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TAMIL NADU LEADERS SERIES

(Based on Unit - 8 and Unit - 9 of TNPSC Exam)



M. BHAKTAVATSALAM

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7. M. BHAKTAVATSALAM

Early Life

- He was born on October 9, 1897.
- His parents: Minjur Kanagasabapathy – Mallika Ammal.
- He was known as “Minjur Kanagasabapathy Bhaktavatsalam” and later he was known as M.Bhaktavatsalam.
- He was brought up by his maternal uncle C.N. Muthurangam and C.N. Evalappar.
- His school Education :
 - Lutheran Mission School, Purasaiwakkam
 - Pinnathur Subramaniam High School, Mylapore.
- His Graduation:
 - Presidency College, Chennai.
 - Madras Law College, Chennai.

Public Life

- He worked as Junior Advocate under **Alladi Krishnaswamy**.
- He associated with Annie Besant’s “Home Rule League”
- He became the member of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee in 1922.
- He started a newspaper called ‘**India**’ to campaign the policies of the Congress.
 - Before him, **Bharathiyar** also published a journal in the name of ‘India’.
- He worked as Secretary of the **Madras Mahajana Sabha** for few months.

- His activities in the Freedom Struggle:
 - Rowlatt Satyagraha (1919)
 - Anti – Simon Commission demonstration (1928)
 - Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha (1930)
 - Civil Disobedience Movement (1930-1932)
 - Individual Satyagraha (1940)
 - Quit India Movement (1942)
- He got arrested and imprisoned for **six months** after **Independence Day** Celebration in 1932.
 - As per the **“Purna Swaraj resolution”** (1929), every year on January 26 was celebrated as Independence Day (as symbol of protest).
- He served as the **Deputy Mayor** of the Madras Corporation. (1936-1937).
- He contested the Legislative assembly election and won in the election (1937 and 1946) and subsequently present in the following cabinet:
 - 1946 – Ministry of Public works (T. Prakasam’s Cabinet)
 - 1947 – Ministry of Public works (Omandur Ramasamy’s Cabinet)
 - 1949 – Ministry of Public works (P.S. Kumarasamy Raja’s Cabinet)
 - 1953 – Ministry of Agriculture (Rajaji’s Cabinet)
 - 1954 – Ministry of Agriculture and Industries (Kamaraj’s Cabinet)
 - 1957 – Ministry of Home Affairs (Kamaraj’s Cabinet)
 - 1962 – Ministry of Finance and Education (Kamaraj’s Cabinet).
- In 1963, **the “National Council for Women Education”** has setup **M.Bhaktavatsalam Committee** to analysis the problem of women’s education. Its recommendations:

- All state government should appoint female teacher in the elementary schools.
- A separate women inspectorate should be established for enrolling more girls into schools.
- Education for girls should be improved according to guidelines provided by **Hansa Mehta Committee** (1962). Domestic Science should be taught as compulsory subject.
- The advanced curriculum subject created by the Central Social Welfare Department should be taught to adult girls.
- The State Government should enlighten the public with regard to education of girls by organizing conferences, seminars and display of audio visual material.
- The State government should provide financial support for female education.
- In the Teacher Training Institute, seats should be reserved for women students from rural areas.

Chief Minister

- According to “**K – Plan**” in 1963, Kamaraj resigned from his Chief Minister post, succeed by M.Bhaktavatsalam as Chief Minister.
- In his Cabinet, the other ministers were:
 - P. Kakkan (Ministry of Home Affairs)
 - R. Venkataraman (Ministry of Industries and Electricity)
 - Jothi Venkatachalam (Ministry of Health)
 - V. Ramaiah (Ministry of Public Works)
 - N.S.S. Mandradiyar (Ministry of Food)

- S.M.A. Majid (Ministry of Home Affairs)
- Poovaragavan (Ministry of Information and Publicity).
- During his period, RSS president **Golwalkar** appointed a committee under **Eknath Ranade** to build Vivekananda memorial at **Kanyakumari** for celebrating the Birth Centenary of **Swamy Vivekananda** (1863).
- Initially Bhaktavatsalam opposed the project of RSS, but later he gave permission for the construction of the Rock Memorial at Kanyakumari in 1964.
- The construction of this Memorial began in January 1964 and was completed in 1970

Students welfare programme

- For maintaining the health of pre-school going children **“Triple Vaccine Scheme”** was introduced in 1964.
- During his tenure, the **“School Medical Inspection Programme”** was introduced in schools to maintain the health condition of the children.
- In 1966, **Madurai Kamaraj University** was established under his rule.
- He initiated to utilize the funds taken from the temple under the control of Hindu Endowment Board for establishment of schools, college and hostel.

Water Management

- Manimuttar River Project (Kallidaikurichi) and Kadana Irrigation Project (Ambasamudram) was implemented by him.
- During his rule, the Peechiparai Dam in Kanyakumari and Perunchani Dam Project were completed.

Obstacles Overcame

- When he was the Chief Minister, he faced the following problems
 - **Food Shortage (Rice Scarcity)**
 - **Price Hike**
 - **Anti – Hindi Agitation**
- He appointed a **Vigilance cell** in the Board of Revenue to estimate the price of goods in Tamil Nadu.
- He provided the necessity commodities to the people through Co-operative Societies.
- In 1963, he started the **“Seed Multiplication Scheme”**.
- He introduced a new variety of Paddy called **“ADT 27”**.
- He introduced the **“Farm Management Program”**.

Anti – Hindi Agitation

- He was honest and simple. But anti – Hindi Agitation started during his tenure, changed the history of Tamilnadu.
- English has been the official language of British India since 1835.
- National Leaders wanted “Hindi” to be the National Language of India during the Freedom Struggle.
- Another faction of Congress had a different of opinion on this.
- So they set up a committee to resolve this problem. The main person in the committee
 - N. Gopalasamy Iyengar
 - T.T.Krishnamachari
 - Alladi Krishnaswamy

- K.M. Munshi
- B.R. Ambedkar
- Shyama Prasad Mukherjee
- Abdul Kalam Azad
- K. Santhanam.
- This committee proposed some recommendations called “**Munshi – Iyengar Formula**”.
- As per the committee’s recommendation, the conclusion has not been reached between the members of the congress.
- Later Constituent Assembly (presided by Rajendra Prasad) adopted ‘Hindi’ as the official language of India on September 14, 1949.
- After the commencement of Indian Constitution (on January 26, 1950), English was used as the official language upto 15 years (i.e. 1965). Parliament may enact the legislation to make English as the official language after 1965.
- According the Article 343, **Hindi** in **Devanagari** script made as official language of India.
- September 14 is being celebrated as ‘**Hindi Diwas**’.
- In 1955, the Official Language Commission appointed under the leadership of **B.G. Kher**. The Committee submitted its report in 1956. The Parliamentary Committee was formed in 1957 under the leadership of **Gobind Ballabh Pant** to examine its recommendations.
 - This recommendation spread Hindi Language across different platforms.
- C.N. Annadurai criticized the language policy of the union government and Hindi Imposition.

- Because of pressure given by Anna, Nehru made the assurance in the Parliament on August 7, 1959. They were:
 - No Hindi imposition
 - English will be Associate Additional Language.
- Bhaktavatsalam was the one who followed the “Official Language Act” of the Union Government. This incident made Congress to face a lot of opposition (criticism) in Tamil Nadu.
- In 1963, the “Official Language Act” was enacted. Accordingly
 - Hindi **shall be** the official language of India from **26th January 1965**.
 - English **may be** used as the additional language with Hindi.
 - As per this act, the Question paper for all the Union Government Examination (UPSC, etc...) shall be in “Hindi” and the Question paper may or maynot be in English. (This was reason for “Anti – Hindi Agitation” started in Tamil Nadu).
 - It revealed that English may not be used as the official language from the above points.
 - Tamil Nadu leader Annadurai was already aware of the impact of Official Language Act.
 - Nehru passed away in 1964.
 - Anna requested to follow the assurance given by Nehru and he requested to continue English as the official language. This should be enacted before the Official Language Act came into force in 1965. But this was not accepted.
 - Prior to January 26, 1965, only the DMK Party led by Anna struggled to address shortcomings of the “Official Language Act”. Later when the Act was enacted, this struggle spread among students who does not belongs to any political party.

- The students through out the state struggled. It continued and they showed their contempt by announcing General Strike and Rail Blockade. The struggle went to next stage and gained the public support.
 - **C. Subramaniam** and **O.V. Alagesan** in the Congress ministry (Union) announced their resignation over this issue.
 - Bhaktavatchalam could not end the protest. The Paramilitary force came to Tamil Nadu to control the situation.
 - The Union Government announced that it would consider the demands of students.
 - Important demands of students in Tamil Nadu were
 - Part XVII of Indian constitution should be repealed.
 - The examinations for the Union Government post should be conducted in English and in the language of 8th Schedule of Constitution.
 - Official language Policy before 1950 would be restored (English should be continued as the official language).
 - On March 14, 1965 the students announced that they would end the protest.
 - Prime Minister **Lal Bahadur Shastri** announced that he will keep up the assurance made by Nehru in Official language issue.
 - Benefits of Anti – Hindi Agitation
 - Opportunities for writing Union Government exams (**written exams**) in their regional language.
 - **Official Language (Amendment) Act, 1967** to ensure the assurance made by Nehru.
- In 1967, Congress lost in the Assembly Election.

- After that Congress Party does not form the government in Tamil Nadu till date.
 - Bhaktavatsalam was the **last Chief Minister of the Congress party** in Tamil Nadu.
- He died on February 13, 1987.

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