



# Gopal Krishna Gokhale

## 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.

## Key Points

- **Birth:** 9<sup>th</sup> 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'**.

### **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 Hindus.

- 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**.

