

No19022/07/2017-SCD-VI
Government of India
Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment

New Delhi, the 15th Oct, 2019

Note for the Committee of Secretaries

Subject: Celebration of Constitution Day on 26.11.2019 and subsequent activities culminating in ' Rashtriya Samrasta Divas' on 14th April 2020

1. Background

On 29 August 1947, the Constituent Assembly set up a Drafting Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar to prepare a draft Constitution for India. The Drafting Committee prepared its initial draft of the constitution in February 1948 which was debated upon, finalised and adopted by the Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949. The Constitution of India came into effect on 26th January 1950 and the Union of India became a modern and contemporary Republic.

The Constitution of India declares India as a sovereign, socialist, secular, democratic republic, assuring its citizens of justice, equality, and liberty, and endeavours to promote fraternity among them. It lays down the framework defining fundamental political principles, establishes the structure, procedures, powers and duties of government institutions and sets out Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles and the Duties of citizens. The Constitution provides a legal framework for social transformation from a society of castes and communities to a modern society of citizens based on equal consideration of individuals without regard for caste, creed or gender, thus ensuring their inclusive growth.

Dr B.R.Ambedkar is regarded as the principal architect of the Constitution of India which is the longest written constitution of any sovereign country in the world. Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar was born on 14 April, 1891 in Mhow Army Cantonment (present-day Dr. Ambedkar Nagar), Central Provinces (present-

day Madhya Pradesh). Dr. Ambedkar was a prolific student and held Doctorates in Economics from both Columbia University and the London School of Economics and gained a reputation as a scholar for his research in Law, Economics, and Political science. In his early career, he was an economist, professor, and lawyer. His later life was marked by his political activities; he became involved in campaigning and negotiations for India's independence, publishing journals, advocating political rights and social freedom for Dalits, and contributed significantly to the establishment of the union of India

Dr. Ambedkar was awarded Bharat Ratna on 14th April, 1990. The contribution of Dr. Ambedkar in social, political and economic sectors is unmatched and he is one of the key founders of the Modern India. The life of Dr. Ambedkar is an inspiration to the millions.

Considering his immense contribution to the society at large, it was found appropriate to celebrate the year 2015, being the 125th Birth Anniversary year of Dr. Ambedkar, in a befitting manner. A National Committee was formed under the Chairmanship of the Hon'ble Prime Minister to provide guidance, advice and direction for the Nationwide Celebration of 125th Birth Anniversary of Dr. B.R.Ambedkar. The Committee, in its first meeting held on 23.7.2015, decided that in order to increase awareness about the Constitution amongst citizens, particularly children, the 26th of November may be celebrated as Constitution Day every year, as it was on this day, that the Constitution of India was adopted. It was also decided that the preamble to the Constitution may be read aloud in schools and colleges.

The Government of India notified on 19.11.2015 through official Gazzette (Annexure-1) that 26th November shall be observed every year as Constitution Day. The first Constitution Day was celebrated on 26.11.2015.

To commemorate the Birth Anniversary of Dr. Ambedkar, the Government of India declared 14th April, as 'Rashtriya Samrasta Divas' and 26th November as 'Constitution Day' through Gazette notifications dtd. 24.6.2015 (Annesure - 2). The first Samrasta Divas was celebrated on 14th April, 2016.

2. Activities undertaken during 125th Birth Anniversary year of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar (2015-16)

A series of events was organized by various Ministries, State Governments, Missions abroad, Institutions, schools, colleges etc. throughout the year, i.e. from 14th April, 2015 to 14th April, 2016 to build awareness about the provisions of the Constitution of India and on the contributions and life of Dr. Ambedkar. Details of the major activities are in the enclosed presentation (Annexure-3).

3. Activities Proposed to be undertaken during the period from 26.11.2019 to 14.04.2020

It is now proposed to organize a slew of Nationwide activities to celebrate the Constitution of India and build awareness about its provisions as also to recognize the contribution of Dr. Ambedkar. It is planned to start the celebrations with the Constitution Day this year (26.11.2019) and culminate them on the Rashtriya Samrasta Divas on 14.4.2020. Details of the activities proposed to be undertaken are given in the attached presentation (Annexure - 3).

4. Proposed name of the Celebrations

It is proposed to name the celebrations as 'Samvidhan se Samrasta Utsav'.

5. The Committee of Secretaries is requested to deliberate upon and finalize the activities to be undertaken by the different Ministries /Departments/State Governments for Celebration of Constitution Day on 26.11.2019 and subsequent activities culminating in 'Rashtriya Samrasta Divas' on 14th April, 2020.