



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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