



Ministry of Culture

Prime Minister Inaugurates ‘Swachhagraha “Bapu Ko Karyanjali”-a Mission, an Exhibition’ to Mark 100th Anniversary of Champaran Satyagrah

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The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi inaugurated “Swachhagraha “Bapu Ko Karyanjali”-A Mission, An Exhibition’ to mark 100th Anniversary of Champaran Satyagrah at the National Archives of India (NAI), here today. He also launched an Online Interactive Quiz “Karyanjali”, which will continue for 30 months till October, 2019. Minister of State (I/C) for Culture and Tourism Dr. Mahesh Sharma and many dignitaries were present. A musical and dance programme based on the banned literature on Mahatma Gandhi and Swachhagraha entitled “Satya, Swachh, Sur” was presented on the occasion.

Addressing the gathering on the occasion, the Prime Minister said that 100 years ago, Mahatma Gandhi reached Champaran and witnessed the hardships of people living there. Gandhi Ji showed them the path to and power of peaceful Satyagrah. Champaran Satyagraha catapulted Gandhi Ji to the forefront of India’s freedom struggle. He said that the exhibition, interactive quiz and dance performance are not only formalities, but are pious occasions to dedicate ourselves to the nation. “Along with Shraddhanjali, we should also offer Karyanjali to Mahatma Gandhi”, the Prime Minister added. Shri Modi emphasised that Gandhi ji was basically a Swachhagrahi and was awakening the thought process of the people of India. He pointed out that Champaran can be described as the place of origin of Swachhata Andolan and Champaran Satyagrah gave a new impetus to the freedom struggle and Gandhi ji accorded equal regard to women. ‘Champaran played an important role in the development of Khadi. Swachh Bharat Mission is a movement to fulfil the dreams of Mahatma Gandhi and is fast becoming a mass movement in our country’, the Prime Minister said.

In his address, Dr. Mahesh Sharma said that Mahatma Gandhi used Satyagrah as the main weapon in freedom struggle. He called upon people to focus on Swachhata movement for their overall development. This exhibition links Gandhi Ji’s core principles of Satyagraha with contemporary issues, a movement to improve conditions through Swachhagraha, he added.

This exhibition is a humble tribute to Gandhi Ji on hundred years of his first experiment of Satyagraha in India, in Champaran and is an attempt to sensitize future generations to fulfill Gandhi’s dream of ‘Swachh Bharat’, where society’s reflection would be as clean as the thoughts within, of every citizen of India. This digital and experiential exhibition strives to connect the essential principles of Satyagrah ‘Jeevan-Chakra’ evolved by Gandhi Ji, with the elements of Swachhagraha, the movement. The exhibition will be open for public in NAI campus for one month and later on, it will be taken to other cities of the country as Mobile exhibition.

Gandhi Ji was initially reluctant to visit Champaran. Rather, he had hardly knew where Champaran was and was unaware of the conditions of the farmers who cultivated Indigo. Upon his arrival in Patna on 10th April 1917 and thence to in Motihari on 15th April, he immediately realized that his stay there would be a long haul. The drama of Champaran has been succinctly depicted in this exhibition. During his stay, Gandhi Ji delved in detail with the problems of people. Social practices of scavenging, illiteracy, issues covering women and health were found to be the main impediments. These obstacles were common to the political issues that Gandhi Ji confronted. Satyagraha was the weapon he employed to overcome hurdles on both these fronts.

The Champaran Satyagraha changed the dynamics of Indian politics, catapulting Gandhi Ji to the forefront of India’s freedom struggle. For the first time, people of India realized the power of non-violence and passive resistance, based on action.

Gandhi Ji’s freedom struggle culminated in India’s independence on 15th August 1947. Though politically independent, India has long since grappled with the same vital issues that Gandhi Ji came face to face with in Champaran, that of health, sanitation, clean water, cleanliness, lack of awareness and education etc. This exhibition is an attempt to link Gandhi Ji’s core principles of Satyagraha with contemporary issues, a movement to improve conditions through Swachhagraha. The younger generation of India needs to understand its importance. In fact we all need to.

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