel, who drafted the resolution on Fundamental Rights and Economic Programme? [UPSC 2010]

- Mahatma Gandhi
- Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru
- Dr Rajendra Prasad
- Dr B.R. Ambedkar

- Why did Mahatma Gandhi undertake the fast unto death in 1932. [UPSC 2012]
  - Round table conference failed to satisfy Indian political aspirations
  - Congress and Muslim League had differences of opinion
  - Ramsay MacDonald announced the Communal Award
  - None of the statements (a), (b) and (c) given above is correct in this context

- Who among the following organised a march on the Tanjore coast to break the Salt law in April, 1930? [UPSC 2015]
  - V Chidambaram Pillai
  - C Rajagopalachari
  - K. Kamaraj
  - Annie Besant



## Previous Years' Questions – Main Exam

- Analyse Mahatma Gandhi's main demands presented to Irwin. How did salt emerge as the central issue for launching the Satyagraha? [UPSC 1988]
- What was the Gandhi Irwin pact? Why was it signed and what were its consequences? [UPSC 1988]
- Why did Mahatma Gandhi launch Civil Disobedience Movement? Analyse the intensity of the movement in different parts of India. [UPSC 1992]
- What was the McDonald Award? How was it modified and with what results? [UPSC 1993]

- In what way did the Civil Disobedience Movement affect the different provinces of India? How did it foster Peasant Movement in India? [UPSC 1995]
- What were the salient features of Gandhi Irwin pact? [UPSC 1997]
- Write a short note on: Communal Award [UPSC 1998]
- Why did Gandhiji launched the Salt Satyagraha in 1930 and with what results? [UPSC 2001]
- Write a short note on: Dandi March [UPSC 2002]



## Practice Questions – Preliminary Exam

- Consider the following pairs with regard to the types of protest and their region during the Civil Disobedience Movement.
  - Forest satyagraha—Central Provinces
  - No-revenue, no tax—United Provinces
  - Anti-chowkidara—Eastern India
 Which of the above pairs is/are correctly matched? Choose the correct answer from the following options.
  - 1 and 2
  - 2 and 3
  - 3 only
  - 1, 2 and 3

- Which of the following is incorrectly matched, with regard to leaders of civil disobedience movement?
  - C. Rajagopalachari—Tanjore coast
  - Rani Gaidinliu—Nagaland
  - K. Kelappan—Madras
  - Sarojini Naidu—Gujarat
- Which among the following was/were Viceroy of India at the time of the Civil Disobedience Movement?
  - Lord Willingdon

2. Lord Irwin
3. Lord Birkenhead

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 only (b) 1 and 2
- (c) 2 only (d) 2 and 3

4. Which of the following statements is/are true regarding the Dharsana satyagraha?

1. It was a forest satyagraha.
2. It was led by Gandhiji's son Manilal.
3. It was covered by American journalist Webb Miller.

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 only (b) 1 and 2
- (c) 2 and 3 (d) 1, 2 and 3

5. Put the following events in the correct chronological order.

1. Gandhi's Eleven Points
2. Communal award
3. Dharsana Satyagraha
4. Simon Commission

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 3-4-1-2 (b) 4-1-2-3
- (c) 4-1-3-2 (d) 3-1-2-4

6. Which of the following were associated with the Civil Disobedience Movement?

1. Khudai Khidmatgar movement
2. Anti-chowkidara tax campaign
3. Prabhat Pheris
4. Labour movement

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 and 3 (b) 1, 2 and 3
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 (d) 1, 2, 3 and 4

7. Which among the following was not a resolution passed during the Karachi Session of the Congress in 1931?

- (a) Ratification of Gandhi-Irwin Pact
- (b) Resolution on Fundamental Rights
- (c) Reiteration of the goal of Dominion Status
- (d) Resolution on National Economic Programmer

8. Which of the following events coincided with the Civil Disobedience Movement?

1. Chittagong Armoury Raid
2. Communal Award
3. Delhi Manifesto
4. First Round Table Conference

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1, 2 and 3 (b) 2 and 3
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 (d) 1, 2 and 4

9. What did Cunningham Circular talk about?

- (a) It imposed a blanket ban on any anti-British and pro-swadeshi activity by students.
- (b) It prohibited government servants from associating themselves with Congress activities.
- (c) It contained provisions for harsh treatment for jailed satyagrahis.
- (d) It carried a warning for merchants against joining the boycott agitation.

10. Consider the following statements regarding Gandhi-Irwin Pact-

1. The government agreed to permit the collection and manufacture of salt freely to the people living within a specified area from the sea-shore.
2. The Congress agreed to participate in the first round table conference.

Which of the above statements is/are correct? Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
- (c) both (d) neither

11. Which among the following sections of people participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement?

1. Women
2. Peasants
3. Tribals

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 and 2 (b) 2 and 3
- (c) 1 and 3 (d) 1, 2 and 3

12. Gandhi was welcomed with black flag demonstration at the time of \_\_\_\_\_ Session of the Congress.

- (a) Calcutta (b) Karachi
- (c) Lahore (d) Madras

13. 1. The government conceded the right to peaceful picketing.

2. The government agreed to release all prisoners unconditionally.

Which of the above statements is/are incorrect regarding the Gandhi-Irwin Pact? Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 only (b) 2 only
- (c) both (d) neither

14. Which of the following are true with regard to the Civil Disobedience Movement?

1. It saw massive participation of peasants and business groups.

2. It was conceived to be a non-violent movement and remained peaceful throughout.

3. It was successful in reducing imports of foreign goods.

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 and 2 (b) 1 and 3
- (c) 2 only (d) 2 and 3

15. Which of the following emerged as popular methods of protest during the Civil Disobedience Movement?

1. Formation of Vanar senas
2. Hoisting the national flag
3. Tying rakhis
4. Magic lanterns

Choose the correct answer from the following options.

- (a) 1 and 3 (b) 2 and 4
- (c) 2, 3 and 4 (d) 1, 2 and 4



## Practice Questions – Main Exam

1. Why did Gandhi choose salt as the central issue of the movement? Examine.
2. Write short notes on:
  - (a) Gandhi's Eleven Points
  - (b) Programme of the Civil Disobedience Movement
3. In what ways was Civil Disobedience different from Non-Cooperation Movement? Analyse.
4. What do you understand by Gandhi-Irwin Pact? How did it impact the Indian National Movement?
5. Was the Civil Disobedience Movement a success or a failure? Evaluate.

## Answers

### Previous Years' Questions – Preliminary Exam

- |        |        |        |        |         |
|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1. (d) | 2. (d) | 3. (b) | 4. (b) | 5. (c)  |
| 6. (c) | 7. (c) | 8. (b) | 9. (c) | 10. (b) |

### Practice Questions – Preliminary Exam

- |         |         |         |         |         |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 1. (d)  | 2. (c)  | 3. (b)  | 4. (c)  | 5. (c)  |
| 6. (b)  | 7. (c)  | 8. (d)  | 9. (a)  | 10. (a) |
| 11. (d) | 12. (b) | 13. (b) | 14. (b) | 15. (d) |