PM Modi greets Bharat Ratna L.K. Advani as he turns 99 and enters his 100th year

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News

Former Deputy Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna awardee Lal Krishna Advani turned 99 on 8 November 2026, entering his 100th year. Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted him. The PM recalled the trauma of Partition, Advani's work in strengthening the Jana Sangh and building the BJP, defending democracy during the Emergency, the Somnath–Ayodhya Rath Yatra and his years in government. He also praised Advani's love of reading, his interest in culture and cinema, and his writing. The BJP held a havan, puja and a video screening on his life at its national headquarters, addressed by BJP national president Nitin Nabin and Union Minister Piyush Goyal. Advani had been discharged from Apollo Hospitals, Delhi, on 19 October after treatment for a chest infection.

Key facts for the exam

Point	Details
Born	8 November 1927, Karachi (Sindh, now Pakistan)
Early politics	1951 – Bharatiya Jana Sangh (founded by Syama Prasad Mookerjee)
1977–79	Information & Broadcasting Minister (Morarji Desai govt)
BJP	A founder in 1980; national president three times

Point	Details
Rath Yatra	From Somnath, 25 Sept 1990; arrested at Samastipur (Bihar), 23 Oct
Office	Home Minister 1998–2004; Deputy PM 2002–04
Awards	Padma Vibhushan 2015; Bharat Ratna 2024 (conferred at home, 31 March)
Book	'My Country My Life' (autobiography, 2008)

Background

- History: Born in Karachi, Advani joined the RSS as a youth and came to India during Partition in 1947. In 1951 he joined the Bharatiya Jana Sangh founded by Syama Prasad Mookerjee. He was jailed during the Emergency (1975–77). The Jana Sangh merged into the Janata Party in 1977; on 6 April 1980 he co-founded the BJP with Vajpayee.
- Polity: In 1990 he led the Rath Yatra from Somnath in Gujarat towards Ayodhya. In the Vajpayee government he was Home Minister (1998–2004) and India's 7th Deputy Prime Minister (June 2002 – May 2004). He also served as Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha and long represented Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- The post of Deputy Prime Minister is not mentioned in the Constitution; it is a political convention. The first was Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (1947–50). Others: Morarji Desai, Charan Singh, Jagjivan Ram, Y.B. Chavan, Devi Lal and Advani.
- Bharat Ratna: instituted on 2 January 1954, it is India's highest civilian award and normally not more than three are given in a year. In 2024, however, five were announced – Karpoori Thakur, L.K. Advani, Charan Singh, P.V. Narasimha Rao and M.S. Swaminathan (all except Advani posthumously). Considering his health, the President conferred it on Advani at his residence on 31 March 2024.

Tamil Nadu link: Tamil Nadu: Dr M.S. Swaminathan, father of the Green Revolution, who received the Bharat Ratna in 2024 along with Advani, was born in Kumbakonam. Other Bharat Ratna awardees linked to Tamil Nadu: C. Rajagopalachari, Sir C.V. Raman and Tiruttani-born Dr S. Radhakrishnan (all 1954 – the first year), K. Kamaraj (1976), M.G. Ramachandran (1988), A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (1997), M.S. Subbulakshmi and C. Subramaniam (1998).

Frequently asked questions

What is this news about?

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What are the key facts to remember for the exam?

Born: 8 November 1927, Karachi (Sindh, now Pakistan); Early politics: 1951 – Bharatiya Jana Sangh (founded by Syama Prasad Mookerjee); 1977–79: Information & Broadcasting Minister (Morarji Desai govt); BJP: A founder in 1980; national president three times.

What is the background to this news?

History: Born in Karachi, Advani joined the RSS as a youth and came to India during Partition in 1947. In 1951 he joined the Bharatiya Jana Sangh founded by Syama Prasad Mookerjee.

Practice questions (with answers)

1. Where was L.K. Advani born on 8 November 1927?

A) Karachi

B) Lahore

C) Hyderabad (Sindh)

D) Quetta

Answer: A – Explanation: Karachi (Sindh, now in Pakistan); he came to India during Partition in 1947.

2. From where did Advani's Rath Yatra of 1990 begin?

A) Kashi Vishwanath (Varanasi)

B) Somnath (Gujarat)

C) Dwarka

D) Ayodhya

Answer: B – Explanation: It began at Somnath on 25 Sept 1990, heading for Ayodhya; Advani was arrested at Samastipur, Bihar, on 23 October.

3. Who was India's first Deputy Prime Minister?

A) Morarji Desai

B) Charan Singh

C) Jagjivan Ram

D) Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel

Answer: D – Explanation: Patel (1947–50). The post is not in the Constitution. Advani was the 7th Deputy PM (2002–04).

4. Which Kumbakonam-born scientist received the Bharat Ratna in 2024 along with Advani?

A) Sir C.V. Raman

B) A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

C) M.S. Swaminathan

D) C.N.R. Rao

Answer: C – Explanation: Swaminathan (posthumous) – father of the Green Revolution. Five in 2024: Karpoori Thakur, Advani, Charan Singh, Narasimha Rao, Swaminathan.

5. Who founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh, which Advani joined in 1951?

A) Deendayal Upadhyaya

B) Atal Bihari Vajpayee

C) K.B. Hedgewar

D) Syama Prasad Mookerjee

Answer: D – Explanation: Syama Prasad Mookerjee (Oct 1951). Hedgewar founded the RSS (1925). The Jana Sangh merged into Janata in 1977; the BJP was formed in 1980.

Sources: PMO; PIB; ThePrint (PTI); Business Today; Telangana Today. © Shanmugam IAS Academy.