



Independence Day Celebrations at Red Fort

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The Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will unfurl the National Flag from the ramparts of the Red Fort, tomorrow to celebrate the 71st Independence Day. After unfurling the Tricolour, Shri Narendra Modi will address the nation.

On arrival at Lahori Gate of Red Fort, the Prime Minister will be received by the Defence Minister Shri Arun Jaitley, Minister of State for Defence Dr. Subhash Bhamre and Defence Secretary Shri Sanjay Mitra.

The Defence Secretary will introduce the General Officer Commanding, Delhi Area, Lt. General Manoj Mukund Naravane to the Prime Minister. The GoC Delhi Area will then conduct the Prime Minister to the Saluting Base where a combined Inter-Services and Police Guard will present the general salute to the Prime Minister. Thereafter, Shri Narendra Modi will inspect the Guard of Honour.

The Guard of Honour contingent for the Prime Minister will consist of one officer and 24 men each from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Delhi Police. The Guard of Honour will be positioned directly in front of the National Flag across the moat below the ramparts.

This year, the Army being the Coordinating Service, the Guard of Honour will be commanded by Lt Col Dheeraj Singh of the Indian Army. The Army Contingent in the Prime Minister's Guard will be commanded by Major Sourav Goswami, the Navy contingent by Lt Cdr VV Krishnan, while Sqn Ldr Salil Sharma will lead the Air Force contingent and the Delhi Police contingent by ACP Ankit Chauhan.

The Army contingent for the Prime Minister's Guard is drawn from the 8th Jammu & Kashmir Light Infantry (Siachen). The battalion was raised as the First Battalion Border Scouts by volunteers who took up arms in the aftermath of communal passion and the smouldering embers of Partition to check the multitude of Kabailies intruding into Poonch on 18 December 1947. 'Born in Battle and Purified in Blood', the battalion was re-designated as 8th Jammu & Kashmir Militia on 15 April 1948.

In the 1971 War, the battalion was outnumbered but never outclassed in valour and fought the defensive battle successfully despite the enemy's passion for Chhamb. For this the battalion was awarded the Battle Honour - Laleali and Picquet 707. The Regiment was rechristened Jammu & Kashmir Light Infantry on 27 April 1976.

During the Siachen tenure in June 1987, the battalion created history by capturing 'Quaid Post' at an altitude of 21,153 feet, the highest battlefield in the world. The post was renamed as 'Bana Top' in honour of Naib Subedar Bana Singh, Param Vir Chakra. The battalion was awarded the Chief of the Army Staff Unit Citation in 2001 for its sterling performance in Jammu & Kashmir, Poonch Sector. The Battalion established the United Nations Mission in Sudan 2006 and was conferred with the United Nations Unit Citation in the year 2007 for handling the bloodiest of clashes ever in the history of Sudan.

The battalion yet again proved its mettle during its 2008 tenure at Kupwara in Jammu & Kashmir when Naib Subedar Chuni Lal, Vir Chakra, Sena Medal, who laid down his life following the highest traditions of the Indian Army while fighting terrorists, was bestowed with the highest peacetime gallantry award, the Ashok Chakra (Posthumous). With this, the battalion joined the elite group of 'Bravest of the Brave' battalions. Apart from this, the battalion was once again conferred with the Chief of the Army Staff Unit Citation in 2009 for its splendid performance on the Line of Control in Jammu & Kashmir.

The Battalion is presently one of the most decorated battalions of the Indian Army with Naib Subedar Chuni Lal, Ashok Chakra (Posthumous), Vir Chakra, Sena Medal as one of the most decorated soldiers. Presently, the Battalion is performing the prestigious duty of Ceremonial Army Guard to the President of India.

After inspecting the Guard of Honour, the Prime Minister will proceed to the ramparts of the Red Fort where he will be greeted by the Defence Minister Shri Arun Jaitley, the Minister of State for Defence Dr. Subhash Bhamre, the Chief of the Army Staff General Bipin Rawat, the Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal B S Dhanoa and the Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Sunil Lanba. The GoC Delhi area will conduct the Prime Minister to the dais to unfurl the National Flag.

The unfurling of the tri-colour will synchronize with the 21 Gun Salute fired by the valiant gunners of the elite 2281 Field Regiment (Ceremonial). The ceremonial battery will be commanded by Lt. Col Aditya Kumar Devrani, Shaurya Chakra, Sena Medal and the Gun Position Officer will be Regimental Havildar Major (Assistant Inspector Gunnary) Kolate Rajesh Shripati.

The National Flag Guard comprising 32 men and one officer each from the Army, Navy, Air Force and Delhi Police will present the Rashtriya Salute at the time of unfurling of the National Flag by the Prime Minister. Lt Col Saket Bharadwaj from the Indian Army will be in command of this Inter-Services Guard and Police Guard. The Naval Contingent for the National Flag Guard will be commanded by Lt Cdr MYV Tejas, the Army contingent by Major Gerry Mathew, the Air Force contingent by Sqn Ldr Ravi Tomar and the Delhi Police contingent by Additional DCP Shri Rajiv Ranjan.

The Army Band will play the National Anthem when the National Guard presents the 'Rashtriya Salute' while unfurling the National Flag by the Prime Minister. All Service personnel in uniform will stand and salute. The Band will be commanded by Sub Maj Bhaskar Singh Rawat of the Military Band of the Garhwal Rifles Regimental Centre.

Two Army Officers, Capt Md Hasseb Khan and Lt Vinay Budhwar will be positioned on either side of the saluting dais for the Prime Minister for ADC duties. Lt Col Kanchan Kulhari will assist the Prime Minister in unfurling the National Flag.

The Army Contingent for the National Flag Guard is drawn from the 25th Battalion of the Rajput Regiment.

The 25th Battalion of the Rajput Regiment was raised by IC-15798K Late Lieutenant Colonel JV Abraham on 01 January 1981 at Fatehgarh (Uttar Pradesh). The Rajput tricolor flew for the first time in the unit's Quarter Guard on 06 April 1981 and the unit was presented with Colours on 1 November 1987. On completion of its raising on 30 June 1981; the battalion joined the 20 Infantry Brigade (18 Infantry Division) at Alwar on 24 July 1981.

Since raising, the Battalion has participated in all operations of the Indian Army viz OPERATION FAULAD, OPERATION TRIDENT, OPERATION PAWAN, OPERATION RHINO, OPERATION RAKSHAK, OPERATION VIJAY, OPERATION PARAKARAM, OPERATION AMAN, OPERATION NORTHERN BORDERS & OPERATION MEGHDOOT with elan, strong determination and earned the following awards in consecutive tenures for performing exceedingly well; these were Param Vishisht Seva Medal-01, Ati Vishisht Seva Medal-03, Vishisht Seva Medal-01, Yudh Seva Medal-02, Sena Medal-07, Mention-in Despatches-01, Chief of Army Staff Commendation Card-47, Vice Chief of Army Staff Commendation Card-07 and General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Commendation Card-41.

The Battalion was awarded the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief Southern Command and Northern Command Citations in 2015 and 2017 for its sterling performance in Alwar and Siachen Glacier respectively.

The Battalion came on the orbat of the "CHARGING RAM" Division on 15 July 2016 and since then, as part of offensive formations-always ready to RAM on REGARDLESS.

The War Cry of the unit is "*Bol Bajrang Bali Ki Jai, Hanuman Ke Hun Pyare.*"

After unfurling the National Flag, the Prime Minister will address the Nation. After the Prime Minister's address, school children and NCC Cadets will sing the National Anthem.

Seven hundred cadets of the National Cadet Corps drawn from various schools of the Delhi Directorate comprising the Army, Navy and Air Force wings are participating in the flag hoisting ceremony this year. The cadets will take part in the singing of patriotic songs and the National Anthem along with the school children. In total, 3,500 girl students and 5,000 boy students from 37 schools of Directorate of Education, Government of Delhi will sing the National Anthem. They will also sing patriotic songs in different regional languages during the celebrations. On this occasion these school children will display the formation of '**Bharat**'.

NW/DK/Rajib

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