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**RRM Inaugurates Armed Forces Veterans' rally**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Armed Forces Veterans' Day is being celebrated with military fervour and gaiety all around the country. The showpiece event, a Veterans' Day Rally, was held at Manekshaw Centre, Delhi Cantt here today. It was inaugurated by Raksha Rajya Mantri Dr Subhash Bhamre.

Addressing the veterans, Dr Bhamre said, "No words can describe your selfless devotion to duty and the sacrifices made by each one of you. I can say it with conviction that it is only due to our formidable Armed Forces, each and every citizen of 'India' today feels safe and has confidence to face the world with pride."

The RRM reflected on the measures taken by the Government towards ex-servicemen welfare and rehabilitation. He extolled the strong bonds between servicemen and Veterans and the continued contribution of Veterans towards nation building.

Complimenting the Armed Forces for organising such events Dr Bhamre said, "Today's warrior is tomorrow's Veteran and what an example being set up by Services in ensuring every possible step to ensure wellbeing and enhanced satisfaction level among its Veterans. I am definitely proud of this initiative of the Armed Forces, which is very much in line with the customs and traditions of our great Country."

The guests of honour at the rally were the three Service Chiefs and ex Service Chiefs. Around 2,000 Veterans attended the rally. It was a unique event since the Veterans were from all the three services. The bonhomie and camaraderie between the three services was reflected in the enthusiasm of the Veterans, many meeting friends from the other service after many years of retirement.

The day is celebrated as Armed Forces Veterans' Day in the country to commemorate the superannuation of first C in C of our Armed Forces, Field Marshal KM Cariappa, who retired from service on 14 January 1953. The day is being observed in more than 10 locations in the country.

The celebrations in Delhi was held under the aegis of Directorate of Indian Army Veterans. It commenced with a solemn wreath laying ceremony where floral wreaths were placed by Chief of Integrated Defence Staff to Chairman, COSC Lt Gen P S Rajeshwar representing the serving community, three star rank retired officers from the three services and Sub Maj rank JCOs from the three services which represented the Veterans community.

A number of stalls were set up by CGDA, banks, pension agencies, ECHS, KSB and Organisations involved in Veterans welfare of the three services, which was appreciated by the Veterans.

**Nampi/DK/Rajib**