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Q13

Since the decade of the 1920s, the national movement acquired various ideological strands and thereby expanded its social base. Discuss.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2020 · GS I · 15 marks · The Freedom Struggle

The Freedom Struggle - its various stages and important contributors / contributions from different parts of the country.

Core demand of the question

- Since the decade of the 1920s, the national movement acquired various ideological strands and thereby expanded its social base. Discuss
- Keep a 15-mark length

Revision summary

Non-Cooperation and Khilafat turned Congress toward a mass public.

Swarajists and no-changers split method, not always the goal.

AITUC, **HSRA**, and early communism added class and revolutionary strands.

Peasants, Non-Brahmin politics, and **Ambedkar** widened the social question.

A larger base was the product of many ideologies under and beside the **Gandhi** centre.

Introduction

The 1920s opened with Non-Cooperation and Khilafat. **Gandhi** made Congress a mass address. Around that centre grew Swarajists, no-changers, socialists, communists, revolutionaries, Non-Brahmin and peasant voices. Ideology multiplied, and so did who counted as the nation.

Body**Gandhi, Khilafat, and the new mass**

- Non-Cooperation (1920-22) pulled students, lawyers, and many peasants into hartal and boycott. Khilafat briefly widened the Muslim street inside the same campaign.
- Constructive work - khadi, anti-untouchability, village spinning - created a social base that petition-Congress had lacked.
- Chauri Chaura and withdrawal showed both the power and the ceiling of a moral mass.

Constitutional and revolutionary strands

- **Swarajists** (C. R. Das, Motilal **Nehru**) took councils; no-changers stayed with constructive work. Two methods, one nationalist roof.
- Hindustan Republican Association and later **HSRA** (Kakori, Bhagat Singh's generation) added a revolutionary socialist strand that spoke to youth beyond the ashram.
- **AITUC (1920)** and mill strikes brought labour as a class, not only as a crowd.

Left, peasant, caste, and region

- **M. N. Roy**, the CPI's early years, and later the **Congress Socialist Party (1934)** gave a class reading of swaraj.
- Peasant leagues and **Bardoli (1928)** under Patel showed a landed-peasant base; Eka and other movements showed a poorer agrarian edge.
- Non-Brahmin, Self-Respect (**Periyar**), and depressed-class organising, including **Ambedkar's** independent path, expanded the social question inside and beside Congress.
- Women in pickets and Prabha-style publicity made gender a visible strand, still limited in leadership share.

Thereby the base

- From an urban professional Congress the movement became multi-class and multi-regional, though not equally deep in every jati and princely zone.
- The 1920s template - mass satyagraha plus rival ideologies - fed Civil Disobedience and 1942.

Flow diagram

Gandhi Khilafat mass -> National movement
Swarajists -> National movement
Left labour peasants -> National movement
Revolutionaries -> National movement
Caste gender region -> National movement

Conclusion

From the 1920s the national movement was a coalition of Gandhians, council-entry liberals, revolutionaries, leftists, peasants, labour, and anti-caste voices. Ideological variety was the method by which the social base grew. It also left unresolved class and caste files for the republic.

Facts & figures

Non-Cooperation 1920-22

First nationwide mass campaign that mixed Congress and Khilafat crowds.

AITUC 1920

All-India labour federation that put workers on the nationalist map.

Swaraj Party

Council-entry group after Gaya, expanding tactics inside the 1920s.

Bardoli 1928

Peasant satyagraha that showed a rural propertied base for Congress.

HSRA

Revolutionary strand that radicalised urban youth after Kakori and Lahore.

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