



Sabarmati Ashram Redevelopment Project

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Why in News?

Recently, on the **94th anniversary of the Dandi March**, the Prime Minister of India laid the foundation for the Sabarmati Ashram Redevelopment Project in **Ahmedabad**.

- The Sabarmati Ashram Redevelopment Project is a Rs 1,200 crore initiative to restore, conserve, and rebuild the original **Sabarmati Ashram founded by [Mahatma Gandhi](#)**.

What is the Historical Significance of the Sabarmati Ashram?

▪ Establishment:

- Founded in 1917 by Mahatma Gandhi, the Sabarmati Ashram is situated on the **western bank of the Sabarmati River**, near the village of Juna Vadaj in Ahmedabad.
 - Gandhi set up five settlements during his lifetime, two in South Africa (**Phoenix Settlement** in Natal, and **Tolstoy Farm** outside Johannesburg), and three in India.
 - Gandhi's first Ashram in India was established in the **Kochrab area of Ahmedabad** in 1915, and the others are **Sabarmati Ashram (Ahmedabad)**, and **Sevagram Ashram (in Wardha)**.
- It is currently managed by the Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust (SAPMT).

▪ Role in India's Independence Movement:

- The ashram served as a base for **Gandhi's socio-political activities** and experiments with truth and non-violence.
 - It witnessed the launch of several seminal movements, including the **[Dandi March in 1930](#)**.
- Apart from the Dandi March, Gandhiji also launched the **[Champaran Satyagraha \(1917\)](#)**, the **Ahmedabad mills strike and Kheda Satyagraha (1918)**, the **Khadi movement (1918)**, the **[Rowlatt Act](#)** and **[Khilafat Movements \(1919\)](#)**, and the **[Non-Cooperation movement \(1920\)](#)** while living in Sabarmati.
- **[Vinoba Bhave](#)** lived in a cottage at Sabarmati Ashram called "Vinoba Kutir".

▪ Architectural and Philosophical Significance:

- Gandhi designed the ashram himself, embodying simplicity, self-sufficiency, and communal living.
- Constructed using local materials and traditional techniques, the ashram exemplified Gandhi's principles of sustainability and harmony with nature.

▪ Legacy and Symbolism:

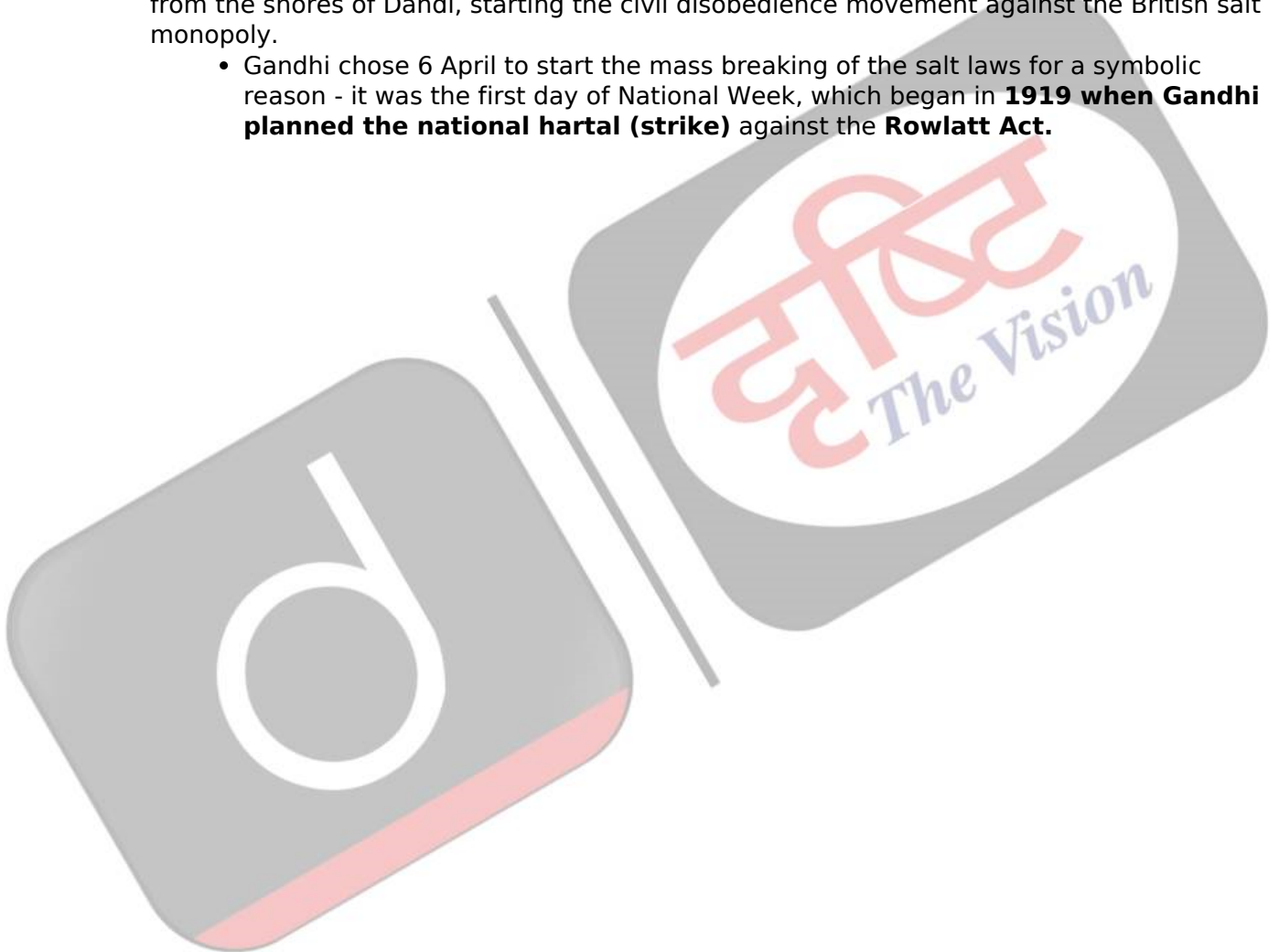
- The Sabarmati Ashram stands as a testament to Gandhi's enduring legacy and his pivotal role in India's freedom struggle.
- It remains a pilgrimage site for admirers of Gandhian philosophy, offering insights into his life, teachings, and principles.

What is the Dandi March?

▪ Origins:

- The tradition of **making salt in India dates back to ancient times**, primarily carried out by farmers, who were often referred to as **salt farmers**.
 - Over time, **salt became a commercial commodity**, and the British imposed a salt tax, making it a symbol of **colonial exploitation**.
- Mahatma Gandhi recognized the **salt tax as a particularly oppressive** measure and saw it as an opportunity to mobilise the masses in a **non-violent protest against British rule**.
- On March 2, 1930, Mahatma Gandhi wrote a letter to **Lord Irwin, the Viceroy of India**, informing him of his intention to break the salt law as an act of civil disobedience.
- The Dandi March, also known as the **Salt Satyagraha or Salt March**, marked a pivotal moment in the country's fight for independence from British colonial rule.
- **Dandi March:**
 - The Dandi March commenced from the **Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad on March 12, 1930**, with Mahatma Gandhi leading.
 - The 24-day march spanned four districts and passed through 48 villages.
 - On April 6, 1930, Gandhi symbolically broke the salt law by picking up a handful of salt from the shores of Dandi, starting the civil disobedience movement against the British salt monopoly.
 - Gandhi chose 6 April to start the mass breaking of the salt laws for a symbolic reason - it was the first day of National Week, which began in **1919 when Gandhi planned the national hartal (strike)** against the **Rowlatt Act**.

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Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi



“The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.”

Brief Description

Birth: 2nd October 1869, Porbandar (Gujarat).

2nd October is observed as **International Day of Non-Violence**.

Profile: Lawyer, Politician, Social activist, Writer and led Nationalist Movement.

Father of the Nation (first called by Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose).

Ideology: Believed in the ideas of non-violence, Truth, Honesty, Care for Mother Nature, Compassion, Welfare of Down-trodden etc.

Political Mentor: Gopal Krishna Gokhale

Death: Shot dead by Nathuram Godse (30th January, 1948).

30th January is observed as **Martyrs' Day**

Nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize five times.



Gandhi in South Africa (1893-1915)

Used satyagraha against racist regime (Native Africans and Indians were discriminated).

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) is celebrated every year on 9th January, to commemorate his return from South Africa.

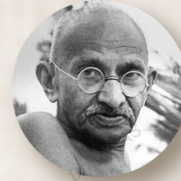
Contribution in India's Freedom Struggle

Small-scale movements like Champaran Satyagraha (1917)—First Civil Disobedience, Ahmedabad Mill Strike (1918)—First Hunger Strike, and Kheda Satyagraha (1918)—First Non-Cooperation.

Nationwide Mass Movements: Against Rowlatt Act (1919), Non-Cooperation Movement (1920-22), Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-34), Quit India Movement (1942).

Gandhi-Irwin Pact (1931): Between Gandhi and Lord Irwin that marked the end of a period of civil disobedience.

Poona Pact (1932): Between Gandhi and **B.R. Ambedkar**; this abandoned the idea of separate electorates for the depressed classes (Communal Award).



Books Written

Hind Swaraj, My Experiments with Truth (Autobiography)

Weeklies

Harijan, Navjivan, Young India, Indian Opinion.

Gandhi Peace Prize

is given by India for social, economic, and political transformation through Gandhian methods.

“Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.”

“You must not lose faith in humanity. Humanity is an ocean; if a few drops of the ocean are dirty, the ocean does not become dirty”

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Question (PYQ)

Prelims

Q1. Who among the following is associated with 'Songs from Prison', a translation of ancient Indian religious lyrics in English? (2021)

- (a) Bal Gangadhar Tilak
- (b) Jawaharlal Nehru
- (c) Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi
- (d) Sarojini Naidu

Ans: (c)

Q2. With reference to the British colonial rule in India, consider the following statements: (2019)

1. Mahatma Gandhi was instrumental in the abolition of the system of 'indentured labour'.
2. In Lord Chelmsford's 'War Conference', Mahatma Gandhi did not support the resolution on recruiting Indians for World War.
3. Consequent upon the breaking of Salt Law by Indian people, the Indian National Congress was declared illegal by the colonial rulers.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) 1 and 2 only
- (b) 1 and 3 only
- (c) 2 and 3 only
- (d) 1, 2 and 3

Ans: (b)

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/sabarmati-ashram-redevelopment-project>