

# ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE

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## CELEBRATING INDIA @ 75

# Azadi <sup>ka</sup> Amrit Mahatosav

THE THREAD THAT KNITS INDIA

RECLAIMING LEADERSHIP IN SCIENCE,  
TECHNOLOGY

VISION OF A SELF-RELIANT INDIA

**Know India Better**

GRANDSTANDING THE BEST  
OF INDIAN CINEMA

**Face to Face**

CHAITY GHOSH







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## **Managing Editor**

Mrs. Sucharita R. Hegde

## **Editor**

Anuradha Dhareshwar

## **Design**

Graphic Cloud

## **OIOP Clubs**

Nagesh Bangera

## **Advisory Board**

Sucharita Hegde

Justice S. Radhakrishnan

Venkat R. Chary

Printed & Published by

Mrs. Sucharita R. Hegde for

**One India One People Foundation,**

Mahalaxmi Chambers, 4th floor,

22, Bhulabhai Desai Road,

Mumbai - 400 026

Tel: 022-2353 4400

Fax: 022-2351 7544

e-mail: oiopfoundation@gmail.com

oiopsub@fouressindia.com

visit us at:

**www.oneindiaonepeople.com**

www.facebook.com/oneindiaonepeoplefoundation



## Celebrating India @ 75 with aplomb

*The diamond jubilee of the country at a time when the economy stands out at a healthy 8.4 per cent, making it fastest among top economies. The spate of celebrations lined up in 2022 will be occasions to look back at how the country broke the foreign shackles to rapidly march towards self-reliance. **Anushka Singh** traces the glorious history of freedom struggle and the men who won it for India.*



**PM Narendra Modi inaugurating the curtain raiser activities of 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav'**

**O**n 15 August 2022, India will complete 75 years of being an independent nation. The country has come a long way in terms of development indices, economic growth, literacy, infrastructure development, etc. In December 2021, according to official data, in the July-September quarter of the current financial year (2021-22), India's economy grew 8.4 per cent, making it the fastest expansion among major economies of the world. This happened with the revival of government spending and private consumption as, over time, the disruptions caused by the Covid-19 pandemic eased out.

On 12 March 2021, India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off a 'Padyatra' (Freedom March) from Sabarmati Ashram in Ahmedabad, Gujarat and inaugurated the curtain raiser activities of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', also known as, India@75 initiative. At the occasion, several other dignitaries were present including Gujarat Governor Acharya Devvrat, Union MoS (I/C) Prahlad Singh Patel, the then Chief Minister of Gujarat

Vijay Rupani and several Gandhi Ashram trustees.

### The significance of India@75

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is an initiative of the Government of India to 'celebrate and commemorate 75 years of progressive India.' In March 2021, when the Prime Minister inaugurated the 75th year celebrations, he addressed the gathering at Sabarmati Ashram and spoke about the significance of the celebrations. At the launch, the PM said that the 'Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav' is to begin 75 weeks before 15 August 2022 and will continue till 15 August 2023. Later, Prime Minister Modi paid homage to the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, and remembered the great personalities who laid down their lives during the independence movement, for India to gain freedom from the clutches of a foreign rule.

Speaking on the occasion, the Prime Minister explained



what the phrase Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav means: It means 'elixir of energy of independence.' He added that the phrase means elixir of inspirations of the warriors of freedom struggle; elixir of new ideas and pledges and the nectar of *Aatmanir-bharat*.

Furthermore, the Prime Minister reiterated the five pillars that form the basis of the celebrations. These include the Freedom Struggle, Ideas at 75, Achievements at 75, Actions at 75 and Resolves at 75 - as the guiding force for India to keep moving forward and keeping dreams and duties as inspiration.

## India's legacy of self-reliance

It was in 1930 when Mahatma Gandhi initiated the Dandi March or Salt Satyagraha from Sabarmati in Ahmedabad. The twenty-four day march began on 12 March 1930 and lasted till 6 April 1930. The march was a non-violent protest against the British salt monopoly. Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Culture Prahlad Singh Patel reiterated how, today, after 91 years, the same soil where Gandhi started the revolutionary Dandi March is completely transformed and India's journey will now be defined by self-reliance and self-respect.

India has always been a country of self-reliance and new India is more so not just self-reliant but also leading the world and setting an example in terms of peace building, using science and technology for human welfare as in the case of manufacturing and distributing medicines and vaccines around the world, education, legal reforms, etc.

The country is today leading in all development and economic indices and the biggest of economies today want to have a stake in India and be part of the Indian story. The Prime Minister has envisioned that when the nation celebrates the hundredth year of Independence, India's 'achievements and cultural glory should be an outshining example before the world.'

## A people's movement

The Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is a public movement and has been being envisioned and planned as a *Jan mahostav*. All the events, activities and programmes will be organised by citizens and only their participation will make the mahotsav happen and make it a success.

When Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav was launched at Sabarmati, the then Chief Minister of Gujarat Vijay Rupani expressed his gratitude to the Prime Minister for initiating the movement and the celebrations from Gujarat. Dandi March was an important milestone in India's history and was a people's movement too at the same time.

Participation of citizens made the march a success and, along the same lines, the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is being organised to ensure public participation and involvement.

Gujarat gave India two important members of the country's freedom struggle who played a pivotal role in the independence movement – Mahatma Gandhi and Sardar Patel. And now, with the people-centric Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, the nation is fast pacing in the direction of asserting its position as the world leader.

## Remembering the 'freedom fighters'

It's important to understand the past to be able to plan the future. With the launch of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Prime Minister Modi gave Indians a chance to remember and to



pay tribute to all the freedom fighters, movements, uprising and struggles of the freedom movement. He paid homage to those whose contributions, in the country's freedom struggle and in making India what it is today, have not been duly recognised or documented the way they should have been.

The Prime Minister said that 'each and every struggle and fight was India's strong declaration of the truth against the forces of falsehood, a testimony to India's independent temperament.' The struggles faced by the nation represented the same consciousness and valour which was present in the 'days of Lord Ram, during the battle of Kurukshetra in Mahabharat, in Haldighati even the roar of Veer Shivaji.'

The Prime Minister quoted several movements that have been completely ignored in the decades following the country's Independence. He recalled the Ramoshi, Kol, Khasi, Naga, Santhal, Bhil, Sanyasi, Kittur movement, Travancore movement, Bardoli Satyagrah, Sambhalpur, Kuka, Chuar, Bundel uprisings and movements. These and many more such struggles kept the flame of freedom burning in India's far corners and amid the diverse communities, tribes and groups.

Apart from those directly involved in the freedom struggle, saints such as Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and Shrimant Sankara Dev gave direction to the masses and ensured they don't lose focus. In the western part of the country, on the other hand, Tukaram, Meerabai, Narsi Mehta, Eknath, Ramdas and then, in the North, Goswami Tulsidas, Soordas, Kabirdas, Guru Nanak Dev took up the mantle to guide the masses. In the southern part of the country, it was Ramanujacharya, Madhvacharya, Nimbarkacharya and Vallabhacharya who gave direction to people to channelize their resources for the larger good of their brethren and the nation.

The PM spoke of how the Sikh Guru tradition energised the country for protection of its culture and traditions. He emphasised that one should not forget the relentless work and contribution of our saints, mahants and acharyas in every part of the country that formed the stable foundation of the national struggle for freedom and independence.

During the Bhakti period also many spiritual and social leaders inspired masses to 'reform' and grow. They were responsible for spreading India's freedom struggle to all the parts of the country and make it a pan-India movement. There is a pending need to make the people of the country aware of the lives and stories of these leaders. It's only with these inspiring stories that the present and future generations will know of the sons and daughters who shaped India to what it is today.

**Anushka Singh works with DraftCraft International as a Media Researcher and writes mostly on issues affecting the Fourth Estate. She likes reading contrarian literature and analysing sources of news**



## The thread that knits India

*The Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav initiative has worked wonders for the social fabric of the country as a strong binding force. Defying Covid, citizens, ministries, government departments, agencies, municipal offices, corporations, village panchayats and leaders at all levels have come together to commemorate India's 75 th year of Independence observes **Vandana Rao**.*



**India Post celebrated Banking Day at Assam Postal Circle as part of the Amrit Mahotsav where five SSA pass books were handed over to girl child**

**T**he Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav initiative has united India in more ways than one. The Prime Minister envisioned it as a movement for the people and by the people and has encouraged citizens from all walks of life to participate and further the vision of a powerful, self-reliant India. Following his lead, many citizen groups have come together, across India, even from beyond borders, to celebrate India's 75 th year of independence as it grows into one of the most powerful nations in the world.

Not just citizens, myriad ministries, government departments, agencies, municipal offices, corporations, village panchayats and leaders at all levels have come together to commemorate India's 75 th year of Independence with the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. Prime Minister Narendra Modi said we have proved ourselves with our hard work, both in India and abroad. We are proud of our Constitution and democratic traditions. India is the mother of democracy and is still moving ahead by strengthening democracy.

The nation's biggest achievement has been uniting the citizens for nation development; leading by example to resolve issues affecting the world; and giving hope to humanity especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. India's journey and evolution is founded on *Aatmanirbharta* or self-reliance and has been providing momentum to that of the world as well.

### Postal commemoration

The Department of Posts under the Government of India Ministry of Communications observed National Postal Week with the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* undertone. India Post is a government-operated postal system in India, under the Department of Posts.

Warren Hastings, under the East India Company started the Postal Service in British India in 1766 that was established under the name 'Company Mail'. Later, it was changed to a service in 1854 by Lord Dalhousie who introduced



uniform postage rates and helped pass the India Post Office Act 1854.

For more than 150 years, the Department of Posts (DoP) has been the backbone of the country's communication and has played a crucial role in the country's social economic development. It has touched the lives of Indian citizens in many ways – delivering mails, accepting deposits for small savings, providing life insurance cover, rural insurance, affordable retail services like bill collection, sale of forms, etc.'

The DoP also acts as an agent for the Government of India for disseminating other citizen-based services such as the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) wage disbursement and old age pension payments. India Post has more than 1,55,000 post offices across the country and has the most widely distributed postal network in the world.

## Spreading awareness for nation development

In October 2021, as part of the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*, Minister of State for Communications Devusinh Chauhan released a special cover on Muga Silk (GI Tag) with Assam Postal Circle. India Post celebrated Banking Day as part of the Mahotsav where five SSA pass books were handed over to girl child accompanied by their parents.

The Department has played a significant role in the promotion of Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana Accounts (SSA) under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Abhiyaan' for empowerment of girl children. So far, more than 2.2 Cr SSA accounts have been opened in post offices since the scheme was launched in January 2015.

This year, DoP is also celebrating the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* by organising Financial Inclusion Melas in all districts to create financial awareness and promote financial inclusion. The Department of Posts along with the Department of School Education and Literacy, Ministry of Education, is holding the '75 Lakh Post Card Campaign' from 1 December 2021 to 20 December 2021.

The campaign is open for all students of class IV to XII of all schools affiliated to CBSE as well as various state and UT education boards, set up in India and abroad. Here, 75 post cards having the best ideas will be selected by CBSE HQ at an All-India level for a National-Level participation in the final event to be held on 17 January 2022.

## India's biggest strength, its people

Continuing celebrations for the *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*, in August 2021, principals and heads of schools in Margao in Goa were felicitated at an event held at the three-day photo exhibition on *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*. The exhibition was being conducted by the Field Outreach Bureau - Goa, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. During the Covid-19 crisis, schools were very helpful to the government in COVID management as they doubled-up as vaccination centres.

In another event, the Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) held a webinar where a series of 12 episodes was launched that will took the participants on a virtual journey of Incredible India. Union Minister of Education Dharmendra Pradhan said, "This is our moral responsibility to educate our youth about our glorious past



### **Mechanical cleaning of sewers and septic tanks has started under 'Safai Mitra Suraksha Challenge'**

and at the same time prepare them for the path of global leadership."

The Minister of Culture, Tourism and the Development of North-eastern Region (DoNER) G. Kishan Reddy urged students to take out at least 75 hours in the next one year and involve themselves in nation building. He said, "This can be participating in Swachh Bharat Abhiyaan in your native villages or involving in a campaign with your village sarpanch or mayor or local representative to hoist the national flag". He also suggested students to take out time for other activities such as 'planting trees to increase the green cover, teaching at an orphanage, volunteering at an old age home, helping in the uptake of digitization and digitally empowering the poor'.

Minister Reddy reiterated that PM Modi's call for *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* is a golden opportunity to develop a common vision for India at its 100th year of independence. "Prime Minister rightly said that the Mahotsav is not just about the last 75 years of Independence, but a movement to develop a common vision for the next 25 years. We need to ensure that the road to 2047 is marked by progress and prosperity. And to achieve this, I urge the youth to become the torchbearers and architects of India@100 as a Vishwa guru", he added.

## Swachh Amrit Mahotsav

In November 2021, India's President Ram Nath Kovind addressed the Swachh Amrit Mahotsav and presented the Swachh Survekshan Awards 2021 - organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. The President noted that *Safai Mitras* and sanitation workers have continuously rendered their services even when the rest of India stopped during the Covid pandemic. The government is committed to ensure that lives of sanitation workers are not risked due to unsafe cleaning practices.

An initiative of the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the 'Safai Mitra Suraksha Challenge' has been started in 246 cities across India with the aim to promote mechanical cleaning of sewers and septic tanks. The President advised 'to extend this mechanical cleaning facility in all the cities'. He said that manual scavenging is a shameful practice and the eradication of this practice is not only the responsibility of the government but also of the society and citizens.

**Vandana Rao is a researcher working with The Media Matters Project - A DraftCraft International Initiative to investigate into functional issues of the media – traditional, social and legal; ethics within borders and bias, inherent and doctored**



## Reclaiming leadership in science, tech

**Nikita Shastri** points that even as India attains a pride of place in the world in its 75 th year of Independence, it continues its pioneering sprint in scientific discoveries. Little wonder that this enviable growth finds honourable mention in Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav with a string of feats achieved by the country's top brains. It will be payback time for unsung scientists and experts in technology.



**India International Science Festival (IISF 2021) at Panjim in Goa**

India's Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav initiative is incomplete without celebrating India's legacy and current position in the realm of science and technology. India has always been a pioneer when it comes to scientific discoveries, technological inventions and in giving the world some of the brightest scientists and inventors who have changed their respective fields for better.

As the country celebrates Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, India's contributions to science and technology are being showcased across platforms. Indian scientists and innovators have worked tirelessly for the betterment of society and humanity – not just in India but across borders too. The brightest of minds, across the country, have diligently worked towards national development and have touched the lives of millions of people through their works.

India's prowess in space and nuclear technology is known to the world. The country has built satellites, sent probes to Mars and the Moon – a feat achieved by very few nations in the world, possesses advanced nuclear weapons and technology being used for defence, surveillance and domestic purposes.

Only through advancement in science and technology did India ensure the green and white revolutions to feed its billion plus population. Today, India is self-sufficient in production of medical drugs, vaccines, food, milk, fruits and vegetables, etc. These feats combined with favourable public policies have ensured that today India is a nation exporting most commodities it used to import earlier.

### Spreading awareness important

In December 2021, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology; Minister of State (Independent Charge) Earth Sciences, Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated the seventh edition of India International Science Festival (IISF 2021) at Panjim in Goa. The festival is a joint programme of Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Earth Sciences and Vijnana Bharati (VIBHA) - a scientific movement with swadeshi spirit. The main aim of the one-of-its-kind festival is to develop technology that is affordable to the masses and take innovations to the people. It's only through advances in science and technology that the country can move forward and lead the world. With this futuristic approach, events like the science festival are being organised across India for education and awareness.



At the inaugural ceremony of the festival, several dignitaries were present including the Union Minister of Ayush and Ports, Shipping and Waterways Sarbananda Sonowal, Union Minister of State (MoS) for the Ministry of Tourism and Ports, Shipping and Waterways Shripad Naik, Chief Minister of Goa, Pramod Sawant, Secretary Ministry of Earth Sciences, Dr M. Ravichandran, President Vijnana Bharati, Dr Vijay Bhatkar and senior scientists and officials. The theme of the four-day festival, IISF 2021, resonated with the ongoing Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations and was titled 'Celebrating Creativity, Science, Technology and Innovation for a prosperous India'.

Speaking on the occasion, Dr Jitendra Singh said, "India is celebrating the 75th year of its Independence and it is time to lay down the road map of scientific progress for the next 25 years, when India celebrates the Centenary of Independence." He called out to the youth of the nation to join this 'Vigyan Utsav' and take the lead through Innovative Start-ups. The long-term goal of these initiatives is to make India a five-trillion-dollar economy by 2024-25.

## Conducive environment for growth

With the recent policy decisions and a growing focus of the government on science and technology, science is now not restricted to being just a subject of research but has grown beyond that. Today, science has assumed a larger status. According to the minister, there is a need for celebrating a Science Festival in every city and village of India to inspire the youth in critical thinking. At the festival, Science Village, Traditional Crafts and Artisan Meet, ECO-FEST, New Age Technology and Mega Science and Technology Expo, Games and Toys, Global Indian Scientists and Technocrats Fest, etc., were held to spark interest of the youth in science and technology.

Initiatives like the science festival are among a series of steps taken in the last few years to support India's long-term vision of 'developing and widening the spectrum of scientific temper for sustainable development and new technological innovations in India'. According to Dr Singh, these initiatives also aim to build a strategy for rural India through the advancement of Science and Technology and festivals such as IISF provide a platform to 'young students, scientists and technocrats from across India for exchange of knowledge and ideas'.

For the advancement of science and technology in India and to encourage participation of more youth, several supporting flagship programmes have been initiated in the last few years by the Prime Minister. These include 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan', 'Swasth Bharat Abhiyan', 'Make in India', 'Smart Cities', 'Namami Gange', 'Unnath Bharat Abhiyan', 'Digital India', 'Smart Villages', etc., initiated by the Prime Minister in the last seven years.

The five pillars of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav - Freedom Struggle, Ideas at 75, Achievements at 75, Actions at 75 and Resolves at 75 as guiding force for moving forward keeping dreams and duties as inspiration – are reflected in the myriad activities planned in the area of science and technology such as the India International Science Festival.

## Multi-pronged approach to popularise science

The role of women in any field, including science and technology, cannot be ignored. Today, in India, women science leaders are increasing and many of them are now leading research projects across the country. According to a recent



### 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas'

government report (Directory of Extramural Research and Development Project 2018- 19), Women Principal Investigators participation in research that received extramural research (EMR) support - through peer-reviewed competitive grant mechanism - was 28 per cent during 2018-19, as against 24 per cent during 2016-17.

Through the 'Science Communicators Mega Conference on India's Independence Movement and Science', as part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, year-long celebrations have been planned to educate citizens about the scientists who risked everything during the freedom movement, their struggles and achievements. The contributions of thousands of unsung scientists and science communicators who were also involved in the freedom struggle of India cannot be forgotten. These bright minds faced discrimination and negligence at the hands of the British and despite extremely challenging and unfavourable circumstances, these scientists and science communicators kept on working for the development of the nation and the society.

The government has also initiated interactions with successful start-ups especially those from the tribal community. On the occasion of 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas', Dr Jitendra Singh announced 30 Science Technology and Innovation (STI) Hubs for Scheduled Tribes by end of 2022 for their overall socio-economic development. India currently stands at 46 th position in the Global Innovation Index and it is due to growing investments in the area of innovation, scientific output and strategic expenditures in Research and Development. So, while science is universal, technology must be local for providing indigenous solutions in the spirit of 'Vocal for Local', the minister maintained.

The birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda is now being celebrated as the 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' and, this year, the government initiated steps to set up STI Hubs in different parts of the country for Scheduled Tribes (STs). The idea is to promote scientific talent among tribal communities. According to Dr Singh, out of 75 proposed STI Hubs for SCs/STs, 20 have already been established by Department of Science and Technology which will directly benefit 20,000 people through various interventions spreading across farm, non-farm and other allied livelihood sectors.

**Nikita Shastri is a researcher with The History and Heritage Project – a DraftCraft International Initiative to document details, analyse facts and plug lacunae generated by oversight or to further national or foreign agenda in History and Heritage Across India and Beyond Borders**



## Vision of a self-reliant India

India battled the odds arising out of the Covid pandemic to usher in a new era in self-reliance. **Trisha Sharma** describes how the country's PM gave a clarion call and subsequently the push to the campaign on 'Vocal for Local' in order to bolster economy. This couldn't have been at a more opportune for India@75.



### Towards a self-reliant India

When the dark cloud of the Covid-19 pandemic engulfed India, it was the clarion call made by the country's leader to achieve self-reliance that not just infused hope and positivity among the citizens but also sowed the seeds of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' celebrations that has now reached all the nooks and corners of India. A country of more than a billion people, India is probably the only nation that managed the Covid crisis successfully in an unprecedented manner. Despite the huge population, shrinking healthcare personnel and the lockdown that lasted months, India not just emerged triumphant but also paved the way for self-reliance like never before.

In May 2020 Prime Minister Narendra Modi had announced the special economic and comprehensive package of Rs. 20 lakh crores, equivalent to ten per cent of the country's GDP, to fight Covid-19 pandemic in India which was at its peak at the time. He also announced that now India should move towards being self-reliant in every way possible and initiated the

Aatmanirbhar Bharat or Self-Reliant India Movement. It was PM Modi's timely call for Aatmanirbhar Bharat and the push for 'Vocal for Local' that ensured livelihood and supplies for Indians throughout the lockdown. The five primary pillars of an Aatmanirbhar Bharat include Economy, Infrastructure, System, Vibrant Demography and Demand.

### India being Aatmanirbhar

In today's India, becoming self-reliant is not about becoming a self-centred system. In India's self-reliance, there is a concern for the entire world's happiness, cooperation and peace. During one of the worst crisis to have hit India, in 2020 when the economic package was announced, its reach and future implications were not fully understood by everyone at the time. Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav that celebrates 75 years of India's independence is only the beginning of India asserting its self-reliance.

The package was announced under the 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan' to aid our country out of the Coronavirus crisis,



college or while he tries to save her from a bunch of road-side Romeos. After falling in love, the couple breaks into a dance on couple breaks into a dancaby making India self-reliant, not just for the time being to address the needs created by the pandemic but in the near and far future as well. Policy reform initiatives were undertaken based on this call made by the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister of India Nirmala Sitharaman who announced several initiatives and steps to implement the Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan in India.

The Ministries of Finance and Corporate Affairs had immediately started implementation of the announcements related to the Economic Package under Aatmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan. In addition to that, regular reviews and monitoring of the implementation of the economic package was overseen by the Finance Minister personally and at regular intervals.

As part of the package, a major relief was given to the backbone of Indian economy – the local MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises). A big relief was also given to the contractors when the Finance Minister announced that all central agencies like Railways, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways and CPWD will give extension of upto six months for completion of contractual obligations, including in respect of EPC and concession agreements.

Additionally, the Finance Minister had announced the Centre's decision to increase borrowing limits of States from three per cent to five per cent, for 2020-21 that gave the States extra resources of ₹ 4.28 lakh crore.

## Historic steps for self-reliance

On India's 74 th Independence Day, the call for 'Vocal for Local' was made by the Prime Minister from the Red Fort. It was a historic moment as the entire nation was in sync with the leader as one. Prime Minister Modi spoke of the country's resolve to become self-reliant and explained how large companies from around the world are finding India a promising ground for business and enterprise and turning towards India in big numbers. He said, "We have to move forward with the mantra of 'Make for the world' along with 'Make in India'."

Soon enough, India realised the importance of being 'Vocal for Local' especially after the Covid-19 public health crisis that devastated many countries in the 'developed' world. When the novel Coronavirus was wreaking havoc in nations the world over, India resolved to self-reliance and pledged to be 'Vocal for Local'. Prime Minister Modi said, "This dream is turning into a pledge. Aatmanirbhar Bharat has become a 'mantra' for the 130 crore Indians today. I am confident of the abilities, confidence and potential of my fellow Indians. Once we decide to do something, we do not rest until we achieve that goal."

## Azad and Aatmanirbhar Bharat

In March 2021, as part of Aatmanirbhar initiative of the central government, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched 'Aatmanirbhar Incubator' – an initiative to train artisans, especially in the cotton value chain. An initiative for economic empowerment, the AatmaNirbhar Incubator is aimed at supporting artisans facing extinction due to lack of market linkage and funds. The unique initiative is expected to benefit nearly 40,000 families in the cotton value chain in the Indian states of Karnataka, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Assam and Andhra Pradesh.

To promote the idea of Aatmanirbhar Bharat, the Ministry of Culture of the Government of India along with Sabarmati Ashram Preservation and Memorial Trust launched this unique



**PM Modi interacting with India`s youth**

support and incubation scheme aimed at India's traditional connection with the natural world. The partnership initiative will aim 'to preserve the indigenous skill of India that suffered during pre-Independence days.'

Just like Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, this initiative has been pledged as a true contribution to Aatmanirbhar Bharat and recognition of India's rich indigenous knowledge. The idea is to turn this initiative into a public movement i.e. a 'Jan Aandolan' – similar to Azadi Ka Amrit Mahostav. The artisans will also be provided mentorship and support through industry interface.

## Drawing from the past

Before India became independent, salt was the symbol of the people's self-reliance. At that time, the British had damaged values of self-reliance and the people of India had to depend on the salt imported from England. It was only after Mahatma Gandhi's Satyagraha movement, that immediately caught the attention and participation of the entire nation, that India united as one to fight the colonial rulers. Today, Indians have come together, one more time, through the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, to be part of the 75 years of the Satyagraha movement and the Dandi March.

At the launch of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, Union Minister of State for Culture and Tourism (Independent Charge) Prahlaad Singh Patel led the first 75 km of the padyatra (foot march) with 81 social workers (padyatris) from different states. He completed the 75 km Dandi Yatra at the town of Nadiad in Gujarat. Thousands of people joined the march and many dignitaries including Union Minister Giriraj Singh, Gujarat Chief Minister Vijay Rupani had participated. The padyatris completed a 386 km long route from Sabarmati to Dandi.

With the beginning of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the Prime Minister again stressed the need of 'Vocal for Local'. He inaugurated a charkha (spinning wheel) near Magan Niwas at Sabarmati Ashram Ahmedabad, Gujarat which is connected with technology and social media. So, whenever a local product would be bought by someone, a picture of it would be shared on social media platforms using the 'VocalForLocal' portal. So with the spinning wheel, India's commitment to self-reliance or Aatmanirbharta would be established, every time.

**Trisha Sharma is a media researcher with The History and Heritage Project – A DraftCraft International Initiative to document details, analyse facts and plug lacunae generated by oversight or to further national or foreign agenda in History and Heritage Across India and Beyond Borders**



## Rising India remembers its forefathers

*If it were not for the vision and foresight of the freedom fighters, India would never have gained Independence. That's why celebrating 75 years of freedom, in a manner it warrants – Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, is important for India to stay focussed, on track, and move ahead to achieve its full potential. **Amita Naik** believes it will be an occasion for the youth, to know about those who made supreme sacrifices to help India attain its freedom.*



**First row : Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel;**

**Second row : Subhash Chandra Bose, Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad;**

**Third row : Tribal leaders Birsa Munda, Gondhar Konwar, Lachit Borpuhan**

**W**hen, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, India welcomed the decision of 75 weeks of observances to commemorate the 75 th year of Independence, to conclude on 15 August 2023, a strong emphasis was made to showcase the contributions of the forgotten men and women of the country. While everyone knows about the contributions of the forefathers of the nation - Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sarojini Naidu, Ashfaqulla Khan, Bhagat Singh, etc., there are, however, many more whose relentless efforts to attain independence for the country went unnoticed and undocumented.

India's freedom was a far-fetched dream as the country had been under the British colonial rule for centuries. Had it not been for the vision and foresight of the freedom fighters, India would never have gained independence. That's why celebrating 75 years of freedom, in a manner it warrants – Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, is important for India to stay focussed, on track, and move ahead to achieve its full potential.

In the last few years, several important issues have

been taken up and addressed by the government, such as cleanliness and sanitation. Amrit Mahotsav, to commemorate India's 75 years of Independence, has specifically focussed on making India cleaner and several events and activities to further this have been organised and are planned in the near future. The Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi, had laid special emphasis on cleanliness. He had said that cleanliness is most important for physical well-being and a healthy environment.

### Educating youth about the freedom fighters

Union Minister of Education and Minister of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Dharmendra Pradhan spoke about the importance of India's struggle for freedom and that it will enlighten the country's path towards progress. The government has initiated several innovative programmes to engage youth and students and encourage participation in nation building.

The minister spoke about the 'sacrifices of the great



Indian freedom fighters Shahid Bhagat Singh, Khudiram Bose, Chandrashekhar Azad'. He explained the relevance of the programme launched by the Ministry of Tourism with the Association of Indian Universities (AIU) wherein efforts would be made to rope in school as well as university students. It is 'preserving of our rich culture and heritage and, at the same time, moving ahead on the path of progress and development. It's our moral responsibility to educate our youth about our glorious past and at the same time prepare them for the path of global leadership.'

Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav was launched as a 75-week-long celebration by PM Modi from the Sabarmati Ashram in Gujarat. The youth of the nation must be exposed to the 'rich tapestry of India's glorious past and a grand future'. The inauguration programme comprised live streaming of a 20-minute film titled 'India@75-A Journey' – an effort to help the youth of the nation to appreciate the multi-hued fabric of India's rich and plural culture, her vast heritage, infinite wisdom and her indomitable spirit so they can shape the glorious further of this ancient land. Several other initiatives have been undertaken to engage the youth through the 'modern' platforms they can best relate to.

## India's glorious history

When the Prime Minister announced the launch of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, to be celebrated 75 weeks before 15 August 2022 and continue till 15 August 2023, he paid homage to Mahatma Gandhi and the great men and women who laid down their lives in the freedom struggle. Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav means elixir of the energy of independence. It means elixir of inspirations of the warriors of India's freedom struggle; elixir of new ideas and pledges and the nectar of Aatmanirbharta. India's struggle for independence had set an example for several other nations who gradually fought their way out of the clutches of colonialism.

In India, one of the most significant events during the freedom struggle was the salt march initiated by Mahatma Gandhi – as a symbol of India's self-reliance. Even today, salt represents honesty, trust, loyalty, labour, equality and, most importantly, self-reliance. The British, through their policies and laws hurt Indian values and self-respect. Indians had to depend on the salt coming from England. Prime Minister noted that 'Gandhi understood this chronic pain of the country, understood the pulse of the people and turned that into a movement'.

Even before the rebellion stirred by Mahatma Gandhi, several important moments had changed the course of India's fight for freedom. The first war of independence in 1857, Mahatma Gandhi's return to India, the power of Satyagraha, call for complete independence or poorna swarajya by Lokmanya Tilak, Delhi March by the Azad Hind Fauj led by Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, to name a few.

## Holistic knowledge needed

The idea of Independence and of a free India percolated down through the thoughts and works of writers, saints, teachers and other bright minds, through history, who were born in India. The flame of freedom was kept alive in the nation's consciousness because of the tireless contribution of religious leaders, scholars and thinkers from different parts of the country. According to the Prime Minister, saints like Chaitanya Mahaprabu, Shrimant Shankar Dev, and Ramkrishna Paramhans "created the bedrock of a countrywide freedom struggle".

Through Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav programmes, an atmosphere will be created for the nation, especially the youth, to know about the many dalits, women, tribals and the youth who made supreme sacrifices to help India attain its freedom. The Prime Minister recalled the "sacrifices of unsung heroes" like 32-year-old Kodi Katha Kumaran from Tamil Nadu who "did not let the flag fall to the ground even as he was shot in the head by the British". Similarly, Tamil Nadu's Velu Nachiyar was the first Maharani who fought against the British rule and only few people are aware of this.

In the last few years, India has made conscious efforts to preserve history in every state and region. So, for example, the site where Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose hoisted the tri-colour in Andaman, after the formation of the country's first independent government, has been revived.

The Prime Minister said, "The Andaman and Nicobar islands are named after the freedom struggle. Places associated with Babasaheb (Ambedkar) have been developed in the form of Panchteerthas. The memorial in Jallianwala Bagh and Paika Movement memorial have also been developed." The Paika Rebellion aka the Paika Bidroha was an armed rebellion in 1817 against the Company rule in India. The Paikas were the traditional militia of Odisha and rose in rebellion under Bakshi Jagabandhu. Among other initiatives, the revival of the site associated with the Dandi Yatra was completed two years ago.

## Unsung tribal freedom fighters

The tribals of India, throughout the freedom struggle, fought to defeat the foreign colonial rule. Birsa Munda challenged the British in the region what is now Jharkhand. He was a tribal freedom fighter, of the Munda tribe, and led a tribal religious movement that arose in Bengal Presidency (now Jharkhand) during the British rule. In Odisha, Chakra Bisoi, a rebel leader of Ghumusar fought the British Empire. Bisoi took command of the Khond rebellion in 1840 after the death of his uncle Dora Bisoi. His father Ram Singh Bakshi had died in cold blood in a skirmish against the British troops in 1937.

Among other tribal freedom fighters, the Murmu brothers led the Santhal movement against the British. On 30 June 1855, Sidhu and Kanhu Murmu mobilised roughly 60,000 Santhals and declared a rebellion against the East India Company. The rebellion, in present-day Jharkhand, was against the British East India Company and the zamindari system. Four Murmu brothers, Sidhu, Kanhu, Chand and Bhairav had led the rebellion. Tribal heroes such as the Nayak tribals in Jambughoda (Gujarat), Manyam Virudu Alluri Siraram Raju in Andhra Pradesh, Pasaltha Khungchera in Mizoram and Gomodhar Konwar, Lachit Borphukan and Serat Sing from Assam and the north-east fought the British to their last breath.

**Amita Naik is a researcher working with The Media Matters Project - A DraftCraft International Initiative to investigate into functional issues of the media – traditional, social and legal; ethics within borders and bias, inherent and doctored**



## Strengthening India's economic identity

**Ruchi Verma** explains the recognition of India now being a world leader when it comes to creating and nurturing a startup ecosystem and the role of states has been pivotal in making India a leading global startup hub. With Trade and Commerce being the backbone of any economy, the nation has rightly taken giant leaps in strengthening the sector.



### Vanijya Utsav in Indian states

As part of India's Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, several government departments, entities, citizen groups, social organisations and groups at state, city, municipal and village levels have undertaken or pledged initiatives and activities to be part of the celebrations. Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav is being celebrated by every State, Ministry and Department in various ways. The initiative embodies all that is 'progressive about India's socio-cultural and economic identity'.

When the curtain raiser activities of the 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav' were launched in Ahmedabad on 12 March 2021, the Prime Minister had urged citizens to celebrate this festival for 75 weeks with the sole purpose of leading the country on the path of development and benefit the people of the nation. The initiative is dedicated to the people of India who have been instrumental in bringing India to what it is today in its evolutionary journey, fuelled by the spirit of Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

India is a world leader now when it comes to creating and nurturing a startup ecosystem and the role of states has been pivotal in making India a leading global startup hub. Trade and commerce are the backbone of any economy and the nation has taken giant leaps in strengthening the sector.

To celebrate and commemorate 75 years of 'a progressive India' and its glorious history, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry through its various departments and agencies initiated myriad programmes and activities to strengthen the sector and further the spirit of entrepreneurship.

### A rising economic force

As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, the Department of Commerce of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry observed the 'Vanijya Saptah' (Trade and Commerce Week) in September 2021 that entailed a slew of programmes and events showcasing India as a rising economic force. India has 739 districts in all and these programmes aimed to brand India as a green and clean economic zone for potential trade and commerce opportunities and avenues.

During the Vanijya Utsav, exporter conclaves and meets were held in more than 700 districts, including mega events in 100 districts, organised by the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) along with the Export and Market Development Assistance (E&MDA) in collaboration with the respective state governments. During these events, handholding sessions for



local exporters and / or entrepreneurs were conducted tackling foreign trade issues involving stakeholders such as the bank, local export chambers / associations and Export Promotion Councils (EPCs).

Additionally, as part of the initiatives taken by the ministry under the Amrit Mahotsav, national seminars and exhibitions were organised by the Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT) in five regions of the country that includes the North, South, East, West and the North-East region. The theme for these events was 'Azadi and Export Promotion / Import Substitution – Aatmanirbharta Ki Aur'. Sessions focussing on 'From Farm to Foreign Lands', exporter conclaves, 'Vaniya Utsav', etc. were organised in all the districts of the country under the umbrella of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav initiative.

The Prime Minister had, during his speech at the Red Fort on 15 August 2019, called to convert each of India's 739 districts into an export hub. In line of the Prime Minister's vision for India's industrial sector, the department initiated the 'One District One Product' (ODOP) scheme under the directions of the Union Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal.

ODOP is a unique initiative and is seen as a transformational step forward towards realising the true potential of a district. The scheme aims to fuel economic growth and generate employment and rural entrepreneurship, to further the underlying goal of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav – strengthening India's cultural and economic identity and imbibing all that is progressive about the country.

## Strengthening the startup ecosystem

India's growing Startup sector has furthered the country's image of an economic force to reckon with. Several steps have been taken by the 'Startup India' initiative following the launch of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav that aims to foster entrepreneurship on the ground. As part of the Mahotsav, the Startup India initiative coordinated with key states and union territories to organise several startup events. Startup policies too were announced on the occasion. The events were held in Uttarakhand, Meghalaya, Assam, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Jammu and Kashmir, Telangana, Gujarat, Karnataka and Haryana.

The programmes under the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav Week will have a long-lasting and holistic impact on the entire startup ecosystem of India.

The events conducted through the 'Startup India' initiative were based on diverse themes and included Knowledge on Trademarking and Patents, Investments, Marketing, Mentorship, Regulations, Procurement, Community building, etc. The unique programmes helped in equipping existing and potential entrepreneurs with the right knowledge and skills to scale-up their existing venture to the next stage.

## Mobilising human, digital resources

An important campaign initiated during the 'Vaniya Saptah' was an array of export promotion events and exhibitions. Each state and union territory showcased India as a rising economic force. As part of these programmes, local exporters, manufacturers and industrial units were mobilised to make Export Promotion a Jan Andolan – a people-centric initiative.

Interestingly, through a series of events, a digital platform was launched to further industry needs. This aims to allow investors to identify and apply for various pre-operations approvals required for commencing a business in India. The

platform would also provide end-to-end facilitation, support, including pre-investment advisory, information related to land banks and facilitating clearances at central and state levels.

For any decision-making, it's imperative to have a thorough understanding and knowledge of the situation at ground zero, pertinent variables, existing trends and future projections. The Industrial Park Rating System (IPRS) helps investors and policy makers recognise best performing parks, identify interventions and serves as a decision support system. In the near future, 'Industrial Park Rating System 2.0' will widen its coverage and bring in qualitative assessment including information on private industrial parks and SEZs with the introduction of qualitative indicators for assessing these parks and zones. The information provided by the digital platform will be generated and guided by the four parameters - Internal Infrastructure and Utilities, External Infrastructure and Connectivity, Business Support Systems and Environmental and Safety Management.

In keeping up with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's primary push for development and cleanliness, more than 250 Special Economic Zones (SEZs) across India ran Swachhata campaigns and tree plantation drives focusing on 'Green and Swachh SEZs'.

## Futuristic approach

Other programmes conducted under the aegis of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav aim to supplement the efforts for realising India's manufacturing potential and raising its contribution to the GDP. Furthermore, reducing compliance burden in procedures, rules, circulars, notifications, etc., and keeping a check on offences leading to frauds or endangering public health is important to catalyse industrial growth.

Digital platforms are the future of commerce and India is a pioneer and world leader when it comes to digital economy. As part of the Mahotsav initiative, events were organised to showcase India's achievements in digital space in December 2021 under the banner of 'Azadi Ka Digital Mahotsav'. While speaking at one such event, Union Minister for Communications, Electronics & Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnaw focused on MSMEs and urged bankers to create powerful platforms such as UPI that provides a quick and easy credit to small industries, small businessmen and people at the bottom of the pyramid.

Minister of State for Electronics & Information Technology and Skill Development and Entrepreneurship Rajeev Chandrasekhar recognised the efforts of Fintech players and Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) in making the dream of a 'less-cash, digitally empowered and Aatmanirbhar Bharat' a reality.

Ruchi Verma is a media researcher with The History and Heritage Project – A DraftCraft International Initiative to document details, analyse facts and plug lacunae generated by oversight or to further national or foreign agenda in History and Heritage Across India and Beyond Borders



## Armed forces display strength, unity

*India's main military entities – Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force – have undertaken several initiatives to commemorate PM's call of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. Through these events the country's military strength will be showcased and amplified across myriad platforms and avenues. The events aim to inculcate national pride and develop a powerful and self-reliant India, asserts **Kriti Kalra**.*



**Assam Rifles, the oldest paramilitary force of the Indian Army, launched a 3,000 km long 'Freedom Cycling Rally' from Shillong to Delhi as part of the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations.**

India's Armed Forces are one of the largest and strongest in the world. According to a study conducted by a defence website in early 2021, India stands fourth in the world among nations with the strongest military force, after China, USA and Russia.

The study incorporated several variables and the ranking was calculated after taking into consideration various factors including budgets, number of inactive and active military personnel, total air, sea, land and nuclear resources, average salaries and weight of equipment.

India's main military entities – Indian Army, Indian Navy and Indian Air Force – have undertaken several initiatives to commemorate Prime Minister Narendra Modi's call of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav and, through these events, have been showcasing the country's military strength across myriad platforms and avenues. The events aim to inculcate national pride and

develop a powerful and self-reliant India.

### Raksha Mantri invokes all

On 13 August 2021, Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh launched a series of major events, to be organised by the Armed Forces and various other organisations of the Ministry of Defence, to mark the 75th anniversary of India's Independence being celebrated as 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav'. He also congratulated the Ministry and the Armed Forces for organising various events across the country that represent the Indian ethos of 'unity in diversity' and help instil a sense of national pride among the people.

While calling out to the defence forces to celebrate the Mahotsav, the minister paid homage to the brave-hearts who laid down their lives and defended the sovereignty of the nation

( Continue on page 28 )



Know India Better



# GRANDSTANDING THE BEST OF INDIAN CINEMA

*International Film Festival of India (IFFI) is just the right platform that spreads out off-beat, experimental, subject-specific and independent films. Debunking the myth that Bollywood alone is cinema, it reaches out to regional cinema as well to assimilate diverse film cultures, and myriad socio-cultural ethos. Manu Shrivastava traces the IFFI timeline.*





**Actor Salman Khan performing at the opening ceremony of IFFI 52**

India's tryst with films is legendary and the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) that is held every year in Panjim, Goa has been a trailblazer in celebrating the best of Indian cinema. Films have always played a crucial role in the Indian society. Cinema does not exist in isolation but reflects contemporary society, issues, and societal choices and concepts.

For many, Indian cinema is synonymous with Bollywood. However, in India, regional cinema representing the rich cultural and ethnic diversity of the country is thriving, popular and has a dedicated fan base of its own. IFFI has been a pioneer in showcasing and celebrating regional cinema too.

Film festivals like the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) are a much-needed platform to showcase off-beat, experimental, subject-specific and independent films. IFFI aims at 'providing a common platform for filmmakers from across the globe to showcase their talent and put forth the excellence of cinema from all over.' The festival brings together diverse film cultures, encourages understanding of myriad socio-cultural ethos and appreciation of world cinema.

## The history of film festival

The International Film Festival of India is held annually in India's smallest state, Goa. The first edition of the festival was held in Mumbai from 24 January till 1 February 1952, organised by the Films Division of India (Government of India) under the patronage of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. In the first edition of IFFI, 23 countries participated with 40 feature films and hundred short films. India's entry included *Awara* (Hindi), *Patala Bhairavi* (Telugu), *Amar Bhoopali* (Marathi) and *Babla* (Bengali). Later, the festival was taken to Madras, Delhi, Calcutta and Trivandrum.

It was only since 2004, with the festival's 35 th edition,

that Goa became the permanent venue of the festival, thanks to efforts by the former Chief Minister of Goa, late Manohar Parrikar. Organised jointly by the Directorate of Film Festivals of the Union Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B Ministry) and Goa government's Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG), IFFI is one of the oldest and biggest film festivals of Asia.

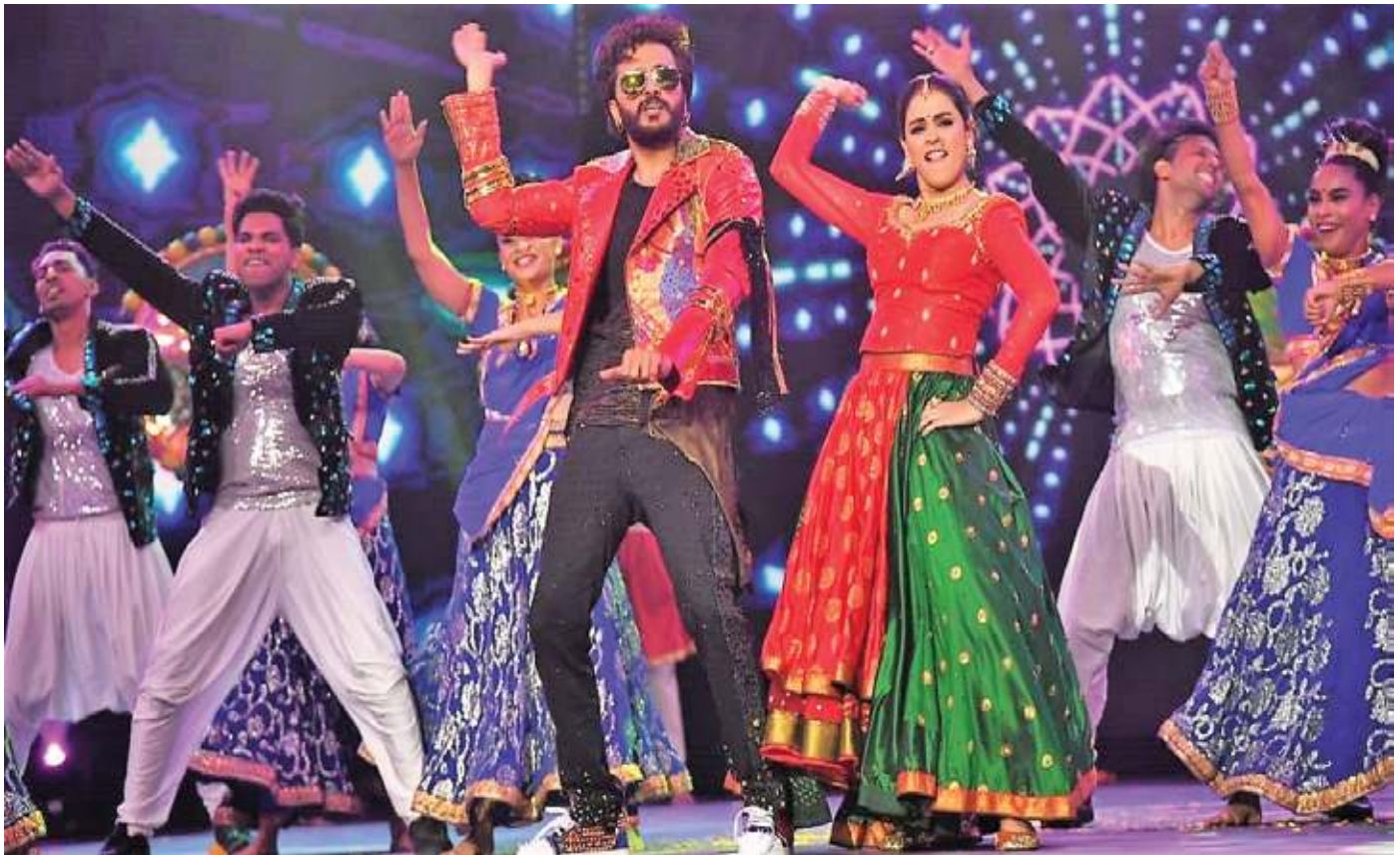
## The journey over the years

Every year, since its inception, IFFI has done something new and unique. IFFI has also strived to screen interesting films and commemorate the works of filmmakers from all over. During the festival's decades-long journey, many noted filmmakers and actors have been honoured for their contribution to the industry.

At IFFI 44, veteran Indian actor Waheeda Rehman was conferred with the first Centenary Award for Indian Film Personality of the Year in 2013. At IFFI 45, Superstar Rajnikanth was presented with the Centenary Award for Indian Film Personality of the Year at the inaugural ceremony. The next year, at IFFI 46, Bollywood actor Anil Kapoor was invited as the chief guest of the opening ceremony and the year after that several Bollywood celebrities joined the celebrations. These included Nana Patekar, Mahesh Manjrekar, Kunal Kapoor, Ali Abbas Zafar, etc., who walked down the red carpet.

In 2017, Shah Rukh Khan and Salman Khan were present in the star-studded event. At IFFI 49, the festival introduced a separate category & 'State of Focus' as a part of the festival and Jharkhand became the first Indian state to receive this focus. IFFI 2019 was the Golden Jubilee of the festival and was a special one, the 50th edition of IFFI was truly a special one where industry legends Amitabh Bachchan and Rajnikanth were felicitated for their contribution to Arts and Cinema. IFFI 51 was held in the midst of India recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and was held in an experimental hybrid format.





**Actor Riteish Deshmukh performing with wife Genelia D'Souza at IFFI 52**

## Celebrating women at IFFI's 50 th edition

Every year, in November, Panjim, the capital city of India's smallest state Goa, adorns a new avatar for the nine-day International Film Festival of India. The festival shines amidst the city's Portuguese heritage, Fontainhas aka Latin Quarters, quiet cobbled lanes and magnificent casino boats docked in the calm Mandovi River. Year 2019 celebrated the 50th edition of IFFI that started in 1952 and to mark the occasion, the festival introduced several exciting features.

The 50 th edition of the International Film Festival of India, IFFI 2019, had a special focus on women- centric films. To commemorate fifty years of the festival, over 50 films from world cinema made by 50 strong women film-makers were showcased, a feat unmatched by any film festival around the world. The opening films of IFFI's flagship section, the Indian Panorama section that showcases the best of contemporary Indian Feature and Non- Feature Films, included *Hellaro* (feature) and *Nooreh* (non-feature) as part of the festival in 2019.

During the golden jubilee edition, woman power was showcased as several women artists and filmmakers pitched in with ideas and concepts at conferences and panels across IFFI 2019. For instance, an all-women panel comprising Meghna Gulzar, Pooja Ladha Surti, Juhi Chaturvedi, Modhura Patil, Sumedha Verma Ojha discussed the 'Nuances and Processes of Film-Making.' Many films based on women, tackling issues affecting women and those made by women, from across the world and regional too, were screened under special film categories marking a huge leap in empowering women filmmakers.

## Post-Covid, IFFI 52 and its many firsts

In November 2021, the 52 nd edition of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) began at Panjim, in a hybrid avatar.



**Acclaimed lyricist and CBFC Chairman Prasoon Joshi receiving an award at IFFI 52**

IFFI 2021 or IFFI 52 was the first international event in Goa after the Covid-19 pandemic and the ensuing lockdown. Like always, the festival marked many firsts and gave the attendees myriad reasons to celebrate cinema. The nine-day festival started on 20 November 2021 and concluded on 28 November 2021.

For the first time in IFFI, the BRICS Film Festival was hosted alongside IFFI 52 with the screening of eight films. BRICS representatives from Brazil, Russia, India, People's Republic of China and South Africa were present during the festival and were felicitated during the glam-packed closing ceremony on 28 November 2021. Additionally, for the first time in the history of IFFI, major OTT platforms Netflix, Amazon Prime, Zee5, Voot and SonyLIV participated in the festival through exclusive Masterclasses, content launches and previews.

Despite the restrictions that were in place following the COVID-induced lockdown, IFFI 52 received 624 film entries from 96 countries. Director of the opening movie for Indian Panorama section (non-feature), *Ved...The Visionary*, Rajiv Prakash, expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the jury and the audience. At IFFI 52, more than 3,000 delegates including film





**An aerial view of the IFFI venue**

enthusiasts and industry personalities converged in Goa. The festival showcased more than 300 films including 148 films from about 73 countries in the International Section with about 12 world premieres, seven international premieres, 26 Asia premieres and about 64 India premieres.

## Honouring cinema legends

The opening ceremony of IFFI 2021 was a grand ceremony hosted by filmmaker Karan Johar and actor Maniesh Paul. It was attended by the stalwarts of Indian cinema, government officials and cine enthusiasts. During the star-studded opening ceremony, Himachal Pradesh Governor Rajendra Arlekar and Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Anurag Thakur felicitated the jury members. Bollywood celebrities Salman Khan, Ranveer Singh, Shraddha Kapoor, Mouni Roy, Raashi Khanna, Riteish Deshmukh and Genelia D'Souza gave power-packed performances.

Speaking at the ceremony, Union Minister Anurag Thakur emphasised on making India a powerhouse of content creation. Veteran actor and Member of Parliament Hema Malini was awarded the Indian Film Personality of the Year 2021. Acclaimed Hungarian filmmaker István Szabó, known for *Mephisto*, and iconic Hollywood filmmaker Martin Scorsese were given the prestigious Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Awards at IFFI 2021.

The 52 nd edition of the film festival coincided with Satyajit Ray's birth centenary year. At IFFI 2021, it was decided that IFFI's Lifetime Achievement Award received by thespians will henceforth be called the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award for Excellence in Cinema from this year.

When Oscar-winning Hungarian filmmaker István Szabó received the Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award at IFFI 2021, he reminisced about the time, more than three decades ago, when he met with Satyajit Ray in what was then Madras. He spoke of how Ray had invited him for dinner where they had

an "unforgettable and profound discussion." He was exhilarated after receiving the award in the name of his 'friend'.

When American filmmaker Martin Scorsese was conferred the award, he spoke of how Satyajit Ray had influenced him. He was extremely proud upon receiving the recognition and said Ray was one of his masters whose work he had returned to often over the years. Scorsese also mentioned how his love for Ray's work began with *Pather Panchali* which was a "revelatory experience for someone growing up in the West." The 52 nd edition of IFFI paid tribute to the legendary Indian filmmaker and physically screened several of his films throughout the festival.



**Actor Hema Malini receiving the Indian Film Personality Award**





*The IFFI 52 (also IFFI 2021) prop serves as a photo backdrop*

## Engaging discussions and masterclasses at IFFI 52

Apart from the screenings and red carpet appearances, the film festival also hosted several strategically-curated interactive sessions with industry experts. These discussions and sessions tackled pressing issues of the industry, ongoing trends and incisive analysis of the craft itself. In an In-Conversation session, 'Creating Cult Icons: India's own James Bond (007) with the Family Man', the creators of the show spoke about the power of authentic story-telling and how powerful content drawn from real-life incidents is now getting acceptance among the new-age viewers.

Actor Manoj Bajpayee, who played the protagonist Srikant Tiwari, joined the discussion virtually. He spoke about how, at first, he could relate to the protagonist's life being a middle-class person himself. The realism and authenticity of the character is what resounded with the viewers making it a popular character. The other actor of the show, Samantha Ruth Prabhu was, incidentally, the first South Indian actress to be invited as a speaker to the film festival.

In another discussion, film director Shoojit Sircar spoke about how he has been drawing from his personal experiences while making films. Several Masterclasses, held in physical and virtual formats, were held during the festival where filmmaker Madhur Bhandarkar, lyricist Prasoon Joshi, actor Hrithik Roshan, director Vajra Pancharia, etc. interacted with cinephiles and aspiring filmmakers.



*Thespian actor Randhir Kapoor honoured at IFFI 52*





**Colourful umbrellas adorn the ceiling at a food plaza at IFFI 52**

## Special India@75 segment

As part of the ongoing celebrations of *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav*, commemorating 75 years of India's Independence, the 52 nd International Film Festival of India (IFFI) hosted a few niche segments. An interesting segment, called 'India@75' was hosted at IFFI 2021 that screened a string of 18 India-centric films showcasing India's rich and diverse cinematic heritage. These films also included some from the Hindi film industry such as *Airlift*, *Kabuliwala*, *Shree 420*, etc.

Also, for the first time ever at IFFI, 75 creative young minds of tomorrow, representing GenNext cinema, attended the International Film Festival of India in Goa to learn and interact with the best minds of the film industry. The unique initiative was taken under the aegis of *Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav* to encourage and recognise young creative minds and budding talents in the country.

As part of the process, a Selection Jury had made a selection of 150 creative talents from out of the hundreds of entries and the Grand Jury selected the final 75 Creative Minds from these 150. The youngest candidate happens to be sixteen-year- old Aryan Khan from Bihar who has been chosen for his skills in Film Direction. The list of 75 aspiring artists includes many from India's small towns and cities.



**Actor Karthik Aryan at the ceremony**





*BRICS representatives being felicitated at IFFI 52*



*A film crew interacting with the media at IFFI*



*A team of a film at the Red Carpet posing for the media*

## Films tackling environmental issues

The International Film Festival of India has always featured sections to highlighting some pressing social issue of the time. Today, environmental degradation, climate change and ecological imbalance are threatening human existence. IFFI has been showcasing the works of filmmakers who have tackled these issues for awareness and education.

This year, several regional films were screened that have tackled a similar issue. Debutant director P. S. Vinothraj's Tamil film *Koozhangal* (Pebbles) was screened at IFFI 2021 in the Indian Panorama (feature film) section. The plot of the film





**Felicitation of 75 Creative Young Minds at the Opening Ceremony of IFFI 52 at Panjim, Goa**

revolves around two arid hamlets in the southern region of Tamil Nadu. The region is marked by a harsh terrain - water scarcity, scorching heat and barren land. Ganapathy, an alcoholic, leaves with son Velu, in what becomes an arduous journey, to bring back his wife.

The father-son duo walks through the unforgiving land under the scorching sun. Nature's wrath leads them to face their true emotions and the two are finally comforted by the 'nurturing women.' The film has also been chosen as India's official entry for the 2022 Academy Awards in the international feature film category.

Another regional film, Praveen Krupakar's Kannada-language film *Taledanda* had its World Premiere in the Indian Panorama (feature film) section at IFFI 52. *Taledanda* is the story of the Soliga tribals whose lives are affected by the 'developmental' activities and deforestation in the area. The protagonist is a mentally-challenged young man Kunna, played by late Sanchari Vijay, who is a passionate 'nature lover' and has a wealth of knowledge about trees and their medicinal value.

The film shows how Kunna does everything he can to stop the cutting of trees in his village and in the end gives up his life.

The nine days of IFFI 2021 concluded with a glittering closing ceremony in the presence of noted film celebrities and government leaders such as Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant and Union Minister of I&B Anurag Thakur. During the closing ceremony, veteran actor Randhir Kapoor was felicitated for his contribution to Indian cinema, actor Madhuri Dixit was feted for her outstanding performances and actor Manoj Bajpayee's contribution in films and OTT was recognised.



**Manu Shrivastava is a journalist and lawyer with DraftCraft International and Co-Convenor of #TheWomanSurvivor, #MeTooAtHome and #MeTooBeyond-Borders initiatives**

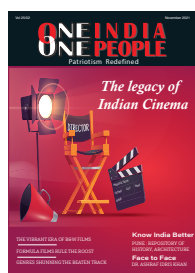
## Our Last Six Issues

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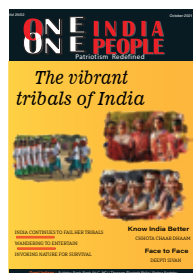
December 2021



November 2021



October 2021



September 2021



August 2021



July 2021





***“The name of my company Phreedom4Ever resonates my own freedom of doing what I always wanted to do and live my dream.”***

Meet Chaity Ghosh. She is one of the most bubbly, enterprising, successful achiever who tries to make a success of whatever she touches. She is pretty, charming, modern and ever smiling. Her work includes event-management, corporate branding, public relations, celebrity management and last but never the least, a home-food-delivery business. She runs all this on her own with little help from a small and dedicated staff.

She comes from a middle-class family where everyone else was in service but after a stint at several jobs which equipped her well with experience and skills, she took courage in her hands to venture out on her own.

**Let us hear a bit about your background.**

I began my career in a multinational organisation DHL. It is a logistics company where I was handling Sales. I was promoted as the Manager within two years where I had my own team. I did not restrict myself to any particular industry and took the challenge of working in varied industries in different positions to gain experience. I then shifted to in a Health Insurance Company when privatisation of Health Insurance Sector was announced under Third Party Administrators. This was followed with a job in a Finance Company. My last job was with one of the largest entertainment companies in Eastern India where my responsibility was to transform a family- oriented business into a corporate structure and position the brand as one of the leading name in the entertainment sector.

**What hard and soft skills should a clinical laboratory technologist possess?**

Setting up my own business had always been at the back of my mind. After closely observing and working in marketing sectors for more than seventeen years, I gained the confidence of following up on my ambition. Thus, Phreedom4ever or P4E was born in 2012. During my 17 + years working tenure, I handled varied responsibilities such as Sales, Customer Services, Operations and HR. I also developed contacts with big corporate players and well-known social names who appreciated the quality of work I delivered and encouraged my out of the box ideas. Hence those experiences and relationships combined with knowledge of the market and its paraphernalia that I acquired maneuvered me to get into this industry..



**Chaity Ghosh**

**You are an ideal mother. How do you balance the two very demanding roles - personal and professional ?**

In the beginning, it was very difficult to balance the responsibilities. But my mother has always been my biggest and strongest support and that helped me overcome that phase. Slowly and steadily I got into the groove and started adapting to both responsibilities.

**You have named your organisation Phreedom4Ever. Why ?**

The name resonates my own freedom of doing what I always wanted to do and live my dream. And the usage of PH for the spelling of Phreedom is to give more stress on the word freedom, create a difference and make it eye catching.

**You seem to run your business with a skeletal staff. How do you do your time management ?**

Sometimes, 24 hrs seem to be less for me. Actually, it is not necessary to have several fixed employees under our payroll in our kind of industry since we need to hire manpower as per the size of the assignments. However, having worked in corporate sector in senior positions I always believed in a good team and team work. So, from 2013 to 2018, Phreedom4ever had around nine employees which is quite a number in our kind and size of organisation. I always kept my team on the forefront. Unfortunately experiencing few dishonest activities and lessons learnt by blindly believing my employees changed my perception altogether. So now I have decided to be a part of every single activity of the





**Chaity Ghosh making a presentation**

organisation and take the maximum burden on myself. It is difficult but I have to cope with this situation.

**Name some of your milestone clients/events and tell us why you consider them 'milestones?'**

Our first milestone client was Johnson & Johnson which we acquired just within 5 months of the start of Phreedom4ever. Our other milestone clients are DBS, Mercedes, BMW, Tata Steel (Metallurgy Dept), Godrej & Boyce, Credai Bengal, Bengal Shrachi Group, Allahabad Bank, Century Ply, Ambuja Group to name a few. The association with the said brands helped the Brand Phreedom4ever to enhance our market value and outreach. If I talk about the milestone event of Phreedom4ever, it is our Brand Property "Monologues" which is the only Solo Art Festival in India as per PTI. It is the brainchild of Sujoy Prasad Chatterjee and the production of Phreedom4ever which we started from 2013 and continued till 2018. We wish to start it once again after the situation improves.

**You began a homefood delivery business during the lockdown. Is it still running?**

Yes, it is still running and in spite of the situation getting better and normal situation coming back, eateries getting opened, we still have regular orders and also special party orders. Friends from abroad frequently order for their family and friends. In fact, we have started making cakes and kababs along with our existing items.

**Who would you consider your mentor and why?**

I did not have anyone in specific who I can call as mentor because I have learnt from many people and each mistake of mine taught me the biggest lessons. However, I must mention about one of my immediate senior in DHL from who I acquired my leadership

qualities and confidence. He was the one who taught me that if we do our best whole heartedly and honestly, we do not have to run after money, Money will follow us.... and till date I follow the same.

**Any hiccups you would like to mention over your professional journey?**

During my assignments, like everyone I also had to go through lot of office politics but I must say that now I feel that those were my learnings and that helped me move on to where I am today. As far as Phreedom4ever is concerned, I should say I have not gone through major hiccups other than the fact that my employee selection was not correct most of the time due to which I had issues which disturbed the entire business. I had an inclination of working with known people who back-stabbed me resulting in major damages. But I have learnt from the same and have moved on. The major hiccups that we face in Kolkata is the unprofessional attitude and lackadaisical approach of the people here.

**What are your criteria for accepting and/or rejecting an assignment?**

We generally try not to reject assignments since all clients are valuable to us. However, certain projects which are totally beyond our service areas, instead of rejecting them we try to guide the client to the right agency.

**Where do you see yourself five years from now?**

This would have been very easy to write before the pandemic but considering the present scenario where we do not know what is going to happen the next day, it is very difficult to write about the future. In fact our industry has been affected so badly that it is like a restart for us if things go smooth.





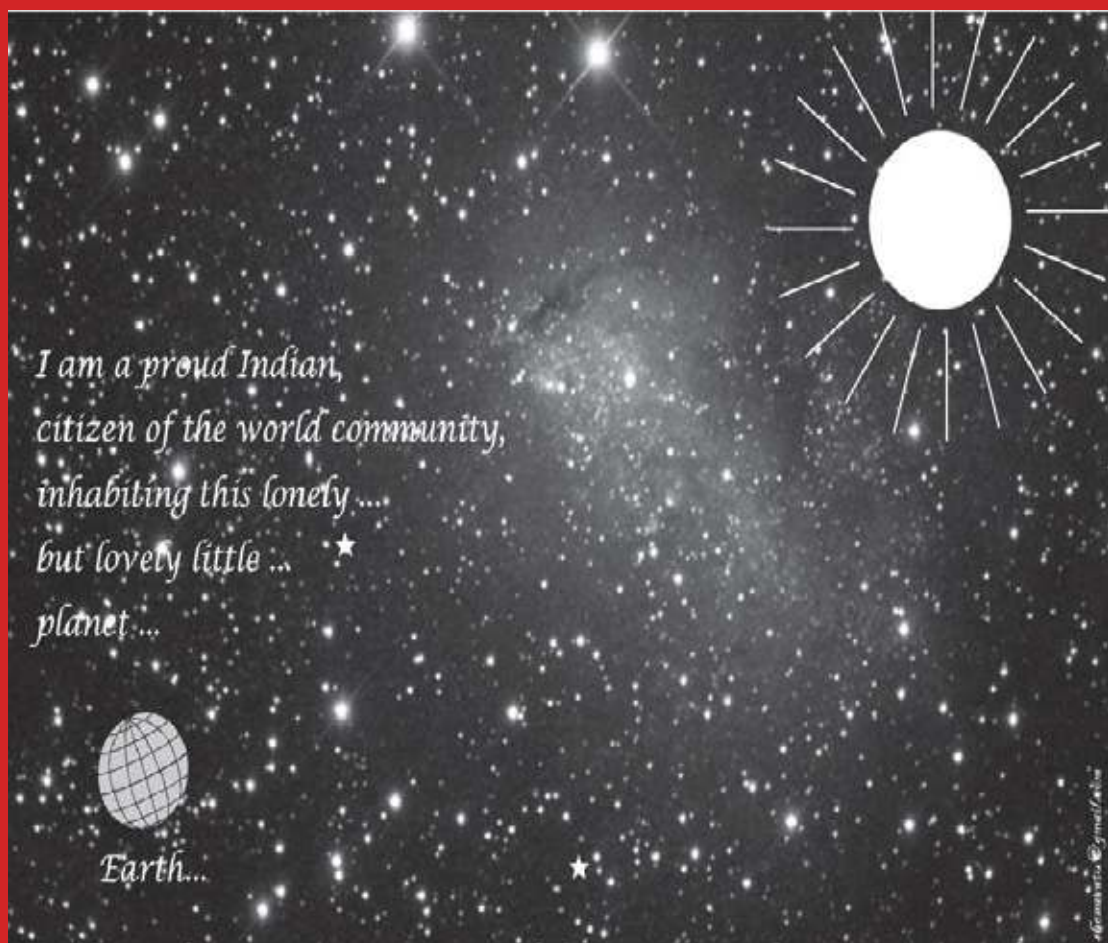
*Chaity Ghosh with Sujoy Prasad Chatterji*

**Your frank comments on a woman's ability to efficiently blend marriage, motherhood and career.**

I feel "balancing" our life is the most important thing that we should work on along with Time Management. If these two are okay everything falls in place automatically. However, we do have to prioritise in life as per situations and phases. I am a huge fan of Indra Nooyi and I really look up to and admire her and learn from speeches about how she performs all her responsibilities as a daughter, a wife, mother and also as CEO of Pepsico.



**Shoma A. Chatterji** is a freelance journalist, film scholar and author. She has authored 17 published titles and won the National Award for Best Writing on Cinema, twice. She won the UNFPA-Laadli Media Award, 2010 for 'commitment to addressing and analysing gender issues' among many awards.





( Continue from page 16 )

the nation since Independence. He remembered Captain Vikram Batra who made the supreme sacrifice during the Kargil war. The bravery and deep-rooted passion of the gallant heroes of India will always be an inspiration for generations to come, he said.

The five pillars of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav envisioned by the Prime Minister act as a guiding force for the country to move forward in the path of development and this includes the defence forces as well who have imbibed the same ethos.

## India settings its own course

Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh reiterated the government's resolve to "develop a powerful and self-reliant Bharat which is peace-loving but fully capable of giving a befitting reply whenever challenged". He assured the nation that the Armed Forces are fully equipped to deal with any challenge that endangers the safety, security, unity and integrity of the nation. The decisions aimed to promote unity among the Armed Forces will play a pivotal role in bolstering the security infrastructure of the country.

India is working towards achieving self-reliance in all spheres and the government's action plan to make India 'Aatmanirbhar' in defence manufacturing is leaving no stone unturned. Today, owing to the measures undertaken by the government, India's reliance on imports has decreased significantly.

In August 2021, India's first indigenous aircraft carrier (IAC) Vikrant, built at a cost of around Rs 23,000 crore, successfully completed a five-day maiden sea voyage with a satisfactory performance of the key systems of the 40,000-tonne warship. The aircraft carrier, undertook crucial sea trials before induction into the Indian Navy next year. The warship's namesake had played a crucial role in the 1971 Indo-Pak War.

The delivery of Vikrant is being made to coincide with celebrations to commemorate the 75th anniversary of India's Independence - Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav. The carrier can operate MiG-29K fighter jets, Kamov-31 helicopters, MH-60R multi-role helicopters, has over 2,300 compartments, is designed for a crew of around 1,700 people including specialised cabins to accommodate women officers.

## Paramilitary forces join in

Assam Rifles, the oldest paramilitary force of the Indian Army, launched a 3,000 km long 'Freedom Cycling Rally' as part of the Azadi ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations. The rally started from Shillong till New Delhi and was conducted jointly with NTPC in September 2021. The rally commemorated 75 years of a progressive India and the glorious history of its people, culture, achievements and also promoted the 'Fit India Movement'.

In November 2021, as part of the Amrit Mahotsav, for the first time amazing motor cycle feats were performed by the brave soldiers of Border Security Force (BSF). The Border Security Force is a border guarding force of India, established in 1965, a paramilitary force charged with guarding

India's borders during peace time and preventing trans-national crimes. The BSF is the world's largest border guarding force with strength of two lakh personnel.

The festival is being celebrated across the country as a mass festival in the spirit of public participation. Several programmes creating awareness among people about the

glorious history of the border force personnel during the freedom struggle were held. This also included a 'Dare Devil Show' for general public and events to promote love for the country and Border Security Force.

## An all-round celebration

As part of the Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, the defence agencies in India have undertaken several initiatives and programmes. For instance, 75 teams of Border Roads Organisation (BRO) departed to unfurl the National Flag at 75 important passes and places in India, including the prominent 'Umlingla Pass' in Eastern Ladakh – the highest motorable road in the world at 19,300 feet above sea level.

The national flag is also being unfurled at strategic locations and infrastructure landmarks such as Atal Tunnel, Rohtang and Dhola Sadiya Bridge in the Northeast, etc. Additionally, under the 75 year celebrations, on 15 August 2021, the national tri-colour was unfurled at 100 islands pan-India by the Indian Coast Guard.

The Indian Army sent out teams to scale 75 mountain passes to mark the occasion including Saser La Pass in Ladakh region, Stakpochan Pass in Kargil region, Satopanth glacier and Harshil in Uttarakhand, Phim Karna in Sikkim and Point 4493, Tawang region of Arunachal Pradesh.

Raksha Mantri also launched several activities for the rejuvenation of 75 water bodies across 62 cantonments in India. A book titled 'Deeds of Gallantry', commemorating India's victory in the 1971 war, detailing 20 selected battles and the valour of Indian soldiers, was unveiled by the Raksha Mantri. In order to pay homage to the freedom fighters and war brave-hearts, a pan-India movement 'Swatantra Senaniyon Ko Naman' was been launched where NCC cadets carried out cleaning and maintenance of 825 statues adopted by 825 NCC battalions.

## Reaching out to the masses

As part of the ongoing Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav celebrations, a Jan Sampark Abhiyan for ex-servicemen was initiated where a representative each of the respective Zila Sainik Board along with a representative of the Indian Ex-Servicemen League will interact simultaneously with the fraternity in 75 districts across India. Minister Rajnath Singh virtually interacted with ex-servicemen in different states and urged them to provide suggestions to resolve issues faced by them.

A team of DRDO scientists was flagged off to the border area villages to celebrate Independence Day. DRDO is the Defence Research and Development Organisation - the premier agency under the Department of Defence Research and Development in Ministry of Defence of the Government of India, charged with the military's research and development.

A Gallantrypedia module of Awardees has been launched to honour the Gallantry awardees and to motivate people, especially the youth, to interact. Through the portal, citizens will be able to share content about the awardees which would help in making the portal more engaging, dynamic and informative.

**Kriti Kalra is an activist and field researcher with [www.thewomansurvivor.com](http://www.thewomansurvivor.com) – an initiative of DraftCraft International to protect and empower women by bringing on one platform the latest on rights and issues, strategic case studies, state initiatives and informed legal opinions**



## Not just in letter, in spirit too

*What the State and Centre overlooked was, in order to avail the treatment, the prerequisite paperwork that had to be processed was simply beyond the reach for most. **Manu Shrivastava** observes that Pune's Budhwar Peth zone's sex-workers were hit the hardest by the state's apathy rather than the Covid-19 pandemic itself.*



**Sex workers and ragpickers were hit the hardest by government apathy during the pandemic**

**O**n 2 July 2012, the then Maharashtra Government launched the Rajiv Gandhi Jeevandayee Arogya Yojana (RGJAY) in eight districts of Maharashtra (Phase 1). It later introduced it to remaining 28 districts of Maharashtra in Phase 2. This scheme was renamed as Mahatma Jyotirao Phule Jan Arogya Yojana (MJPJAY) from 1 April 2017 under which people in the state could avail the benefits of free and cashless health insurance.

In order to apply for the scheme, applicants needed to essentially furnish documents such as ration card and domicile certificate. In order to enable benefits reach out to state government, semi-government employees and white ration card holders too, the government signed a MoU with the General Insurance Public Sector Association (GIPSA) for treatment of Covid-19 patients at private hospitals in Pune and Mumbai. Different packages would be designed to standardise treatment fees at all hospitals. In order to prohibit hospitals from charging exorbitant fees, the Maharashtra government capped the fees of Covid 19 treatment too in private hospitals.

At the Centre, the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojna or PM-JAY as is popularly known was launched on 23 September 2018 in Ranchi, Jharkhand by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Plugged as the largest health assurance scheme in the world, it provides a health cover of ₹ 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization to approximately 50 crore poor and vulnerable persons that formed the bottom 40 per cent of the Indian population. The households included are based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011) for rural and urban areas respectively. PM-JAY was earlier known as the National Health Protection Scheme (NHPS) before being rechristened.

What the State and Centre overlooked was, in order to avail the treatment, the prerequisite paperwork that had to be processed was simply beyond the reach for most. Pune's Budhwar Peth zone's sex-workers were hit the hardest by the state's apathy rather than the Covid-19 pandemic itself. Thousands of female sex-workers and transgenders even moved out of Pune back to native places in Maharashtra and Karnataka in



order to dodge punitive State action during the lockdowns.

After being tested for the Covid-19 virus with RT-PCR tests, the civic authorities would simply classify the girls as either being 'positive' or 'negative' without producing even a single physical test result, felt few. The process, they said, was created to strike fear in the hearts of these sex-workers who would often pay up only to be let off. Or else, the authorities would force the girls into undertaking institutional treatment. "And, all of this without producing a test result," says a sex-worker without revealing her identity. "We were charged for tests as high as ₹ 10,000 and 'Covid-19 treatment' all at the whim of private centres," she adds.

Completely oblivious of the schemes available, the sex-workers in Pune, caught in the eye of the storm of the second wave, simply couldn't afford the costs incurred during treatment. On paper they could avail free treatment, in reality, they were provided no relief. Given a choice, most of the sex-workers would opt for private facilities who would, in turn, fleece them by charging them arbitrarily rather than avail a government-provided treatment. That it would be for free and fast was only on paper. There were practical hurdles in their way. So, among the 3,000-odd sex-workers in the zone, most of them lost all their savings and incurred a lot of debt during the COVID pandemic. There were also those from other states like Karnataka who got admitted in a government facility but simply couldn't avail any benefits because they didn't have any papers or documents needed to do the same.

As of March 31, 2021, a total of 28,12,980 Covid infections were recorded in the Maharashtra, with 54,649 Covid deaths. Between April 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021, 5,07,188 Covid patients have benefitted from the Mahatma Jyotiba Phule Jan Arogya Yojana in Maharashtra. Pune district, which had the highest number of infections in the state, saw 34,045 claims settled till then. On the other hand, Mumbai, which had 4,23,419 infections and 11,708 deaths on April 1, 2021, saw 29,664 claims settled. The highest number of claims settled was in Ahmednagar, at 34,867 where 95,000 infections and 1,221 deaths were recorded. A total of 34,574 in claims were settled in Kolhapur.

The government had declared that holders of all types of ration cards eligible under the scheme, at grassroots, yet families were known to shell out a fortune for COVID treatment. Hospitals had forced citizens to pay up hefty bills and simply refused to implement the scheme leading to state government's action across Maharashtra's hospitals. Despite the insurance policies in place, Maharashtra government had to literally take over hospitals during this period even ensure checks in prices and rates for procedures to provide medical relief.

Pune Shivajinagar ragpickers faced the worst time of their lives in March this year when their entire families contracted Covid-19. Pune's *Kagad Kach Patra Kashtakari Panchayat* co-founder Poornima Chikarmane offers, "Despite being essential workers, the ragpickers simply could not avail the benefits of the schemes as, at the time, they were applicable only in certain hospitals. Only later, the Jumbo Covid facilities came up to provide aid. Sadly, private entities made a fortune in the period especially when there was a shortage of beds." Even in government hospitals, at that time, several medicines such as Remdesivir, were not included in these schemes. The patients were left with little option but to pay a fortune for them. A huge black market was created owing to this, leaving the poor and marginalized to the whim and fancy of private players.

"Those who were admitted too, in Covid Centres, and



had got the tests done were not given the reports in hand. They would simply be told that they were either Covid positive or negative. Even the death certificate would not reveal Covid-19 as the "cause of death," leaving little to show by way of proof for redress. Unable to show a correlation of COVID-19 with death would ensure that the kin do not avail any benefit," added Ms Chikarmane. "Covid Warriors have been assured insurance on death and several applications remained pending with the Pune Municipal Corporation, but nothing came out of it," she maintains.

The dismal state of affairs of the very stakeholders, who the State through strategic insurance and yojanas aimed to reach, spoke reams of mismanagement and greed. The need for medico-legal intervention was felt hard at a time when accountability had reached a rock bottom and private players made hay while the State's poorest reeled under the onslaught of a pandemic that risked complete ruin. The second wave is behind us but the lessons to be learned by the State and political parties is that, in view of complete autonomy for private medical practitioners, even the best-intended yojana and policy is set to fail. Covid-19 brought out the worst among the greed-ridden. Policies and yojanas, if not implemented in spirit, were bound to fail. And, they did!



**Manu Shrivastava is a journalist and lawyer with DraftCraft International and Co-Convenor of #TheWomanSurvivor, #MeTooAtHome and #MeTooBeyond-Borders initiatives**





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## SC Judge speaks for Denotified, Nomadic Tribes

Justice D Y Chandrachud says that almost 73 years since the tribes were denotified, its members have to suffer oppression and cruelty, decries that members of the denotified tribes are still picked up by the investigating officers to cover up shoddy investigations. **Bharat Dogra** throws light on the issue.



**Denotified tribes-homeless and harassed**

**S**upreme Court Judge Justice D.Y.Chandrachud recently gave voice to the agony of millions of the denotified tribes when he clearly stated that injustice and discrimination was still being suffered by them over seven decades after Independence.

Speaking on the occasion of the 13 th B. R. Ambedkar Memorial Lecture on 'Conceptualising Marginalisation' organised by the Indian Institute of Dalit Studies and Rosa Luxemburg Stiftung, South Asia, he stated, " The British enacted the Criminal Tribes Act 1871 through which a tribe, gang or class of persons ( believed to be) addicted to the systematic commission of offences were notified. The Criminal Tribes Act was later repealed in 1949 and the tribes were 'de-notified'."

The judge known for his deep concern for marginalised sections noted, "Even after nearly 73 years since the tribes were denotified, its members are still subject to oppression and cruelty. Members of the denotified tribes are still picked up by the investigating officers to cover up shoddy investigations."

120 million people in India belong to denotified and nomadic tribes (DNTs). They are among the worst victims of neglect and oppression. Various nomadic and semi- nomadic

and semi- nomadic tribes may be pastoral groups, or they may have artisan based livelihood (like godalia lohars or blacksmiths of Rajasthan) or else they may derive livelihood based on medicinal herbs, acrobatics, folk arts, etc.

Some attention could be drawn in recent years to the numerous problems and sufferings of these neglected groups due to the efforts of social activists and the National Commission for Denotified, Nomadic and Semi Nomadic Tribes.

This Commission observed, "The Commission was shocked to notice the living conditions of large section of these people during its field visits. It was appalled by the fact that some of these communities are far away from receiving the benefits of freedom and social justice even though they are classified as ST, SC or OBC. The welfare measures implemented for these groups either have not reached them or are irrelevant in their context. Those among the concerned communities who got the benefits of welfare are basically the ones who are better off and organised and the vulnerable groups are completely left out of their reach."

"Several groups among these communities across the states, in both urban and rural sectors, are seen dwelling in



## Sound of birds, making music!

**G Venkatesh** rationalizes that birds can coexist in harmony with humans even in urban settings. Citing the examples of some European nations, he argues that post-pandemic, the situation is tailor-made to bring the winged guests back into the human fold.

*‘Chal ud jaa re panchi ke ab ye des hua begaana’*

If one pauses and realises the adverse impacts of urbanisation on Mother Nature, this Mohammed Rafi song will strike the right chords. Are we aware of their dwindling populations in urban settings? If we are, do we care? If we do, what we do about it?

Birds of a feather flock together. Metaphorically yes. Literally, it would be great if birds of different feathers flocked, together. Well, we need them more and more, and varied and diverse in our forests. Biodiversity or rather, ‘ornithodiversity’, if I may coin such a word.

A bird in hand is worth two in a bush, they say. Well, far from it, literally! Hundreds of them in the bushes and trees around us are what are needed and they not just have more worth than the ones trapped in cages inside homes but are happier and more thankful to us.

### Urban creatures

If birds have fled cities and are more comfortable in the countryside and forests, it is good for them. But birds are also urban creatures and would like to live in harmony with Homo sapiens. They may make us more joyful as published research in the journal Ecological Economics (based on a survey of 26000 adults in 26 European countries), reveals.

It is sheer joy to see birds in Scandinavia in the spring and summer months, flocking to the hundreds of bird-feeders which people place in their gardens. Little ones – yellow, blue, orange, red, black, white – tweeting about in sunshine! Come autumn and winter, people here make it a habit to stock bird-food and ensure their bird-feeders are filled up regularly. As the study has found, the happiest Europeans are those who see the bird species daily.

I am talking of cities in countries like Norway and Sweden. Birds here are as happy as they are in the woods. We are talking of the Kuznets curve at work here. Seeing 14 additional bird species, it provides as much satisfaction as earning an additional USD 150 per month. In India, we too could avail this satisfaction by doing our bit to bring back ornithodiversity to our cities. At least the once ubiquitous

### If change is thrust upon us, we adapt

Interestingly, when we human species locked ourselves indoors and the streets were deserted in 2020 and 2021, birds seemed to make a comeback. One sensed an inverse correlation with the degree of air and noise pollution. Mother Nature signals, does not speak. It hints by hurting. As we slowly emerge out of the pandemic, there are changes to be made. They may turn out to be rewards in the medium-term.

Fashion your own bird-feeder from recyclable material



**Bird feeders can be hung in balconies to attract birds**

and hang it in the balcony with compartments for grains and water. Do this religiously every day. You could end up attracting birds never seen before.

### Cherished epithet

I recall my (late) wife Varshita handing over a cover with breadcrumbs or wheat grains in the morning and urge me to take the forest-route to the university and feed birds there. There were those who hated crow seagulls. We were remembered there as the bird-feeding couple. I set up a bird-feeder in the university campus in Karlstad.





**Varshita Venkatesh Trondheim**

Continue from page 32



**Justice D Y Chandrachud**

temporary shelters or tents on vacant lands. These people have no permanent addresses; hence they have got no land allocation for housing purpose. With no proof of residence or property ownership certificates, they are not in a position to avail ration cards and have not been included in the BPL list. With no certification of their residence, they also face a lot of trouble in getting the caste certificate, which results further in not being able to avail government welfare schemes."



**Photo by G Venkatesh, Karlstad**

We read Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, Longfellow and Tennyson and their love for the nature. Do we try to live them? Can we do so? It is never too late. Instead of remembering that sad Rafi song which I began this article with, perhaps, some other uplifting melodies may come to mind.



**G. Venkatesh is Associate Professor, Department of Engineering and Chemical Sciences, Faculty of Health, Science and Technology, Karlstad University, Sweden. He is also a freelance writer for several magazines around the world. The author has set up Varshita Venkatesh Girls' Education Fund with Plan USA in memory of his wife. ...**

"Among the extremely patriarchal nomadic communities there is hardly any protection for women, and the progressive property laws and laws for the dignity of women have virtually no relevance to the women in these communities. Living utterly undignified lives in destitute conditions, they are subject to maltreatment and abuse by all -- the family, the community and the society at large. Having no shelter or support, they fall victim to every kind of social harassment and torture."

In addition the nomadic communities also suffer. As this report says, "Generally, it is understood by the government as well as by the activists that atrocities are perpetrated on the tribes considered 'criminal'; however, the fact is, that the nomadic communities which are scattered and in today's circumstances dehumanized into begging or other illegal activities at the bottom most level are being victimised on a growing scale.

Justice Chandrachud also emphasised the need for social mobilisation of collective against discrimination. This should not be seen as identity politics but instead should be seen as necessary for redressing historical discrimination, he asserted.

**Bharat Dogra is a journalist and author. His recent books include Protecting Earth for Children and Man Over Machine -- A Path to Peace.**



## Bible on Military Justice

A book that bespeaks of military law and justice but flows smoothly enough for a layperson to comprehend is indeed a treasure trove. The opening page is not only significant but poignant as it sets the tone and pace on the milestone decisions by constitutional courts across various jurisdictions that have impacted military justice.

The book delves into the purpose of military justice in order for military leadership to maintain discipline, efficiency and morale. It makes us realise that it is increasingly relevant to study and analyse the outcome of decisions that have a direct bearing on military courts.

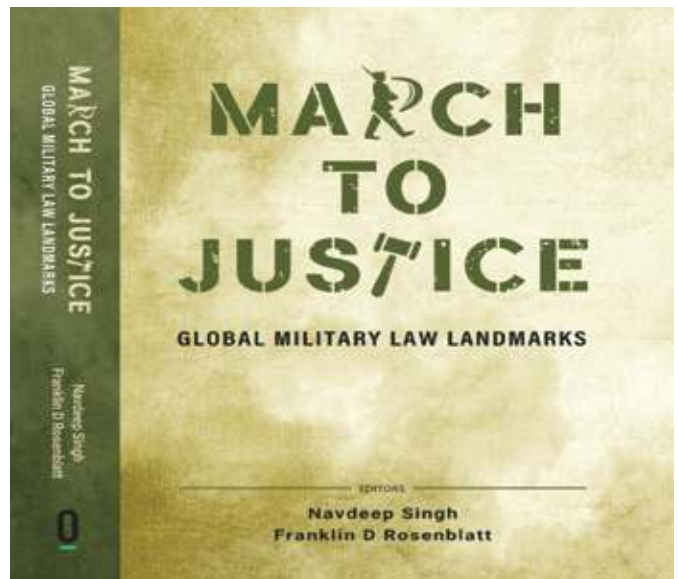
Major Navdeep Singh and Colonel Franklin Rosenblatt have worked tirelessly over a period of time to bring out the importance of a subject close to their hearts. Edited by both of them, it contains short essays and commentaries by jurists, judges and academics from around the world. Their aim has been to provide facts and data on the diverse course taken by military law, justice and reforms globally.

The language is engrossing. I highly recommend this book to all those interested in law, politics, military, policy making, governance and human rights. The book contains contributions related to various nations, including USA, India, Canada, UK, The Netherlands, Colombia, China, Australia, Georgia, Israel, Pakistan, Ukraine, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Denmark, Nepal and Turkey.

The foreword has been written by Diego García-Sayán, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers and former Minister of Justice and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Peru.

The Yale Draft – A valuable global military justice template and the facets of the draft have been touched upon. The draft was the result of the hard work of distinguished professionals and personalities. There are also two essays on judicial pronouncements on women in the military, one from the Supreme Court of India and the other from the Supreme Court of the United States that stand out. The editors are proud about the overwhelming contribution by accomplished women in the book. Both also share similar views about the unifying aspects of military service. It is also interesting that in the 25 chapters there is a huge diversity of contributors. The cases range from military justice to the basic protection of law to members of the military to offences under military law to the use of military tribunals and how landmark judgements have been arrived at.

Major Navdeep Singh is a practicing lawyer at the Punjab and Haryana High Court, Chandigarh, India. He is the founder President of the Armed Forces Tribunal Bar Association at Chandigarh. Navdeep has been a national service volunteer-reservist with the Territorial Army. He has been decorated with a record number of 11 Commendations from the Army, Air Force and tri-service Institutions for his work for the military community and veterans. He is known for his work in the field of rights pertaining to disabled soldiers and military widows and kin and been a member of a High-Level Committee of Experts constituted for reducing litigation pertaining to



### *March to Justice*

**March to Justice Global Military Landmarks**  
(Editors: Navdeep Singh and Franklin D Rosenblatt) BluOne India LLP, 2021, Hardcover 337 pages, Price Rs 995

disabled soldiers and military widows and kin and been a member of a High-Level Committee of Experts constituted for reducing litigation pertaining to military service and pension-related matters.

Colonel Franklin D Rosenblatt teaches law at the Mississippi College School of Law in Jackson, Mississippi, USA. He is a retired Judge Advocate from the United States Army, where he served for 20 years. He participated in numerous military operations around the globe. He is well decorated with numerous military awards. Franklin was the lead military defense counsel in the most publicised court martial in American history. He speaks and writes frequently about military law topics and has co-authored two military justice books.

Both editors have been a part of the historic Yale Draft (Principles) on Military Justice, an improvement of the existing United Nations document on the same subject, at a Yale Law School conference.



Rashmi Oberoi, an army officer's daughter and army wife is passionate about writing and has authored two story books for children – *My Friends At Sonnenshine* and *Cherie: The Cocker Spaniel*. Her third and latest book – *"Blues, Hues & All Things Wonderful"* has short anecdotes. She continues to write articles and middles regularly.



## SHIVASHIR BALWANT MORESHWAR PURANDARE (1922-2021)

### The last word on Chhatrapati Shivaji

**B**alwant Moreshwar Babasaheb Purandare was a noted Indian writer, poet, storyteller, narrator, author, playwright, novelist, historian, and theatre personality from Maharashtra and an authority on the 17th century Maratha King Chhatrapati Shivaji.

Born in Saswad near Pune, his passion from childhood about the Maratha empire history, battles, and the fort ramparts were shaped hearing his father's stories of the warrior king at Kondhana (Sinhagad Fort).

For the next nine decades, his sole preoccupation was to study and chronicle every little piece of information. Never claiming to be a historian, he would however be honoured as Shiv Shahir (Shivaji's Bard), the warrior king's living embodiment across Maharashtra.

He authored a vast repertoire of books, focused mostly on Shivaji. His earlier writings were published in a book titled Thingya (Sparks). In a prolific 50-year writing career, Purandare wrote almost 36 books, including a two-volume 900-page biography titled Raje Shivchhatrapati in Marathi, published in the late 1950s going through numerous reprints.

There was no fort, structure, or historical area conquered by Shivaji that Purandare didn't study and trek to. He meticulously preserved every little acquisition – documents, weapons -- for posterity.

Honing his research skills with renowned historians at Bharat Itihas Sanshodhak Mandal, he single-handedly brought alive the epoch of Shivaji through 12,000 lectures over seven decades, in India and abroad.

History seemed exciting when Purandare took the podium. Narrating with passion, stories of each fort the King held without reference notes, his knowledge and oratory would bring the life and times of Shivaji alive. His words were grounded in solid proof, yet lucid.

He felt one needed to be obsessed with history to understand it. He never encouraged deification for its sake. "I love Shivaji Maharaj, but I am not his pujari (priest) or his gulam (slave). I am enamoured with his intellect, his bravery, and his wisdom. But most of all, I am in awe of his idea of nation-building", he enunciated.

In Rome and London, he watched grand Roman ballets, held in open area theatres with huge sets, numerous extras, and even live animals, especially inspired by Agatha Christie's *The Mousetrap* and observing its sound design. That gave him the idea of creating a show around Shivaji's life.

With no parallel in Indian theatre, he penned, conceived, and directed a historical mammoth 3-hour mega extravaganza *Janata Raja* (1985), with spectacular production values. It was performed by over 200 artistes, several horses, and elephants. It has been since translated and enacted in different languages and performed more than 3,000 times across in India as also in the US.

In the past few years, Purandare, a Brahmin, was targeted by Maratha outfits, accusing him of distorting history and sully the reputation of the warrior king by casting aspersions on his parentage and of writing the history with a Brahminical pro RSS prism.

It reached a crescendo after Purandare's biography of Shivaji formed the research basis of American scholar James Laine's book - *Shivaji: Hindu King in Islamic India*, published in 2003. Sambhaji Brigade vandalised the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute (BORI) in

Pune, in protest. An unfazed Purandare refused to give clarifications.

He was awarded the Padma Vibhushan (2019) and the Maharashtra Bhushan (2015). For drama, he was awarded the Kalidas Samman by the Madhya Pradesh Government (2007–08).

A freedom fighter in the Dadra Nagar Haveli liberation movement, he was also one of the earliest ideologues of Bal Thackeray's Shiv Sena in the 1970s. His autobiography *Bel Bhandara* was authored by Sagar Deshpande. The Wax Museum, Lonavala has his wax statue.

He passed away aged 99 and was given a state funeral. His late wife Nirmala was a veteran social activist. He is survived by two sons and a daughter.

**A.Radhakrishnan is a Pune based freelance journalist, poet and short story writer.**





## SARADA MENON (1923-2021)

### Taking the stigma out of the mental illness

*“Mental illness is like any other illness. Response to treatment should not be sidelined from the mainstream of medicine. If treatment is not given properly, relapses occur. About 20 percent recover well fully. Even with them one can work on their residual ability and tap their resources to a constructive goal.”*

**D**r. Mambalikalathil Sarada Menon born on 5 April 1923 was India's first woman psychiatrist, social worker and the founder of Schizophrenia Research Foundation, (SCARF) a Chennai- based NGO working for the rehabilitation of people with mental disorders.

Youngest of eight children in a Malayali family from Mangalore, her father was a judge. Sarada graduated from Women's Christian College and later did medicine from Madras Medical College in 1951 and her residency at the then Irwin Hospital, New Delhi before joining Madras Medical Service to start her career at Pittapuram Mission Hospital, Andhra Pradesh.

She simultaneously did her MD in 1957 after which she completed the Diploma in Psychiatric Medicine, making her the country's first woman psychiatrist. In 1959, Sarada joined the Institute of Mental Health in Kilpauk as its first woman Superintendent in 1961 and superannuated in 1978.

During her tenure, the institution started department of psychiatry, began an out-patient facility and set up regional psychiatric centres at every district hospital in the State. She also introduced professional social workers to oversee patients and counsel their families. R'vive, a community cafe managed by people recovering from mental illness was also launched. In 1984, after retirement, Menon founded the NGO SCARF, which developed into a full-fledged research base and is one of the few Indian institutions recognised by the WHO (World Health Organisation) as a Collaborating Centre for Mental Health Research and Training.

It continues to be a premier NGO, offering treatment and rehabilitation for those with schizophrenia and mental illness and support for their caregivers. It provides temporary shelters and telepsychiatric therapy, runs vocational training centers and manages a mobile clinic. It also facilitates employment and conduct awareness campaigns and research project.

She changed it from an asylum into a place where volunteers and social workers were recruited and ensured there were psychiatric outpatient wards in government

hospitals. SCARF received land and an annual grant from the State Government to construct its daycare centre and residential facilities. Stepping down in 1995, she remained an advisor.

She initiated participation of social organisations like the Chennai based AASHA, a community-based organisation and even transformed one of the rooms in her home into a shelter and later influenced the local chapter of YMCA to open three palliative care centres.



A strict disciplinarian, she was considerate and humble but also an administrator par excellence. She could diagnose just by talking to people for a few minutes. At a time, when mental health issues were scarcely acknowledged, she brought dignity to the mentally ill by spreading awareness and helped thousands of patients and shaped the careers of several psychiatrists.

Her primary motivation was the rehabilitation of the mentally ill, a neglected aspect. The other was a stigma. She was awarded the Padma Bhushan in 1992, the Best Employer Award from the Govt. of India, Best Doctor Award and the Avvaiyyar Award in 2016 from the Government of Tamil Nadu, For the Sake of Honour Award from the Rotary Club, Chennai, a Special Award of the International Association of Psycho-Social Rehabilitation, Boston, and the Lifetime Achievement Award of Madras Neuro Trust.

Sarada was also the vice-president of the Chennai chapter of the Red Cross Society, member of the Tamil Nadu government panel set up for proposing prison reforms and a part of the World Fellowship for Schizophrenia and Allied Disorders (WFSAD).

She passed away in Chennai, aged 98, leaving a huge void for the medical fraternity, her patients and their families.

**A.Radhakrishnan is a Pune based freelance journalist, poet and short story writer.**



## CAPTAIN ASHUTOSH KUMAR SC (1996-2020)

### He epitomised Service before Self

**A**shutosh Kumar was born on 15 Oct 1996 in Parmanpur village of district Madhepura in Bihar to Ravindra Yadav and Geeta Devi.

He did his schooling from Sainik School Bhubaneswar, Odisha. His inclination towards the Armed Forces grew and the foundation of his future military life was laid. Shy and sober, yet firm in his resolve, he joined the school in 2007 and lived in Yamuna House. He loved gardening and enjoyed painting, solving Sudoku, poetry and playing hockey. He was a good orator too.

His teachers at Sainik School appreciated his brilliance in academics apart from his being an exemplary SSB cadet. His journey from an unknown village of Bihar to NDA was creditable. Though he could have easily cracked NEET or JEE, Ashutosh's sights were set on the armed forces.

After clearing SSB from Allahabad, he joined 132 nd Course of the National Defence Academy (NDA). He later went to IMA, Dehradun and was commissioned as a Lieutenant in June 2018 at 21. He got commissioned into 18 Madras of the Madras Regiment, an infantry Regiment well known for its dauntless soldiers and numerous battle exploits. As a young Lieutenant, he got posted to J&K area as his first assignment. He soon evolved into a committed soldier and a fine officer with superior field-craft skills.

During Nov 2020, 18 Madras was deployed in Kupwara district of J&K close to the Line of Control (LoC). The unit troops were engaged in counter-insurgency operations as its AoR (Area of Operation) was affected by militancy. The LoC was volatile with frequent ceasefire violations. Besides manning the forward posts in Machil sector in Kupwara district, the unit also undertook operations to check the infiltration bids as its AoR was prone to infiltration from across the border. On 8 th November 2020, one such infiltration bid was reported by the Border Security Force patrol at around 0100 hours about 3.5 km from the LOC.

18 Madras were rushed in take on the infiltrators. Ashutosh was performing duties of the Ghatak Platoon Commander close to the Line of Control (LoC). On receipt of

information of likely escape of terrorists, he proceeded to establish stops along the likely routes of escape and spotted the terrorists. Ashutosh Kumar and his team swung into action to foil the infiltration. The contact with the militants was lost around 0400 hrs but was re-established at around 1020 hrs as the infiltrators were being tracked through surveillance devices.



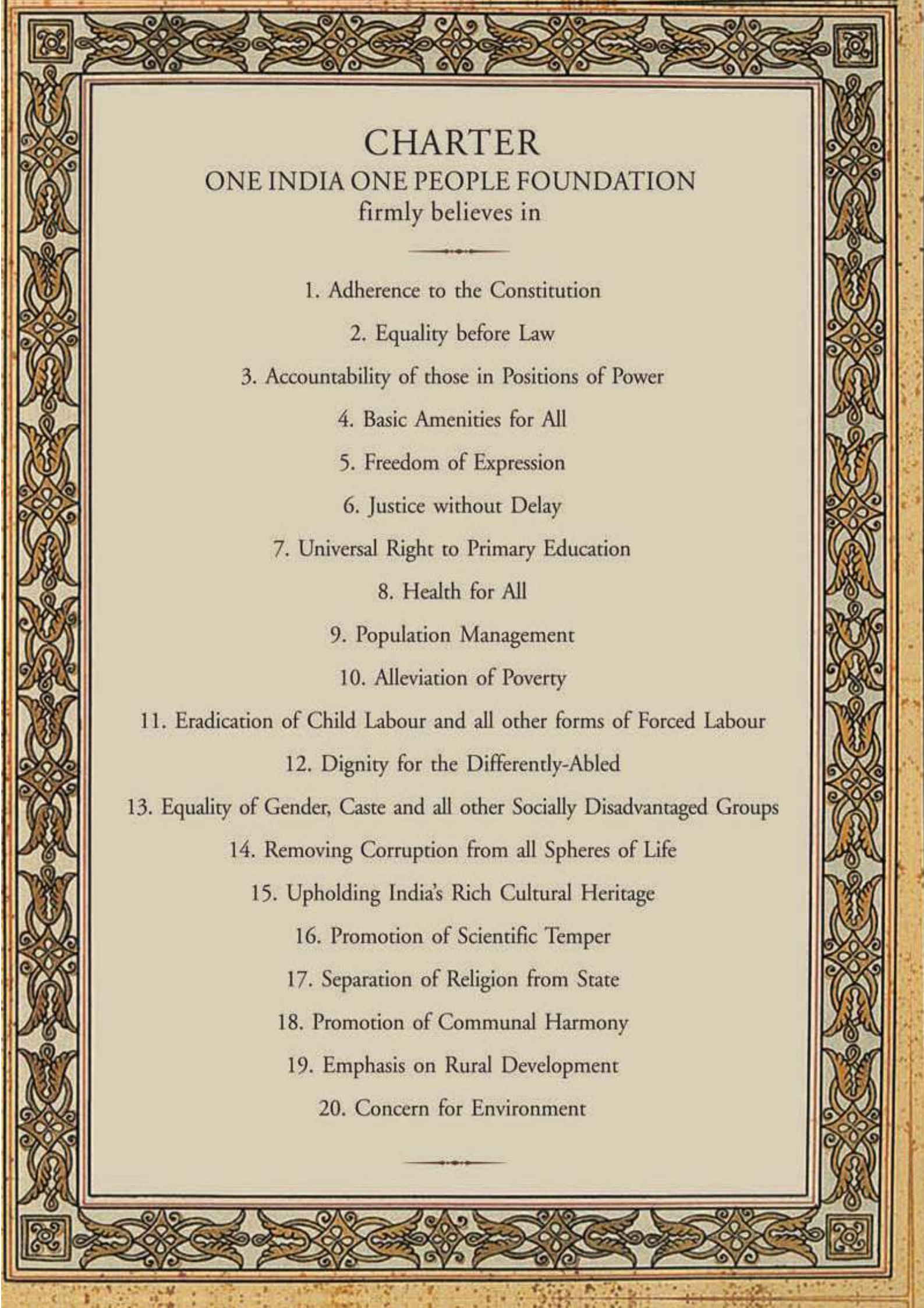
Capt. Ashutosh Kumar deployed his troops tactically to block the possible escape routes and engaged them aggressively. In the ensuing fierce gun-battle three militants were eliminated. However, Capt. Ashutosh Kumar and four others received gun shots and were seriously injured. Later Capt. Ashutosh Kumar and two more soldiers Havaldar Praveen Kumar and Rifleman Ryada Maheshwar succumbed to their injuries and were martyred. Capt. Ashutosh Kumar was a valiant soldier and a fine officer, who led from the front and laid down his life in the line of his duty.

He was awarded Shaurya Chakra posthumously for 'displaying indomitable courage and professional acumen of the highest order in saving his fellow soldier's life and eliminating hardcore terrorist with utter disregard to his own safety'. The authorities have named one of the entry points to the school and SSB Training zone as Ashutosh-Dwar. His name has been engraved on the stone slabs of the 'Martyrs Memorial' of Sainik School, informed Shri Sidhewar Nayak, a teacher at Sainik School, Bhubaneswar.

Wreath laying ceremony was organised at the 'Hut of Remembrance' at the NDA on 10 th November 2020, in the soldier's honour. The NDA Commandant Lieutenant General Asit Mistry paid homage to the braveheart in a solemn ceremony on behalf of the NDA fraternity. He lived up to the motto of NDA – 'Service before Self'. His martyrdom will continue to inspire future generations of NDA cadets.

**Brigadier Suresh Chandra Sharma (retd.)**





# CHARTER

## ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE FOUNDATION

firmly believes in

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1. Adherence to the Constitution
  2. Equality before Law
  3. Accountability of those in Positions of Power
  4. Basic Amenities for All
  5. Freedom of Expression
  6. Justice without Delay
  7. Universal Right to Primary Education
  8. Health for All
  9. Population Management
  10. Alleviation of Poverty
  11. Eradication of Child Labour and all other forms of Forced Labour
  12. Dignity for the Differently-Abled
  13. Equality of Gender, Caste and all other Socially Disadvantaged Groups
  14. Removing Corruption from all Spheres of Life
  15. Upholding India's Rich Cultural Heritage
  16. Promotion of Scientific Temper
  17. Separation of Religion from State
  18. Promotion of Communal Harmony
  19. Emphasis on Rural Development
  20. Concern for Environment
-



# WHO AM I?



Am I a Hindu first or an Indian first?

Am I a Muslim first or an Indian first?

Am I a Christian first or an Indian first?

Am I a Buddhist first or an Indian first?

Am I a Brahmin first or an Indian first?

Am I a Dalit first or an Indian first?

Am I a South Indian first or an Indian first?

Am I a North Indian first or an Indian first?

Am I the President of India first or an Indian first?

Am I the Prime Minister of India first or an Indian first?

Am I the Commander-in-Chief first or an Indian first?

Am I a supporter of any 'ism' first or an Indian first?

Am I a white-collar/blue collar worker first or an Indian first?

Am I a youth/senior citizen first or an Indian first?



In all cases you are Indian First, Last and Always.  
Be a Proud Indian. Make this country Great, Strong and United.



Sadanand A. Shetty, Founder Editor  
(October 9 1930 – February 23 2007)  
ONE INDIA ONE PEOPLE