

Remarks by Ambassador Sibi George on the occasion of National Unity Day on Oct 31, 2021

Good Evening Everybody,

Greeting to all on this important occasion of National Unity Day, Rashtriya Ekta Divas, when we celebrate the birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, one of the greatest sons of India. I welcome you all to this evening, our community members, office bearers of various associations and members of the media.

Dear Friends,

During the last one year, despite the many challenges of the Covid 19 pandemic we were all celebrating India in Kuwait as part of the celebrations to mark the 60th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kuwait and also the 75th anniversary of India's independence. Together we organized many events, together we took many initiatives, and together we celebrated everything that is Indian in Kuwait. We celebrated all festivals. We also celebrated the lives of each one of our heroes. Today's celebrations marking the National Unity Day is one of the most important events in this anniversary year.

Today, several functions were held all across India to celebrate the national unity day. Hon'ble Rashtrapati ji paid floral tributes in front of a portrait of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. Rashtrapati ji also visited Sardar Patel Chowk in New Delhi to pay homage at the statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. A major event was also held at the statue of unity in Kevadia, which has become a shrine, a shrine of national unity and of patriotism.

Today morning in his address to the nation, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi said and I quote: "Today the nation is paying its tribute to national hero Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who dedicated every moment of his life for 'Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat' (One India, Supreme India). Sardar Patel ji is not just a historical figure but lives in the heart of our countrymen. Today, our energetic friends, who are moving forward with the message of unity across the country, are a symbol of seamless devotion towards the

integrity of India. We can see this spirit in the National Unity Parade being held across the country and at the events being held at the Statue of Unity.

India is not just a geographical unit but a nation full of ideals, concepts, high standards of civilization and culture. The land mass on which more than 130 crore Indians live is an integral part of our soul, dreams and aspirations. The strong foundation of democracy, which has developed in India's society and traditions over hundreds of years, has enriched the spirit of 'One India'. But we also have to remember that every person sitting in the boat has to take care of the boat. If we remain united, only then will we be able to move forward, only then will the country be able to achieve its goals." Unquote.

Let me also quote from the address of Prime Minister in 2018 unveiling the statue of unity. He said, I quote: "This is the tallest statue of the world. It will keep reminding our future generations of that personality's courage, abilities and resolutions; about the one who thwarted the conspiracy of disintegrating Mother India into pieces; about the great personality who ended such desires forever, something that the world was expecting about the future of India. I salute such a Man of Steel Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel.

Sardar Saheb's abilities were put to work at a time when mother India was divided into more than 550 princely states. There was pessimism regarding India's future around the world. Pessimistic people existed even at that time. The pessimists felt that India would disintegrate due to its diversity. However, even in that period of pessimism, people could see a ray of hope and that ray of hope was Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel. Sardar Patel was a blend of Kautilya's diplomacy and Shivaji Maharaj's bravery. He had said on 5th July, 1947 addressing the princely states - 'our internal conflicts and enmity were the main reasons for our defeat against the foreign invaders. Now we must not repeat the same mistakes or to be someone's slave again.' I believe that Sardar Saheb's words are still valid today." Unqote

Dear Friends,

I welcome each one of you to today's event. Each one of you in Kuwait are representing our country in your field of activities and contributing towards building an Aatmanirbhar Bharat. I see it every day here, in almost every field. Each one of our doctors, nurses and other medical professionals through their hard work and sacrifice bring respect and admiration to our country; each of our businessmen, engineers, chartered accountants, other professionals and skilled labour through their hard work are building bridges between their motherland and their host country. Each one of our teachers and academicians by performing their responsibilities to the students are contributing in building a strong India. I am happy to note that each one of Associations and Groups in Kuwait, are joining hands with the Embassy transcending religious, regional and language barriers and are making immense contribution in strengthening of our relationship with Kuwait and its extremely warm and cordial people; in showcasing our rich and vibrant culture here in Kuwait; in increasing awareness of the socio-economic and technological advancements in India; and also in ensuring the continued welfare of the Indian Community.

Today, on this important occasion of National Unity Day, I have an appeal to make to each one of you. In this modern era of social media, let's all use social media to learn more about and celebrate the economic and scientific achievements of India, our successful space program, Chandrayan and Mangalayan missions, our quality educational institutions like our IITs, IIMs, IISc, our world class medical facilities, our wellness tourism centers, our millions of serene landscapes and hundreds of millions of touristic attractions. Each of our children and their friends in Kuwait should be able to see and know about the success story of India.

I request each of our professionals present here and each members of our associations to engage with children and others and highlight the billions of our success stories in our motherland. Imagine our doctors in their hundreds sharing stories of the excellent medical infrastructure in India and their experience in becoming a medical professional through several years of hard work and experience with the best curriculum in the world, imagine our engineers in their thousands speak about India's engineering marvels, imagine our scientists here speak about India's

contribution to modern medicine including on Made in India vaccines, imagine each one of our chartered accounts explaining the rigorous training they need to go through to become a qualified chartered accountant, imagine our hoteliers and restaurant owners speak about India's rich and varied cuisines; and our yoga instructors speaking about the wellness tourism in India.

Of course, in each of these efforts we need to make sure that we follow each and every rule of the country where we live and work. We should at no stage do anything that knowingly or unknowingly violate the rules and regulations of our host country.

Dear Friends,

Let's keep celebrating India in Kuwait, let's continue to contribute in building our relationship with Kuwait, let's contribute towards building an Aatmanirbhar Bharat. Once again, I welcome you all and thank you all for joining me today in celebrating our National Unity Day.

Thank you.