

K Kamaraj

March 22, 2021

Biography

- Kamaraj was born on 15 July 1903 in Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu, to Kumaraswami and Sivakami Ammal.
- His father Kumaraswami was a merchant.
- Kamaraj was first enrolled in a traditional school in 1907 and in 1908 he was admitted to Yenadhi Narayana Vidhya Salai.
- In 1909 Kamaraj was admitted to Virudupatti High School. Kamaraj's father died when he was six years old, his mother was forced to support the family.
- In 1914 Kamaraj dropped out of school to support his mother

His Contribution In National Freedom Movement

- In 1920, aged eighteen, he joined the Indian National Congress to fight foreign rule and liberate the country.
- He organized public meetings of the INC at Virudhunagar for the Congress party. He met Mahatma Gandhi for the first time on 21st September 1921 during Gandhi's public meeting.
- He took part in the Non-Cooperation Movement, Nagpur Flag Satyagraha and other important events.
- He was imprisoned for two years in 1930 for participating in the Salt Satyagraha at Vedaranyam led by C Rajagopalachari.
- Arrested in 1940 and was elected as the Municipal Councillor of Virudhunagar from jail. He later resigned because of his belief in the principle, "One should not accept any post to which one could not do full justice."
- In 1942, arrested for participating in the Quit India Movement.

His Contribution After India's Independence

- After India became independent, he was in the Congress Working Committee from 1947 to 1969.
- He was a member of the Constituent Assembly of India and then a Member of Parliament in 1952.
- He introduced the brilliant concept of mid-day meals in schools to provide free meals to school children hailing from economically backward families.
- Kamaraj was elected the President of the INC in 1963.
- After Jawaharlal Nehru's death, he was instrumental in bringing Lal Bahadur Shastri to the post of the country's Prime Minister. He also played a big part in bringing Indira Gandhi to the same post.
- He was posthumously honoured with the Bharat Ratna in 1976.

Kamaraj Plan

- In 1954, he became the Chief Minister of Madras State. Kamaraj became the CM for two more consecutive terms until 1963. That year, he resigned and asked many top Congress leaders to resign from their ministerial posts because there was a need to remove the lure of power in the minds of Congressmen. This came to be called the Kamaraj Plan.