

Participation of the Student Delegation in the Republic Day Celebration

The visit of the student delegation coincided with the celebration of India's Republic Day, providing students from the University of Delaware with a unique and enriching opportunity to engage directly with the democratic ethos and historical foundations of the country. Observing this significant national occasion allowed the visiting students to gain a deeper appreciation of India's constitutional values, civic traditions, and the spirit of unity in diversity that defines the nation.

The day began with a solemn and dignified Flag Hoisting Ceremony, conducted in an atmosphere of respect and patriotic fervour. The ceremony served as an introduction to the importance of Republic Day, which commemorates the adoption of the Constitution of India and the establishment of the country as a sovereign democratic republic. Students were briefed on the historical background of the Constitution, its guiding principles, and its role in shaping modern India. The event also provided insight into the symbolic and ceremonial aspects associated with national celebrations, fostering a sense of respect for institutional traditions and democratic practices.

Participation in the ceremony enabled the delegation to witness firsthand the collective expression of national pride and civic responsibility. It also encouraged meaningful discussions on comparative constitutional systems, governance structures, and the role of citizens in sustaining democratic institutions. For many students, this experience served as an important moment of cultural immersion and intellectual engagement beyond the classroom.

Following the ceremony, the delegation visited Sabarmati Ashram, one of the most significant landmarks associated with India's freedom struggle. The Ashram, closely linked to Mahatma Gandhi, stands as a symbol of the values of simplicity, self-reliance, and non-violent resistance. During the visit, students were introduced to various aspects of Gandhian philosophy, including the principles of *ahimsa* (non-violence) and *satya* (truth), which played a crucial role in mobilising masses during the independence movement.

The guided exploration of the Ashram provided historical insights into Gandhi's life, his methods of protest, and his vision for a just and equitable society. Students engaged with archival materials, exhibits, and narratives that illustrated the Ashram's role as a centre for political mobilisation and social reform. This immersive experience allowed them to connect theoretical knowledge with lived history, deepening their understanding of anti-colonial movements and ethical leadership.

Moreover, the visit encouraged reflection on the relevance of Gandhian ideals in contemporary global contexts, including conflict resolution, social justice, and sustainable living. The interaction fostered critical thinking and cross-cultural dialogue, enabling students to draw parallels between historical struggles and present-day challenges.

Overall, the participation of the student delegation in the Republic Day celebrations, combined with their visit to Sabarmati Ashram, constituted a profoundly enriching

experience. It not only enhanced their academic understanding of India's political and historical landscape but also promoted intercultural awareness, reflective learning, and a deeper appreciation of the values that continue to shape democratic societies worldwide.



