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Mahatma Gandhi and the Nationalist Movement

Mahatma Gandhi played a pivotal role in India's struggle for independence through his leadership in various nationalist movements. After re Non-Cooperation Movement and the Civil Disobedience Movement, which united diverse groups including peasants, workers, and women in





Gandhi as a People's

By 1922, Gandhi transformed nationalism into a mass movement, inspiring peasants, workers, and artisans through simplicity and emotional identification.

His spinning wheel and khadi symbolised equality, bridging caste divides and promoting dignity of manual labour and economic self-reliance.

Peasants saw Gandhi as a miracle-worker who punished injustice and protected them from oppressive taxes and corrupt British officials.

Gandhi's popularity grew through grassroots Congress work, vernacular outreach, and support from diverse social classes including industrialists and rural leaders.

His core supporters—Nehru, Patel, Azad—joined during 1917–1922, helping Gandhi lead an inclusive, cross-regional nationalist movement.

Post-1924, Gandhi promoted khadi, opposed untouchability, and championed religious harmony and social reform as prerequisites for India's true independence.

Prepzy



Civil Disobedience

Gandhi re-entered politics by 1930, opposing British rule through campaigns like Bardoli satyagraha and boycotting the Simon Commission.

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Gandhi launched the Salt March from Sabarmati to Dandi, breaking the salt law and inspiring widespread national civil disobedience.

The salt tax was condemned as exploitative, destroying livelihoods and heavily burdening the poor with unjust costs and restrictions.

The Salt March drew global attention, mobilized women, and pressured Britain to consider devolution of power in India.

Gandhi-Irwin Pact ended the first civil disobedience; salt making was allowed, but independence demands were left unresolved.

Gandhi opposed separate electorates for Dalits; Ambedkar insisted they needed safeguards against caste oppression and systemic inequality.

Congress won 1937 elections, but WWII tensions led to resignations; League's 1940 resolution intensified the political divide.

Gandhi's Return and Early Activities

Gandhi returned to India in 1915 and spent a year traveling across the country to understand its people and problems. His first major public c

Non-Cooperation Movement

Launched in response to the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwala Bagh massacre, the Non-Cooperation Movement aimed to boycott British goods and services.

Civil Disobedience Movement

Beginning with the Salt March in 1930, this movement involved breaking unjust laws, such as the salt tax, through peaceful protests. It attracted widespread participation across India.

Gandhi as a People's Leader

By the 1920s, Gandhi had become a symbol of unity and self-reliance, promoting rural industries like khadi and advocating social reforms such as untouchability eradication.

Exam Question

Q: What were the main objectives of the Non-Cooperation Movement led by Gandhi?

A: The Non-Cooperation Movement aimed to boycott British goods, institutions, and services to protest against repressive laws like the Rowlatt Act.

Salt Satyagraha and the Quit India Movement

The Salt Satyagraha and the Quit India Movement were two major campaigns led by Gandhi that intensified the struggle for Indian independence.

Salt Satyagraha

In 1930, Gandhi led the famous Salt March from Sabarmati Ashram to the Arabian Sea to protest the British monopoly on salt production and the salt tax.

Quit India Movement

Launched in August 1942, the Quit India Movement demanded an immediate end to British rule. Despite Gandhi's arrest, the movement saw widespread participation.

Political Developments

During this period, the Indian National Congress declared Purna Swaraj (complete independence) as its goal. The Muslim League, however, pursued a separate political agenda.

Exam Question

Q: What was the significance of the Salt Satyagraha in India's independence movement?

A: The Salt Satyagraha was significant because it was a mass civil disobedience movement that united Indians across regions and social groups.

The Last Heroic Days

After India gained independence on 15 August 1947, Gandhi focused on promoting peace amid communal violence and the challenges of po

Gandhi's legacy includes his lifelong commitment to non-violence, social reform, and unity. His writings, speeches, and the accounts of cont

Sources of Historical Information

Historical understanding of Gandhi and the nationalist movement comes from his writings, government records, and contemporary newspa

Exam Question

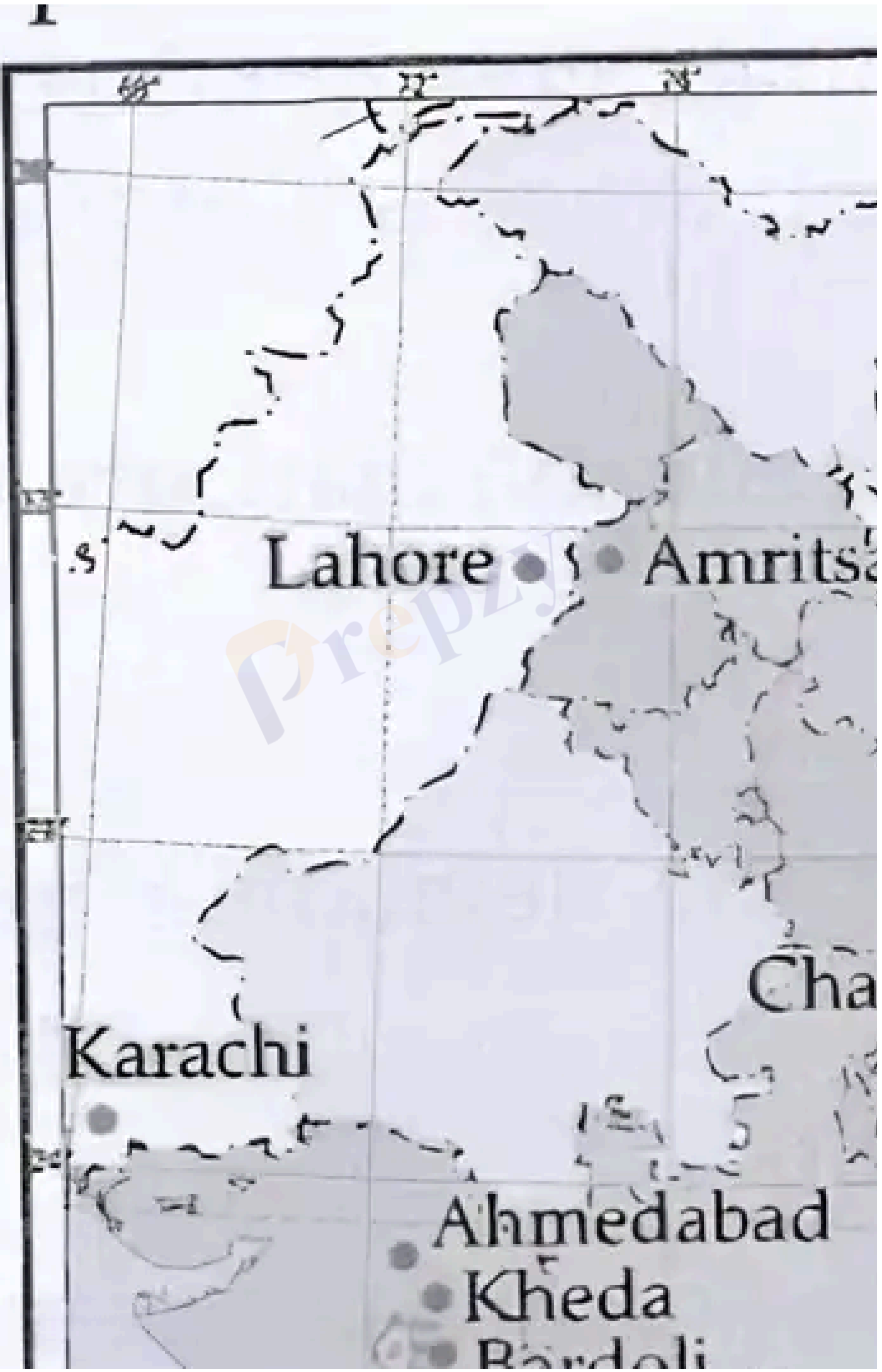
Q: How did Gandhi respond to the communal violence following independence?

A: Gandhi responded by fasting, visiting hospitals and refugee camps, and urging peace and unity between Hindus and Muslims, despite the

Key Dates in the Nationalist Movement

Year	Event
1915	Gandhi returns from South Africa
1917	Champaran Movement
1919	Rowlatt Satyagraha and Jallianwala Bagh Massacre
1921	Non-Cooperation and Khilafat Movements
1930	Civil Disobedience Movement and Salt March
1942	Quit India Movement
1947	India's Independence and Partition

Important Centres of the National Movement





This political map highlights key locations such as Lahore, Amritsar, Karachi, Ahmedabad, Bombay, Champaran, Kheda, Bardoli, and Dandi, v

Solved Examples

Example 1

Question: Explain the reasons for the suspension of the Non-Cooperation Movement in 1922.

Answer: The Non-Cooperation Movement was suspended by Gandhi in 1922 after the violent incident at Chauri Chaura, where protesters killed

Example 2

Question: What was the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and its significance?

Answer: The Gandhi-Irwin Pact was an agreement in 1931 between Gandhi and the British Viceroy Irwin. It ended the Civil Disobedience Move

Practice Set

Easy

- When did Gandhi return to India from South Africa?
- What was the main objective of the Salt March?

Moderate

- Describe the impact of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre on the Indian nationalist movement.
- Explain the reasons behind the launch of the Quit India Movement.

Challenging

- Analyze the role of peasants and workers in the Non-Cooperation Movement.
- Discuss the challenges Gandhi faced in uniting different religious communities during the freedom struggle.

Answer Key

Easy

- Gandhi returned to India in 1915.

- The Salt March aimed to protest the British salt tax and monopoly.

Moderate

- The Jallianwala Bagh massacre intensified anti-British sentiments and united Indians against colonial rule.
- The Quit India Movement was launched due to the failure of British promises and the demand for immediate independence.

Challenging

- Peasants and workers actively participated by boycotting taxes, strikes, and protests, interpreting Non-Cooperation in their own ways.
- Gandhi faced religious divisions, political rivalries, and communal tensions, making unity difficult.

Quick Reference

- **Non-Cooperation Movement:** 1920–1922, boycott of British goods and institutions.
- **Civil Disobedience Movement:** 1930–1934, breaking unjust laws peacefully.
- **Salt March:** 1930, protest against salt tax.
- **Quit India Movement:** 1942, demand for British withdrawal.
- **Partition of India:** 1947, creation of India and Pakistan.

Glossary

- **Satyagraha:** Non-violent resistance or civil disobedience.
- **Khadi:** Homespun cloth promoted by Gandhi to encourage self-reliance.
- **Purna Swaraj:** Complete independence from British rule.
- **Rowlatt Act:** Legislation allowing detention without trial, opposed by Gandhi.
- **Two Nation Theory:** The idea that Hindus and Muslims are separate nations, leading to partition.
- **Chauri Chaura Incident:** Violent clash in 1922 that led to suspension of Non-Cooperation Movement.