

Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam - The Righteous Life

Dr. Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam popularly known as A.P.J. Abdul Kalam still lives in the hearts of millions of us, cutting across age groups, regions, communities and all natural and man made frontiers.

Born on 15 Oct 1931 at Rameshwaram in Tamilnadu Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam breathed his last on 27.07.2015 at Bethany hospital in Shillong. Former President APJ Abdul Kalam, the “missile” man, who came to be known as the ‘Peoples President’ was a visiting faculty at IIM Shillong and had come to deliver a talk on ‘liveable planet earth’.

There was hardly a deliberation/talk/speech/interaction where Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam would not refer to world peace –

His mantra being-

*“Where there is righteousness in the heart,
There is beauty in the character.
When there is beauty in the character,
There is harmony in the home.
When there is harmony in the home,
There is order in the nation.
When there is order in the nation,
There is peace in the world.”*

His thoughts, passion and zeal were universally appealing and apt for all times. “A Visionary” is what we would call him.

Of his many episodes, we in the field of education can learn a lot from his narration regarding his own school days –

“We were 400 boys and girls in total. Yes, this school had an unimpressive building and scanty amenities but it was an interesting place nonetheless. The teachers, particularly those who taught history, geography and science, were loved by the students. Why ? Because they loved teaching and ensured that each one of us excelled in our studies. To give equal attention to the fifty-five children in each class could not have been an easy task. They did not want us to only earn good marks in our exams, they also wanted us to develop a love for the subjects they taught us. We saw the light of purity shining in our teachers.

Even if one student was absent for a day, they would go to the parents and enquire about the child’s welfare and the reason for his not coming to school. If one of us got high marks, the teacher would be the first person to go to our homes and share the information with our parents. My school was a happy place. All of us who started our schooling there completed our studies till the eighth standard. I don’t remember even a single person dropping out. These days, when I visit schools, both big and small, all across the county, I tell them that true quality does not come from a great building or great facilities or great advertisements. It happens when education is imparted with love by great teachers.”

Dr. Kalam’s thoughts ranged from inspirational to spiritual to autobiographical reflections to his vision statement for a developed India. Let us take inspiration from A.P.J. Abdul Kalam’s greatest ambition of finding ways that would transform India into a developed nation.

Though we have lost a role model in the physical dimension – we have gained him in the immortal world as an everlasting idol.

“Let peace prevail”

Ajay Pant
Deputy Commissioner
KVS RO Tinsukia