

# Ram Nath Kovind

**Ram Nath Kovind** (born 1 October 1945) is an Indian politician currently serving as the 14th President of India, in office since 25 July 2017.<sup>[1]</sup> Previously he had served as the Governor of Bihar from 2015 to 2017<sup>[2][3]</sup> and was a Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabhafrom 1994 to 2006. Kovind was nominated as a presidential candidate by the rulingNDA coalition and won the2017 presidential election<sup>[4]</sup>

Before entering politics, he was a lawyer for 16 years and practiced in the Delhi High Court and the Supreme Courtuntil 1993.<sup>[5]</sup>

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## Early life and education

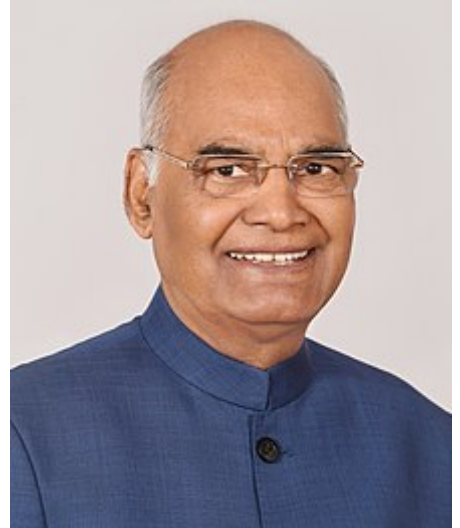
Kovind was born on 1 October 1945 in Paraukh village in the Kanpur Dehat district, Uttar Pradesh.<sup>[6][7]</sup> His father Maikulal ran a small shop. He was the youngest of five brothers and two sisters. He was born in a mud hut, which eventually collapsed. He was only five when his mother died of burns when their thatched dwelling caught fire. Kovind later donated the land to the community.<sup>[8]</sup>

After his elementary school education, he had to walk each day to Kanpur village, 8 km away, to attend junior school, as nobody in the village had a bicycle.<sup>[9]</sup> He holds a bachelor's degree in commerce and an LLB from DAV College (affiliated with Kanpur University).<sup>[10][11][6]</sup>

## Career

### Advocate

His Excellency  
**Ram Nath Kovind**



**14th President of India**

**Incumbent**

**Assumed office**

25 July 2017

**Prime Minister** Narendra Modi

**Vice President** Mohammad Hamid Ansari  
Venkaiah Naidu

**Preceded by** Pranab Mukherjee

**Governor of Bihar**

**In office**

16 August 2015 – 20 June 2017

**Chief Minister** Nitish Kumar

**Preceded by** Keshari Nath Tripathi

**Succeeded by** Keshari Nath Tripathi

**Personal details**

**Born** 1 October 1945  
Paraunkh, United Provinces, British India

**Political party** BJP

**Spouse(s)** Savita Kovind (m. 1974)

**Residence** Rashtrapati

After graduating in law from DAV College, Kanpur, Kovind went to Delhi to prepare for the civil services examination. He passed this exam on his third attempt, but he did not join because he had only scored high enough to work in an allied service rather than in IAS and thus started practicing law<sup>[12]</sup>

Kovind enrolled as an advocate in 1971 with the bar council of Delhi. He was Central Government Advocate in the Delhi High Court from year 1977 to year 1979. Between 1977 & 1978, he also served as the personal assistant of Prime Minister of India Morarji Desai.<sup>[13]</sup> In 1978, he became an advocate-on-record of the Supreme Court of India and served as a standing counsel for the Central Government in the Supreme Court of India from 1980 to 1993. He practiced in the Delhi High Court and Supreme Court until 1993. As an advocate, he provided pro-bono aid to weaker sections of society, women and the poor under the Free Legal Aid Society of New Delhi.<sup>[10]</sup>

## BJP member

He joined the BJP in 1991.<sup>[13]</sup> He was President of the BJP Dalit Morcha between 1998 and 2002 and President of the All-India Koli Samaj. He also served as national spokesperson of the party.<sup>[14]</sup> He donated his ancestral home in Derapur to the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh.<sup>[13]</sup> Soon after joining the BJP, he contested for Ghatampur assembly constituency, but lost and later contested for Bhognipur (in 2007) (both in Uttar Pradesh) assembly constituency on the BJP ticket but lost again.<sup>[15]</sup>

In 1997, Kovind joined the protest against certain orders from the Central government that had adverse effects on the SC/ST workers. Later, three amendments were made to the Constitution that revoked the orders, by the NDA government headed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee.<sup>[16]</sup>

## Rajya Sabha

He was elected and became a Rajya Sabha MP from the state of Uttar Pradesh in April 1994. He served a total of twelve years, two consecutive terms, until March 2006. As a member of parliament, he served on the Parliamentary Committee for Welfare of Scheduled Castes/Tribes, Home Affairs, Petroleum and Natural Gas, Social Justice and Empowerment, Law and Justice. He also served as the chairman of the Rajya Sabha House Committee. During his career as a parliamentarian, under the Members of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme he focused on education in rural areas by helping in construction of school buildings in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. As a member of parliament, he visited Thailand, Nepal, Pakistan, Singapore, Germany, Switzerland, France, the United Kingdom and the United States on study tours.<sup>[11]</sup>

## Other appointments

He has served on the Board of management of Dr. B.R Ambedkar University, Lucknow, and as on the Board of Governors of IIM Calcutta. He has also represented India at the UN and addressed the United Nations General Assembly in October 2002.<sup>[17]</sup>

## Governor

On 8 August 2015, the then President of India appointed Kovind as Governor of Bihar.<sup>[18]</sup> On 16 August 2015, the acting Chief Justice of Patna High Court, Iqbal Ahmad Ansari, administered the oath to Kovind as the 35th Governor of Bihar. The function took place at Raj Bhawan, Patna.<sup>[19]</sup>

Kovind's appointment was criticised by then Chief Minister of Bihar Nitish Kumar as it came months before State Assembly elections and the appointment was made without consulting State Government as recommended by Sarkaria Commission.<sup>[20]</sup> However, Kovind's term as Governor, was praised for constituting a judicial commission to investigate irregularities in promotion of undeserving teachers, mis-management of funds and appointment of undeserving candidates in universities.<sup>[13]</sup> In June 2017, when

	Bhavan
Alma mater	Kanpur University



Kovind at a function with Prime Minister Narendra Modi opening a bridge in Bihar, 2016.

Kovind was announced as candidate for Presidential election, Nitish Kumar backed Kovind's choice and praised Kovind as being unbiased and working closely with the State Government during his Governorship.<sup>[21]</sup>

## 2017 presidency campaign

After nomination for the post of 14th President of India, he resigned from his post as Governor of Bihar, and President of India Pranab Mukherjee accepted his resignation on 20 June 2017.<sup>[22]</sup> He won election on 20 July 2017.<sup>[23]</sup>

Ram Nath Kovind received 65.65% of the valid votes, against former Speaker of the Lok Sabha - Meira Kumar, the presidential candidate of the Opposition who received 34.35% of the total votes. Kovind received 2,930 votes (From MPs and MLAs) amounting to Electoral College votes of 702,044 (65.65%) as compared to 1,844 votes with a value of 367,314 (34.35%) votes for Meira Kumar lagging far behind with 367,314 votes, and 77 votes were invalid.<sup>[24]</sup> He became only the second Dalit representative to become President after K. R. Narayanan, and also is the first BJP candidate to be elected to the post.<sup>[25]</sup> The tally of votes (367,314) polled by Meira Kumar is only the second highest for a losing candidate, that of Neelam Sanjiva Reddy in the 1969 Presidential elections being the highest ever; he received 405,427 votes as against 420,077 by V Giri, the winner.

## 14th President of India

Ram Nath Kovind took the oath as the 14th President of India on 25 July 2017.<sup>[26]</sup> He is the first leader from Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh to occupy the Office of President of India.<sup>[27]</sup>

## List of international trips as president



Governor of Bihar Ram Nath Kovind welcoming President Pranab Mukherjee at Patna on April 17, 2017



President Ram Nath Kovind with Dipak Misra after administering his oath as the Chief Justice of India on 28 August 2017

Country	Areas Visited	Date(s)	Purpose	References
<b>2017</b>				
 <u>Djibouti</u>	<u>Djibouti City</u>	3 - 4 October	State Visit	[28][29]
 <u>Ethiopia</u>	<u>Addis Ababa</u>	5 - 6 October		[30][31][32]
<b>2018</b>				
 <u>Mauritius</u>	<u>Port Louis</u>	11 - 14 March	State Visit	[33][34]
 <u>Madagascar</u>	<u>Antananarivo</u>	14 - 15 March		[33]
 <u>Equatorial Guinea</u>	<u>Malabo</u>	7 - 9 April		[35]
 <u>Swaziland</u>	<u>Mbabane</u>	9 - 10 April		[36]
 <u>Zambia</u>	<u>Lusaka</u>	10 - 12 April		[37][38]
 <u>Greece</u>	<u>Athens</u>	16 - 19 June		[39][40]
 <u>Suriname</u>	<u>Paramaribo</u>	19 - 21 June		[40][41]
 <u>Cuba</u>	<u>Havana</u>	21 - 23 June		[42][43]
 <u>Cyprus</u>	<u>Nicosia</u>	2 - 4 September		[44]
 <u>Bulgaria</u>	<u>Sofia</u>	4 - 6 September		[44]
 <u>Czech Republic</u>	<u>Prague</u>	6 - 9 September		[44]
 <u>Tajikistan</u>	<u>Dushanbe</u>	7 - 9 October		[45]
 <u>Vietnam</u>	<u>Da Nang, Hanoi</u>	18 - 21 November		[46][47]
 <u>Australia</u>	<u>Sydney, Melbourne</u>	21 - 24 November	[46][48]	

## Personal life

Kovind married Savita Kovind on 30 May 1974. They have a son, Prashant Kumar and a daughter, Swati.<sup>[6]</sup>

## Controversy

In 2010, he was reported to have said that "Islam and Christianity are alien to the nation" as spokesperson of the BJP.<sup>[49][50]</sup> As reported by IANS and published by Hindustan Times, he made this comment in response to the Ranganath Misra Commission which recommended 15 percent reservation for religious and linguistic minorities in government jobs.<sup>[51]</sup> Although more recently, the issue was raised in the media if whether or not he was misquoted and that he in fact said "Islam and Christianity are alien to the notion (of caste)" as opposed to what was reported as "nation"<sup>[52][53]</sup>

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