

MCQ Question · mcqquestion.com

Narayan Meghaji Lokhande

Free · Share

Narayan Meghaji Lokhande

Narayan Meghaji Lokhande quit his clerk's job at a Bombay cotton mill to fight for the men working the looms around him. In 1890, that fight produced India's first labour association. Historians now call him the father of India's trade union movement.

Picture the scene. More than 10,000 mill workers stood together at Bombay's Race Course Ground on 24 April 1890. Remember the number and the date together. Exams like to pair them.

The idea in brief

- Lokhande founded the Bombay Mill Hands Association in 1890.
- Lokhande's association won mill workers their first weekly rest day.
- A former railway and postal clerk, he left his mill job to organise full-time.
- Thousands of mill workers signed his memorandum to the government.
- A law from 1881 already covered child labour.

How did Lokhande found India's first labour association?

Lokhande founded the Bombay Mill Hands Association in 1890, drawing over 10,000 mill workers to its founding meeting. That work earned him the title father of India's trade union movement.

Narayan Meghaji Lokhande was born around **1848** into a Mali family from Kanhersar, in Pune district.

He founded the **Bombay Mill Hands Association** on **24 April 1890**. Over **10,000 mill workers** attended his founding meeting at Bombay's Race Course Ground.

Historians call him the **father of India's trade union movement** for this work.

Sources: pib.gov.in; bbc.com



Narayan Meghaji Lokhande, on a 2005 Indian commemorative postage stamp. Government Open Data License – India, via Wikimedia Commons.

> **Quick check 1.** Check 1: true or false? Over 10,000 mill workers attended the founding meeting of Lokhande's Bombay Mill Hands Association in 1890. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

What reforms did he actually win for mill workers?

Lokhande's association won mill workers their first weekly rest day, a daily break, regular pay dates, and injury compensation. Bombay's mills had never offered these protections before.

His association won mill workers a weekly **Sunday holiday**, a first for Bombay's mills. Workers also gained a **half-hour recess** each afternoon under the new rules.

Mills agreed to pay wages regularly, by the **15th of every month**. The association also pushed mill owners to **compensate workers hurt on the job**.

Why do these four gains matter? Each one is simple. A rest day on Sunday. A short break in the afternoon. Wages on a fixed date. Help when a worker is hurt. Before the association, the mills offered none of these.

Sources: thebetterindia.com; bbc.com

> **Quick check 2.** Check 2: true or false? Before Lokhande's association, Bombay's mill workers already had a weekly holiday and regular pay dates. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

How did a clerk become a full-time labour organiser?

Before the mills, Lokhande was a railway and postal clerk. Then he gave up his own mill job to run the association full-time.

Lokhande worked first with the railways, then the postal department, before joining the mills. He joined **Mandavi Textile Mills** as Store Keeper in **1870**.

He quit his job as a mill clerk to run the Mill Hands Association full-time.

Notice the path. He was a clerk first, with the railways and then the postal department. Then came the mills in 1870. Later he left his own job to serve the workers full-time. A clerk became an organiser.

He married **Gopikabai** and had a son named **Gopinath**.

Sources: thebetterindia.com; pib.gov.in

> **Quick check 3.** Check 3: true or false? Lokhande worked as a railway and postal clerk before joining the mills. He later joined Mandavi Textile Mills as Store Keeper in 1870. *(True or False?)*
>
> See answer ↓

How did a memorandum become the Factories Act of 1891?

Lokhande turned thousands of mill workers' signatures into a formal memorandum. He gave it to a government commission. It helped shape the national law.

Lokhande collected signatures from about **5,300 mill workers** for a formal memorandum. He gave it to the government's **Factory (Labour) Commission** in 1890.

He worked with reformer **Sorabji Shapurji Bengallee** to help shape the resulting law. Their combined efforts fed directly into the **Factories Act of 1891**.

Here is the chain to remember. Lokhande collected about 5,300 signatures. The memorandum went to the Factory (Labour) Commission in 1890. The Factories Act of 1891 followed. Signatures led to a commission, and a commission led to a law.

Sources: library.niti.gov.in; webapps.ilo.org

> **Quick check 4.** Check 4: true or false? About 5,300 mill workers signed Lokhande's memorandum. It went to the Factory (Labour) Commission and fed into the Factories Act of 1891. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

How did the 1891 Act actually differ from the 1881 one?

An earlier 1881 law already regulated child labour. It took Lokhande's 1891 campaign to win adult workers a weekly holiday. That campaign also limited women's working hours.

An earlier Factories Act, passed in **1881**, already regulated Indian mills. That Act set a ban on employing children under **seven**, and capped child workers' daily hours at **nine hours**.

The Factories Act of **1891**, shaped by Lokhande's campaign, added a **weekly holiday for all workers**.

A simple way to remember the gap is by who gained. In 1881 the gain was for young children. In 1891 the gain reached every adult worker, because the weekly holiday applied to all.

The 1891 Act also limited women mill workers to **eleven working hours** a day. It also raised the minimum age for factory work from seven to **nine**.

Hold the two Acts side by side. In 1881, children under seven were barred and child workers got a nine-hour limit. In 1891, all workers got a weekly holiday, women got an eleven-hour limit, and the minimum age rose to nine. Each Act widened the protection.

Sources: library.niti.gov.in; webapps.ilo.org

> **Quick check 5.** Check 5: true or false? The 1881 Factories Act already gave all workers a weekly holiday, before Lokhande's campaign even began. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Why was Lokhande a social reformer as well as a labour leader?

Lokhande's labour work grew out of Phule's anti-caste reform movement. His peace-making work during Hindu-Muslim riots earned him a government title.

Lokhande joined Jyotirao Phule's **Satyashodhak Samaj** in 1874, its second year of existence.

From 1880, he managed **Deenbandhu**, a Marathi paper for Bombay's working people. Phule had founded Deenbandhu in 1877 with fellow reformer **Krishnarao Bhalekar**.

In 1895, the government gave him the title **Rao Bahadur** for calming Hindu-Muslim riots.

Look at the order of his life. He joined the Satyashodhak Samaj in 1874. He managed Deenbandhu from 1880. He founded the Mill Hands Association in 1890. He became Rao Bahadur in 1895 and died in 1897. Reform came first and labour work second.

This shows how his two roles joined up. Reform taught him to organise ordinary people. Labour work gave that organising a clear aim, which was safer and fairer mills.

He died on **9 February 1897**; India issued a postage stamp honouring him in 2005.

Exam questions often link the two roles, so keep them together in your notes. Think of Lokhande as one person who moved from reform meetings to mill gates without changing his purpose.

His mentor Phule shaped both his early reform work and his later labour organising. See Jyotirao Phule: Education and Anti-Caste Reform for that fuller story.

Sources: pib.gov.in; thebetterindia.com

> **Quick check 6.** Check 6: true or false? Lokhande joined Jyotirao Phule's Satyashodhak Samaj in 1874, well before he founded the Bombay Mill Hands Association in 1890. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Exam Angle: A Real PYQ Trap — "First Trade Union" vs "First Labour Association"

CDS (II) 2020 asked which body was India's first trade union in the proper sense of the term.

The official answer was the **Madras Labour Union**, founded in 1918. Lokhande's 1890 Bombay Mill Hands Association is usually called India's first **labour organisation**, not its first formal trade union.

The same paper asked who founded the **All India Trade Union Congress** in 1920; the answer was **N.M. Joshi**, a separate reformer.

Three dates settle the confusion. Lokhande's association came in 1890. The Madras Labour Union came in 1918. The All India Trade Union Congress, led by N.M. Joshi, came in 1920. Write them side by side in your notes.

Expect questions that test whether you can tell Lokhande's association apart from these later, more formal trade unions.

Do not mix up the two ideas. A labour association is a group of workers who ask for better conditions. A trade union in the proper sense is a more formal body. Lokhande's group is the first kind, not the second.

Sources: thehindu.com

Sources: pib.gov.in; thebetterindia.com; library.niti.gov.in

> **Quick check 7.** Check 7: true or false? Lokhande's 1890 Bombay Mill Hands Association is officially recognised as India's first formal trade union. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

> **Quick check 8.** Check 8: true or false? N.M. Joshi, a separate reformer from Lokhande, is credited with founding the All India Trade Union Congress in 1920. *(True or False?)* See answer ↓

Practice MCQs

1. Narayan Meghaji Lokhande is hailed as the father of which movement in India?

A. The trade union movement

B. The Bhoodan movement

C. The cooperative movement

D. The Swadeshi movement

See answer ↓

2. On which date in 1890 did Bombay's mill owners accept a weekly Sunday holiday?

A. 1 May 1890

B. 24 April 1890

C. 15 August 1890

D. 10 June 1890

See answer ↓

3. A commemorative postage stamp honouring Lokhande was released in which year?

A. 1990

B. 1947

C. 1975

D. 2005

See answer ↓

4. Which pair of protections did the Factories Act, 1891 add for factory workers?

A. A ban on all night shifts for men

B. A weekly holiday and a half-hour midday rest

C. An eight-hour day and paid leave

D. Pensions and health insurance

See answer ↓

5. What daily limit on working hours did the Factories Act, 1891 set for women?

A. Twelve hours

B. Eight hours

C. Eleven hours

D. Nine hours

See answer ↓

6. Which body is usually called India's first trade union in the proper sense, formed in 1918?

A. The Madras Labour Union

B. The Bombay Mill Hands Association

C. The Girni Kamgar Union

D. The Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association

See answer ↓

Answer Key

1. **A.**
   A government release at his 2005 stamp launch calls Lokhande the father of India's trade union movement.
   Sources: PIB · BBC News Marathi.
   ↑ Q1
2. **D.**
   Mill owners accepted the Sunday holiday on 10 June 1890. Lokhande's mass meeting on 24 April had pressed for it.
   Sources: The Better India · BBC News Marathi.
   ↑ Q2
3. **D.** A commemorative stamp honouring Lokhande was released in 2005. ↑ Q3
4. **B.**
   The 1891 Act added a weekly holiday and a compulsory half-hour rest during the day.
   Sources: NITI Aayog library · Shodhganga thesis.
   ↑ Q4
5. **C.** The 1891 Act limited women to eleven working hours a day. ↑ Q5
6. **A.**
   The Madras Labour Union was formed on 27 April 1918 under B.P. Wadia. Lokhande's 1890 body is usually called a labour association.
   Sources: The Hindu · Shodhganga thesis.
   ↑ Q6

Quick-check answers

1. **True.** The meeting was held at Bombay's Race Course Ground on 24 April 1890 -- work that earned Lokhande the title father of India's trade union movement. ↑ 1
2. **False.** The weekly Sunday holiday was a first for Bombay's mills. ↑ 2
3. **True.** He later quit his own mill clerk's job entirely to run the Mill Hands Association full-time. ↑ 3
4. **True.** He worked with reformer Sorabji Shapurji Bengallee to help shape the resulting law. ↑ 4

5. **False.** The 1881 Act only regulated child labour (no child under seven, capped at nine hours daily) -- it took Lokhande's campaign to win the weekly holiday, added only in the 1891 Act. ↑ 5
6. **True.** His social-reform work and his later labour organising grew together throughout his life -- he also managed Phule's Deenbandhu newspaper from 1880. ↑ 6
7. **False.** It is usually called India's first labour organisation. ↑ 7
8. **True.** Exams often test whether you can tell Lokhande's 1890 association apart from these later, more formal trade unions. ↑ 8

Curated by Arsalan Zuberi · mcqquestion.com



Scan to read online

https://mcqquestion.com/articles/modhist0300-narayan-meghaji-lokhande/