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Q12

Bring out the constructive programmes of Mahatma Gandhi during Non-Cooperation Movement and Civil Disobedience Movement.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2021 · 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

- Bring out the constructive programmes of **Mahatma Gandhi** during Non-Cooperation Movement and Civil Disobedience Movement
- Keep a 15-mark length

Revision summary

Non-Cooperation added khadi, national schools, panchayat, and Khilafat unity to the boycott.

Civil Disobedience kept khadi and prohibition and raised Harijan work after 1932.

Women's picketing and **Nai Talim** were part of the same constructive file.

The programme trained a nation of volunteers, not only protesters.

It left caste and communal wounds still open.

Introduction

Gandhi treated non-cooperation and civil disobedience as political withdrawal plus a constructive nation. The programmes were khadi, villages, communal unity, and the ending of untouchability, not only hartals.

Body

Non-Cooperation (1920-22)

- **Khadi and swadeshi:** spinning as daily politics; boycott of foreign cloth after the Punjab and Khilafat wrongs.
- **National education:** students left government schools; **Gujarat Vidyapith, Kashi Vidyapith**, and vidyapeeths tried a parallel syllabus.
- **Arbitration and panchayat:** settle disputes without colonial courts.
- **Hindu-Muslim unity** through the Khilafat alliance, and a temperance and untouchability plank in Congress resolutions.
- **Tilak Swaraj Fund** and volunteer corps funded the constructive side, not only the strike.

Civil Disobedience (1930-34)

- **Salt** was the symbol; constructive work continued as **khadi, prohibition**, and village sanitation in the Dandi year.

- **Harijan work intensified after 1932:** **Harijan Sevak Sangh**, tours, and temple-entry campaigns, even when **Gandhi** was in jail.
- **Women's** participation in picketing liquor and cloth shops was organised as a constructive public role, not a riot.
- **Basic education** (**Nai Talim**) ideas thickened in this decade, linking craft and literacy.

Why it mattered

- Constructive work trained cadres who could run ashrams, Congress offices, and later ministries.
- It answered the charge that satyagraha was only negation. **Hind Swaraj's** village remained the positive picture.
- **Limits:** khadi did not industrialise India; unity cracked in the 1920s and 1940s; caste humiliation outlived the tours.

Flow diagram

Non-Cooperation -> Khadi schools panchayat
Civil Disobedience -> Salt Harijan prohibition
Khadi schools panchayat -> Constructive nation
Salt Harijan prohibition -> Constructive nation

Conclusion

In both movements **Gandhi** paired boycott with khadi, schools, unity, and anti-untouchability. The constructive programme was the freedom movement's workshop. It did not finish social reform, but it made mass politics more than a street.

Facts & figures

Tilak Swaraj Fund

1921 fund that financed Congress constructive and political work.

Gujarat Vidyapith

National education institution in the non-cooperation years.

Harijan Sevak Sangh

1932 body for the anti-untouchability constructive drive.

Nai Talim

Gandhian basic education tying literacy to craft and village life.

Salt March 1930

Political spear of civil disobedience; constructive work ran in parallel in villages.

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