



Celebrating 75 years of democracy

THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

India's glorious past is an inspiration for the present, and augurs hope for a better and brighter future.



In the course of India's history that dates back thousands of years and a civilization that is among the oldest in the world, the passage of a mere 75

years may seem quite insignificant. But the past 75 years have been singular in that it marks a period in its collective history when it carved an identity for itself as an independent, cohesive, democratic nation that proudly celebrates its unity in diversity. This new found standing, achieved and maintained over the 75 years since the country's independence in 1947 is certainly worthy of celebration. Indians can rightfully hold up the tricolor flag and wave it proudly in the name of a nation that remains united, democratic and Indian.

India celebrating its 75th Independence Day in 2021 has come a long way from the India of 1947,

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Embassy places highest priority on welfare and well-being of Indian community in Kuwait

H.E. Sibi George, Ambassador of India to Kuwait

On this very special and joyous occasion of the 75th Independence Day of India, it is my honour and privilege to extend warm greetings and best wishes to my fellow countrymen and women in Kuwait.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express my deep appreciation and profound gratitude to all well-wishers and friends of India in Kuwait, particularly to the leadership, the Government and the people of the State of Kuwait, for their steadfast commitment to the close and friendly relations between India and Kuwait

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Celebrating the Diversity of Indian foods

Every country takes pride in its handful of dishes that have gained popularity around the world. In India, we take pride in the buffet of Indian dishes that have found favor on tables around the world.

The vastness of our country with its cultural variety and ethnic diversity, along with differing topography and climatic conditions have led to the presence of dishes and cuisine that vary as one moves from north to south or east to west of the country. And, if this culinary variety were not enough, we also have innumerable celebratory occasions — religious, national or of a personal

nature — that call for the preparation of special dishes and sweets.

It is also a matter of pride for us that the diversity of foods and cuisines, as well as traditional cooking styles, have successfully withstood the onslaught of modern convenience foods and fast food cultures. People all over the country still spend hours laboriously preparing traditional dishes on celebratory occasions.

On this 75th Independence Day, let us celebrate the country's culinary diversity with a few mouth water recipes that you could and should try out.

Indian chicken curry with black pepper

This fragrant southern Indian curry is unusual in that it gets all its heat from black pepper rather than chilli. For maximum flavor from the spices, marinate the chicken for as long as you can, which speeds up making of the curry.

Ingredients

- boneless, skinless chicken thighs 900g, cut into bite-sized pieces
- onions 2 large, finely sliced
- garlic 4 cloves, crushed
- ginger 50g, finely grated
- coconut milk 400ml tin
- coriander a small bunch, roughly chopped
- Marinade
- black peppercorns 2-3 tbsp, depending on how hot you like it
- cumin seeds 2 tbsp
- coriander seeds 2 tbsp
- coconut oil
- fresh turmeric 50g, finely grated or 1 tbsp ground turmeric
- lemon 1, juiced

Preparation

- For the marinade, add the peppercorns, cumin and coriander seeds to a small frying pan over a medium heat. Toast for a minute until they begin to smell fragrant. Tip into a spice mill or mortar and roughly grind.
- Place the spices into a bowl with 1 tbsp of



coconut oil. Add the turmeric along with the juice of half a lemon (save the other half for later) and stir to a paste.

- Add the chicken and mix well with the spice paste. Cover and chill for a few hours, but preferably overnight.
- Heat a deep frying pan over a medium-low heat with 1 tbsp of coconut oil.
- Add the onion, garlic and ginger, and fry gently for 15-20 minutes until soft and lightly golden.
- Turn up the heat and add the chicken and marinade. Season and stir-fry for 10 minutes.
- Pour in the coconut milk, bring to the boil and simmer gently for 15 minutes or until the chicken is cooked.
- If you prefer a drier curry simply simmer for another 10-15 minutes until the sauce is a consistency you like.
- Turn off the heat and stir through the remaining lemon juice. Scatter over the coriander and serve with rice and naan bread.



WISHING YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY 75TH INDIA INDEPENDENCE DAY!



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Maharashtrian amti dal

A comforting food consumed on special occasions, as well as on numerous other instances, the sweet-and-sour-dal (lentil) is an ethnic fare common in the western India. However, the addition of jaggery and tamarind to the dal and serving it with a dollop of ghee or butter and some warm bread or rice, is a unique take on the dish that is popular in Maharashtra.

Ingredients

- toor dal or red lentils 250g, (see cook's notes)
- ground turmeric 1 tsp
- ghee or vegetable oil 2 tbsp
- black mustard seeds 1 heaped tsp
- fresh curry leaves 10

- asafoetida a pinch
- green bird's-eye chillies 2, slit lengthwise
- jaggery or light brown sugar 1 tbsp
- tamarind paste 2 tsp
- Maharashtrian goda masala 1 tsp, or garam masala ¼ tsp
- mild chilli powder ½ tsp
- coconut grated to make 1 tbsp
- coriander chopped, to serve
- chapatis or cooked basmati rice to serve

Preparation:

- Place the lentils in a heavy-based pan with 1 litre water and the turmeric. Bring to boil and simmer gently for 45-50 minutes or until the lentils start to get mushy. Stir well to ensure they do not stick to the bottom of the pan. Turn off the heat, mash the lentils slightly to thicken, then cover and set aside.
- Heat the ghee in a heavy-based frying pan over a medium heat then add the mustard seeds. As soon as they begin to splutter, add the curry leaves. Fry for a few seconds, then add the asafoetida and chillies. Tip in the cooked lentils, along with the jaggery, tamarind, goda masala and chilli powder, and season with salt. Mix well and fry for 1 minute. Add enough just-boiled water (about 100-200ml) to make the dahl soupy, then simmer for 5 minutes. Stir well, turn off the heat and garnish with the coconut and coriander. Serve warm with chapatis or rice.





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Rajasthan

Enlivened by the sounds of history

Rajasthan, or the 'Land of Kings', is the largest state in India, covering over 10 percent of the country's total geographical area. Lying to the northwestern side of India, the state juxtaposes the inhospitable vastness of the arid Thar Desert in the west with the verdant Keoladeo National Park of Bharatpur in the east teeming with birds and other wildlife.

The state is a veritable amalgamation of architectural grandeur, vibrant culture, diverse wildlife and warm hospitality. Replete with royal palaces, imposing forts, magnificent havelis, amazing heritage sites and so much more, the state needs to be explored rather than just traveled to.

Beyond the well trodden tourist paths of Jaipur, Udaipur and Jodhpur, there are others such as Jaisalmer with its magnificent havelis, palaces and temples. The state which traces its history back to the Vedic and

Indus Valley civilizations, is rightfully described as a living museum of history, throbbing with a modern heart.

Here are some of the touristic delights of the 'Desert Capital of India' that one needs to explore in detail to fully comprehend the depth of what emerges at first sight.

Jaipur: The capital of Rajasthan is where royalty gets painted with the shades of cultures, traditions, history, and elegance. Jaipur, also known as the 'Pink City of India', for its distinctive pink colored overlay, it is the largest city of Rajasthan. In the year 1876, the then ruler of Jaipur, Sawai Ram Singh, had the entire city painted in pink to welcome the Prince of Wales.



Jaipur was founded by the ruler of Mewar, Maharaja Jai Singh II in 1727. An epitome of royal grandeur and charm, the entire city is jotted with historic marvels that still reverberates the charm of a bygone era. Besides serving as a gateway to most other tourist places in Rajasthan, Jaipur also holds a noteworthy place in the 'Golden Triangle Tourist Circuit' of India.

The pride of the great Thar Desert, Jaipur is acclaimed as an epicentre of art and architecture; it is in fact, the first planned city in India. With the city layout planned by Vidyadhar Bhattacharya according to 'Vastu Shastra' and 'Shilpa Shastra', it was divided into nine blocks; individual blocks for official buildings and public access. Since its inception, the city has not lost its charm and appeal and still beckons travelers from all over the world.



Udaipur: A true treasure trove in the Rajasthan travel itinerary, the royal city of Udaipur is bestowed with the magical charm of numerous lakes. Known as the 'City of Lakes', the city's bucolic charm, mesmerising appeal, and heart-warming ambience has also earned it the moniker of 'Venice of the East'.

Adding more to the enchanting beauty and alluring charm of Udaipur, there are imposing imperial palaces, spectacular forts, and several other reminiscences of the past that makes Udaipur a dream. Explore this royal city to witness, discover, and enjoy the beauty, culture, and romantic allure of a bygone era.

Jodhpur: The second largest city in Rajasthan, Jodhpur is all about the grandeur of an



extravagant past and royal charms. Dotted with several stunning palaces and outstanding forts, this historic city, often referred to as 'Sun City of India', experiences a sunny and bright ambience throughout the year. Also, in contrast to Jaipur's pink hue, Jodhpur is bedecked in a vibrant blue color that is used in almost all the establishments across the city, earning the city the additional title of 'Blue City of India'.

Founded by Rao Jodha in around 1459, Jodhpur is located at the centre of India's Desert Capital and it takes pride in its historical landmarks and vivid history. Named after its founder, Jodhpur is divided into two parts, Old City and New City. Though these two parts have a stark difference, they completely comply with the royal essence and aura of Rajasthan's golden past.



Chittorgarh: A land of valour, sacrifice, glory, pride, and romance, Chittorgarh is a scenic city that boasts of its royal charm, heroic tales, passionate love stories, architectural brilliance, and picturesque beauty.

Guarded by towering cliffs from almost all the sides, Chittorgarh is a phoenix city that reverberates with numerous tales of a bygone era. A land of love and devotion where dignity is followed by death. Despite being attacked ferociously by several enemies over the years, the city never bowed down before them. Warriors of Chittorgarh rose every time, and fought back courageously to reconquer their land. On the other hand, it was in Chittorgarh, where passionate devotees like Meera Bai reached the pinnacle of her love towards Lord Krishna.



Bharatpur: The 'Eastern Gateway to Rajasthan' is a land of guts-and-glories. Home to some of the most historical sites, natural marvels, and valorous tales, it was once the most invincible region across the land and owing to its great line of defence, the city got the name 'Lohagarh'.

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Founded by Maharaja Suraj Mal in 1733, the city was formerly known as 'Mewat', and was later named as 'Bharatpur' after king 'Bharat', one of the brothers of Lord Rama. Being the most impregnable part of Rajasthan, Bharatpur has successfully endured its culture and heritage since time immemorial. The city has a history that takes the visitors back to 5th century BC and is known to be the origin of the 'Matsya Kingdom'.

In addition to the rich and diverse history, Bharatpur also boasts an exotic range of flora and fauna, and is home to the much acclaimed Keoladeo National Park, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Bikaner: An oasis in the bosom of the great Thar Desert, Bikaner, the fourth largest city in Rajasthan is a melting point of history, culture and royalty. Founded by Rao Bika; the eldest son of Maharaj Rao of Jodhpur, in 1486, this magnificent oasis has always played a significant role in Rajasthan's history. While during the ancient times, the city served as an important trade route between Central Asia and Gujarat Coast, it now boasts of being one of the most sought after places to visit in Rajasthan.

Once the capital of the princely state of Bikaner, the city came under the suzerainty of Mughal empires during the reign of its sixth

ruler Maharaja Rai Singhji. Historical landmarks like Chintamani Durg or the Junagarh Fort, Karan Mahal Palace, Zenana Quarter, and Chandra Mahal were built during this period.

Jaisalmer: And then, there is Jaisalmer; a city within a state that offers a microcosm of what the entire region parades. Perched atop a ridge of yellowish sandstone, the city acts as a sentinel to the vast Thar desert and to India's western frontier with Pakistan. Owing to the alluring golden color of the sandstones used in most of the buildings of this region, the city also goes by the name of 'Golden City' of India's Desert Capital.

The most prominent landmark in the city is the imposing Jaisalmer Fort, also called Sonar Quila (Golden Fort). Unlike most other forts in India, Jaisalmer Fort is not just a tourist attraction, it houses shops, hotels and ancient havelis (homes) where generations continue to live.

Jaisalmer traces its inception to the 12th century when history tells us of Rawal Jaisal, the eldest heir of the Rawal of Deoraj, who was passed over for the throne of Lodurva while a younger half-brother was crowned king. Rawal Jaisal went looking for a new location to set up his capital. In 1156 he constructed a mud fort atop a hill and named it Jaisalmer, or the Hill Fort of Jaisal, and declared it his capital.

It is in Jaisalmer that one is best able to appreciate the intricate mix of nature, architecture and culture of the state and its famed hospitality. Places to visit in and around the city include:

Jaisalmer Fort: The Jaisalmer Fort rises from the desert itself and seems to blend with the surrounding sand to become one with the golden hues of the desert. The setting sun



adds its own magic and shrouds the fort with an alluring mystique. Constructed in the classic style of the royals by local craftsmen, the fort is a world heritage site.



Jaisalmer Government Museum: Established by the Department of Archaeology and Museums, it is a prime attraction for tourists visiting Jaisalmer. The most striking display is

the trophy of Rajasthan's state bird Godawan (the great Indian bustard). Traditional household items, rock-cut crockery, jewellery and statues from the 7th and 9th century AD displayed here are remnants of the city's rich cultural heritage.

Nathmal Ji Ki Haveli: Two architect brothers built Nathmal Ji Ki Haveli in the 19th century. They worked on the haveli from two sides and the outcome is a beautiful blend of the symmetrical construction. Miniature style paintings and mighty tuskers carved out of yellow sandstone are used for decoration.

Salim Singh Ki Haveli: This haveli was built in the first half of the 18th century and a part of it is still occupied by descendants of the original residents. The high arched roof is supported by carved brackets designed in the shape of peacocks. Legend has it that there were two additional wooden storeys that made it match the Maharaja's palace in height, but he ordered for the upper level to be demolished.

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Sujani Embroidery

A bold and beautiful

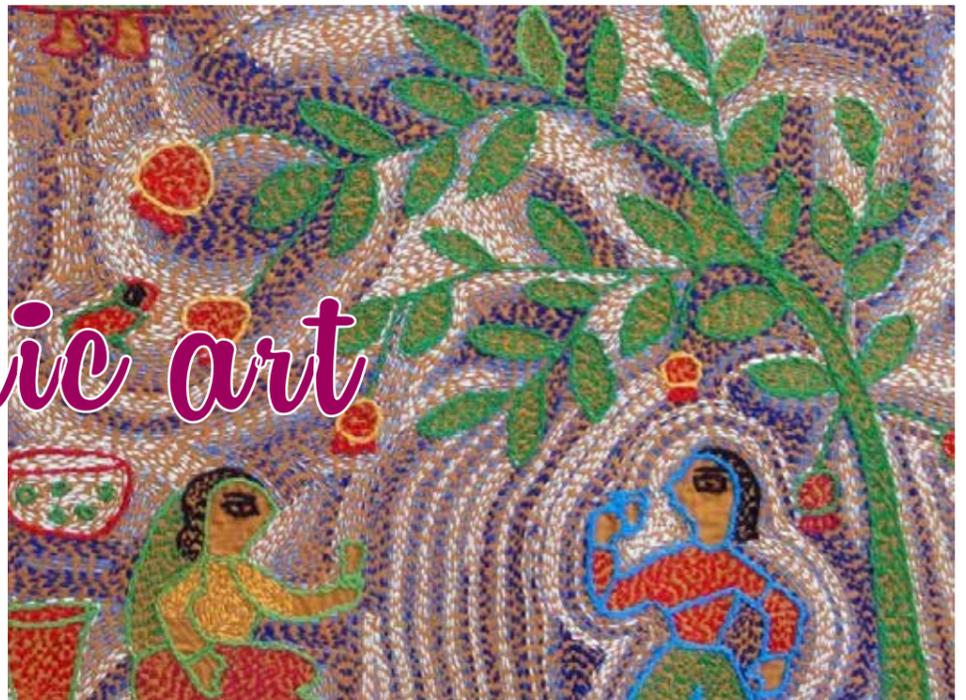
Bihari Fabric art



Though the art has expanded and is now practised throughout the country, especially in the state of Rajasthan, it is interesting to note that this handcraft started in the small, quaint town of Basara in Bihar in the eighteenth century. An interesting fact related to the same is that this village is a mere hundred kilometres from the town where the Mithila Paintings found their origins, entrenching Bihar's status as a state of glorious art forms.

The origin of this embroidery was like all great inventions, born out of necessity. Sarees as well as other pieces of clothing that were quite old were folded twice or even thrice in some cases and then joined together by some simple stitches. The cloth became a canvas for artistic expression in the form of designs and motifs. The clothes, after being revamped and patched

When one thinks of Bihar, some of the positive things that come to mind include the state's amazing biodiversity, the architectural majesty of its temples, the enchanting city of Patna, as well as the region's culture and rich history. However, a lesser known remarkable masterpiece of handcraft lies in the state's bold and beautiful Sujani embroidery.



together, were embroidered to make cosy and beautiful quilts. This was a popular method of quilting back then. The Sujani embroidery was woven by women manually in their own houses but the tragedy remains that most of these were either damaged or lost.

Such humble beginnings have now gained recognition due to the efforts of numerous civil society organizations that are hoping to bring awareness to this style of embroidery, which has to an extent, been shadowed due to the esteem of other more popular and well-known art forms such as Madhubani from Bihar. The patterns indigenous to this style of embroidery can be found on dupattas, sarees, and other articles of clothing.

The original primary resolution of the Sujani Embroidery is portrayed through its very name. The word Sujani is derived from 'Su' which means simplifying and 'Jani' which refers to birth. The quilts made, ornamented with gorgeous designs, were used to wrap a newborn baby. The reason behind this was that, due to the infant mortality rates of the time, it was considered to be unholy to dress a child in newly bought attire. These quilts were quite bold and vibrant since the motifs were made using colored threads, especially in a darker shade. Every color used had a purpose and depicted something, like red symbolized blood and yellow for the sun.

These motifs depict various pictures for men and women, dressed in traditional attire and scenes from joyous events, such as festivals and celebrations. Other common depictions include those of deities, animals, birds such as peacocks, plants, and flowers as well as the Sun, Moon, and other powerful forces such as characters from mythology. This embroidery used to embellish quilts can now be seen on various apparel of Indian ethnic wear and remains a favorite among designers for its unique charm. Apart from that, with the commercialization of the embroidery designs, it was then even added onto pillow covers, curtains, bread spreads, and many more.

A remarkable detail about a common depiction on these quilts is the expression of the pain and dread of the women who sew them. On two sides of the quilt, we get to see two different sides of the story, one being a man who gives the appearance of being drunk treating a woman as inferior just because he is the breadwinner of the family and on the other, we see the woman's aspirations and desires to be free of societal constraints and to be able to work and earn a living for herself and not being dependent on anyone for survival. The coverlet and this embroidery are her way of conveying her true self and the struggles of a woman in such a world.

The stunning results of the Sujani Embroidery can be achieved at home, with the prerequisites being certain old clothes used as the raw material as well as knowledge of stitches that are used in this type of embroidery.

Patches can be cut up from all these clothes and then put together by using a simple running stitch and therefore forming your base for this embroidery. To sew the variety of motifs, as aforementioned, a chain stitch, among others is mainly used. A chain stitch is done in the form of loops and is very helpful to make smooth curved lines, thereby allowing for countless alluring designs to be shaped.

The materials that form the base generally vary. However, on a marketable scale, it is made from cotton. A variety called Salita is used to get a higher quality but it is a bit on the expensive side. Some other prevalent materials include silk and casement cloth.



The Sujani Embroidery may just seem to be an elegant style of embroidery, that it is, but it is also so much more. It is empowering and enables women to convey their message and story to the world through art in the most beautiful way.

When words fail, it is such depictions that speak. Women in earlier times, as aforementioned, used to convey their wish to be self-sufficient and through this embroidery, were able to do that. They inspired themselves and countless others. Their motifs always have a deeper meaning and they reflect a part of the artist herself whether it be a scene of a woman earning for herself, being able to judge on her own, or the Sun and other mystical elements.

This is such a magnificently executed art that it should certainly be encouraged by the public across the country. Various organizations already use these motifs as a basis to tackle the issues of our society today and therefore, this article ends with a call for action. A call to raise our voices and motivate such amazing designs and the message they aim to convey.

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Embassy places highest priority on welfare and well-being of Indian community in Kuwait

H.E. Sibi George, Ambassador of India to Kuwait

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and also for their support to the Indian community in our fight against the devastating Covid-19 pandemic.

I would like to reiterate India's commitment and keenness to further strengthen and expand the long-standing dynamic partnership with the State of Kuwait. The mutually enriching and multi-faceted bilateral relations between our two friendly countries are rooted in history. These close ties have been nurtured by continuous civilizational linkages and vibrant people-to-people affinities. Presence of a large number of Indians in this friendly, peace-loving and vibrant nation of Kuwait is a testimony to the enduring spirit of cooperation and understanding that exists between the two countries and its peoples.

This year, we mark 75 years of our Independence. It is a significant milestone in our quest to build a new, resurgent and self-sufficient India. India of today is a nation that inspires other nations across the world, and is a leading country in the comity of nations when it comes to stability and prosperity coupled with sustainability in true sense. We, the people of our country, have forged this robust nation of ours with strong and vibrant democratic traditions through sheer grit, resilience and selfless efforts and sacrifices of millions of people over decades. This is the result of our collective human endeavor, of our devotion to duty, of our commitment to hard work, of our relentless dedication to not only the well-being of the people of our nation but also to the larger cause of humanity. For this continued success, we owe a great deal to our founding fathers for the most prized national inheritance — the Indian Constitution. Our Constitution, which is widely acclaimed as one of the finest in the world, is an expression of the principles and values we have committed ourselves to; an eternal fountain of wisdom and guidance; a fundamental source of the law of the land and the power of its people; and an encapsulation of the essence of our nationhood.

The past year and a half have been challenging for India and the rest of the world as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to threaten the very existence of human race. Millions of lives have already been lost and livelihoods of hundreds of millions have adversely been impacted. During this hour of crisis, India has once again risen up to the occasion. We not only managed to face the COVID-19 pandemic with great fortitude but while we did this, we stayed true to our age old ethos of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', where we treat the world as one big family. India was and continues to be the first responder to calls of help and assistance from other countries. We sent medicines and medical supplies to over 150 countries in the world. Our medical professionals travelled the world to augment and support healthcare infrastructures of other countries. In yet another display of our commitment to this idea of universal brotherhood, India supplied vaccines to more than 90 countries around the world, including 200,000 doses of Made-in-India 'COVISHIELD' vaccine to the friendly State of Kuwait, and rightfully justified our credentials as the 'Pharmacy of the World'.

Despite the global macroeconomic headwinds due to the ongoing pandemic, Indian economy continues to remain on firm footing. Hon'ble Prime Minister's clarion call for 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India), which envisages a merger of the local with the global, has played the role of catalyst in this economic revival. Innovation and adaptability to the situation have been the important pillars of our

comprehensive approach in dealing with the pandemic challenge. This has been particularly demonstrated in the way India ramped up its medicalequipmentmanufacturinginfrastructure during the pandemic period. While before the pandemic, there was not a single company in the country producing masks and PPE kits, within a few months around 1,100 such companies became operational. In just three months, India has become the second largest manufacturer of masks and PPE kits in the world. And during the entire process, there was strict adherence to the policy of non-compromise with quality.

To give a further fillip to growth and development, the Government continues to introduce various measures like production-linked incentives which envisages increase of scale and efficiency of Indian manufacturing. This is in line with the objective to Make in India for the world. Major structural reforms, including through introduction of simpler tax systems, creation of a capable human resource base, development of a strong financial system and building of hard and soft infrastructure, continue to be undertaken to enable us to harness the true, latent potential of Indian economy. Also, despite the disruption caused by the pandemic, India attracted the highest ever total FDI inflow of USD 81.72 billion in the financial year 2020-21. This is a testimony of the belief of the global investor community in our long-term growth story and the strength of our underlying strong economic fundamentals.

India is currently in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as a non-permanent member and has assumed the Presidency of the Council

“ The Gulf and Middle East region occupies a pivotal place in India's foreign policy framework. We are each other's extended neighborhood, and peace, security and stability of countries in this region is imperative for prosperity and economic development of India. GCC is one of our largest trading blocs, meeting a significant percentage of India's energy requirements and hosts over 8 million Indians. ”

for the current month of August. In a historic first, Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi chaired a UNSC debate titled 'Enhancing Maritime Security - A Case for International Cooperation'. Speaking at the event, Hon'ble Prime Minister stated "We want to make an inclusive framework on maritime security in our region based on the vision of SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region). This vision is for a safe, secure, and stable maritime domain». This in a nutshell summarizes our vision of creating an environment of peace and security to ensure a better world for the entire humanity, which has been the guiding spirit of India's foreign policy. India places an undeterred faith and belief in multilateral approach and has always taken the lead on issues of global concern such as international terrorism, climate change, energy security, food security, and the reform of multilateral institutions, including the UN Security Council.

The Gulf and Middle East region occupies a pivotal place in India's foreign policy framework. We are each other's extended neighborhood, and peace, security and stability of countries in this region is imperative for prosperity and economic development of India. GCC is one of our largest trading blocs, meeting a significant percentage of India's energy requirements and hosts over 8 million Indians.

I also take this opportunity to inform all our friends that India-Kuwait bilateral relations continue to intensify with an increasing number

of bilateral visits from both sides. His Excellency Sheikh Dr. Ahmed Nasser Al-Mohammad Al-Sabah, Hon'ble Minister of Foreign Affairs and Minister of State for Cabinet Affairs, State of Kuwait, visited India in March this year. During the visit, in a significant development marking an upward shift in our bilateral institutional engagement, our two countries upgraded the existing Joint Ministerial Commission to the level of Foreign Ministers. This was followed by the visit of His Excellency Dr. S Jaishankar, Hon'ble External Affairs Minister of India, to Kuwait in June 2021.

The visit was highly successful as it imparted further momentum to a relationship which is firmly on an upward trajectory. Highly successful and productive discussions that covered all the dimensions of our bilateral relations were held during the visit. A wide range of topics of mutual concern and also some issues that needed deeper understanding and greater alignment were discussed between the two sides. Considerable progress was made on cooperative frameworks in the areas of defence, etc. Generous appreciation for the Indian community living in Kuwait from the Kuwaiti leaders stood out as a consistent theme during the interactions. During the visit, a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Recruitment of Domestic Service Workers was signed which will streamline the entire ecosystem of the recruitment process and provide mutual benefits and protection to employers and employees.

When India faced the second wave of COVID-19 and the consequent shortage of medical oxygen, our traditional partner, Kuwait,

rose to the occasion and became a leading global supplier of medical oxygen helping us tide over the critical situation. I take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to the leadership, the Government and the people of the friendly State of Kuwait and also to the Indian Diaspora in Kuwait for all the assistance.

Our bilateral trade and investment ties continued to remain strong despite the adverse impact of the pandemic and its associated precautionary restrictions implemented by the concerned authorities. During the entire crisis period, India remained a steady and reliable partner for Kuwait maintaining its supply of exports of essential commodities including foodstuffs. To further strengthen our bilateral trade and investments linkages, the Embassy has been organizing various business promotion events under the themes of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', 'States Facilitation', and 'Invest in India' in hybrid/virtual formats. The overwhelming response from the business communities of the two countries was heartening to see.

The Embassy celebrated every national festival and days of national importance and also organized various other events, including International Day of Yoga, Open House sessions, COVID-19 awareness related seminars and roundtables, NEET Day Kuwait, etc. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere gratitude to all the esteemed guests who graced our events with their presence and to all the friends of India who collaborated with

the Embassy to make all these events highly successful and memorable.

As I had highlighted right at the beginning, it is the people-to-people ties that forms the bedrock of this strong and enduring relationship. Indians form the largest expatriate community in Kuwait and are present in almost all segments of Kuwaiti economy. In all my interactions with the Kuwaiti leadership at various levels, I have been reassured that the Indian Community in Kuwait enjoys the trust and confidence of the friendly people of Kuwait because of the community's law-abiding nature, its peaceful character, work ethic and cultural compatibility.

We at the Embassy place highest priority to the welfare and well-being of the Indian Community in Kuwait. I thank the Indian Community Support Group (ICSG) and the many Indian professional bodies, cultural groups and associations and the many volunteers and media representatives for joining hands with the Embassy in its efforts to support the Indian diaspora in facing the many challenges posed by the devastating COVID-19 pandemic. I thank our brave frontline healthcare professionals, our doctors, our nurses and our scientists who have been working selflessly in trying to protect our lives and that of our loved ones. I salute our children who have managed a difficult school year with extraordinary resilience and understanding.

The Embassy is your 'Home Away from Home'. During the year, we have continuously worked to further improve the quality of our services to the community and will continue to do so in the future. We have introduced 12 new, dedicated 24*7 Helpline WhatsApp numbers to address your issues; we continue to take your feedback and have widened the network of feedback form availability to include your nearest supermarket; all suggestions received through this mechanism are reviewed for applicable implementation; we have introduced an AYUSH information cell; and have also created a new 24*7 helpdesk at the premises for various ongoing registration drives.

Our various outreach platforms, viz., Indian Business Network (IBN), Indian Professionals Network (IPN), Indian Cultural Network (ICN), Indian Sports Network (ISN) and Indian Readers' Network (IRN) continue to function smoothly as we work together towards building Brand India in Kuwait and further strengthening India-Kuwait relations across the entire spectrum. We look forward to launching an Indian Women's Network to provide a platform to celebrate the contributions of our women in Kuwait.

This year, 2021, marks the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between India and Kuwait. The Embassy aims to celebrate this momentous milestone in a befitting manner with year-long commemorative events. We have already organized a number of events under this theme and I look forward to working with each of our diaspora members in organizing more events in the days, weeks and months ahead.

Once again, on this joyous and proud occasion of the 75th Independence Day of India, I wish every Indian in Kuwait good health and happiness. I conclude by conveying my best wishes for the continued good health and well-being of His Highness Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Amir of the State of Kuwait; His Highness Sheikh Misha'al Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait; His Highness Sheikh Sabah Khaled Al Hamad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait; and to the Government and the friendly people of the State of Kuwait.

◆◆ INDIA ◆◆

INDEPENDENCE DAY



HAPPY
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15th AUGUST



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15 - 21 August, 2021 | The Times Kuwait | www.timeskuwait.com

India: the world's spice bowl



Exquisite aromas, myriad texture, tantalizing taste and storied medicinal value, make Indian spices the most sought-after commodity by discerning chefs and cooks worldwide. India is the world's largest producer, consumer and exporter of spices. Around 75 of the 109 spices listed by the International Standards Organization (ISO) are produced in India and the country accounts for over half of the global trade in spices.

The use of spices in cooking is a culinary tradition in India that stretches back thousands of years, and which points to the rich heritage and culinary diversity that exists across the country. Each region of India has its own preferences in what spices are used in local cuisines; the quantity of spices used; and the form and order in which they are incorporated into dishes. Nevertheless, the one thread that links households across the country is the presence of spice jars, or a 'masala dabba' (spice box) in the kitchen.

The contents of a housewife's masala dabba, with its various complementary spices placed in separate compartments, and the number of chutkis (pinch) in which they are doled



over dishes are often a closely guarded culinary secret passed on through generations. It is these chutkis of spices that turn a dish from just palatable to simply delectably appetizing and flavorful.

People from outside the country are extremely curious about the 'secret' ingredients used in Indian dishes that make them so uniquely flavorful. But what they often tend to overlook is that often it is the lesser-known indigenous spices that make Indian food so irresistible.

Apart from the wonderful aroma and flavor, Indian spices also have medicinal and immunity boosting properties. For

generations, Indians have traditionally used commonly-available kitchen ingredients to prepare healthy concoctions like kadha (a healing Ayurvedic drink made with herbs and spices) and haldi doodh (turmeric milk) to cure common cold. Making regular use of spices and herbs has also been proven to be a healthy and economic way to enhance health and your cooking. Spices allow you to reduce salt, sugar and fat content and still have tasty food.



The same antioxidants that convinced doctors that fruit and vegetables help prevent heart disease and certain cancers are now known to be present in spices, and in larger quantities than was previously thought. New research shows that just adding herbs and spices to an otherwise balanced diet can provide additional benefits. Data provided by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) shows that a half teaspoon of cumin equals the standard portion of red grapes or kiwi fruit for antioxidant potential.

A teaspoon of dried ginger or paprika can match a portion of tomatoes or green pepper. In addition, one teaspoon of ground cinnamon or cloves packs in as much antioxidant power as a portion of blueberries, raspberries or cranberries.



Analysis of some curry powder blends of spices by Australian and American researchers also found that one teaspoonful is as powerful an antioxidant fix as portions of broccoli, spinach, red peppers, carrots and other high-scoring antioxidant vegetables often dubbed 'superfoods'.

Popular spices such as jeera (cumin), saunf (fennel), sarson (mustard) and methi (fenugreek) feature in masala dabbas across the country, and much has been said and written about their exceptional culinary properties. Here we explore some of India's lesser-known indigenous spices from different regions of the country that are popular for its culinary aspects as well as its myriad health benefits.

Raja mircha: Let us begin with the ultra-spicy king of peppers or raja mircha, quite popular in the northeastern parts of India. Also known as ghost pepper, Naga chilli and bhut (or bhoot) jolokia, it has the distinction of being recognized by the Guinness Book of Records as the hottest chilli in the world. It is best used when freshly plucked as it tends to lose its intensity with time. Another popular way of savouring this spice is by pickling it with oil, salt and vinegar. And with fusion foods and drinks growing in fashion, some tea-makers in Assam have begun experimenting by making bhut jolokia tea. When consumed in limited quantities, it is said to help in improving blood circulation and digestion, lowering blood pressure and boosting metabolism.

Kalpasi: Also known as daagar ka phool, patthar ka phool or black stone flower, kalpasi is the Tamil word for lichen. This special yet rare spice, which aids digestion, reduces inflammation and acts as a pain reliever, is primarily used in Maharashtrian and Chettinad cuisine (of Tamil Nadu). The upper surface of this spice is dark green or black in colour. It has a strong earthy aroma and a dry texture, and is incorporated in the preparation of such popular

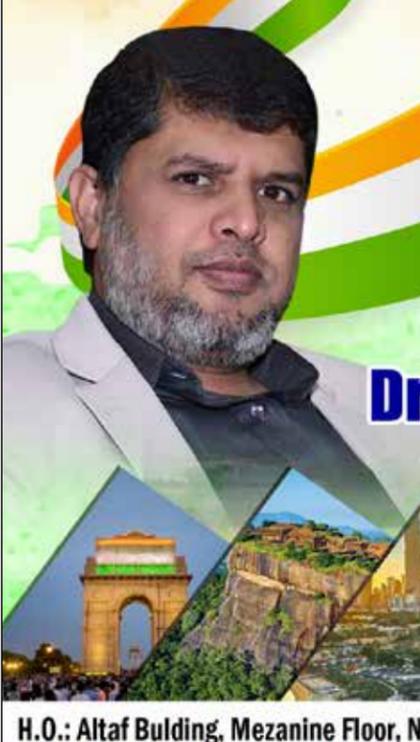


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indigenous spice mixes as Maharashtra's kala masala and goda masala, and Hyderabad's potli masala.

Lakadong and Salem Turmeric: Turmeric or haldi is probably the most common Indian spice. It enjoys a pride of place in every Indian household and deserves more appreciation than what is often afforded to it. It is rich in curcumin, which has antioxidant, anti-inflammatory and immunity-boosting properties, and also imparts a beautiful yellow hue to every dish that it is added to. The two varieties of turmeric that are said to be the best in India are Lakadong from Meghalaya and Salem from Tamil Nadu. This humble superfood has travelled from traditional Indian kitchens to global food hotspots and has found a place in boutique cafes as turmeric latte and in several international

Latest feature on Saiyarti app offers complete protection of your vehicle

Have you had to race against time to head to work, only to realize your car battery has given way? Or, had a flat tire mid journey? While you might not be able to control the highs and lows of life, you can control how you deal with them.

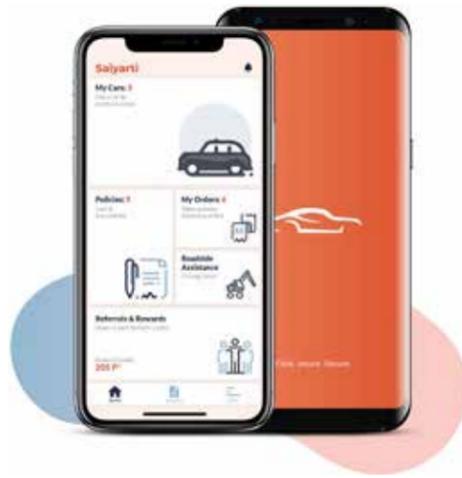
Saiyarti Assist, a new feature on Saiyarti app, leads the way in more ways than one.

Saiyarti app, from the Insure and Secure Group, is Kuwait's first automated platform that allows patrons to purchase Third-Party Motor Policy online, in just three simple steps. As pioneers in the Kuwait auto-insurance space, Insure and Secure Group constantly strives to improve customer solutions in a holistic manner.

With customer experience at their core, the Saiyarti Team has launched a new feature on their app - Saiyarti Assist.

Satish Sharma, Chairman, Insure & Secure Group, says: "Saiyarti is proud to be a trailblazer in changing the way people of Kuwait insure their vehicles. Our 11,000 app installs are testimony to the idea of customers being open to a digital way of buying and renewing their policies. As a way of thanking them for their constant support and unwavering belief in us, we're proud to offer free roadside assistance under the new Saiyarti Assist feature, exclusively to all our Saiyarti clients."

The Assist feature enables registered Saiyarti members free and exclusive roadside assistance. Yes, that is correct, the assistance is totally free!



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This means that now, you can be assured that your vehicle is safe and insured against external motor damage and has access to free and exclusive roadside assistance, no matter what the motor emergency is. So, in times of a flat tire, a car breakdown, an accident, a dead battery, or even an empty fuel tank etc., Saiyarti Assist services is the trusted aid in your vehicle's repair.

HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY OF INDIA 15TH OF AUGUST

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conditions and malnutrition were rampant across the land.

Today, though poverty continues to be a challenge, latest available figures for 2019 show that less than 7 percent of the population of 1.3 billion people live below the national poverty limit, and life expectancy stands at around 70 years. Data from the last census in 2011 also reveals that literacy rate in the country was over 74 percent, with around 82 percent of males and 66 percent of females able

to read and write. Over the span of the past 75 years of independence, India has achieved stupendous all-round socio-economic progress.

Independent India also has many other extraordinary aspects to its credit. To begin with it has the world's second largest population, with its over 1.3 billion people accounting for nearly 17 percent of the global population. It is also the most multi-religious, multicultural, multi-racial, and multilingual community among the comity of nations.

The kaleidoscopic variety and rich cultural heritage of India that evolved over thousands of years of ancient history remained intact despite being ripped apart by 200 years of imperialistic presence, and nearly a 100 years of colonial rule under the British Raj. An impoverished, divided and widely illiterate country emerged from the trauma of the independence struggle to proclaim on 15 August 1947 its new status as an independent nation committed to pursuing a democratic path in its way to the future.

In an op-ed that appeared in The Washington Post in 2019, historian Ramachandra Guha wrote: 'Had the country been a start-up in 1947, not even the most venturesome of venture capitalists would have invested in it.' He was pointing to the consensus among political experts in 1947 that India would not survive as a unified democratic country post its independence from Britain. To underline this he quoted the last British commander-in-chief of the Indian Army, Gen. Claude Auchinleck, who wrote: "... The Punjabi is as different from a Madrassi as a Scot is from an Italian. The British tried to consolidate it [India] but achieved nothing permanent. No one can make a nation out of a continent of many nations."

Such despairing forecasts were widespread in the early years of independence, both in India among the so-called elite intelligentsia, as well as by Western 'India- experts' abroad. The consensus was that India could not survive as a single nation, and it could never become a democracy either. But it did.

Defying its detractors and against all odds, the country not only initiated a democratic form of governance, but also attained unity among its fractured states and princely kingdoms, and brought together people from all walks of life and both genders, who professed different religions, languages, and cultures, under one tricolor flag.

Over the past 75 years the country has stayed true to its early democratic credentials and remained united in the face of numerous challenges. Nation-wide general elections held periodically are the greatest manifestation and exercise of free-will in the world. Even more importantly, the 29 States of the Union, some of them with populations larger than many countries in the world, regularly hold provincial elections, highlighting

how grass-roots democracy has taken hold in the country.

Memories of the shared suffering during the British raj, and the camaraderie forged in the crucible of the Independence movement, as well as engagement in the world's first non-violent revolution, resulted in a national consensus that crystallized in the form of the country's constitution, which forms the bedrock upon which democracy is cemented in India.

Celebrating

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

when the tricolor was first unfurled to herald the birth of an independent nation. The country that emerged following independence was a nation impoverished by nearly nine decades

of subjugation under the British Raj. Over 60 percent of the population of 362 million people then lived below the poverty line, life expectancy was just 32 years, literacy was a dismal 17 percent, and unhealthy living



Heartiest Greetings and Best Wishes to
The Government and People of India

On their



of Independence

We are proud to serve the community and country



Indian Community Support Group (ICSG)

Mr Rajpal Tyagi | Mr Dhiraj Oberoi | Mr Kuldeep Lamba
Mr Ashok Kalra | Mr S K Wadhwan | Mr Jatinder Suri
Dr Amir Ahmed | Dr Surendra Nayak | Mr Ajai Goel
Mr T Remesh | Mr Choji Lamba | Mr Reaven D'Souza

- The Indian Constitution offers all citizens, individually and collectively, basic freedoms that are guaranteed in the form of six broad categories of Fundamental Rights, which are justiciable. They include:
- Right to equality, including equality before law, prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth, and equality of opportunity in matters of employment.
- Right to freedom of speech and expression, assembly, association or union, movement, residence, and right to practice any profession or occupation (some of these rights are subject to security of the State, friendly relations with foreign countries, public order, decency or morality).
- Right against exploitation, prohibiting all forms of forced labour, child labour and traffic in human beings.
- Right to freedom of conscience and free profession, practice, and propagation of religion
- Right of any section of citizens to conserve their culture, language or script, and right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice; and
- Right to constitutional remedies for enforcement of Fundamental Rights.

But along with these rights, the scripters of the constitution also adopted fundamental responsibilities that citizens need to adhere to. These enjoin upon a citizen among other things, to abide by the Constitution, to cherish and follow noble ideals, which inspired India's struggle for freedom, to defend the country and render national service when called upon to do so, and to promote harmony and spirit of common brotherhood transcending religious, linguistic and regional or sectional diversities.

It is noteworthy that the Preamble of the Indian Constitution seeks to ensure not just political justice but also social and economic justice. The constitution also underlines that equality is not just about equal political rights but also of status and opportunity. Despite the lofty aspirations of the Constitution, we the people have on several occasions been found wanting in the execution of our responsibilities.

75 years of democracy

Democracy needs to be lived by and proactively pursued by every citizen so as to generate an ethical, sustainable and economically- and socially-viable environment for it to thrive. We need to create a climate of social and political equality in which citizens resolve issues through

discussions and dialogue, and make choices through the use of procedures that ensure that the final decision, while accurately reflecting the predominant desires and intentions of citizens, is also fair and equitable to all citizens.

Democracy also enshrines that

the government in power must operate in a manner where leaders serve the public trust and public interest, work within the framework of constitutionally-endowed rights and responsibilities, and uphold a commitment to parliamentary democracy, excellence and efficiency in service delivery, as well as to serve all Indians with honesty and openness.

Democracy is not an easy ride, and no one promised it would be one, especially in a country as diverse

as India where inequality based on gender, caste and community have prevailed for centuries. Viewed against this background of stark inequality, the success of Indian democracy over the past 75 years is indeed a remarkable feat.

The fact that India has enjoyed 75 years of democracy, with a few hiccups here and there, but without experiencing any of the coups, civil wars, dictatorships or national disintegration that have marred the post independence history of many of

our neighbors, is certainly something to be proud of. Today, India remains in a handful of outliers in the global community of nearly 200 nations that has managed to enjoy a stable democracy throughout its years of independence.

Is this triumph of democracy over 75 years something to shout from the rafters? It certainly is; so let us proudly wave the tricolor on this Independence Day and chant, vive le democracy, long-live a united, democratic India.

A timeline of India since independence in 1947

- 15 August, 1947:** India becomes an independent democratic nation
- 1947:** India fights first war with Pakistan after tribesmen supported by the Pakistani army invade Jammu and Kashmir.
- 1951:** India introduces its first five-year plan, which defines the Nehruvian model of centralized economic planning and development, based largely on the Soviet-style five-year plan, creating a typically Indian model of mixed economy and big government.
- 1951:** India holds its first national census as an independent country
- 1952:** India organizes its first general elections.
- 1962:** China's People's Liberation Army invades India in Ladakh, and across the McMahon Line in the then North-East Frontier Agency (now Arunachal Pradesh), usurping significant territory and inflicting heavy damage on Indian forces.
- 1965:** India engages in a second war with Pakistan over Kashmir.
- 1967:** India's Green-Revolution produces the first crop of high-yielding wheat, marking the first-step towards attaining self-sufficiency in foods.
- 1969:** Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) established heralding India's entry into space.
- 1969:** Government nationalized 14 major Indian scheduled commercial banks with the aim of serving the needs of the country's growth and development.
- 1971:** India fights third war with Pakistan; East Pakistan breaks away from Pakistan and Bangladesh is born as an independent nation.
- 1974:** India conducts a peaceful nuclear test at Pokhran, resulting in international outcry and imposition of sanctions.
- 1975:** The Congress government at the center imposes Emergency.
- 1977:** Emergency ends, first non-Congress government elected at the centre.
- 1991:** Economic liberalization opens the economy to foreign and private investment, scrapping decades of state domination and moving towards a mixed market economy of capitalism and socialism.
- 1999:** Indian army evicts Pakistani army regulars and militants from the heights of Kargil inside the Line of Control in Kashmir.
- 2001:** Indian Parliament stormed by five terrorists of Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed.
- 2008:** Mumbai witnesses coordinated shooting and bombing attacks across various locations in the city, by ten members of Lashkar-e-Taiba
- 2011:** World's longest running democratic rule by a Leftist government comes to an end in Bengal, with the All India Trinamool Congress led by Mamata Banerjee defeating communists
- 2016:** Government announces demonetisation of Rs500 and Rs1000 notes.
- 2017:** The goods and services tax is introduced from 1 July.
- 2018:** Government warns that 21 cities could run out of groundwater by 2020
- 2019:** Government revokes Article 370 and Article 35A from Constitution of India that gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir. Government also bifurcates Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh into separate Union Territories.
- 2020:** January 30: First case of COVID-19 infection reported in the country, in a 20-year-old medical student in Kerala who just returned from Wuhan in China. March 12: India reports first fatality due to COVID-19, after a 76-year-old man from Karnataka, succumbs to the infection.
- 2021:** January 16: India launches one of the world's biggest coronavirus vaccination programs.
- Aug 7:** Neeraj Chopra ends India's drought of individual Olympic Gold medal winning the Javelin Throw event at the Tokyo Olympic

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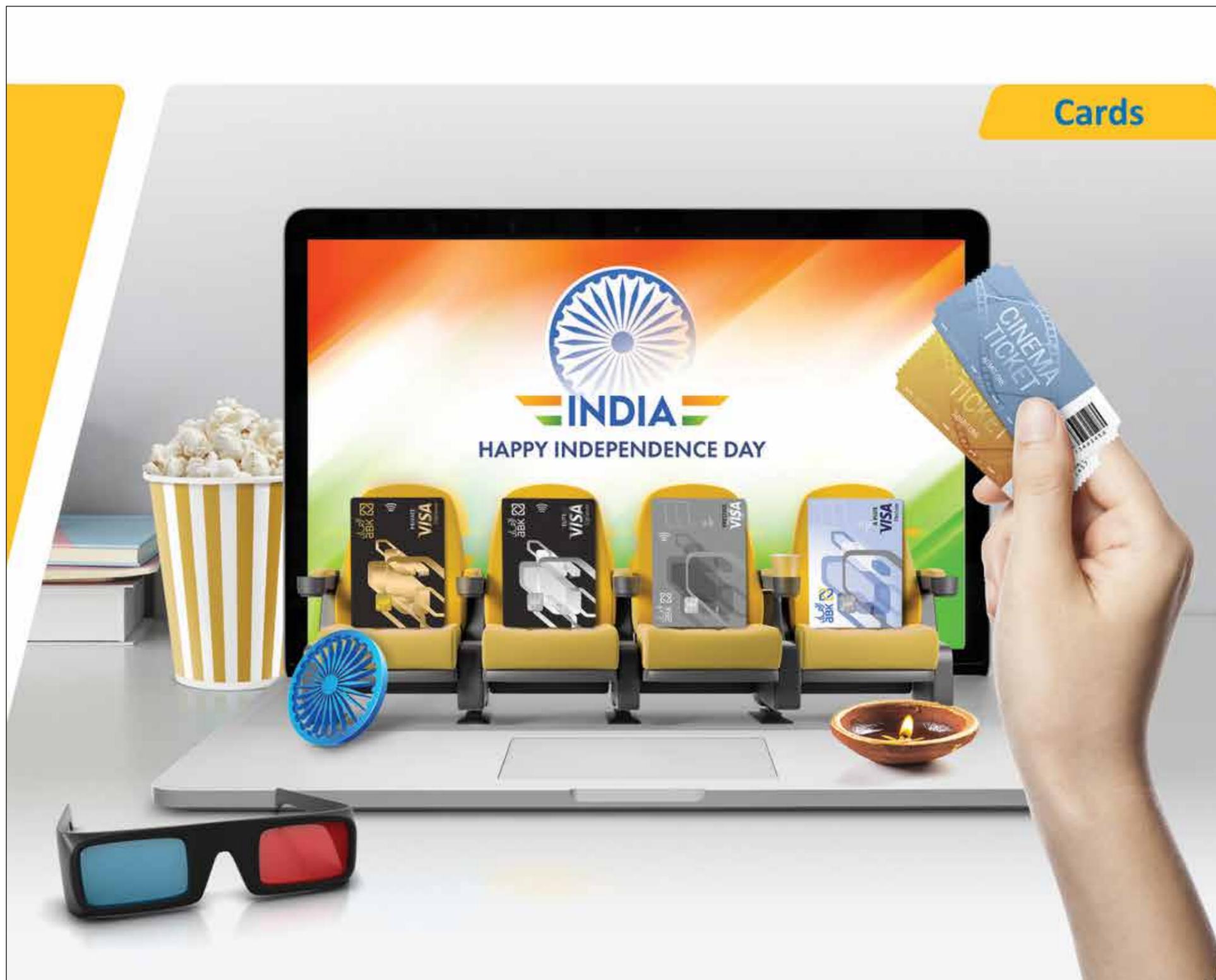
Heartiest Greetings to the Government and citizens of India on the occasion of the Independence Day

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