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A P J Abdul Kalam - Interesting Facts & Achievements on his 87th Birth Anniversary

Modern Indian history is incomplete without the mention of APJ Abdul Kalam, a scientist, teacher, statesman and above all a great human being. He is known as people's President and 'Missile Man of India'. He was born on 15 October 1931 on Pamban Island, Rameshwaram, Tamil Nadu. In 2015, UN declared his birthday as the World Student's Day. Here are 13 Interesting Facts about A P J Abdul Kalam, on his 87th Birth Anniversary that you should not miss about him.

“If you want to shine like a sun. First burn like a sun.”

- Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam

Once you are done reading this article, test yourself with this Quiz on achievements of A P J Abdul Kalam:

[**A.P.J Abdul Kalam Quiz - Attempt Now**](#)

13 Interesting Facts About A P J Abdul Kalam

1. **Hardships:** Jainulabudeen, Kalam's father, was a boat owner and imam of a local mosque. His ancestors were wealthy but due to business failures, the family fortunes were lost and the former President was forced to do odd jobs. He used to sell newspapers to support his family.
2. **Failures:** Kalam missed an opportunity to become a fighter pilot for the Indian Air force. He was on the 9th spot on the list, and there were only 8 openings. The first 8 shortlisted candidates were recruited.





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3. **Empowered Indian Nuclear Mission:** Kalam also made significant contributions to the nuclear capabilities of India. The Pokhran -2 nuclear tests (in 1998) were successful thanks to his organizational and technical support.
4. **Honors:** He was honored with doctorates from 40 universities.
5. **Frisking at Airport:** Kalam was frisked twice at JFK Airport in New York. He was checked for explosives by the airport staff. This incident was protested by India on the international level.
6. **Science Day:** Kalam's visit to Switzerland is commemorated as Science Day in the country. This declaration in his honor was made by the Swiss government after the sad demise of this great personality.
7. **The VVS Connection:** Kalam followed only one cricketer on his Twitter account - VVS Laxman. Kalam followed a total of 38 people on this social media account.
8. **Youth Icon:** He was awarded the MTV Youth Icon award twice, in 2003 and 2006.
9. **People's President:** Once Kalam used Yahoo Answers to ask a question about terrorism. He asked, "What should we do to free our planet from terrorism?" He received more than 30,000 responses.
10. **Visionary:** Kalam's wish was to power the Rashtrapati Bhawan completely with solar power. However, this could not be implemented during the term of his presidency.
11. **Notable Gesture:** Dr. Kalam dedicated his book 'Ignited Minds' to a Class 12 girl, Snehal Thakkar, who had impressed him with her response on poverty. He also invited her personally for the swearing in at the Rashtrapati Bhavan when he took over as the President of India on July 25, 2002.
12. **Died Doing what he Loved:** On his last day, he was delivering a lecture at IIM, Shillong. He was standing at the podium delivering his speech to hundreds of students when he suffered a cardiac arrest that made him fall to the floor. He

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always had a passion for teaching and working hard. And at the time when death captured him, he was doing what he loved.

13. **World Student's Day:** Abdul Kalam's birthday i.e. 15th October is observed as the World Student's Day. This initiative was started by the UN in 2015. The motive behind this initiative is to promote diversity, multiculturalism, and innovativeness among students across the world.

A P J Abdul Kalam's Awards & Achievement

1. Dr. A P J Abdul Kalam was conferred Padma Bhushan by Government of India in 1981.
2. Later, in 1990, he received Padma Vibhushan Award for his immense contribution as scientific advisor to government and spearheading DRDO and ISRO.
3. Government of India also honored A P J Abdul Kalam with Bharat Ratna Award in 1997. He was the third President of India to have been awarded Bharat Ratna, after Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1954) and Dr Zakir Hussain (1963).
4. His contributions to develop SLV-III projects and PSLV played a major role in ISRO's success.
5. The King Charles-II Medal was awarded by the Royal Society, UK for his contributions in Science and Technology in October 2007.
6. He also received the prestigious Woodrow Wilson Award in 2008.
7. He is the author of many inspiring books like Wings of Fire, India 2020: A Vision for the New Millennium, Children Ask Kalam, and so on.
8. He was also awarded Von Braun Award by National Space Society in 2013.
9. Wheeler Island in Odisha, India's missile test site, was renamed as 'Abdul Kalam Island' to honor him in 2015.





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10. NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory also named a newly discovered bacterium in the International Space Station (ISS) as '*Solibacillus kalamii*'

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