



Interesting Things About Indian Republic Day

Girija Sankar Das

The Indian Republic Day is fast approaching, this day is certainly a day to reflect and respond to all the sacrifices made and the wars fought to make India a sovereign republic. However, with the independence and the struggles associated with it beaming more and more historic or old; there is a growing fear that the youth of today are not able to understand the magnitude of what transpired before 1947.

Moreover, there is a threat that if people are not reminded enough about India's Republic Day, and the reasoning behind the celebration of it, people may soon forget their history and treat the day as yet another holiday. Therefore, it is in India's best interest that Indians acknowledge the importance of the day and celebrate the independence that their forefathers dreamt of and fought for. That said, here are things that you might want to know and understand about India's Republic Day and the traditions that govern it.

Celebration of 26th January before Independence

The Indian National Congress and many other parties had been celebrating 26th January as a symbol of Independence long before India truly became independent. This date was chosen

as a day to commemorate the declaration of independence in 1930.

History of Indian Republic Day

India got her independence on 15th August 1947. The laws of governance were however based on the colonial Government of India Act 1935 in a modified way and the nation was a Dominion under Governor General Mountbatten and George VI as head of the state. So, India still did not have a permanent Constitution of its own. A draft of the Indian Constitution was presented by the Drafting Committee on 4th November 1947 with the Assembly meeting consistently for over a period of 2 years, 11 months and 18 days and discussing the matter till an agreed upon version of the Constitution was finalized; On 24th January 1950, the Assembly signed two copies of the document in Hindi and English. The Constitution of India came into being on 26th January 1950 at 10.18 AM 1st. This day has been known as the Republic Day of India since then. This day is celebrated as a tribute to the declaration of the Constitution of India.

Constitution of India

There are main bodies of the Government in the Constitution: The Executive, the Legislature,



and the Judiciary. The relationship and connection between each of these bodies, the citizens of India and the Government is decided and guided by the Constitution. It lays down the national objectives of the country as Democracy, Socialism, Secularism and National Integration.

Amar Jawan Jyoti

On the Republic Day of India, every year at Delhi, the honourable Prime Minister of India lays a wreath at Amar Jawan Jyoti at India Gate as a mark of respect to all the people and soldiers of our country who died fighting for our Independence. After which there is a two minute silence as a tribute of honour and thanks to the soldiers. 'Amar Jawan Jyoti' in Hindi means 'the light of the immortal soldiers'. It is because of these soldiers India was liberated.

Awards

The President of India presents prestigious bravery awards such as Ashoka Chakra, Kirti Chakra, Param Veer Chakra, Veer Chakra and Maha Veer Chakra to Indian Armed Forces and civilians for their acts of bravery and courage. Children who stood out with their courage and performed acts of bravery are also awarded the National Bravery award.

21-Gun Salute

Gun salutes are the firing of cannons and arms as a military or naval mark of honour. The President of India arrives at Rajpath with other dignitaries and then unfurls the Indian National flag as the Indian National Anthem is played and a 21-gun salute is given.

Beating Retreat

After the Republic Day, on 29th January of every year, a ceremony known as 'Beating Retreat' is held at the 'Vijay Chowk' or alternatively known as 'The Victory Square' in New Delhi. This ceremony starts at 6.00 PM IST and the beating of the drums marks the closure of the Republic Day celebrations. This ceremony originated in England in the 16th century, the beating of the evening drums signalled the end of inspection of the troops and the return to the castle for the night. In Delhi, the Beating Retreat ends with the bands of all the armed forces playing the song 'Abide with me'.

National Holiday

26th January of every year is declared a National Holiday as the Republic Day of India is considered to be a National Festival. The entire nation celebrates the day and the ceremonies from New Delhi are broadcast live on television for the millions of viewers.

Chief Guests

The honourable chief guest for the Republic Day celebrations is different each year; the head of the state or ruling government of other countries are invited. India being a peace - loving nation strives to maintain good relations and enrich the connections with nations of the world and thus invites the guests of honour based on, diplomatic, strategic, or international geopolitics.

Girija Sankar Das, Qrs. No.2RA(F)-6/1, Unit-9, Bhubaneswar-22.