

DEPARTMENT / SUBJECT: Obituary

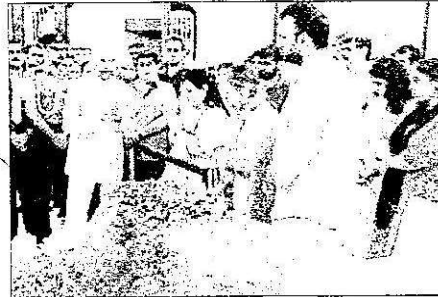
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Arun Jaitley, BJP's trouble-shooter, no more

Affable and articulate BJP stalwart passes away at 66

SAGAR KULKARNI
NEW DELHI, DHNS



President Ram Nath Kovind pays his respects to Arun Jaitley in New Delhi on Saturday.

Senior BJP leader and former finance minister Arun Jaitley passed away on Saturday afternoon after a prolonged illness at the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), where he had been admitted on August 9 following complaints of breathlessness and restlessness. He was 66.

The end for the suave and articulate BJP stalwart, whose illustrious career spanned the legal and political arenas, came at 12.07 pm.

His mortal remains will be kept at the BJP headquarters in New Delhi from 11 am on Sunday.

Tributes immediately poured in from across the political spectrum and other fields, revealing the extent of goodwill the BJP's chief trouble-shooter enjoyed.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi spoke to Jaitley's wife Sangeeta and his two children. Terming Jaitley a "towering intellectual and legal luminary", Modi tweeted that he had "lost a valued friend".

Master strategist

A master strategist, Jaitley's political career has run almost parallel to that of the BJP. From planning protests during the Emergency and running campaigns against the Congress party

in every election since 1977, Jaitley had a major role in the rise of the BJP.

A quintessential Delhi man, Jaitley had friends across the socio-political spectrum and knew how to work the levers of power.

An avid debater since his college days, first at the Shri Ram College of Commerce and later at the Law College, Jaitley struck long-lasting friendships that held him in good stead later in life. He made a mark by defeating the Congress in 1974 as an ABVP candidate for the Delhi University Students' Union elections.

From then on, he rose steadily in the legal profession as well as party hierarchy, till he reached the number two position for all practical purposes in Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led BJP government.

Jaitley's political acumen was first put to test in 1977 as the national convenor for the Loktantrik Yuva Morcha, established to campaign for the Janata Party.

Jaitley, Page 8



1952-2019

A tale of 2 tall BJP leaders

In less than three months of coming to power, the Modi 2.0 government has suffered two big losses with deaths of Sushma Swaraj and Arun Jaitley. Sushma had declined to contest polls and Jaitley had asked the PM to spare him from government.

Inside

Man who steered FinMin in tough times | PAGE 8

BJP's Ajathashatru | PAGE 8

Leader who sparked first stir against Emergency | PAGE 8

A chequered career in cricket administration |

BSY's 'godfather' behind win

Arun Jaitley came to be known as CMBS Yediyurappa's godfather, and proved to be his Man Friday when he faced a crisis during his first stint as chief minister. The BJP made Jaitley in charge of Karnataka when the BJP won Karnataka in 2008.

Trouble-shooter..

JAITLEY, FROM PAGE 1

His legal defence of a major media house, whose building in Delhi's Fleet Street faced a demolition threat from the Lt Governor of Delhi, brought him recognition and earned him powerful friends in the media and legal circles.

His close association with I. J. Singh, who had rebelled against the Congress in 1986-87, helped Jaitley become the Additional Solicitor General when the former became the prime minister in 1989 with the support of the BJP.

Jaitley was tasked with the Bofors case. Between 1995 and 2000, Jaitley struck a friendship with Modi, who was in Delhi as the BJP's national secretary. He used his equations with L K Advani to plead Modi's case as Gujarat chief minister in 2001.

Later, Jaitley became Modi's greatest defender when he faced the heat on account of the post-Godhra riots. The bond only grew stronger. Jaitley was once again by Modi's side when he made the prime ministerial bid.

In the recent past, Jaitley was dogged by health issues, having undergone bariatric surgery in 2014, a kidney transplant in May 2018 and detection of soft tissue cancer earlier this year.

With Jaitley gone, the BJP has lost its 'defender-in-chief, who came to its rescue whenever it was in trouble and needed a well-argued defence.