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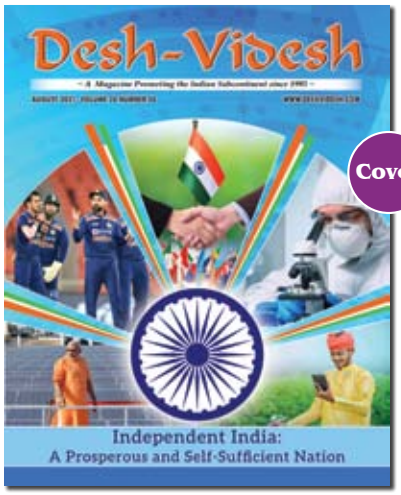


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Cover

Independent India: Prosper and Self-Sufficient Nation after 73 years of Independence 16

From the demoralised country she had been due to her having been devastated by long colonial rule, India has come a long way since her independence from British rule in 1947. India has made remarkable achievements in a variety of different fields ranging from economy to agriculture.

The History of India's Tricolor Flag 28



This month, India celebrates 73 years of independence. The tricolor flag - perhaps the most tangible and potent symbol of freedom from colonial servitude - is, particularly, on full display. In 2017, a rally organised in Delhi was held under a 2,200-foot-long tricolor.

Ayurvedic Tips and Tricks 34



Happy August! Since we are in the full swing of the summer season, let's go through some Ayurvedic tips to brighten your skin, make your hair healthier, and keep you calm and relaxed through this fun time!

How Gita transformed my life 38



My mother introduced me to the Gita during my childhood. In the nights, when we had power cuts, she would teach us the 'sthita pragnya' verses from chapter 2. I even remember participating in a Gita competition in my school which coincidentally was on the same set of shlokas. During my high school summer holidays,

Kristi Biswas 44



I participated in the Florida State Science and Engineering fair and got first place in my category and the grand award. I was chosen to represent the state of Florida at the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF).

NRI News 52



Teenage Indian American Girls Win Robotics Championship - A two-girl team composed of Indian American teenagers Amrita Pasupathy and Nidhya Shivakumar has won the 2021 VEX Robotics World Championships in Sunnyvale.

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To serve and support members of the Indian subcontinent community with an inspirational and educational magazine and to empower readers with an awareness of local, national and international news, events, and social happenings.

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Desh-Videsh (USPS 024575/ISSN: 1941-2398) is Published Monthly Feb, Apr, Jun, Aug, Oct, Dec and Semi-Monthly Jan., Mar., May, July, Sep., Nov. (18 issues Annually) by Desh-Videsh Media Group, Inc. 10088 W McNab Rd, Tamarac, FL 33321-1895 • Telephone: (954) 784-8100 • E-Mail: info@deshvidesh.com.

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Editor's View

Dear Readers,

Once again in this issue of Desh-Videsh, we are covering a topic that is dear and near my heart, India. On August 15, 2021, we will celebrate India's Independence Day and on that day Prime Minister Modi will kick off year-long celebrations to mark India's 75th Independence Day. Our cover story article talked about Independent India: A Prosperous and Self-sufficient Nation. The article covers various areas where India has made a leap-frog progress. The area covers from economy to infrastructures to space exploration, and of course, India's second religion, cricket. It is a proud moment for every Indian. When I was reading and editing the article, it was giving me goosebumps.

I am sure Winston Churchill must be turning in his grave when he hears India's progress since he hated India and this is what he talked about Independent India, "If Independence is granted to India, power will go to the hands of rascals, rogues, freebooters; all Indian leaders will be of low calibre and men of straw. They will have sweet tongues and silly hearts. They will fight amongst themselves for power and India will be lost in political squabbles." Wow, what a negative thought, and the irony is that at this time his own country is going through several troubles with Brexit and the economy. Well let me stop here otherwise I can go on and talk about the Evil Empire or as Shashi Tharoor described the Inglorious Empire.

While we are talking about Independent India, talking about the History of India's Tricolor Flag would be timely. Please read how India's flag design evolved from 1907 to 1947.

Over the weekend at a party, I met a wonderful woman, soft-spoken, humble and knowledgeable in Sanskrit and Bhagavad Gita named Jyotsna Narayan Swami. We end up talking about various subjects in Hinduism from Bhagavad Gita to Panchdashi to Thirukkural. The entire conversion became interesting. And at the end, she mentioned that she participated in an essay competition titled, "How Gita transformed your life. " The article was so interesting that I asked her permission to print it in Desh-Videsh. And she graciously agreed. Please read the article in this issue and give us your opinion on how the Gita has transformed your life.

In this issue, it is our pleasure to talk about an Indian American student, Kristi Biswas from Jacksonville, Florida, who won 1st place in Florida State Science Fair and 3rd place International Science and Engineering Fair. Congratulations to Kristi and her family.

As I have mentioned before, publishing Desh-Videsh is not business for me anymore, it has become my passion. It's a passion to talk about India, Indian Culture, Hinduism and finally Indian American and specifically Indian American kids. We are careful when we publish an article and make sure we do not offend anyone and more importantly do not write something that is not true. Even after paying attention to every detail, sometimes we make mistakes. But in the last issue it was not a mistake, it was a big blunder. One of the Desh-Videsh readers, Renu Nair, pointed out our big blunder in an article published by us in the last issue. The article title was, "Yoga isn't timeless: it's changing to meet contemporary needs." In this article, author Dr. Jeremy David Engels acknowledged that "it was a Hindu reformer, Swami Vivekananda, who first introduced yoga to a larger audience." But after that, he mentioned that Vivekananda originally came to the United States to seek funds to relieve poverty in India. This is an absolutely wrong statement .As we all know, in 1893 Swami Vivekananda came here to attend the World's Parliament of Religions in Chicago and delivered several electrifying addresses on Hinduism. I want to apologize from the bottom of my heart about this blunder



Let me close my column by announcing that we are postponing all our 2021 Bridal shows because the Delta Variant of Covid-19 is spreading very rapidly. Please spread the news. We will let you know the new dates very soon.

Until next time, Be safe and Be well!

Raj Shah
Managing Editor

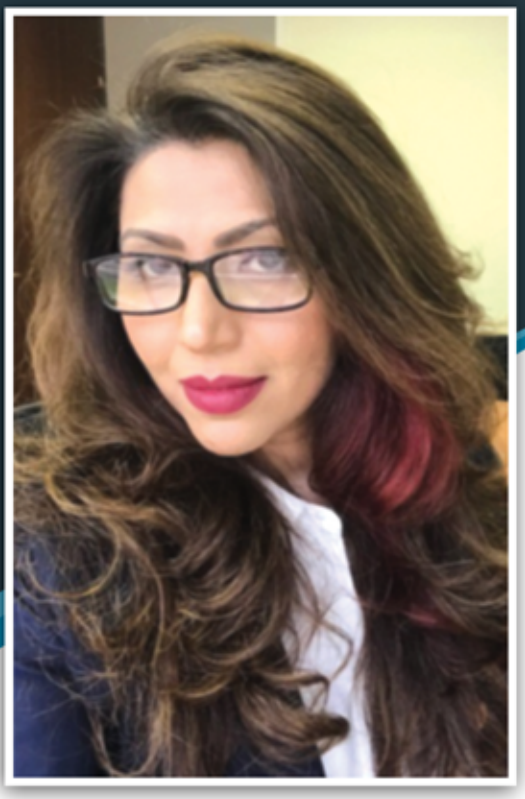
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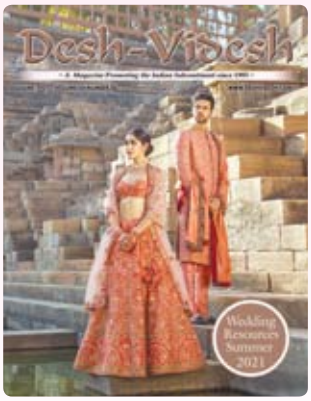
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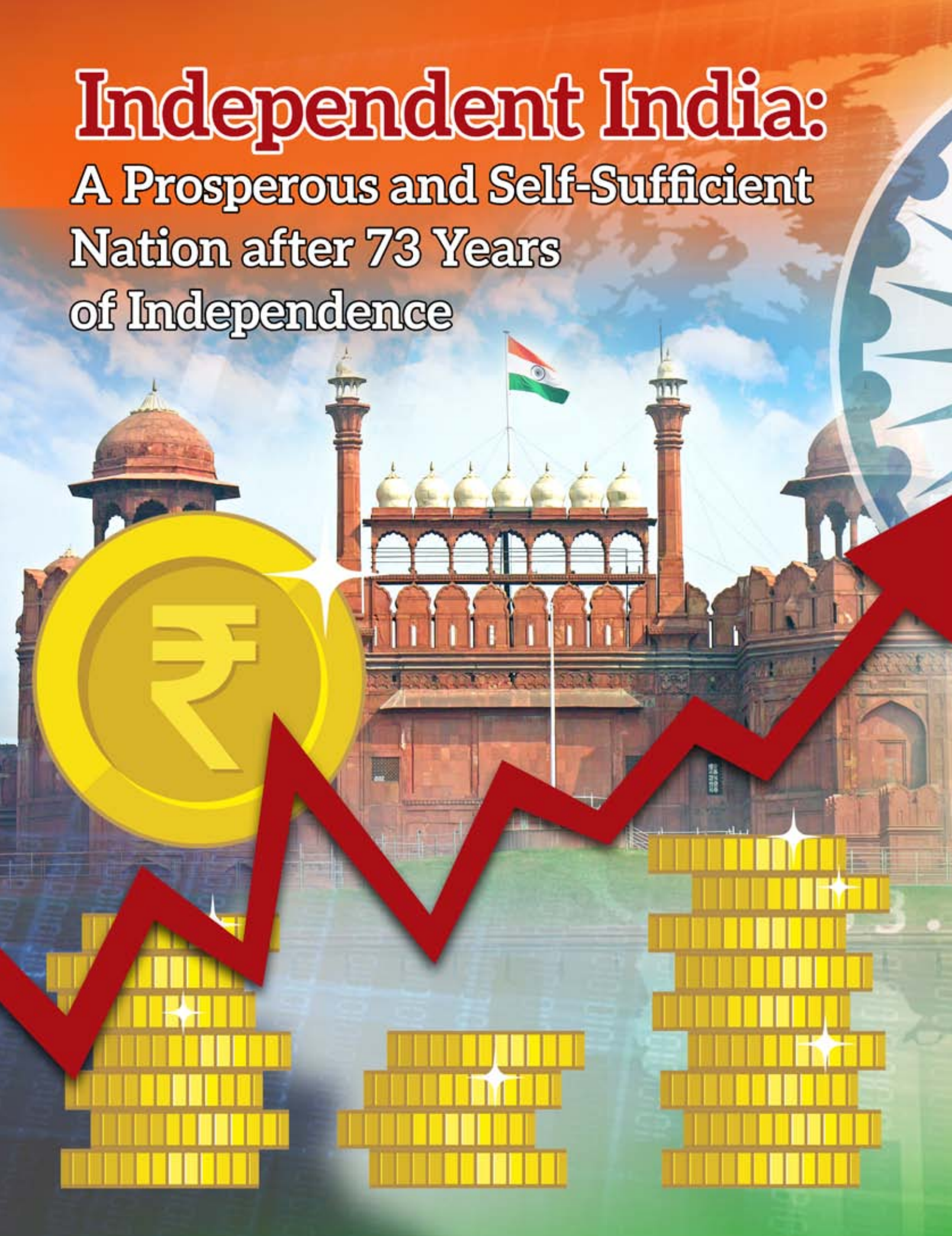
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Independent India:

A Prosperous and Self-Sufficient Nation after 73 Years of Independence





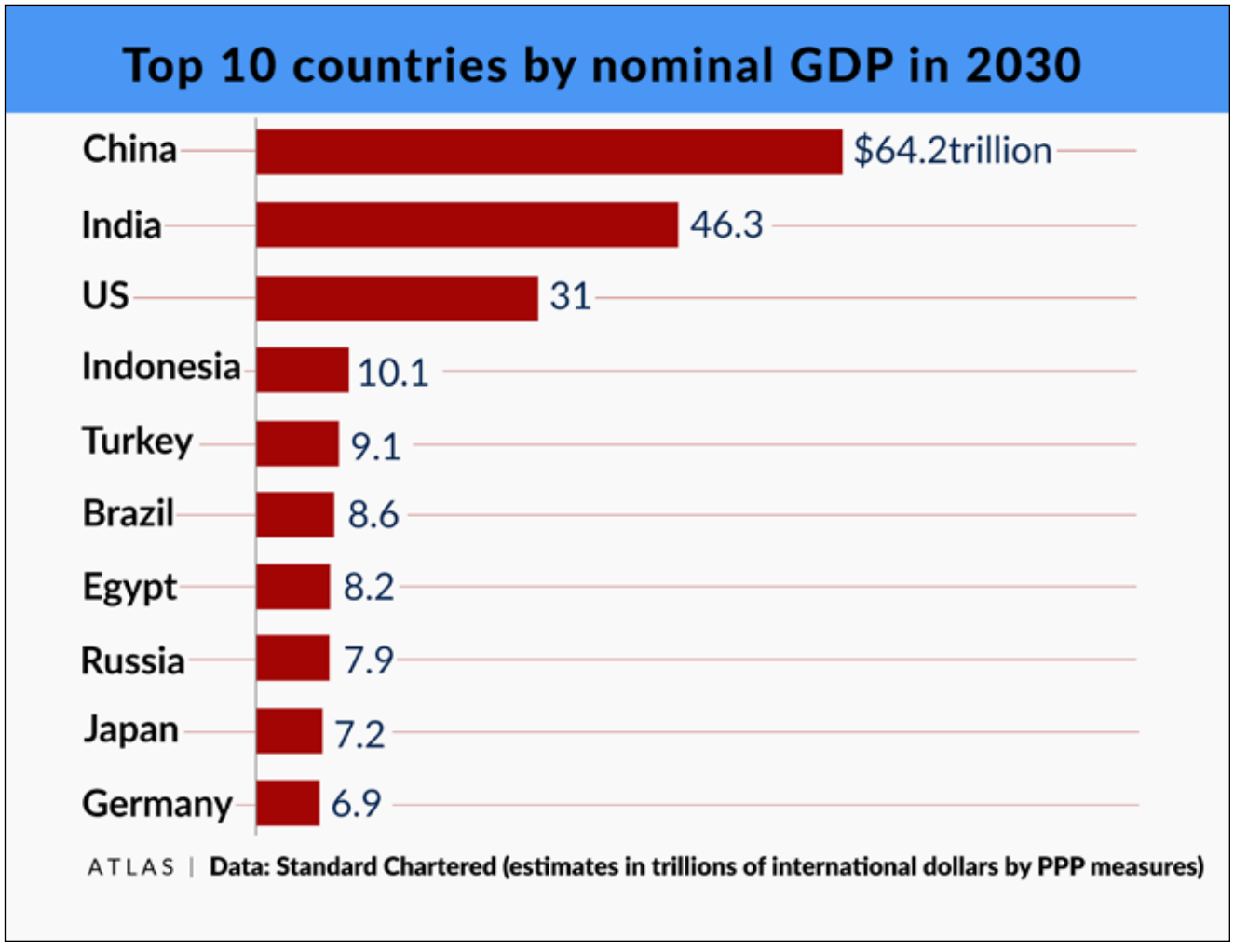
From the demoralised country she had been due to her having been devastated by long colonial rule, India has come a long way since her independence from British rule in 1947. India has made remarkable achievements in a variety of different fields ranging from economy to agriculture. These have brought it soaring through a breathtakingly stratospheric journey of celestially upward economic curves that now make it the fifth-largest economy in the world! This is in terms of nominal GDP, as per the data presented by the IMF's October World Economic Outlook. Not only that, it has been predicted by Standard Chartered in its long-term forecast that India will become the second-largest economy in the world - superseding the USA and following only China.

In the 73 years since her independence, India has been able to achieve landmark successes in several important areas. Most remarkably, she has been successful in retaining the democratic structure of the country, upholding the principles laid down in the Preamble as A Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic. The milestones of India's success are manifold, beginning with economic health and continuing on to agricultural development, industrial growth, and the steady growth of infrastructural facilities. Freedom from imperialist rule set India on anew path of progress and development that has placed her in a commanding position in the international arena today.

India in the World Forum

Once a poor and devastated country getting freedom from her imperial rulers, India is now a major force in the global arena, and is (in many instances) a showcase of success and sustainability. India truly has become an icon of sustainable development under the aegis of able leadership and smart administration. 73 years after independence, India has excelled in all sectors and has uplifted both the lives and living standards of her people. That has received global acclaim, too.

United Nations' Voluntary National Review 2020 has highly praised the Sustainable Development Goals of India through the different developmental programs of the Government of India. These have uplifted more than 271 million people from poverty. That became possible through economic development and empowerment; improved health facilities; and much-improved access to child and maternal health, nutrition, drinking water, electricity, and housing facilities through



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4 Germany	Germany
5 France	India
6 United Kingdom	United Kingdom
7 Brazil	France
8 Italy	Italy
9 India	Brazil
10 Russian Federation	Canada
Source: IMF world Economic Outlook, October 2019	

the Sashakt Bharat - Sabal Bharat program (meaning 'An Empowered and Strong India'). Other programs like Swachh Bharat - Swasth Bharat (meaning 'A Clean and Healthy India') stress cleanliness and improved health facilities. Satat Bharat - Sanatan Bharat (or 'A Sustainable India') stresses the use of renewable energy sources. It has done so to the point where India ranks third in renewable power, fourth in wind power, and fifth in solar power, globally. Samagra Bharat - Saksham Bharat (meaning 'An Inclusive and Self-Sufficient India') stresses better social and civic facilities and the development of entrepreneurial skills. Along with it, there is Sampanna Bharat- Samriddh Bharat (meaning 'A Prosperous India'), which gives importance to the development of infrastructure and youth in the workforce, along with improving the business and manufacturing sectors.

The numbers also reflect the reality of resplendent India post-independence. As per the statistics by Statista, India's GDP at factor cost has multiplied more than 70 times from 1960 to 2018 - and the per capita GDP has multiplied more than 20 times in the same period. Achieving self-sufficiency in food grain production, the figure has multiplied 5 times. So has the export and the road network. This is a reflection of India's achievement through fulfilment of her solemn pledge to rise to the top.

From Poor to Prosperous: The Economic Journey of India Post-Independence

The British left a ravaged and damaged India with an unknown destiny. However, proper planning and the brilliant think-tank of Indian policy-makers gradually transformed the Indian economy into a prosperous and prospective one, with rising growth in income, purchasing power, and standard of living. The figures don't lie; they speak for themselves: In more than 7 decades of India's independence, her GDP in absolute numbers has grown more than 20 times! From $30.6 billion in 1950 to $2870.50 billion in 2019 (according to tradingeconomics.com), it has truly traversed a path of positive progress. This has been made possible due to the rapid pace of development in the agricultural and industrial sectors and due to various beneficial reforms along with enhanced infrastructural growth and rising social awareness.

Agricultural Advancement: Sustainable and Self-Sufficient

Even after 73 years of independence, agriculture remains the leading means of livelihood for the majority of people. Hence, post-independence, the policy-makers focussed on the development of agriculture and on achieving self-sufficiency in food grain production so that India does not need to depend on any other country to feed her people. Thanks to the extensive agricultural research by Indian scientists like M. S. Swaminathan, the use of High Yielding Variety (HYV) seeds coupled with land reforms, increase in irrigation facilities, and the use of superior fertilizers and pesticides, India began to shine bright in agricultural production.

It began with the Green Revolution in the late '60s and was followed by a bumper production of milk through the White Revolution (also known as Operation Flood) under the aegis of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), oilseeds through the Yellow Revolution, and fruits and vegetables through the Golden Revolution. It has been a

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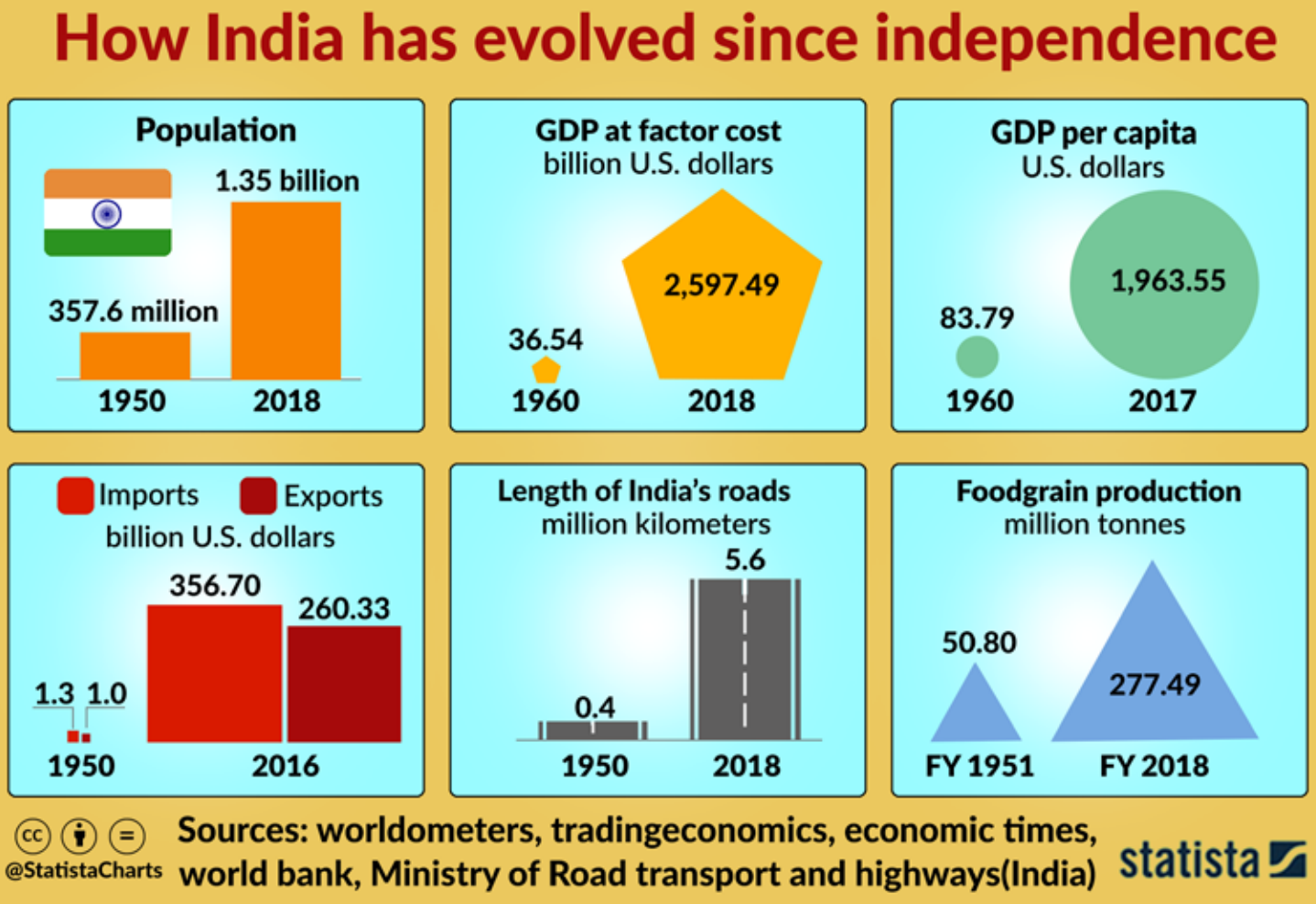
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Industrial Development: Progress through Liberalization

Despite her resources, potential and manpower, the colonial rulers treated India as a supplier of raw materials for overseas industries. Therefore, independent India had to traverse a long path of policies of centralization, decentralization, and liberalization to become the confident and self-reliant industrial nation she is today. The immediate post-independence period focussed on the growth of heavy industries like iron and steel; the development of infrastructure; and the categorization of the public, private, and joint sectors of industrial production. The inauguration of several hydroelectric and thermal power projects has helped in the growth of agricultural as well as infrastructural industries.

The Industrial Policy of 1991 was a trendsetter in many ways. It adopted the policy of liberalization and welcomed foreign investment, thereby spinning the wheel of development further to make it achieve even faster revolutions. With the private sectors increased participation in the country's industries, India moved faster on the industrial track. Heavy industries like engineering, electrical machinery, automobile, and construction along with the electricity, water, and gas supply has been growing remarkably. Service sector industries like hospitality and tourism have achieved great landmarks. Information technology and telecommunications have placed India astride a prominent place of honor in the global arena. Indian IT professionals are making bright marks and are achieving new heights of success globally.

The growth of the IT and telecommunications industries has made way for retail and e-commerce in India, and it is boasting a high growth trend. As per a report published in The World Economic Forum, India has the second-largest market for online business. That has initiated Microsoft to enter the rural market of India through its Airband Initiative program wherein they have collaborated with

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AirJaldi to provide reasonably priced broadband. This will enable the rural population to enter e-commerce more easily and also to gain access to medical, financial and other e-governance services.

Recent government initiatives like the 'Make in India' (2014) programme or the National Infrastructural Development Corporation's Skill Development initiatives are steps towards a bright future in the industrial development of India. According to the World Economic Forum, the real estate sector of India is estimated to contribute 13% of its GDP by 2025; and by 2030, it is projected to reach a market of $1 trillion.

Along with heavy industry, the Indian cottage and small industries sector has also witnessed significant growth and achievements. There are different types of incentives, grants, and export assistance given to this sector.

Infrastructural Achievement: Smooth Roads and Smart Cities

Gone are the days of poor roads and dark villages. India has achieved noteworthy successes in the infrastructural development of both rural as well as urban sectors. The lengths of the national and state highways have increased to a great extent. With a total of 5.89 million kilometres, the Indian road network is the second largest in the world. This has made the transport of passengers and goods; the provision of services across distances; and the ability to stay in contact easier and less time consuming. (For instance, communication between villages and cities has become easier.)

The power sector of India has achieved great success with the development of thermal and hydroelectric power projects. All the inhabited villages have been electrified. India is also a potential mass-market user of renewable energy and has a promising future in this sector. Leading among them is solar energy. According to a survey by the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), India is the cheapest producer of solar power in the world. There is great potential for generating power from wind, tidal, bioenergy, and energy from wastes.

Honorable Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his inaugural speech at RE-Invest 2020, said that India's renewable energy capacity will increase from 136 gigawatts (GW) to over 220 GW by 2022.

The Smart City Mission of the Government of India (launched June 2015) is an innovative approach to sustainability and local development. This is a great move towards urban development and improving the infrastructural and civic amenities of a city or town. The objective of this competition-based program is to promote developmental models in sustainability, quality of life, and cleanliness in the cities and towns.

Science & Technology: Achievements Influencing Progress

FFrom spaceships to vaccines, India's achievements in the field of science and technology have been phenomenal. The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) under the Department of Science has been successfully launching satellites and exploring the moon and Mars. These achievements have made India a major player in the area of space science. Satellites have created a sea change in the communication system of the country and have enabled her to move ahead. In the fields of nuclear power and weapons, India has been able to develop a trend of success due to her able and competent scientists.



The pharmacy sector of India's many noteworthy contributions include producing low-cost generic medicines and supplying them worldwide. Described by Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the Pharmacy of the World, the Indian pharmaceutical sector has also been able to produce Covid-19 vaccines in her laboratories.

The telecommunications and information technology sectors have revolutionized India's communication system and have made the lives of common people easier and more convenient along with developing the economy and creating a lot of employment opportunities for the youth.

The relentless efforts and initiatives of the scientists of India have been able to make her agricultural sector green and promising with projects like the Green Revolution and the White Revolution. Not only in terms of achievements and accreditations but also in terms of science and technological development, these have been able to elevate the lives of the common people.

The Societal Achievements of Independent India: A New Outlook; A Broader Perspective

Post-independence India has witnessed a host of social reforms and changes both in the structure of the demographics and in the mindset of the people. Primary

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and secondary education was made free, which helped a large part of the common people including rural and underprivileged children. The result was a highly impressive rise in the literacy rate. The rate of literacy increased from 18% in 1947 to 77.7% in 2020. The increase in literacy caused greater awareness among the masses. Along with that, legislation for abolishing the zamindari system; ensuring fair wages for workers; and preventing child marriage, female feticide, and the dowry made many things mandatory. Untouchability was already prohibited in the Constitution.

Education has expanded the thought process of common Indians, especially in the case of women. They are no longer treated as if they were a burden on the family because their marriage would drain the resources of the family. On the contrary, more and more women are being educated and getting appointed in various jobs, even in so-called 'only for men' jobs. The Gandhi Nagar Railway station in Rajasthan is a unique example. This station is staffed by women only. From station master to the porter, all are women. Not only that, the station is clean and organized, and it pays a good income.

The constitution has ruled that 33% of the legislative assembly or parliament seats must be reserved for women; and this law is well-implemented now. This has given rise to the emergence of many prominent and eminent women politicians. Corporate affairs have also categorically mentioned that companies with a paid-up share capital of Rs 100 crores and above, or a turnover of Rs 300 crores and above, must appoint at least one woman director.

Women empowerment has been prominent at the rural level, too. There are women members of the Panchayats, self-help groups of women; and even farming is done by women, in many cases. The 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' or 'Save and Educate the Girl-Child' program has been immensely popular in rural India.

Not only women empowerment, but also the Society of Post-Independence India, has also undergone several changes in its outlook. Inter-caste or inter-religion marriage is no longer taboo now. Liberalization, followed by digital communication and exposure to the greater world, has opened up Indian society and has made it free from certain irrational notions about life as a whole.

Latest World Economic Outlook Growth Projections

(real GDP, annual percent change)	ESTIMATE 2020	PROJECTION 2021	2022
World Output	-3.5	5.5	4.2
Advanced Economies	-4.9	4.3	3.1
United States	-3.4	5.1	2.5
Euro Area	-7.2	4.2	3.6
Germany	-5.4	3.5	3.1
France	-9.0	5.5	4.1
Italy	-9.2	3.0	3.6
Spain	-11.1	5.9	4.7
Japan	-5.1	3.1	2.4
United Kingdom	-10.0	4.5	5.0
Canada	-5.5	3.6	4.1
Other Advanced Economies	-2.5	3.6	3.1
Emerging Markets and Developing Economies	-2.4	6.3	5.0
Emerging and Developing Asia	-1.1	8.3	5.9
China	2.3	8.1	5.6
India	-8.0	11.5	6.8
ASEAN-5	-3.7	5.2	6.0
Emerging and Developing Europe	-2.8	4.0	3.9
Russia	-3.6	3.0	3.9
Latin America and the Caribbean	-7.4	4.1	2.9
Brazil	-4.5	3.6	2.6
Mexico	-8.5	4.3	2.5
Middle East and Central Asia	-3.2	3.0	4.2
Saudi Arabia	-3.9	2.6	4.0
Sub-Saharan Africa	-2.6	3.2	3.9
Nigeria	-3.2	1.5	2.5
South Africa	-7.5	2.8	1.4
Memorandum Low-Income Developing Countries	-0.8	5.1	5.5

Source: IMF,World Economic Outlook Update, January 2021

Note: For India, data and forecasts are presented on a fiscal year basis, with FY 2020/2021 Starting in April 2020. India's growth projections are -7.6 percent in 2020 and 11.0 percent in 2021 based on calendar year.

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Entertainment and Sports: Indian Achievers Making Us Proud

The entertainment and sports arena of post-independence India has produced many milestones and achievers who have made the country

and their countrymen proud. Filmmakers like Satyajit Ray, Mrinal Sen, Shyam Benegal, Govind Nihalani, Adoor Gopalakrishnan, Raj Kapoor, Bimal Roy, Guru Dutt, and G Aravindan along with actors like Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor, Dev Anand, Uttam Kumar, Amitabh Bachchan, Rajnikant, Kamal Hassan, Mohanlal, Uttam Kumar, Shahrukh Khan, Aamir Khan, Nargis Dutt, Meena Kumari, Madhubala, Vyjayanthimala, Waheeda Rehman, Sharmila Tagore, Rekha, Hema Malini, Shabana Azmi, and Smita Patil have portrayed various roles with incredible élan and competence that has made Indian cinema famous worldwide. International festivals regularly screen Indian movies; and they are critically acclaimed.

The area of performing arts, including musical and instrumental genius, has also produced noteworthy personalities like Pandit Ravi Shankar, Uday Shankar, Ustad Zakir Hussain, Pandit Ali Akbar Khan, and many more. India has been acknowledged around the world for her soulful music - music which reflects the ancient and storied tradition and culture of the country.



Sports are a national passion for the people of India. From the Cricket World Cup to the Olympics, Indians have achieved success everywhere. From the 'Flying Sikh' Milkha Singh to the latest young archer Deepika Kumari, all have struggled with poverty and many other hindrances and have emerged as champions! This not only makes India proud, but also inspires the common people. The cricketers like Sunil Gavaskar or Sachin Tendulkar, MS Dhoni or Virat Kohli can truly be called national heroes. Women Cricketers like Jhulan Goswami or Mithali Raj have also become household names.

Overcoming the Impediments

IIndependence from British rule gave India freedom - but with that freedom came the responsibility to grow into a self-sufficient, peaceful nation with prospects of

"The milestones of India's success are manifold, beginning with economic health and continuing on to agricultural development, industrial growth, and the steady growth of infrastructural facilities."

sustainable growth in all sectors. It was a difficult task to overcome, given the many obstacles and shortcomings which had been created and left by the colonial rulers. However, with intelligent planning and strong leadership, India moved ahead with achievements in all sectors and emerged as a major force in the world. There is no area of activity that can be discussed without laudatorially addressing the significant role and contribution of India. That is the greatest achievement of the country after 73 years of independence.

Common misconceptions about India (misconceptions such as assuming it to be a poor, superstitious, dirty, or unhealthy country) can easily be answered by the tremendous achievements of the country post-independence and by the impressive list of successful non-resident Indians throughout the globe. India has emerged as a major power in the fields of international economy, politics, and defence. She is proud of her heritage, and - head held high (with the confidence and class of a glamorous Bollywood actress) - walks hand in hand with the developments of the new global order, in which she is an active participant and bold leader.

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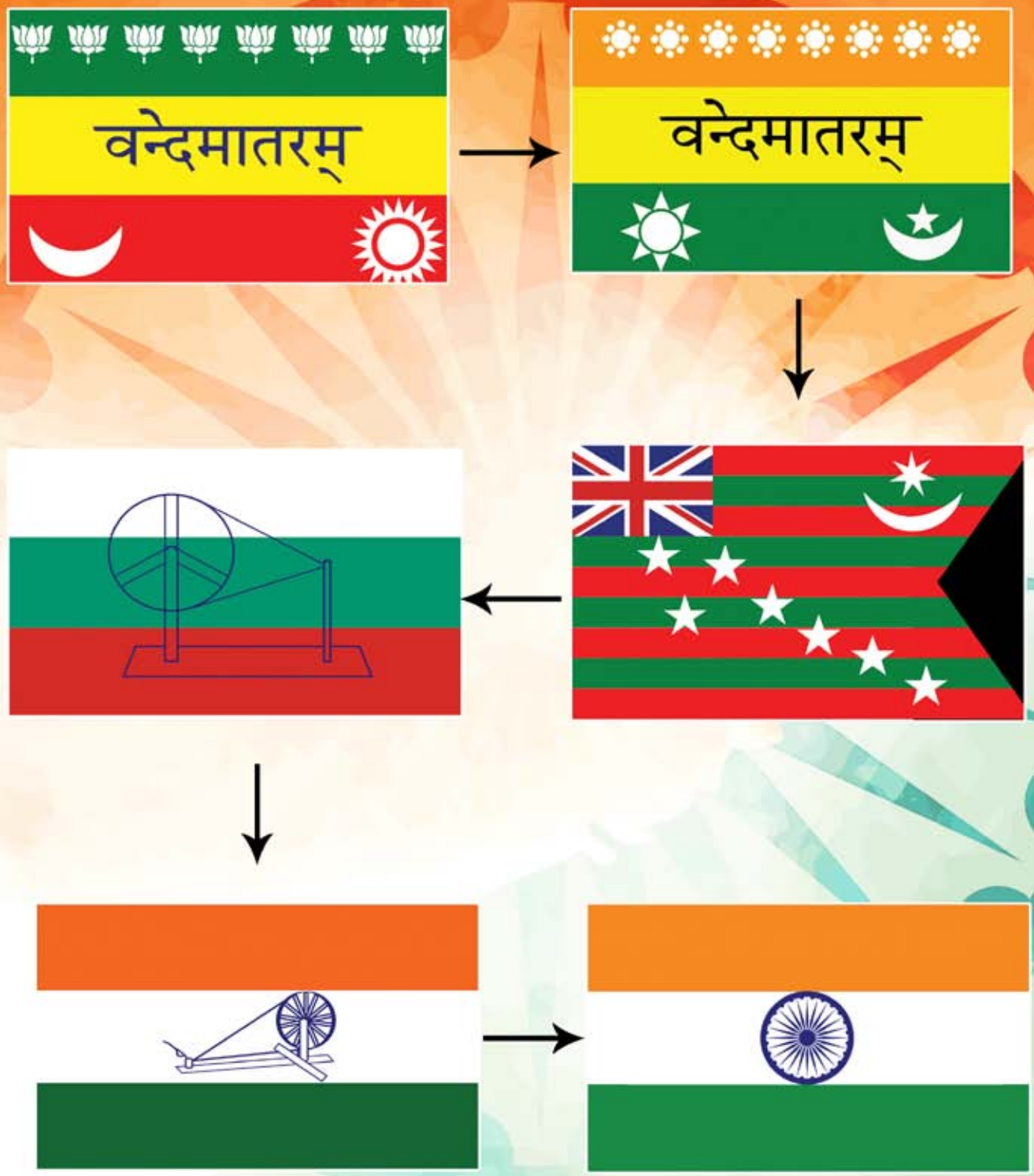


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The history of India's tricolour flag





This month, India celebrates 73 years of independence. The tricolor flag - perhaps the most tangible and potent symbol of freedom from colonial servitude - is, particularly, on full display.



This month, India celebrates 73 years of independence. The tricolor flag - perhaps the most tangible and potent symbol of freedom from colonial servitude - is, particularly, on full display.

In 2017, a rally organized in Delhi was held under a 2,200-foot-long tricolor. At Attari, on the border of India and Pakistan, the tallest Indian flag in the country was recently mounted atop a 360-foot-high pole. In 2016, Purnia, a town in the northern state of Bihar, had a 7.1-kilometre-long tricolor. Size, it turns out, does matter.

Flag waving takes place in a wide range of locales, ranging from everyday street corners to sports matches to movie screens - in a display of both fervour and pride. The song "Maula Mere Le Le Meri Jaan" from the Hindi movie *Chak De India* (2007) is an example of one such moment:

"Teeja tera rang thaa main to teeja tere dhang se main to", it intones, reflecting on the flag's green shade: "I was your third Color, the one fashioned by you".

Such spectacles generally come wrapped in the visual vocabulary of majoritarian politics, wherein the voices and concerns of the largest community dominate. Loyalty to the flag is never sui generis; its citizens must be inculcated to display and demonstrate patriotism in this specific way.

The vivid shades of the Indian tricolor actually have a secret subaltern history - a genealogy that has been largely forgotten. As India celebrates its independence from Britain, it's a story worth remembering.

A symbol with a forgotten history

We begin this brief history with an official document called Specification for the National Flag of India (Cotton Khadi), in which the Bureau of Indian Standards prescribes that the Indian national flag shall be a tricolor consisting of three rectangular (sub)panels of equal widths.

The specified colors are "India saffron", "white", and "India green". At the centre is a design portraying the Ashoka Chakra - the "wheel of peaceful change" associated with the legendary ancient emperor Ashoka from the third century BCE. The wheel is to be depicted in navy blue, the document says, before going into great technical detail on other aspects of the national flag.Two obvious questions arise here.

Firstly, why do we call it a three-color flag? Why has blue been erased from our cognitive frame of reference when we think about the color scheme of India's national flag?

Secondly, this document does not tell us anything about meanings, social significance, and popular perceptions pertaining to these four shades. We must go back in time to understand their origins.

Blue, the color of revolt and dalit politics

In the popular memory of the colonial period, blue is the color of resistance. Commonly associated with indigo, the shade owes its political imagery to the "Indigo revolt" (*Nil vidroha*), a peasant uprising against the white Indigo planters in 1859-60 in Bengal.

Later, in 1917, the country witnessed another massive peasant mobilisation of indigo growers, this time in the northern state of Bihar. This event was transformative - even for Mahatma Gandhi, who shifted his political attention from urban centres to rural landscapes of suffering and exploitation under the colonial regime.

It would be a fitting tribute to Gandhi and those rebellious peasants that the *charka*, or wheel, in the centre of the flag is in navy blue. But the wheel is bereft of Mahatma's spindle.

"India as a nation can live and die only for the spinning wheel", he often claimed; and this symbol occupied a central position in the model of *Swaraj*, or self-governance, laid out in his book *Indian Home Rule*.

In 1931, the Indian National Congress adopted it to don India's pre-Independence flag as an emblem of the anti-colonial movement.

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But in July 1947, just before independence, the *charkha* was replaced with the Ashokan wheel (*chakra*) in the design of India's national flag. This irked Gandhi, who said he would "refuse to salute the flag" if it did not contain the *charka*.

There's also the eerie silence about navy blue, which compels us to confront the deep political prejudices of Indian politics. That's because its roots trace back to the dalit, to lower-caste politics. India's most famous dalit icon - Dr. Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, a contemporary of Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru - is always portrayed wearing a blue coat. Blue is still the color of dalit politics in modern India, too.

Is it a mere coincidence that the navy blue color of the Ashokan wheel in the Indian national flag remains uncounted when we talk about the "tricolor flag"? Or does this gesture perhaps reveal a deep grudge against dalit politics and subaltern voices?

White for minorities

Another color that deserves increased attention in any story of the flag is white. In the aforementioned official document, saffron and green are affixed with the word "Indian", bestowing them a sense of rootedness and specific history. By contrast, white has been denied placement in a similar cultural milieu.

Instead, it is perceived only in the universal vocabulary as representing peace and humanism. Why this erasure of particularities?



> **In 2017, a rally organized in Delhi was held under a 2,200-foot-long tricolor. At Attari, on the border of India and Pakistan, the tallest Indian flag in the country was recently mounted atop a 360-foot-high pole.**

White is perhaps the most difficult shade when it comes to telling a tale. From the bridal trousseau of the Christian tradition to the Himalayan snow-capped Mount Kailash (where, in poet Kalidasa's Sanskrit classic Meghadutam, it represents the laugh of Hindu god Shiva), to the ubiquitous shrouding of grief in the monochromatic uniform of Hindu widowhood, the color white is an open canvas spread far and wide.

For Gandhi (in 1921), while the flag's red and green symbolised the Hindu and Muslim communities (respectively), white was to represent all the minority communities put together. In his scheme, they were to be protected by the other two.

Red and saffron

Soon, however, his own party, the Indian National Congress, officially distanced itself from this direct connection between color and community. This was particularly important in the aftermath of violence between Muslim and Hindu communities that had gripped the country in the 1920s.



Secular leaders (including the future prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru) championed saffron as a color of valour, an ancient color, and underplayed its popular association with the right-wing Hindu organisation the Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh and its association with the 17th-century Maratha warrior king Shivaji.

Yet to this day, the color remains well associated with Hinduism and with Hindutva, an ideology that promotes an essentialist vision of Hinduism. We have forgotten that saffron also came to India through minority religious traditions, including Buddhism; and via other ascetic religious movements, like ancient Shramanic traditions.

It is rather ironic that in today's aggressive nationalism, India has completely forgotten the minority histories of these colors.

Bypassing the green

The amnesiac fading from memory of the green results in its acquiring a sickly, sinister pallor, considering that the outgoing vice president, Hamid Ansari, recently voiced his anxiety pertaining to the vulnerability of minority communities in contemporary India.

In the song from the film *Chak De India*, this anxiety is palpable. Premised upon the popular tendency to equate the color of green with Islam, the lyrics refer to green as the third color, using the past tense – "I was your third color" – lamenting the Muslim's community's growing marginalisation in contemporary India.

This erasure of green from the present, and its exile into the past, calls for deep introspection.

Sadan Jha is the author of Reverence, Resistance and Politics of Seeing the Indian National Flag.

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Ayurvedic Tips and Tricks

By Chahna Tailor

Happy August! Since we are in the full swing of the summer season, let's go through some Ayurvedic tips to brighten your skin, make your hair healthier, and keep you calm and relaxed through this fun time!

Skin Care

- *Swedana*, sweating, is great for opening up the pores and sweating out toxins. You can buy a facial steamer from Amazon, or boil some water in a pot, cover your head with a towel, and hang over the hot water (with the stove off!). The steam works just as well as a facial steamer!
- Brides (and grooms) can use sugar to exfoliate the face. Honey and lemon can be used to even out the skin tone and to fade acne scarring. The inside of tomatoes can be used for the same purpose.
- Mixing a pinch of turmeric with a scoop of besan (gram powder) and creating a paste with milk, cream, or water can help to clean and purify the skin.
- For those that suffer from redness, inflammation, and acne, applying aloe vera can be cooling and can help balance some of those *pitta* symptoms. It also helps to hydrate the skin and even out the skin tone. You can also make a paste of tulsi leaves for your face - it's great for those with oily skin since it is great for skin disorders and for acne due to its anti-inflammatory properties.
- Drinking CCF (coriander, cumin, fennel) tea daily can help to clear toxins out of your digestive system, thus clearing your complexion. Refer back to my Preven-Tea-Tive article for an exact recipe of how to make it, plus some added benefits!
- A daily *abhyanga* would be amazing for your overall skin as well as your mind. An abhyanga is an oil massage. Depending on your type of skin and your *dosha*, you can use a specific oil, but refined sesame oil works for anyone! Before a shower (or, if you are prone to dry skin, use after your shower), massage oil into your skin and leave on for a minimum of 15 minutes so that it can be well absorbed. It's great for your body and you will feel more relaxed through giving yourself a massage.

Hair Care

The first thing for hair is to give yourself a daily head massage.

- The second is to put oil on your scalp and hair. The best way? Do them both at the same time! Amla oil is amazing for the scalp and hair. Amla oil and hair massages are known for strengthening the scalp and hair. Amla is also used for reducing graying of the hair. A hair massage stimulates the hair follicles, and just like amla oil, can help increase hair growth. If you have a dry scalp and suffer from dandruff, oiling the scalp helps to rejuvenate the skin. Amla oil can easily be found at your local desi store, Amazon, or I can send you a recipe on how to make it at home yourself!

Mental Balance

- Tulsi leaves are usually something that every family has at home. Take a few of these leaves and boil them to make a tea or eat them as they are. Tulsi is known for being a relaxant. In Ayurveda, tulsi is used as a way to regulate hormones which can regulate your mood, and help awaken the neurotransmitters that work to make this happen.You can eat a few tulsi leaves to freshen your breath and to relax. Mint tea can also be taken as a way to relax your nerves.
- Some *pranayama* exercises can definitely help keep you balanced, such as *anuloma viloma* (alternate nostril breathing) and *ujjayi pranayama* (victorious breath). *Anuloma viloma* is practiced by using your right ring finger and

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thumb to block one nostril at a time. Start by blocking the right nostril and inhaling through the left, close the left nostril, open the right nostril and exhale through the right. Then, inhale through the right, close the right, open the left nostril, and exhale out the left. That is one cycle. Do this for 5-10 minutes and you will see a noticeable shift in your mood.

- Doing a few yoga poses can also relax you. It may not be conducive to do *adho mukha svanasana* (downward facing dog) but just sitting in a meditative pose, *vajrasana* (thunderbolt/diamond pose), by kneeling and sitting on your heels can help bring peace.
- If none of these are feasible, sitting in a chair and even standing with your eyes closed for a few minutes can help to bring relaxation.

I hope these suggestions help you. Remember, these tips and tricks are great for any time of the year. Just keep calm and have fun through the rest of the summer! When in doubt, give yourself a massage!

About the Author



Chahna Tailor, a certified yoga instructor, has a background in occupational therapy and health science & administration. Chahna deepened her yoga practice by training in Rishikesh, India, where she studied the science behind yoga as a whole. Chahna provides yoga, pranayama, and meditation services through her company Namaskar To You. A volunteer for Ekal Vidyalaya, Chahna also Registered Yoga Teacher with Yoga Alliance. She is currently pursuing a doctoral degree in Ayurvedic Medicine while continuing her self-studies in yoga.

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How Gita transformed my life

By Jyotsna Narayanswamy

My mother introduced me to the Gita during my childhood. In the nights, when we had power cuts, she would teach us the 'sthita pragnya' verses from chapter 2. I even remember participating in a Gita competition in my school which coincidentally was on the same set of shlokas. During my high school summer holidays, I first tried to read and understand the meaning of these verses from Swami Chidbhavananda's book which was at home. I particularly liked the simple short stories at the end of the commentary on some of the verses by Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. One of the verses 'aapurya-manam' appealed to me so much that I ended up memorizing its meaning. When I started college, I began an attempt to learn to recite more chapters of the Gita with my mother and starting with Gita Dhyanam. We almost finished the first chapter when I got into engineering college and due to time constraints, I stopped learning the Gita. I would just continue to sing the verses that I had learned once in a while and joined some group singing whenever I would get an opportunity.

When I came to America to further my education, I bought a copy of Bhagavad Gita with me and would recite slokas occasionally. More than 10 years later, after I settled in Florida on a casual visit to one of our friend's house. I got to know about a Gita chanting competition at a local temple on the same 'sthita pragnya' verses which I had learned as a child. Our friend provided me with the details and motivated me to participate. With a little practice, I could recollect the verses and enjoyed participating in the competition. I introduced my son also to the Gita Dhyanam slokas and trained him to participate in the competition for his category. This re-kindled my Gita study.



> "A speaker at one of the competitions spoke very eloquently about The essence of the 18 chapters of the Gita and how Arjuna's doubts and confusion were cleared by the end of eighteenth chapter where Arjuna said "nashto moha smratir labdha".

I then heard about a Gita chanting competition in the Chinmaya mission. A group of friends and their children who were interested decide to meet in the park on Sundays and practice Chapter 3 competition related shlokas. All our children are now in college but we all remember the wonderful memories of our study of the Gita at the park. A speaker at one of the competitions spoke very

eloquently about the essence of the 18 chapters of the Gita and how Arjuna's doubts and confusion were cleared by the end of eighteenth chapter where Arjuna said "nashto moha smratir labdha". This along with how Gita had influenced a lot of people including Gandhiji who would refer to the Gita to find the solution to any problem, motivated me enough to restart my Gita learning process with greater enthusiasm. At about the same time, one of our family friends was visiting Florida and she shared Swami Brahmananda's audio cassettes of the Gita. I was motivated to wake up early and learn the Gita verses and would listen to the cassettes many times to get the correct pronunciations. This project took several months at the end of which I could recite all the slokas without pausing. I felt the urge to record my recitation of the Gita. A Couple of re-recordings to correct pronunciations took a few more months to complete.

Now came the next thought of wanting to recite the Gita with my family every day. Reading Swami Sivananda 's Bhagavad Gita book which I had borrowed from the local library intensified this desire. I discussed this with my husband who readily encouraged me to start a10-15 minute session at home to teach 1-2 shlokas every day. I initially started teaching the fifteenth chapter (Purushottama yoga), since it is considered as one of the best chapters and also because it had only 20 verses. It took a couple of months to learn to recite it from memory and since we enjoyed the time together, we continued learning the other chapters. My son was about 10 year old at that time and learned to recite the shlokas very quickly. Till today, which is about 9 years from the time we started, we as a family continue to recite the fifteenth chapter every day in the evening. Even if we are visiting friends or family we have tried to recite it in their houses also and on one of our India trips, family from Punjab to Bangalore enjoyed joining us in reciting Gita with us and thanked us for the Satsanga.

Around the same time that we started reciting at home, I volunteered to teach Gita recitation in the Sunday temple classes and taught middle school kids to recite Chapter 12. I also helped train kids for the Gita chanting competition in local temples. Our temple presented me with a plaque to acknowledge my teaching Gita to the local children.

I have enjoyed listening to commentaries on the Gita by a number of sages and knowledgeable people at local events and online.



A 19th-century illustrated Sanskrit manuscript from the Bhagavad Gita, composed c. 400 BCE – 200 BCE.

On one of my visits to India, I had the good fortune to meet Swami Brahmananda whose style of recitation I have followed and also visit Swami Sivananda's ashram in Rishikesh.

Here are two incidents as to how the Gita guided me to overcome one of the difficult situations in my life. A few months back, I was in a family dilemma and needed help in resolving it. I remembered that in one of Dr Krishnamurthy's talks about the Gita Regimen on Advaita academy, he had mentioned about the 7th shloka from Chapter 2. " karpanya dosho ..". He said that when he was confused and in a dilemma, he would always repeat this shloka in front of God and mysteriously in a few days, he would get some solution. I did the same and repeated this verse for a few days with sincerity. I too experienced more clarity in handling the situation and ended by finding a solution. One more incident happened about 2 years back when I was looking for a new job. Initially I had some interviews but nothing materialized in an offer. As days passed by it was getting more and more frustrating. I doubted my own strength. Two verses from the Gita really helped me stay focused in that period of time. The first was from chapter 6 verse 5 "uddhared ātmanātmānaı.." where Krishna teaches us not to degrade ourselves and tells us that the mind can be the friend and also the enemy of the self. The second verse was from chapter 3 verse 47 "karmanye vadhikaraste.." which emphasizes that our right is only to work and not to expect the fruits and also not to choose inaction. I am happy that the teachings of Gita have helped me in a number of difficult periods in my life.

For the past one year, I have been teaching Gita at home to local children 5 years and older along with some of their parents on Sundays. My family locally and my parents in India encouraged me to continue to teach even after I accepted a full time job 50 miles away from home. Currently we are studying chapter 6. Earlier



Arjuna is the archer, Krishna the charioteer. This scene iconically symbolizes the Bhagavad Gita - the spiritual discussion between them about war and dharma.
This temple sculpture is in Kurukshetra, Haryana India.

this year, I thought of taking the kids to Swami Jyothirmayananda's (swami Sivanada's disciple) ashram locally in Miami. I sent an email to Swamiji and he promptly replied that he would be willing to meet all the families and the kids. Parents and kids were excited and we went to the ashram and all of us recited the sthitha prajna shlokas and Swamiji was very happy to hear all of us sing. We were blessed to hear a very enjoyable lecture by Swamiji highlighting the salient verses of chapter 2. It was a memorable Satsanga evening for all of us. One of our family friends who is 90 years old and who is very knowledgeable about the Gita also joined us on the ashram visit. She visits us on many Sundays and enjoys being a part of our Sunday classes and I feel blessed to have her guidance in my classes.

I feel very happy to hear the responses that I receive from my students and their families. Most of the grandparents back in India of these kids are very happy to hear their grandchildren recite. One of the grandparents visited Florida and blessed and encouraged me to continue this Jnana Yagna. One of my student's mothers told me that her daughter desires fewer items now and they think of the reference in 2nd chapter of the tortoise which restrains its limbs. One of the other mothers brought a packet of sweets to the class and when asked about the reason for the sweets, she replied that it was because her highly active son who is 8 years old enthusiastically takes bath early in the morning and is looking forward to my Sunday class. When I started teaching the class, since I had very young children, I thought of only teaching them to recite the shlokas. My son, a college student, suggested there is more value if I could impart the meaning in a simple way that they can understand. So now I try to read and listen to a lot of commentaries on the verses that I teach so I can understand it better and explain it in a simpler language. A couple of months back, I thought I should acknowledge my thanks to online gurus and I sent an email to some of the teachers at Advaita academy. One of them encouraged me to continue my personal quest to understand the scriptures and to impart it to the community and he shared his book on the Gita which has been a valuable reference material too.

So in effect, Gita has transformed my life and given me more satisfaction, peace and happiness and I am continuing to learn to follow the principles outlined by Krishna in the Gita.

About the Author



I am a software engineer. I enjoy my day job as well as other hobbies including traveling, spending time with family, socializing, listening to spiritual discourses, cooking, music, and enjoying nature. Above all I like to help and make a small difference in the lives of people that I come in contact with. I am grateful to have met and spent a lot of time with wonderful people in my life who have taught me to live in the present.

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Editor's Note: *We are pleased to present this inaugural column,* ***Legally Speaking.*** *Each month, we ask an attorney to answer reader questions. This month, David M. Benenfeld discusses car accidents and accidents at the workplace. Please send your legal questions to editor@deshvidesh.com.*

I just got hurt in an automobile accident, what do I need to do?

When a car accident occurs, it can be traumatic not only physically, but also mentally. The most important thing to do is not panic and do not leave the scene of an accident. Check yourself and your passengers for injuries and dial 911 if someone is injured and needs an ambulance. Do not move a seriously injured person unless it's absolutely necessary, and do not move your car unless your car's position puts you in danger or the police instructs you to move it. Write down a description of the other car and license plate, and be sure to wait for the police to arrive. You may also want to take pictures of the damages to your car, the intersection where the accident occurred, skidmarks on the road, damages to the other car, as well as photos of any injuries, as well as road conditions at the time of accident. It is also important to get contact information of the other driver as well as their insurance carrier, an insurance policy number,and driver's license information. When all of this is done, and after you talk to the police, if you are in pain, it is important to seek medical care with a doctor and do not downplay your injuries. You may also wish to contact an attorney to help you as you navigate through this process, in order to potentially obtain a settlement in regards to your injuries.

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I just got hurt while working, what should I do?

When you've had an accident while working, you must provide notice to your employer within 30 days. When you report your injury, it must be reported to someone in a supervisory capacity, and of course, medical care must be requested. It is good to not only report your accident verbally, but also by some kind of writing whether it's by email, fax, or by text, and in this way, there will be a record as to when the incident was reported. In this way, should your employer ever say that you failed to report this accident, you would then indeed have proof that it was reported. In addition, when you start receiving medical care with the doctors, it is very important to let them know about any kind of pre-existing injuries that you have as well as prior accidents, and in this way, the doctor can give you a proper diagnosis. Also, it is also very important to let the doctor know about all your injuries that you sustained in this work-related accident for all body parts. In this way, the insurance company for your employer will not be able to deny that you failed to complain about certain body parts that have been hurt. Certainly, if you need help navigating through this process and would like to explore settlement, you may wish to contact an attorney.

About the Author



Graduated from University of Miami School of Law, David Benenfeld with an office in Broward County, has over 25 years of experience in helping injured people in Florida. He is a Member of the Trial Lawyers Section of the Florida Bar and The Florida Workers' Advocates. Mr Benenfeld has published several articles to help injured people in Florida. For More information, Please visit his web https://www.injurylawservice.com.





David M. Benenfeld
Attorney at Law

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I understand Florida's personal injury law and the tactics that insurance companies and their representatives use to avoid paying money to victims. I have never represented an insurance company in a claim; never have, never will. I only represent the injured.

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Kristi Biswas

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Parents Name: Dhiman Biswas and Suchitra Biswas

Name of the School: Paxon School of Advanced Studies

Grade: 11

Please tell us in brief about the competition you just won:

I participated in the Florida State Science and Engineering fair and got first place in my category and the grand award. I was chosen to represent the state of Florida at the Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF). ISEF is a research-based, high school competition that exists in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and more than 75 countries, regions, and territories. I won the third-place grand award in my category.

1. How did you prepare for the competition?

To prepare for the competition, I spent several months first coming up with an original project idea of my own that would be interesting to work on. Once I came up with the idea of using face detection technology to locate Parkinson model fruit flies on videos to determine its speed, movement linearity, etc., I designed the experimental setup, built the Java software, and spent countless hours every day to record more than 500 videos and analyze more than 1.6 million data points. I spent a lot of time reading enough journals and research papers to help support my background in this research and prepare for presentations at competitions.

2. Who do you consider to be a mentor and why?

I consider my parents and my brother as my mentors. They all are the ones who continue to give me advice and guide me to the right direction when I make decisions. I wouldn't be where I am today if it weren't for them.

3. What are your favorite activities outside of school?

Outside of school, I enjoy listening to music a lot, dancing, piano, and I personally love watching videos on animals.

4. Has religion played a role in your success or your life? If so, how?

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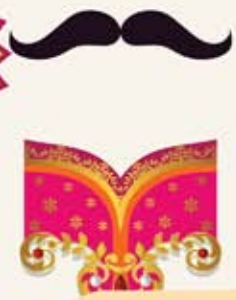
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Religion has played a big role in my life and success. Every-time I am about to do something important, I always pray to God before-hand. I always make sure to put my faith and trust in God and do my best in everything I do.

5. Many people feel that a young achiever is made of a sheer spark and plenty of luck. How much of a role did hard work make in your pursuit? Is there a mantra that you would like to share with other young aspirants?

Hard work and passion carried all of the success I've received so far. I think it's very important to pursue what drives you the most in life and work as best as possible in it. Even if it may seem endless at times, it's all worth it in the end.

Before I do anything important, I always chant

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, three times.



6. International fame at an early age when most cannot taste it all their life. What does it mean to you?

It means the world to me that so many people are interested in the work and research I did. I'm always grateful for the support I get from the people around me and use it as a drive to continue working hard to meet my dreams.

7. The final moments (Competition), can you recount them for us?

It was very nerve-wracking. I was constantly telling myself that no matter what happens, I would be proud of myself for working very hard, and I'm grateful for all the support I got on that day.

8. After this, there must be larger goals and greater heights to be scaled. What can we expect next?

I am currently working on my next project on Alzheimer's disease at Mayo Clinic. I hope to see if I can find possible genetic variants associated with Alzheimer's disease. I am focusing on my current work in my hands and only god knows what the outcome will be.

9. Which field you are planning to major in college and why?

I am planning on going into the medical field and I plan on majoring in biology because I've always been interested in biology. I find it a very interesting part of the scientific field and I've always loved the genetics unit.

10. What relevance does being Indian American have to you? Has it given you an edge?

Being Indian American hasn't given me an edge, actually it was the other way around. I felt like I had to work extra hard to break certain barriers in America.

11. Beneath all of this, who is the real you ?

I'm just a little girl from Florida pursuing her passion in science, but that's not all of who I am. In my free-time, if I have any, I love listening to music, dancing, playing the piano, and volunteering at the Humane Society to comfort and take care of abandoned animals.

12. You cannot deny that fame comes with this achievement. You are now being searched on

Google, being interviewed, and have become a role model. Has it changed who you are?

It hasn't changed who I am as a person, but it has driven me to work even harder. Other people have higher expectations from me, but I still am and always will be a music and animal lover.

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13. If you could have breakfast with anyone, who would it be and why?

If I could have breakfast with anyone, it would be with my favorite music group, BTS. They continue to inspire me to work harder everyday and I listen to their music constantly when I have time. I think they would be fun people to eat breakfast with!

14. What is your favorite quote?

My favorite quote is from Namjoon from BTS: "No one is born ugly; we're just born in a judgmental society."

15. Which issue (global or local) is close to your heart, and why?

Right now, the CoronaVirus pandemic is very close to my heart. It breaks my heart to see the heartbreaking numbers on the news every day and I wish I could do more to help. My heart goes out to everyone during these difficult times.



Favorite Indian Leader: Mahatma Gandhi
Favorite Non- Indian Leader: Martin Luther King Jr.
Favorite Indian Book: Devdas by Sarat Chatterjee
Favorite Non-Indian Book: Wonder by R.J Palacio
Favorite Indian Movie: Lagaan
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Favorite Sports Team: US Women's Soccer Team

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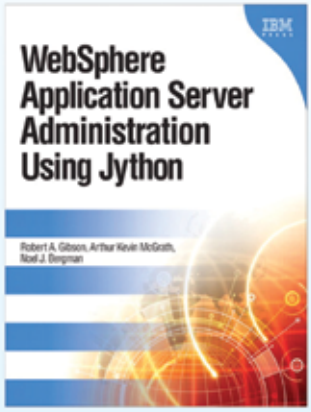
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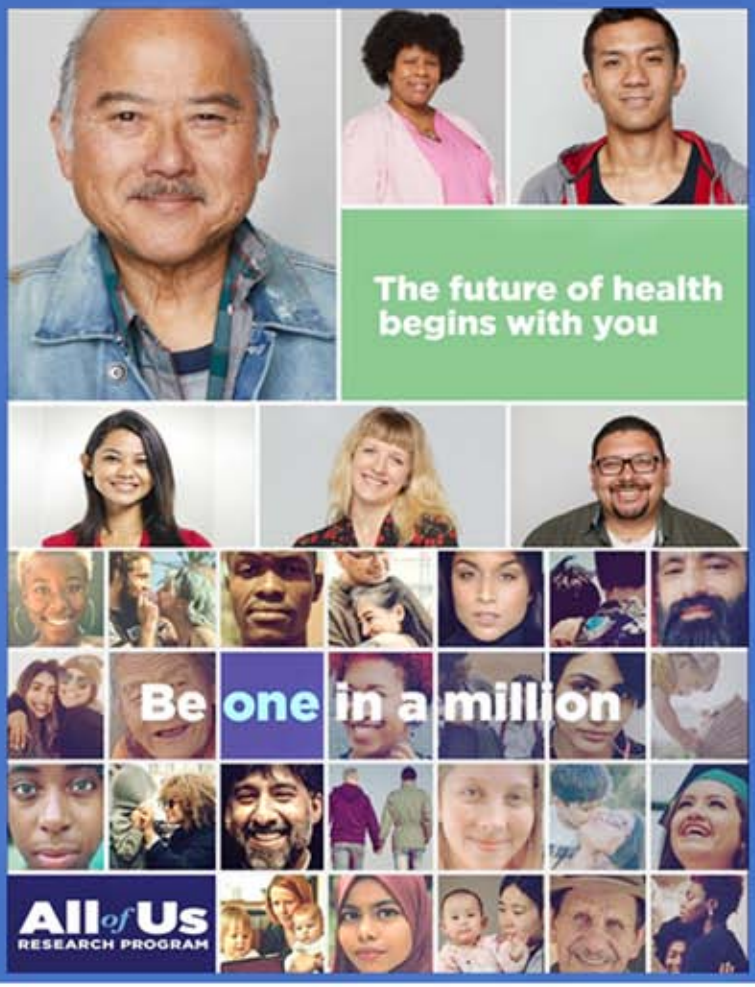
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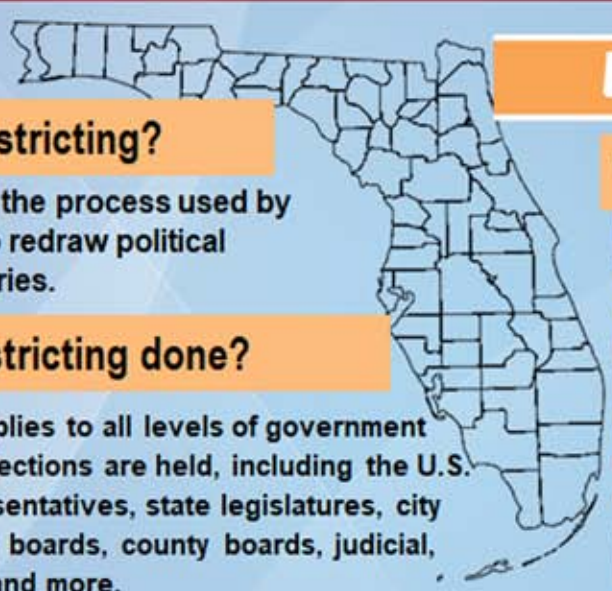
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Redistricting

What is Redistricting?

Redistricting is the process used by governments to redraw political district boundaries.

Why is Redistricting done?

Redistricting applies to all levels of government where district elections are held, including the U.S. House of Representatives, state legislatures, city councils, school boards, county boards, judicial, water districts, and more.

Redistricting is based on the idea of "one person, one vote", which makes sure that each of our voices can be represented fairly, by creating districts that have the same number of people. Census data that is collected every ten years is used to draw new maps to account for the ways that populations have changed and moved across the states and districts.

Why is Redistricting important?

How district lines are drawn influences who runs for public office and who is elected. Elected representatives make decisions that are important to our lives, from ensuring safe schools to adopting immigration policies. Who lives in a district can influence whether elected officials feel obligated to respond to a community's needs. The district boundaries are in place for the next ten years, and their policy impacts can last well beyond that.

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South Region
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Teenage Indian American Girls Win Robotics Championship



A two-girl team composed of Indian American teenagers Amrita Pasupathy and Nidhya Shivakumar has won the 2021 VEX Robotics World Championships in Sunnyvale.

The announcement was made in the July edition of a newsletter released by *The Milpitas*, a California-based Indian community centre.

The all-girl VEX robotics competition team 315Y duo who won the competition, Pasupathy and Shivakumar, are Indian American students at the Harker School in San Jose, California. The two girls won the high school section of the competition.

VEX Robotics is the world's leading – and fastest-growing – robotics program for middle and high school students. It is held across cities, states, and countries across the globe. The format of the program is such that it encourages qualities such as teamwork, leadership, and problem solving while also giving a platform to learn engineering and programming.

According to the ICC, this competition is the world's largest robotics competition. A full 8,600 participants in 1,400 teams from 30 countries took part in it this year.

Another all-girl team comprising just one team member from the 315 Paradigm Organization has won the Middle School World Championships. As per the newsletter, Team 315T had one girl who had her first 'tryst' with robotics at the flagship Google Girl Powered VEX Robotics Workshop at Google in 2019.

The newsletter also announced that the forthcoming Girls Robotics Workshop (which will be organised on July 31 and August 1 this year) will be put together by Team 315 of the Girls Robotics Workshop and will be held at the India Community Centre. The emcee hosting the event will be Shivakumar.

“The all-girl VEX robotics competition team 315Y duo who won the competition, Pasupathy and Shivakumar, are Indian American students at the Harker School in San Jose, California.”

Biden Nominates Two Indian Americans for Key Administrative Roles



United States President Joe Biden on Tuesday made his decision public to nominate two Indian Americans (among eleven other individuals) to serve in key roles.

The Indian Americans who have been named for the prestigious positions on offer are Rahul Gupta and Atul Gawande. While Gupta is the nominee for Director of National Drug Control Policy, Gawande is the nominee for Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Global Health, United States Agency for International Development.

Dr Gupta, the son of an Indian diplomat, was born in India and had spent his early years in the suburbs of Washington D.C. He is a popular figure driving new public policies on health issues and is a thought leader on both the national and global level.

He also works in various advisory capacities for multiple organizations and task forces on local, national, and international public health policy. During the Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak, Gupta headed the states' efforts at preparedness and spearheaded their Zika action plan.

Atul Gawande is the founder and chair of Ariadne Labs which is a joint centre for health systems innovation at Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Harvard TH Chan School of Public Health, and of Lifebox, a non-profit organization that concentrates its efforts on making surgery safer globally.

Dr Gawande was a co-founder of CIC Health, which was instituted during the coronavirus pandemic. The body works relentlessly in testing for Covid-19 and vaccination against it on a national level. He has also served as a member of the Biden transition team's COVID-19 Advisory Board.

Apart from this, Atul Gawande has also served as a writer for *The New Yorker* magazine since 1998 and has penned four *New York Times* best-selling books: *Complications*, *Better*, *The Checklist Manifesto*, and *Being Mortal*.

Manish Bapna named as NRDC's New President and CEO

Master environmental activist Manish Bapna has been named by the NRDC as its next president and chief executive officer. He will commence his new role starting August 23.



Bapna, who is currently serving as interim president and CEO of the World Resources Institute, said in a press statement, "We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to overcome the climate crisis and build a healthier, more equitable and more vibrant world. NRDC is uniquely suited for this challenge, and I am deeply honored to be taking the helm at this time."

The Indian American was Executive Director of the Bank Information Center from 2003–2007. From 1996–2003, he worked with the World Bank, leading projects that focused on projects tackling with rural poverty. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He also holds both a Master of Public Administration and a Master of Business Administration (graduating with distinction) from Harvard University.

Bapna had recently mentioned in a Twitter post how much he had enjoyed his stint with the World Resources Institute. He wrote, "I have truly enjoyed every moment of my 14+ years at the World Resources Institute, and I cannot wait to take on new challenges in the fight against climate change and inequality with NRDC."

The WRI also tweeted their gratitude for Bapna and wished him well in his future endeavors.

As per the 51-year-old environmental organization's own record, most of Bapna's career has likewise been spent paying close attention to the designing of sustainable development strategies that are equitable, durable, and scalable. The organization stated, "His proven track record in developing policies and programs to address the twin challenges of climate change and inequity will help NRDC achieve ambitious climate action."

Andrew Carnegie 2021 Program names Indian American researchers 'fellows'







Indian Americans Sonali Shukla McDermid and Neel Sukhatme have been named honorees by the Andrew Carnegie Fellows program that has announced its latest group of Fellows recently.

Shukla, an associate professor at NYU's Department of Environmental Studies, has done extensive research work on the role of landscapes in our climate system; doing so with the help of a variety of models and observational datasets. The focus of her work is in the different ways that agriculture both drives, and is vulnerable to, global environmental change.

Shukla holds a B.A. in physics from NYU and a Masters and Ph.D. from the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences at Columbia University. She was previously a NASA post-doctoral fellow at NASA GISS.

Sukhatme, an associate professor of law at Georgetown University Law Center, is affiliated faculty at Georgetown University McCourt School of Public Policy and is also the Thomas Alva Edison Visiting Scholar at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

He is a co-founder of Free Our Vote, a nonpartisan nonprofit that aids people who have a record of felony convictions, helping them get back their voting rights.

The Andrew Carnegie Fellows is a philanthropic support program that provides scholarship in humanities and social sciences that deals with pressing issues plaguing society.

This year, the program selected 26 fellows from a batch of 311 nominations. It comprises 18 women and 8 men (including 1 transgender person).

The nomination process is a rigorous one wherein 700 distinguished individuals are invited to make their recommendations and then undergo an anonymous preliminary evaluation followed by a final review and selection by a jury.

The award is for a period of two years, culminating in an anticipated book or a major study.

"Indian Americans Sonali Shukla McDermid and Neel Sukhatme have been named honorees by the Andrew Carnegie Fellows program that has announced its latest group of Fellows recently."



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Mahesh Bhagia Reinstated as Chairman of the Edison Democratic Organization

Mahesh Bhagia will retain his position as head of the Edison Democratic Organization and will go on serving as the township's Democratic chairman.

He defeated fellow councilman Ajay Patil by a 66–54 vote during a reorganization meeting that was held on Monday.

Along with Bhagia, other members of the body were elected. These included Vice Chairman Peng Chen, Recording Secretary Veena Sinha, and Corresponding Secretary Lisa Salem.

Among those re-elected to their former posts were Bhagia, Chen, and Sinha. This, according to Bhagia, points to the fact that the committee members still have a lot of confidence in the board. With an aim of increasing the representation of women on the board, Salem has been brought in as a new recruit.

The decision to remove Bhagia from his position was announced by Middlesex County Democratic Chairman Kevin McCabe after his alleged connection with an investigation into racist flyers sent during the 2017 Edison Board of Education election. Bhagia, however, declined to make any comments on the matter.

He said on Tuesday, "I have always believed as chairman in uniting the committee members toward the goal of helping Edison residents and making a positive change in the lives of residents."

Bhagia has come back with even more zeal. He said he plans to do more work with the help of feedback and ideas he receives on how the Edison Democratic Organization can help improve residents' lives.



He said, "My goal is to focus more on helping committee members so they can help the residents in their neighborhoods. That's the job of the chairman."

"Along with Bhagia, other members of the body were elected. These included Vice Chairman Peng Chen, Recording Secretary Veena Sinha, and Corresponding Secretary Lisa Salem."

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Mahasamadhi Aradhana Day
When: 08/03/2021
Contact: 301-384-5009
Email: msc21@chinmayadc.org
Host: Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center

A Year in Review
When: 08/06/2021, 7:00 PM EDT
Contact: 508-842-9795
Email: secretary@iswonline.org
Host: India Society of Worcester

Chinmaya Niketan Bala Vihar
When: 08/08/2021, 2:00 PM
Contact: 678-615-7088
Email: atlanta@chinmayamission.org
Host: Chinmaya Mission Atlanta

India Nite 2021
When: 08/15/2021, 11:00 AM
Contact: 602-751-8126
Email: president@iaphx.org
Host: India Association of Phoenix

Summer Kathak Weekend Intensive
When: 08/20/2021, 5:30 PM
Email: info@navatman.org
Host: Navatman

Hasya Kavi Sammelan
When: 08/29/2021, 8:00 PM
Contact: 732-744-0851
Host: Vishwa Hindu Parishad of America Inc.- Natick

Florida

Jacksonville

Gujarati Samaj Picnic 2021
When: 08/01/2021, 9:00 AM
Where: Henna Park Shelters 4/5/6
500 Wonderwood Dr,
Jacksonville,32233
Contact: 904-209-9445
Email: superadmin@gsnef.org
Host:GujaratiSamajofNorthEastFlorida

Orlando

2021 Navratri (at Olympia)
When: 08/10/2021, 7:00 PM
Where: Olympia High School
4301 S Apopka Vineland Rd,
Orlando,32835
Contact: Jiten Patel 407-924-7015
Email: info@gujaratisocietycfl.com
Host:GujaratiSocietyofCentralFlorida

Musical Evening
When: 08/14/2021, 6:00 PM
Where: Hindu Temple Casselberry
1994 E Lake Dr.,
Casselberry,32707
Contact: Jiten Patel 407-924-7015
Email: info@gujaratisocietycfl.com
Host: Gujarati Society of Central Florida

India Fest 2021
When: 08/21/2021, 4:00 PM
Where: Apopka Amphi Theatre
3710 Jason Dwelley Pkwy,
Apopka,32712
Contact: Hari Singh 321-662-1887
Indianhorizon0674@yahoo.com
Host: Indian Horizon of Florida

Shrimad Devi Bhagwat Katha & Navchandi Havan
When: 08/21/2021, 4:00 PM
Where:HinduSocietyofCentralFlorida
1994 Lake Drive,
Casselberry,32707- 4130
Contact: Mahesh Kapadia
407-902-8634
Email: info@orlandohindutemple.org
Host: Hindu Society of Central Florida

Tampa

Onam Celebration
When: 08/07/2021, 11:30 AM
Where: Sacred Heart Knanaya Catholic Community Center
2620 Washington Rd,
Valrico,33594
Contact: Shaju Ouseph 813-765-1443
Email: macftampa@gmail.com
Host: Malayalee Association of Central Florida

India Independence Day Celebration
When: 08/29/2021
Where: India Cultural Center
5511 Lynn Road, Tampa,33624
Contact: Jai Chandran 813-992-2014
Host: Federation of Indian Associations of Tampa Bay

Georgia

Atlanta Metro

Life Walk for Childhood ancer
When: 08/07/2021, 8:00 AM
Where: Webb Bridge Park Sports Complex
4780 Webb Bridge Rd,
Alpharetta,30005
Contact: 678-799-7521
Email: ycatl.accesslife@gmail.com
Host: Youth Chapter - Access Life America

Hindu Matrimonial USA

When : 09/24/2021
Where : India Cultural Center
5511 Lynn Road, Tampa, FL 33624
Phone : 769-241-0675
Email : floridahindumatrimonial@gmail.com
Website : www.hindumatrimonial.org
Host : Hindu Matrimonial USA (HMUSA)



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Where: Global Mall - Impact Hall

5675 Jimmy Carter Blvd, Norcross,30071

Contact: Sandhya Bhagat 404-384-8277

Host: Dhoop Chaoon Atlanta

Haryali/Singara Teej

When: 08/11/2021

Where: Sadhana Mandir

5675 Jimmy Carter Blvd Ste 733, Norcross,30071

Contact: 770-310-5944

Email: vedjoshiji@gmail.com

Host: Sadhana Mandir

Freedom Mela by Indian Friends of Atlanta

When: 08/15/2021, 10:00 AM

Where: 4080 Mcginnis Ferry Rd. Ste 1305, Alpharetta,30005

Contact: 404-253-4432

Email: info@ifaworld.org

Host: Indian Friends of Atlanta

Shravan Purnima | Raksha Bandan Satyanaryan Katha

When: 08/22/2021, 11:00 AM

Where: Sadhana Mandir

5675 Jimmy Carter Blvd Ste 733, Norcross,30071

Contact: 770-310-5944

Email: vedjoshiji@gmail.com

Host: Sadhana Mandir

Gujarati Jeevansathi Matrimonial

When: 08/28/2021, 6:00 PM

Where: Gokuldham Haveli 2397 Satellite Blvd, Buford,30518

Contact: 470-326-7455

Email: info@gujaratijeevansathi.org

Host: Gokuldham Haveli

Krishna Janmashtami

When: 08/30/2021, 8:00 PM

Where: Sadhana Mandir 5675 Jimmy Carter BLVD STE 733, Norcross,30071

Contact: Acharya Joshiji 770-310-5944

Email: vedjoshiji@gmail.com

Host: Sadhana Mandir

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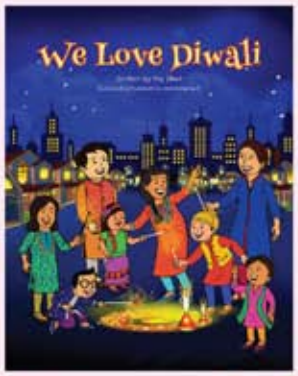
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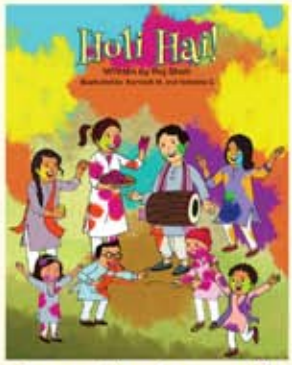

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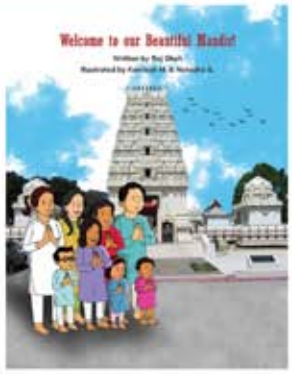
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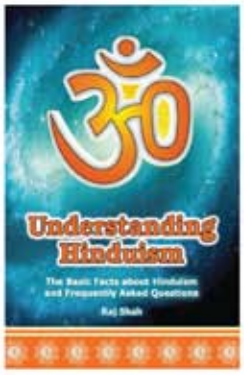
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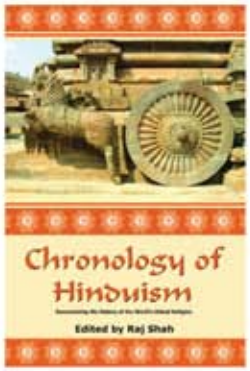
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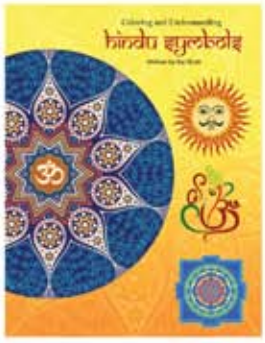
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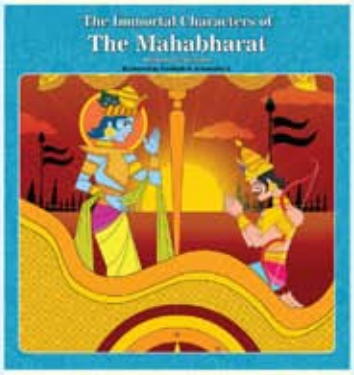
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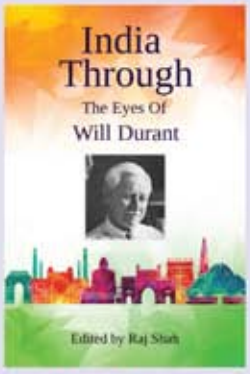
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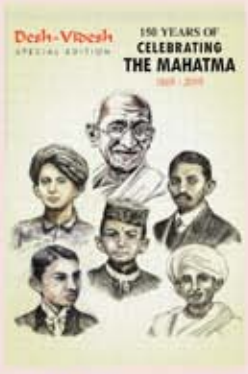
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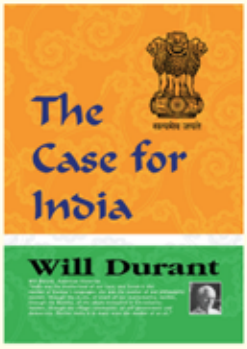
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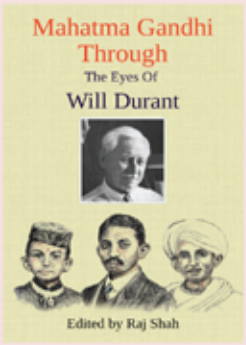
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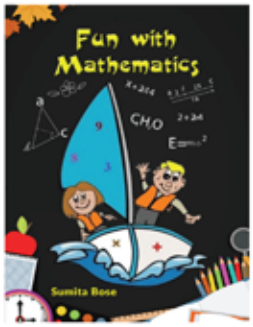
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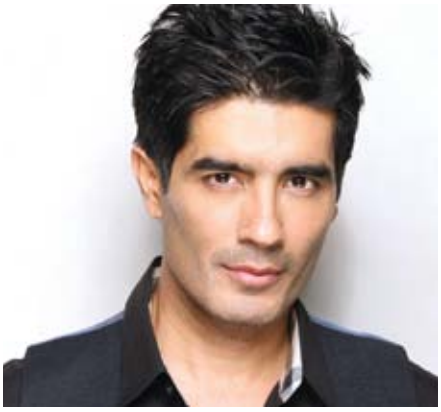
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Manish Malhotra to direct his first movie!



Manish Malhotra is all set to don the director's hat and give wings to his long-time desire of being involved in filmmaking. One of India's leading dress designers today, Malhotra has his name associated with the who's who of Tinsel Town, not to mention some of the most iconic looks in Bollywood movies.

Malhotra's debut venture will be made in association with Dharma Productions, which is headed by close friend and ace movie maker Karan Johar.

According to sources, the film is expected to be a period musical drama. The screenplay is "all ready and the film is going to be magnanimous". It is also said that the film is entirely Malhotra's baby – that not only is he the film's director, but that he's also its writer and that he's even doing the screenplay himself.

The fashion designer's first venture will be set during the Partition era. As of yet, the cast is unknown; but given Malhotra's close association with some of the biggest names in B-town, the film is expected to include some of the best actors and actresses in the country.

It goes without saying that the costumes in the film are going to be ultra-glamorous, given Malhotra's workmanship and his love for intricate designs along with a sense of lofty opulence.

The designer – who has styled for films like *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai*, *Kabhio Khushi Kabhi Gham*, and *Student of the Year* (among others) – will naturally choose the best outfits for his own directorial debut.

Shibani Dandekar's Sweet Message for Farhan Akhtar...

Shibani Dandekar praised beau and actor Farhan Akhtar and cheered him on for his latest venture, *Toofan* (now released on Amazon Prime Video).



Shibani took to her Instagram handle to give a shout-out to Akhtar, lauding him for all the hard work he put in to get into the skin of the character Aziz Ali Boxer in his new release.

She posted a picture of the couple from the sets of the film *Toofan* and wrote, "Watching your journey so closely has been nothing short of a privilege. You went to unimaginable lengths to get into the skin of the character, you didn't give up till you found his authentic voice, you took your mind to the darkest of places, and you tested your body every single day."

She also mentioned how proud she is of Farhan and added, "There was blood, sweat, [there were] punches, literal blows but you hit back with persistence, endurance, grit, resilience. Slowly the lines blurred and you literally morphed into AJJU BHAI aka AZIZ ALI BOXER!"

Farhan, too, took to social media to respond to Shibani's wishes and express his love for her. Shibani has been relentless in her promotion of the movie from the day it was announced.

Toofan has received a worldwide release on OTT platform Amazon Prime Video. The film is Farhan Akhtar's and Rakeysh Omprakash Mehra's second joint venture together. Both Akhtar and Mehra happen to be the film's producers, as is Ritesh Sidhwani (Excel Entertainment).

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Navya Naveli's Latest Post Gives a Sneak Peek into Her Home



Bollywood legend Amitabh Bachchan's granddaughter Navya Naveli Nanda, gave Instagram viewers a little peek inside her plush home as she spent time there on Thursday.

She captioned the post "at home with @rohanshrestha & @alliaalrufai", followed by a bunch of emojis of a person bowing.

In the snapshot, Navya is seen smartly attired in high-waist blue denims and a crisp-collared, oversized white shirt. She has also accessorised the look with a brown belt. Her hair has been left loose, with a simple parting in the middle; and she is sitting on a striped sofa in a couple of different poses.

The post attracted several comments from a number of Navya's friends and star kids, as well as from her mother – and from Amitabh Bachchan's daughter Shweta Bachchan Nanda, who wrote, "You clean up well." Actor Shah Rukh Khan's daughter Suhana Khan also commented, "Wowww."

Other children of popular Bollywood actors also wrote on the post. Actor Sanjay Kapoor's daughter Shanaya Kapoor posted a series of red heart emojis. Kapoor's wife Maheep Kapoor posted heart-eye emojis and wrote "love!" Sridevi and Boney Kapoor's younger daughter Khushi Kapoor wrote "omg ok yes".

Navya has also given us a glimpse of a nook in the house. The back of the sofa faces a glass pane with a semi-transparent curtain that is billowing in the wind. Peering through the glass wall behind it, you get to glimpse the lush greenery beyond.

Subhash Ghai Tweets a Noteworthy Fact About Dilip Kumar



Recently, ace filmmaker Subhash Ghai took to Twitter to write an interesting and largely unknown fact about veteran actor Dilip Kumar, who is now no more.

The Bollywood director who worked with Dilip Kumar in his film Karma revealed on social media that the late actor had not featured in a single endorsement in his entire life except one advertisement – for which he had not charged a penny.

Ghai also shared the endorsement, a pickle brand, which had the actor's photo on the label and which was even named after him. He wrote in the post about Kumar's early days as an actor, "Dilip Kumar stood by his friends always ... in his entire career he never did any endorsements, the only exception being Baburao Patel, the editor of Film India magazine, who was also into naturopathy. He endorsed his product free of any charge[,] as [a] Friend."

The actor breathed his last a few days ago amid loving friends and family and left his fans with innumerable memories to cherish. He was 98.

Mentioning the actor's death, his close family friend Faisal Farooqui had tweeted on July 7 from the actor's official Twitter handle, "With a heavy heart and profound grief, I announce the passing away of our beloved Dilip Saab, a few minutes ago. We are from God [-] and to Him, we return. He was laid to rest with full state honors at Mumbai's Juhu cemetery."

Dilip Kumar had almost 65 films to his credit, some of which have been etched into the history of Indian cinema as iconic for his memorable roles in films such as *Devdas*, *Naya Daur*, *Mughal-e-Azam*, *Ganga Jamuna*, *Kranti*, and *Karma*.

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Salman's B' day Wish for Katrina, With a Cute Picture of the Duo



Bollywood actor Salman Khan took to social media to wish Katrina Kaif a happy birthday. He also posted an adorable picture of them with his message of a "healthier, wealthier and wiser" birthday on Friday.

Salman has shared screen space with Katrina in several Hindi movies, and the snapshot he picked to post on Instagram was of a time when the duo visited the sets of popular comedian and host Kapil Sharma to promote one of their movies.

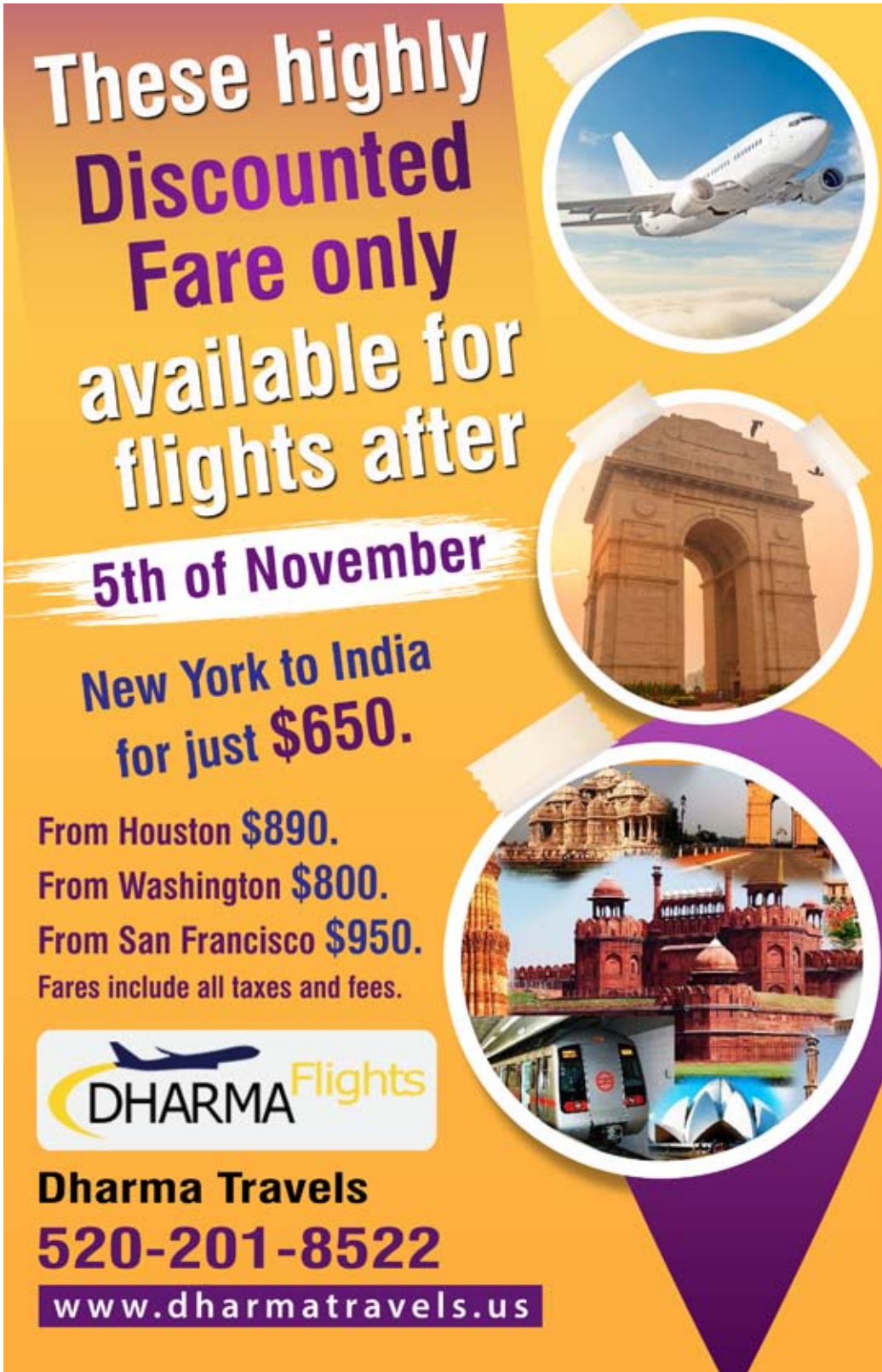
The caption on the photo said, "Wish you an amazing birthday Katrina! Healthier wealthier wiser birthdays with lots of love n respect in your life."

The post came as a delight to the superstar's fans who, soon after the message was put up on Instagram, deluged the comment section, expressing their happiness and how they loved to see Salman and Katrina together.

Some of the comments read, "Best couple", "We love SalKat forever" and so on. Many of their fans even went on to express their desire to see the two actors get married. "Wish these two [would] marry each other", read one of the comments.

Katrina had shared a beautiful picture of her in a stunning red swimsuit, smiling happily, and half-immersed in a swimming pool, on her Instagram account hours before Salman's post came. She had written, "Birthday, thank you so much everyone for all the love always."

The actress, who turned 38, will soon feature in the third part of the *Ek Tha Tiger* (2012) and *Tiger Zinda Hai* (2017) film series, *Tiger* 3.





Lovey Sasan of Saath Nibhaye Saathiya Fame Welcomed Her Second Baby on Her B' day



Actress Lovey Sasan from the popular TV show *Saath Nibhaye Saathiya* has been doubly blessed on her birthday as she gave birth to her second son.

Sasan, who played the role of Paridhi in the soap opera celebrated her birthday on July 16 when she also delivered her second baby at a private hospital in Bengaluru. She and husband Koushik Krishnamurthy have another son Royce, who was born on February 19, 2020.

The beaming mother expressed her happiness effusively: "Koushik and I feel extremely blessed. Now, I have three special men in my life – my husband and two boys. My in-laws wanted a daughter but destiny had other plans. The baby was born today, my birthday and so this gives a reason every year to have a huge celebration at home."

When asked about how her elder child reacted to having a new member added to the household, Lovey said, "When the baby was delivered, we showed it to the elder kid through video calling and told that this is your younger brother. Royce looked confused and looked at the baby with a smile. He is still very young[,] but the joy of the arrival of his younger brother is clearly visible in his eyes. He lives peacefully with my mother-in-law[,] without me. He is waiting to come to our house."

Best wishes for the happy family!

Divyanka Tripathi Offered *Bade Achche Lagte Hain 2.0*



There has been a recent trend of popular television soaps and series getting revived or making a comeback with a complete makeover – and none other than the queen of the small screen Ekta Kapoor has been entrustisted to lead from the front. After the announcement of coming back with *Pavitra Rishta* 2.0, 12 years after the much-loved show went on air on Zee TV, it is rumoured that Kapoor plans to revamp yet another popular show of hers, *Bade Achche Lagte Hain*, launching a second season of the show.

The role played by Sakshi Tanwar, however, has now been offered to Divyanka Tripathi who has also confirmed the offer. However, whether or not she will actually play the part is still under speculation. The reason? As the actress says, it's still too early for her to make a decision.

She said, "I've got the proposal for '*Bade Acche Lagte Hain*', but the talks are at a very initial phase. It has not even reached a point where there can be rumours or reports of me doing it. When the show is in the preliminary stage, the production house speaks to a lot of artists. We as actors are also in talks with different makers and channels for different projects."

Bade Achche Lagte Hain continues to be one of the most loved TV soaps among Indian viewers. Along with Tanwar, it had starred actor Ram Kapoor in the lead, telling the love story of two people who met at a later stage in their lives.

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Rahul Vaidya & Disha Parmar Throw a Glitzy Reception at the Grand Hyatt



Singer Rahul Vaidya tied the knot with Disha Parmar at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, Mumbai on July 16. While the wedding ceremony was a day affair, they threw a grand reception that night.

The event was a star-studded one, complete with all the glitz and glamour. Some popular figures who graced the occasion were Aly Goni, Jasmin Bhasin, Raai Laxmi, Mehreen Pirzada, and Mika Singh. The entire Khatron Ke Khiladi 11 squad including Arjun Bijlani, Neha Swami, Sana Makbul, Vishal Aditya Singh, Shweta Tiwari, and Anushka Sen were also present.

The newly wedded couple is seen vibrant and joyful in all the wedding finery in the pictures and videos shared on Instagram. They beamed with joy as they took the wedding vows and exchanged rings. One of the videos even showed the singer singing the Ganesh mantra with his bride by his side.

Earlier in the week, Parmar was seen celebrating her bachelorette party with some close friends, pictures of which went viral soon afterwards.

The couple had announced their wedding date a few weeks ago on social media with a joint statement that read, "With the blessings of our families, we are delighted to share this special moment with you all. We are elated to announce that our wedding is set to take place on 16th of July."

It was during his time in the Big Boss house of the famed TV show *Big Boss*, season 14, that Vaidya proposed to Parmar.

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Shooting starts for Pavitra Rishta 2; Shaheer Sheikh Replaces SSR



As shooting starts for a new season of the popular TV soap *Pavitra Rishta*, fans miss the onscreen chemistry between the show's lead actors Ankita Lokhande and the late Sushant Singh Rajput.

Rajput has been replaced by actor Shaheer Sheikh who will play the role of Manav Deshmukh, while Ankita will continue to play her role as Archana.

Sushant Singh Rajput, who was found dead under mysterious circumstances in his Mumbai apartment a year ago, had risen to fame playing the protagonist in this soap opera produced by Ekta Kapoor.

On Sunday, Ekta Kapoor's digital platform AltBalaji announced the return of the much-loved show with a new season and shared some pictures of the cast including Ankita Lokhande, Shaheer Sheikh, Usha Nadkarni (who played Savita Deshmukh), Asheema Vardaan, and Randeep Rai from the first day of *Pavitra Rishta 2*'s shoot.

A caption on the ALTBalaji post read, "Sometimes in most ordinary lives, we find the most extraordinary love stories! Witness the extraordinary love story of Manav and Archana."

Ankita, who became a household name after the show released 12 years ago, also shared a few pictures and videos on Instagram, one where she held the clapboard of "Pavitra Rishta". She posted a caption along with her picture that read, "12 Years!! Ohh, Yes Yes It's 12 Years Of Pavitra Rishta, Time Flies Really Quickly. With more than 66 Awards #Pavitrarishta remains to be one of the most loved shows on Indian Television. Here's to 12 glorious years of this iconic show. Which not only gave me Archana but love all across the globe and made me who I'm today".

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Indian Idol 12 Plans to Have Grand Finale That'll Run 12 Hours

Popular television reality show *Indian Idol 12* is nearing its finale and the makers of the programme have big plans for their fans, who have been eagerly waiting to know who is to emerge *numero uno*.

To make the grand finale a memorable affair for all their audience, the show organisers are making special preparations to make it truly exciting. Recently they have announced that the final episode will happen on August 15. It is also being told that the episode will be on air for a whopping 12 hours.

The concluding episode will have several stars who have been associated with performances on the show. This will not only include famous singers from Bollywood but also many former winners of the show who will come together to spread the magic of their soulful voices among viewers. All this is aimed at making the show an even memorable one.

The news has been received with some amount of panic and a lot of excitement among fans on social media. Even though the show has received some criticism and controversy after a few celebrities mentioned negative comments about it, audiences have shown much love for it.



In a recent interview, one of the contestants Mohammad Danish said, "We all are like a family. We all share a great bond. There is nothing being done for TRP. I don't think there is any love angle. They are great friends and share a great bond. But I don't know if there is love." He was alluding to the fake love story between two of the other contestants.

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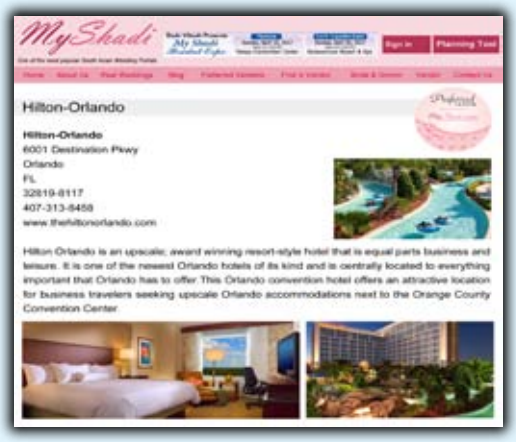
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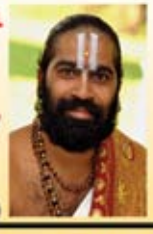


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