

## Ministries gear up for Rashtriya Ekta Diwas celebrations

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Arrangements ahead of the fourth Rashtriya Ekta Diwas (National Unity Day) scheduled to be celebrated on October 31 are in full swing, and several events are scheduled to be held by various Ministries, Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) and organisations across the country.

The National Unity Day is observed every year on the birthday of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. It will be marked by people by taking a pledge to protect the unity and integrity of the nation and participating in the Run for Unity programme across the country.

In the national capital, the run will be organised from Major Dhyanand Stadium at 7 am and will be flagged off by Union Home Minister Rajnath Singh. He will also pay floral tributes at the statue of Sardar Patel at Parliament Street.

To mark the occasion, various ministries, including Ministries of Youth Affairs and Sports, Defence, Power, Shipping, Civil Aviation and Tourism, among others, will conduct various activities.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) will mark the celebrations by pledge taking in Indian Missions. Essay and quiz competitions, debates, short films, photo exhibitions will also be organised in offices of the MEA and in the Indian Missions. 'Talks' on life and contribution of Sardar Patel in cooperation with 'Friendship Societies' and 'Think Tanks' will also be arranged.

To mark the day, Ministry of Railways will hold pledge taking and March Past at its Zonal and Divisional headquarters. Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) will also participate in State-level and other field level functions and March pasts.

Along with the Run for Unity, pledge, and floral tribute, the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, will have poetry and painting competitions in Tier-I and Tier-II cities including SMART and AMRUT cities and towns.

The Ministry of Culture has scheduled essay, quiz competitions, lectures and symposium at Sahitya Academy and other programmes at Zonal Cultural Centres. There will be a special play on Sardar Patel at the National School of Drama.

Apart from the Run for Unity, and essay competitions in more than 2000 Kendriya and Navodaya Vidyalayas, the Human Resource Development Ministry will also encourage the students to speak simple sentences/words in constitutionally recognised 22 Indian languages for 22 consecutive days - one language every day.

The Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas will be organising programmes in oil PSUs, and, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting will telecast the film 'Sardar' on DD, radio and TV jingles and will run features on life and achievements of Sardar Patel, talk shows, interviews based programmes, live phone-in programmes on 'Integration of India.

As part of celebrations, Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the Statue of Unity - a monument statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel- in Gujarat on October 31.

Located in Sadhu-Bet Island, Gujarat, the 182-metre long statue will occupy over 20,000 square meters, and will be surrounded by a 12 square km artificial lake.

The total project cost is estimated to be Rs. 2,989 crore.