



A Virtual Exhibition on Life Journey of
Sarojini Naidu





The Great Sarojini Naidu



Sarojini Naidu is known as the Nightingale of India or "Bharatiya Kokila". She played an important role in India's freedom struggle and also promoted women's rights.

Sarojini Naidu was a poet and a great politician. Her literary works gain popularity all over the world. At an early age, she went to London for further studies. She became the first women Governor of India. In childhood she wrote a play "Maher Muneer" and due to it she earned a scholarship and went abroad for further studies. She was remembered as a great leader and also was one of the members of the Constituent Assembly.





Introduction of Sarojini Naidu



- **Born: 13 February, 1879**
- **Place of Birth: Hyderabad**
- **Father: Aghore Nath Chattopadhyay**
- **Mother: Barada Sundari Devi**
- **Spouse: Padipati Govindarajulu Naidu**
- **Children: 4 namely Jayasurya, Padmaja, Randheer and Leilamani**
- **Studied at: University of Madras, London King's College, Cambridge**
- **Associations and Movements: Indian National Congress, Indian National Movement and Indian Independence Movement**
- **Political ideology: Right-winged, Non-Violence**
- **Publications: The Golden Threshold (1905), The Bird of Time (1912), Mohammad Jinnah: An Ambassador of Unity (1916), The Broken Wing (1917), The Feather of the Dawn (1961), The Indian Fantasy, Ecstasy, The Queen's Rival, The Royal Tombs of Golconda, The Snake Charmer etc.**
- **Death: 2 March, 1949**
- **Memorial or Institutions: Sarojini Naidu Medical College, Sarojini Naidu College for Women, Sarojini Naidu School of Arts and Communication, University of Hyderabad, India**





Sarojini Naidu Childhood & Early Life



Sarojini Naidu was born on February 13, 1879 in Hyderabad. Her father, Dr. Aghore Nath Chattopadhyay was a scientist, philosopher, and educator. He founded the Nizam College of Hyderabad. Her mother, Varada Sundari Devi was a poetess in the Bengali language. Dr. Aghore Nath Chattopadhyay was the first member of the Indian National Congress in Hyderabad. For his socio-political activities, Aghore Nath was dismissed from his position of Principal. One of his brothers, Virendranath Chattopadhyay, played key role in establishing the Berlin Committee. As a political activist involved in India's on-going struggle for self-rule, he was heavily influenced by Communism. Her second brother Harindranath Chattopadhyay was a renowned poet and a successful playwright. Her sister, Sunalini Devi was a dancer and actress

Since childhood, Sarojini was a very bright and intelligent child. She was proficient in multiple languages including English, Bengali, Urdu, Telugu and Persian. She topped her matriculation exams from Madras University. Her father wanted Sarojini to become a mathematician or scientist, but young Sarojini was attracted to poetry.

She applied her prodigious literary skills to write a 1300 lines long poem in English titled 'The Lady of the Lake'. Impressed with Sarojini's skills of expressing emotions with appropriate words, Dr. Chattopadhyaya encouraged her works. Few months later, Sarojini, with assistance from her father, wrote the play "Maher Muneer" in the Persian language.



Sarojini Naidu Education



- **At the age of 12, she started a career in literature. She wrote a play namely "Maher Muneer" and earned recognitions, praises from all over the world. She went for higher education in London and Cambridge at an early age. This play also impressed the Nawab of Hyderabad and gained popularity.**
- **She received a scholarship at the age of 16 from the Nizam of Hyderabad and went to London King's College. There, Nobel Laureates Arthur Simon and Edmond Gausse advised her to focus on Indian themes for writing. To depict her poetry, she covered Indian Contemporary life and events. No doubt she became an incredible poet of the 20th century by expressing her feelings, emotions and her experiences through poems.**
- **In London, during her college days, she fell in love with Padipati Govindarajulu Naidu a non-Brahmin and a physician. She was brave enough and showed honesty for her love and got married at the age of 19 in 1898. She had four children namely Jayasurya, Padmaja, Randheer and Leilaman.**



Role in Indian Independence Movement



Sarojini was initiated into the Indian political arena by iconic stalwarts of the Indian freedom struggle, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and Gandhi. She was deeply affected by the partition of Bengal in 1905 and decided to join the Indian freedom struggle. She met regularly with Gopal Krishna Gokhale, who in turn introduced her to the other leaders of the Indian freedom movement. Gokhale urged her to devote her intellect and education for the cause. She took a respite from writing and devoted herself fully to the political cause. She met Mahatma Gandhi, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, C. P. Ramaswami Iyer and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. Her relationship with Gandhi was that of mutual respect as well as of benign humour.

She met Jawaharlal Nehru in 1916, worked with him for the disheartening conditions of the Indigo workers of Champaran in the western district of Bihar and fought vehemently with the British for their rights. Sarojini Naidu travelled all over India and delivered speeches on welfare of youth, dignity of labor, women's emancipation and nationalism. In 1917, she helped found the Women's India Association with Annie Besant and other prominent leaders. She also presented to Congress the need to involve more women in the freedom struggle. She travelled extensively to the United States of America and many European countries as the flag-bearer of the Indian Nationalist struggle.



Role in Indian Independence Movement



In March 1919, the British government passed the Rowlatt Act by which the possession of seditious documents was deemed illegal. Mahatma Gandhi organized the Non-Cooperation Movement to protest and Naidu was the first to join the movement. Sarojini Naidu religiously followed Gandhi's example and actively supported his other campaigns like the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, the Khilafat issue, the Sabarmati Pact, the Satyagraha Pledge and the Civil Disobedience Movement. When Gandhi was arrested after the Salt March to Dandi in 1930, she led the Dharasana Satyagraha with other leaders. She accompanied Gandhi to London to take part in the Round Table Talks with the British Government in 1931. Her political activities and role in the Freedom struggle led to several stints in prison – in 1930, 1932, and 1942. Her 1942 arrest led to imprisonment for 21 months. She went to England in 1919 as a member of the All-India Home Rule Deputation. In January 1924, she was one of the two delegates of the Indian National Congress to attend the East African Indian Congress. As a result of her selfless contribution to the cause of freedom, she was elected as the President of the Indian National Congress Party in 1925.

Naidu played an immense role in presenting the nuances of the Indian non-violent struggle for freedom to the world. She travelled to Europe and even to the United states to disseminate Gandhian principles and was partly responsible for establishing him as this icon of peace.

After the independence of India, she became the first governor of the United Provinces (now Uttar Pradesh) and remained in the role till her death in 1949. Her birthday, March 2, is honoured as Women's Day in India.



Literary Works of Sarojini Naidu



- Naidu began writing at the age of 12. Her play, *Maher Muneer*, written in Persian, impressed the Nizam of Kingdom of Hyderabad.
- In 1905, her first collection of poems, named *The Golden Threshold* was published. The volume bore an introduction by Arthur Symons. Her poems were admired by prominent Indian politicians like Gopal Krishna Gokhale.
- Naidu poem "In the Bazaars of Hyderabad" was published as a part of *The Bird of Time* with her other poems in 1912. "In the Bazaars of Hyderabad" was well received by critics, who variously noted Naidu's visceral use of rich sensory images in her writing.
- *The Feather of The Dawn* which contained poems written in 1927 by Naidu was edited and published posthumously in 1961 by her daughter Padmaja Naidu



Literary Works of Sarojini Naidu



- **1905: The Golden Threshold, published in the United Kingdom.**
- **1912: The Bird of Time: Songs of Life, Death & the Spring, published in London**
- **1917: The Broken Wing: Songs of Love, Death and the Spring, including "The Gift of India" (first read in public in 1915)**
- **1919: Muhammad Jinnah: An Ambassador of Unity**
- **1943: The Sceptred Flute: Songs of India, Allahabad: Kitabistan, posthumously published**
- **1961: The Feather of the Dawn, posthumously published, edited by her daughter, Padmaja Naidu**
- **1971: The Indian Weavers**



Literary Achievements



Besides her role and contribution to the Indian Nationalist Movement, Sarojini Naidu is also revered for her contribution in the field of Indian poetry. Many of her works were transformed into songs. She drew her inspiration from nature as well as surrounding daily life and her poetry echoed with the ethos of her patriotism. In 1905, her collection of poems was published under the title "Golden Threshold". Later, she also published two other collections called "The Bird of Time", and "The Broken Wings", both of which attracted huge readership in both India and England. Apart from poetry, she also penned articles and essays like 'Words of Freedom' on her political beliefs and social issues like women empowerment.



Awards and honors



- Naidu was awarded the Kaiser-i-Hind Medal by the British government for her work during the plague epidemic in India, which she later returned in protest over the April 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre.
- For her work in the field of poetry writing, Naidu was given the title of "Nightingale of India".
- In 2014, Google India commemorated Naidu's 135th birth anniversary with a Google Doodle. Naidu was listed among "150 Leading Women" list by the University of London to mark the 150 years since women gained access to higher education in the United Kingdom in 2018.
- Asteroid 5647 Sarojininaidu, discovered by Eleanor Helin at Palomar Observatory in 1990, was named in her memory. The official naming citation was published by the Minor Planet Center on 27 August 2019



Last days and legacy of Sarojini naidu



Sarojini Naidu was the first women Governor of Uttar Pradesh. On 2nd March 1949, Sarojini Naidu died at Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. She lived her glorious life by her own words, "As long as I have life, as long as blood flows through this arm of mine, I shall not leave the cause of freedom...I am only a woman, only a poet. But as a woman, I give to you the weapons of faith and courage and the shield of fortitude. And as a poet, I fling out the banner of song and sound, the bugle call to battle. How shall I kindle the flame which shall waken you men from slavery..." Her childhood residence at Nampally was bequeathed to the University of Hyderabad by her family and it was christened as 'The Golden Threshold' after Naidu's 1905 publication.

The University renamed its School of Fine Arts and Communication as 'Sarojini Naidu School of Arts and Communication' to honour the Nightingale of India.



Some Glimpse of Sarojini Naidu



Sarojini Naidu





Source of Information References



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