

PM Modi announces new award for national unity

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE

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PRIME MINISTER Narendra Modi has announced the institution of a new national honour for national unity on the pattern of Padma Awards, an official statement said on Sunday.

The annual award will be given to an Indian who has contributed to national unity in any manner, it said, adding that the PM drew inspiration from Sardar Patel's contribution towards unification of the country.

The announcement was made at the just-concluded annual conference of Director Generals of Police and Inspector Generals of Police held at Kevadiya in Narmada district of Gujarat, near the statue of Sardar Patel.

Modi also released a commemorative postal stamp on the National Police Memorial and a special issue of *Indian Police Journal* on police martyrdom, published by the Bureau of Police Research and Development, it said.

The PM also suggested that a national-level parade be organised by police forces of about three to four states near the Statue of Unity every year on Patel's birthday – October 31. This day is observed as National Unity Day.

Modi launched the website of the Cyber Coordination Centre, which will be a one-stop shop on all cyber-related issues. The centre will act as a bridge between law enforcement agencies on the one hand, and academia and private cyber-security professionals on the other, the

statement said.

The three-day conference focused on improving cyber security and preparing police forces to prevent and investigate cyber crimes and financial fraud.

According to the statement, it was Patel, who as home minister inaugurated the first conference of Inspector Generals of Police in Delhi in 1948. So Patel's message of national unity was the underlying theme of this year's conference, it said.

Modi emphasised that coordination of Central Armed Police Forces and central agencies with state police forces and among neighbouring states was essential for successfully dealing with complex issues of crime prevention, it said. He advised DGPs to make imaginative use of information technology to reach out to all sections of society.