**25th National Youth Festival**

The National Youth Festival in India is an annual gathering of youth with various activities including competitive ones. Celebrated to commemorate the birth anniversary of youth icon Swami Vivekananda, it is organized by Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India in collaboration with one of the State Governments. Thus it is held in a different state each year during National Youth Week, 12 to 16 January every year.

Swami Vivekananda's birthday on January 12 is always celebrated as National Youth Day and the week commencing from that day is known as the National Youth Week. As part of National Youth Week celebrations, the Government of India holds the National Youth Festival every year. This is an event of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, Government of India and is celebrated annually in one of the States in a joint venture. The youth festival aims to propagate the concept of national integration, spirit of communal harmony, brotherhood, courage and adventure amongst the youth by exhibiting their cultural prowess in a common platform. This is done by organizing gatherings of youth across the country and encouraging them to take part in different activities.

Crucial components of the National Youth Festival are the competitive events. To compete at the national level, the young talents perform their level best to get themselves medals and awards. To conduct these competitions, eighteen in all disciplines, a team of officers was deployed who managed the competitions, helped in creating logistical arrangements for smooth conduct of competitions, collected and collated the results.

The activities held during the festival include competitive and non-competitive cultural events, martial arts, exhibitions, intellectual discourses, young artists’ camps, seminars and adventure programmers. The presentation of National Youth Awards also takes place.

The National Youth Festival began in 1995 as a major activity under the programme of National Integration Camp (NIC). In collaboration with one of the States and institutions like Nehru Yuva Kendra Sangathan (NYKS) and the National Service Scheme (NSS), the Government of India conducts this programme every year. Like the National Youth Festival, States are also encouraged to hold state level, district level and block level youth festivals in the same format as that of the National Youth Festival. The centre of the festival focuses on cultural aspects and a number of other programmes covering a wide variety of activities, which not only reflect the spirit of friendship but also peace and development. Besides all this, this festival provides a nationwide exposure to the youth for the expression and fulfillment of their cultural talents and aspirations.