

Celebrating Teachers' Day

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The end-product of education should be a free, creative individual, who can battle against historical circumstances and adversities of nature.

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

Abstract

A jewel in the treasure of India, Dr Radhakrishnan was born in a remote village near Madras. He emerged as a spark from the masses and achieved great heights leaving remarkable footprints as a student, teacher and politician. His creative mind and style of speech played a major contribution in his success. He was a great teacher of humanity who gave message of humanity to the masses through his valuable writings and speeches. He can be marked honestly as a genuine representative of India. His views on education and vision of human destiny will always be appreciated all over the world. A remarkable theme is always seen in his speeches that made his audience speechless or spell bound. His birthday in our country is celebrated as "Teachers' Day" on 5th September.



This paper is a tribute to the great soul with a focus on some of his contributions. This paper includes some parts of his life, philosophy and his vision for education that proves him- a great teacher.

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Introduction

Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the great teacher was known as the philosopher king for he was one of those who fulfilled Plato's requirement for being a head of the state. Radhakrishnan was a multifaceted personality as he was a teacher, speaker of par excellence, a politician of compassion and a versatile diplomat. During his life, he achieved great heights with his scholarship and public service. His contribution to education is remembered and will be remembered for his path breaking ideas and vision in the University Education Commission, the first commission on education set in the independent India. The Commission set 'understanding the meaning of life' as one of the aims of higher education. His works and life stand as testimony of new thinking in the new independent India where every citizen of the country was recognised – 'the maker of the nation'.

Life of Dr Radhakrishnan

Born on 8th September 1888, in a remote village of Thiruttani near Madras in a traditional Indian Telugu Brahmin family. He completed his schooling in Tirupati and then was sent to Vellore for higher education where he completed graduation and obtained a master's degree in Philosophy. His father did not want his son to learn English, instead he wanted him to be a priest. Radhakrishnan was highly talented and he came out as an outstanding performer in the studies. He was awarded many

scholarships in his academic life. He was extremely popular among his students. He also served as India's Ambassador to USSR from 1949 to 1952. He was also the Vice-Chancellor of the Andhra University and Banaras Hindu University. He was the Vice-President of India from 1952-1962 and became the President of India from 1962-1967.

He achieved great heights during his life. His versatility was the most striking element that attracted everyone to work with him. His powerful mind, power and style of speech, dedication to work contributed greatly to his success in life. His warm heartedness and ability to draw out people made him even more popular. He always wrote for the well-being and upliftment of the society. His life's journey was continuous and uniform setting new examples and standards for the masses. He was a positivist/optimist. He believed in goodness of the future. He believed that true knowledge is to know one's own ignorance. He was a very humane person. Whether being on the position of the Ambassador, Vice-President or President, he always remained a teacher all over his life. Teaching profession was his first love and whoever studied under him can never forget him. Everyone remembers him with gratitude as a teacher.

In *Kalki* or *The Future of Civilisation*, he says:

"Democracy has become confused with ignorance, lack of discipline,

and low tastes.....
Though educational facilities are within the reach of large numbers, the level of culture is not high. It has become more easy to get into a college and more difficult to get educated. We are taught to read but not trained to think.....Those who know better are afraid to speak out but keep step with the average mind. Uncivilized mass-impulses, crowd emotions and class-resentments have taken the place of authority and tradition.”

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru wrote about him- “He has served his country in many capacities. But above all, he is a great teacher from whom all of us have learnt much and will continue to learn. It was India’s peculiar privilege to have a great philosopher, a great educationist and a great humanist like him. That in itself shows the kind of men we honour and respect.”- (Public Information Bureau)

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru described Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan as “the symbol of India”. Nehru and Ambedkar are known as the architects of the political institutions of our country, Dr Radhakrishnan is the architect of our social institutions. He had a great understanding of philosophy of religion and education. He had an extraordinary ability to convert the contradictory thoughts into complementary ones. His great soul left for heaven on 17 April 1975.

His vision for Education and Philosophy

Many Great thinkers and philosophers of contemporary India have given their theories on the basic principles of education. He was one of the most brilliant man and played a significant role in the field of philosophy and education. He was not only a philosopher but also a writer, a great thinker, a scholar with par-excellence, an educationist, a man with immense creativity, a genius. As a philosopher, he marked excellence in both Western and Eastern thoughts. Among the modern thinkers he is an example of a great educationist in the modern world on religion, culture and philosophy.

The first book written by him was “The Ethics of the Vedanta and its Material Presupposition” in 1908. Thereafter he wrote many world renowned books which are popular all over the world. At Mysore, he wrote his two important books – “The Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore” in 1918 and the “Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy” in 1920. In 1923, the first volume of a book ‘Indian Philosophy’ was presented by him. This book gave new recognition to Indian thought and philosophy in the western world. This book was one of his best creations and made him famous in the world of Philosophy. In this book, there are surveys of the philosophy of Vedas and the *Upanishads*, *Bhagavadgita*, Realism of the Jainism, Idealism of the Buddha and Buddhistic philosophy.

The second volume of this book was published in 1927, in which he has described the six systems of *Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya Yoga, Mimansa, Vedanta, Vaishnava, Shaiva* and *Shakta* systems of theism.

He delivered a series of lectures on philosophy in many foreign countries. These lectures were published under the title "The Hindu View of Life". He was also a recipient of *Bharat Ratna* in 1954, which is the highest civilian award in India. Simultaneously he also wrote many classical writings. In true sense, he was a versatile personality. His vast philosophical knowledge, ideas and thoughts built a bridge between India and the West. He had uncountable admirers throughout his life. Dr Radhakrishnan's views on an "ideal teacher" are contrary to many of the common teaching practices today. He warned against idolising teachers as *gurus* and becoming a congregation of faithful without openness of mind. He said that students are greatly influenced by the teacher and they can't evade their responsibility to their teaching profession. Dr Radhakrishnan gave teaching the status of a 'profession'. He said that education is not only important for knowledge and skill, but it helps us to live with others." Radhakrishnan wanted to establish a classless society through education so that there would be equality between the masses. He wanted to have universal brotherhood all over the society.

Radhakrishnan gave great importance to observations, experi-

ments and the relationship of nature and society in the method of teaching. He said that real and living examples should be used for the teaching of moral values. He wanted that the students should come close to society and nature for their better understanding. He said that through regular practice of Yoga and Meditation, man gets a lot of help in achieving his goal. He defined education as an important tool for social, economic and cultural change in the society. Radhakrishnan said that the education's quality was determined by the quality of teacher in itself. He wanted that students should study many subjects such as philosophy, literature, science, ethics, politics, theology, geography, history, agriculture, natural science, economics, human science and civics. In the curriculum for women, Radhakrishnan wanted that they must be taught subjects like home science, cooking, fine arts, ethics and religion so that these would be helpful in their duties also. He wanted that curriculum must be related to one's life so that one could learn by the daily experiences.

He was the chairman of the first '*University Education Commission*' also known as the '*Radhakrishnan Commission*' (1948-49) which came out as a masterpiece of education policy. He argued that the teaching institutions must focus on teaching democratic principles like liberty, fraternity, equality and social justice. He truly explained the impact of these principles in the society. He argued

that any education is incomplete without the knowledge of all the three streams: Science and Technology; Social studies including History; Humanities including language and literature, fine arts, ethics, philosophy and religion.

“The process of education becomes dull and boring if we are unable to interest the live minds of the students. What they learn unwillingly becomes dead knowledge which is worse than ignorance. Learning is an activity of thought. It is not stuffing the mind with facts. We must be able to use what we learn, test it, throw it into fresh combinations. It must become vibrant with power, radiant with light”

– (*First University Education Commission Report, 1948*)

Radhakrishnan has laid the foundation for a Universal Religion that satisfies the demands of reason and the needs of humanity. He has searched the hearts of all religions and the writings of all the mystics of the East and the West. He pleads for a global outlook and an integrated approach to the problems of the world. He said that it is not enough for us to listen to the voices of Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Hegel, Shakespeare, and Mill, but we must also listen to Sankara, Buddha, Krishna, Gandhi. His work in the field of comparative religion, and his earnest endeavour to restore the true conception of religion are truly the permanent testimony to his greatness.

Remembering the Great Soul on His Birth Anniversary

A life of strenuous endeavour for human betterment is not possible, if we are not persuaded that life has a meaning. Many of our popular writers today seem to be possessed by the one desire to escape from the world of meaning and teach us the essential purposelessness of life. They make us believe, with a good deal of cleverness and sophistry, that life is infinitely complicated and totally inexplicable. Many of our students are taught to assume that free-will and personal responsibility are illusions, that human beings are conditioned almost wholly by their physical make-up and the society in which they live, and that the only sense that the religious statements make is emotional and subjective. This is a generation which knows how to doubt but not how to admire, much less to believe. This aimlessness, this indifference to basic issues, is to no small extent, responsible for the decline of standards, for the fading of ideals, for the defeat of human endeavour”.

– (*First University Education Commission Report, 1948*)

Dr Radhakrishnan always had a dream for world democracy. His is no more with us, but his great ideas and messages for the whole world make him immortal. The future generations will always get inspired through his life and ideas dedicated to learning and service of humanity. He will always

live in our hearts, and his thoughts will always work as an instrument for the upliftment of the society.

Celebrating Teachers Day

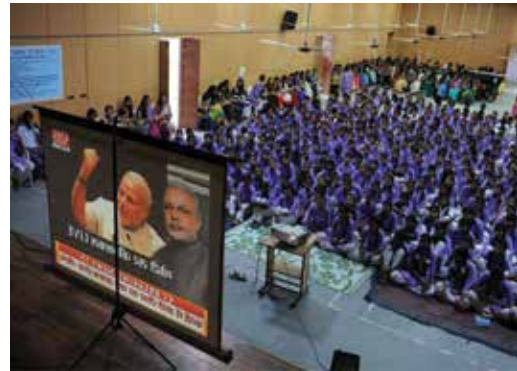
Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, was a philosopher and a teacher with par excellence. He made a great contribution towards Indian education system. Dr Radhakrishnan believed that “teachers should be the best minds in the country”. On 5th September i.e., the Teachers Day, we gratefully remember the great educationist, apart from honouring all the teachers that have made our life much more knowledgeable and fulfilled, as serving as our beacons of light. He will always be missed as a great teacher.



*Radhakrishnan's picture by:
K. Sudhanjini, Class VI,
Sai Baba Central School, (A.P.)*

Teachers' Day has a great importance for everyone in India. The teachers act as the roots for creating

responsible citizens and good human beings. Without teachers, it is not possible for a human being to decide and walk on the correct path of life. They are the real guides of our future.



Source: www.ndtv.com

They act as the shapers of our future. The teachers can never be thanked for whatever they have taught us in our life. They have a great contribution in making our life. Celebration of Teacher's Day is only a way to show our respect towards them. Schools all over India celebrate Teacher's Day by allowing the senior students to act as teachers for a day. Many fun activities are enjoyed by both the acting teachers and junior students. Students also

bring gifts for their teachers. It is a special day for the students and the teachers as well. This is a day to honour our teachers, who play such an important role in our lives.

This year on the occasion of Teachers' Day, Honourable Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi interacted live with millions of young students and teachers across the nation. Children heard his speech with great enthusiasm. The students got the opportunity to ask questions directly from the honourable Prime Minister. He encouraged girls' education and said that an educated girl further educates at least two more families. He also reminded that all of us need to ensure that all schools must have

toilet facilities for girl students. Modi also asked teachers to make best use of technology in teaching and emphasised more learning rather than teaching. He also said that teaching must be done without any discrimination among the students. For a teacher all students are equal irrespective of their abilities. Teacher needs to identify the potentials of each student and help them realise their potentials.

The Prime Minister said, "Teaching is not just another profession. It is a divine responsibility to guide and enlighten the young minds." He addressed the teachers saying that their determination and sincerity will shape the destiny of the nation.

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