

## Former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam passes away

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**New Delhi:** India's 11th President Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam died on Monday evening at a hospital in Meghalaya, where he had gone to deliver a lecture. He was 83.

The former President, who was in office from 2002 to 2007, had collapsed during the lecture at the Indian Institute of Management, Shillong, around 6.30 pm. He was taken to the Bethany hospital. Doctors said he had suffered a massive cardiac arrest.

A career scientist turned reluctant politician, Kalam was born and raised in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu and studied physics and aerospace engineering. He spent the next four decades as a scientist and science administrator, mainly at the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and was intimately involved in India's civilian space program and military missile development efforts.

He thus came to be known as the Missile Man of India for his work on the development of ballistic missile and launch vehicle technology.

Kalam was elected President of India in 2002 with the support of both the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party and the opposition Indian National Congress.

After serving a term of five years, he returned to his civilian life of education, writing and public service. He received several prestigious awards, including the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour.

Dr Kalam was born in Rameswaram on October 15, 1931, to a humble family. His father was a boatman.

A bright student, his interest in flying led to a degree in aeronautical engineering, and eventually to supervising the

development of India's guided missile programme.

This was Dr. Kalam's last tweet.

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