Birth Anniversary of C. Rajagopalachari
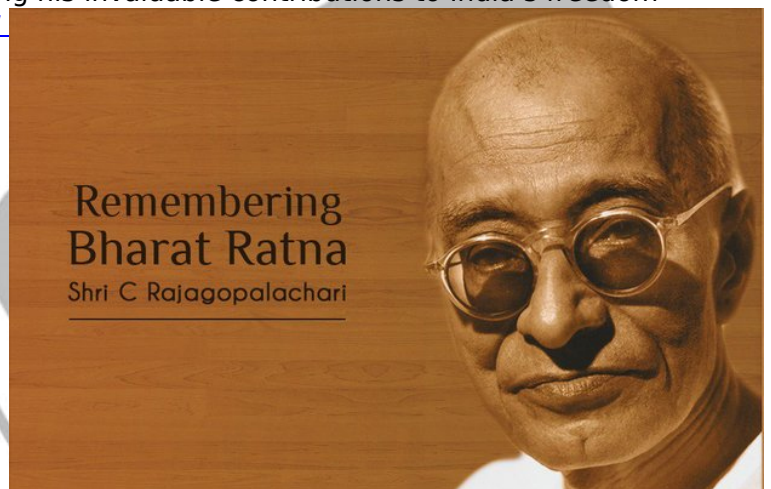
Why in News?

The Prime Minister of India, paid tribute to Shri Chakravarti Rajagopalachari (popularly known as Rajaji) on his birth anniversary (10th December), remembering his invaluable contributions to India's freedom struggle, governance, and social empowerment. //

Who Was C. Rajagopalachari?

- **Early Life and Education**: C. Rajagopalachari was born on 10th December 1878 in Salem, Madras Province (now Tamil Nadu). Became a Bachelor of Law in 1899 and began his legal practice in Salem.
- **Politics and Social Reforms:** Rajagopalachari was deeply affected by Lord Curzon's decision to partition Bengal on communal lines and was inspired by Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak's call for complete independence.
  - Joined the Indian National Congress (INC) and actively participated in India's freedom struggle.
  - In 1917, Rajagopalachari became Chairman of Salem Municipality, focused on social welfare of backward classes, and in 1925, he established an Ashram in Madras Province for social upliftment.
    - The Ashram published two magazines, ***Vimochanam (Tamil) and Prohibition (English).***
- **Freedom Struggle**: During the anti-Rowlatt agitation, Rajaji hosted Mahatma Gandhi in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
  - In 1930, during the Dandi March, Rajagopalachari led the Salt March in Madras Province from Tiruchi to Vedaranyam (also known as **Vedaranyam Satyagraha)**.
    - His arrest during Vedaranyam Satyagraha gained him national recognition as a leader in the **independence movement.**
  - After the Quit India movement, Rajagopalachari's pamphlet "***The Way Out***" outlined the **C. R. Formula** to resolve the constitutional deadlock between the **Muslim League** and the

INC regarding a separate Muslim state.

- **Prime Minister of Madras Province**: In 1937, Rajagopalachari became the **Prime Minister of Madras Province.**
    - Implemented social and economic reforms, including the **promotion of** Khadi, the **abolition of** Zamindari, and the **introduction of Hindi in schools.**
    - Focused on raising the standard of living for Dalits and promoting social equity.
- **Post-Independence Contributions:** Rajagopalachari was appointed the **Governor of West Bengal** and later the **first Indian** Governor-General of Independent India in 1947 (the office was permanently abolished in 1950).
    - Worked to integrate **Muslims into the national mainstream** and maintain India's secular fabric.
    - Served as Union Home Minister after Sardar Patel's death and played a significant role in key national issues, including the **preparation of the** First Five-Year Plan.
    - In 1959, Rajagopalachari founded the **Swatantra Party,** advocating for a market economy and less government control.
    - In 1962, Rajaji led a **Gandhi Peace Foundation** delegation to the US, urging a ban on nuclear tests.
    - Rajagopalachari wrote a Tamil translation of the Ramayana, titled **Chakravarthi Thirumagan,** which won the Sahitya Akademi Award **in 1958.**
- **Legacy:** Shri C. Rajagopalachari was awarded 'Bharat Ratna' **in 1954**. He was the **first to receive the highest civilian award.**
    - Rajagopalachari passed away on 25th December 1972.

UPSC Civil Services Examination, Previous Year Questions (PYQs)

Prelims

Q. **After Quit India Movement, C. Rajagopalachari issued a pamphlet entitled "The Way Out". Which one of the following was a proposal in this pamphlet? (2010)**

(a) The establishment of a "War Advisory Council" composed of representatives of British India and the Indian States

(b) Reconstitution of the Central Executive Council in such a way that all its members, except the Governor General and the Commander-in-Chief should be Indian leaders

(c) Fresh elections to the Central and Provincial Legislatures to be held at the end of 1945 and the Constitution making body to be convened as soon as possible

(d) A solution for the constitutional deadlock

Ans: (d)

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