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PAGES

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT
INDIA INDEPENDENCE DAY

India at 75: Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

progressive and preminent in the nation's socio-cultural, political and economic milieu over the past 75 years of its independence.

Official celebrations to mark Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav began on 12 March 2021, with Prime Minister Narendra Modi making the announcement at Mahatma Gandhi's Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat. The launch of celebrations also commenced a 75-week countdown to the 75th anniversary of India's independence on 15 August, 2022, which will culminate a year later on 15 August, 2023. Celebrations marking this historical milestone in the nation's journey of independence pivots around the five themes of: Freedom struggle, Ideas@75, Resolve@75, Actions@75, and Achievements@75.

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Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is an initiative by the Government of India celebrating the country's remarkable growth and development over its 75 years of independence. The festival commemorates the people who have helped bring the country thus far in its evolutionary journey, as well as celebrates the power and potential that all Indians hold within them to take the nation forward in its triumphal march to the future.

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is a salute to the vivacity and dynamism of a nation, the ebullience and diversity of its people, the vibrancy of its culture, the resilience of its economy, and so much more. It is a recognition of all that is pioneering,

Ambassador's Message on Independence Day of India

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



Ambassador of India
H.E. Sibi George

State of Kuwait; His Highness Sheikh Misha'al Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, Crown Prince of the State of Kuwait; His Highness Sheikh Ahmad Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah, Prime Minister of the State of Kuwait; and to the Government and the friendly people of the State of Kuwait.

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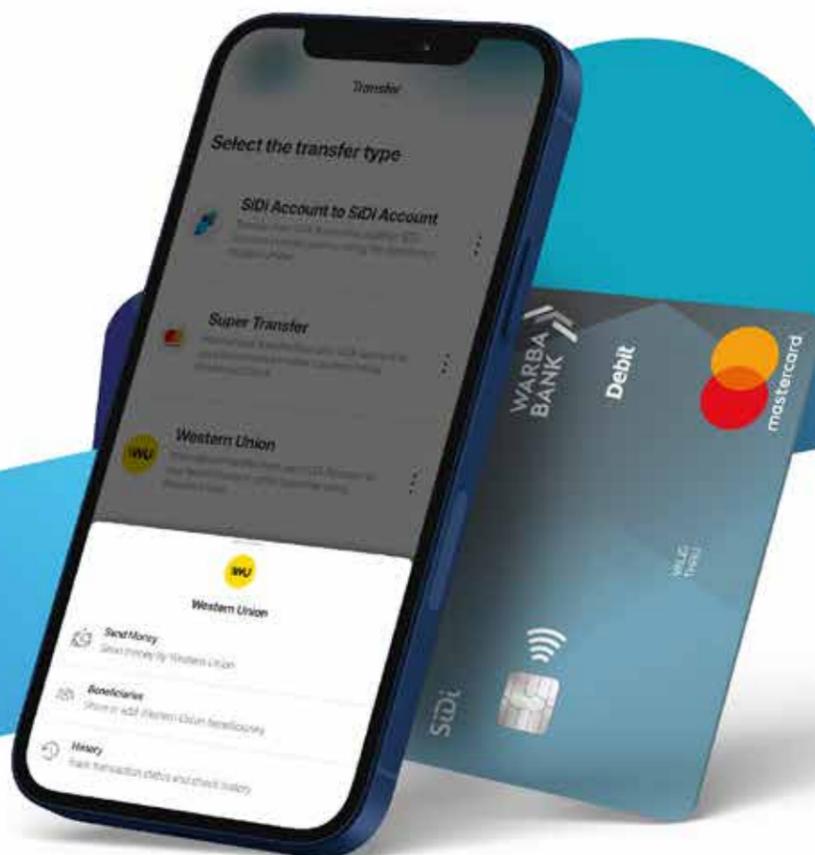
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India's Approach to Development Partnership

By Ambassador Gurjit Singh

In a globalising world there was an increasing shift towards development partnership. Today, when globalisation is threatened due to the pandemic and a new war in Europe, there is a greater requirement for development partnership programmes. India's approach to development partnership was rooted in the experience of India's freedom movement. This had solidarity with other developing countries who were also shaking off the yoke of colonialism and thereafter, of underdevelopment. Despite initial resource constraints, India immediately after its independence in 1947, began to share its developmental experience and technical expertise with other countries. This began with scholarships and capacity building programmes and then spread to institution building.

India's developmental partnership approach focuses on human resource development; it shows respect for partnerships, provides for diversity, looks at the future and puts sustainable development at the centre. India's development cooperation is typically unconditional. In a survey of African interlocutors 60% said that they saw the HRD, capacity building, training and scholarships as a valuable part of the Indian partnership, next only to Indian FDI. Cooperating with development partners on an equal basis, and guided by their development priorities is India's fundamental approach. In the landmark address of Prime Minister Modi to the Parliament of Uganda in July 2018 he said 'Our development partnership will be guided by your priorities. It will be on terms that will be comfortable for you, that will liberate your potential and not constrain your future. We will

build as much local capacity and create as many local opportunities as possible'.

India's model of development cooperation is organised to be responsive to requests from partner countries and provide technically and financially feasible solutions. The main instruments of India's development partnership include lines of credit, grant assistance, small development projects, technical consultancy, disaster relief and humanitarian assistance, as well as capacity building programmes under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) programme. In a recent survey in Africa, the ITEC had the best recall among various development efforts.

The establishment of the ITEC program in 1964 came about as India understood that newly independent and emerging countries faced challenges for their development. There was an opportunity to fill such gaps. The ITEC hence brought India's own development experience and growing achievement to share with other developing countries.

The ITEC program has 6 core qualities. These are:

- (1) Training in India for regular courses in several areas within the ITEC courses
- (2) Provide consultancy services and conduct feasibility studies for proposed projects in partner countries
- (3) Set up grant-based projects in partner countries in areas mutually agreed upon
- (4) Dispatch experts to partner countries
- (5) Study and experience sharing tours by decision makers from partner countries
- (6) Provision for disaster relief and humanitarian assistance



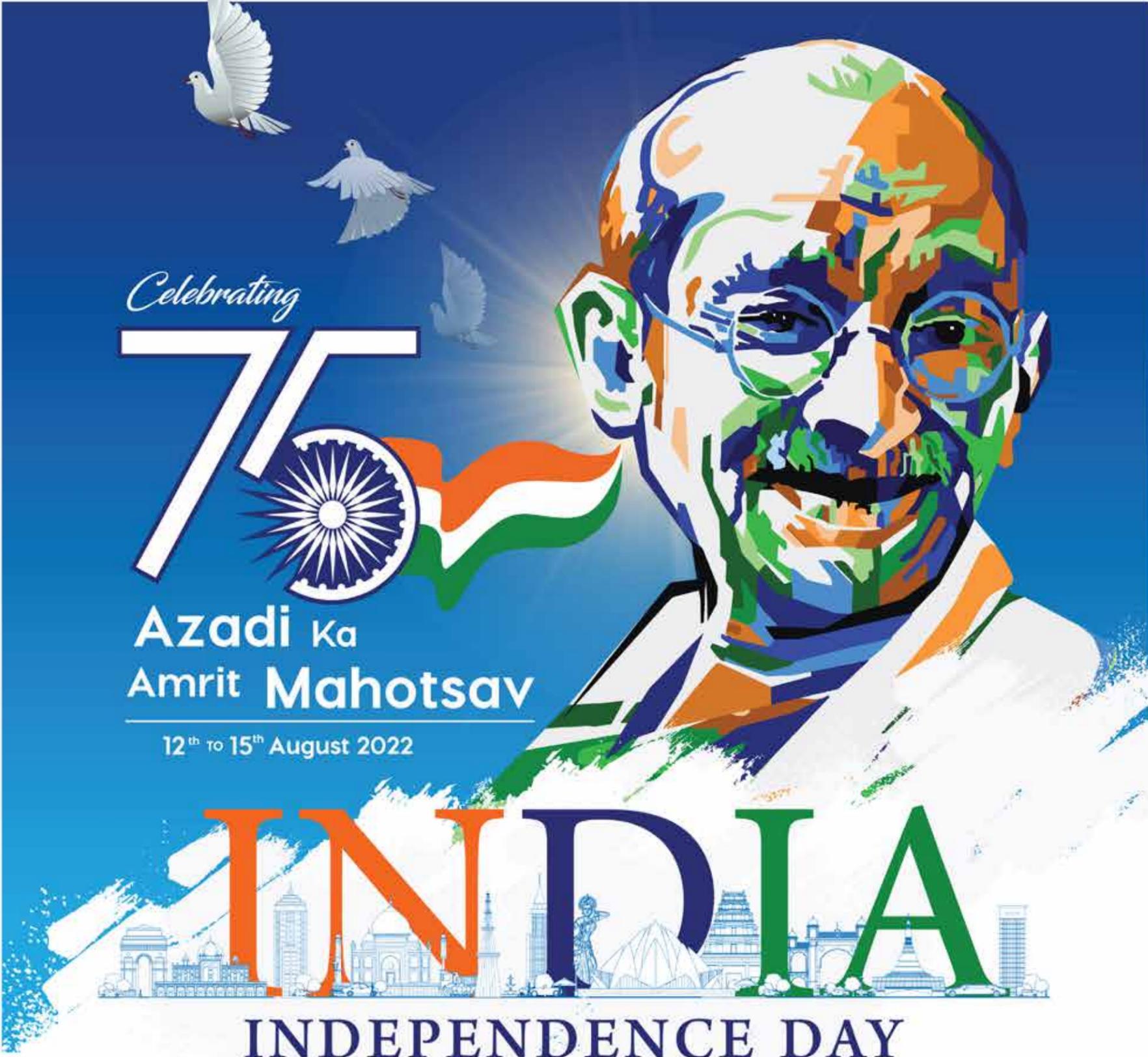
Indian partnership directly supports national development priorities. India also contributes to multilateral funds for similar achievements like the IBSA fund or the India-UN Development Partnership Fund. Where loans are involved or institutions are built, there is now a greater emphasis on business plans to make these projects financially sustainable. The main point is that they should support development priorities, which internationally today include the Sustainable Development Goals. Development cooperation adds value to the development processes of its partners. The projects emanating from the partnership can play an important role in providing incentives for profitable activities, which can have developmental impact. The Indian impact investment movement for implementing the SDGs through investment is an example of this.

The development partnership that India follows creates new opportunities for other developing countries using its own experience, and capability of its public and private sectors. Thus, it tries to overcome the structural impediments that

limit the absorption among other countries and creates easily scalable and transferable models. This criterion is increasingly important. The Indian model of cooperative development partnership seeks to provide ownership of the assets and the capacities which are built through partnership with India of the host country. It aims to complement resources and capacities while respecting the sovereignty of partners and their own development plans. This has led to the Indian partnership model earning respect among developing countries and from international partners. India's efforts are also cost effective and spend less on high fees for consultants and focus more on delivery. The creation of a new Trilateral Development Fund in India will incrementally channel diverse funds into supporting the Indian model of cooperation in developing countries.

In Nepal, India has constructed highways, electrified villages, provided drinking water projects and increased the power potential of the country. Amid Sri Lanka's recent crisis, India has provided support of about \$ 3.8 billion for immediate assistance to alleviate the problems faced by the people of Sri Lanka for fuel, food and medicines. In Africa, the Pan African E-network project was the largest project which covered 47 countries to provide them with telemedicine and tele-education facilities between 2009 and 2019. It has now moved into the next digital phase. There are other success stories like the Centre for IT Excellence in Ghana and Entrepreneurship Development Training Centre in Senegal. The India-Africa Forum Summits provided a new paradigm for India's development partnership, raising the funding by several billion dollars.





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India at 75: Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav

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Launching the innovative and extended celebration of India's independence, Prime Minister Narendra Modi declared: "History is witness to the fact that the glory of a nation remains conscious only when it teaches the next generation of the traditions of self-esteem and sacrifice, and inspires them continuously. The future of a nation is bright only when it is associated with the pride of its past experiences and heritage. And India has a profound repository to take pride in, a rich history and a conscious cultural heritage.

"Like the history of the freedom movement, the journey of 75 years after independence is a reflection of the hard work, innovation, enterprise of ordinary Indians. Whether in the country or abroad, we Indians have proved ourselves with our hard work. We are proud of our Constitution. We are proud of our democratic traditions," said Indian Premier Modi. He went on to explain: "The Azadi Amrit Mahotsav reflects the elixir of energy of independence; elixir of inspirations of the warriors of freedom struggle; elixir of new ideas and pledges; and elixir of Aatmanirbhar Bharat (Self-reliant India). It is a festival of reawakening of the nation; a festival of fulfilling the aim of good



governance; and a festival of global peace and development."

Since 15 August 1947, when the tricolor of Independent India was first hoisted from the ramparts of the Red Fort in New Delhi, India has evolved on all fronts and in every domain to become a force to reckon with on the

international arena. Today, India is more than a geographic landmass of over 3.2 million sq km, or a nation of over 1.3 billion people seeking their rightful place on the global stage. India is a country whose modern ethos traces its lineage back to the multi-millennium old civilization that held sway during its time.

India is a nation that today holds its head up high among the comity of nations by virtue of its intellectual achievements, its gracious contributions, its philosophical discourses, and its universalism in thought and action. India is the country that has transformed its billion plus people into a cohesive society; a people who live together in conviviality and draw strength from the diversity of their cultures and customs, their traditions, religions and languages.

Shattering its fetters and emerging from under the colonial yoke on 15 August 1947, India paved a path of growth and development that has enabled and served as a model for several countries across Asia, Africa and elsewhere to seek their own independence and chart their own destiny. Despite struggling to survive and overcome hunger, poverty and under development in the early years of its independence, India is today a beacon of hope and trust for the world. India's developmental model, its various capacity-building programs, and its humanitarian efforts in the spirit of 'Share and Care', have assisted countries across the world.

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, India was one country which went way beyond her call of duty to help more than 150 countries with medicines and other assistance, and to provide millions of doses of vaccines to nearly a 100 countries. India's spirit of sharing and caring for others, which emanates from the country's ancient civilizational ethos of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam' (World is one family), has created a tremendous constituency of goodwill for India across continents.

In the international domain, India, which will chair the G20 in 2023, is taking the lead in a post-COVID era, even as the country continues to push forward its aspiration to take its rightful place at the high table of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). A place that is justly warranted for a country that promotes peace and development across the world through the dynamic five 'S' vision of its foreign policy, namely Samman (respect), Samvaad (dialogue), Sahyog (cooperation), Shanti (peace) and Samriddhi (prosperity).

Heeding the call of Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Indian Embassy in Kuwait, under the able leadership and wise guidance of the Ambassador H.E. Sibi George, took on the challenge of celebrating Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav,

in a manner befitting the nation and reflecting the glorious 75 years of India's Independence. Launching the celebrations in Kuwait last year, Ambassador George said the celebrations would reflect India's profound progress in various fields over the last 75 years.

Revealing that India's mega celebrations also coincided with the 60th anniversary of the start of diplomatic relations between India and Kuwait, the ambassador disclosed an ambitious plan to organize 750 events to celebrate the 75th anniversary of Indian independence, and 600 events to celebrate the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations, over the next two years."

In line with this commitment, the Embassy of India has been organizing a multitude of events since then that highlight India's growth story in various domains, as well as underlines the strength of bilateral relations between India and Kuwait. One such event was 'Namaste Kuwait', which was organized in association with the Indian Cultural Network (ICN) from 20 - 28 February, on the occasion of celebrations marking the National and Liberation Days of Kuwait.

Underlining the robust relations between India and Kuwait, Ambassador George noted: "Bilateral relations between our two countries were forged over centuries of commercial, cultural and social ties that were then further entrenched following Kuwait's independence in 1961 and its rapid development into a modern state." He added that the relations that have bound the two nations and its peoples for centuries continues unabated to this day with Indians now forming the largest expatriate community in Kuwait.

"The Indian Community in Kuwait has always played a commendable role in building our bilateral relations. During the last two years we have seen how this vibrant community came together and worked closely with the Embassy in addressing the many challenges associated with the COVID 19 pandemic that we faced. I thank our doctors, nurses and other medical professionals who are our frontline warriors in the fight against the pandemic. I also thank our scientists, our engineers and other professionals and our teachers who are among the unsung heroes in the fight against the pandemic.

"I also thank the Indian Community Support Group (ICSG) and the many associations and groups, who individually and collectively, joined hands with the Embassy and have been important pillars in our collective struggle to help hundreds of thousands of our brothers and sisters in need here in Kuwait, as well as back home in India.

"We can all be proud that today, as we celebrate India's 75-year journey of independence, our country has emerged as a nation that inspires the world and is a leading country in the comity of nations contributing immensely to world peace, stability and prosperity. The vision of creating an environment of peace and security to ensure a better world for the entire humanity has always been the guiding spirit of India," concluded the ambassador.

India at 75 and with its 1.3 billion voices has become an indispensable strategic actor and a force to reckon with and factor in all global calculations. If the past can serve as a good guide for the future, it is evident that India, with its distinctive ability to forge unity from diversity, will be key to traversing the many global challenges that call for global cooperation, coordination and solidarity among nations.

So, this 15 August, under the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' initiative, let us celebrate with pride the magnificent 75-year march of Independent India, and look forward with hope to the glories that await the nation as it heads towards its centennial celebration of independence in 2047.

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India's March Towards 'AatmaNirbharta'

By Amb. (Dr.) Mohan Kumar

Former Indian Ambassador now retired and a full time academic

It was in May 2020 that Indian Prime Minister Modi made a clarion call for a Bharat that was 'Aatmanirbhar'. It is important to clarify what this term meant and what it did not. While a rough translation of the word 'Aatmanirbharta' is no doubt 'self-reliant', it is nevertheless not the kind of self-reliance that India arguably believed and practiced in the early years of its independence up until the seventies and eighties. It is easy to state what it is not. It is certainly not autarchy; it is certainly not inward-looking; and it is most certainly not stopping imports and making every product at home. It may be more prudent to think of 'Aatmanirbharta' as Self-Reliance 2.0.

In this framework of Self-Reliance 2.0, the PM clarified that rather than be self-centred, India will open up even more to

the world outside, guided by its motto: 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', or the World is one family. The prime minister went on to say that Aatmanirbharta will stand on five pillars: economy, infrastructure, technology, demography and demand. Explaining the raison d'être of Aatmanirbharta he said that this should prepare India for participation in global supply chains and that this is a battle India cannot afford to lose.

There is little doubt that the global COVID-19 pandemic played a significant role in India's push for Self-Reliance 2.0. Take the simple example of PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) and N-95 masks. At the beginning of the pandemic, India was not making any N-95 masks. Today, India manufactures at least 200,000 N-95 masks a day, if not more.



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Even more impressive is India's own record of vaccinating its mammoth population. In 2020 when COVID-19 emerged, almost no one believed India could ever fully vaccinate its population and that such an exercise would take years. Yet, in July 2022, about 18 months after the first vaccination began, India completed 2 billion doses of vaccines for its citizens.

The story of how this was achieved is worthy of a case study which will cover vital issues such as public-private partnership, centre-state cooperation and not to mention building awareness among citizens and getting their participation willingly in this exercise. Indeed, the WHO and others have praised India and the best practices here will be emulated the world over. Proving that Self-Reliance 2.0 is not just for Indians, India also exported a large number of vaccines and PPE to countries all over the world. The latest statistics from the MEA website indicates that around 240 million vaccines have been delivered to 101 countries, of which there are developed, developing and least-developed countries. The story of India being the pharmacy of the world is too well known to bear any repetition here. All of this is real 'aatmanirbharta' at work.

The COWIN platform that India used for distributing vaccines to its mammoth population was remarkable. COWIN is essentially a cloud-based IT solution for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating COVID vaccination in India. By July 2021, India decided to make this open platform available to all countries for their use. In the COWIN global conclave organized in July 2021, as many as 142 countries in the world expressed interest in adopting this platform. Again, this is Aatmanirbharta at work.

The war in Ukraine has had a profound impact not just in Europe,

but more importantly for developing and least-developed countries. Specifically, the war has impacted food, energy and commodity prices adversely. Wheat shortage in particular, is expected to affect Africa and the Middle-East quite significantly. At a time like this, it is comforting to know that India's position when it comes to food security for its huge population is satisfactory. This is yet another manifestation of Self-Reliance 2.0. Indeed, not only was India able to give away food-grains and lentils to 800 million of its citizens as part of the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, India was also able to carry out modest exports of food-grains to low income countries that needed it. Again, Aatmanirbharta at work.

Yet another amazing success story of Aatmanirbharta is the case of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) which is a government-backed centralized digital payment gateway, widely popular in India. To understand the significance of UPI, consider this: India accounted for the largest number of worldwide digital transactions in 2021 at a whopping 48 billion, a number that is nearly three times bigger than China's (18 billion) and is at least six times bigger than the transactions of US, Canada, UK, France and Germany combined. Voices in the US are saying that we must learn from India which is leapfrogging into the future. Again, Aatmanirbharta at work. The above is not to suggest that everything is rosy. India faces monumental challenges with regard to eradication of poverty, job creation and investment in health/education/skills of its vast population. But the lessons are clear: India is sui generis and it is only an 'Indian' model that will work for India and Indians. Hence, the capital importance of Aatmanirbharta. After all, as we have seen through the examples provided above, 'AatmanirbharBharat' is not just good for India but also for the world at large.

Happy Independence Day, India.

To the most vibrant and friendly nation
that has always inspired us!



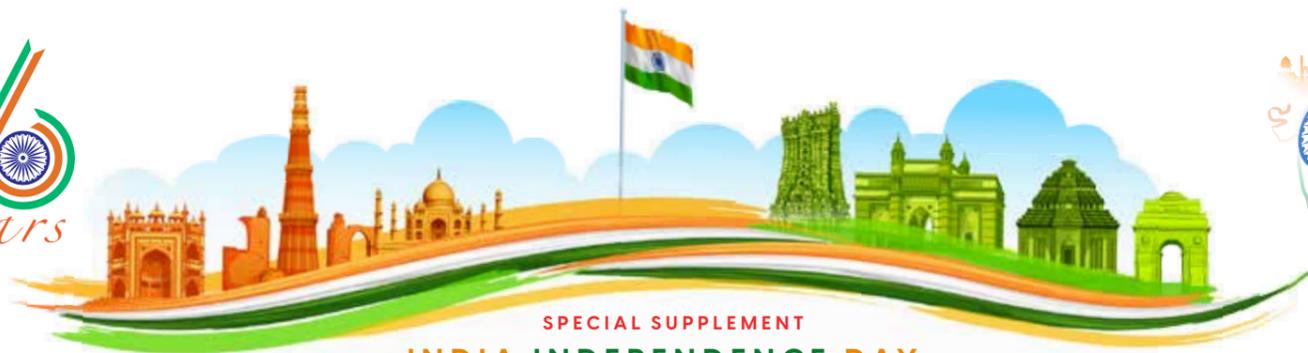
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Indian economy notches decadal high growth rate

Globally the seventh-largest country by area, the second-most populous country by virtue of its population of over 1.38 billion people, and the most populous democracy in the world, India boasts of an economy that is the world's third-largest by purchasing power parity (PPP) after China and the United States.

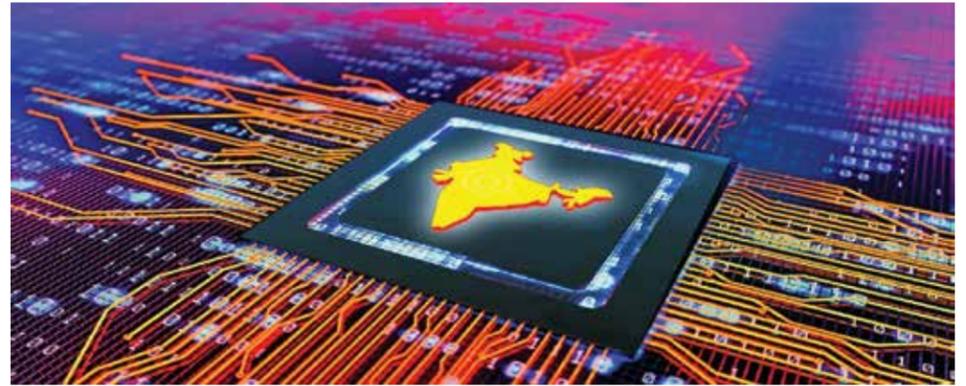
This remarkable economic growth was made possible only after the country decided to dump the socialist model of development that it chose to follow in the immediate decades after independence in 1947. Eversince the economy opened up through liberalization policies that began in the 1990s, the country's economy has never looked back and it has been growing from strength to strength and making gains in various economic measurements and metrics year after year.

Political and financial leadership in India is also increasingly passing on to new generations that have had little or no experience of the earlier dirigisme — which is complete state control over the economy

that was characterized in the Indian context by the often derided 'License Raj'. In line with the economic liberalization and political changes in leadership, India has been introducing and implementing a slew of bold and sometimes avant-garde economic measures that encourage and facilitate trade, exports, and investments, all of which help fuel growth and development of the country.

In recent years, India has often been in the forefront of adopting prudent and proactive economic measures to overcome unprecedented challenges such as the global COVID-19 pandemic that erupted in early 2020, and the more recent geo-political upheavals in Europe and elsewhere. The country has also not shied away from making economic decisions that are in its best interests, despite political and economic pressures being brought to bear on it by outside powers.

The independent decisions and policies have been instrumental in supporting the country's economic resilience that has helped it bounce back from the lows experienced with



the start of the pandemic in 2020 and which continued with the high energy prices in 2021. Despite these challenges, the resilience of the Indian economy is evident from recent figures published by international financial institutions including the World Bank and International Monetary Fund.

Provisional estimates of GDP released by the authorities on 31 May, 2022 show that the Indian economy has fully recovered to the pre-pandemic real GDP level of 2019-20. Real GDP growth in FY 2021-22 stood at 8.7 percent, which is 1.5 percent higher than the real GDP in FY 2019-20. These figures are associated with stronger growth momentum, indicating increased economic demand. The growth story is also reiterated by a new report by analysts at Morgan Stanley, a global leader in investment management and financial services.

According to Morgan Stanley, India is likely to be the fastest-growing Asian economy in the Asian region in 2022-23, as it is best-positioned to generate robust domestic demand, helped by economic policy reforms, a young workforce and business investments. Economists at the firm project that India's GDP growth will average 7 percent during the 2022-23 period, contributing 28 percent to the Asian growth and 22 percent to global growth respectively.

Incidentally, India's growth rate is also expected to be the highest among the largest world economies, and the economy is forecast to have its best run in over a decade as pent-up demand soars to above pre-COVID levels. Government policies in recent years, including lower corporate taxes introduced in 2019 to woo manufacturers and revive private investments, and a production-linked incentive (PLI) scheme to aid domestic manufacturing, which was passed in 2020 are expected to catalyze and sustain domestic demand, especially in investment.

The key change in India's structural story as identified by analysts is the clear shift in policy focus toward increasing the economy's productive capacity. Policymakers have undertaken a series of reforms in recent years that will catalyze an increase in the private capex cycle, thereby assisting in the release of a powerful productivity dynamic and the initiation of a virtuous cycle. In addition, the country has the potential to benefit from the supply chain diversification plans being envisaged by many developed countries.

A significant portion of this optimism on the Indian economy stems from a drop in commodity prices, particularly crude oil. With oil/commodity prices down 23-37 percent since the March 2022 peak, Morgan Stanley expects macro stability indicators to return to the comfort zone and the Reserve Bank of

India (RBI) to avoid aggressive rate hikes in the future. Aside from falling commodity prices, the economy's reopening earlier this year has also aided recovery, said Morgan Stanley.

In the meantime, India's merchandise exports, which topped US\$417 billion in fiscal year 2021-22, are now expected to surpass those figures in the current fiscal. Early indications of a buoyant export sector in this fiscal came with figures showing exports totalling over \$157 billion in the first four months from April to July 2022. This export volume marked a 20 percent increase over the figures registered during the same period in the previous fiscal year.

Besides merchandise exports, the Indian economy is making headway in most other sectors as well. India's consumer digital economy is expected to become a \$1 trillion market by 2030, growing from \$538 billion in 2020, and driven by the strong adoption of online services such as e-commerce and edtech. E-commerce in particular has been showing remarkable progress ever since it became a mainstream contributor to the economy during the pandemic period.

According to latest industry sources, the Indian e-commerce market is expected to grow to \$188 billion by 2025 and cross \$350 billion by 2030 from the \$46 billion it was in 2020. Other figures show that the Indian e-commerce platforms generated sales with a Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of over \$9 billion in 2021, which marked a 23 percent increase from the previous year's figure of \$7.4 billion. In the meantime, India's social commerce — the buying and selling of goods or services directly within a social media platform — also has the potential to expand to \$20 billion in fiscal year 2025, growing at a CAGR of 55-60 percent.

Indian online grocery market has been another significant component in the country's e-commerce success story. Propelled by rising smartphone penetration, the imminent launch of 5G network and increasing consumer wealth, the Indian online grocery market is now projected to cross \$27 billion by 2027, from the \$4 billion it was in fiscal year 2021, and recording an expansion at a Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of 33 percent.

It is noteworthy that after China and the US, India had the third-largest online shopper base of 150 million in fiscal year 2021. This figure is expected to increase to 350 million by fiscal year 2026. According to media reports Indian consumers are increasingly adopting 5G smartphones even before the rollout of the next-gen mobile broadband technology in the country. Smartphone shipments reached 150 million units and 5G smartphone shipments crossed 4 million in 2020, driven by high consumer demand post-lockdown.





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We Salute the People & the Government of INDIA



**LONG LIVE
INDO-KUWAIT FRIENDSHIP**



Harnessing India's Space Technology Potential

By Amb. P. S. Raghavan

On June 11 this year, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the headquarters of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe). It was a significant step in the operationalization of reforms launched by the Government of India to promote private sector participation in India's space sector, providing access to space assets, data and facilities, which were hitherto entirely with the government entity, Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

IN-SPACe is an independent single-window agency, which will permit and oversee activities of private enterprises in building and launching satellites, and providing space-based services. It will evolve suitable mechanisms for sharing of ISRO's technologies and expertise at no cost or at reasonable prices, to avoid reinventing the wheel. ISRO's capital-intensive, high technology facilities will be made available for use by private enterprises. In short, the Indian government will, through IN-SPACe, ensure a level playing field for private industry, with enabling policies and a friendly regulatory environment.

India's space industry has recorded remarkable successes over the past decades, in the face of a hostile external environment (sanctions, export controls, technology denials) for much of the period of its development. ISRO has developed end-to-end technologies for space-based services and applications in various sectors. It has indigenously developed sophisticated technologies of strategic importance. It designs, builds and launches satellites for high throughput communications, geo-imaging and high-resolution earth observation, and operates an independent Indian stand-alone navigation satellite system (NavIC). In scientific and developmental applications, the Indian space programme is, in some respects, ahead of that of some of the more advanced space-faring nations.

The global space industry today generates revenues of nearly \$400 billion. This figure is projected to grow to over \$1 trillion by 2040 and \$2.7 trillion by 2050. This growth will be driven by increasing demand for new automation technologies and miniaturisation, resulting in cost, time and quality benefits. Space technology is already widely accessible, and more sophisticated versions will further widen its reach, as new generation networks and enhanced satellite navigation services upgrade



connectivity with faster communication and high-resolution images. In addition to Elon Musk's SpaceX and Jeff Bezos' Blue Origin, a flourishing private space industry has arisen, offering a range of space services.

India's share in the global space market is miniscule, despite rising demand. The reason is that ISRO has had a near-monopoly over the supply of these services, and its primary focus has been developmental and scientific applications for the use of the government and its agencies.

The demand for dedicated communication (Satcom) capacity, as well as Earth Observation (EO) applications is rising rapidly. Large corporates are willing to invest in their own satellite, thereby ensuring captive capacity for their future needs. New applications like inflight and maritime broadband connectivity, and government initiatives like Digital India and Bharatnet offer new opportunities for companies in the Indian Satcom market. With growth in EO technology, mining companies can replace their field equipment with satellite-based analytical and monitoring tools.

As of now, Satcom services' demand in India is estimated at around \$11 billion. This does not reflect true demand, because of the supply-driven framework. ISRO's in-house capacity provides communication mainly to remote geographical areas and islands, which terrestrial cables cannot access economically. Imported satcom services are considerably more costly, thereby depressing demand. When the private sector manufactures and launches satellites, the market will move to a truly demand-driven situation. INSPACE will oversee the rollout of policies to enable privately-owned communication satellites and ground stations, with allotment of suitable orbital slots to them.

The first important step in commercializing launch vehicle production was taken with the award of a contract for manufacturing five Polar Satellite Launch Vehicles (PSLVs) to a consortium of the public sector undertaking Hindustan Aeronautics Limited and the private sector company Larsen & Toubro, for \$103 million.

Earth observation data for satellite imagery is also an under-provided market, since regulations hitherto mandated that data requirement of customers should be sourced only through ISRO. Again, ISRO's capacity is almost fully utilized for the requirements of the government and its agencies. To meet

the demand from other users, it imports and resells data, making it more expensive. The new policy will permit privately owned and operated space-based remote sensing systems for activities within and outside India.

The demand for geospatial data in India is projected to grow to nearly \$12 billion by 2029-30. The government has recently taken measures to nurture and develop the geospatial ecosystem of the country. It has lifted the requirement of licence or prior approval for the collection, generation, dissemination, storage and/or digitisation of geospatial data and maps. This will spur growth in downstream applications by significantly reducing the price of high-resolution data and its applications.

As the repository of space technologies, ISRO has a crucial role to play in sharing them with Indian industry. Indian entrepreneurs could also build technology partnerships with foreign companies willing to invest in bringing satellite technology to India.

ISRO has equipped IN-SPACe with a technical lab with state-of-the-art equipment for design, fabrication, integration and testing of satellites, which will be available to Indian companies. More modern facilities and infrastructure are to be made available to the space industry.

The use of space-based technologies in warfare, intelligence and defence has been highlighted by recent conflicts in West Asia and Ukraine. Space-based systems for defence communications, high-resolution imagery for target detection and other real-time information are important defence needs. The secrecy involved in defence applications means that these products have to be indigenously manufactured, serviced and upgraded. There may be opportunities for reputed Indian companies in this area.

There has already been a rapid growth in space start-ups and companies upgrading manufacturing capability in the space sector. An industry body, the Indian Space Association, has been formed to promote the interests of this nascent industry and for policy advocacy with the government and its agencies. This is an important role at this stage, when the government, ISRO and the private space industry are all seeking to evolve an optimal public-private partnership.

If the reforms progress as projected, the Indian space sector should generate – in domestic sales and exports – at least USD 50 billion of revenues by 2025.

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INCREDIBLE



Statue of Unity

It's huge, almost gigantic! That is the first reaction most people have as they speed down the winding road leading to the towering Statue of Unity (SoU). A long bridge connects the mainland to the Sadhu Bet Island, on which the statue stands. Silhouetted against the surrounding Vindhya and Satpura mountain ranges, the colossal statue almost seems to pierce the skyline.

The legacy of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, India's Iron Man, lives on in the form of this massive statue dominating the Narmada river basin. He towers over the landscape, as if, keeping an eye over the land he helped become independent. Standing at a height of 182 m, the Statue of Unity, is the tallest in the world. It depicts Sardar Patel in a walking pose, clad in his characteristic simple attire. About 100 times the height of a five-and-a-half-ft-tall person, one can see the statue from as far away as 8 km. The SoU was inaugurated on October 31, 2018, by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to commemorate Patel's 143rd birth anniversary.

The statue has been built on a star-shaped geometric base that covers the entire Sadhu Hill. It has a viewing gallery at 135 m, at the statue's chest level, that can be reached via two high-speed elevators. The gateway to the elevators is through an exhibition gallery, in which you can marvel at a model of the statue and an elaborate blueprint, among other exhibits. The elevators travel 150 m in half a minute and can carry 26 people at one time. From the viewing gallery, reinforced with steel grids, you can take in the breathtaking views of the surroundings and of the Sardar Sarovar reservoir at a distance. Interestingly, it's not just the statue that throws light on Patel's life and achievements, but also a spectacular laser show, which talks in detail about the statesman's life.

It traces the life of Patel and talks about why the statue has been erected in his honour. The show also outlines the leader's contribution to the nation. However, what really fascinates are the realistic projections that show Patel in different phases of his life: in a lawyer's garb, images from his 'Bharat Chodo' movement (asking the British to leave India) and in his characteristic kurta pajama.

Constructed by engineering giant Larsen and Toubro, SoU was built in a record time of 33 months. It is 177 ft taller than China's Spring Temple Buddha statue (the second tallest in the world), which took 11 years to build. The SoU comprises two semi-joined, composite concrete cylindrical cores surrounded by a steel space frame to support the external cladding. The face of the statue is particularly noteworthy and 93-year-old sculptor Ram Sutar has made it to have a poised countenance. Patel's head is held high with his arms at his side, and the leader is supposed to appear to be walking on water towards the Sardar Sarovar Dam, with his left leg placed slightly forward. It is said that figuring out the perfect posture for the statue was a challenge. The engineers scanned around 2,000 photographs, and consulted several historians to choose the final picture. Finally, a 2-dimensional image was converted into a 3-dimensional model.

Munnar

A lush carpet of rolling green, interrupted by low rises of mountains of the gorgeous Western Ghats, Munnar, in Kerala, is dotted with huge emerald plantations and pristine waterfalls. No matter where you go in Munnar, a mixed scent of tea, coffee and cardamom will follow you everywhere. With a bountiful of natural treasures, Munnar leaves one rapt with its spectacular and awe-inspiring views. Such is

One of the oldest civilisations in the world, India is a mosaic of multicultural experiences. With a rich heritage and myriad attractions, the country is among the most popular tourist destinations in the world. It covers an area of 32, 87,263 sq. km, extending from the snow-covered Himalayan heights to the tropical rain forests of the south. As the 7th largest country in the world, India stands apart from the rest of Asia, marked off as it is by mountains and the sea, which give the country a distinct geographical entity.

Fringed by the Great Himalayas in the north, it stretches southwards and at the Tropic of Cancer, tapers off into the Indian Ocean between the Bay of Bengal on the east and the Arabian Sea on the west. As you travel the expanse of the country, you are greeted by diverse nuances of cuisines, faiths, arts, crafts, music, nature, lands, tribes, history and adventure sports. India has a mesmerizing conflation of the old and the new. As the bustling old bazaars rub shoulders with swanky shopping malls, and majestic monuments accompany luxurious heritage hotels, the quintessential traveller can get the best of both worlds. Head to the mountains, enjoy a beach retreat or cruise through the golden Thar, India has options galore for all.

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the beauty of the myriad shades of green of the landscape that Munnar is often called the Kashmir of South India.

Nestled at the confluence of three gushing rivers- Mudrapuzha, Nallathanbi and Kundala-Munnar literally means three rivers. During the blooming season, every 12 years, the town of Munnar is transmogrified into an artist's canvas, when the beautiful and vibrant Neelakurinji flower carpets the land in hues of purple and blue. It is truly a sight to behold as the town acquires a paradisiacal setting.

Replete with picturesque greenery, valleys and mountains along with a plethora of flora and fauna in its teeming national parks and wildlife sanctuaries, Munnar is an exhilarating and peaceful travel destination. It offers a respite from the chaos of daily life and all its stress with cloudy skies, constantly pleasant weather, delectable cuisine and hillocks and greenery.

Munnar is also home to the highest peak of South India, Anamudi, at a height of 2,695 m. This peak has a number of trails that make it a must-visit for trekkers and backpackers. Given its tourist appeal, the state government has guaranteed that access to this hill town is easy – it is well-connected to Bengaluru, Kochi, Mysore and other larger cities, ensuring an influx of travellers all year round, including the rainy season, when the Munnar is its most vibrant and fragrant self.

The region around Munnar was once the summer retreat of the erstwhile British Government and several maharajas of the Travancore Kingdom. It was once known as the

High Range of Travancore.

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Scale the heights of thrill, or plummet to the depths of excitement or if you're truly daring, survey gorgeous lands and waters, while suspended in the sky. All this and more awaits you as you explore land, water and sky adventures in the country. From trekking, mountain biking and mountaineering in the secluded snow-capped Himalayas to surfing, rafting, scuba diving and snorkelling, there are a multitude of options for thrill seekers.

India's diverse terrain ensures optimum adrenaline-pumping for those looking to tread on the exhilarating side of a holiday. The north beckons adventure seekers with the gregarious spirit of the Himalayas that offer visitors thrilling experiences in destinations like Manali, Dharamsala, Ladakh, Srinagar, and Kedarnath. In south, you can visit Ootacamund and Yercaud, while Goa, in the western part of the country, is a delight for water-sport enthusiasts. In the east and northeast, you can head to Kurseong (West Bengal), Tawang (Arunachal Pradesh), Sikkim, Dirang (Arunachal Pradesh), and Bhalukpong (Arunachal Pradesh) for a tryst with adrenaline. Rest assured that trained professionals make sure everything on your adventure-filled itinerary follows the strictest standards of safety. All you have to do is sign up and enjoy all the activities

on offer!

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It's all in the mind, and reflected on the body... And our ancestors were well versed with this simple concept, owing to which many ancient sciences and techniques are still in practice. These have received worldwide renown and still continue to grow.



Taj Mahal

Most famous in India

India is a remarkable tourist destination that offers a plethora of experiences to travellers. From the grandiose Taj Mahal, one of the wonders of the world, to opulent palaces and forts, India displays a variety of heritage riches that were crafted hundreds of years ago.

As its bustling bazaars promise to give you the shopping experience of a lifetime, its serene natural retreats assure a scenic respite from the din. The various wildlife sanctuaries and national parks, along with adventure sports opportunities

add to the thrill of a holiday. India is a delightful place with lots to explore and discover. As you script your odyssey travelling through the country, be prepared to be awed by the splendour of the country that beckons time and again.

Mughal emperor Shah Jahan, the creator of the Taj Mahal, said that the beauty of the monument made "the sun and the moon shed tears from their eyes". It has also been described as a "teardrop on the cheek of eternity" by Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore. Every year, thousands of tourists from around the world make a beeline for this breathtakingly ethereal marble monument, considered by many as the most beautiful building constructed by man. The monument was built as a memorial by Mughal emperor Shah Jahan for his deceased wife, Mumtaz Mahal. It is one of the seven wonders of the world and is a monument of pride for not just Agra but also India.

A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is featured in almost all literature about India and is one of the most enduring images of the country. Its name is believed to have been drawn from the Persian language: 'taj' means crown and 'mahal' means palace, thus making this the palace of the crown. Interestingly, the queen it was built in memory of, originally named Arjumand Begum, held the name Mumtaz Mahal, which meant the crown of the palace. Although it is best known as a symbol of love, a grieving emperor's ode to his deceased queen, another legend sees the Taj Mahal as an embodiment of Shah Jahan's vision of kingship. The story goes that he sought to build something akin to heaven on earth, a spectacular, unbelievably beautiful monument that reinforced the power as well as the perceived divinity of the monarch as next only to the Almighty.



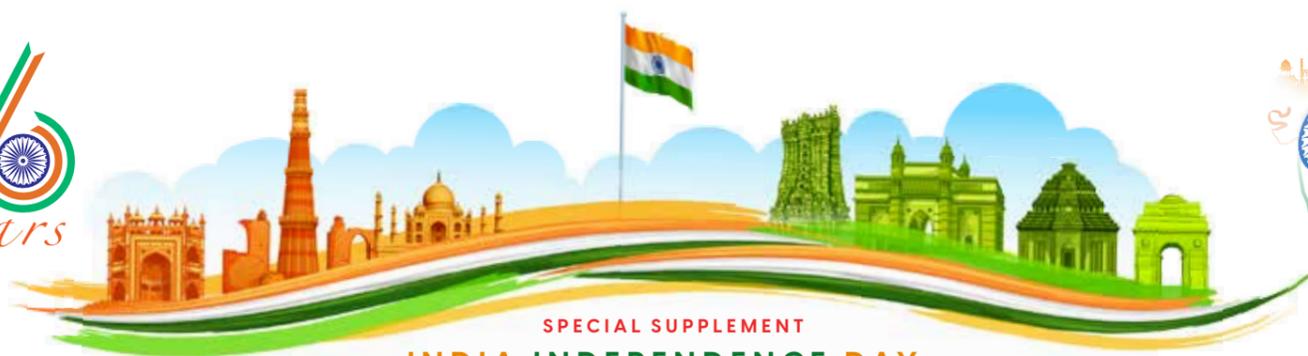
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Embassy always places highest priority to the welfare and well-being of the Indian community in Kuwait

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

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 and also for their support to the Indian community. 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.

This year marks the 75th anniversary of India's Independence. It is a significant milestone in our quest to build a new, resurgent and self-sufficient India, an Aatmanirbhar Bharat. In his address to the nation on the occasion of the 75th Independence Day of India, Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi said: "There comes a time in the development journey of every country when the nation redefines itself afresh and pushes

forward with new resolutions. Today that time has arrived in the development journey of India. We should not limit the occasion of 75 years of Indian independence to just one ceremony. We must lay the groundwork for new resolutions and move forward with a new determination.

"Starting from here, the entire journey of the next 25 years, when we celebrate the centenary of Indian independence, marks the Amrit period of the creation of a new India. The fulfillment of our resolutions in this Amrit period will take us to the hundredth anniversary of Indian independence with pride."

Hon'ble Prime Minister of India continued, "The goal of 'Amrit Kaal' is to ascend to new heights of prosperity for India and the citizens of India. The goal of 'Amrit Kaal' is to create an India where the level of facilities is not dividing the village and the city. The goal of 'Amrit Kaal' is to build an India where the government does not interfere unnecessarily in the lives of citizens. The goal of 'Amrit Kaal' is to build an India where there is world's every modern



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75th Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav
15th August INDEPENDENCE DAY

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CARGO	22410299	22473179	22455359	23925209	98760476	99692489	24579449
	99692499	98010087	99091949	99653609	99692496	99692491	98010070
	MURGAB	MALIYA	FAHAHEEL	FARWANIYA	KHAITAN	MAHBOULA	JAHRA
TRAVELS	22430222	22497259	23934059	96714616	99992352	98896376	24579449
	90026400	22497594	23934069	98760474	24760608	99692487	90026394
	98010073	90026402	99692503	90067050	24760609	94965710	98010070

infrastructure. We should not be lesser than anyone. This is the resolve of the crores of countrymen.

"But the resolve remains incomplete if it is not accompanied by extreme hard work and courage. Therefore, we have to realize all our resolutions with hard work and courage, and these dreams and resolutions are also for effective contribution to a safe and prosperous world beyond our borders. Amrit Kaal is of 25 years. But we do not have to wait for long to achieve our goals. We have to start now. We do not have a moment to lose. This is the right time. Our country also has to change and we as citizens have to change ourselves too. We also have to adapt ourselves to the changing era."

Last few years have been challenging for the entire world as the COVID-19 pandemic threatened the very existence of human race. During this hour of crisis, India not only managed to face the COVID-19 pandemic with great fortitude but also stayed true to our age-old ethos of 'Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam', where we treat the world as one big family. In July this year, we created history by crossing the special figure of two billion vaccine doses in India's domestic vaccination drive which was unparalleled in scale and speed. This has also strengthened the global fight against COVID-19.

India was the first responder to calls of help and assistance from many countries. India, as the pharmacy of the world, dispatched medicines and medical supplies to over 150 countries in the world. Our medical professionals travelled all across the world to augment and support healthcare infrastructures of other countries. India also supplied vaccines to more than hundred countries around the world, including 200,000 doses of Made-in-India vaccine to the friendly State of Kuwait. At the same time, Kuwait, with the active support of the Indian diaspora, emerged as one of the major suppliers of medical oxygen to India when India faced the second phase of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the many challenges posed by the pandemic, the Indian economy continues to remain on firm footing. 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat' (Self-Reliant India) campaign which envisages a merger of the local with the global, has played the role of a catalyst in India's economic revival. The massive business friendly reforms and

policies contributed in unleashing the true potential of the country. India stands at 63rd position among 190 nations in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business ranking and in the Top 50 countries in the Global Innovation Index (GII) of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

India is currently in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) as a non-permanent member and it continues to place an undeterred faith and belief in multilateral approach taking the lead on issues such as fight against international terrorism, climate change, energy security, food security, and the reform of multilateral institutions. India's presidency of the G-20 in 2023 presents an enormous opportunity to accelerate sustainable growth within India and beyond.

At the bilateral front, we continue to make steady progress in our engagement with the State of Kuwait. As we conclude the year-long celebrations that marked the 60th anniversary of establishment of our diplomatic relations, I extend my sincere gratitude to all who collaborated with the Embassy to organize hundreds of commemorative events which made the anniversary year a memorable one. Our bilateral trade and investment continued to grow despite the many challenges posed by COVID-19 pandemic. India remains a reliable partner for Kuwait in maintaining supply of essential commodities including foodstuffs.

We at the Embassy always place highest priority to the welfare and well-being of the Indian community in Kuwait. I thank our brave frontline healthcare professionals, our doctors and our nurses for their selfless service to the community. The Embassy continues to be your 'Home Away from Home'. I thank the Indian Community Support Group (ICSG), Indian Doctors Forum (IDF), Indian Business and Professional Council (IBPC) and the many professional bodies, cultural groups and associations and the many volunteers and media representatives for joining hands with the Embassy to extend support to those in need.

Once again, on this joyous and proud occasion of the 75th anniversary of India's Independence I wish every Indian in Kuwait and all friends of India in Kuwait good health and happiness.

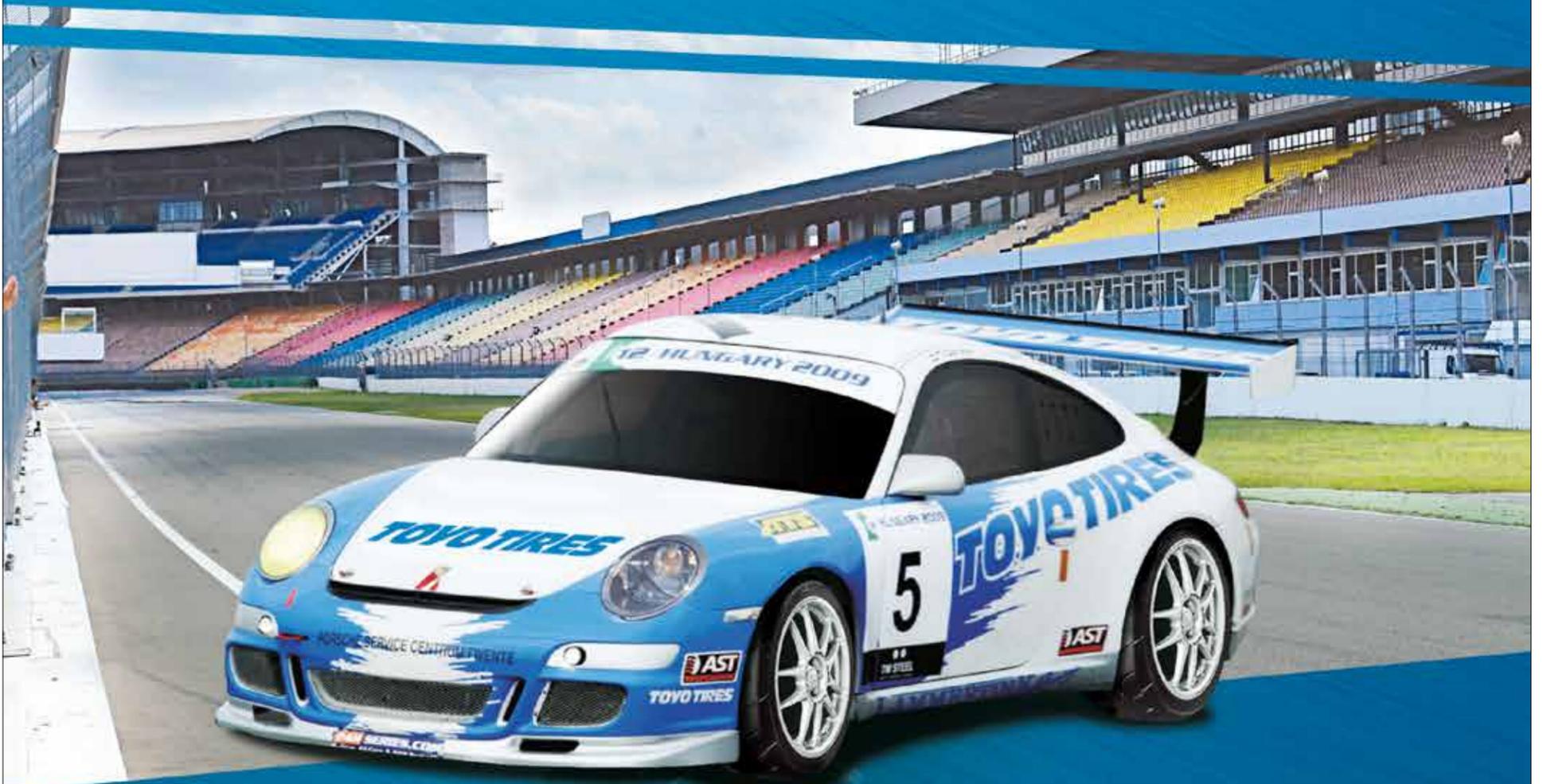
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India-Kuwait relations, an enduring bond of friendship

India celebrates the 75th anniversary of its independence on 15 August 2022. Celebrating this joyous event, The Times Kuwait extends warm greetings and best wishes to all Indians and to the many well-wishers of India in Kuwait. We also take this opportunity to convey our best wishes for the continued good health and well-being of His Highness the Amir Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Crown Prince Sheikh Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, His Highness the Prime Minister Sheikh Ahmad Al Nawaf Al-Sabah, to the Government and to the friendly people of the State of Kuwait.

On this occasion we take a brief look at bilateral relations between India and Kuwait and how the strong ties between the two friendly countries have withstood the test of time and grown stronger over the years.

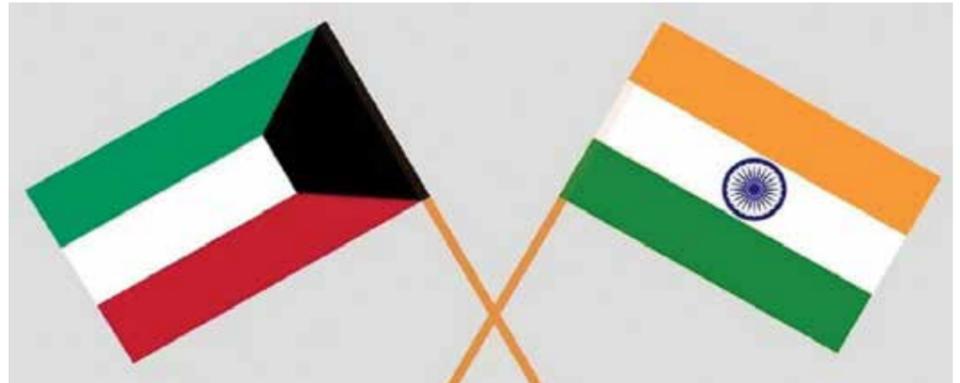


THE TIMES KUWAIT REPORT

Close and friendly relations between India and Kuwait are rooted in history and have withstood the currents of time. Discovery of Indian artifacts such as pottery and jewelry from Failaka Island in Kuwait point to commercial and cultural interactions dating back several millennia. Over the centuries, historical trade links, arising from geographical proximity and cultural affinities, gave rise to social ties that have been cemented over time.

Relations between the two countries before the discovery of oil in Kuwait involved seafaring Kuwaiti merchants traveling to ports along the western coast of India. Initially, trade was in dates, pearls and pedigreed Arabian horses for the stables of India's maharajas and other wealthy families, in exchange for teak wood, food grains and most other essential commodities that Kuwait needed.

With the discovery in the late 1930s of oil



in Kuwait, the country embarked on a path of progress and transformation that led to the creation of a modern independent state in 1961. India was among the first countries to recognize the independent State of Kuwait in 1962, and this gesture of solidarity was reciprocated when Kuwait became one of the first countries to lend moral support to India during the Chinese aggression of 1962.

Kuwait and its new-found wealth soon attracted Indian workers, technicians and merchants to the country; first in a trickle and then in a flow which has continued over the years.

Today, the Indian diaspora in Kuwait form the largest expatriate community in the country. It is noteworthy that through the years, the leadership, government and people of both countries have remained committed to maintaining the age-old bilateral relations, and continue to look forward to strengthening and expanding this mutually enriching experience in the years to come.

To Kuwait, India is not only a major trading partner, Indians also account for the largest expatriate community in the country. By the end of 2020, the size of the Indian community in Kuwait reached almost a million contributing to the economic growth of Kuwait.

Through the centuries of trade and cultural ties, and the six decades of diplomatic relations between the two countries, the relationship has gone from strength to strength and enhanced the people-to-people relations. The presence of nearly a million Indians in Kuwait and the thousands of Kuwaitis who make regular trips to India for business, education, tourism and healthcare needs, attest to the ongoing strong ties between peoples of the two countries.

India-Kuwait bilateral relations have continued to intensify with an increasing number of high-level bilateral visits on both sides. India has consistently been among the top-ten trading partners of Kuwait. Of this trade, India imports mainly oil and its derivatives, while Indian exports to Kuwait include food items, cereals, textiles, garments, electrical and engineering equipment, ceramics, machinery and mechanical appliances, cars, trucks, buses, tyres, chemicals, jewelry, handicrafts, metal products, iron and steel, and others.

Indian public sector companies in the aviation, insurance, and telecommunication sectors have been operating in Kuwait for ages, while Indian private companies from the construction, power and petroleum sectors, such as Larsen & Toubro, Punj Lloyd and Kalpataru have implemented several major projects in Kuwait.

Meanwhile, state-owned companies in Kuwait such as Kuwait Petroleum Corporation and Kuwait Airways have offices in India and several large companies from the private sector in Kuwait, including Alghanim Group, the KAPICO Group, Global Investment House and Kuwait

Finance House have been doing business in India. In recent years, India and Kuwait have been exploring possibilities of joint-venture projects in the oil and gas sector in both countries, and Indian companies are active in bidding for projects in Kuwait's mega infrastructure development programs.

As part of its efforts to improve and increase trade, commerce and tourism, the Indian Embassy in Kuwait regularly organizes trade exhibitions, seminars, and facilitates participation of Indian delegations in international trade exhibitions in Kuwait, as well as encourages business delegations from Kuwait to visit India.

India and Kuwait participate in various global forums and international gatherings where the two sides share consensus on issues of global dimension, and support just causes around the world. Both countries have called for non-interference in the internal matters of other countries, constructive engagement over aggression, non-discriminatory global trade practices, equitable global responsibility for the protection of the environment, disarmament, regional stability, international peace and sustainable growth among other issues.

In the three-quarters of a century that India has been independent, the country has achieved tremendous growth and development that has at times been slow and at others rapid. Through these often tumultuous and checkered years, India has maintained a proactive and pragmatic foreign policy that fundamentally considers the world community as part of a single large global family whose members must live together in peace and harmony, work and grow together, and have trust in each other for the benefit of all humanity.

This Indian growth story and its success is a triumph of our collective human spirit — it is a triumph of hope, of devotion, of hard work, of dedication to not only the well-being of the people of our nation but also to those in other countries and to the larger cause of humanity.

As the two countries complete their historic 60 years of diplomatic relations, it bears remembering that the destinies of India and Kuwait are inter-linked by centuries of historical ties, close geographic proximity, strong cultural affinity and an open and broadminded viewpoint that embraces diversity and pluralism. The overarching vision that Kuwait and India have for a future is also defined within the shared parameters of peace, stability and economic prosperity, democratic values and a global outlook. To ensure a stable and secure regional environment and continued economic prosperity for its people, Kuwait and India must consciously work towards nurturing and developing the strategic relations that have epitomized their interactions for centuries.



India INDEPENDENCE DAY
15 AUGUST

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Turning people's load into a successful business venture

As it turns out, one man's burden could become another man's treasure. This is literally true for Dr. Saguber Ali, whose business success could be attributed to his cargo company. Back in 2004, when he flew all the way from India to Kuwait he did not know that he would one day lift the weight off people's shoulders by establishing his door-to-door cargo service, GMS Express Cargo. Although Dr. Ali initially rolled out his career as a successful pharmacist at a local hospital, he pursued the freight industry and hit the jackpot when he built one of the most reliable logistics services in the country.

Venturing the business world: Dr. Ali hails from a traditional Indian village named Poolangal in Tamil Nadu state; he took his Bachelor of Pharmacy in JSS College Ooty and MBA from Annamalai University and is currently working on his research paper on Indian logistics for his doctorate degree. Beyond academics, he is a social servant and participates in various Tamil and Indian social forums to extend help to underserved people, and holds a charitable trust for medical and educational aids.

In 2004, Dr. Ali landed in Kuwait and launched his career as a pharmacist at the Royal Hayat Hospital. In 2010, he simultaneously started a pharmacy business and a traditional Indian restaurant in Mahboula. Along the way, he eventually saw a huge opportunity in the logistics sector in Kuwait and opened a reputed door-to-door cargo service to India and worldwide.

"As per my experience, Kuwait is one of the best countries to open a business for Indians. The Indian community in Kuwait has a large number of domestic workers and laborers, and they need very economical prices to send packages back to their families. Even professional workers and business people want to send their goods to their family at affordable prices, while providing professional services. So to meet their requirements, we worked hard to provide 100 percent committed service," Dr.



Ali remarked.

Serving one package at a time: At the onset, Dr. Ali had seen opportunities in the logistics business and he opened GMS Express Cargo, a door-to-door cargo service catering to India and the rest of the world. Through the sponsorship of Faleh Shuwaireb Mohamed Al Ajmi, who saw Dr. Ali's dedication and supported him to expand the business, the company opened its first branch in 2014. Since then, the company has spawned four more branches across Kuwait with the latest one opening in 2020.

To date, the company has sister companies in many cities in India, as well as, the most number of vehicles and professional staff under its belt. With his vision to efficiently serve the people and commitment to deliver goods with competitive prices in the market, his venture reaped success and is today among the top companies in this field in Kuwait.

"I found the act of sending goods to loved ones or families more sentimental than the actual goods, so almost all the Indians

have the habit of sending goods to their families in India, especially the domestic workers. Most of them left their children in the country so they want to send the goods to convey their love for them. And this field has a lot of scope if we do it in a perfect and professional manner," Dr. Ali said.

Delivering top-notch door-to-door service; Dr. Ali built the company with its own freight and shipping forwarding systems from Kuwait to many countries. It has its own clearance and forwarding network in India, and supports many small cargo companies and agents to forward their goods from Kuwait. He weaved the company's reputation by generating safe and committed deliveries, with the goal to win as many satisfied customers as possible in Kuwait and worldwide.

He said that one of the key factors to the company's success is setting a target based on the market potential then working hard to reach that target. He also said that taking chances is a must. According to him, applying his knowledge to plan for the future and solve daily business struggles is

important in this field.

"After GST was launched in India, all cargo companies had encountered issues with airport clearance during that time. Most of the small companies struggled to run the business. But I opened a new branch at the same time," noted Dr. Ali.

"We always give competitive and economical prices in the market. In fact, most of our customers receive their goods before the committed time. GMS had a unique record when the clearance issues occurred in India in the past five years. It is the first company to solve these issues and take out containers than other GCC-based logistics companies," he continued.

Building on challenges and experience: Establishing the company from scratch comes with multitude challenges according to Dr. Ali. He said that before GST, the government of India was providing free clearance without tax if the value of the goods was less than 20,000 Indian rupees. But with GST, the cargo clearance is 41 percent if the value of goods exceeds 5,000 rupees.

"When our company was launched eight years ago in Kuwait, most of the top 20 companies had more than 20 years' experience in the cargo business in the country, so I found it very difficult to switch customers over to GMS. But now, I can proudly say that GMS is the fastest growing company, and is among the top five companies in Kuwait in the field of door-to-door cargo in just eight-years' time," he pointed out.

Looking into the future: Dr. Ali is planning to establish more branches in Kuwait and reach customers' homes through these branches. He said that through this, customers would feel safer and more secure when shipping their goods. He is aiming to launch more branches in other GCC states and in Europe, as well.

Dr. Ali attributes his success to his wife, who supports him in his business, as well as his two sons.





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Branch Off : MIRQAB

Opp. Round About Masjid,

22410634

66473352

Branch Off : FARWANIYA

Old Nesto Hypermarket Complex,
Block-1, St. 123, Mezzanine Floor, Shop No. 8

24715924

66989551

Branch Off : MAHBOULA

Near Safa Restaurant,
Block-1, St. 134, Bld. 85,

51669901

50020113

Best Indian Curry Recipes

The great Indian 'kari', which stems from the word for sauce in Tamil, is known to have originated sometime in ancient South India. Since then it has traveled beyond boundaries and created many fans across the globe. A curry is the ultimate crowd pleaser and on this Independence Day, here are the recipes for the best curries.

Mughlai Karahi Gosht

Ingredients

1 kg leg of lamb on the bone, cut to bite-sized pieces
5 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
3.5cm piece ginger, roughly chopped
4 tbsp vegetable oil
500g tomato, thinly sliced
200g onions, thinly sliced
1 heaped tsp kashmiri chilli powder (or mild paprika) Salt to taste
2 tbsp Greek yogurt
2 tsp coriander powder Pinch turmeric powder
1 tsp cumin seeds, coarsely crushed
1/2 tsp black pepper, coarsely crushed Pinch garam masala powder
2 green chillies, slit lengthwise (optional)
1 tbsp chopped coriander leaves
1 tbsp chopped mint leaves ginger slivers for garnish

Directions:

Place the lamb in a mixing bowl. Crush the garlic and ginger to a coarse paste and add to the lamb. Stir well and set aside for an hour or overnight if you have time. In a large heavy-bottomed saucepan or kadhahi heat the oil on a medium heat.

Add the marinated lamb chunks and fry for 5-6 minutes stirring well to seal. Add the sliced tomatoes and cook for a further 8 minutes. The tomatoes will begin to break down and soften. Add the onions and chilli powder and stir well cooking for a further 3 minutes. Season to taste.

Now lower the heat and simmer with the lid on for 30 minutes stirring half way through the cooking process. Add the Greek yogurt to a small bowl and mix in the ground spices: coriander, turmeric, cumin and black pepper.

Add this to the karahi gosht and stir well, making sure the yogurt does not split. Continue simmering on a low heat and with the lid half over the pan, cook the lamb for 45-50 minutes, stirring half way through cooking, making sure it doesn't stick to the bottom of the pan.

Turn the heat off and while it's still warm add the garam masala, chillies if using, coriander, mint and ginger slivers.



Goan prawn curry with coconut, chilli and coriander

Ingredients

400g raw king prawns, deveined, with tails on
1/2 tsp turmeric powder
1 tbsp Goan vinegar or malt vinegar
Pinch of salt
1 tbsp vegetable oil
90g onion, finely chopped
80g tomato, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, pounded to a paste
2.5cm piece of fresh root ginger, pounded to a paste
400ml coconut milk
80ml water
1 tbsp tamarind paste
3 green chillies, slit lengthwise
Pinch of sugar
Salt to taste
1 tbsp chopped coriander leaves, to garnish

For the powdered spices
1 tsp cumin seeds
15-18 black peppercorns
1 tbsp coriander seed

Directions:

In a bowl add the prawns and sprinkle over the turmeric powder, vinegar and salt. Mix and set aside for 15-20 minutes while you get the curry ready. In a coffee grinder tip in the cumin seeds, peppercorns and coriander seeds.

Blitz to a fine powder and set aside. Heat the oil in a heavy-based saucepan over a medium heat and add the onions and fry for 5-7 minutes until they start to change colour to a light brown.

Add the chopped tomato and fry for 5 minutes. As they begin to soften add the garlic and ginger paste and fry for a further minute. Now add the powdered spices and mix it all together.

Fry for 2 minutes and add the marinated prawns. Stir, coating them in the spiced sauce for a 20-30 seconds, then add the coconut milk, water and tamarind paste. Cover and simmer gently for no more than 4-5 minutes until the prawns turn pink. Add the green chillies and sugar. Garnish with coriander leaves and check seasoning. Serve with lime and coriander rice.

Butter chicken

The great Indian 'kari', which stems from the word for sauce in Tamil, is known to have originated sometime in ancient South India. Since then it has traveled beyond boundaries and created many fans across the globe. A curry is the ultimate crowd pleaser and on this Independence Day, here are the recipes for the best curries.

Mughlai Karahi Gosht

Ingredients

For the chicken
2.5cm piece ginger, peeled
4 cloves garlic, peeled
1 green chilli, destalked
2 tbsp thick natural yogurt or Greek yogurt
2 tsp chickpea flour (gram flour)
1 tsp mild paprika
1/2 tsp chilli powder (or a little more if you'd like it spicy)
1/2 tsp garam masala powder
1 tsp coriander powder
Pinch cinnamon powder
Pinch saffron, crushed
Salt to taste
450g skinless boneless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces
Melted butter for basting
1 tsp chaat masala
Juice of 1/2 a lemon
Salad and chutney to serve

For the sauce

11/2 tbsp unsalted butter
6 green cardamom pods, lightly crushed
2.5cm piece cinnamon
4 cloves
1 onion, finely chopped
1 heaped tbsp grated ginger (made from an 8cm piece of fresh ginger)
2 green chillies, slit lengthwise
1 tsp kashmiri chilli powder (or mild paprika)
1/2 tsp garam masala powder
3 tbsp tomato puree

150ml double cream
2 tbsp honey
1 tbsp dried Kasoori methi (dried fenugreek leaf)
50ml water
Salt to taste
Chopped coriander for garnish

Directions:

First prepare the tandoori chicken. Place the ginger, garlic and green chilli in a wet grinder and blend to a smooth paste. Mix the yogurt with the gram flour in a bowl to get rid of any lumps, until you have a thick paste.

Add the ginger, garlic and chilli paste, the paprika, chilli powder, garam masala and coriander powder. Also mix in the ground cinnamon, saffron and salt. Stir well and tip in the chicken pieces and mix well, making sure to coat them in the thick marinade.

Leave to marinate for a few hours or even overnight if you prefer. Soak wooden skewers in water. Preheat the grill to medium. Shake off the excess marinade and thread the chicken pieces onto the skewers and place them on a wire rack. Cook under the grill for 15-20 minutes.

Turn the skewers every 5 minutes and baste with melted butter until the chicken juices run clear and the pieces are cooked through and slightly charred around the edges.

To prepare the sauce, place a deep saucepan over a low heat and add the butter. When hot, add cardamom pods, cinnamon and cloves.

Fry for 20 seconds, then add the onions and saute for 5-7 minutes over a medium heat until they take on a light brown colour. Add the grated ginger and birds eye chillies.

Fry for a further minute, add the chilli powder and garam masala, stir for 20 seconds and add the tomato puree. Mix well and cook for a couple of minutes.

Now gradually add the double cream, stirring continuously to mix it with all the spices. Simmer and cook for 2 minutes. Stir in the honey and the fenugreek. Season to taste.

Add the water as well. Add the cooked chicken pieces and simmer the curry on a low heat for 6-8 minutes. Garnish with coriander and serve with naan bread.

Hirwa Fish Kalwan

Ingredients:

800g (1lb 12oz) firm white fish steaks with the centre bone intact (cod would be ideal)
1/2 tsp turmeric powder
3 tbsp vegetable oil
10 curry leaves, plus 5, roughly torn, to garnish
400ml (14fl oz) coconut milk
2 tsp tamarind paste
1 red chilli, halved lengthwise
1 tsp sugar
1 tbsp chopped coriander, to garnish

For the green paste
50g (13/4oz) coriander leaves
50g (13/4oz) coriander stalks
5 cloves garlic 2.5cm (1in) piece root ginger
1 green birds-eye chilli
2 spring onions, roughly chopped

Directions:

Place the fish steaks on a plate and sprinkle over a pinch of salt and the turmeric powder. Rub this in to the fish well and set aside while you make the paste.

Mix all the ingredients for the paste in a mini food processor and add 50ml (2fl oz) water to form a smooth paste. Heat the oil in a saucepan and add the 10 whole curry leaves. When they begin to splutter add the paste and fry on a low flame for three to four minutes. Stir well and pour in the coconut milk, tamarind paste and 150ml (5fl oz) water. Stir again and simmer for five minutes. Season to taste and add the sugar.

Now add the fish steaks and, with the heat still on a low heat, cook the fish with the lid on for three to four minutes until just done. Halfway through the cooking process just lift the pan and swirl it gently to mix - don't stir. Garnish with chopped coriander and the remaining curry leaves. Turn the heat off and leave the curry to rest for 15 to 20 minutes. Serve warm with steamed rice.

Tri rang dishes to taste this Independence

Independence Day is a great opportunity for compatriots from different states to get together and share their traditional dishes. It allows us to taste foods infused with flavors from across the country and also gives us a chance to appreciate India's vibrant and varied cuisines.

For a healthy dessert with a tricolor theme you could try combinations of various fruits using orange crush for the top orange color; chia seeds or oats

soaked overnight in milk or yogurt for the white; and kiwis for the bottom green color. You could also vary the dessert by using your imagination to come up with tricolor cakes, puddings, custards or jelly.

Tricolor idlis are another variation, by adding grated carrots to the idli batter for the orange, using normal idli batter for the white, and adding pureed green spinach to the batter for the green.

Tricolor paneer tikk

Ingredients:

250g paneer diced
Capsicum diced - 1
Onion diced - 1
Tomato diced - 1
Ginger garlic paste - 2 tsp
Black pepper powder - ½ tsp
Mint or coriander chutney 2 tbsp
Red or orange colour (optional)
Thick curd - ½ cup
Garam masala - 1/2 tsp
Red chilly powder - ½ tsp

Instructions:

First of all, cut and dice paneer and all the vegetables.
Now mix paneer, onion, capsicum, tomato, ginger garlic paste, hung curd, oil, salt and black pepper.
Marinate them for 1-2 hours. Divide them into 3 proportions. Use the first part as it is



for the white portion.
Either add red chilly powder and turmeric or a pinch of red food color to the next part to give it the orange color.
For the green add mint or coriander chutney.
Now use skewers and add them according to the flag colors.
In a non-stick pan, heat oil and cook these skewers evenly on both the sides.
Once done, serve hot with chutney of your choice.

Tricolor Phirni

A classic Indian dessert to prepare at home, phirni is an amalgamation of milk and sugar along with nuts and dry fruits.

Ingredients:

100g broken basmati
50g semolina (sooji)
100g rice powder
2 ltr milk
1 tin condensed milk
100g sugar
500 ml cream, chilled
1 tsp green cardamom powder
3 tbsp raspberry, preserved
3 tbsp blueberry, preserved
3 tbsp mango chunks
3 tbsp almond flakes

Instructions:

In a bowl, soak the broken basmati rice for 15-20 minutes.
Make granule size paste with semolina and keep aside.
Make a paste with the rice powder and keep aside.
Heat milk in a heavy bottom pan and reduce it a little bit, adding condensed



milk as well.
Add the soaked rice, semolina paste and rice powder paste slowly into the milk. Keep stirring to avoid lumps.
Cook on a slow flame for 15-20 minutes, or till the time the rice is cooked properly, along with sugar.
Once the rice is cooked, keep phirni aside to cool down. Add chilled cream and cardamom powder. Mix well.
Once the phirni is chilled properly, divide equally into three parts and flavor it with different berries and mango chunks.
For the green add mint or coriander chutney.
Now use skewers and add them according to the flag colors.
In a non-stick pan, heat oil and cook these skewers evenly on both the sides.
Once done, serve hot with chutney of your choice.

Tricolor Fruit Jelly

With the goodness of fruit juices such as orange, litchi and kiwi along with coconut milk and the tang of lime this delightful dish is sure to make the kids happy.

Ingredients:

350ml coconut milk
2 Kafir lime leaves
40g orange dices
30ml lychee juice
coconut water (from one shell)
350ml orange juice
A pinch of salt
sugar to taste
40g kiwi dices
15g agar agar

Instructions:

Place a saucepan on flame and pour coconut milk dissolved in coconut water and bring to boil; add sugar, kafir lime and wait until it releases flavor, then remove from flame.
Place another saucepan on flame and pour about 150 ml of water and add the agar agar into it. Switch flame to high mode and let it boil well, wait until it dissolves. Wait patiently, it will dissolve after about 10 to 15 minutes of time.
Now make the diced kiwi into a puree and add to boiling water. Once it starts boiling



add agar agar and let it dissolve. Add litchi juice to adjust the sweetness, once the mixture is completely dissolved remove from flame and put in a glass jar for the layer to set.
Now pour one third of agar agar into hot coconut milk and stir well. Add little salt also.
Cut the oranges and take out the chunks, Add orange juice to boiling water then add agar agar and wait to dissolve. Once done, add cut orange pieces.
Layer the glass jar with a second layer with coconut milk and keep in the fridge for setting the layer. Once done take it out and put the third layer with orange juice. Refrigerate or let it set in room temperature, but refrigeration will help quicken the process. Use a ladle to pour the mixture and be very gentle while pouring, see that there are no air bubbles while you pour.
Try pouring equal levels to make sure it looks good. Refrigerate or set aside until it sets well.

Tricolor Macaroons

Packed with a cream-cheese filling and laced with the national tricolour, these macaroons are perfect to make at home and ring in the Independence Day.

Ingredients:

1 cup almond flour
1.5 cup powdered sugar
3 egg whites
1/4 tsp cream of tartar
3 tbsp white sugar
green food colour
orange food colour
white food colour

Instructions:

For macaroon shells:

In a bowl mix together almond flour and powdered sugar.
Beat the egg whites using a wire whisk. As the egg white starts to foam a little, add cream of tartar. In a while, the egg whites will develop a shaving cream like consistency, start adding sugar.
Fold in the almond flour-sugar mixture into the egg whites. The batter should not



be runny, it should be slightly thick.
Divide batter into three parts, leave one as such and add green and orange food coloring to the remaining two batters and transfer them to three different piping bags fitted with 1/2 inch round tip. Pipe the batter onto the cookie sheets.
Let the macarons sit at room temperature for 45 minutes. Once the shells have dried completely bake them in a preheated oven at 148 degree C for 15 minutes. Remove from oven and cool completely.
For cream cheese filling:
Beat butter and cream cheese till smooth and creamy. Add powdered sugar, 1/2 cup at a time, mixing well after each addition. Add vanilla extract and mix till combined. Also add white food color.
Add heavy cream, 1 teaspoon at a time till you get the desired consistency. The filling should remain thick, so do not add too much liquid.



INDIAN CINEMA

When we talk about Indian cinema, what is the first thing that comes to your mind? Bollywood!

Of course Bollywood does have a huge audience but Indian cinema is more than that. Cinema of India consists of a wide range of films with Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai, Thiruvananthapuram, Kochi, Bengaluru and Hyderabad being the major centres of film production. Over the decades, Indian Cinema has been the source of information, entertainment and education. Cinema is a powerful means of communication, a mirror of society, a cultural agent of change and a source of history.

With so much of ethnic diversity and languages being spoken all over India, how one could expect Indian Cinema to be left untouched by varied influences. There are films in Hindi, Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam, Kannada, Bengali, Bhojpuri, Assamese and what not. The Hindi language film industry is known as Bollywood, the largest sector representing 43% of box office revenue. The other 36% revenue is shared by both Tamil and Telugu film industry and the rest by others.

Starting with the first commercially hit movie Raja Harishchand (mute movie) to the first audible movie Alam Ara to the recent releases like Mission Mangal or Chhapaak, Indian cinema has grown and evolved to give its best to the viewers—thus entertaining and teaching millions at the same time. For the records, India's first film was Ram Chandra Gopal (R.G.) called Pundalik that was released on May 18, 1912. The film was based on the legend of a famous Maharashtra saint. Dada Saheb Phalke's film Raja Harishchandra was released on May 3, 1913 and it was a milestone in the journey of Indian cinema. Phalke's long lasting contribution to Indian cinema earned him the title of 'Father of Indian Cinema'.

With films of different genre, the role of Indian Cinema is too diverse. Films like Golmaal, Dhamaal, De Dana Dan, Bhagam Bhag, Housefull, etc. have not failed to entertain the people through their humour, not only in India but people across the world. On the other hand, deep message-oriented movies like Lagaan, Slumdog Millionaire, and Super 30 have shown the sufferings of unprivileged people and how they succeed in overcoming all adversities to make a difference to themselves as well as to the society—thus imparting hope in viewers and giving a message that "Born poor is not a crime but dying one is". These inspiring films are laced with a powerful message that with hope, dream and hard work, everything is possible.

Bollywood has never failed to empower women too. From time to time it has made historical movies to show the society that, "If given freedom, women could do what the society believes they cannot". On one hand Manikarnika has shown that how women have fought Britishers for the freedom of India and that whether it is 1857 or 2020, women at times can manifest the virtues of Goddess Durga if required. On the other hand movies like Mary Kom and Saand Ki Aankh have biopics of living legends. Mary Kom, the six times World Boxing champion who has made a global mark

by her talent and skills, is a true inspiration to all the women across the globe. She is an inspiration to all those who give up their career giving excuses.

It is believed that the movie Border has been watched by every second person of the country. The movie which has depicted the Battle of Longewala is the inspiration for the youth of the country to join armed forces. Years after that "URI: The Surgical Strike" has led to a new surge of patriotism in millions of countrymen. It has shown how Indian Armed Forces operate in extreme weather conditions, defending our borders, protecting us from dangers. It has shown how they are always ready to sacrifice their lives for their country. For them service is always before self. Let's salute to their indomitable spirit.

When we talk about romantic Bollywood movies, what name comes to your mind? King Khan of course. From Dilwale Dulhaniya Le Jayenge to Kuch Kuch Hota Hai, from Main Hoon Na to Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gum, from Mohabbatein to Devdas, from Kal Ho Na Ho to Rab Ne Bana Di Jodi, from Veer Zara to Ashoka. Bollywood and romantic movies of King Khan are inseparable part. They have enthralled the audience with the plot as if they are in another world.

Mars Orbital Mission would have remained in ISRO archives and YouTube videos if Mission Mangal starring Akshay Kumar had not been released. The movie has beautifully depicted the work of our Scientists and Engineers to reach Mars with a limited budget.

The work of Arunachalam Muruganantham would have remained only in the files but for the release of Padman—The man who made sanitary napkins at low cost, challenging the social stigma of people who think bleeding is a crime. The movie was a hit not just in box office but also in making a positive impact on the thinking of the audience.



Remember the movie Toilet—Ek Prem Katha? The one which showed the living condition of women who have to go out in open to answer nature's call. It has powerful message to the people who believe that making toilet in home would bring bad omen to them and the family.

There are a range of movies packed with entertainment as well as social message—some influencing, some informative, some creating thrill. Besides, Indian Cinema is also the one which earns huge revenue annually. It gets revenue not only from the people of India but also from other countries like China, Japan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, etc. In an era where our imports are always more than our exports, it is our cinema which has been reversing this trend.

Certainly Indian Cinema has played a major role in our lives in innumerable ways. Indian Cinema with its far-reaching appeal has the power to influence the thinking of the people. They have the potential to change the society and social trends. Long live Indian Cinema!

The celebration of India Cinema and the recognition of India's cinematic excellence the world over is set to manifesting India into the 'content hub of the world'. Today the flavour,

choice and narrative have shifted from Eden in the West and settled in the East. India's journey has been beautifully captured and narrated through cinema and as we mark 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' we must recall the crucial role it has played and portrayed in our fight for independence, be it through turbulent times or in our triumphs.

Today the media and entertainment sector is a significant contributor to the Indian 'creative' economy and also for projecting India's soft power abroad. The Indian government has envisioned and spearheaded major initiatives over the last eight years to boost co-productions, film shoots and film facilitation in India. States such as Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh amongst others have taken the lead through film facilitation policies and providing co-production opportunities.

We are seeing that within India and across the world, the nature of the media business and content creation, consumption and distribution has changed. The advent of AI, virtual reality, immersive technology such as the metaverse, presents immense possibilities to India's IT skilled workforce. According to reports, the OTT market in India is predicted to grow at 21% annually to nearly USD 15 Billion by 2023. Today Indian platforms outnumber foreign ones and there is a gold rush amongst broadcasters as well as telcos to set up their own platforms.

India is bustling and hustling in its towns and villages. India's tales and talent from the hinterland are capturing the imagination of filmmakers and movie lovers, both in mainstream cinema as well as on OTT platforms and winning awards on the way! With this in mind India is organizing more regional film festivals across the country, of which Ladakh, Kashi and J&K have been organised.

Looking ahead, one can boldly say, what India creates today is being consumed by the world tomorrow. India is poised to take another leap as nearly 300 million citizens are set to connect online as India marches ahead in cementing its space in the commerce of the M&E sector. Government policies are aimed at boosting India's media and entertainment ecosystem, which is a sunrise sector expected to generate USD 50 Billion annually by 2025.

The opportunities India offers to the world to connect, communicate, create and in terms of choice as well as consumption are unlike anywhere in the world. And that is why the land of storytellers is in the spotlight of the cinematic world today.



Mesmerizing Forts of India

India has been a melting pot of cultures and diversity over the centuries. This amalgamation is best reflected in the different architectural marvels that still remain extant all over India in the form of magnificent buildings, astounding monuments and imposing forts and grandiose religious places. These edifices attest to the prowess and creativity of Indian builders and their willingness to learn and adapt to outside influences.

Almost every historical building standing tall today has a brilliance of architecture that was given to it by these workers and funded by various rulers and dynasties that set up their seat in places all across the length and breadth of the country throughout the eons of Indian history. While many of these sites have been accorded the status of World Heritage Site by the UNESCO, many remain unrecognized and unsung. Here are a few mesmerizing forts that are often not part of the official narrative and tourist literature, but nevertheless leaves one in awe of their magnificence.

Manjarabad Fort, Karnataka: A bird's eye view of the Manjarabad Fort looks like a star, which is why it is popularly recognised as the Star Fort. Located in Karnataka, this grand fort was built by Tipu Sultan and reflects the brilliance of Islamic architecture. Constructed in an octagonal shape, with eight walls, the fort is unique in the sense that it has only one level, unlike other forts with multiple levels. Legend has it that this fort was used as a frontier to store guns and ammunition and provided protection to Tipu Sultan's army

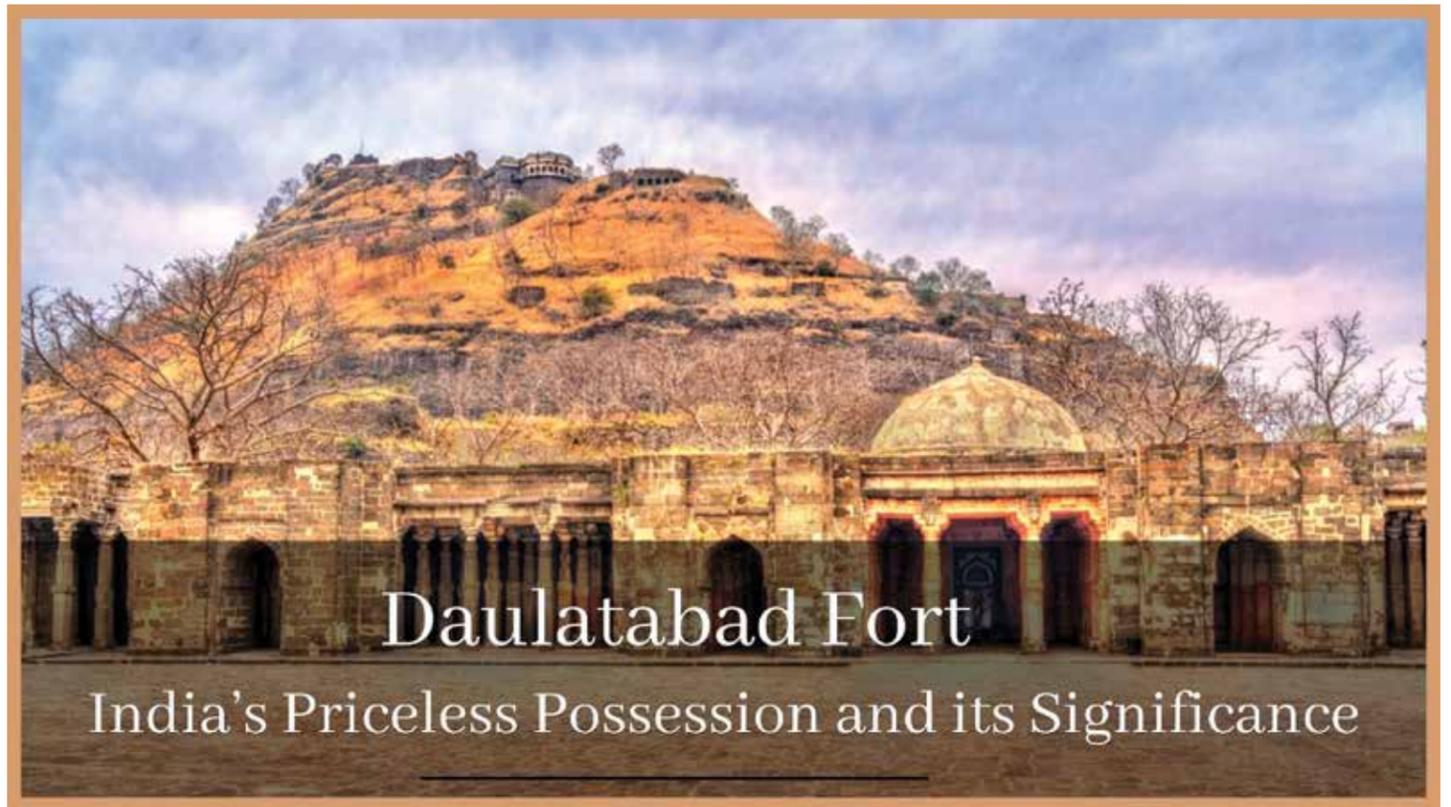


against the British.

While touring the fort is an unforgettable experience, it also provides spectacular views of the Western Ghats and the Arabian Sea. Tourists can also explore various chambers in the fort and a tunnel that leads to Srirangapatna Fort.

Murud Janjira, Maharashtra: Sprawled on an island off the coastal village of Murud, about 55 km from Alibaug, Murud Janjira Fort is perched on a massive rock that lies in the middle of the Arabian Sea.

The architecture of the fort has fared well and passed the test of time, with 19 of its bastions standing tall to this day. Tourists can get here via boats, and enjoy the spectacular view of the Arabian Sea that the roof of the



fort offers. **Bhujia Fort, Gujarat:** Located on the outskirts of Bhuj, Bhujia Fort is a marvel hidden away in the hills. Constructed as a fortification against invasions by the Mughal, Sindh and Rajput rulers, the fort was commissioned under Rao Godji I and built in the 18th century. Today, the fort is best known for the Bhujang Nath Temple, where special prayers are performed during Nag Panchami. The fort sits on a hill and it takes around 600 steps to climb and reach the fort entrance, but once up there the amazing view of the entire Bhuj area more than makes up for the tiring climb up.

Mattancherry Palace, Kerala: Located in Kochi, Mattancherry Palace or Dutch Palace is one of the best examples of Malayalam-style architecture mixed with colonial influences. Its interiors are beautifully adorned, with 17th and 18th-century murals depicting scenes from the epics Ramayana and Mahabharata. Besides, tourists can admire life-size portraits of all the kings of Cochin since 1864, sheathed swords, daggers and axes, together with ceremonial spears decorated with feathers, royal caps, coins issued by the kings of Cochin, silver sequined gowns, royal umbrellas made of silk and brass, along with plans laid out for Cochin by the Dutch.

Of note here are the paintings in the king's bedchamber that depict the stories of Ramayana, the murals in the coronation hall that depict Goddess Lakshmi on the lotus, sleeping Lord Vishnu, Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati with Ardhanariswara, the coronation of Lord Rama, Lord Krishna lifting the mountain Govardhan, as well as images of other goddesses. The room opposite Coronation Hall has paintings of Lord Shiva, Lord Vishnu and Goddess Devi and an incomplete painting; and

another room has murals of Kumarasambhava and works by renowned poet, Kalidasa.

The palace was built by the Portuguese as a gift to King Veera Kerala Varma (1809-1828). It came to be known as the Dutch Palace because of the number of additions the Dutch made to it. The palace is home to the presiding deity of the royal family, the 'Pazhayannur Bhagavathi' (the Goddess of Pazhayannur).

Kondapalli Fort, Andhra Pradesh: Located in the heart of the Kondapalli village, the majestic Kondapalli Fort is a must-visit spot. The giant ramparts of the fort made entirely from granite, can be seen from a long distance as you enter the Kondapalli village. One of the most striking features of the fort is its entrance gate called Dargah Darwaza. It has been carved out of a single granite boulder. Other notable features of the fort include the Golconda Darwaza, the Dargah of Gareeb Saheeb and the Tanisha Mahal. The fort dates back to the 14th century, when it was constructed by the Musunuri Nayaks, the warrior kings of South India. The fort is also known as Kondapalli Kota or Kondapalli Killa.

Daulatabad Fort, Maharashtra: Towering over the landscape on a 200-m-high conical hill and spread over 95 hectare, the Daulatabad Fort is the epitome of Deccan perseverance and strategic ingenuity. In its heyday, the fort was considered impenetrable, owing to a complicated series of defenses around and inside it. Mahakot, or the four distinct walls with 54 bastions surround the fort for a length of nearly 5 km. The walls are about 6 to 9 ft thick and 18 to 27 ft high. Ammunition depots and granaries housed inside in the premises add to the thrill of exploring this historical stronghold.

Another interesting feature is Hathi Haud, a gigantic water tank with a capacity of about 10,000 cubic m. Today, the huge crater leaves one in awe of its size. You can also visit the Chand Minar, which stands at a height of 30 ft. The Tughlaq era royal bath, an elite structure, is a must-visit. It has massage chambers, provisions for hot baths and steam baths for which water was supplied through well-laid tanks, channels, pipes, ventilators etc.

Visitors are awed by the remains of the moat, the fortified walls, the step wells, the court building, a unique temple dedicated to Bharat Mata, a hall of public audience, water cisterns and a rock-cut passage. A lower city complex consisting of main routes and by-lanes was also revealed through recent excavation.

Situated on the Aurangabad to Ellora road, the fort was built by king Bhillama V, a Yadava ruler, in 1187. The city was then known as Deogiri, or the abode of Gods. The grandiose fort was desired by a number of influential rulers throughout history because of its strategic importance. Muhammad Tughlaq, the ruler of Delhi, was so impressed by the fortress that he decided to move his court and capital there, renaming it Daulatabad, the city of wealth.

The whole population of Delhi was shifted here en masse. Later, it passed on from the Bahmani rulers under Hasan Gangu to the Nizam Shahis of Ahmednagar. Even after this, Mughal emperor Aurangzeb laid a siege of four months before finally being able to capture it. It was then snatched away by the Marathas before being taken over by the Nizams of Hyderabad in 1724 CE.



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