

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh Unveils Statue of Mahatma Gandhi on his 150th Birth Anniversary; Praises his Unique Contributions and Worldwide Influence

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Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh today unveiled a statue of Mahatma Gandhi in Delhi Cantonment and paid rich tribute to the Father of the Nation as a rare person who wielded so much influence over people without occupying formal positions of power.

The statue of Mahatma Gandhi was erected by the Directorate of Defence Estates on his 150th birth anniversary celebrations at Sri Nagesh Garden in Delhi Cantt. Raksha Mantri also paid tributes to Former Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri who shares birthday with Mahatma Gandhi.

Addressing the gathering, Shri Rajnath Singh said Mahatma Gandhi's political programmes had economic, social and cultural messages as well for the people at large. Referring to the Champaran Movement, Shri Rajnath Singh said that Mahatma Gandhi, while fighting for the rights of exploited indigo farmers, urged them to work also for the cleanliness of their surroundings and villages. For him that was as important as freedom.

He said that the cleanliness ideas and works of Mahatma Gandhi were made into a people's movement by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. The result is there for everyone to see. Coverage of toilets in households has increased from 37 per cent in 2014 to 98 per cent now. In all, total of 11 crore toilets have been made in the last five years.

Raksha Mantri urged people to extend cleanliness programme to cover environment protection and to vow not to use single use plastic bags as these are extremely harmful to the Mother Nature. Instead, he advocated usage of cloth bags which are environment friendly. Shri Rajnath Singh said it will also generate employment for the poor. He termed saving rivers from pollution is like saving our civilisation.

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh administered Swachhta oath to people present at the venue. He later planted a sapling while taking part in 'Swachhta Hi Sewa' campaign.

Member of Parliament Smt Meenakshi Lekhi also addressed the audience. She appreciated Directorate General Defence Estates and Cantonment Board for making all 62 Cantonments across the country open defecation free. Secretary (Defence Finance) Smt Gargi Kaul, Director General of Defence Estates Smt Deepa Bajwa, General Officer Commanding, Headquarters Delhi Area Lt General Asit Mistry, Controller General of Defence Accounts Shri Sanjiv Mittal and other senior officials of the Ministry were also present there.

School children rendered "Vaishnav jan to" and depicted themes dear to Mahatma Gandhi in the sprawling gardens.

ABB/Nampi/DK/Savvy/MTJ/ADA/Anand

