

SPEECH OF THE HONOURABLE GOVERNOR OF
MEGHALAYA SHRI C H VIJAYASHANKAR FOR
GANDHI JAYANTI ON 2TH OCTOBER 2024 DURBAR
HALL RAJ BHAVAN SHILLONG

My dear friends,

It is my honour to address you on this significant day as we celebrate the 155th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of our Nation. Today, we gather to pay tribute to a man whose life, dedication, and unwavering efforts brought about a transformation not only in India but across the world.

October 2nd, which we observe every year as Gandhi Jayanti, marks the birth of this great freedom fighter. His contribution to India's independence is unparalleled, but his influence goes far beyond national borders. His birthday is also celebrated globally as International Non-Violence day, a recognition of his role as a pioneer of non-violent movements.

His ideas of non-violence, peace, and justice continue to inspire nations around the world, making him a universal figure of hope and compassion.

Today, we also commemorate the birth anniversary of Lal Bahadur Shastri, another great leader and the second Prime Minister of India, whose legacy stands as a testament to simplicity, integrity, and unwavering dedication to the nation.

Shastri ji played a pivotal role in shaping modern India, promoting self-reliance and agricultural reforms with his famous slogan, "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan" a tribute to the soldiers and farmers who form the backbone of our country. His leadership during challenging times, including the 1965 Indo-Pak war, displayed his courage and resolve.

Our hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has launched several initiatives deeply rooted in Gandhian values, focusing on self-reliance, cleanliness, and social upliftment.

One of the most notable is the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, inspired by Mahatma Gandhi's vision of a clean and healthy India.

This campaign has mobilized millions towards improving sanitation and hygiene across the country.

This morning, we have planted 155 trees in and around Raj Bhavan, a tribute to his 155th birth anniversary, underscoring his belief in the close relationship between man and nature, and our responsibility to protect the environment.

I also had the privilege to flag off the Swachhata Run from the main gate of Raj Bhavan, where more than a thousand participants joined in support of the Swachh Bharat mission ---a vision inspired by Gandhiji's dream of a clean and self-reliant India.

Further, I was honoured to flag off the Mobile Library, an initiative that brings the joy of reading and learning to people ensuring that education, a cause dear to Gandhiji, reaches every corner of our state.

Lastly, it gives me immense pride to inaugurate the National Book Trust Exhibition, an event that promotes a culture of reading and literacy. Gandhiji believed in the power of knowledge and education to uplift society, and this exhibition is a step toward that goal.

As we participate in these activities today, let us remember that Gandhiji's principles of truth, non-violence, and service to humanity are not just words for the history books.

They are values we must practice in our daily lives, in our communities, and in our nation.

On this Gandhi Jayanti, let us re-affirm our commitment to his principles, ensuring that his legacy continues to guide us as we strive to build a cleaner, greener, and more peaceful India.

Thank you, and Jai Hind!