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US President Guest Of Honour On India's 66th Republic Day Amid Unprecedented Security

Press Trust Of India



WIRES

NEW DELHI – Watched by US President Barack Obama, India today displayed its military might and rich cultural diversity during the dazzling 66th Republic Day parade in the Capital which was wrapped in an unprecedented security blanket.

Obama was the first ever US President to attend the parade as Chief Guest on the second day of his three-day visit, as light rains and overcast skies failed to dampen the enthusiasm of thousands of spectators who gathered along the Rajpath to watch the majestic pomp-filled spectacle.

Dressed in a dark suit, Obama was seated next to Modi, donning a multicoloured 'bandhej safa' (Rajasthani turban), as the two leaders chatted and soaked up the splendour that unfolded on the rain-soaked parade route. Obama was also seen holding his umbrella for a while.

A smiling US President was seen nodding in appreciation on several occasions and gave a thumbs up to the BSF daredevils--famed for their formation of a human pyramid on



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Smartly attired all-female units from the Army, Navy and Air Force marched for the first time in this year's parade, as the country's military hardware with carnival-style floats featuring achievements in diverse fields as well as tribal dancers and traditional music rolled past in a show of 'unity in diversity'.

In a departure from tradition for the Chief Guest at the Republic Day parade, Obama arrived in his own highly-secured bomb-proof vehicle, 'The Beast,' at Rajpath. The crowd erupted in cheers as the Obamas emerged from the limousine.



Obama and Michelle sat in a special glass enclosure along with President Pranab Mukherjee, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Vice President M Hamid Ansari and his wife, and Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar among other dignitaries. Michelle also smiled broadly at dance performance by young children.

A highlight of this year's parade was the display for the first time of the recently acquired long-range maritime surveillance and anti-submarine P-8I aircraft and the long-range advanced MiG-29K fighter plane.

Prime Minister Modi's "Make in India" campaign to boost the country's manufacturing industry and create much-needed jobs was featured in one of the tableaux.



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The amount of time--around two hours-- spent by Obama on an outdoor viewing platform was unusual given the US Secret Service security concerns.



A massive ground-to-air security apparatus was put in place in the national capital turning the city into virtually an impregnable fortress. Snipers of National Security Guard were deployed at all high-rises along the parade route.



Kunal Majumder

@kunalmajumder

Atleast on Republic Day we should move above politics and respect the individuals on constitutional positions, whether it is PM or VP

2:21 PM - Jan 26, 2015

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DNA

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1 See DNA's other Tweets

The arrangements were made to ensure an incident-free Republic Day celebrations and foolproof security to the American President, who arrived here yesterday.

Another military attraction was the display of Army version of indigenously developed surface-to-air Akash medium range missile and Weapon Locating Radar, both by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Indian Army's laser-guided missile capable T-90 Bheeshma tank, infantry combat vehicle BMP-II (Sarath) followed by T-72 with Trawl too proved to be a major draw in the mechanised columns.

These were followed by 'Pinaka' multiple barrel launcher system. The Mobile Autonomous Launcher of BRAHMOS missile system, three dimensional tactical control radar, satellite on the move communication platform and rapidly deployable satellite terminal (RADSAT) followed next.

An Indian Air Force tableau with the theme "50 years of 1965 War" was next in line at the majestic Rajpath, dazzling VIPs, VVIPs and spectators alike.

In keeping with the Indian Navy's theme "Ensuring Safe Seas for a Resurgent Nation" ? the Naval Tableau displayed a few of its frontline assets in all four dimensions of maritime warfare.

Navy's march to self-reliance and indigenisation was showcased by the models of indigenously constructed destroyer INS Kolkata launching a BrahMos missile with the Advanced Light Helicopter "Dhruv" in the background.

The second Naval tableau, titled "Bharatiya Nau Sena aur Nari Shakti", represented the four Indian Navy women officers who braved vagaries of the seas and participated in an ocean voyage from Goa to Rio-de-Janeiro in Brazil on board Indian Naval Sailing Vessel 'Mhadei'.

The marching contingents of paramilitary and other forces included those from BSF, Assam Rifles, Coast Guard, CRPF, Indo -Tibetan Border Police, CISF, Sashastra Seema Bal, Railway Protection Force, Delhi Police, National Cadet Corps and National Service Scheme.



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PM Shri [@narendramodi](#) and Chief Guest, US President Mr. [@BarackObama](#) witnessing 66th Republic Day Parade at Rajpath

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78

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The camel-mounted band of BSF and the ex-servicemen marching contingent too added to the attraction.

Among the state's tableau, Gujarat and Karnakaka had particular appeal.

While the home state of Prime Minister Modi showcased the ambitious project of building the 'Statue of Unity' symbolically represented by that of Sardar Vallabhahi Patel and the Sardar Sarovar Yojana, the southern state charmed everyone especially the kids with its tableau, huge scale-model, fashioned on the famed wooden toys of Channapatna, located in the outskirts of Bengaluru.

New-born state Telangana, making its Republic Day debut showcased its illustrious festival 'Bonalu', celebrated to worship Mahakali goddess in the month of Ashada.

For Jammu and Kashmir, the dazzling beauty of the region was displayed through Rouff dance of Kashmir, flower dance of Ladakh and Kud dance of Jammu regions.

Haryana made its presence through its Sultanpur Bird Sanctuary, famous for hosting migratory birds coming from Europe, Siberia and central Asia.

One of the most breathtaking event was the manoeuvres by air force jets and daredevil motorcycle performance 'Jaanbaaz' by BSF personnel.



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formations among others.

The grand finale of the parade was a spectacular flypast by the IAF jets and aircraft.



The flypast commenced with 'Chakra' formation, comprising three Mi-35 helicopters in 'Vic' formation, followed by the 'Hercules' formation comprising three C-130J super Hercules aircraft.



Trailing them was a 'Poseidon' formation comprising one P-8I aircraft flanked by two MiG-29Ks and the 'Globe' formation comprising one C-17 Globemaster flanked by two Su-30s.



Next five Jaguars flew in Arrowhead formation and the five MiG-29 fighters, called the 'Tridents', flew in 'Fulcrum' style.



Three Sukhoi (Su-30 Mkl) fighter jets then made the "Trishul" formation by flying over the Rajpath, and once in front of the saluting dais, the three aircraft split upwards, making a 'Trishul' in the sky.

The flypast concluded with another Su-30 Mkl carrying out a "Vertical Charlie" manoeuvre over the saluting dais.



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