

**Embassy of India
The Hague**

Press Release

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Gandhi@150 to be marked in the Netherlands with grand celebrations

The 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi will be marked in the Netherlands with grand celebrations which will include a Gandhi March for Non-Violence, a Cycling Rally, an Exhibition on the life of Mahatma Gandhi, a Commemoration Meeting, events surrounding the four Gandhi statues in the country and a School Outreach Program. These are being organized by the Indian Embassy in The Hague, the Netherlands in cooperation with the Gandhi Non-Violence Foundation and other organizations.

The celebrations will commence with a Cycling Rally on September 29 to spread awareness regarding the Gandhian philosophy of simplicity and sustainability. The rally in the city of The Hague will begin at the Embassy of India and pass through the iconic Peace Palace, the Parliament (Binnenhof), and the most popular seaside resort Scheveningen and return to the Embassy of India.

From October 1 to October 4, an exhibition on the “Life and Message of Gandhi” will be displayed in the Atrium of the City Hall of The Hague. The Exhibition in Dutch will walk the viewers through important phases of Mahatma Gandhi’s life until his ultimate sacrifice, when he was assassinated for standing by his ideals of inter-religious harmony and universal brotherhood. From September 24 to October 3, volunteers will fan out to schools and universities of the Netherlands in a “Follow the Mahatma” campaign and talk about Mahatma Gandhi’s message of non-violence and its relevance in today’s world. This school project aspires to reach over 25 schools and over 1600 children. The aim of the program is to bring together

volunteers who in turn can reach out to several thousand students aimed at disseminating the message of non-violence.

The International Day of Non-Violence on October 2 will be marked by a “Gandhi March for Non-Violence” through the city of The Hague to highlight the importance of the message of non-violence. Around 300 school children and 150 adults will take part in the march. The march will begin from the Gandhi statue at Hobbemaplein and conclude at the iconic Peace Palace. The rally will be addressed by Ambassador Venu Rajamony and other dignitaries in the courtyard of the Peace Palace. This will be followed by planting of a tree in the Peace Palace. A plaque with a message of Mahatma Gandhi will be placed by the tree.

Other celebrations on October 2 will include garlanding of Gandhi statues in the four cities of The Hague, Amsterdam, Utrecht and Zoetermeer, with the public paying tributes by placing flowers at the feet of the statues as a mark of respect amidst speeches, singing of favourite songs of Mahatma Gandhi, cultural programmes and a memorial meeting organized by Stichting Standbeeld Mahatma Gandhi in the Peace Palace.

A social media campaign will also be conducted inviting people to post messages reiterating their commitment to the principle of non-violence.

This year marks the 150th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) who is the Father of the Nation. He led India to independence from the British rule through peaceful and non-violent resistance. In 2007, the United Nations declared his birthday, October 2, as the International Day of Non-Violence and called upon countries and people across the world to celebrate and observe this day by disseminating the message of non-violence, including through education and public awareness.
