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## India's oldest man dies at 138

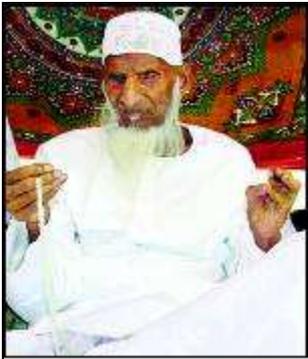
Prakash Bhandari | TNN

Jaipur: Habib Mian, perhaps the oldest man in the country, died in Jaipur on Tuesday. His family claimed that he was 138. While official records reportedly say he was born on May 20, 1870 at Rajgarh in Alwar district, Habib Mian himself claimed he was born much earlier.

He left behind a huge family of 139 members — mostly greatgrandchildren. His wife died 70 years ago. Mian passed away at his Purana Ghat locality on Agra Road in Jaipur. He was buried at the Ghat Gate graveyard. On his birthday this year, soon after the Jaipur blasts, Mian had said he regrets "living so long and watching the bloodshed".

He had joined the band of the erstwhile Jaipur Royal family as a clarinet player and retired from service in 1938. At that time, he received a pension of just Rs 1.46. It was later increased to Rs 2,698. "He lost his eye sight about 56 years ago and since then he was living with his great grand grandsons," said Rajesh Nagpal, an employee of SBI. The only time he went to a doctor was two years ago when he fractured his leg in a fall.

Living in a dingy room in a ghetto with his family members, the grand old man led a quiet life. He enjoyed his simple meal of bread, vegetables, milk and boiled meat and was very fond of kalakand, often requesting his female relatives to get him the sweet. He didn't know much about the secret of his longevity and always said, "Pata nahin, Allah ki marzi hai ki zinda hoon. Sab uski mehrabaniyon ka nateeza ha." Mian went on Haj pilgrimage in 2004 after two Muslims sponsored his trip when they heard his last wish.



A LONG JOURNEY: Habib Mian