



Dr. Rajendra Prasad

Why in News?

[The President of India](#) paid floral tributes to **Dr. Rajendra Prasad**, the **First President of India**, on his birth anniversary at Rashtrapati Bhavan on **3rd December 2022**.

Who was Dr. Rajendra Prasad?

- **Birth:**
 - Son of Mahadev Sahai, he was born in **Zeradei, Siwan, Bihar** on **3rd December 1884**.
- **Education:**
 - He joined the famed **Calcutta Presidency College in 1902**.
 - In 1915, Prasad appeared in the **examination of master's in law from the Department of Law, University of Calcutta**, passed the examination and won a gold medal.
 - In 1916, he commenced his **legal career in the Patna High Court**. He completed his **Doctorate in Law from Allahabad University in 1937**.
- **Role in Fight for Freedom:**
 - **Association with Gandhiji:**
 - While [Gandhiji](#) was on a fact-finding mission in **Chamaparan district of Bihar** to address grievances of local peasants, he called on **Dr. Rajendra Prasad to come to Champaran with volunteers**.
 - Gandhiji's influence **greatly altered many of his views**, most importantly on **caste and untouchability**.
 - The [Champaran Satyagraha](#) not only brought him closer to Mahatma Gandhi, but also changed the entire course of his life.
 - [The Rowlatt Act of 1918](#) and the [Jallianwala Bagh massacre of 1919](#) pushed Rajendra Prasad closer to Gandhiji.
 - **Call for Non-cooperation:**
 - Dr. Prasad called for **non-cooperation** in Bihar as part of [Gandhiji's non-](#)

cooperation movement.

- **National College:**
 - He gave up his law practice and started a **National College near Patna**, 1921.
- **Salt Satyagraha:**
 - In March 1930, Gandhiji launched the **Salt Satyagraha**. Under the guidance of Dr. Prasad, a salt Satyagraha was launched in Nakhas Pond, Bihar.
 - Batch after batch of volunteers courted arrest while making salt. He called for more volunteers.
 - Public opinion forced the Government to withdraw the police and allow the volunteers to make salt.
 - He then sold the manufactured salt to raise funds. He was sentenced to six months imprisonment.
- **Dr. Prasad & Indian National Congress:**
 - He officially **joined the Indian National Congress in 1911**, during its annual session held in Calcutta.
 - He presided over the **Bombay session of the Indian National Congress** in October 1934.
 - Following the **resignation of Subhash Chandra Bose** as the President of the Congress in April 1939, **He was elected President for the second time.**
 - In 1946, he **joined the Interim Government of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru** as the Minister of Food & Agriculture and gave the slogan of **“Grow More Food”**.
- **Dr. Prasad & Constituent Assembly:**
 - In July 1946, when the **Constituent Assembly** was established to frame the **Constitution of India**, he was elected its President.
 - **Committees of Constituent Assembly under the chairmanship of Dr. Prasad includes:**
 - Ad hoc Committee on the National flag
 - Committee on the Rules of Procedure
 - Finance and Staff Committee
 - Steering Committee
 - Two and a half years after independence, **on 26th January 1950**, the **Constitution of independent India was ratified** and he was elected **India's First President.**
- **Awards & Recognition:**
 - In 1962, after 12 years as President, **Dr. Prasad retired**, and was subsequently awarded the **Bharat Ratna**, the nation's highest civilian award.
 - Dr. Prasad recorded his life and the decades before independence in many books, which includes:
 - Satyagraha at Champaran
 - India Divided
 - His autobiography “Atmakatha”
 - Mahatma Gandhi and Bihar, Some Reminiscences
 - Babu ke Kadmon Mein
- **Death:**
 - Dr. Rajendra Prasad spent the last few months of his life in retirement at the Sadaqat Ashram in Patna.
 - He died on 28th February 1963.

[Source: TOI](#)