



Curtain Raiser-Republic Day – 2017

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The Nation's military prowess and achievements in different fields, state-of-the-art defence platforms, its diverse cultural and social traditions, and the government's emphasis on self-reliance and indigenisation will be showcased before the public at the historic Rajpath when the country celebrates its 68th Republic Day tomorrow.

The highlights of this year's Parade will be, a 149-member UAE Presidential Guard, the Air Force, the Navy and Army contingent led by a UAE band consisting of 35 musicians marching on Rajpath and presenting a ceremonial salute to the President of India. The UAE military contingent is led by Lt Col Abood Musabeh Abood Musabeh Alghfeli.

This year's parade will also see some of the firsts to its credit. For the first time a contingent of the National Security Guard (NSG) popularly known as the Black Cat Commandoes will march-past the Rajpath. The parade will also see the fly-past of three LCA Tejas Aircraft flying at a height of 300 m from ground in 'Vic' formation and the Airborne Early Warning & Control System (AEW&C) developed by DRDO.

Sticking to the 67 years tradition of the Republic Day Celebration, the colourful BSF Camel Regiment led by Deputy Commandant Kuldeep Seervi will take part.

The Indian Army's missile firing capability, T-90 'Bhishma' tank, Infantry Combat Vehicle BMP-2K, Mobile Autonomous Launcher of the BrahMos Missile System, Weapon Locating Raddar 'Swathi', Akash Weapon System, CBRN Reconnaissance Vehicle and Dhanush Gun System will be the main draw in the mechanised columns.

An Indian Air Force Tableau will roll down the Rajpath with the theme "Air Dominance Through Network Centric Operations". The Tableau will display the scaled down models of Su-30 MKI, Mirage-2000, AWACS, UAV, Apache and Communication Satellite.

This year the Indian Navy's Tableau will have the theme 'Indian Navy – Professional Force-Anchoring Stability, Security and National Prosperity'. The tableau showcases the lethal Marine Commandoes proceeding for action, the indigenously built Kolkata Class Destroyer and the Kalvari Class next generation attack submarines. The tableaux also displays a model of the P-8I Long Range Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

The parade ceremony will commence at the Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate where the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will lead the nation in paying homage to the martyrs by laying a wreath. An eternal flame burns at the Amar Jawan Jyoti to commemorate the indomitable courage of our Armed Forces personnel who have made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the motherland. The Amar Jawan, the immortal soldier, is symbolised by a reversed rifle standing on its barrel and crested by a soldier's helmet.

As per tradition, after unfurling the National Flag, the national anthem will be played with a 21 gun salute. The parade will then commence and the President will take the salute. This year's Chief Guest in the parade will be His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Armed Forces. The parade will be commanded by Lt. General Manoj Mukund Naravane, General Officer Commanding, Delhi Area. Major General Rajesh Sahai, Chief of Staff, Headquarter Delhi Area will be the parade Second-in-Command.

Param Vir Chakra winners Subedar Major & Honorary Captain Bana Singh (Retd), Subedar Yogendra Singh Yadav, 18 Grenadiers and Naib/Subedar Sanjay Kumar, 13 JAK Rifles and Ashok Chakra winners Major General Cyrus A Pithawalla (Retd), Lt Col Jas Ram Singh (Retd), Shri Hukum Singh and Shri Govind Singh of district Chhatarpur, Madhya Pradesh and Shri Bhure Lal of district Guna also from Madhya Pradesh will follow the Deputy Parade Commander on Jeeps.

The marching contingents of Army will include horse-mounted columns of the 61st Cavalry, the Mechanised Infantry Regiment, the Bihar Regiment, the 39 Gorkha Training Centre, 58 Gorkha Training Centre, the Madras Engineering Group and Centre and 103 Infantry Battalion (Territorial Army) Sikh LI.

The marching contingent of Navy comprising 144 young sailors will be led by Lieutenant Aparna Nair, while the Indian Air Force contingent comprising 144 men will be led by Squadron Leader Attal Singh Shekhon. The Paramilitary and other auxiliary civil forces will include the Border Security Force Camel Contingent, Indian Coast Guard, Central Reserve Police Force, Central Industrial Security Force, Delhi Police, National Cadet Corps and National Service Scheme.

Tableaux from 17 States and UT, six Central Ministries and Departments will present the varied historical, art and cultural heritage of the country. They will also showcase country's progress in different fields, particularly floats from Goa, Gujarat, Odisha, West Bengal, Assam and Jammu & Kashmir with their varied themes, which will be of special attraction. The floats of Central Board of Excise and Customs, Ministry of Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises and Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation will showcase the rapid development of some of the flagship programmes of the Government. The floats of Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship will highlight the significant progress in the scientific and technological growth in the country as well as our efforts to promote skill development and entrepreneurship to achieve the vision of "Skill India".

Twenty one of the Twenty five children selected for the National Bravery Award-2016 will also participate in the parade. Four children have got the award posthumously. In the children's pageant section, about 600 boys and girls drawn from three schools in Delhi and a group of school children from South Central Zone Cultural Centre, Nagpur will perform colourful dances on varied themes. The splendid driving skills of 'Dare Devils'- the motorcycle display team of Corps of Military Police will be a major attraction of the parade. They will perform different stunts like Salute to President, Ladder, Double Bar, Lotus, Christmas Tree, Aircraft, Sudarshan Chakra, Flower Pot, Pyramid and Wheeling on moving motor cycles.

The grand finale of the parade will be a spectacular flypast by the IAF. The flypast will commence with the 'Chakra' formation, comprising three Mi-35 helicopters in 'Vic' formation, followed by the 'Hercules' formation comprising three C-130J Super Hercules aircraft in 'Vic' formation. Trailing them will be the 'Netra' which is an Airborne Early Warning and Control System Aircraft also known as "Eye in the Sky". It will be followed by the 'Globe formation' comprising one C-17 Globemaster flanked by two Su-30 MKIs. Next in line will be the fighters, where five Jaguars will fly in Arrowhead formation, another five MiG-29 Air Superiority Fighters will fly in Fulcrum style. Then the breath-taking 'Trishul' formation comprising three Su-30 MKIs of No. 24 Squadron would fly over the Rajpath, and once in front of the saluting dais, the Su-30 MKI aircraft will split upwards, making a Trishul in the sky. The flypast will conclude with another Su-30 MKI carrying out a 'Vertical Charlie' manoeuvre over the saluting dais.

The ceremony will culminate with the national anthem and release of balloons.

NW/NAo/DM/Ranjan

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