

UNIVERSITY OF RAJASTHAN

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On the 8th of January 1947, the University of Rajputana appeared like a little star on the educational horizon of pre-independent India. That little star, now called the University of Rajasthan is shining "like a diamond in the sky." Having acquired the status of University with Potential for Excellence, today, the University celebrates its 68th Foundation Day. Over the years the University has redefined itself keeping in mind the changing trends of the educational system. But let us travel down memory lane and recall how this University was set up. The efforts for a separate University for Rajputana State were initiated as early as 1921 when the Act for the Allahabad University was passed. The Act prescribed for separation of Intermediate classes from the Degree classes as a condition for affiliation, which meant more expenditure for the then colleges at Jaipur, Jodhpur and Ajmer, the only colleges then imparting University education and affiliated to Allahabad University. The location of the University became a controversial issue. The question was considered in all its aspects at a meeting called by the Agent to the Governor General in Rajputana and attended by the ruling Princes and Chiefs at Mt. Abu on 20- June 1924. It was finally decided that 'the general sense of the Conference seems to be that there are strong obstacles at present to a Rajputana University, and that the scheme is premature but that the respective advantages of affiliating either with Agra or with Delhi under changed conditions as can be brought about should be explored.' The colleges in Rajasthan (erstwhile Rajputana) were then affiliated to Agra University after it was established in 1927. After a gap of nearly two decades the efforts were again initiated in 1942 by Sir Mirza Ismail, the then Prime Minister of Jaipur, who appointed J.C. Rollo as Special Education Officer for this purpose. Sir Mirza Ismail and his successor in office Sir V.T. Krishnamachari, took the initiative of holding talks with the representatives of Udaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Awar and Jaipur in December, 1946. They agreed to the establishment of a University at Jaipur and on 8- January, 1947, legislation was promulgated and the colleges in the State formally federated into the University of Rajputana, which came into existence in July the same year. It was the last (2 1st) university that was set up in pre-independent India. The University office was temporarily set up in the Kesargarh Fort. The then Maharaja of Jaipur State, Sawai Man Singh graciously made available to the university an extensive site of over 300 acres. About two miles from the centre of the city, the site was considered ideal for a University campus. With the Moti Doongari castle overlooking the campus on the northern side, and the Jhalana hills stretching from end to end in the east, the site possessed that wild grandeur that characterised most landmarks of Rajasthan. Dr. G. S. Mahajani, who was at that time Principal of Ferguson College, Poona (now Pune) was appointed the first Vice-Chancellor of the University. Dr. Mahajani was in many respects an ideal person. He was a member of the Servants of India Society.