

Rashtrapati Nilayam

Rashtrapati Nilayam (literally the "President's House") formerly known as **Residency House** is the official winter retreat of the President of India located in Hyderabad, Telangana.^[1] Rashtrapati Nilayam was officially opened to the public in March 2023, allowing visitors to explore its vast grounds, thematic gardens, and architectural marvels.^[2] The President stays here for at least two weeks during their winter sojourn visit and conducts official business.^[3] It is also used as a guest house for visiting dignitaries. It is located in Bolaram in Secunderabad, a neighbourhood of Hyderabad.

History

Originally called the Residency House, it was constructed in 1860 by Nizam Nazir-ud-Dowla.^[4] It became the country house of the British Resident at Secunderabad. After the Hyderabad state's integration into Indian Union (Read Operation Polo) in 1948, it became the President's retreat and used as the *Southern Sojourn*.^{[5][6]} The decision to open the estate to the general public marked a significant step in making India's presidential history more accessible and engaging for a wider audience.^[7]

Architecture

The 16-room estate is spread over an area of 90 acres (360,000 m²), consisting of single storied building besides a visitors' quarters that can accommodate 150 people. It has a Dining Hall, Durbar Hall, Morning Room, Cinema Hall, etc. A unique aspect of this Rashtrapati Nilayam is that the kitchen and dining hall are independent buildings connected with a tunnel to serve food.

The President stays in the Main Building and conducts official business from here when they visit for their winter sojourn in December every year.

Rashtrapati Nilayam



Rashtrapati Nilayam,Bolaram



General information

Type	Official retreat
Location	<u>Bolaram</u> , <u>Secunderabad</u> , <u>Hyderabad</u> , <u>Telangana</u> , <u>India</u>
Current tenants	<u>Draupadi Murmu</u> (President of India)
Completed	1860

The retreat's premises include a landscaped garden, seasonal flowering plants and display of potted plants around the main building, natural cascading water falls and different types of nutrition gardens.

Attractions

Knowledge Gallery

It has been established to provide more information about Rashtrapati Bhavan and its estates including Rashtrapati Nilayam, along with belongings of past Presidents of India. Apart from this there are enclaves dedicated to unsung heroes of Independence and chapters of Hyderabad history.^[8] The museum also showcases the cutlery used in the President's Kitchen along with pictures of the State Dinners hosted by each of the Past Presidents.

Flagpost

In December 2023, President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated a replica of the historic flag post at the Rashtrapati Nilayam ^[9] on which the national flag was hoisted for the first time in Hyderabad after the princely state acceded to the Indian Union in 1948. This Flagpost is a one-of-its-kind 120 ft wooden structure made of Burma teak wood. This replaced the old flagpole which was dismantled in 2010 as it became dilapidated and posed a threat to the main building.^[10]

Stepwells

Smt. Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the revival of traditional water systems in Rashtrapati Nilayam.^[11] There are total 3 different 100 year old step wells in the premises of Rashtrapati Nilayam, that have been revived in 2023 - Jai Hind Step Well, Nakshtra Step Well, and Chinna Baavi. ^[11] An Interpretation Centre has been curated along side the Jai Hind Stepwell to educate the visitors about the various traditional water management systems of India.

Cheriyal Art Tunnel

The Kitchen tunnel, once essential as a discreet food passage, was restored in March 2023, and now features Telangana's Cheriyal folk art,^[12] emphasising the preservation of cultural heritage.

Gardens



The President, Shri Ram Nath Kovind hosting 'At Home' reception, at Rashtrapati Nilayam, Bolarum, Secunderabad on December 26, 2017



Rashtrapati Nilayam (Residency House), c. 1892, Photo: Lala Deen Dayal



One of its kind 120 ft tall teak wood flag post - replica of the original flag post where the Indian flag was hoisted for the first time in Hyderabad in September 1948

There are a total of 6 gardens that exist today at Rashtrapati Nilayam - Nakshatra Garden, Herbal Garden, Rock Garden, Maze Garden, Palmatum, and Fruit Orchards.^[13] ^[14]

The Herbal Garden, inaugurated in December 2009, of medicinal and aromatic plants is spread over 7,000 sq metres, has about 116 species of medicinal and aromatic plants including sarpagandha, kalabandha, citronella, lemon grass, khus, geranium, coriander, sandalwood, tuber rose, jasmine, kalmegh, tulsi etc. The garden was built by Central Public Works Department and the Telangana Medicinal Plants Board, while Rashtrapati Bhavan and National Medicinal Plants Board funded the project.

The Nakshatra Garden showcases the trees associated with various zodiac signs and planets. Additionally, the 75 acre main campus with 33 acres fruit orchards of different varieties – Mango, Chikkoo, Amla, Custard apple, Pomegranate, Guava, Coconut and big tamarind trees are the bio reserves of various fauna. Another feature interesting feature is the Palmatum which is a germplasm repository of 30 species of palms from Rhaps, Areca, Royal, Foxtail, Rhaps, Washingtonia etc.

The Rock Garden was created by transforming the natural surroundings of existing rocks into cactus gardens, while also repurposing the boulders to create cascading water features. The Garden also features beautiful rock sculptures of Lord Shiva and Nandi Bull.

The most recent addition to the gardens is the Maze Garden which offers a playful experience to the children visiting the property. At the culmination of the maze, there is a musical fountain which acts a key attractions for young visitors.

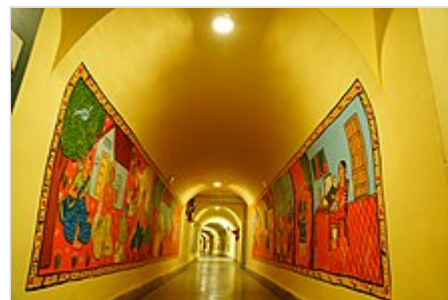
Public access and education

Since its opening to the public, Rashtrapati Nilayam has become a vibrant center for educational tours, interactive exhibitions,^[15] and cultural events^[16] that celebrate India's rich heritage. Its comprehensive offerings aim to educate visitors about the nation's history, the role of the presidency, and the significance of Hyderabad in India's national narrative.^[17] The estate's transformation into a public venue reflects a broader commitment to preserving and sharing India's cultural legacy.

Visiting information



Jai Hind Stepwell - one of the three stepwells revived at Rashtrapati Nilayam



Kitchen Tunnel adorned with local Cherial Art paintings



Nakshatra Garden



Musical Fountain at the center of Maze Garden

Rashtrapati Nilayam is open to visitors with guided tours available, offering a comprehensive experience of its historical and cultural significance.^[18] For those interested in exploring India's presidential heritage and enjoying a day amidst nature and history, Rashtrapati Nilayam provides an unparalleled opportunity. The tickets can be booked on the official website of Rashtrapati Bhavan for slots between 10 AM to 5 PM from Tuesday to Sunday.^[19]

See also

- [List of official residences of India](#)
- [Rashtrapati Bhavan, New Delhi](#)
- [The Retreat Building, Shimla](#)
- [Rashtrapati Ashiana, Dehradun](#)

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External links

- The official web site of President of India: President's Retreats (<https://presidentofindia.nic.in/>)
- The official web site of Presidential Estates (<https://visit.rashtrapatibhavan.gov.in/>)
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