

## Sarojini Naidu : Jewels Of The World

DR. VANDANA SHRIVASTAVA

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH

GURU BRAMHANAND KANYA MAHAVIDYALYA

ANJANTHALI (KARNAL)



*Sarojini Naidu*

### ABSTRACT

Sarojini Naidu also known by the sobriquet **The Nightingale of India**, was a child prodigy, Indian independence activist and poet. Naidu was the first Indian woman to become the President of the Indian National Congress and the first woman to become the Governor of Uttar Pradesh state. She was a great patriot, politician, orator and administrator. Of all the famous women of India, Mrs. Sarojinidevi Naidu's name is at the top. Not only that, but she was truly one of the **jewels of the world**. Being one of the most famous heroines of the 20th century, her birthday is celebrated as "Women's Day" She was responsible for awakening the women of India. She brought them out of the kitchen. She traveled from state to state, city after city and asked for the rights of the women. She re-established self-esteem within the women of India.





## INTRODUCTION

She was born in Hyderabad. Sarojini Chattopadhyay, later Naidu belonged to a Bengali family of Kulin Brahmins. But her father, Agorenath Chattopadhyay, after receiving a doctor of science degree from Edinburgh University, settled in Hyderabad State. Sarojini Naidu's mother Barada Sundari Devi was a poetess *baji* and used to write poetry in Bengali.

When her father saw that she was more interested in poetry than mathematics or science, he decided to encourage her. With her father's support, she wrote the play "Maher Muneer" in the Persian language. Dr. Chattopadhyaya distributed some copies among his friends and sent one copy to the Nawab of Hyderabad. Reading a beautiful play written by a young girl, the Nizam was very impressed. The college gave her a scholarship to study abroad. At the age of 16 she got admitted to King's College of England.

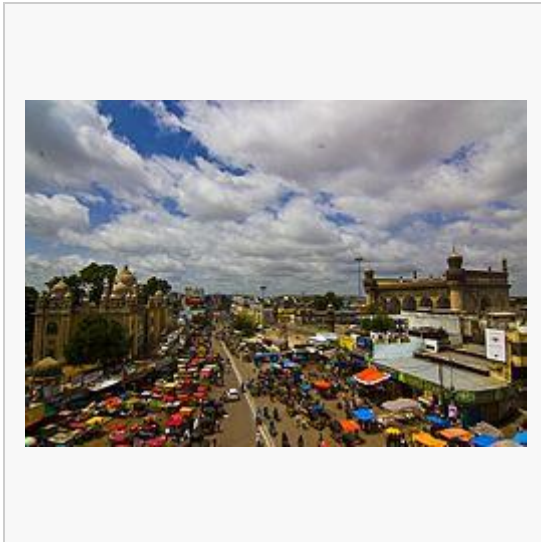
At the age of 16, she traveled to England to study first at King's College London and later at Girton College, Cambridge. There she met famous laureates of her time such as Arthur Symons and Edmond Gosse. It was Gosse who convinced Sarojini to stick to Indian themes- India's great mountains, rivers, temples, social milieu, to express her poetry. She depicted contemporary Indian life and events.

During her stay in England, Sarojini met Dr. Govindarajulu Naidu, a non-Brahmin and a doctor by profession, and fell in love with him. After finishing her studies at the age of 19, she got married to him.

One day she met Shree **Gopal Krishna Gokhale**. He said to her to use her poetry and her beautiful words to rejuvenate the spirit of Independence in the hearts of villagers. He asked her to use her talent to free Mother India.



Then in 1916, she met Mahatma Gandhi, and she totally directed her energy to the fight for freedom. She would roam around the country like a general of the army and pour enthusiasm among the hearts of Indians. The independence of India became the heart and soul of her work.



Naidu's joy in Nature is revealed in The Songs of Spring Time. The colourful Indian scenes with its **Gulmohars and Sirsas, Champak and Lotus** buds and **Koels** evoke Indian flowers and birds and give her poetry an extraordinary Indian flavour. Her attitude to Nature is that of the English romanticists but her poetry is imbued with Indian colour and smell and sound:



“The earth is a fire like a humming-bird’s wings And the sky like a king fisher’s feather” Sarojini Naidu was a gifted artist having ornamental and highly sophisticated style. Her poetry reflected that she was a superb artist in the use of words. It contained the language, which burnt with feeling and passion and was as sweet as a bird’s song. Her genius like that of Shelley and Keats was essentially lyrical. She had the classicist’s perfection and refinement and the sensuousness and imagination of the Romantics. She was a conscientious artist and believed Incommunicating her thoughts in a

language that was appealing and graceful. In striving to do so she acquired almost a distinctive style which was her own. Sri Aurobindo aptly remarked that her poetry “has qualities which make her best work exquisite, unique and unmatched of its kind. Through the poem In The Bazaars of Hyderabad Sarojini wanted to convey **the message** that India is rich in tradition and they don’t need the foreign products. So, she goes on to give a picture of a bazaar where traditional Indian products are ruling.

Hyderabad is a city which is the meeting point of the Hindu and the Islamic cultures. Therefore, the wares sold by the people in the bazaars of Hyderabad (i.e. the merchants, vendors, maidens, peddlers, goldsmiths, fruit-men, musicians and flower-girls) cater to the need of every segment of the society: rich or poor, Hindu or Muslim. The poet provides a panoramic view of the colours, sounds, smell and sights of an Indian Bazaar. She has also used vibrant rhymes to describe the magnificence of the bazaars and also the products sold in the bazaars.

**Folklore** is one of the central subject in the poetry of Naidu. In The Bazaars of Hyderabad is associated with one such subject, the charm and enthusiasm of a traditional Indian bazaar in the city of Hyderabad is presented in this poem. Naidu had enthusiastically described the Bazaar with merchants and vendors selling diverse range of wares. The poet stops over at the galleries arranged by the merchants, traders, hawkers, goldsmiths, fruit sellers, peddlers, magicians, musicians and flower girls. The poet describes the experience of conversation between the seller and the buyer, here the poet questions the sellers about what they are selling and who in turn politely answer while explaining their products. Emotional moods are stirred by the poet, when Naidu makes the readers feel that the bazaar life also witnesses both sorrows and joys. Wedding and festival occasions brings joy in the Bazaar’s life when people buy jewellery, garlands, fruits and children crowding near the magicians. The sorrow and sadness is witnessed when **common public kitchens** are arranged when the nobles or soldiers die and when flower girls are seen weaving masses of white flowers to be used for the dead people’s grave.

Another theme in the poem is the **Swadeshi movement**, though not specifically mentioned in the poem. The poem was written during the **Indian independence movement**. By this poem Naidu proves that India is rich in tradition and there is no requirement of foreign products. Through the poem, **Naidu encourages the Indians to buy goods from their traditional bazaars and she urges the country men to take part in the Swadeshi movement and boycott all foreign goods.**



Photo: Botchan Media

**Key role in drawing women to freedom movement**





Photo: Indian Express

## SAROJINI NAIDU AND MAHATMA GANDHI

Sarojini was drawn into Indian freedom struggle after the partition of Bengal in 1905. She played a vital role in the Civil Disobedience movement. In 1925, she became the second woman President of the Indian National Congress.

She was at the forefront of Civil disobedience in 1930 when Mahatma Gandhi was in jail. In 1931, she participated in the Round Table Summit, along with Mahatma Gandhi and Pundit Malaviya. She also contributed to the drafting of the Indian Constitution.

**Renowned British author and philosopher Aldous Huxley wrote, “It has been our good fortune, while in Bombay, to meet Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the newly elected President of the All-India Congress and a woman who combines in the most remarkable way great intellectual power with charm, sweetness with courageous energy, a wide culture with originality, and earnestness with humour. If all Indian politicians are like Mrs. Naidu, then the country is fortunate indeed.”**

. She re-established self-esteem within the women of India. She helped in shaping *Women’s Indian Association* in 1917 with Annie Besant and others. The Association sought equal rights including the right to vote and represent. She presented the need to include more women in the Congress and in the freedom struggle. Naidu first met Gandhiji in London, an event which changed the whole course of her life, which took her away from comfortable rooms of scholars and poets and placed her before a beggar-saint. With time, they went on to share a great camaraderie. In a letter dated Aug 8 1932 to Naidu, he addressed Naidu as Bulbul and signed off as ‘Little man’. Somewhere along the line she referred Mahatma as a “Micky Mouse,” a “Little Man” and Gandhiji did not mind it.

## CONCLUSION

In her last years, Sarojini actively participated in the freedom movement and was a part of the Round Table summit held in 1931. In 1942, she was arrested along with Mahatma Gandhi for her involvement in the Quit India movement and was jailed for almost 2 years. After her release from the jail, she presided over the Steering Committee at the Asian Relations Conference. With the independence of India in 1947, Sarojini Naidu was made the Governor of the Uttar Pradesh in the wake of her contribution to the movement. She was the first woman to become the governor of a state. She died of a heart attack while working in her office on 2 March 1949.

**The poetess in Sarojini had now blossomed fully. Her poems were beautiful and lyrical and could be sung. Her collection of poems "Golden Threshold" was published in 1905 and she was soon given the nickname - "Bul Bule Hind" or the "Nightingale of**

**India"...**



The ashes of Sarojini Naidu kept at Golden Threshold, Hyderabad before immersion

## WORKS CITED

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