

Madhusudan Das

Utkal Gourab' (Pride of Utkal) Madhusudan Das was born on 28 April 1848 in Satyabhamapur near Cuttack. Read more about this inspiring personality, and his contributions to the Indian freedom struggle, for the IAS exam modern history segment.



Madhusudan Das Biography

- Born in a Zamindari family to Choudhury Raghunath Das and Parbati Debi, Madhusudan Das was first named Gobindaballabh.
- Initially educated at a local school, he later moved to Cuttack High School and then on to Calcutta University. In 1870, he secured a BA degree becoming the first Odia to do so.
- He also completed an MA and then a BL degree, all firsts for an Odia.
- In 1881, he started his law practice in his home state. Not only was he a lawyer, Madhu Babu (as he was called by the people) was also a prolific journalist, social worker and legislator.
- He became the first person of Odia descent to enter the Bengal provincial legislative council and also the Central Legislative Assembly.
- He strove for the unification of all Odia-speaking regions and through his efforts, the state of Odisha was formed on 1 April 1936. This day is celebrated as Utkala Dibasa in Odisha.
- Das was also an eminent writer and poet and his works, both in English and Odia, inspire people till date.
- Although initially a member of the Indian National Congress, he later disassociated from it because his demand for linguistic states was rejected. It must be said that Madhusudan Das had deep foresight when he asked for linguistic states. After independence, there were intense language movements and demands for separate states on this basis, and the government of the day had to give in to preserve the country's unity.

- He was the Vice President of the Utkal Sabha in 1889. He also protested against the unjust salt tax laws of the British government long before Mahatma Gandhi took up the Dandi March. He pointed to the British the unfair nature of the law as early as February 1888.
- In 1903, Das founded the Utkal Union Conference.
- He was elected as a member of the legislative council of Bihar and Orissa Province and under the Diarchy scheme of the Montagu-Chelmsford reforms.
- He passed away on 4th February 1934.
- His birth anniversary is marked as 'Lawyers' Day' in Odisha.