Vaikom Satyagraha

Why in news?

Kerala Chief Minister and Tamil Nadu Chief Minister are to jointly inaugurate the centenary celebrations of Vaikom Satyagraha.

What is Vaikom Satyagraha?

- Vaikom is a serene town in Kottayam, Kerala.
- The Vaikom Satyagraha was launched on ***March 30, 1924*** against the ban imposed on members of marginalized communities in the surroundings of Vaikom Mahadevar Temple.
- It marked the *dawn of temple entry movements* across India.
- It was launched by leaders in Kerala such as ***T.K. Madhavan, K.P. Kesava Menon and George Joseph,*** on the advice of Mahatma Gandhi.
- A march comprising of 'upper caste' Hindus who supported the reform commenced in Vaikom and ended at the capital of Trivandrum.
- They marched with 25,000 signatures of 'forward caste' Hindus, for opening the Vaikom's temple roads to all castes.
- ***Large-scale participation of women*** was witnessed for the first time during the Satyagraha, marking the passage of women into the socio-political consciousness of the country.
- The protest sustained itself for more than one and a half years, leading to many arrests and satyagrahis being jailed.
- Even the Akalis from Punjab travelled to Vaikom to supply food to the protesters.

What is the role of Periyar?

- Leaders such as Neelakandan ***Nampoothiri and George Joseph*** requested Periyar to lead the protest.
- Periyar accepted the request and led the protest making the protest successful.
- ***Thiru. Vi. Kalyanasundaram (Thiru.Vi.Ka.)*** conferred the title ***Vaikom Veerar (Hero of Vaikom)*** on Periyar.
- Tamil Nadu played a pivotal role in Vaikom Satyagraha, which symbolised a struggle by the untouchables.
- Emperumal Naidu and Sivathanu Pillai were prominent leaders in Nagercoil, Tamil Nadu.

What are the impacts of temple entry movement?

- In 1925, the government of the Travancore princely state declared that people could enter three of the four streets around Vaikom temple thus bringing the protest to an end.

- It paved way for the temple *entry proclamation of Kerala in 1936.*
- In 1928, backward castes got the right to walk on public roads inn all temples in Travancore.
- It led to various temple entry movements across India thereby promoting social justice and equality for all.

- **Sanchara resolution**
- It is a resolution for ***free entry to the streets around the temple***.
- The resolution was supported by higher cates in the assembly.
- But, it was defeated by a single vote in the Assembly by the open support of the traditionalists and the indirect pressure of the government.

References

1. The Hindu | Vaikom Satyagraha

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