



Statue of Unity

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Prime Minister has inaugurated the Statue of Unity at Kevadiya in Narmada district of Gujarat.

- The Statue of Unity which is built in honour of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel is dedicated to the nation.
- Sardar Patel is credited with uniting over 560 princely states in pre-independent India to build the Republic of India, hence the name of the statue is christened as 'Statue of Unity'.
- The date for the inauguration of the statue (October 31, 2018) also marks the 143rd birth anniversary of Sardar Patel.
- It is located on the Sadhu Bet island on the Narmada river, which flows between the Satpura and the Vindhya mountain ranges.
- The Statue of Unity is the tallest statue in the world. At 182 metres, it is 23 metres taller than China's Spring Temple Buddha statue and almost double the height of the Statue of Liberty (93 metres tall) in US.
- The viewing gallery for the statue, at 153 metres, can accommodate 200 people at a time and offer an expansive view of the Sardar Sarovar Dam.
- The statue is a three-layered structure. The innermost layer is made of reinforced cement concrete (RCC), comprising two towers 127 metres high that rise till the statue's chest. The second layer is a steel structure and the third an 8 mm bronze cladding on the surface.
- It was built within three-and-a-half years by more than 3,000 workers, including 300 engineers from infrastructure major Larsen & Toubro (L&T).
- The Statue of Unity was designed by Padma Bhushan recipient sculptor Ram V Sutar and intricate bronze cladding work was done by a Chinese foundry, the Jiangxi Toqine Company (JTQ).

Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel

- Vallabhbhai Patel was a political and social leader who played a major role in the country's struggle for independence and subsequently guided its integration into a united, independent nation.
- Women of Bardoli bestowed the title Sardar to Vallabhbhai Patel, which in Gujarati and most Indian languages means Chief or Leader.
- Vallabhbhai Patel was inspired by the work and philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi. Patel subsequently organised the peasants of Kheda, Borsad, and Bardoli in Gujarat in a non-violent civil disobedience movement against oppressive policies imposed by the British Raj.
- He rose to the leadership of the Indian National Congress and was at the forefront of rebellions and political events, organising the party for elections in 1934 and 1937, and promoting the Quit India movement.
- As the first Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister of India, Patel organised relief for refugees in Punjab and Delhi, and led efforts to restore peace across the nation.
- Patel took charge of the task to forge a united India from over 560 semi-autonomous princely states and British-era colonial provinces. Using frank diplomacy backed with the option (and the use) of military action, Patel's leadership enabled the accession of almost every princely state.
- Hailed as the Iron Man of India, he is also remembered as the "Patron Saint" of India's civil servants for establishing modern all-India services.
- Patel was also one of the earliest proponents of property rights and free enterprise in India.

Run for Unity and Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat

- **Run for unity:**
 - 'Run for unity' Marathon has been organised in various parts of the country to commemorate the 143rd birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.
- Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat:
 - "Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat" was announced by the Prime Minister in 2015 on the occasion of the 140th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Subsequently, the Finance Minister announced the initiative in his Budget Speech for 2016-17.
 - Through this innovative measure, the knowledge of the culture, traditions and practices of different States & UTs will lead to an enhanced understanding and bonding between the States, thereby strengthening the unity and integrity of India.