

Birth of Revolutionary Leader Rajguru - [August 24, 1908] This Day in History

Shivaram Rajguru, great Indian revolutionary and martyr for the cause of Indian independence was born on 24 August 1908 in Khed, near Pune, Maharashtra. In this edition of This Day in History, you can read about the life of revolutionary Rajguru for the IAS exam.

Biography of Rajguru

- Shivaram Rajguru was born in Khed (the place has been renamed Rajgurunagar in his honour) into a Marathi family.
- As a child, he grew up witnessing British atrocities on Indians. His family had strong anti-British and nationalist sentiments.
- He was well versed in Indian scriptures.
- He joined the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) in his late teens. The HSRA was founded in 1928 by Chandrasekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh and others.
- Rajguru believed in militant nationalism and thought that oppression was to be met with ferocity and violence. He did not have faith in Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent Satyagraha.
- It is said that he once touched a hot iron with his bare hands. When Chandrasekhar Azad questioned his sanity in doing so, Rajguru replied that he was testing his strength



to bear police brutality.

- He was a good shooter and was called the 'Gunman' of the HSRA. In the organisation, he went by the name Raghunath.
- Rajguru is most remembered for his role in the assassination of J P Saunders, a British police officer.

- This assassination was planned by Bhagat Singh, Chandrasekhar Azad, Sukhdev and Rajguru and the shots were fired by Rajguru and Bhagat Singh.
- The young revolutionaries wanted to take revenge for the death of Lala Lajpat Rai who is thought to have died due to injuries sustained in a brutal police lathi charge during the protests against the Simon Commission. They had wanted to kill James A. Scott, the police officer who had ordered the lathi charge. But in a case of mistaken identity, Saunders was killed. But still, the revolutionaries declared that Lala Lajpat Rai's death had been avenged.
- After the assassination, Rajguru went to Nagpur to escape the police. But when he was traveling to Pune, he was caught and arrested.
- In the trial that followed the shooting, all three leaders Rajguru, Singh and Chandrashekar Azad were sentenced to death.
- Rajguru, along with his fellow revolutionaries were hanged at 7:30 PM on 23 March 1931 in Lahore. Their bodies were cremated quietly at the banks of the Sutlej. This day is observed as Martyrs' Day in India.
- Rajguru was just 22 years old when he was martyred.