

# Vinobha Bhave

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## In News

- Yuva brigade establish Vinobha Bhave educational institute in Karnataka-Tamilnadu border village,

## Vinoba Bhave

- Born Vinayak Narahari Bhave to Narahari Rao and Rukmini Devi, Vinoba Bhave had a deep sense of spiritualism instilled in him at a very young age by his religious mother.
- He had read the Bhagavad Gita in his early years and was drawn towards spiritualism and asceticism despite being an academically good student.
- He learnt various regional languages and Sanskrit along with reading the scriptures.
- He read a newspaper report carrying Mahatma Gandhi's speech at the newly founded Benaras Hindu University, and this inspired him so much that he burnt his school and college certificates while on his way to Bombay to take his intermediate examination.
- He exchanged letters with Gandhi before meeting him at the latter's ashram in Ahmedabad in 1916.
- There, he quit his formal education and involved himself in teaching and various constructive programmes of Gandhi related to Khadi, education, sanitation, hygiene, etc.
- He also took part in nonviolent agitations against the British government, for which he was imprisoned.
- Participated in Quit India Movement
- He was chosen by Gandhi as the first individual Satyagrahi in a nonviolent movement in the year 1940. After this event, the unknown Vinoba Bhave became known to the whole country.

- He worked towards eliminating social inequities. He started the Sarvodaya Movement which meant 'Progress for all'.
- He also created the Brahma Vidya Mandir which was a small community of women enabling them to become self-sufficient.
- In 1951, Bhave started the Bhoodan Movement in Pochampally, Telangana.
- He authored several books and was well-versed in many languages including Marathi, Gujarati, Sanskrit, English, Urdu and Hindi.
- Shri Vinoba Bhave called "Kannada" script as "Queen of World Scripts" – "Vishwa Lipigala Raani"
- He was awarded the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Community Leadership in 1958. In 1983, he received the Bharat Ratna posthumously.
- Vinoba Bhave died on 15 November 1982 due to a serious illness.

### **Bhoodan Movement**

- In 1951, Vinoba Bhave started his peace-trek on foot through the violence-torn region of Telangana. On April 18, 1951, the Harijans of the Pochampally village requested him to provide them with around 80 acres of land to make a living.
- Vinoba asked the landlords of the village to come forward and save the Harijans. To everybody's surprise, a landlord got up and offered the required land.
- This incident added a new chapter in the history of sacrifices and non-violence. It was the beginning of the Bhoodan (Gift of the Land) movement.
- The movement continued for thirteen years and Vinoba toured the length and breadth of the country, a total distance of 58741 Km.
- He was successful in collecting around 4.4 million acres of land, of which around 1.3 million was distributed

among poor landless farmers.

- The movement attracted admiration from all over the world and was commended for being the only experiment of his kind to incite voluntary social justice.

## **Role in Freedom Struggle**

- Under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi, Vinoba also got involved in the Indian freedom struggle.
- He took part in programs of non-cooperation and especially the call for use of Swadeshi goods instead of foreign imports.
- He took up the spinning wheel churning out Khadi and urged others to do so, resulting in mass production of the fabric.
- In 1932, accusing Vinoba Bhave of conspiring against the British rule, the government sent him to jail for six months to Dhulia.
- There, he explained to the fellow prisoners the different subjects of 'Bhagavad Gita', in Marathi.
- All the lectures given by him on Gita in Dhulia jail were collected and later published as a book.
- Till 1940, Vinoba Bhave was known only to the people around him. Mahatma Gandhi, on 5 October, 1940, introduced Bhave to the nation by issuing a statement.
- He was also chosen as the first Individual Satyagrahi (an Individual standing up for Truth instead of a collective action) by Gandhi himself.

## **Gramdan**

- Then after 1954, he started to ask for donations of whole villages in a programme he called Gramdan.
- He got more than 1000 villages by way of donation.
- Out of these, he obtained 175 donated villages in Tamil Nadu alone.