

Kanaiyalal Maneklal Munshi

Born on December 30, 1887, and passing away on February 8, 1971, Kanhaiyalal Maneklal Munshi was a Gujarati politician, writer, and educator who was active in the Indian independence struggle. He was also known by his pen name, Ghanshyam Vyas. He started off as a lawyer but subsequently became an author and politician. He has a reputable literary reputation in Gujarati. In 1938, he established the educational trust Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. Gujarati, English, and Hindi are the three languages in which Munshi wrote his works. Munshi was a member of the Indian National Congress prior to the country's independence and afterwards joined the Swatantra Party. Munshi held a number of significant positions, including the governor of Uttar Pradesh, member of the Indian Constituent Assembly, and minister of agriculture and food. He eventually served as a founding member of the Vishva Hindu Parishad.

The topic has a chance of being asked as a UPSC Prelims Polity Question or as a Current Affairs Question.

About K. M. Munshi

On December 30, 1887, Munshi was born in the Gujarat State of British India in the town of Bharuch. On 1902, Munshi enrolled in Baroda College and received a first-class grade with "Ambalal Sakarlal Paritoshik". By receiving the highest possible English language marks in 1907, he was awarded the "Elite prize" and a Bachelor of Arts degree. Later, the same university bestowed honoris causa upon him. In 1910, he graduated from law school in Mumbai and was admitted to the Bombay High Court as a lawyer. Aurobindo Ghosh, later known as Sri Aurobindo, was one of his professors at Baroda College and left a lasting influence on him. Maharaja Sayajirao Gaekwad III of Baroda, Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, and Bhulabhai Desai all had an impact on Munshi.

Political Life of K. M. Munshi

Pre-Independent India

- Munshi moved toward a revolutionary group and became involved in the bomb-making process as a result of Sri Aurobindo's influence. However, after relocating to Mumbai, he joined the struggle for Indian Home Rule and was appointed secretary in 1915.
- He was appointed secretary of the Bombay presidential association in 1917.
- He attended the annual congress meeting in Ahmedabad in 1920 and was impressed by Surendranath Banerjee, the president.
- He was elected to serve in the Bombay Legislative Assembly in 1927, but Mahatma Gandhi persuaded him to quit following the Bardoli Satyagraha.
- In 1930, he took part in the civil disobedience movement and was first detained for six months. He was detained once more and imprisoned for two years in 1932 after participating in the second phase of the same movement.
- He was appointed secretary of the Congress parliamentary board in 1934.
- In the 1937 election for the Bombay Presidency, Munshi was re-elected, and he was appointed Home Minister. As home minister, he put an end to the communal riots that broke out in Bombay.

- Following his participation in the Individual Satyagraha in 1940, Munshi was detained once more.
- He abandoned the idea of nonviolence as the desire for Pakistan gained steam and backed the notion of a civil war to force the Muslims to abandon their demand. He thought that cooperation in an "Akhand Hindustan" was essential for the future of Hindus and Muslims. He resigned from Congress in 1941 over differences with it, but Mahatma Gandhi invited him back in the year 1946.

Posts Held

1. A Bombay Legislative Assembly member
2. Member of the Indian National Congress's Working Committee (1930)
3. Member of the All India Congress Committee (1930 - 36, 1947)
4. Secretary of INC Parliamentary Board (1934)
5. Home Minister of Government of Bombay (1937- 40)

Post-Independent India

- He served on a number of committees of the Indian Constituent Assembly, including the Drafting Committee, Advisory Committee, and Sub-Committee on Fundamental Rights. In his draught on fundamental rights, which he offered to the Drafting Committee, Munshi argued that progressive rights should be included.
- Following India's independence, Munshi, Sardar Patel, and N. V. Gadgil travelled to the state of Junagadh to aid the Indian Army to stabilise the region. Patel announced the restoration of the revered Somnath temple in Junagadh. Patel passed away before the renovation was finished. Even after Jawaharlal Nehru's resistance, Munshi emerged as the principal proponent of the Somnath temple reconstruction.
- Munshi was appointed as the princely state of Hyderabad's diplomatic ambassador and trade representative (Agent - General), serving there till India annexed the state in 1948.
- Munshi served on both the committees that drafted the Indian Constitution under the leadership of B. R. Ambedkar and the Ad Hoc Flag Committee that chose the country's flag in August 1947.
- Munshi was not just a politician but also a teacher and an environmentalist. When he was the Union Minister of Food and Agriculture in 1950, he created the Van Mahotsav to expand the area covered by forests. Since then, a week long tree planting event called Van Mahotsav is held every July across the nation, during which thousands of trees are planted.
- From 1952 until 1957, Munshi presided as the governor of Uttar Pradesh.
- In 1959, Munshi founded the Akhand Hindustan movement after leaving the Nehru dominated (socialist) Congress Party. Together with Chakravarti Rajagopalachari, he created the Swatantra Party, a right-wing political organisation that supported commerce, the free market, and private property rights because he believed in the power of strong opposition. The party experienced significant success before collapsing.
- He presided over the Sandipini Ashram gathering in August 1964 that led to the formation of the Hindu nationalist group Vishva Hindu Parishad.

Posts Held

1. Member of the drafting committee and the Indian Constituent Assembly (1947 - 52)
2. Minister of Agriculture and Food of the Union Government of India (1950 - 52)
3. Agent general to the Government of India, Hyderabad (1948)

Academic Life of K. M. Munshi

Since 1923, Munshi had considered providing institutional support for his beliefs. He founded Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan in Andheri, Bombay, on November 7, 1938, alongside his wife Lilavati Munshi and Harshidbhai Divatia. Later, he founded Mumbadevi Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya to impart traditional instruction in Sanskrit and old Hindu writings. Munshi not only helped create Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan but also Bhavan's College, Hansraj Morarji Public School, Rajhans Vidyalaya, Rajhans Balvatika, and Panchgani Hindu School (1922). He was chosen as a Fellow of the University of Bombay, where he was in charge of ensuring that local languages were properly represented. Additionally, he played a key role in establishing the department of Chemical Technology. He held positions as executive chairman of the Indian Law Institute (1957 - 60), trustee of the Birla Education Trust (1948 - 71), and chairman of the Sanskrit Vishwa Parishad, in addition to serving as chairman of the Institute of Agriculture, Anand (1951 - 1961).

Literary Life and Works of K. M. Munshi

A prolific writer in both Gujarati and English under the pen name Ghanshyam Vyas, Munshi is regarded as one of Gujarat's greatest authors. Munshi, a writer and a responsible journalist, founded the Gujarati publication Bhargava. In addition to co-editing Young India, he founded the Bhavan's Journal in 1954, which is still published by the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan today. Both the Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and the Gujarati Sahitya Parishad were presided over by Munshi. Munshi had a diverse range of interests and was also a writer. His trilogy Patan-ni-Prabhuta (The Glory of Patan), Gujarat-no-Nath (The Lord and Master of Gujarat), and Rajadhiraj (The King of Kings) are among his best-known historical books in Gujarati. His other writings comprise Tapasvini (The Lure of Power), a novel with a fictitious parallel derived from the Freedom Movement of India under Mahatma Gandhi, Jay Somnath (on the temple of Somnath), Krishnavatara (on Lord Krishna), and Bhagavan Parasurama (on Parshurama). Several important works were also written by Munshi in English.

Most of Munshi's works are based on imaginary historical subjects, including

- Early Aryan colonies in India (what he refers to as Gaurang's, who have white complexion).
- Krishna's activities during the Mahabharata period.
- More recently, in the Gujarat, Malwa, and Southern India regions in the 10th century.

The book Prithivivallabh by K.M. Munshi was adapted twice into films with the same name. Mahatma Gandhi criticised the 1924 dramatisation, which Manilal Joshi had directed, for having too much sex and violence. Sohrab Modi created the second version in 1943.

Works in Gujarati and Hindi

S. No.	Novels	Drama	Non-fiction
1	Mari Kamala (1912)	Brahmacharyashram (1931)	Ketlak Lekho (1926)
2	Verni Vasulat (1913)	Dr. Madhurika (1936)	Adadhe Raste (1943)
3	Patanni Prabhuta (1916)	Pauranik Natako	
4	Gujaratno Nath (1917)		
5	Rajadhiraj (1918)		

6	Prithivivallabh (1921)		
7	Svapnadishta (1924)		
8	Lopamudra (1930)		
9	Jay Somanth (1940)		
10	Bhagavan Parashurama (1946)		
11	Tapasvini (1957)		
12	Krishnavatara (in eight volumes) (1970)		
13	Kono vank		
14	Lomaharshini		
15	Bhagvan Kautilya		
16	Pratirodha (1900)		
17	Atta ke svapana (1900)		
18	Gaurava kā pratīka (1900)		
19	Gujarat ke Gaurava (1900)		
20	Sishu aura Sakhi (1961)		
21	Avibhakta Atma		

Works in English

1	Gujarat and Its Literature
2	Imperial Gujaras
3	Bhagavad Gita and Modern Life

4	Creative Art of Life
5	To Badrinath
6	Saga of Indian Sculpture
7	The End of An Era
8	President under Indian Constitution
9	Warnings of History: Trends in Modern India
10	Somanatha, The shrine eternal

