

## SECTION 2: SOURCES ANALYSIS

Refer to the sources on this sheet when answering Question 2.

### The Salt March

As part of India's push for independence from Great Britain, Mahatma Gandhi advocated a non-violent civil disobedience campaign to defy British laws and authority. The campaign included a 380-kilometre march beginning in March 1930 that protested against the British law banning Indians from making, collecting, or selling salt. At the end of that march, on 6 April, Gandhi and thousands of his followers broke that law by picking up salt on a beach in Dandi, western India. Great Britain granted independence to India in 1947.

SOURCE 1 — A photograph of Gandhi and some of his followers during the Salt March to Dandi



The Hindu Photo Library in Krishnaswamy, MN 2010, 'Walk of force', *The Hindu*, viewed 5 July 2019, www.thehindu.com

SOURCE 2 — Excerpts from Gandhi's letter to Viceroy<sup>1</sup>, Lord Irwin, on 2 March 1930

... my ambition is no less than to convert the British people through non-violence and thus make them see the wrong they have done to India. I do not seek to harm your people. I want to serve them even as I want to serve my own ...

... on the 11th day of this month I shall proceed with such co-workers of the Ashram<sup>2</sup> as I can take to disregard the provisions of [the] Salt laws. I regard this tax to be the most iniquitous<sup>3</sup> of all from the poor man's standpoint. As the Independence Movement is essentially for the poorest in the land, the beginning will be made with this evil. The wonder is, that we have submitted to the cruel monopoly for so long. It is, I know, open to you to frustrate my design by arresting me. I hope there will be tens of thousands ready in a disciplined manner to take up the work after me ...

<sup>1</sup>a person who exercises authority on behalf of their sovereign

<sup>2</sup>a community sharing common beliefs

<sup>3</sup>grossly unfair

Khipple, RL (ed) 1947, *Famous letters of Mahatma Gandhi*, The Indian Printing Works, Lahore, India, pp 65–7

SOURCE 3 — Excerpts from a report of events at Dandi in the British newspaper *The Times*

Mr. Gandhi stooped down, scooped up a handful of sand and salt water ...

The great deed was done, at least from the technical point of view, for he had 'collected salt' within the meaning of the Salt Tax Act.

Shortly afterwards the 82 volunteers who had marched with the Mahatma ... received orders to carry on, and proceeded in military formation to a neighbouring creek, where the salt deposits are thicker than on the beach ...

There was no political demonstration of any kind and no visible elation ... There was not a single policeman in sight, and I have the best reasons to believe that orders were issued not to interfere with the proceedings. The martyrs<sup>4</sup> therefore went about their job unmartyred, save so far as a hot sun and brackish<sup>5</sup> drinking-water may constitute martyrdom. It all seemed very futile<sup>6</sup>, very childish, and, above all, very unreal.

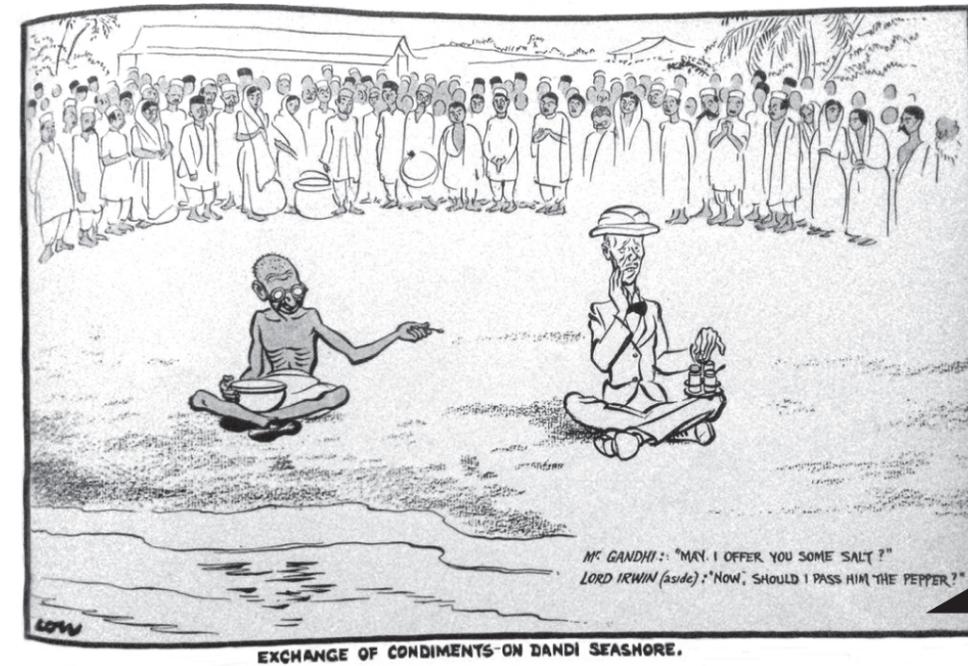
<sup>4</sup>people who suffer for adhering to their beliefs

<sup>5</sup>slightly salty

<sup>6</sup>pointless

The Times 1930, 'Mr Gandhi: salt campaign opened', *The Times*, viewed 5 July 2019, www.thetimes.co.uk/archive

SOURCE 4 — A cartoon published in a British newspaper



Low, D 1930, 'Exchange of condiments on Dandi seashore', *Evening Standard*, 8 April

Mr Gandhi:  
"May I offer you  
some salt?"

Lord Irwin (aside):  
"Now, should I pass  
him the pepper?"

SOURCE 5 — An Indian historian's view of the British Government's response to the Salt March

It was becoming increasingly clear that the Government's gamble — that non-interference with the movement would result in its spending itself out, that Gandhiji's<sup>7</sup> salt strategy would fail to take off — had not paid off. In fact, the Government ... was, as Gandhiji had predicted, 'puzzled and perplexed'. The dilemma in which it found itself was a dilemma that the Gandhian strategy of non-violent civil disobedience was designed to create. The Government was placed in a classic 'damned if you do, damned if you don't' fix, i.e., if it did not suppress a movement that brazenly defied its laws, its administrative authority would be seen to be undermined and its control would be shown to be weak, and if it did suppress it, it would be seen as a brutal, anti-people administration that used violence on non-violent agitators.

<sup>7</sup>a term of respect for Gandhi

Chandra, B et al. 1989, *India's struggle for independence: 1857–1947*, Penguin Books (India) Ltd., Delhi, pp 273–4

SOURCE 6 — An American historian's view of Gandhi's achievements

Gandhi did two things in 1930: he made the British people aware that they were cruelly subjugating<sup>8</sup> India, and he gave Indians the conviction that they could, by lifting their heads and straightening their spines, lift the yoke<sup>9</sup> from their shoulders. After that, it was inevitable that Britain should some day refuse to rule India and that India should some day refuse to be ruled.

<sup>8</sup>controlling

<sup>9</sup>heavy burden

Fischer, L 1951, *The life of Mahatma Gandhi*, Jonathan Cape, London, p 300

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Sources to accompany the 2019 Modern History examination