



Gopal Krishna Gokhale

For Prelims: Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Indian National Congress.

For Mains: Indian Modern History, Important Personalities.

Why in News?

The Prime Minister of India paid tribute to Gopal Krishna Gokhale on his Jayanti.

- Gopal Krishna Gokhale was a **great social reformer and educationist** who provided exemplary leadership to India's freedom movement.

What do we know about Gopal Krishna Gokhale?

- **Birth:** 9th May 1866 in Kotluk village in present-day Maharashtra (then part of the Bombay Presidency).
- **Ideology:**
 - Gokhale worked towards social empowerment, expansion of education, struggle for freedom in India for three decades and rejected the use of reactionary or revolutionary ways.



- **Role in Colonial Legislatures:**

- **Between 1899 and 1902**, he was a member of the **Bombay Legislative Council** followed by work at the **Imperial Legislative Council from 1902 till his death (1915)**.
- At the Imperial legislature, Gokhale played a key role in framing the **Morley-Minto reforms of 1909**.
- **Role in INC:**
 - He was **associated with the Moderate Group of [Indian National Congress](#) (joined in 1889)**.
 - He became **president of INC in 1905 in Banaras session**.
 - This was the time when bitter differences had arisen between his group of **'Moderates'** and the **'Extremists'** led by [Lala Lajpat Rai](#) and [Bal Gangadhar Tilak](#) among others. The two factions **split at the Surat session of 1907**.
 - Despite the ideological difference, **in 1907**, he intensely **campaigns for the release of Lala Lajpat Rai**, who was imprisoned that year by the British at Mandalay in present-day Myanmar.
- **Related Societies and Other Works:**
 - He **established the Servants of India Society in 1905** for the expansion of Indian education.
 - He was **also associated with the Sarvajanik sabha journal** started by Govind Ranade.
 - In 1908, Gokhale **founded the Ranade Institute of Economics**.
 - He started English weekly newspaper, **The Hitavada** (The people's paper).
- **Mentor to Gandhi:**
 - As a liberal nationalist, he is **regarded by [Mahatma Gandhi](#) as his political guru**.
 - Gandhi wrote a book in Gujarati dedicated to the leader titled **'Dharmatma Gokhale'**.

What is Morley-Minto Reforms 1909?

- The reforms included the **admission of Indians to the Secretary of State's council**, to the viceroy's executive council, and to the executive councils of Bombay and Madras, and the **introduction of an elected element into legislative councils with provision for separate electorates for Muslims**.
 - The reforms were regarded by Indian nationalists as too cautious, and the provision of separate electorates for Muslims was resented by Hindu.
- The **legislative councils at the Centre and the provinces** were increased in size.
 - The Act increased the maximum **additional membership of the Imperial Legislative Council from 16 to 60**.
- The legislative councils at the Centre and the provinces were to have **four categories of members as follows:**
 - **Ex officio members:** Governor-General and members of the executive council.
 - **Nominated official members:** Government officials who were nominated by the Governor-General.
 - **Nominated non-official members:** Nominated by the Governor-General but were not government officials.
 - **Elected members:** Elected by different categories of Indians.
 - The elected members were elected indirectly.
- **Indians were given membership** to the Imperial Legislative Council for the **first time**.
- It introduced **separate electorates for the Muslims**.
 - Some constituencies were earmarked for Muslims and only Muslims could vote for their representatives.
- **Satyendra P Sinha** was appointed the first Indian member of the **Viceroy's Executive Council**.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Years Questions (PYQs)

Q. Who among the following rejected the title of Knighthood and refused to accept a position in the Council of the Secretary of State for India? (2008)

- (a) Motilal Nehru
- (b) M.G. Ranade
- (c) G.K. Gokhale922
- (d) B.G. Tilak

Ans: (c)

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