

India: A Sovereign, Socialist, Secular, Democratic Republic



On 26 January each year, India celebrates its Republic Day. The day marks the adoption of India's constitution and its transition from a dominion in the British Commonwealth of Nations to a sovereign republic with the coming into effect of the Indian Constitution on 26 January, 1950.

The Constitution, adopted by the Indian Constituent Assembly on 26 November 1949, was initiated two weeks after the country's independence on 15 August, 1947 by the Constituent Assembly. A resolution was moved in the Assembly for the appointment of the Drafting Committee, which was appointed to draft a permanent constitution for India, with Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as chairman. With the coming

into effect of the Constitution on 26 January 1950 the Union of India officially became the modern Republic of India.

The Indian Constitution repealed both the Indian Independence Act of 1947 and the Government of India Act of 1935, and became the country's fundamental governing document. The date of 26 January was chosen to commemorate the Purna Swaraj declaration of independence on this date in 1930.

Facts on the Indian Constitution

Drafting of the Constitution: The drafting committee had handwritten and beautifully calligraphed the constitution - both in English and in Hindi.

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Message by Ambassador of India on 75th Republic day of India

On this momentous occasion of the 75th Republic Day of India, I extend my warm greetings to all Indian nationals and persons of Indian origin in the friendly State of Kuwait.

I also take this opportunity to express my profound gratitude to all well-wishers and friends of India in Kuwait, particularly the leadership, the Government and the people of the State of Kuwait, for their steadfast commitment to close and friendly relations between India and Kuwait. I would like to reiterate India's commitment to further strengthen and expand the long-standing and time-tested partnership with the State of Kuwait.

This year marks the 75th year of coming into force of India's Constitution. The Indian Constitution is the longest written constitution in the world and is a living



H.E. Adarsh Swaika
Ambassador of India

document that has evolved over time to incorporate necessary changes. The Constitution declares India as a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic republic and assures its citizens justice, equality and liberty of thought and action. This constitutional guarantee is an article of faith for all Indian citizens in India and abroad.

Today, as we celebrate our Republic Day, we feel proud of India's many achievements. Equitable development has been the corner-stone of socio-economic policies of India. Democracy, pluralism and unity in diversity are the traditional ethos of Indian society. India believes in its ancient philosophy of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (the world is one family). This belief guides our foreign policy as well.

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Voices and Concerns of the Global South



Asoke Mukerji
*[Ambassador (Retd.)
 Former Permanent Representative
 of India to the United Nations in
 New York.]*

The voices and concerns of developing countries in the United Nations, collectively referred to as the 'Global South', prioritize peace, security, and development. These objectives require an integrated framework for international cooperation, with the Global South participating on an equal basis in its decision-making.

The collective identity of the Global South began to emerge at the UN General Assembly (UNGA) in December 1963, when developing countries initiated two significant amendments to the UN Charter of June 1945 for greater representation in the organs of the UN. These amendments expanded the number of elected members of the UN Security Council (UNSC) from 6 to 10, and the number of elected members of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) from 18 to 27. In 1971, the Charter was amended again to increase the ECOSOC membership to 54, representing all geographical regions of the world.

In June 1964, the Global South created its platform in the UN, called the group of 77 developing countries (G-77). The G-77 sought structural reforms in the UN to support its priorities for socio-economic development. The UNGA responded by establishing the UN



From left, Brazil's President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, China's President Xi Jinping, South Africa's President Cyril Ramaphosa, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov pose for a BRICS group photo Aug. 23 at the 2023 BRICS Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa. Modi says his country is "becoming the voice of the Global South."

Development Programme (UNDP) in 1965. Today, the UNDP is active in 170 countries, most of which are in the Global South. It is the 'face of the UN' on the ground, supporting a range of national socio-economic activities carried out in coordination with specialized agencies of the UN, impacting on all aspects of human endeavour.

In October 1967, the Charter of Algiers was adopted by the first ministerial meeting of the G-77. It advocated the creation of a New

International Economic Order to accelerate the development of the Global South. In response, several developed countries expressed concern at the impact of rapid development on the environment. At the First UN Conference on the Human Environment in June 1972, Global South countries like India rejected these attempts to restrict development because of environmental protection, saying that "poverty is the biggest polluter".

The UNGA recognized the 'right to development' as an 'inalienable human right' in 1986 through a voted resolution, opposed by some developed countries. In 1987, the UN's Brundtland Commission tabled its report on 'Sustainable Development', converging the Global South's demand for accelerated socio-economic development with the globally accepted goal of protecting the environment. Almost three decades later, in September 2015, the UNGA unanimously adopted Agenda 2030 on Sustainable Development, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Agenda 2030 represents the consolidation of the Global South's priorities. Two important 'means of implementation' commitments to achieve the SDGs are an integral part of Agenda 2030. These are for the flow of financial resources from multilateral financial institutions, and transfers of appropriate technologies, to the Global South.

The concerns of the Global South today are reflected in the assessment by world leaders meeting at the UN's SDG Summit in September 2023 that the achievement of the SDGs is in peril due to numerous crises facing the world. At the top of the list of crises is the impact of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and a sharp escalation in violent conflicts, both of which have impacted adversely on huge numbers of people, particularly in the Global South.

When Agenda 2030 was adopted in 2015, over 60 million people worldwide were affected by violent conflicts on the UNSC's agenda. That figure ballooned to 314 million people in 2022, mainly in the Global South. In October 2022, the World Bank reported that the COVID-19 pandemic had pushed an additional 90 million people, mainly in Global South countries, into the ranks of the 670 million people worldwide living below the poverty line of \$2.15 a day.

Ongoing conflicts across Africa, Asia, and Europe, of which images of the wars in Ukraine and Gaza are visible on international media, have jeopardized Agenda 2030.

These conflicts are attributable to an increasingly ineffective UNSC. Its five permanent members (P5) seek to maintain their dominant status given by their veto power,

despite the fact that the P5 were party to the UNGA's unanimous mandate of September 2005 for early reforms of the UNSC including on the question of the veto.

An ineffective UNSC has created space for the emergence of aggressive protectionism and militarism in developed countries, as unilateralism seeks to replace multilateralism. Despite strong opposition from entrenched protectionist interests in developed countries, over 100 Global South countries supported a Vaccine Waiver Initiative at the World Trade Organization in June 2022 to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic. In December 2023, a total of 131 Global South countries voted to adopt a UNGA resolution condemning "the continued unilateral application and enforcement by certain Powers of unilateral coercive measures", and rejected those measures, "with all their extraterritorial effects".

India has coordinated the Global South's response to these ongoing challenges by convening two virtual Voice of the Global South Summits in January and November 2023 during its Presidency of the G-20. 125 countries, including 47 from Africa, 31 from Asia, 29 from Latin America, 11 from Oceania, and 7 from Europe participated to express their concerns and seek solutions through reforming multilateral structures. At the New Delhi G-20 Summit on 9 September 2023, India announced the inclusion of the 55-nation African Union in the G-20 as its 21st member, dramatically expanding the composition and focus of the grouping in favour of the Global South.

“The concerns of the Global South today are reflected in the assessment by world leaders meeting at the UN's SDG Summit in September 2023 that the achievement of the SDGs is in peril due to numerous crises facing the world. At the top of the list of crises is the impact of the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic and a sharp escalation in violent conflicts, both of which have impacted adversely on huge numbers of people, particularly in the Global South.”

The leaders of the Global South have sought to reform multilateral institutions to respond effectively to the challenges facing the world today. Their current focus is on the UN Summit of the Future in September 2024 in New York. The Global South's objective will be for this Summit to mandate the convening of a UN General Conference in 2025. The outcomes of such a Conference, based on dialogue and diplomacy, can revitalize the United Nations, restoring the integrity of an integrated international framework for achieving the priorities of the Global South.


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An era of green initiatives

India ascends in Global Climate Performance Index

India's significant rise to the 7th position in the Global Climate Performance Index reflects the country's dedicated and effective actions in tackling climate change. The drastic reduction in carbon emissions has positioned India as a global leader in environmental governance.

According to a report released during the global climate conference (COP-28) in Dubai, India not only improved one rank from a year before, it also maintained its top 10 position for the fifth year in a row.

Under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, a series of impactful initiatives have been launched, steering the country towards a greener and more sustainable future.

Renewable Energy Expansion: Central to this ascent has been India's aggressive investment in renewable energy sources. The government has significantly expanded solar and wind power capacities, reducing dependency on fossil fuels and cutting down greenhouse gas emissions. This shift towards renewable energy is a cornerstone in India's climate strategy, reflecting a commitment to sustainable energy generation. According to information provided by the government, a total of 72.02 GW Solar power capacity projects have been installed in the country, so far.



National Electric Mobility Mission Plan: Embracing electric mobility, India has taken bold steps under the National Electric Mobility Mission Plan (NEMP) 2020. It aims to achieve national fuel security by promoting hybrid and electric vehicles in the country.

There is an ambitious target to achieve 6-7 million sales of hybrid and electric vehicles

every year and the government aims to provide fiscal and monetary incentives to kick start this nascent technology.

International Solar Alliance Leadership: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been pivotal in driving the International Solar Alliance (ISA), a global coalition aiming to harness solar energy effectively. By promoting solar technology in tropical countries, ISA is addressing both energy poverty and environmental concerns, marking a large milestone in global climate change mitigation.

The ISA, co-founded by India and France in 2015, aims to harness solar energy to reduce

dependence on fossil fuels. The alliance, primarily involving countries located between the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, has grown steadily over the years.

Policies to Combat Climate Change: India has committed to reducing emissions intensity of its GDP by 45 percent by 2030. The updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) marks an important step towards achieving India's long-term goal of reaching net-zero emissions by 2070.

Prime Minister Modi's policies have been instrumental in ensuring that India not only meets but, in many cases, surpasses its international commitments. These policies focus on both mitigation strategies to reduce the effects of climate change and adaptation measures to manage the impacts.

Green Infrastructure Development: The development of green infrastructure is another area where the government has excelled. Initiatives like smart cities and eco-friendly buildings are part of a larger plan to create sustainable urban environments that are resilient to climate-related challenges.

In addition to these, India's reforestation and wildlife conservation efforts have contributed significantly to biodiversity and helped in carbon sequestration. These initiatives have contributed to maintaining overall ecological balance and reducing the impact of climate change.

India has also aligned with international climate agreements, notably the Paris Agreement, which offers a central position to achieving global climate goals.



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There was no typing or print involved. Each page was designed and decorated by famous artists that included Beohar Rammanohar Sinha and Nandalal Bose, from Shantiniketan, a place in West Bengal developed by India's famed polymath Rabindranath Tagore.


Constitution in figures: The Indian constitution is the longest written national constitution in the world with 448 articles in 25 parts, 12 schedules, 5 appendices and 98 amendments (out of 120 Constitution Amendment Bills). At the time of its adoption, it consisted of almost 80,000 words.

Time period for passing it: After the constitution was presented to the Constituent Assembly, they took two years, eleven months and seventeen days to pass it.

Signatures: As many as 284 members of the Constituent Assembly signed the documents on 24 January, 1950. Two days later, the constitution came into effect.

Borrowed points: The Constitution has features borrowed from previous legislations, including the Government of India Acts of 1858, 1919, and 1935, as well as influences from governance documents from other countries, including the parliamentary form of governance and cabinet from the United Kingdom; the Bill of Rights (Fundamental Rights) from the United States; Directive principles of state policy from the Irish Parliament; and notions such as 'liberty, equality, fraternity' from the French Republic.

National emblem: On 26 January 1950, the Indian Government also adopted Sarnath, depicting the Lion Capital of Ashoka with the wheel, bull, and horse, as the national emblem of India.



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Water conservation has been a fundamental aspect of India's identity and cultural history spanning centuries. Water conservation in the form of rainwater harvesting is an ancient Indian tradition that has become more relevant in the present-day scenario. India is home to 18 percent of the global population and 15 percent of livestock with only 4 percent of freshwater resources, the availability of which has been decreasing over time. This makes water conservation policies and practices a key plank in the country's water security strategies.

Water conservation is therefore essential not only to overcome shortages but also for climate change risk preparedness and socio-economic development. Over the past few years, the Indian government has been making sustained and people-centric efforts to promote water conservation and supply. It has launched several schemes, including the ambitious Jal Jeevan Mission, to ensure that water does not become a limiting factor for the nation's socio-economic development.

Vagaries of rainfall: Hydrologically, India is not endowed with water equity, both temporally and geographically. From June to September, the South-West monsoon contributes 70 percent of total rainfall while the North-East monsoon from October to December contributes 30 percent. But there is an enormous regional disparity as average rainfall varies from more than 2,000 mm in the Western Ghats and Sub-Himalayan areas of the North-East to less than 500 mm in western Rajasthan and the Deccan Plateau.

The Gujarat model: Water being a state subject in India, states are empowered to enact laws for its regulation. The reason for the Prime Minister's call for a people's movement in water conservation can be traced back to his pioneering role in integrated water management in Gujarat as the then Chief Minister of the State. After taking over as the state's Chief Minister in October 2001, he took priority measures to provide safe drinking water in drought-affected areas of the state. He also introduced several developmental initiatives to promote integrated water management to meet the increasing water demand of growing economic activities.



A water treatment plant and clear water reservoir at Dantiwada, Gujarat

The integrated water management approach became very successful in Gujarat. As compared to 2004, by 2017, Gujarat had a 50 percent increase in the utilizable groundwater recharge and is continuously improving. Since 2001, agriculture production in the state has increased by 255 percent. Today, more than 83 percent of rural households in Gujarat have an assured tap water supply and more than 76 percent of families are regularly paying monthly water service charges.

On 15 August 2019, PM Modi launched the ambitious Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) for providing household piped drinking water supply to every rural home by 2024. The budget allocation for the mission in 2020-21 was INR 50,011 crore. In a short span of 18 months, the percentage of



households with tap connections has increased to 7.30 crore (38.15% increase).

JJM has a holistic approach to water supply, service, delivery and scientifically addresses source sustainability, water supply, greywater treatment and re-use, and water works operation and maintenance. Every village prepares a one-time plan for five years called the Village Action Plan (VAP) capturing these details. Funds are dovetailed through the convergence of several rural programs at a village level. The focus has shifted to the assured supply of potable water to every home rather than mere infrastructure creation.

The global pandemic has made us realize that water is key to public health and productivity. The Prime Minister's timely call to all citizens for action on water conservation has generated enthusiasm among all key stakeholders to add their strength for the greater good of water security for all. The momentum thus generated from the success of various government initiatives needs to be maintained for ensuring water is both available and not destroyed.

As mentioned in Yajurveda (an ancient Vedic Sanskrit text): 'Amirtham vaaapaha; amirthasya aantharithai' (Let water be ever-present and not destroyed).



BHARAT LAL
Additional Secretary and Mission Director, National Jal Jeevan Mission. The article has been co-authored by Manoj Kumar Sahoo, Director, Dept. of Drinking Water & Sanitation, and A. Muralidharan, Deputy Advisor, Dept. of Drinking Water & Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Government of India.
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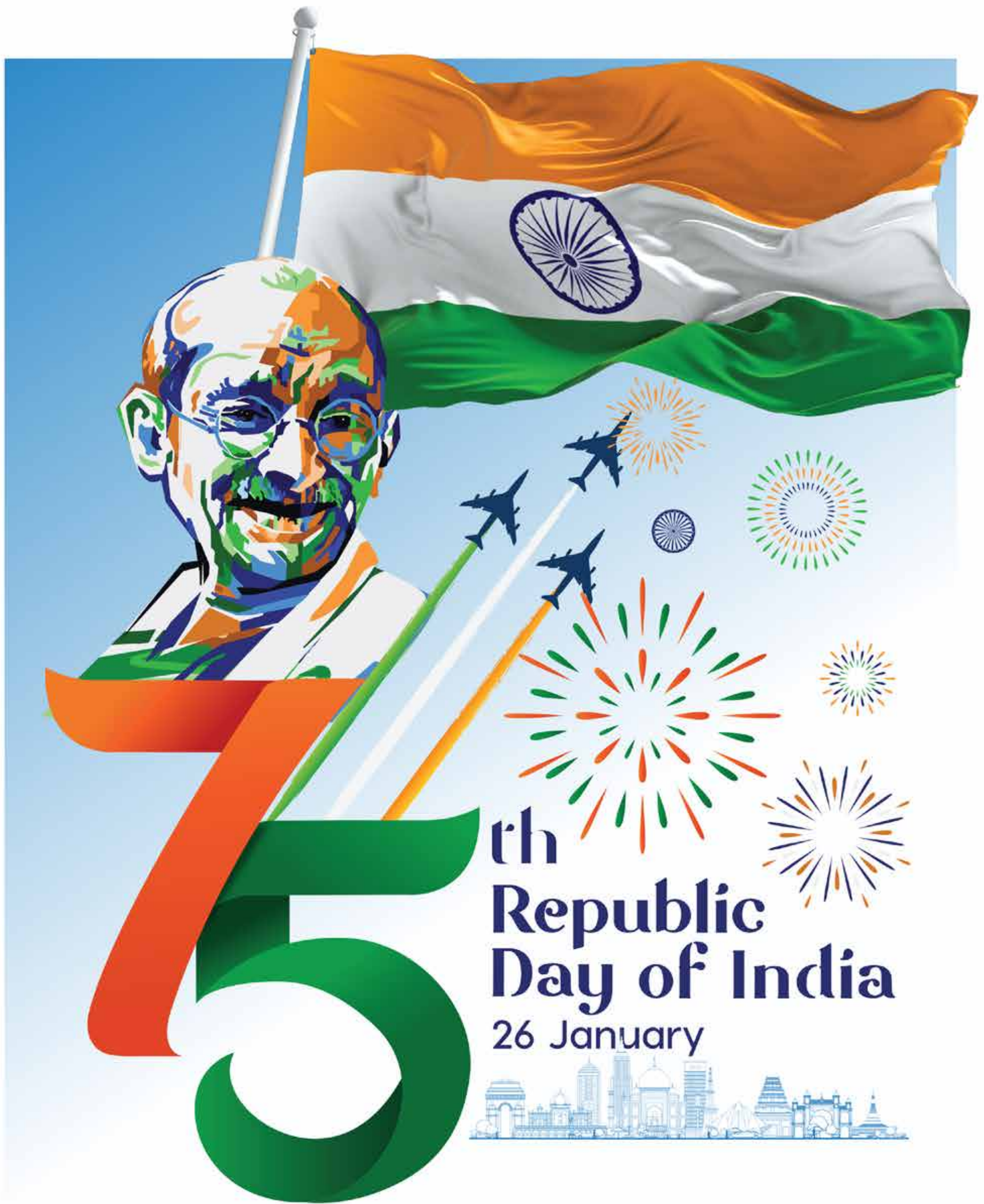
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Dhordo: A lighthouse of India's cultural heritage

In the heart of Gujarat's sprawling landscapes lies Dhordo, a village in the Great Rann of Kutch white desert region that serves as an embodiment of India's rich cultural heritage and the sheer allure of natural beauty. Recently, this secluded gem received international recognition, earning the prestigious title of the 'Best Tourism Village' by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). Such a global commendation, while acknowledging the village's charm, also puts India's vast tourism potential into perspective.

Social media, abuzz with the news of the award, saw a surge in users sharing their Dhordo memories under the hashtag #AmazingDhordo. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, known for promoting India's cultural diversity and tourism opportunities, in a post on social media platform X stated, "Absolutely thrilled to see Dhordo in Kutch being celebrated for its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty. This honour not only showcases the potential of Indian tourism but also the dedication of the people of Kutch in particular."

Dhordo's journey to this acclaim is steeped in stories of dedication and resilience. The locals, with their unyielding spirit, have toiled for years, preserving traditions, protecting the environment, and warmly welcoming every visitor with stories and smiles.

Beyond the scenic beauty, Dhordo's essence lies in its community. A visitor stepping into Dhordo does not just see a village; they



experience a culture. From traditional 'bhungas' (mud houses) adorned with mirrors reflecting the region's artistry to the expansive White Desert shimmering under the moon, every corner tells a story.

One cannot mention Dhordo without highlighting the Rann Utsav, which is scheduled this time from November 2023 to February 2024. This annual festivity paints the desert with a riot of colors, sounds, and flavors. Tourists and locals alike dance to the beats of traditional Garba and Dandiya Raas, while the air is filled with the



aroma of authentic Kutch cuisine.

Local communities are the foundation upon which the success of tourism initiatives is built, especially in regions rich with historical and cultural significance. Their deep-rooted connection to the land, traditions, and stories makes them indispensable in preserving the essence of these destinations. When we speak of sustainable tourism, these communities are not just participants but the primary drivers.

To harness this potential, the government identifies the crucial aspects of providing them

with the tools, training, and support they need. By empowering them with essential skills, be it in management, hospitality, or conservation, and by arming them with the right knowledge about global best practices, we create an environment where they can flourish. Furthermore, when they have access to the necessary resources, whether it is financial or infrastructural, they can transition from passive observers to active protectors and promoters of their cultural and natural heritage.

Their role extends beyond mere maintenance. They have the unique capability of weaving stories, traditions, and experiences in a way that's authentic and engaging for visitors. As they take the reins of crafting these genuine experiences, they simultaneously elevate the standards of tourism in their region.

Moreover, their dedication to the environment and the legacy they have inherited means they lead conservation and preservation efforts with unmatched passion and integrity. This symbiotic relationship between the community and tourism not only enhances the visitor experience but also ensures its sustainability for the future.

In conclusion, Dhordo's recognition as the 'Best Tourism Village' is not just an award; it is a testament to India's untapped tourism potential. It is a clarion call to recognize, respect, and responsibly promote the myriad destinations that dot the vast nation and to be a part of and celebrate the unwavering spirit of local communities and their rich diversity and cultural tapestry.



HAPPY REPUBLIC DAY

INDIA

26TH JANUARY

Join us at Dawat in commemorating this special day, as we celebrate the spirit of unity and the flavours that bring us together. Happy Republic Day to all!

BNEID AL GAR (SHARQ)

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ABU AL HASANIYA

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India's Moon Mission wins prestigious Leif Erikson Lunar Prize

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has been honored with the distinguished Leif Erikson Lunar Prize for its pioneering Chandrayaan-3 mission, a significant milestone in lunar exploration.

This accolade, awarded by the esteemed Exploration Museum in Húsavík, Iceland, on 19 December, 2023, acknowledges ISRO's indomitable spirit in advancing lunar exploration and contributing to understanding celestial mysteries.

The Chandrayaan-3 mission, a landmark achievement in India's space exploration history, successfully executed a soft landing near the Moon's South Pole on 23 August, 2023. This remarkable feat marked India as the first nation to accomplish a landing in this region of the Moon, thereby joining an elite group of global space powers.

Central to Chandrayaan-3's success were significant technological innovations, including sophisticated navigation algorithms, state-of-the-art guidance systems, and advanced fault tolerance mechanisms. These enhancements were critical in facilitating a seamless descent and precision landing on the lunar surface, a testament to ISRO's engineering prowess.

The mission's lander, Vikram, equipped with the Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment (ChaSTE), played a pivotal role in gathering crucial data about the Moon's surface temperature, probing up to 10 centimeters below the surface. In parallel, the Pragyan rover conducted invaluable in-situ experiments, contributing substantially to our collective understanding of the Moon's environment.

ISRO Chairman S. Somanath, expressing

his gratitude for this global recognition, echoed the significance of the award in reflecting India's ascent as a major player in space exploration. The award highlighted the international community's acknowledgment of India's space exploration capabilities.



The Leif Erikson Lunar Prize, named in honor of the legendary Norse explorer, is bestowed by the Exploration Museum to celebrate extraordinary achievements in lunar exploration. The Leif Erikson Awards, since their inception in 2015, have been recognizing the efforts of individuals and organizations that have significantly contributed to the field of exploration and space science. The 9th iteration of these awards, announced on 26 November 2023, continued this legacy of honoring exceptional contributions to humanity's quest in space.

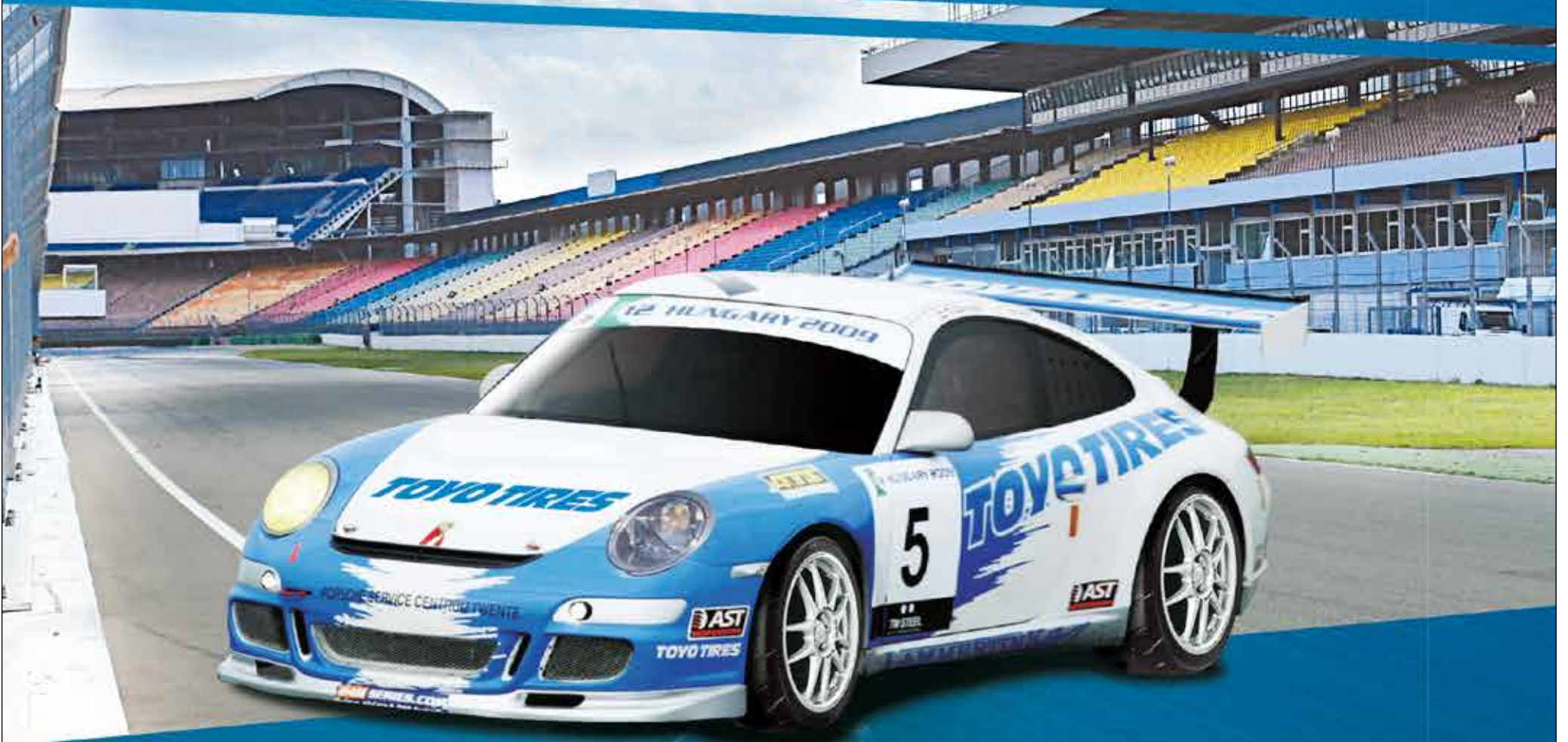
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Rising on the world stage

India's 'Vishwa Mitra' initiative evokes collective global interest

In an impressive demonstration of India's rising stature on the global stage, the address delivered by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar at the United Nations, focusing on India's 'Vishwa Mitra' initiative, has emerged as among the Top 10 United Nations YouTube videos of 2023.

EAM Jaishankar was speaking at the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The high interest in the video signifies a collective global interest in India's foreign policy and diplomatic stances as the nation expands its role on the world stage. The 'Vishwa Mitra' initiative, designed to foster global cooperation and understanding, aligns with India's long-standing tradition of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' - the world is one family. India's commitment to sustainable development, peacekeeping, and inclusive growth, officially released as the program's objectives, achieved immense global outreach.

The heightened global attention towards EAM Jaishankar's UN speech can be traced back to a confluence of India's growing influence and strategic actions on the international scene. Key among these is India's burgeoning economic growth, positioning it as a significant player in the global economy.

This economic ascent has entered in the form of enhanced international trade relations



and an increased visibility in global economic forums.

Additionally, India's strategic geopolitical positioning has become increasingly prominent. Its unique location and diplomatic manoeuvres in the Asia-Pacific region, along with its engagements in various international coalitions, have placed it at the centre of major global discussions. India has also been critical in dominantly shaping the geopolitical narratives around pressing maritime security and regional stability issues.

Notable instances of India's proactive involvement in tackling global challenges are



its contributions to international dialogues and actions on climate change. Similarly, India's response to terrorism, marked by advocating for comprehensive international strategies and cooperation, has positioned it as a pivotal figure in global security dialogues. The country's handling of pandemic situations, including the Covid-19 crisis, through vaccine diplomacy and sharing of healthcare expertise, has also contributed to its heightened global profile.

The year 2023 stands out as even more particularly significant in India's international journey, especially in view of its successful G20 Presidency.

The 'Vishwa Mitra' initiative itself is a clear echo of India's diplomatic vision. By focusing on collaboration and mutual understanding, India is redefining its diplomatic engagements. This, as EAM Jaishankar highlighted, is not just about aid or assistance but about building enduring partnerships based on respect and mutual benefit.

Underlying EAM Jaishankar's speech was India's approach to global challenges. Be it climate action, technological development, or healthcare, India has adopted a solution-oriented approach. The 'Vishwa Mitra' initiative is a step further in this direction, aiming to collaborate on global issues with a spirit of cooperation.

The speech's strategic implications are significant, garnering it the global recognition it continues to endure. It sends a strong message about India's readiness to take on more significant responsibilities in the global arena. It also reflects India's aspirations to shape global norms and policies, especially in areas like digital technology and environmental sustainability. EAM Jaishankar's speech also reinforced India's soft power. The cultural aspects of 'Vishwa Mitra', from yoga to Bollywood, from cuisine to classical arts, play a vital role in India's diplomatic outreach, enhancing its cultural diplomacy.



Message by Ambassador of India

75th Republic day of India

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

India today is a land of billion opportunities. Our collective resolve has ensured that the Indian economy is today the 5th largest economy in the world. And it is going to be the 3rd largest (5 trillion dollar economy) in the next couple of years. India is moving ahead with the spirit of 'Make in India, Make for the World'. The massive business friendly reforms and policies have contributed in unleashing the true potential of the country.

The new India has made tremendous strides in science and technology; is one of the leading centers of innovation and Information Technology globally; is the 'Pharmacy of the World'; has world class production and manufacturing capabilities; is a leading global partner to address new age challenges facing the humanity, be it climate change or building resilient and reliable supply chains to ensure food and health security. Today, we are on the right track to build an Atmanirbhar Bharat (Self-Reliant India), which envisages a merger of the local with the global.

In the international arena, India has been playing a significant role in contributing to world peace, stability and prosperity. The past year is symbolic of India's global responsibilities as an emerging major power. Our successful and ambitious action-oriented G20 Presidency is a matter of immense pride. We were happy to welcome Kuwait in the SCO family as a Dialogue Partner during our SCO Presidency.

India organized two editions of 'Voice of Global South Summit' in 2023, in which over 125 countries participated, with the aim of mainstreaming priorities of developing

countries in the international agenda, particularly the G-20. India championed the increased use of millets through various awareness programmes on the use of millets across the globe, as part of the International Year of Millets 2023.

India believes that dialogue and diplomacy remains the only way to resolve disputes and conflicts. India places an undeterred faith and belief in multilateral approach and has always taken the lead on issues of global importance such as fight against cross-border terrorism, climate change, energy security, food security, and the reform of multilateral institutions, including the UN Security Council.

On the bilateral front, we continue to make steady progress in our multi-faceted engagement with the State of Kuwait. We look forward to greater engagement with both Government and at people-to-people level in the coming times. The vibrant Indian community in Kuwait continues to be the living bridge of our bilateral ties with Kuwait.

The Embassy places highest priority on the welfare and well-being of the large Indian Community in Kuwait. I thank all the community associations, professional bodies, cultural groups and members of the Indian community for joining hands with the Embassy for not only contributing to the welfare of the community but also undertaking activities that contribute to the strengthening of bilateral relations with the State of Kuwait.

Once again, on this special and proud occasion of the 75th Republic Day of India, I convey my best wishes to every Indian in Kuwait and all friends of India in Kuwait for their continued success, happiness and good health.

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There is something about watching animals interacting in their natural environment, their hunting, feeding, playing and caring, that appeals to everyone's basic instincts. It could be the novelty or curiosity that impels us to experience wildlife in its raw surroundings, or perhaps, witnessing the primordial nature of these wildlife interactivities strikes a chord on the strings of our evolutionary roots. No matter what the reason is, there is no denying that wildlife experiences are truly exciting, allowing us to get in touch with nature and take a break from the concrete jungle that engulfs us.

With so many wildlife vacations on offer in so many wonderful locations it is often difficult for a traveler to narrow down the choices to just one country or place. India is blessed in that it has an abundance of spectacular ecological, topographic, climatic and geographic variations across the country that are made even more attractive by the diversity of its wildlife, and wildlife experiencing opportunities, bundled within its borders. Whether you have two weeks to spare or two days, there is a wildlife vacation to suit you. From endangered species of wildlife to ones that have been rehabilitated in their natural ecosystems, from lumbering elephants to fleet-footed cheetahs, and on to tiny endemic species of amphibians, mammals and birds, India offers you the opportunity to see them all.

The country's rich diversity in natural forests and sprawling parklands hosting a multitude of wildlife species makes India a magnet for tourists looking for adventure and for exploring unspoiled natural beauty in an eco-friendly tourism mode. Wildlife abodes abound in India and span from the lofty Himalayan ranges down to the plains and coastlines. The diversity of wildlife experiences in India are amazing and its uniqueness can only be experienced.



Great Himalayan National Park, Himachal Pradesh: Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its outstanding biodiversity in 2014, this beautiful national park is more a space to enjoy nature than chase after animals. A place of stunning natural beauty, with misty mountains and silvery rivers, the higher reaches of the park (accessed by trekking) are home to the Himalayan brown bear, Himalayan tahr (wild goat), bharal (blue sheep) and other magnificent mountain animals. You can also spot birds like the Himalayan griffon vulture, the huge golden eagle and Himachal's state bird, the western tragopan.



Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand: The country's oldest national park, Corbett has always been a favorite weekend

getaway from Delhi – and a popular destination for family holidays. Jim Corbett's forest is steeped in history and locals will tell you amusing tales about the legendary figure Carpet Sahib. The sightings of elephants, wild boars and tigers are fascinating. Take a safari or sit on the forest's edge, inside your luxury retreat, having a fine meal and enjoying the therapeutic sounds of the jungle.



Kaziranga National Park, Assam: The only habitat of the endangered one-horned rhino, Kaziranga draws wildlife addicts from across the world for a glimpse of this massive beast. A beautiful park with tall grasslands, Kaziranga safaris are mostly on elephants rather than in vehicles. Because of its unique biodiversity, it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985, and is also home to tigers, bears, panthers and elephants, along with hundreds of exotic birds.



Manas National Park, Assam: The second national park in Assam that is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Manas National Park is less frequented than the popular Kaziranga, which means it offers a more untouched wildlife experience. Its most famous resident is the pygmy hog, apart from other strange and wonderful creatures like the Assam roofed turtle and the golden langur. There is also the chance to spot a tiger.



Bandhavgarh National Park, Madhya Pradesh: A relatively smaller park, it nevertheless has the highest density of tigers in the country, in addition to a vast biodiversity and topography. The 2,000-year-old Bandhavgarh Fort inside the park stands testimony to the times when this used to be hunting grounds for the Rewa maharajas, and makes for an unforgettable backdrop to jungle safaris. Today, this National Park is a haven for animals and birds with over 250 species of birds, 37 species of mammals and 80 species of butterflies. The park also contains many rock paintings and man-made caves. Also not to miss are the White Tigers that reside in their natural habitat within this parkland.



Sundarbans National Park, West Bengal: On the southern edge of West Bengal, facing the Bay of Bengal, is this unique part of the country: the world's largest river delta with mangroves and mudflats around a network of creeks and water channels. Declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site to protect its fragile ecosystem, the Sundarbans National Park is the largest reserve for the Royal Bengal tiger, apart from being ideal territory for spotting crocs, reptiles and a large variety of water fauna.



Panna National Park, Madhya Pradesh: When it comes to wildlife, Madhya Pradesh is blessed with some of the country's best parks boasting the highest chances of a tiger sighting. Another of its gems is the verdant Panna National Park, where you can spot the sloth bear, the sambar, nilgai and, if you are lucky, the tiger and the leopard. The surroundings make for a beautiful spot to enjoy a picnic breakfast and listen to the sounds of birds, such as the blossom-headed parakeet and changeable hawk-eagle.



Kabini Forest Reserve, Karnataka: The biggest attraction at Kabini right now is its resident melanistic leopard, or the black panther that is spotted frequently during wildlife safaris into Nagarhole National Park. On the park's periphery, Kabini Reserve is the ideal place to stay for the region's best hotels and a whole host of wildlife experiences – such as boat safaris on the Kabini River, coracle rides and bird-watching walks.

Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve, Maharashtra: A beautiful park that is still less known, Tadoba offers a chance to sight the dhole, or wild dog, which is often considered more difficult to spot than the tiger itself. There are also several elegant raptors, including the crested serpent eagle, gray-headed fishing eagle and the honey buzzard.



Silent Valley National Park, Kerala: Located in rainforest territory, Palakkad is as lush and beautiful as they come. Recently named a UNESCO World Heritage Site (2012), it is part of the delicate Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve, revered for its biodiversity. Spot tigers, leopards and elephants, and watch out for snakes and reptiles, as there are well over 400 species here.



Gir National Park, Gujarat: Your only chance to see the Asiatic lion in the wilderness, not just in India but anywhere in the world, Gir has a special place in India's wildlife experience. Home to the majestic but endangered beast, this is also your chance to spot elusive animals like the panther, jackals, hyenas and porcupines. Known locally as Sasan Gir, spotting one of the lions against the grasslands of Gir is a truly unforgettable moment.

Vikramshila Gangetic Dolphin Sanctuary, Bihar: Lauded for its conservation efforts, the Vikramshila Sanctuary is in the Bhagalpur



district of Bihar covers a 50km stretch of the Ganges. In 2009, the Gangetic dolphins were declared India's National Aquatic Animal, and this is a rare chance to spot them in large numbers.



Jhalana Reserve Forest, Rajasthan: The surprise of the season is definitely India's newest wildlife destination: the recently opened Jhalana Reserve Forest. Over 20 leopards have adopted Jhalana as their home over the past decade, leading the government to declare it a protected reserve and then, in May 2017, open the park up for guided jeep safaris. Plenty of birds like the shikra and white-eyed buzzard, and lots of peacocks, add beauty to the lush forest.

Salim Ali Bird Sanctuary, Goa: Not all wildlife experiences are about the big cats. In Goa, this small sanctuary for birds on the island Chorao on Mandovi River is named after India's premier ornithologist, Dr Salim Moizuddin Ali. Make your way into the mangroves at this little wonderland in canoe-like boats over a channel of canals that lead through a paradise for bird lovers. Egrets, kingfishers, cormorants and

drongos abound, and look out for rarer species such as the black bittern and the pied avocet.

Ranthambore National Park, Rajasthan: There is a good reason why this is the most popular (and the most crowded) national park in the country: fantastic tiger sightings.



Ranthambore is more than just an opportunity to spot wildlife – one of India's prettiest parks, it is dotted with historical monuments and hunting lodges of the maharajas of yore, adding charm to the landscape. Spot scores of strikingly beautiful birds such as cormorants, lapwings and eagles.



Periyar National Park, Kerala: For an experience that really differs from the wildlife parks of north and east India, head to the south, where the green is greener than any you have ever seen. Criss-crossed by the Periyar River, this evergreen forest is home to elephants and tigers, and creatures not seen in north India, such as the Malabar giant squirrel and Nilgiri langur. Locally called Thekaddy, this is a lovely hilly tract with nice trekking options – a wonderful way to see birds including the Nilgiri wood pigeon and laughing thrushes.

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Being such a large and diverse country, it is not surprising that Indian cuisine varies considerably as one crosses the borders of its states and territories, and sometimes even between districts within states. Endowed with this multitude of exotic cuisines and dishes that encompass every known flavor, and range from mild to fiery hot, it is no wonder that Indian

cuisine enjoys a premier standing among world cuisines.

Each of the 28 states and 8 union territories has its own unique identity in terms of demography, history, tradition and culture, which along with the religious diversity of the country, influences the cuisine of the region, the foods used and cooking methods employed.

The country's vastness in its ethnic diversity, vibrant culture, varying topography and historic significance contribute to the versatility of dishes when moving from north to south or east to west. Along with culinary diversity, festivals and special occasions also feature a variety of mouth watery delicacies.

Renowned for its exotic spices in ancient

times, Indian dishes are infused with a majestic blend of spices. Besides lending distinct flavors, and sizzling aromas to the dishes, spices also serve as a characteristic coloring and act as a substitute in place of artificial preservatives.

On this 74th Republic Day, let us celebrate Indian culinary diversity with a few recipes of savory delicacies one should definitely try out.



Chicken Makhani/ Butter Chicken

This flavorful, fragrant curry is a favorite amongst foodies across the globe. A vibrant texture with tender chicken traditionally cooked in a tandoor (clay oven) will spice up your taste buds. Butter Chicken, which originates from Northern India, is a staple in restaurants across the country and is a classic chicken recipe that can never be out of place when serving guests.



Ingredients:

For marinating:
 1kg boneless, skinless chicken cut into bite-sized chunks
 2 tsp red chili powder
 2 tsp ginger-garlic paste
 2 tsp salt
 2 tsp lemon juice
 1/2 cup curd
 1/2 tsp garam masala
 1 tsp kasuri methi (dried fenugreek leaves)
 2 tsp mustard oil

For gravy:

2 tsp oil,
 4 cubes butter or as per taste
 3 gram cloves,
 1 cinnamon stick (broken),
 1 tsp mace
 7 cardamom seeds
 4 tomatoes (chopped)

1 tsp garlic
 1 tsp ginger
 1 tsp ginger-garlic paste
 1 1/2 tsp red chili powder
 1 tsp kasuri methi
 2 tsp honey
 1 green chili
 2 tsp cardamom powder
 1 tsp cream

Instructions:

- Place the chicken pieces in a mixing bowl, add salt, red chili powder, ginger-garlic paste and lemon juice. Mix and refrigerate for 15-20 minutes.
- Add curd to the refrigerated mix, followed by more salt, ginger-garlic paste, red chili powder, garam masala, kasuri methi and mustard oil. Mix well and refrigerate again for an hour.
- Roast the marinated chicken in an oven for about 30 minutes or sear the chicken in a skillet or pan until it is three-fourth done.
- Heat 2 tsp of oil in another pan with 2 cubes of butter. Add cloves, cinnamon stick, mace and cardamom. Sauté for a few minutes then add chopped tomatoes, garlic and ginger.
- In another pan, heat another two cubes of butter, along with ginger-garlic paste, add the tomato puree made from the mixture.
- Add red chili powder, kasuri methi, honey and finally the roasted chicken pieces. Let it simmer, add green chili, cardamom powder and cream. Mix well.
- Serve with a teaspoon of cream over the dish

Hyderabadi Biryani

Hyderabadi biryani, with its distinct mix of spices, meat and rice, and meticulous preparation method that lends it a rich flavor and unique taste, is said to have originated in the kitchens of the Nizams of Hyderabad in the 18th century.

Although several variations of this dish exist across India, the style of cooking inevitably remains essentially the same, with the raw meat, rice and spices cooked together, unlike other biryani recipes.

Ingredients:

- 1kg meat
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp ginger-garlic paste
- 1 tbsp red chili paste
- 1 tbsp green chili paste
- Sautéed brown onions (to taste)
- 1/2 tbsp cardamom powder
- 3-4 cinnamon sticks
- 1 tbsp cumin seeds
- 4 cloves
- A pinch of mace
- Mint leaves to taste
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 250g curd
- 4 tbsp clarified butter
- 750 gms semi-cooked rice
- 1 tsp saffron strand
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup oil
- For garnishing:
- Eggs, boiled carrots, sliced cucumbers



Instructions:

- In a pan, add the meat, salt, ginger-garlic paste, red chili powder, green chili paste, sautéed brown onions, cardamom powder, cinnamon, cumin seeds, cloves, mace, mint leaves and lemon juice.
- Mix well and then add curd, clarified butter, semi-cooked rice, saffron, water and oil. Mix to bring all ingredients together
- Wet flour to form a sticky dough, and paste it along the top edge of the pan, place the lid and seal with dough. Cook for about 25 minutes.
- Remove the lid and garnish the rice mixture with boiled eggs, sliced carrots, cucumbers and serve hot.



Aloo gobi (potato-cauliflower)

Renowned as a 'comfort food', and a flavorful and healthy option to boot, Aloo Gobi is as simple to prepare and as rustic as it can get. This combination of soft chewy potatoes and crunchy cauliflower is cooked in numerous styles varying from region to region.

Ingredients

- 2 tsp ginger-garlic paste
- 2 tsp grated ginger
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1/4 tsp turmeric
- 1 cup water
- 1 large serrano pepper (split down the middle leaving halves attached)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 1 small head cauliflower (cut into small florets)
- 1 potato (peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes)
- Salt to taste
- 2 tsp freshly minced cilantro leaves (for garnish)

Instructions:

- To form a wet masala, mix the ginger-garlic paste, coriander, turmeric, and 1/2 cup water in a small bowl and set aside
- In a pan, warm the oil over medium-high heat until simmering, but not smoking. Add the serrano pepper, and after a few seconds, the cumin seeds and wait for a few more minutes
- Add the wet masala and cook for around 2 minutes, until the paste thickens and oil oozes up from the masala
- Add the cauliflower and potatoes, stirring to coat the vegetables with the masala
- Add salt, 1/2 cup water, cover and cook over medium heat for 10 to 15 minutes
- Stir once carefully, and cook until the cauliflower and potatoes are cooked
- Garnish with cilantro and serve hot.

Seven Sisters of India

Commonly known as the ‘Seven Sisters’ the seven Northeast states of India — Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Assam, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura and Mizoram — are an amalgamation of undulating hills, picturesque valleys and tranquil hamlets.

Every one of these sisterly states are enriched with a deep-rooted history, culture and a diversity of flora and fauna, which is further embellished only by the enchanting warm hospitality of the locals who welcome visitors to explore the allure of their charming states.

The amalgamation of Northeast India originated in the 19th century during British rule in India. Between 1839 and 1873, it was originally a part of the Bengal Province. At the time of India’s independence in 1947, the northeastern region consisted of only Assam, Manipur and Tripura.

Over time, the other states emerged from the larger region of Assam. These Northeastern States are connected to the rest of India through the Siliguri Corridor, making this the only way to physically reach the Seven Sister States.



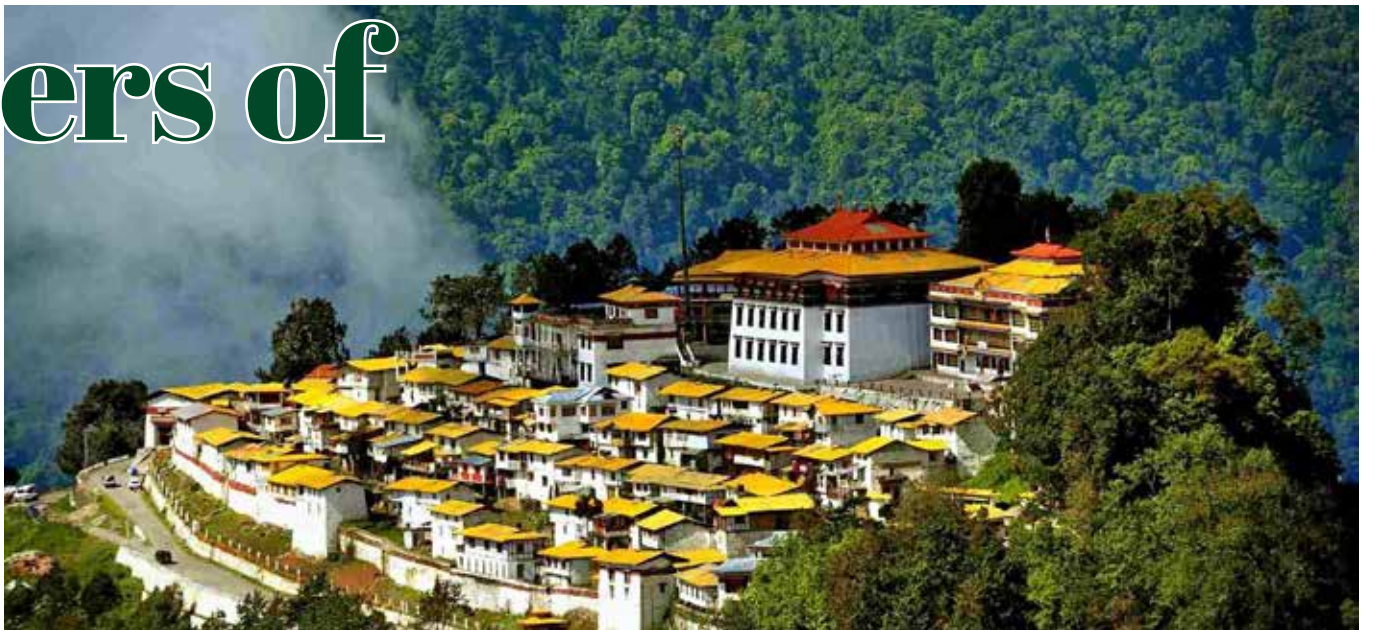
Arunachal Pradesh: Popularly known as ‘Land of Dawn-lit Mountains’, it is the first Indian soil to meet the rising sun. The state consists of a magnificent mountainous area in the extreme northeastern part of the country and is bordered by the kingdom of Bhutan to the west.

Hindu mythological legends describe Arunachal Pradesh as the land that was ruled by powerful dynasties and kingdoms. The state is dotted with innumerable historical monuments and archeological remains, which are a testimony to its rich cultural heritage.



Assam: The largest state in Northeastern India is a treasure trove of natural beauty, draped in verdant tea plantations and has a vibrant culture with historical significance. Popularly known as the home to the endangered one-horned rhino, the state is one of the hotspots of biodiversity globally. With evergreen plantations throughout the year, the state is also home to some of the oldest pilgrimage sites in the country. The area is dotted with numerous temples, mosques and churches, and other religious and sacred artifacts.

Manipur: The state, often referred to as the ‘Land of Jewels’, stands as a touristic delight that is glazed with bountiful views of nature, sculpted blend of rolling green hills, dense forests, tranquil lakes and exquisite landscapes. The pleasing



climate and vibrant views welcomes visitors to a world that is unmatched in surrealism. Deep historic marvels that showcase acclaimed art and culture await to mesmerize its visitors.



The state hosts the Shri Govindji temple which is one of the largest temples dedicated to Lord Krishna and Devi Radha. It is also the birthplace of Raas Lila, which is a renowned form of classical dance which was created by Maharaja Bhagyachandra. The authentic culture of Manipur reflects its magnificent historical heritage.



Meghalaya: Also known as the ‘Abode of Clouds’, it is one of the most veritable amalgamation of scenic grandeur. A state that needs to be explored rather than just traveled to. Meghalaya, is packed with vibrant natural sites to behold, its cultural heritage comprises endless experiences for visitors.

The famed monsoons, the rich traditional festivals, and the dramatic terrain are just some of the prominent aspects the state is famous for. With adventures that will give you an adrenaline rush along with the tranquility of the humbleness of nature, Meghalaya has plenty to offer.



Mizoram: Situated in the southernmost tip of Northeast India, ‘The Land of Mizos’ is nestled in the mountainous terrains, and

is dotted with an exotic display of flora and fauna along with evergreen hills and dense bamboo forests. The intricate detailed work of the tribal artisans is a spectacular highlight of Mizoram.

The state is also known for its traditionally rich cuisine that provides a delicious treat to all tourists. With lush green paddy fields, gushing rivers and high sparkling waterfalls, this geographical diversity makes it one of the most beautiful places to visit in north east India.



Nagaland: The ‘Land of festivals’ is a diverse, vibrant state that offers a bucolic charm. Nagaland is bordered by Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh, making it one of the most exquisite Northeast Indian states. With its scintillating landscapes, picturesque terrace fields, overlooking pristine mountains and faraway blue skies, the state is a delightful experience for visitors.

Nagaland is deep rooted into the magical storytelling art of traditional folktales, folk songs, and stories of the state’s rich culture and tradition that has thrived from generation to generation. The most enchanting festival commonly known as the ‘Hornbill Festival’ is an alluring spectacle where the ancient Naga music reverberates the true spirit of Nagaland’s traditional cultural heritage.



Tripura: The third smallest state in India, is a charming mix of diverse cultures and traditions. Famously known for its intricate handicraft, particularly hand-woven cotton fabric, wood carvings, and bamboo products. Tripura’s magical charms include mesmerizing white marble domes and extravagant culture that reflect its Hindu and Islamic architectural heritage.

Also officially depicted as the ‘most literate state in India’, the state displays the harmony of traditional Indian cultural practices coexisting with a diverse set of ethnic groups. A visually stunning sight to see, the state offers glorious sculptures and artifacts, enriched with the state’s indigenous and distinct culture.

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