

A. P. J. Abdul Kalam



Great Indian scientist and politician who played a leading role in the development of India's missile and nuclear weapons programs.

About the Legend

- ▀ A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, in full Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam, was born on October 15, 1931, in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu, India.
- ▀ He served as the 11th President of India from 2002 to 2007.
- ▀ Kalam earned a degree in aeronautical engineering from the Madras Institute of Technology and in 1958 joined the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- ▀ In 1969, he moved to the Indian Space Research Organisation, where he was project director of the SLV-III, the first satellite launch vehicle that was both designed and produced in India.
- ▀ Rejoining DRDO in 1982, Kalam planned the program that produced a number of successful missiles,

which helped earn him the nickname “**Missile Man.**”

- ▀ Among those successes was Agni, India’s first intermediate-range ballistic missile, which incorporated aspects of the SLV-III and was launched in 1989.
- ▀ He also played a pivotal organisational, technical, and political role in India's Pokhran-II nuclear tests in 1998, the first since the original nuclear test by India in 1974.
- ▀ From 1992 to 1997 Kalam was scientific adviser to the defense minister, and he later served as principal scientific adviser (1999–2001) to the government with the rank of cabinet minister.
- ▀ His prominent role in the country’s 1998 nuclear weapons tests solidified India as a nuclear power and established Kalam as a national hero, although the tests caused great concern in the international community.
- ▀ In 1998 Kalam put forward a countrywide plan called Technology Vision 2020, which he described as a road map for transforming India from a less-developed to a developed society in 20 years. The plan called for, among other measures, increasing agricultural productivity, emphasizing technology as a vehicle for economic growth, and widening access to health care and education.
- ▀ Kalam received 7 honorary doctorates from 40 universities. The Government of India honoured him with the **Padma Bhushan in 1981** and the **Padma Vibhushan in 1990** for his work with ISRO and DRDO and his role as a scientific advisor to the Government.
- ▀ In 1997, Kalam received India's highest civilian honour, the Bharat Ratna, for his contribution to the scientific research and modernisation of defence technology in India.
- ▀ In 2013, he was the recipient of the Von Braun Award from the National Space Society "to recognize excellence in the management and leadership of a space-related project".
- ▀ While delivering a lecture at the Indian Institute of Management Shillong, Kalam collapsed and died from an apparent cardiac arrest on **27 July 2015**, aged 83.
- ▀ Wheeler Island, a national missile test site in Odisha, was renamed **Kalam Island** in September 2015.
- ▀ A prominent road in New Delhi was renamed from Aurangzeb Road to **Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Road** in August 2015.
- ▀ In February 2018, scientists from the Botanical Survey of India named a newly found plant species as *Drypetes kalamii*, in his honour.

For more information, check out [**A.P.J. Abdul Kalam** on Wikipedia.](#)