

**GS Foundation 2024: Modern India**  
**Handout 37: Civil Disobedience Movement**  
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*"Civil disobedience is not our problem. Our problem is civil obedience."*

Howard Zinn

*"The call of 1920 was a call for preparation. The call in 1930 is for engaging in the final conflict."*

Mahatma Gandhi

*"The Civil Disobedience Movement was a watershed moment in the Indian freedom struggle. It helped to unify the Indian people and to show the world that India was ready for independence."*

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

**Background:** The political environment in the country was getting over-heated. By 1928-29 the country was slowly but surely, moving towards a new mass movement.

- The Swaraj Party
- Simon Commission and Nehru Report
- A new upsurge was visible among the youth: Leftist leaders like Subhash Chandra Bose and Jawaharlal Nehru were spreading the idea of Purna Swaraj through the Indian Independence League.
- Return of Gandhi
- Ultimatum given by Calcutta Congress (1928): British to accept the Nehru report or be ready for another round of mass movement with the goal of Purna Swaraj.
- Lahore Conspiracy Case and death of Jatin Das
- Meerat Conspiracy Case
- Failure of Irwin Offer (Oct 2919)
- Impact of world economic depression on almost all sections of Indian society.
- Lahore Session of Congress (1929-30)

Thus, the stage was set for a new confrontation with the Government. Gandhi wrote a letter to Viceroy Irwin on 31<sup>st</sup> January 1930 presenting his **eleven demands**. He first wanted to negotiate with Viceroy before launching the movement.

1. 50% cuts in army expenses and civil service salaries
2. Total prohibition
3. Release of political prisoners
4. Reform in the C.I.D. It should stop spying on political leaders.
5. Change in the Arms Act allowing popular control of issue of fire-arm licenses.
6. Lowering of the rupee-sterling exchange ratio to 1:41
7. Textile protection
8. Reservation of coastal shipping for Indians
9. 5% Reduction in land revenue
10. Abolition of the Salt Tax and end of Government salt monopoly
11. Acceptance of Postal Reservation Bill

Many Congress leaders, including Jawaharlal Nehru, did not appreciate Gandhiji's proposal. The government also took a negative attitude to his proposal. After a lot of heart-searching, Gandhiji decided to launch the Salt Satyagraha.

In his letter to the Viceroy dated 2 March 1930, Gandhiji conveyed his decision and reiterated some of his earlier demands. And he made it clear that if no positive response came by 11 March 1930, he would proceed along with his Ashram co-workers to break the provisions of the salt laws.

#### **Gandhi's letter to Viceroy on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1930**

*And why do I regard the British rule as a curse? It has impoverished the dumb millions by a system of progressive exploitation, and by a ruinously **expensive** military and civil administration which the country can never afford. It has reduced us **politically** to serfdom. It has sapped the foundations of our **culture**. And, by the policy of cruel disarmament, it has degraded us **spiritually**.*

#### **Beginning of the movement: Dandi March**

On 12<sup>th</sup> March 1930, Gandhi, in association with 78 volunteers, started a 24 days march of 386 km from Sabarmati Ashram to Dandi coast. Based on Gandhi's principle of non-violence or Satyagraha, the march marked the inauguration of the civil disobedience movement.

*"Gandhi wanted this to be a long march, or pilgrimage perhaps, where his leisurely progress would enthuse people along the way and attract wider publicity too." Ramchandra Guha*



Thus, it wasn't simply a physical march; it was an attempt to establish an extensive communication with the people. It was a technique of mass mobilisation.

His Ashram inmates who accompanied him were drawn from different region and religions. In a word, it was a mini-India marching under the leadership of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. apostle of truth and non-violence. *"There were thirty-one marchers from Gujarat, thirteen from Maharashtra, lesser numbers from the United Provinces, Kerala, Punjab, and Sindh, with Tamilnad, Andhra, Karnataka, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa sending one man apiece. The diversity was social as well as geographical, for among the chosen marchers were many students and khadi workers, several 'untouchables', a few Muslims and one Christian"* (Ramchandra Guha). Even though women too wanted to be part of the march, Gandhi preferred to keep it restricted to men alone.

Newspapers of the day reported on how at every stop Gandhi was greeted by enthusiastic followers.

Gandhi reached Dandi on April 5. The following day (6<sup>th</sup> April), early morning he proceeded along with the other marchers to the sea, where he picked up lumps of natural salt lying in a small pit. The act was symbolic, but was hugely covered by the press, and was the beginning of several other acts of civil disobedience in other parts of India.

*“With this, I am shaking the foundations of the British Empire...Now that the technical or ceremonial breach of the Salt Law has been committed it is open to anyone who would take the risk of prosecution under the Salt Law to manufacture salt wherever he wishes and wherever it is convenient. My advice is that the workers should everywhere manufacture salt to make use of it and to instruct the villagers to do so”* Gandhi said.



Now the movement spread to different parts of India. The people joined the battle instantaneously, thousands defied the lawless law all over the country. On 5<sup>th</sup> May, Gandhi was arrested and taken to the Yerawada Central Jail. (He remained in the Central Jail without trial and was released unconditionally on 26 January 1931.)

#### **Why did Gandhi choose salt as the main issue?**

The **Salt Act, 1882** gave the British a monopoly in the manufacture and sale of salt. Even though salt was freely available on the coasts of India, Indians were forced to buy it from the colonisers. Gandhi decided that if there was any one product through which civil disobedience could be inaugurated, then it was salt.

The issue of salt suited to the Gandhian method of mass mobilisation. It proved to be a unifying factor between the rural poor and the urban intellectuals. For millions of rural poor, it was an economic issue. It was inhuman and unnecessary burden on them. On the other hand, it was an emotional issue for Indian intellectuals. So, by choosing salt as the major issue of the non-cooperation movement, Gandhi tried to bridge the gap between the two classes and created a united front against the British.

## First Phase of the CDM

### **Programs:**

Gandhi had formulated a well-planned programme for this movement such as the boycott of British clothes and educational institutions, violation of salt laws in different parts of the country, protests outside liquor shops and at the shops selling other intoxicants (women took part in large numbers in such protests), no-tax campaign in Ryotwari areas and no-chowkidari tax campaign in Zamindari regions etc.

### **Spread of the movement:**

The popularity gained by the march shook up the British government. It responded by arresting more than 95,000 people by March 31.

Gandhi had chosen Dharasana (May 1930, Gujarat) as the next site for salt satyagraha. However, before it could be executed, many Congress leaders, including Nehru, Patel as well as Kasturba were arrested. Gandhi had chosen **Abbas Tyabji** to lead but he too was arrested. Finally, it was **Sarojini Naidu, Maulana Azad, Pyarelal and Manilal** who led the brave and peaceful satyagraha at Dharasana.

American journalist **Webb Miller** was an eyewitness to the beating of satyagrahis with steel tipped lathis. He wrote that in his 18 years career as an international journalist he never saw such a determined non-violent agitation, where agitators were beaten mercilessly but they didn't lose courage. *"the satyagrahis faced blows with steel shod lathis on their bare heads and not one of them even raised his hands to protect his head. Each one of the satyagrahis went ahead till he was beaten unconscious and then another batch came facing the same fiery ordeal."* His report attracted international attention. As Louis Fischer later on commented: *"The British beat the Indians with batons and rifle butts. The Indians neither cringed nor retreated. That made England powerless and India invincible".*

The Salt Satyagraha inspired many such satyagrahas in different parts of India.

### **1. Salt Marches**

- a. In Bengal, volunteers led by **Satish Chandra Dasgupta** walked from Sodepur Ashram to the village of Mahisbathan to make salt.
- b. **K.F Nariman** in Bombay led another group of marchers to Haji Ali Point where they prepared salt at a nearby park.
- c. **Chakravarti Rajagopalachari** broke the salt law at Tanjore coast in Tamil Nadu. He led a march from Tiruchirapalli to Vedaranyam, on Tanjore coast. (Vedaranyam Salt March)
- d. **K. Kelappan** (the hero of Vaikom) led a march from Calicut/Kozhikode to Payyannur.

- e. In the **far North-East**, salt satyagrahis marched all the way from Sylhet in Assam to Noakhali on the Bengal coast for making salt.
- f. In **Andhra**, Satyagrahis marched from village to village, spreading the message of Swaraj to reach the coastal area for making salt.
- g. In Bihpur, Bhagalpur, a large crowd of satyagrahis were lathi charged, in which **Dr Rajendra Prasad** was seriously hurt.

## 2. Satyagraha at Salt-work

- a. A crowd of 15,000 carried away all the salt from **Wadala salt work** in a suburb of Bombay, despite deployment of heavily armed mounted police.
- b. In Karnataka, a crowd of 10,000 satyagrahis invaded **Sanikatta salt-work** and faced lathi blows and police firings.

Altogether, more than one hundred people lost their lives and more than a thousand were wounded. However, the

movement was not confined only to breaking of the salt laws alone. People also joined, rather enthusiastically, the **other programmes of the movement**. The illegal manufacture and sale of salt was accompanied by the **boycott of foreign cloth and liquor**. What started as salt satyagraha soon grew into mass satyagraha.

1. In response to the call of the Congress by February 1930, 172 **members of legislatures had resigned their memberships**, including 21 from Central Assembly and the rest from the provinces like Bengal (34), Bihar and Orissa (31) CP (20), Madras (20), UP (60) Assam (12) Bombay (6) and Punjab (2) and Burma (1).
2. In **Gujarat** a number of **village Patwaris** relinquished their posts and joined the movement.
3. Farber in **Calcutta**, **JM Sen Gupta**, the Mayor of Calcutta, publicly read out from seditious literature in **defiance of the law of sedition** and invited imprisonment.
4. **No revenue campaign** was organized in those areas where peasants were paying land revenue directly to government. **No rent campaign** was organized in Zamindari area.
5. **Forest laws** were flouted in Maharashtra, Karnataka, and the Central Provinces. The provisions of Indian forest Act, 1927 had imposed a number of restrictions on the activities of forest dwellers. They could no longer use forest produce freely.
6. Peasants in Bengal refused to pay **land and chowkidari taxes**. Anti-Chowkidari tax movement was particularly strong in East India.
7. **No rent and no municipal board tax campaign** was also organized.



In Allahabad, Motilal Nehru gave away his palatial house, Anand Bhawan, which was renamed Swaraj Bhavan, to the country. He even tried to make salt in the streets of Allahabad.

Jawaharlal Nehru was arrested on 14 April and gave his clarion call to the people: "Who lives if India dies and who dies if India lives."

8. **Traders and businessmen** also participated by boycotting foreign clothes, evidenced by the fall in the imports of British clothes from 26 million yards in 1929 to 13.7 million in 1930, Revenue on liquor excise also went down in a significant measure.
9. One of the marked features of the movement was the **large-scale participation of women**. They particularly took the lead in **picketing liquor shops**. They launched their own '**Purda Hatao**' **Movement** in which the women, drawn from all sections of society, participated.
10. **Assam**: Agitations were organized against **Cunningham Circular**.
11. **Nagaland**: Nationalist agitations were headed by **Rani Gaidinliu**. She was a young tribal girl of about 15 years of age. She led the agitation from the front. She was arrested during CDM and was released only after independence. The title of Rani was given to her by Pandit Nehru.



**Flag Satyagraha:** Flag agitations were organized by Indian Nationalist throughout India.

1. At **Machlipatnam**, the flag agitations were led by **Thota Narasayya Naidu**.
2. At **Calicut** the flag agitations were led by **P. Krishna Pillai**.
3. At **Surat**, kids organized **flag agitations** in their unique manner.

Quite surprisingly, there were **three violent incidents** during this movement-

3. Revolutionary activist, **Surya Sen**, along with his 5 associates, captured the **Chittagong** armoury on 18th April 1930.
4. On 23rd Oct 1930, when **Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan** was arrested at Peshawar, the volunteers of massively successful **Khudai Khidmatgar**, called **Red Shirts**, turned violent against the police.
5. On 7th May, the **mill workers of Solapur** went on strike on a violent note. Labours paralyzed the entire admin. They ran parallel government in city from May 7 to 16.

Acts of violence broke out in Calcutta, Karachi, and Gujarat as well, but unlike what happened during the non-cooperation movement, Gandhi refused to suspend the civil disobedience movement this time. It means that he realised by this time that a mass movement cannot be completely non-violent.

#### **Participation in the movement:**

- Larger participation of farmers, women, and capitalist class in comparison to Non-cooperation Movement.
- Unlike Non-cooperation Movement this movement did not enjoy the support of Hindu-Muslims amity. Declining participation of intellectuals, students, and workers in comparison to Non-cooperation Movement.

## Political Attitudes

- The **socialists** supported the movement wholeheartedly. The **communists** also supported the Congress as at this time, they were working from within the Congress and trying to tilt its policies.
- Some congress leaders known as **New Swarajists** refused to resign from the Legislative Council. NC Kelkar, Satyamurti and M.A Ansari were prominent among them.
- The Nationalist **section was Muslim League** supported CDM, but rest of the didn't participate.

### Interlude: Stalemate from both the sides

The movement affected India's soul despite the government's repressive actions, and it sent a clear message to the authorities that the Indian people were no longer prepared to live as slaves. The administration was also alarmed since it had not anticipated such broad public backing, despite its outwardly aggressive postures and oppressive methods.

Lord Irwin started to talk in terms of holding the RTC by the end of 1930. The services of liberal leaders like **Tej Bahadur Sapru** and **M R Jayakar** were enlisted to work out a compromise formula, leading to a truce. But nothing came out of their efforts as both sides stuck to their guns. Hence the struggle continued.

The **First Round Table Conference** was held in Nov 1930 – Jan 1931, in London, which was boycotted by the Congress. As the Movement was losing its momentum towards the end of 1930, some rethinking was also probably being done by the Congress leadership. Madan Mohan Malaviya, Tej Bahadur Sapru and Shrinivas Shastri played behind-the-scenes roles to work out a new rapprochement between the Congress and the Government.

In January 1931, Gandhi was released unconditionally from the Jail.

### **Major provisions of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact (March 5, 1931):**

After protracted negotiations between Gandhiji and the Viceroy, an agreement was reached between the two on 5 March 1931. Gandhiji agreed to discontinue the civil disobedience movement and participate in the Round Table Conferences, on Irwin's acceptance to withdraw the Salt tax and ordinances and cases against the Congress and other nationalists.

- Major Provisions:
  - All declarations regarding all associations, including the Indian National Congress, making them **unlawful** during the movement were to be taken back.
  - Release of **prisoners** of CDM who had not participated in violent acts.
  - All **finances** not yet realised were to be remitted. All **moveable property** seized during the movement would be returned. To return the seized **immovable property** if that property had not been sold to a third party.



- Withdrawal of draconian **ordinances**.
- All **proceedings** moved by the Government against all legal practitioners will be dropped, except those which relate to the acts of direct violence. However, proceedings/prosecutions against police and armed personnel would not be covered by this clause.
- All those who had **resigned** from their posts during the movement and wished to revert to their jobs would be reinstated, except relating to all those posts which had been filled up on a permanent basis.
- Right to protest near liquor shops in a peaceful manner.
- Right to make salt for their own use to people living on the seashore/coastal areas (not elsewhere)
- In return, as per this pact, Congress agreed to
  - Halt the Civil Disobedience movement.
  - Join the Second Round Table Conference.

### **Judgement on Gandhi-Irwin Pact:**

Many people on the side of the Government as well as that of the Congress were not happy with the terms of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact.

- **British conservative elements** took it as surrender on the part of Lord Irwin.
  - British Conservative leader Winston Churchill said: *"it was alarming and nauseating to see Gandhiji-late Inner Temple Lawyer, now a seditious fakir, striding half-naked, up to the steps of the Viceroy Palace to parley on equal terms with the representatives of the King-Emperor."*
- **Many Indians, including the Congressmen**, were dismayed by Gandhiji's consent to withdraw the movement at a very critical stage without achieving its basic objectives. There was discontent among the peasants as the movement was withdrawn in the mid-course.
  - Subhas Chandra Bose looked at it as an *act of surrender* on the part of Mahatma Gandhi.
  - Jawaharlal Nehru recorded in his autobiography, *"So I lay and pondered on that March night and in my heart, there was a great emptiness as if something precious had gone beyond recall... this is the way the world ends, not with a bang but with a whimper."*

Despite opposition, the Pact was ratified both by the Working Committee and the Karachi Congress subsequently. In a way, it seems to be a major success of the Congress because for the first time Congress had bargained with the government on equal level. It was the first, and perhaps only, formally negotiated and signed pact between the Mahatma and the Viceroy of India. Besides, it also underlined the centrality of the Indian National Congress in general and that of the Mahatma in any future political settlement for India.



However, further developments prove that this pact could not prove durable. Gandhi himself was deeply disappointed by the British government's approach in the Round Table Conference and then he had to restart the Civil Disobedience Movement.

Meanwhile, Congress held **Karachi Session, (26-31 March 1931)**

- President: Sardar Patel

The Karachi resolution on fundamental rights and economic programme was nothing short of historic. Lahore Congress (1929) committed to the idea of Purna Swaraj, Karachi Congress gave a concrete shape to it.

### **Resolutions:**

- The Congress expressed its admiration of the bravery and sacrifice of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru who were executed on March 23, 1931, while also voicing its disapproval of political violence. It declared the execution of the three young men to be an 'act of wanton vengeance.'
  - Resolution on the martyrdom of **Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi**, a staunch secularist, who had been earlier assassinated during communal riots at Kanpur in 1931.
- The resolution reiterated the Congress Party's **commitment to 'Purna Swaraj.'**
- In addition to **fundamental rights** which protected **civil liberties**, the Resolution for the first time put forward a **list of socio-economic principles/rights** that the Indian state had to adhere to.
  - Wording: *This Congress is of the opinion that to enable the masses to appreciate what 'Swaraj,' as conceived by the Congress, will mean to them, it is desirable to state the position of the Congress in a manner easily understood by them. In order to end the exploitation of the masses, political freedom must include real economic freedom of the starving millions.*
- The Karachi resolution was in three parts.
  - **Part I: the fundamental rights and duties of the people**
    - Rights of freedom of expression, free association, peaceful assembly, freedom of conscience and religion.
    - Right to property and their free movement
    - Due process of law
    - Abolition of capital punishment
    - The state was to desist from offering any titles.
    - Free and compulsory free education.
    - System of universal adult franchise
    - Right to bear arms subject to public regulations
    - Citizen military training for national defence
    - Access to public utilities for all castes
    - Under Gandhian influence, it prohibited intoxicating drinks and drugs.



- **Part II: Labour**

- Minimum wages, better working conditions, including regulated hours of work.
- Women workers were assured of maternity leave and equality in respect of wages, etc.
- Children were to be barred from being employed.
- Peasants and working class were given the right to form unions for the protection of their interest.
- Small peasants were assured of reduction of land revenue and rent and their exemption, if found necessary.

- **Part III: economic policy and programme**

- To protect textile and other indigenous industries.
- State to own key industries and services, mineral resources, railways, waterways, shipping and other means of public transport.
- Relief in respect of agricultural indebtedness and control of usury.

Thus, the Karachi resolution presented a concrete and comprehensive picture of citizen's rights in respect of civil, political, and economic liberty.

### **Second RTC (Sept-December 1931)**

Mahatma Gandhi agreed to participate in the Second Round Table Conference which was to be held in London from 7 September 1931. However, **a lot of political change had taken place between the period of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact (March 1931) and the Second Round Table Conference (September 1931).** Thus, Gandhiji started having doubts whether any useful purpose would be served by his participation in the Second Round Table Conference in the light of the divided nature of the national movement



and the new hostile attitude of the British officials. *"I have often wondered myself what we are going to do at the Conference when we know that there is such a gulf between what we want and what has been as yet offered at the Conference. But the considerations of a satyagrahi decided me."* – Mahatma Gandhi

### **In London:**

The main problem was the **Hindu-Muslim** problem. Despite his best efforts and his utmost sincerity, Mahatma Gandhiji could not achieve a breakthrough on the **issue of communal representation**. In the Minority committee, Gandhiji made a powerful speech in his attempt to allay the fears of minorities and pleaded with them to work unitedly for the independence of India. But he failed to persuade them.

Also, **other minorities like scheduled castes, the Anglo-Indians, Christians and non-Brahmin groups** also joined hands with the Muslims to assert that without adequate safeguard of their interests, no constitution for India would be acceptable to them. As the minority problem was not being solved, the conference turned out to be a big flop.

**Reason for the failure and Gandhi's disappointment in the Second Round Table Conference:**

- The composition of the Muslim delegates and other representatives was such that they were more committed to the Muslim cause rather than the cause of independence.
- The Labour Party Government, primarily responsible for the First Round Table Conference and the Gandhi-Irwin Agreement, had been replaced by the national Government which was virtually dominated by the conservatives.
- Gandhi was deeply disappointed when he felt that the British were treating the Congress like any other interest group or pressure group.



Thus, the Second Round Table Conference almost ended in a fiasco. This failure provoked Gandhiji to say that the '*parting of the way*' had come.

The Prime Minister declared that the communal difference would not be allowed to come in the way of further constitutional arrangements. But he also made it clear that if no agreement among the different sections of Indian people could be reached on the minority issue, *he would announce his own award on it.*

## Back to India: Revival of CDM (Second Phase)

After returning to India, Gandhi realised that the Indian political scenario had changed under the **new viceroy, Lord Willingdon** (Nov 1931). He violated Irwin Pact by repressing Congress and other nationalists. Instead, he introduced a **policy of extreme repression**.

The **Gandhi-Irwin Pact**, for all practical purposes, **was dead**. All attempts by Gandhiji to revive its spirit failed as he was **not even given an interview by the new Viceroy**. While the old dispensation treated Gandhiji and the Congress with respect, the new one was out to humiliate them by showing them their place. Thus, the Congress was hardly left with any other alternative but to revive the mass Civil Disobedience Movement with renewed vigour. Hence, **Gandhi revived the civil disobedience movement** on 4 Jan 1932.

**The renewed movement invited the worst repression from the government.** More than that, there was fundamental change in the attitude of the Government after the collapse of the Second Round Table Conference

Within a few months the government apparently crushed the movement with all such barbaric measures. The movement continued, though its pace slowed down by the later part of 1932.

Now, when the movement was likely to die, to make the situation worse, the then **Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald's** government announced a scheme, subsequently known as **communal award** (16 Aug 1932). British Government announced that members to the provincial legislatures would be elected from separate electorates demarcated on a communal basis. This award was a big blow to Indian nationhood and was designed to further fragmentation.



(a) It extended the principle of separate electorate to many Indian religious and caste groups. Thus, **each community was to be treated as a separate constituency** for the purposes of election for its representatives.

Ten communities were identified as minorities: (i) Muslims, (ii) Depressed classes, (iii) Backward areas representatives, (iv) Indian Christians, (v) Anglo-Indians, (vi) Europeans, (vii) commerce and industry, (viii) Land holders, (ix) university and (x) the labour. However, the award did not cover the Central Legislature



(b) Seat allotment

The actual distribution of seats in the provincial legislatures differed from province to province. Careful consideration was given by the Award to safeguard the British imperial

interests. Out of 1488 seats in all the 9 provinces, Hindus got only 776 (715 general seats +61 for the depressed classes) which was 52% of the total seats, whereas the Muslims got 489 (around 33%) when the population was not more than 25% of the population. Thus, the British game becomes clearer.

(3) It was more of an order rather than an award as the Congress Party was never a party to rendering any authorisation to McDonald in this regard. Perhaps, this is why it was made clear by him that in case Indian political groups would succeed in finding an all-agreed scheme, the award would be withdrawn and suitably substituted by it.

Gandhiji was deeply concerned about it, and he reacted sharply. On September 20, 1932, Gandhiji went on a fast unto death protesting a separate electorate for Harijans. He said, *'separation would kill all prospects of reform'; 'when a man relies on a support, to that extent he weakens himself.'*

Finally, it was resolved in September 1932 through the **Poona Pact**. With the persuasive intervention of some prominent Indian leaders including Madan Mohan Malaviya, the Poona Pact was signed with Dr Ambedkar, the leader of the depressed classes.

- Central and Provincial elections
  - **The concept of separate electorate would be discarded.** Instead, seats for the depressed classes would be reserved in general electorate, which would be joint in nature.
  - There would be 148 reserved seats in different provincial legislatures instead of 71 as provided under the Communal Award. In Central legislature, 18% of the seats allotted to the general electorate in British India would be reserved for them.
- This system of representation for the depressed classes (for both provincial and Central Legislatures) would continue till it would be terminated by the mutual agreement of the communities concerned.
- Other provisions
  - Every effort would be made to secure fair representation of the depressed classes regarding the election to **local bodies** as well as in their appointment to **public services**.
  - An adequate sum, out of the **educational fund of every province**, would be earmarked for providing educational facilities to the members of the depressed classes.

This agreement was signed not only by prominent national leaders like **Madan Mohan Malaviya, C Rajagopalachari, Rajendra Prasad, and GD Birla**, but also by prominent depressed classes leaders like **BR Ambedkar and MC Rajah**. The British Prime Minister immediately accepted these points of the Poona Agreement, which were relevant to the award already announced by him.

On the termination of the fast on 26 September 1932, Gandhiji turned his attention towards the problems faced by the Harijans.

First RTC	Nov 1930 – Jan 1931	Congress boycotted
Second RTC	Sept 1931 – Dec 1931	Congress attended
Third RTC	Nov 1932 – Dec 1932	Congress boycotted.
Soon after, in April 1933, a joint parliamentary committee was appointed which submitted its report on 19 December 1934. Finally, a Bill was introduced in the British Parliament which was passed on 4 August 1935 and became the <b>India Act of 1935</b> .		

### Winding up of the CDM:

The next **Congress Session was in Calcutta (Sept 1933)** presided over by **Nellie Sengupta**.

- Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, the President elect of the Congress, was arrested before the Calcutta Session of 1933. Nellie Sengupta was elected in his place, thus becoming the third woman, and the second European-born woman to be elected.
- In the Congress, resolutions were passed reiterating complete Independence as the goal of the Congress, endorsing the revival of Civil Disobedience, expressing complete faith in Gandhiji's leadership and reaffirming deep faith in non-violence.



This was the period when a new thinking was growing in a section of the Congressmen that there was a need once again for the entry into the Council. Ultimately, the **Civil Disobedience Movement was withdrawn** on 20 May 1934 and the **Congressmen were permitted Council entry**.

### **Bombay Session of Congress, October 1934**

President: Rajendra Prasad

- **Major changes in the Congress constitution:**
  - Wearing of Khadi was made a necessary criterion for elective membership.
  - The delegates were to be elected at the rate of 1 per every 500 primary members, thereby making them representatives of the people.
- Jawaharlal Nehru moved the **resolution for convening a Constituent Assembly** to frame a suitable Constitution for free India at the Bombay session.
- Owing to the increasing difference of opinions between the tactics of Gandhi and Congress, **Gandhi's retirement from Congress as member was declared at this session**. He declared, *"I am a dead weight in the Congress now."*

Gandhiji started vigorously the **Harijan Upliftment Program** and went on a tour of ten months from November 1933 in connection with Harijan work.



### Did the Civil Disobedience Movement fail? (Critical evaluation)

Even though the movement didn't succeed in achieving its declared objective of complete independence nor did it immediately lead to self-rule or dominion status, we cannot take the entire CDM as a failed movement.

- **The massive support for the Congress** reached new heights. With it, the **social base** of the national movement was greatly widened. **Its influence in the rural area** was clearly visible.
- The movement provided an **opportunity to younger generation of congress to participate** activity in anti-British struggle. Young leaders like Pandit J.L Nehru and Sarojini Naidu played an important role in the movement.
- The movement manifested itself in the **radical form in certain areas** viz., NWFP, Nagaland
- The refusal of the soldiers of Gorkha regiment to open fire on peaceful agitations of Peshawar clearly indicates that spirit of Nationalist was no longer limited to civilian population only. The **British could no longer rely on blind support of Indian armed forces.**
- **Three major points**
  - Indian, British and world opinion increasingly recognized the legitimate claims of Gandhi and the Congress for Indian Independence.
  - The British also realized that control over India now depended completely on the consent of the Indians. The pressure builds by CDM forced the British to take Indian Nationalist leaders seriously. The round table conference granted Indian leaders a position of equality with British Government.
  - Congress received unprecedented public support amid this movement. Hence, it played a major role in the success of the Congress in the election of 1937.