

Commemorating unsung National Heroes on Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav



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Hukumchand Jain

Grand Portrait



A prominent leader of the Jain community, a philanthropist and a business magnate, Seth Hukumchand is popularly known as the Cotton Prince of India. He was born in 1874 to the family of Seth Pusaji, who aided the establishment of the Holkar Maratha clan, in Indore. He was instrumental in Mahatma Gandhi's khadi movement and swadeshi movement. He established several industries, hospitals, market complexes and cow sanctuaries. He generously donated to several Jain religious activities and was conferred with many titles for his outstanding services to the society.



Hukumchand Jain

Industrial pioneer



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Seth Hukam Chand became a leading business magnate of the country doing speculative and ready trade in commodities on a large scale. He was known as the 'Cotton Prince of India' and had much credit even in some overseas countries. His offices were located in important cities of India. He established cotton mills (Hukam Chand Mill and Raj Kumar Mill at Indore), and a large jute mill and iron mill at Calcutta. He was a pioneer in Swadeshi industry. He was the first Indian businessman to set up a jute mill.

Social service



Hukumchand Jain

He was a champion of the nationwide Khadi movement initiated by Gandhiji in 1920 and a leader of the Swadeshi Movement of 1931 in Bombay. He financially supported Hindi Sahitya Sammelan and was President of Madhya Bharat Hindi Sahitya Samiti. He had an unparalleled record of religious and social service. He protected Jain Tirthas, and constructed and repaired several Jain temples. He built the famous Kack ka mandir in Indore. He served as:

President of Digamber Jain Mahasabha

Dig. Jain Trithakshetra Committee

Bombay Prantic Dig, Jain Sabha

Presided over numerous religious, social and political organizations.

Hukumchand Jain

Philanthropy



Hukumchand Jain established:

Sir Hukam Chand Eye Hospital, Kalyanmal Nursing Home, Raj Kumar Singh Ayurvedic, Kanchan Bai Maternity Home, Kanchan Bai Shravikashram, Tukoji Rao Cloth Market, Gaushala, Jain temple and boarding house in Banaras University.

On Mahatma Gandhi's visit to Indra Bhawan, Hukumchandji agreed to give him his 40 acres ($160,000 \text{ m}^2$) of farmland for building the Kasturbagram village.

He donated Rs. 400,000 for the construction of Lady Hardinge Medical College and Hospital at New Delhi. He donated Rs. 200,000 for the welfare of agriculturists. He provided enormous financial assistance during the famine of 1899 and the plague epidemics of 1903 and 1908.

Hukumchand Jain

Accolades



Hukumchand Jain was made Rai Bahadur in 1915 and honoured with the title of 'Sir' (knighthood) in 1919. Maharaja of Gwalior presented him Khilat and rulers of Indore honoured him with the titles of Rajya Bhushan, Rao Raja and Rajya Ratna.



The gold 1919 Daimler of Sir Seth Hukumchand Jain

Hukumchand Jain

Transformation



In his later life, Seth Hukum Chand gave up wearing expensive clothes and jewellery studded with precious gems, and switched to simple clothes. He devoted most of his time to religious activities. He passed away in 1959. New York Cotton exchange was closed for two day on his death.

Hukumchand's life is an example of how a person of power and influence can bring positive changes in society, without glorifying the need of making unnecessary personal sacrifices.

Sources: [Seth Hukumchand – Wikipedia](#)

[Recounting the life & altruistic deeds of Indore's Seth Hukumchand, the 'Cotton Prince of India' - Knocksense](#)