



MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD: LEADER IN NEWS

National Education Day

- **Observance Date:** November 11 is celebrated annually as National Education Day in India.
- **Purpose:** Marks the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, independent India's first Education Minister.
- **Honors:** Azad was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna in 1992.

Early Life and Background

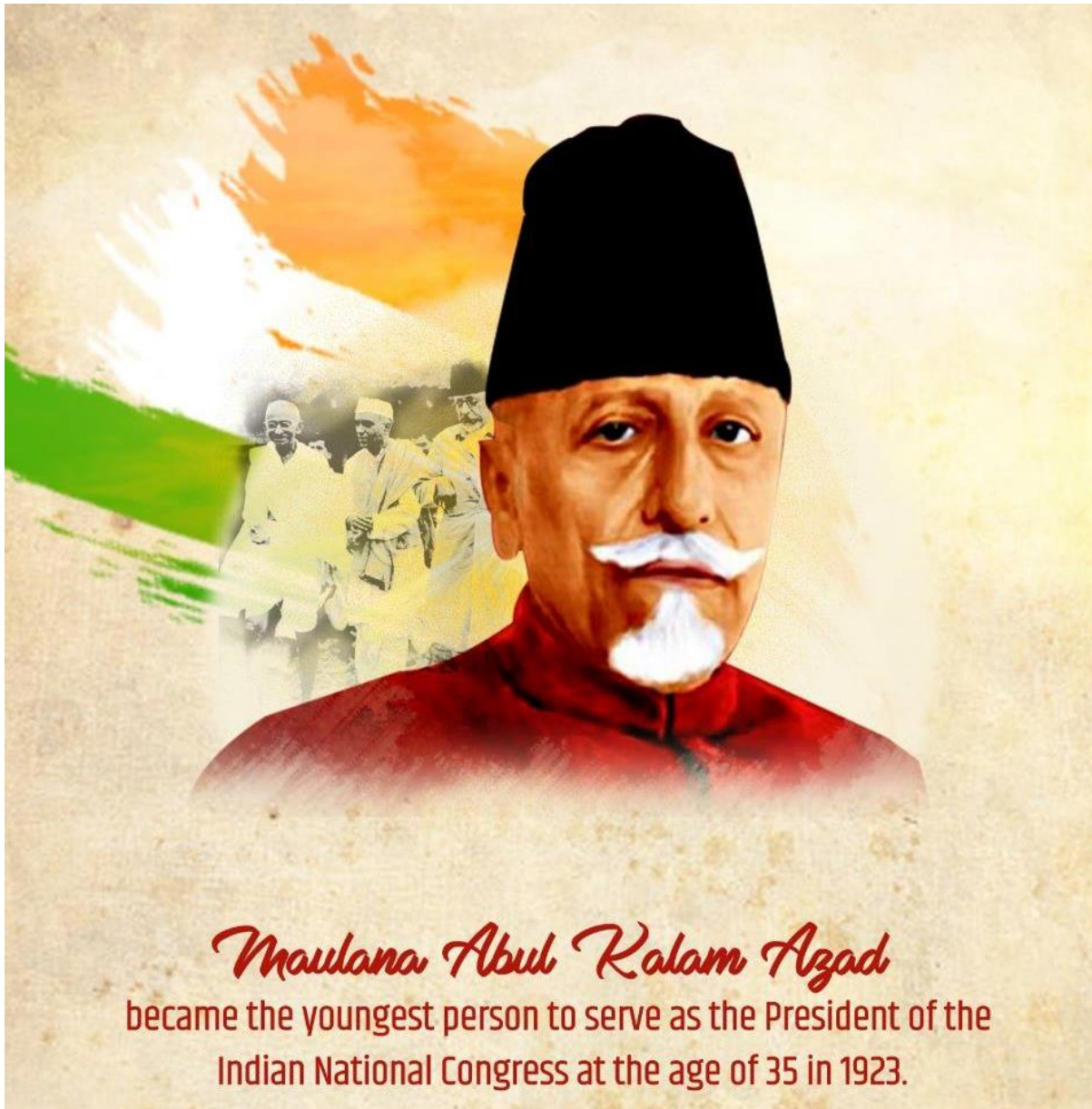
- **Birthplace:** Born in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, in 1888.
- **Family Heritage:** His mother was an Arab, and his father, Maulana Khairuddin, was a Bengali Muslim with Afghan roots.
- **Return to India:** The family moved back to Calcutta (now Kolkata) in 1890 when Azad was two years old.

Role in Journalism and Promotion of Hindu-Muslim Unity

- **Founding of Al-Hilal (1912):**
 - **Objective:** Established as a weekly Urdu journal to promote Indian nationalism and increase revolutionary recruits among Muslims.
 - **Impact:** Played a crucial role in fostering Hindu-Muslim harmony following the divisive Morley-Minto reforms.
 - **Government Reaction:** Banned in 1914 for its perceived secessionist content.
- **Launch of Al-Balagh:**
 - **Objective:** Founded as a follow-up to Al-Hilal, aiming to continue promoting Indian nationalism and Hindu-Muslim unity.
 - **Ban and Exile:** Banned in 1916, leading to Azad's exile to Bihar, where he remained until his release in 1920.

Contribution to Education through Jamia Millia Islamia University

- **Founding Member (1920):** Azad joined the foundation committee to establish Jamia Millia Islamia University in Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh.
- **Relocation to New Delhi:** Helped in shifting the university campus to New Delhi in 1934.
- **Campus Tribute:** The main gate of the university is named after him in his honor.



Architect of Independent India's Education System

- **Key Contributions as Education Minister (1947-1958):**
 - **Institution Building:** Established premier institutions, including the first IIT, IISc, School of Planning and Architecture, and the University Grants Commission (UGC).
 - **Cultural and Literary Foundations:** Initiated the Sangeet Natak Academy, Lalit Kala Academy, Sahitya Academy, and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.
 - **Focus Areas:**
 - Emphasis on rural education and literacy among the rural poor and girls.
 - Advocacy for universal primary education and adult literacy.



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- Supported diversification of secondary education and vocational training.

Political Involvement and Leadership in the Indian National Congress

- **Joining Congress:** Became a member of the Indian National Congress in 1920.
- **Youngest President of INC:**
 - **Special Session in Delhi (1923):** Elected as President of the Congress's special session at the age of 35.
 - **Distinction:** Remains the youngest person to hold the position of Congress President.

Source: <https://indianexpress.com/article/upsc-current-affairs/upsc-essentials/knowledge-nugget-national-education-day-maulana-abul-kalam-azad-upsc-9663334/>

