

CELEBRATION OF GANDHI JAYANTI AT THE HISTORIC ST. PAUL'S CHURCH

With India celebrating 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, the Consulate General of India in Frankfurt has been organising several events and functions. On 11th October, 2019, the Consulate organised Gandhi Jayanti celebrations at the historic venue of St. Paul' Church where leading Gandhian experts from India arrived to deliver talks.

The venue of the event was particularly special. St. Paul's Church was first consecrated in 1833 as the main Evangelical Lutheran church in the city of Frankfurt am Main. The church is historically important as it was the meeting place for the first all-German Parliament. Here, the National Assembly created the first democratic constitution for Germany. Even after the dissolution of the Parliament, St. Paul's Church was the site of national memorial celebrations. In 1944, St. Paul's Church was completely destroyed. Its reconstruction began shortly after the end of the war. It was consecrated on 18 May 1948 on the occasion of the centennial celebration of the German National Assembly. Since then it has served exclusively as a place to remember the beginnings of German democracy.

In what was a proud connection of the Church with India, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was elected as the winner of the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade in 1961 and the ceremony for giving away this award was held at the St. Paul's church. In 1963, US President John F. Kennedy gave a major speech at the church during his visit to Germany. The 150th birthday of the German democratic experience was also celebrated in St. Paul's Church in 1998. In the year 2015, Queen Elizabeth II along with Prince Philip also visited the St. Paul's Church.

The Event organised by the Consulate included a presentation on the life of Mahatma Gandhi by Consul General Smt. Pratibha Parkar. Also speaking at the event was Gandhian expert Shri Atul Jain who travelled from India to attend the event. Shri Jain is a journalist, media consultant and a social worker and is presently the Director of Deen Dayal Reasearch Institute. The event was also graced by the activist couple coming from Maharashtra, Shri Abhay Bang and Dr. Rani Bang. The Bang couple has been actively working in the field of community health and are the recipients of the prestigious Padma Shri awarded to them in the year 2018.

The event turned out to be a huge success with hundreds of Germans and Indians participating. The audience included prominent leaders from different walks of life including CEOs of Indian and German companies, literary experts, politicians, members of the diplomatic community and friends of the Consulate from the India, Germany and other nations.