

Poona Sarvajanik Sabha Founded - [April 2, 1870]

This Day in History

On 2nd April 1870, Poona Sarvajanik Sabha was founded. In this edition of This Day in History, you can read about the important socio-political organisation Poona Sarvajanik Sabha, an early platform where educated Indians expressed their opinions and demands from the British government. This is a part of UPSC Syllabus on history.

Aspirants would find this article very helpful while preparing for the IAS Exam.

Background of Poona Sarvajanik Sabha for UPSC

1. The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha was established on 2 April 1870 at Poona originally because of the discontent of the people over the running of a local temple.
2. The Deccan Association formed in 1850 and the Poona Association formed in 1867 had become defunct within a few years and the western educated residents of Poona felt the need for a modern socio-political organisation.
3. Mahadev Govind Ranade, an eminent lawyer and scholar from the Bombay Presidency was also a keen social reformer. He played a major part in the formation of the Sarvajanik Sabha.
4. The other key members who helped in its formation were Bhawanrao Shrinivasrao Pant Pratinidhi (ruler of the Aundh State who was also the organisation's first president), Ganesh Vasudeo Joshi and S H Chiplunkar.
5. Other important members of the Sabha included M M Kunte, Vishnu M Bhide, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Gopal Hari Deshmukh. The members were mostly from the educated middle class of society and comprised of lawyers, inamdars, pensioners, pleaders, teachers, journalists and government servants in the judicial and education departments.
6. The organisation also had people drawn from the earlier similar organisations of western India.
7. The Sarvajanik Sabha had wanted to be an organisation on modern democratic lines and hoped to be a representative of the people of the region. So, its first 95 members were elected from among 6000 people.
8. The organisation organised lecture tours and meetings and tried to foster national pride among the people. It also organised relief work during famines.
9. Basically, it meant to serve as a link between the government and the people in order for the former to be more in conformity with the wishes and interests of the latter.
10. Even though the members were mostly from the upper-middle classes, the membership was open to people of all castes and classes.

11. The Sabha represented to the government the interests of the peasants and also opposed the forest laws, the salt laws and the press laws.
12. It had a quarterly journal through which it propagated its ideas and also urged Indians to unite and press for economic and political reforms.
13. The Sabha even encouraged Swadeshi and sent its member Ganesh Vasudeo Joshi to the Delhi Durbar (1877) in hand-spun khadi attire. It is interesting to note that khadi had made its appearance on the Indian political landscape well before Gandhi made it a symbol of Indian nationalism. At the Durbar, Joshi read out a citation demanding "*Her Majesty to grant to India the same political and social status as is enjoyed by her British subjects.*"
14. The Sabha was in many ways a precursor to the Indian National Congress that was formed in 1885. Many members from the Sabha became members of the INC as well.
15. By 1895 the Sarvajanik Sabha split owing to political differences amongst its members.

Relevant Questions Regarding Poona Sarvajanik Sabha

What was the aim of the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha?

The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha was formed with the aim of working as a mediating body between the government and people of India.

Who was the founder of Poona Sarvajanik Sabha?

Poona Sarvajanik Sabha was founded by Mahadev Govind Ranade (1842–1901), an alumnus of the University of Bombay (now University of Mumbai).