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TAMIL NADU LEADERS SERIES

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



RAJAJI

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4. RAJAJI

Early Life

- Rajaji was born on 10 December 1878 at **Thorapalli** near Hosur, Krishnagiri district (presently). His **birth name** is **Rajagopal**.
- He later known as Rajagopalachari in short as Rajaji.
- His parents: Venkatarya Chakravarti -Singarammal.
- He studied in the following institutions:
 - Central College, Bangalore.
 - Presidency College, Madras.
 - Madras Law College.
- He married Alamelu Mangammal.

Mango of Salem

- In 1900 he began his career as a Lawyer in Salem.
- Swadeshi movement (1905) was developed due to partition of Bengal. This incident changed his life.
- Rajaji attended the Congress session (1906) in Calcutta along with **Namakkal kavignar Ramalinganar** and **V.O.C.**
 - Session president - Dadabhai Naoroji.
- He also attended the Surat Congress session in 1907.
- He was elected as a **member** in the Salem Municipal Council in 1911.
- Rajaji attended the **Social Reform Conference** at Tiruchirapalli in 1914 and he was elected as the **President** in the conference.

- He supported the **Inter-caste marriage**.
- He started the “**Tamil Scientific Term Society**” in 1916.
- Rajaji joined in the **Home Rule League** and started a **branch** of the League in Salem.
- Rajaji attended the Lucknow Congress session in 1916.
- He served as **Chairman** in the Salem Municipal Council from 1917 – 1919. The reform brought by him:
 - Eradication of Untouchability.
 - Inter-caste dining (Samapandhi Virundhu)
 - Promotion of education of backward class people.
- He formed the Salem Literature Forum (Salem Ilakeya Mandram)
- He is known as “**Mango of Salem**” (Salethu Mambazham).

Freedom Struggle

- He became the Madras High Court Lawyer (prosecutor) in 1919.
- He quit his lawyer profession after meeting Gandhi in Chennai. Then participated in the Rowlatt Satyagraha.
- He participated in the Non – Cooperation Movement in Chennai in 1920.
- Rajaji was sentenced to three months of imprisonment for attending the public meeting (Protest against arrival of **Prince of Wales** in 1921).
- After his release from prison he wrote the book “**Siraiyil Thavam**” in 1922.
- He elected as a member of the Congress Working Committee (CWC).
- After the arrest of Gandhi in 1922, the responsibility of publishing Gandhi’s journal **Young India**, has given to Rajaji.

- In 1922, he attended **the Gaya Congress session** and followed the path of Gandhi and supported **“No Changers”** faction. From then he played important role in National politics.
- He participated in the Vaikom Satyagraha in 1924.
- In 1924, he started an ashram in **Pudupalayam** near **Tiruchengode** which was constructed on the model of “Gandhi’s Sabarmathi Ashram” and named it as **“Gandhi Ashram”**.
 - **Ratina Sabapathy** who was the person to donate his land for this Ashram.
 - In 1929 Rajaji published the Tamil magazine **“Vimosanam”** from this Ashram. The journal dealt about prohibition of Liquor.
 - The editor of the magazine was **‘Kalki’ Krishnamoorthy**.
 - As well as his English magazine **“Prohibition”** which emphasizes “Prohibition of Alcohol”.
- In 1930 he elected as the President of the Tamil Nadu Congress Committee.
- **Gandhi** praised Rajaji as **“My Conscience Keeper”**.

Vedaranyam Salt Satyagraha

- On March 12, 1930, Gandhi began famous **Dandi March** and broke the salt law on April 6, 1930. It was called Salt Satyagraha.
- Rajaji went to Madurai and consulted **Vaithiyanathar** and **N.M.R. Subba Raman** (also known as Madurai Gandhi) to conduct Salt Satyagraha based on the model of Dandi March and choose the place “Vedaranyam” for conducting the Salt Satyagraha.
- Accordingly Rajaji along with **99 congress volunteers** started the salt satyagraha Yatra from Tiruchirapalli to Vedaranyam on April 13, 1930.

- They sung the song “**Achamillai**” (wrote by **Subramanya Bharathi**) in that march.
- **Namakkal Kavignar Ramalingam** wrote the new song “**Kathiyindri Rathamintri Yuttam ondru varuguthu**” (a war is coming without knife and blood”) for this Yatra.
- Satyagrahis reached Vedaranyam on April 28, 1930.
- Rajaji took some Satyagrahis along with him and reached **Agasthiyam palli** Village near Vedaranyam, broke the salt law and got arrested.
- The persons who led the Salt Satyagraha after Rajaji’s arrest were:
 - K. Santhanam
 - Mattaparai Venkataraman.
 - K. Subramaniam.
 - G. Ramachandran.
- Vedaranyam Salt satyagraha lasted about **one and a half months**.
- Some other important leaders participated in the Salt Satyagraha were:
 - Sardar Vedharatnam.
 - T.S.S. Rajan.
 - Rukmani Lakshmi pathy.
 - C. Swaminathan.
- Rajaji became **Acting President** of All India Congress Party in 1932 and played a key role in signing Poona Pact (on September 24, 1932).
- Rajaji’s daughter Lakshmi got married to Gandhi’s son Devadas Gandhi.
- He constructed a **new boarding hostel** for **Adi Dravidar students** in **Tiruchengode** in 1935.

Formation of the Government (First Term)

- Congress party contested in the election in Madras province (1937) for **first time** and Congress won 159 seats out of a total of 215 seats.
- Rajaji became Chief Minister on July 15, 1937. Other ministers in his cabinet were
 - T. Prakasam
 - P. Subbarayan
 - V.V. Giri
 - T.S.S. Rajan
 - Yakub Hassan Seth
 - Munisamy Pillai
 - S. Ramanathan
 - Bezawada Gopala Reddy
 - Kongkatti Raman Menon
- He passed **Agricultural Debt Relief Act, 1938** to solve the problems of the farmers.
- A new committee was formed under the Revenue Minister **T. Prakasam** to remove the Zamindari System. This Committee recommendation was adopted by those who came to power later.
- He passed **Temple Entry Authorization and Indemnity Act, 1939** which gave legal right for depressed class people to enter into temple.
 - **Vaithyanathan, L.N. Gopalasamy** implemented this act at Meenakshi Amman Temple, Madurai.
- During his rule, Liquor Prohibition enacted for the **first time** in Madras Province (**Salem district**) from 1st October 1937.

- **Sales tax** was introduced to compensate the loss incurred by state by prohibiting the liquor sale.
- This tax was introduced by Rajaji for **first time in Asia**.
- During his period, the Stanley Medical School was upgraded to **Stanley Medical College** in 1938.
- In the academic year 1938 – 39, Rajaji declared Tamil as the medium of instruction in schools in Tamil Nadu.
- He introduced **Gandhi's Wardha Scheme of Education** in schools.
- In 1938, he made Hindi as a compulsory second language from 6th to 8th standard in schools in Tamil Nadu. This issue paved the way for the anti – Hindi Agitation in Tamil Nadu.
- The British Government made India to participate in the 2nd World War without Indian leader consultation. Due to this congress Ministry resigned in all the Provinces.
- So, Rajaji's Cabinet resigned on 29 October 1939.
- He got arrested under **Defense of India Rules Act** and imprisoned for a year.
- In April 1942, Rajaji led Madras provincial Legislative Congress members passed a resolution. This resolution was named as **Madras Resolution**. Accordingly,
 - To support Muslim League for forming separate country (Pakistan).
 - Establishment of Central Government in Centre and Federal government in Provinces.
- He opposed **the Quit India Movement** (1942). Following this, he left the Congress Party.
- C. Rajagopalachari's formula (**C. R. formula**) was a proposal formulated by Rajai in 1944 to solve the political deadlock between the All India Muslim

League and Indian National Congress on two nation theory and independence of India from British.

- He rejoined in the congress in 1945.

Chanakya

- He became a Minister in Interim Government formed in 1946.
 - Portfolio: Industries (first)
Education and Arts (Later)
- **Richard Casey** (the Governor of Bengal from 1944 to 1946) called Rajaji as the **“Wisest Man in India”**.
- He was appointed as **the first Governor of West Bengal**, after India’s Independence.
- He was appointed as **the Acting Governor – General** of India in November, 1947 for a few days.
- Rajaji succeed Mountbatten as “Governor-General of Independent India”. He was **first and last Indian** to hold this position (From June 21, 1948 to Jan 26, 1950).
- After India became Republic, he became Union minister **without any portfolio** for a few months. After death of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel on December 15, 1950, Rajaji assumed the role of **Home Minister**. Later he resigned from the minister post due to difference of opinion with Nehru.
- Due to his Political knowledge he hailed as **“Chanakya”**.

Formation of the Government (Second Term)

- After the general elections in 1952, no party proved majority in Madras Assembly, so Governor of Madras Province **Sri Prakasa** asked Rajaji to form

the Government. Rajaji sworn as Chief Minister on April 1952 with coalition of some parties. In his Cabinet, other ministers were:

- A.P. Shetty.
 - C. Subramaniam.
 - K. Venkatasamy Naidu.
 - N. Renga Reddy.
 - M.V. Krishna Rao.
 - V.C. Palanisamy Goundar.
 - R. Naguna Gowda.
 - N. Sankara Reddy.
 - M.A. Manicka Velu.
 - K.P. Kutti Krishnan.
 - Shanmuga Rajeswara Sethupathi.
 - Pattabhirama Rao.
 - T. Sanjeevaiah.
- Speaker of the Legislative Assembly – **Siva Shanmugam**.
- Confidence Motion was introduced at the Madras Legislative Assembly for first time in Independent India on June 30, 1952.
- It is brought by Ruling Government.
 - No confidence Motion is often brought by opposition party.
- **Pannaiyal/Tenants Protection Act**, which was introduced in 1952, to affirmed the rights of tenant farmer over their leased land in Thanjavur.
- During his period, the problems of the weavers who had been doing the traditional textile weaving were solved. He did
- Inauguration of weaver co-operative society.

- Establishment of Handlooms Board
 - Strengthening of Khaddar industries & Village based cottage industries
 - Because of this Rajaji's period was called the "**Golden Age of Handloom Weavers**".
- During his period in 1953, Andhra became separate state from state of Madras (Its capital – **Kurnool**).
- Andhra people claimed ownership of Madras. Rajaji denied this claim and retained Madras as capital of Tamil Nadu.
- Rajaji introduced a new education scheme called "**Modified Scheme of Elementary Education**" in Tamil Nadu.
- Education Minister at that time was C. Subramaniam.
 - Rajaji introduced 4 hours of schooling instead of full day.
 - Student utilize this free time to learn thier family profession.
 - **Periyar** and **Anna** have criticized this as "**Kula Kalvi**" and **Caste Education**.
- Rajaji's educational reform has faced severe controversy. So he subsequently resigned his post in 1954.
- Rajaji was **the first person** to receive "**Bharat Ratna**" award along with
- S. Radhakrishnan
 - Sir. C.V. Raman.

Mootharignar (Scholar Emeritus)

- After leaving Congress he formed a new party called **Congress Reform Committee** in 1957.
- President : K.S. Venkata Krishnan

- This party contested in the Assembly Election of Madras State in 1957.
- In 1959 Rajaji formed the **Swatantra Party** in Chennai
 - First President of the Party: **N.G. Ranga**
 - General Secretary: **Minno Masani**
 - Other important leader: **Murari Vaithiya.**
- It was considered as Right wing party and an alternative to Congress.
- The purpose of party to end Nehru's "**License – Permit -Raj**" system.
- This party was called "**Inanala Katchi**" by Periyar E.V.R.
- Rajaji expressed his views on behalf of party through the English Magazine "**Swarajya**".
 - Editor of this magazine: **Khasa Subba Rao.**
- He met **John F. Kennedy** in White House, USA in 1962 to halt the use of nuclear weapon for world peace on behalf of Gandhian peace movement.
- In 1962 Legislative Assembly election the party formed alliance with Anna Durai's DMK, this alliance continued till 1967 election.
 - Anna called him as "Mootharignar" (Scholar Emeritus).
- In 1938 when he was Chief Minister in Madras Province imposed Hindi at schools in Tamil Nadu. But in 1965, when anti – Hindi Agitation started he supported students and opposed imposition of Hindi.
- In 1971, he formed alliance with Kamaraj's faction Congress (O) and faced the election.

Contribution to Literary Works

- His series based on Ramayanam were published in the Magazine Kalki under the name “**Chakravarti Thirumagan**”. This book was awarded with **Sahitya Academy Award** in 1958.
- His other works were
 - Thirumular Thirumozhi
 - Sokkirathar
 - Kudikedukum Kal
 - Thikketra Parvathi
 - **Vysar Virunthu** (Mahabharatham)
 - **Kannan Kattiya Vazhi** (Bhagavat Geethai)
- His English translation work
 - Thirukural (1965)
- He wrote the book “**Mankind Protests**” against testing of Nuclear Weapons.
- He has written the epitome “**Sri Ramakrishna Upanishad**” about life of Paramahansa Ramakrishna.
- He wrote famous song “**Kurai Ondrum Illai**” which was sung by **M.S. Subbulakshmi**.
- He died on December 25, 1972.

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