# Who was Mahatama Hansraj?

Mahatma Hansraj (Lala Hansraj, 19 April 1864 – 14/15 November 1938) was an Indian educationist and leading Arya Samaj reformer who co-founded the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic (D.A.V.) school system in Lahore in 1886 and served as the first headmaster and later principal of D.A.V. College for 25 years, dedicating his life to expanding modern education rooted in Vedic values. He is remembered as a tireless social reformer who promoted women's education, led famine and disaster relief, and helped shape generations of nationalist-leaning students across North India.[1] [2]

### Early life and formation

- Born in Bajwara (Hoshiarpur, Punjab) into a Khatri family, he lost his father young and was educated with support from his elder brother before moving to Lahore, where exposure to Swami Dayanand's lectures set his reformist path.[1]
- After earning a B.A., he chose to found a school rather than take government service, reflecting a lifelong vocation for educational nation-building.[1]

### D.A.V. movement and leadership

- With Gurudatta Vidyarthi, he launched the first D.A.V. school on 1 June 1886 in memory of Dayanand Saraswati, integrating Western learning with Vedic principles; he then led D.A.V. College, Lahore, for a quarter century.[1]
- The D.A.V. network expanded widely and later encompassed hundreds of schools and colleges, with Hansraj providing organizational backbone and public fundraising grounded in personal simplicity.[3] [1]

### Social reform and public service

- He championed women's education through Kanya Vidyalayas and promoted civic relief in major disasters (e.g., Kangra 1905, Quetta 1934, Bihar 1935) and famines in Rajasthan, Awadh, and Garhwal, modeling education as social service.[2]
- The movement's campuses intersected with anticolonial currents; many Punjabi nationalists were D.A.V. alumni, and his own family bore costs during repression, underscoring his nationalist commitments.[3]

## Legacy and remembrance

- Hansraj College (University of Delhi) commemorates his educational legacy; narratives also stress his ascetic lifestyle, persuasive public appeal, and administrative vision in building enduring institutions.[2] [3]
- He died in Lahore in November 1938, mourned by large multicommunity crowds, sealing a public life identified with character formation, civic responsibility, and accessible modern education.[3] [1]

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1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahatma_Hansraj
2. https://www.hansrajcollege.ac.in/about/historicalperspective
3. https://aryasamajhouston.org/about-us/stalwarts-of-arya-samaj/mahatma-hansraj
4. https://vedicphilosophy.tripod.com/Mahatma_Hans_Raj.htm
5. https://www.aimamedia.org/newsdetails.aspx?nid=439101
6. https://philatelyhobby.blogspot.com/2024/06/mahatma-hansraj-beacon-of-education-and.html
7. https://www.facebook.com/arya.samaj/posts/mahatma-hansrajpublished-on-his-death-anniversary-on-14th-novlala-hansraj-19-apr/865326302480000/
8. https://www.exoticindiaart.com/book/details/mahatma-hansraj-life-philosophy-and-achievements-nai375/
9. https://aboutmahatmahansraj.blogspot.com