



Mains Practice Question

Q. Salt satyagraha was more than just a symbolic act of breaking the salt law, that shook an empire. Examine (150 words)

05 Apr, 2019 GS Paper 1 History

Approach:

- Give brief introduction by mentioning chronological facts about salt satyagraha.
- Bring out the essence of satyagraha by linking it to broader Gandhian methods.
- Give conclusion.

Answer:

Introduction:

- In beginning of 1930 Congress working committee invested Gandhiji with all powers to launch Civil Disobedience Movement.
- Gandhiji decided to make salt the central formula for the movement as there was no other article like salt, outside water, by taxing which the government can reach the starving millions. It was the most inhuman tax according to him.

Body

Salt satyagraha was more than just a symbolic act of breaking the salt law, because it is:

- **An act of civil disobedience:** The violation of the law was seen as a symbol of the Indian people's resolve not to live under British-made laws and therefore under British rule. Gandhi asked the people to make salt from sea water in their homes and violate the salt law.
- **A Mass Movement:** It was an act to mobilize masses by choosing to oppose the tax which impacted poorest of poorest. By choosing a tax which was non divisive unlike no rent campaign which pitted farmers against landlords, Gandhi ensured mass participation.
- **Upheled principle of self help:** It was an act to allow people to generate important income for the poor through self-help by making salt. Gandhiji had already popularized Khadi as a source of income generation for rural poor. By making salt a centerpiece of civil disobedience, he reiterated the importance of self help especially for communities living along the coast.
- **A non violent satyagraha:** Salt satyagraha underlined the Gandhian approach to social movement and protest against injustices. Dandi march has been etched as an example and method of non-violent struggle. Salt satyagraha through simple act of making salt upheld the principle of non violent struggle for independence.

Conclusion:

The Gandhian strategy is the combination of truth, sacrifice, non- violence, selfless service and cooperation and Salt satyagraha brought these characteristics of and shook the British empire.

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