

War. Kites. Elephants. Chandni Chowk. Mughlai India. Red Fort. Harappa. 70 years. Celebrate. Democracy. UAF. chai. Secular. Justice. Equality. Fraternity. Unity in Diversity. Development. 19 states. Linguistic Diversity. Rich history. Cultural Gem. Patriotism. Constitution. Power to the People. Color. Vibrance. Bazaars and palaces. Partition. Prabhaat Pheri. Architecture Independence.

VASANT VALLEY CELEBRATES 70 YEARS OF INDIA

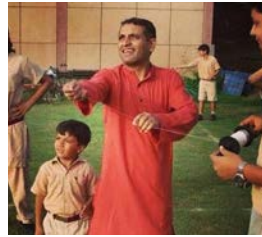
As Independence Day comes closer, Vasant Valley School is buzzing with excitement, and the rapid pace of preparations is setting everyone astir. The sublime feeling of patriotism fills everyone's hearts as 'Vande Mataram' plays on a loop during every break, and the school is decorated in green, white, and saffron. Despite the many flaws in our nation, there is a certain feeling of pride in our country that fills the atmosphere. Juniors decorate kites and colour in cut-outs of our national flag and the choir practice their songs for their performance on stage. We marvel at the fact that on the 15th of August – that very day, so many years ago, our country gained independence from the British, we are today- one of the largest and fastest growing economies.

Independence Day in Vasant Valley is celebrated like no other- children fly kites, dances and patriotic songs are performed on centre stage. The Vasant Valley Tradition that is the highlight for all, is the Prabhat Pheri, though waking up in the morning is a strenuous task, once the Prabhat Pheri starts, the only feeling in everyone's hearts are of joy and pride. The ladoos and halwa, made with a generous helping of ghee are served and eaten with a mischievous reverence, students begging for second helpings.

Watching the events unfold, leading up to the day, you can't help but feel fortunate, being part of this extraordinary celebration. Vasant Valley is one school which allows us to truly understand the importance of Independence. We are taught to acknowledge our independence through singing songs, dancing and eating age old Indian delectables. And so with our mouth filled with the sugary goodness we say, happy 70 years to India! Let's celebrate with a bang!

Sanah Kapur, 10

Send all articles/suggestions to zoysiddiqihassan@gmail.com
Online issue available at www.vasantvalley.org



वन्दे मातरम्

वीरों का यह देश,
परम्पराओं में महान है।
बहती यहाँ निर्मल नदियाँ,
ऊँचा हिमालय सालता है।

काले या गोरे का भेद नहीं,
दिल से लगाव हो जाता है।
कुछ और न आता है हमें,
सिर्फ प्यार निभाना आता है।

हे भारत माँ!
तेरी रक्षा के कसम हमने
खायी है।
हँस- हँस कर मर मिटने
पर हमने,
आज़ादी अपनी पाई है।

आद्या जातिआ

कला

भारत विविधताओं का एक देश है। इसी कारण यहाँ कला में भी अनेक विविधताएँ दिखाई देती हैं।



स्वतंत्रता के उपरांत देश के नवीन वातावरण में, हमने धर्म, साहित्य और विज्ञान के साथ-साथ कला के क्षेत्र में भी अभूतपूर्व सफलता प्राप्त की है। पुराने समय की अजंता की चित्रकला अथवा दक्षिण भारत के मंदिरों की शिल्पकला को नकारा तो नहीं जा सकता है पर यह भी सच है कि आज के इस आधुनिक युग में कला को एक नई पहचान मिल रही है। आज से कुछ ही वर्ष पहले तक, एक कलाकार को अपनी पहचान बनाने के लिए अक्सर बहुत संघर्ष करना पड़ता था, क्योंकि समाज में मानो जैसे कला की कद्र ही नहीं थी। किन्तु आज हमारे भारत में कलाकारों के लिए एक अनोखा स्थान बन गया है। धीरे धीरे लोग कलाकारों को बढ़ावा दे रहे हैं। अपने संस्कृति को बचाने का प्रयत्न कर रहे हैं। हम अब कला को अपने जीवन के हर

पहलू में सम्मिलित करने का प्रयास करते हैं। संगीत, चित्रकला, वादन, कविता, कहानी लेखन- सभी कला के दायरे में आते हैं। जहाँ राजा रवि वर्मा अथवा मुंशी प्रेमचंद को अपने जीवन काल में इतना लोगों तक अपनी कला को पहुँचाने के लिए संघर्ष करना पड़ा, उसी देश में आज एम एफ हुसैन, जॉकीर हुसैन, किशोर कुमार जैसे महान भारतीय कलाकारों को भला कौन नहीं जानता?

आज सरकार भी कला के विकास के लिए हर सम्भव प्रयास कर रही है। अनेक विदेशी देशों में भारत महोत्सव के माध्यम से भारतीय कला की झलक प्रस्तुत कर रही है। भारत की विशाल संस्कृति ग्रामीण परिदृश्य से भरी है। विलुप्त होती हुई कलाओं को पुनर्जीवित करने तथा स्थानीय कलाकारों को बढ़ावा देने के लिए देश भर में समय-समय पर लोक तथा जनजातीय समारोहों का आयोजन होता है। सच आज भारत में ना कलाकारों की कमी है और ना ही उनके कद्रदानों की।

वेदिका बागला, 9



WHAT TO LOOK FOR INSIDE!

- On pages 2, 4, 6 there are fiction prose pieces by three writers on various themes that trouble Indian society and culture today. These range from the time of Independence, to the present and to the 100th year of Indian Independence in the year 2047.

- A continuation of the timeline of important events (*compiled by Sanaa Sharma*).

- An entertaining quiz and a crossword.

- A commentary on today's media.



1947-1957

- 1947 - India becomes an independent country.
- 1948 - Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated.
- 1950 - The constitution was adopted.
- 1952 - India holds first general elections.
- 1955 - Untouchability was abolished.



1957-1967

- 1958 - Indian Institute of Technology inaugurated.
- 1962 - India and China have a brief war over border disputes.
- 1965 - Hindi becomes the official language of India.
- 1965 - War breaks out between India and Pakistan.



1947

On nationalism and Communalism by Zoya S. Hassan (12)

The rickety train khat khataoed in a steady rhythm as it left the cultural gem of Lahore now engulfed in flames and set out towards the hallowed town of Amritsar. I sat looking out of the window, staring at my hometown fade away into the distance, in a cloud of dust and smoke, from the large decrepit vessel rushing to a new destination. The future seemed bleak, and I was afraid of what I would find in Amritsar, other than fire, screams and blood.

Clutching my daughter, her eyes closed in a peaceful sleep, closer to my chest, I turned towards the dusty window. They had killed my husband. Not that he wasn't to blame - partaking in this sheer madness. Going out with the mob to burn and kill other people. I had begged him. I had begged him not to leave me, not to leave his daughter, not to go out into the night where flames leapt higher than the stars and the face of God blacked out completely.

"Please. This is dangerous, you know it is."

"They are throwing us out of our nation, and you ask me not to fight? I thought the woman I married was brave."

"I'm brave, not a doormat. You knew that when you agreed to marry me. What you are going out to do isn't brave."

"How would you know? You sit here nursing her all day, while they kill our people."

"We are all the same people, you blind, ignorant man. Who are you going out to kill? They look the same, they do the same work, we live together in this nation. It is being torn asunder because of your stupidity."

"I fight for this nation. If I do not fight them, then who will? I fight for my country."

"You fight your own countrymen. You fight the people who till the fields alongside us. Your notion of nationality is skewed, don't you see it!"

I winced remembering the door slam. They dropped his body back on my doorstep so marred with knife marks and burnt black that I didn't even recognize him at first sight. Who killed him? I could not say. Did they wear skull caps or saffron? I could not say. Perhaps one of our own slaughtered him without even realizing it. He left me widowed at the age of 25, he left my daughter fatherless and he left the nation for the skies above, where he could defend himself against the way he killed those of his own nation. The train khat khataoed on.

"They are dividing the nation on religious lines."

"Where will we go?"

"Go? This is our hometown, where you and I were born, where our blood was born. We will stay here and fight if we must."

"Who are we fighting? Firang?"

"The firang have left. We fight those who believe in another God and see it fit to throw us out of our city on his grounds."

"We fight our countrymen? Is that what you are proposing?"

"I'll fight any man who opposes my faith. Any man who opposes my nation."

I asked God then, rubbing my prayer beads in nervous circles, when did nationality become equivalent to faith, knowledgable one? Which holy book stated that those who follow another may not live together in harmony and love the soil they grow subsistence on and the people who harvest the crop? And yet that night he sent the mobs. He sent them from both religions, each carrying pitchforks and torches and dangerously large knives. They smeared the streets of Lahore, upon which Fakirs had once travelled singing praise of the historic city of splendour, with crimson blood. The scent of the air metallic, a shroud hung over the city and when I peeked my head out through the window, I could not see for who this shroud had been sowed and by whose hands. Hindu? Muslim? I settled for an easier answer. Human. The train khat khataoed on.

"There is nothing left for you her beti. It is best you take our poti to Amritsar and move southward from there."

"Ma, how can I leave you and Pitamaha here. Your son didn't want me to leave Lahore."

"Do not disrespect him beti, he was your husband not just my son, we cannot leave. We will honor his foolhardy wishes. Go, I will send for a train ticket."

"But it is not safe for you here."

"Honor his life by leaving beti. Honor it by living for your daughter."

"How shall I know what happened to you once I arrive at Amritsar?"

"Let the violence die down. Then we will see."

"Khudahfiz Ma."

"Be careful, don't let the men do to you what they have done to other women."

Raped. She had meant raped. I sat in a bogey surrounded by people who were scared of one another. Women of being raped and left to die. Men worried to say their names to another in case it preached a different religion scared to be persecuted by the men of their own country, men who vowed to the firangs that they were from the same mother. The entire carriage seemed to tremble with fear. It was almost physical. And then with another quake, I realized with horror, holding onto my daughter tightly that the khat khataoing train was being mobbed. It seemed to burst open at the seams, the metal torn apart by fire. My cotton sari whipped around me as screams tore through the air and blood splattered my face and white mourning clothes. The rush of people suffocated me as I rushed to the nearest opening. Jumping with the rest of the lucky ones onto the hard ground, the already patchy grass charred in many areas. Stumbling to my feet I ran, noticing that I had barely missed the track. Ran away from the burning train, flames engulfing the vessel as the star disappeared once more in a haze of blinding smoke.

"Musalmaan!"

"Hindus!"

"Which one attacks us?"

Still running holding my screaming child against my breast, I muttered under my breath, *"Indians."* I turned around looking over my shoulder at the half open torn apart vessel, that burnt the skies and grounds creating partitioning lines, that had never seemed a reality. And yet the slaughterhouse of a train, dying slowly, khat khataoed on.



Gar Firdauz Baroye Zaminasto, Aaminasto Aaminasto Aaminasto

If there is a paradise on Earth, it is this, it is this, it is this. - Amir Khusrau

Where all people were considered equal, religion created no boundary, love abounded and life rejoiced. Built upon the legends of a desiccated land where The Valley was once a shimmering lake and the historical kingdoms of Kamboja and Panchal ruled - this was Kashmir. Before violence became a norm and religion created barriers. From being the paradise on Earth described by Amir Khusrau, Kashmir has been become a place of terror, hatred, political unrest. The events that led up to the degradation of this paradise are as follows:

1947: End of British rule and partition of India and Pakistan.

1947: Maharaja of Kashmir signs a treaty of accession with India after a Pakistani tribal army attacks. War breaks out between India and Pakistan over the region.

1965: A war between Indian and Pakistan over Kashmir ends in a ceasefire.

1971-72: Indo-Pakistani war ends in defeat for Pakistan and leads to the 1972 Simla Agreement. This turns the Kashmir ceasefire line into the Line of Control.

1984: The Indian Army seizes control of the Siachen Glacier.

1987: India accuses Pakistan of fomenting the pro independence insurgency, which escalates after the Indian Army kills about 100 demonstrators at Gawakadal Bridge. Attacks and threats lead to the flight of almost all Hindus from the Kashmir Valley. India imposes Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA).



हमारे संगीत विभाग के कुछ प्रिय गाने !

१. ऐ मेरे वतन के लोगों
२. कदम कदम बढ़ाए जा
३. बुंदेले हरबोलों के मुँह
४. प्यारी जन्मभूमि
५. ऐ मेरे प्यारे वतन
६. चक दे इंडिया
७. सुनो गौर से दुनिया वालों

संग्रहकर्ता प्रकृति महाजन



1999: India and Pakistan go to war again after militants cross from Pakistan to India.

2015: Muslim separatist leaders in Indian-administered Kashmir close shops, businesses and government departments in protest at the enforcement of a ban on eating beef.

2016: A curfew is put in most parts of Indian-administered Kashmir; schools, shops and most banks are shut and mobile and Internet services suspended.

2016-17: Gunmen in Indian-administered Kashmir kill Indian soldiers in an army base.

2016: Thousands of villagers in Pakistan-controlled Kashmir are evacuated after violence escalates following the killing of seven Pakistani soldiers along the Line of Control.

2017: Violent clashes take place on the anniversary of the death of militant commander Burhan Wani.

2017: Militants attack Hindu pilgrims going to Amarnath, killing at least seven and injuring 16, in the worst such attack since 2000.

Reana Soni, 9

THE LEADERS OF OUR NATION - ANALYSED



Jawaharlal Nehru:

Pro- A leader in the march to independence and the very first Indian Prime Minister stressed secularism, insisted upon the basic unity of India, and, in the face of ethnic and religious diversity, carried India into the modern age of scientific innovation and technological progress.

Con- A rather misplaced sense of idealism over Kashmir resulting in a multitude of issues that plague us today.

Indira Gandhi:

Pro- Among the most powerful Prime Ministers this country has ever seen Indira Gandhi managed to consolidate her rule with effective leadership.

Con- The complete subversion of democracy in India along with the imposition of emergency under which the arbitrary arrest of various political leaders and prominent newspaper editors took place for a start.

Rajiv Gandhi:

Pro- Rajiv Gandhi triggered many initiatives such as the IT and communications revolution as well the Panchayati Raj which have left their mark on the nation for the following decades.

Con- The 1984 Sikh riots and Bofor scam will never be forgotten and neither will his clumsy efforts to woo Muslim fundamentalists through the Shah Bano case while also appealing to the Hindu right wing by opening the gates of Ayodhya.

Manmohan Singh:

Pro- Manmohan Singh pushed the Nuclear deal with the US through, in the face of overwhelming political opposition resulting in his greatest achievement.

Con- His government seemed to be a mute spectator as India reeled under a string of terror serial blasts and he is charged with being one of the weakest Prime Ministers by his critics, lacking that charismatic personality our other leaders have possessed.

Narendra Modi:

Pro- A charismatic personality who is committed to a hands on and decisive approach toward policy reflected in his drive to crackdown on black money and his tax reforms.

Con- While he does have a very clear approach to many problems, Modi remains silent on various issues such as healthcare where he has become more of a sloganeer than a strategist. A lot of speculation and conspiracy theories hover around Modi after the Gujarat riots and there has been outrage regarding his silence on the lynchings and targeting of minorities currently taking place.

Aryan Sadh, 11

Caricatures by Ananya Jain, 12



1967-1977

1969 - 14 leading banks nationalised.

1971 - Pakistan declares war on India and then cedes post defeat in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh)

1974 - India conducts underground nuclear test.

1975 - Aryabhata, India's first satellite is launched.

1975 - Indira Gandhi declares a state of emergency in which the press is censored and 1,00,000 people are jailed.



1977-1987

1979 - Mother Teresa receives Nobel Peace Prize.

1983 - India wins the Cricket World Cup.

1984 - Rakesh Sharma becomes the 1st Indian in space.

1984 - Bhopal Gas Tragedy claims many lives.

1984 - Prime Minister Indira Gandhi assassinated leading to mass anti-Sikh riots.

2017

On women and casteism by *Ananya Jain* (12)

It was a warm summer evening in the capital. The sun was gradually setting and darkness encompassed the skies. But even the nightfall did not mean sleep for this city. The golden hearts of 'Dilli' had just woken up.

*Flickering streetlights, swaying telephone lines,
Each road was swarmed with shining headlights.*

*Loud honking echo's sounded,
The noise had become an essential part of the night.*

*Delhi would never be the same without this peak hour traffic,
The unique display of sound and light.*

And while the schedule of the night went on as each day, not far away from this chaos another everyday scene played out just the same...

5th of August 2017

Dear Citizens of A Free India,

I am writing this not as a victim, but as a warrior, fighting for the rights of hundreds of Indian women who have no one to confide in. Their voices are being drowned, their mouths are forced shut, but the flames of their spirits can never be extinguished.

Yes, I was out all alone that night. I was driving back home unaccompanied when it happened.

But let's get one thing straight; I did nothing wrong and it wasn't my fault.

3 men in a black SUV, I could see them from my rearview mirror; laughing, they mirrored my movements, following me for over 20 minutes on the streets of the capital city.

For a few minutes I was absolutely terrified. I'm not scared of standing up for myself, but at that moment I wasn't just fighting against 3 men, rather this was a war against the patriarchal society of India.

Being chased by these goons, the only thing that kept me going was the memory of my grandmother; a woman who undertook the journey from Lahore to Amritsar all alone, holding ma close to her bosom. Without any help, with nothing, not even a few rupees to feed herself she came to India and nurtured a family, providing them with everything they could ever ask for. Working odd jobs, giving it her everything; a woman succeeded in a man's world against all odds. It was her spirit that reminded me of how much strength I really have.

It was when things got extremely violent, the car swerving into my path, the men trying their best to hit me that I called up the police. I couldn't run away, I had to stop, for the sake of millions of women, make them pay.

Why can't we understand the concept of equality?

Irrespective of gender, caste, any construct we may see.

We humans are just the same,

Red blood flows in each of our veins.

Open the Newspapers, only pain you brew,

Inequality and discrimination screaming back at you

Whether it is a young Dalit boy committing suicide,

Or a baby girl being burnt alive.

We're in the year 2017, 70 long years since the rebirth of our motherland. We're redefining boundaries, racing ahead with technology as our enabler, the fastest growing economy and largest democracy in the world; India.

But even today, despite all this visible 'progress', the dark pits of our minds refuse to change.

We worship her in the temple, folding our hands in prayer, devotion to the goddess we say, Saraswati, Durga, Kali, Parvati or Sita. When there is respect there, what happens on the streets? What happens within the four walls of a home, near hospitals, in moving and stationery buses, anywhere, everywhere, even inside of the same shrines of God's safe haven? What urges the same hands to harass, to molest, to rape?

The mouth that sings a hymn of appreciation for her hurls back insults and catcalls just the next moment with one justification, 'Her walk provoked me, her talk provoked me, her clothes provoked me.'

I ask these men one question, 'Was the 10 month old infant dressed provocatively too?'

2.24 million crimes against women were reported in India the past decade.

26 crimes against women are reported every hour.

A woman becomes victim to crime every 2 minutes.

If these numbers seem baffling, the fact is that majority cases of crime however go unreported.

Is this really progress? Are we really moving forward?

India's daughter

Looming over an uncertain future

THE FIGHT FOR FEMINISM IN INDIA - PAST AND PRESENT

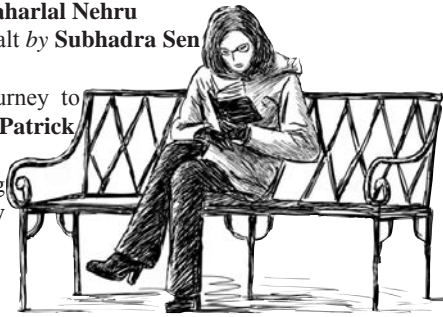
Women empowerment can be simply described as actions designed to increase the degree of independence and self-determination in women in order to enable them to represent their interests in an accountable and self-determined way, acting on their own authority. It would be appropriate to analyze the position and space Indian women occupy today, and compare it to the time, 70 years ago when the country had just gained its independence. With women participating in movements relating to nationalism, to being pushed into the domestic household space, to their resurgence as super-women today, women in our country have seen it all. Innumerable debates about gender have been held in India over the years. Much of it includes women's position in society, their education, health, economic status, gender equality etc. Women have always held a certain contradictory position in our developing nation. On one hand, India has seen an increased percentage of literacy among women, and their entering professional fields, but practices of female infanticide, poor health conditions and lack of education still continue to persist. Even the patriarchal philosophy of the home being a woman's 'real domain' and marriage being her ultimate destiny hasn't changed. The matrimonial advertisements, demanding girls of the same caste, with fair skin and slim figure, or the much criticized fairness cream ads, are displays of the slow changing social values. If one looks at the status of women then and now, one has to look at two sides of the coin; one side which is promising, and one side which remains bleak.

SOUL FIRE FOR A PATRIOT

A list of books that parrot patriotism and give detailed accounts of history concerning Indian Independence and the National movement. These are perfect for any book lover and history buff.

1. India's Struggle For Independence by **Bipin C. Pal**
2. Freedom At Midnight by **Dominique La Pierre**
3. India After Gandhi by **Ramachandra Guha**
4. India by **Patrick French**
5. From Plassey to Partition by **Shekhar Bandhopadhyay**
6. India Wins Freedom by **Abul Kalam Azad**
7. India Since Independence by **Abul Kalam Azad**
8. India A History by **John Keay**
9. The Discovery of India by **Jawaharlal Nehru**
10. A Flag, A Song & a Pinch of Salt by **Subhadra Sen Gupta**
11. Liberty or Death: India's Journey to Independence and Division by **Patrick French**
12. The Proudest Day: India's Long Road to Independence by **Anthony Read**

Compiled by **Ishita Malhotra, 12**



25 साल बाद - बाबरी मस्जिद

दिसंबर १९९२ को राष्ट्रीय स्वयं सेवक दल के सदस्य तथा उनके समर्थक व विश्व हिन्दू परिषद व भाजपा के समर्थक बाबरी मज्जिद में एकत्रित हुए। इस दस्तूर पर भाजपा कार्यकर्ता जैसे लाल कृष्ण आडवाणी, मुरली मनोहर जोशी व उमा भारती ने भाषण दिया और एकत्रित जनता को उबलते तेल की तरह जानलेवा बना दिया।

यह सब देख कर पुलिस ने तुरंत मस्जिद को चारों ओर से घेर लिया। परन्तु पुलिस से छुपते हुए एक आदमी नेमस्जिद के गुम्बद पर एक केसरी रंग का ध्वज लहराया और इसे प्रहार का संकेत समझकर एकत्रित लोग मज्जिद पर धावा बोल बैठे और मस्जिद को तहस- नहस कर दिया।

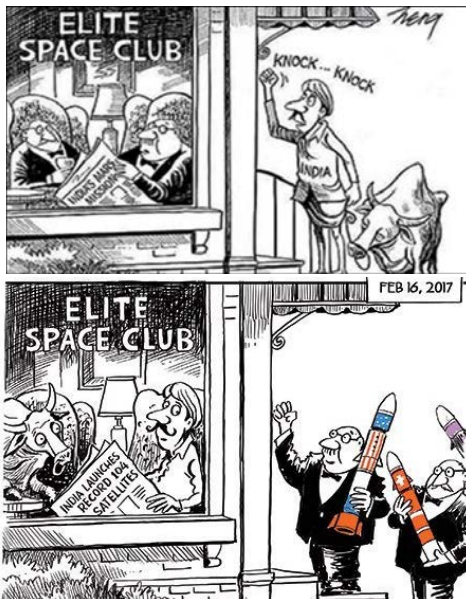
इस सभा का कारण बड़ा ही विचित्र है। हमलावारों को लगता है कि वह जगह श्री राम की जन्मभूमि है। वहाँ पर १६वीं सदी में एक मुगल सम्राट मीर बाकी ने बाबरी मस्जिद को बनवाया दिया तो श्री राम की जन्मभूमि व राजकीय दलों की भूख ने इस वारदात को अंजाम दिया।

२००९ में जस्टिस मनमोहन सिंह लिट्हरन के अंतर्गत बिठाई गई बैठक ने वाजपायी, जोशी, विजय राजे सिंध्या व कल्याण सिंह के साथ ६८ और लोगों को दोषी ठहराया।

२०१७ में सुप्रीम कोर्ट ने आडवाणी, मुरली मनोहर जोशी, उमा भारती व अन्य लोगों पर कार्यवाही करने का आदेश दिया।

इशिता मल्होत्रा, 12

INDIA: From Humble Beginnings to Science Enabled Super-powerdom



Over a course of just 70 years, India has made huge progress in the fields of science and technology as it burgeoned from a fledgeling nation to a rising superpower.

India's journey into scientific development began soon after independence. On 18 August 1951 the minister of education Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, inaugurated the first Indian Institute of Technology at Kharagpur in West Bengal. These institutions were conceived by a 22-member committee of scholars and entrepreneurs under the chairmanship of N. R. Sarkar.

India's foray into nuclear technology began with the inauguration of India's first nuclear reactor 'Apsara' on Jan 20, 1957, in tandem with India's foray into television programming in 1959. This was followed by the establishment of ISRO (Indian Space Research Organisation) in 1962. The establishment of ISRO along with the launching of its first satellite 'Aryabhata' was India's first step towards its entry into the 'Space Club' of the world, majorly composed of USA and USSR.

The 1960s reaped the benefits of the advances in India's agricultural sciences with the start of the Green Revolution, creating higher crop yields with more efficient fertilisers, pesticides and the introduction of high-yield seeds. 1974 marked the year in which India carried out its first nuclear tests in Operation Smiling Buddha at Pokhran, Rajasthan. These tests established India as a global nuclear power, the first country apart from the permanent members of the UN Security Council to conduct a nuclear test. The early 2000s saw the development of India's first indigenously created supercomputer, known as the Param Padma, with 1 teraflop (1 trillion calculations per second) and a capacity of 5 TB, later increased to 22 TB. This instantly placed India amongst the elite club of nations with supercomputational capability. In the 2010s, ISRO has gained massive fame for their Mangalyan (Mars Orbiter Mission) Program, which gave India the status of being the first country to succeed at a Mars mission in its very first attempt. Adding to that, ISRO also managed to accomplish it an 'astronomically' tiny cost when compared to other countries.

With a huge population of over 1 billion and a huge array of projects in development, only time can tell what wonders await our country in the future.

Jay Jaganaath, 12



1987-1997

- 1988 - Official voting age reduced to 18.
- 1991 - Rajiv Gandhi assassinated by a LTTE suicide bomber.
- 1992 - Hindu Muslim riots break out after the Babri Masjid is destroyed in Ayodhya.
- 1993 - Massive earthquake leaves severe casualties and damage in Maharashtra.



1997-2007

- 1999 - Nuclear Atom Bomb tested in Pokhran.
- 2002 - Fire on train kills 59 Hindu activists that leads to Hindu-Muslim riots in Gujarat.
- 2003 - Pakistan declares cease-fire over Kashmir.
- 2004 - Coastal Tsunami devastates coastal communities in the South and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- 2006 - The US signs a nuclear deal with India.

2007-2017

- 2008- Terrorists attack Mumbai, killing 160 people.
- 2008 - Delhi metro launches.
- 2008 - Abhinav Bindra wins India's first individual gold medal at the Beijing Olympics.
- 2010- The Rajya Sabha passes women's reservation bill.
- 2011- India wins the cricket world cup after 28 years.
- 2013- The Supreme Court of India reinstates same sex relationship as a criminal offence
- 2014- Narendra Modi becomes Prime Minister.
- 2015- Sanya Mirza becomes world number one in women tennis doubles.
- 2016- The Indian government withdraws Rs 500 and Rs 1000 notes out of circulation, causing economic disruption.
- 2017- Nuclear capable Agni 4 missile tested successfully.
- India's biggest tax reform in 70 years of independence- Goods and Services Tax (GST) is implemented.



2047

A futuristic look upon the nation - Science, Technology, Economy, Equality by Aditya Kapur (12)

To : The Historical Society of India,

As asked by you I have enclosed the accounts from the year 1947 and 2017 within this envelope. Attached are photographs and visual aids. I have enclosed my thoughts on India today, hand written, for you to display in your worldwide exhibit showcasing India's gruelling 100 years of Independence that today has led to it becoming a power in the global village.

The year 2047 is a landmark year for our nation as we celebrate the 100th year of independence from the British Raj. It marks 100 years of power to the people and a nation built on the democratic values of freedom, equality, liberty and secularism. At the same time, this also marks 100 years of struggle, struggle against the forces of social disharmony, economic inequalities, external attack, illiteracy and diseases.

1947-the year that independence was eclipsed by religious divisions, fear, hate and anger. As the partition tore our nation apart, it also tore through the hearts of the people - separating them from their loved ones, homes and livelihoods. When I think about the year 1947, I always remember my Great Grandmother's heartbreaking memories of the partition. I can never forget the expressions with which she would repeat that story over and over again. The fear and sadness which stood out as she described her perspective of the narrative of hate, violence and carnage and the idea of people being uprooted and thrown across hand-drawn borders. My Great Grandmother saw the worst of our country and she had to suffer at the hands of a situation which was out of everyone's control. Every time I reflect on her story, I wonder that what was lacking at that time in our nation? Why were we disunited and how did artificial boundaries and shallow differences get the better of so many Indians? Today I see a truly secular nation. Once where each is allowed to practice his religion in peace, without fear of being ostracized or criticized or killed or lynched. Nationalism is a feeling which strives. One where each man and each woman is proud to be an Indian, proud of the nation and its development. Our pride of our contemporaries and tolerance of cultural and global sects is what puts us as a nation aside.

As contradictory as it may be, inequalities have been ingrained in the social fabric of our country for centuries. Whether it be the caste system, gender discrimination or prejudice on the basis of economic background, man-made boundaries have played a major role in the way society works. Ma used to tell me how during her childhood, these divisions were the determining factor for everything from marriage to housing to politics to education. For years, people have tried to tackle these issues and worked towards a more inclusive, accepting society with 'unity in diversity' and social harmony as its guiding principles. Now, as I compare the India of back then to the India of today, I see massive changes for the betterment and benefit of all and we are getting closer to achieving the nirvana of peace and prosperity. I believe we are on the path to successfully tackling these issues as revolutionaries had attempted to do much earlier.

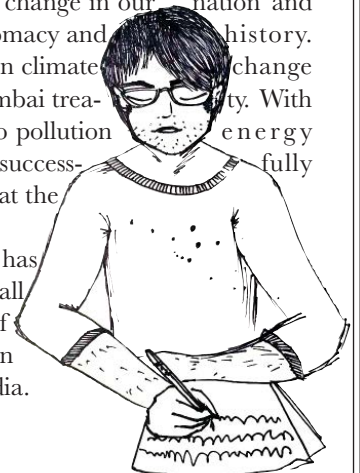
As a male looking upon my nation now and looking through the 100 of years we as a nation have been through, I am proud to be an Indian and be a part of the nation that once so deeply embedded in gender inequality has managed to climb up the abyss and into the light. Women are paid equally, rape and domestic violence has reduced and is now reported.

ये जो देस है तेरा, स्वदेस है तेरा तुझे है पुकारा..

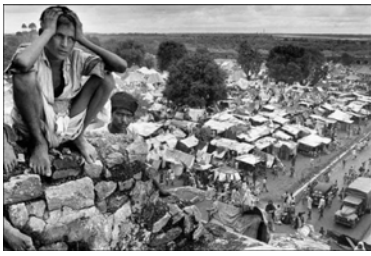
ये वो बंधन है, जो कभी टूट नहीं सकता

These words encapsulate the true essence of being an Indian, of possessing an eternal bond with one's own country. As an NRI for over 25 years, I have chosen to return back to India as I have seen great change in our nation and want to contribute to the nation's development with my immense knowledge of science, diplomacy and history. India has become a symbol of progress and hope for the world. We have been able to work on climate change and have fulfilled all clauses of the 2015 Paris treaty, 2028 Buenos Aires treaty and 2041 Mumbai treaty. With increased reliance on solar, wind and hydro power, India has become a world leader in zero pollution energy production. After taking multitudinous steps in the field of health and sanitation, India has successfully eradicated diseases such as dengue and malaria. We Indians take pride in telling the world that the literacy rate in India is 100% and over 95% of all children receive primary education.

We are proud of our country for so many more achievements but most of all India has been able to battle the injustices and biases in society to create a fair and just environment for all of us. India has been able to truly imbibe its constitutional values and bring about a sense of social harmony and unity. By understanding the idea that all religions are one and all men and women are equal, we have been able to accept all into our fold. That is the beauty of India.



A SISTERHOOD TORN ASUNDER



Pre 1947, Pakistan didn't exist. It was just India; the land that represented unity in diversity and a ground where Hindu and Muslims both could reside peacefully. That

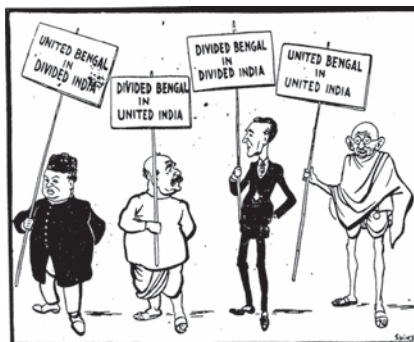
is until the stroke of midnight of 14th August 1947 where the people and the country would never be the same and this ground turned into a battlefield. Pakistan was declared the land of the Muslims and India for the Hindus to propagate the political agenda of a few. This communal division not only led to confusion and turmoil in the lives of the 80 lakh migrants but 5-10 lakh people were injured or killed just due to partition related violence.

People became refugees within their own homes and minorities on either side feared for their lives as women were raped, converted and then forced into marriage. Hindu and Muslim neighbours that would often go

the others homes to ask for essential supplies when they were out, now despised each other and looked at one another with suspicion. This division of the country led to the "division of hearts" which now seems to be irreparable.

It's sad to see that the image of the Pakistanis that were once our brothers and sisters is now so tainted in the hearts of us Indians. The attacks across the LOC, on our CRPF javaans, in Kargil in 1999 have made us view Pakistanis as our enemies. But are they really? Is it right to view all Pakistanis in this light? Can the acts of just a few represent an entire community?

Asees Kaur, 12



MOTHER INDIA

My water colour painting is titled by me as "Mother India". It was painted by me to celebrate 15th August 2017, India's 70th Independence Day. I salute our brave Indian soldiers who keep us safe day and night. India became independent from the British Empire on the 15th of August 1947. Our Indian flag is beautiful. The top band of saffron stands for strength and courage of India. The white band in the middle stands for honesty, purity and peace. The green band at the bottom represents progress of our nation. The Ashoka Chakra has 24 spokes which represent the 24 hours of a day.

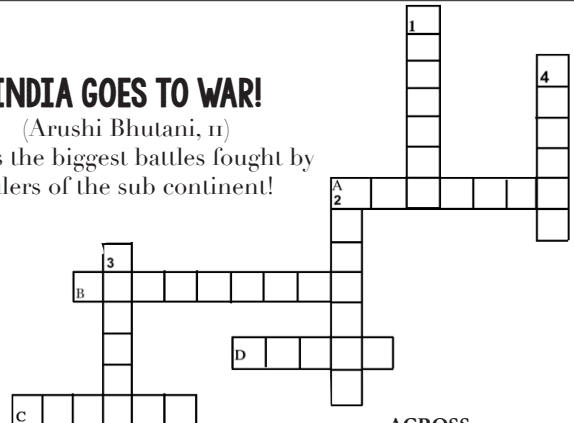
Ailina Sarna, 3



INDIA GOES TO WAR!

(Arushi Bhutani, 11)

Guess the biggest battles fought by rulers of the sub continent!



DOWN

- The Battle of _____ was fought with the Afghans, on the confluence of the Ganga and its tributary, (1529).
- The Battle of _____ (1526) fought between Babur's forces and Ibrahim Lodi's troops in Panipat. This was the beginning of the Mughal era.
- The Battle of _____ (1739), was a decisive victory for Nader Shah of Iran, during his invasion of Mughal India.
- The Battle of _____ was a major battle of the Second Anglo-Maratha War fought between the Maratha Empire and the British East India Company. (1803)

ACROSS

- The Battle of _____ was a victory of the British East India Company over the Nawab of Bengal & French allies (1757.)
- The Battle of _____ was fought before the Tirah Campaign (1897) between Sikh soldiers of the British Indian Army & Pashtun Orakzai.
- The Battle of _____, also known as that of Suvali, (1612) and was a victory for four English East India Company galleons.
- The Battle of _____ (1764) between the forces under the command of the British East India Company led by Hector Munro.

GANDHI JI

Our father of the nation Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, was born in Porbandar on 2 October 1869. He fought for India's freedom and independence. His family belonged to a cast of tradesmen. His father was the Chief Minister of Porbandar. His mother was a simple traditional lady who was very religious.

He studied in Dhool Shala school. He was not that great in studies. He was shy, he played no sports but showed plenty of respect to his teachers. Who knew, that this shy little boy would one day become a great leader. He married Kasturba at the age of 13 and had four sons.

He went to study law in London at the age of 19. Later on, he tried to set up a law firm in India but was not successful. Soon after, he left for South Africa to practice law. He lived in South Africa for about 20 years. In that period of time he was moved by the discrimination against Indians. He returned to India in 1914 and received a hero's welcome. At that time the Britishers were ruling over India. There was a lot of discrimination against untouchables, the poorest sections of society. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi became a leader of the Indian nationalist movement or Swaraj. He also declared a movement against using imported British textiles and told people to spin cloth.

He had belief in non-violent protests. He was declared the President of Indian National Congress in 1921.

He was imprisoned for breaking the salt laws. He had a tough time when his parents and wife passed away. He began the Quit India movement in 1942. India finally got her independence.

Later on in 1948 Mohan Das Karamchand Gandhi was shot dead by the Hindu radical Nathu Ram Godse who was against Gandhiji's support for Muslims and untouchables. Today he lies in Rajghat, New Delhi. Gandhiji brought truthfulness, non violence and peace to our country.

He was a great soul and I wish he could still be there to help our nation.



Ayesha Chandra Thakur, 5

MY INDIA

India became independent in 1947

The British Raj ended, it became like heaven.

India has become a very modern nation

From railway station it has become metro station.

We want to make India clean Swath Bharat is every Indian's dream.

Save the girl child is India's new pride

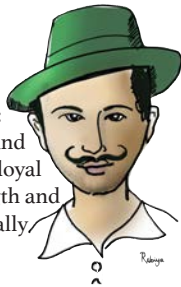
Girls are not born just to be brides.

Shiv Raj Talwar, 10

WHICH HISTORIC FREEDOM FIGHTER ARE YOU?

- Which quality do you most value?
 - Courage in the face of all adversity
 - Composure in times of the greatest hardship
 - Determination even in a losing fight
 - Fluency and structure of thought
- What is your spirit animal?
 - Tiger
 - Pigs
 - Elephant
 - Monkey
- Your friend has been wronged and is gravely upset, what advice to you give her?
 - You don't believe in giving advice- you deal with the wrongdoer
 - You tell her to move on and deal with whatever comes her way
 - You ensure that the wrongdoer pays their penance
 - You let her talk it out until she is calmer
- How would you revolutionise the world?
 - Fight the enemy till the end
 - Embody the change that you want to see
 - Ensure that you uplift everyone along with yourself
 - Use various platforms of media to bring light to your plight
- What would you prioritise:
 - Your dreams and passions
 - The greater good
 - Acceptance of all
 - A voice for everyone

If you got mostly A's, you are Bhagat Singh:
 You believe in action as opposed to sitting and planning each and every detail. You are a loyal friend and courageous to no end. Your strength and valour displays itself not only physiologically, but psychologically. Go, you!



If you got mostly B's, you are Mahatma Gandhi:
 Being equated to the father of the nation? Not bad! You believe that peaceful debate is the best way to reach a solution. You often sacrifice your needs for others, because you know this is the best way to be the best person you can. You are a deep thinker and rather wise. Well done!



If you got mostly C's, you are Sarojini Naidu:
 Hello there, pioneer of change! You believe strongly judging people based on their achievements as opposed to their lineage. Equality between all should be taken for granted, you say! Hats off to you on being compassionate, charitable and caring to no end!



If you got mostly D's, you are Dr. B. R. Ambedkar:
 It's not to be said that you wrote the constitution, but one can assume that you have a way with words. You're calm and composed and relied upon greatly by all those you love.



Tanvi Bahl & Anoushka Clays, 10

Sketch of Bhagat Singh and B.R. Ambedkar done by Rabiya Gupta

SHATRANJ KE KHILADI

A critical review of the acclaimed classic



'Shatranj ke Khiladi' is a 1977 Hindi movie directed by Satyajit Ray. It is set in the year 1856, on the eve of India's first struggle for independence. The movie takes place in the beautiful city of Lucknow, the capital of the kingdom Awadh. Being one of the last independent states of India, the British are looking to annex the state, and send General Outram to do their bidding. To legally take control of the state, General Outram must persuade the ruler of Awadh,

Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, to sign a treaty with the British, declaring them as 'friends'. The king, however, is not a man of the politics, preferring to engage himself in artistic activities like singing, dancing or composing rather than actually handling the affairs of

The movie has a simple plot, it follows the lives of two rich noblemen, Mir and Mirza, of Lucknow. These noblemen are aware of the situation around them, of the world they know crumbling down, yet do nothing about it, too addicted to their game of chess. This indifference is two-fold, as they are seemingly uncaring about both political and personal matters, hence leading to a feeling of neglect present in their wives at home.

The movie is slow-paced, not what you would expect from a movie about such a sensitive matter. It is not gripping in its action, yet it keeps your undivided attention through its subtle comparisons, & brilliant dialogues. Herein lies the brilliance of the movie, in its subtleness. It is sarcastic, extremely so, comparing the witty advances of the British to the game of chess, and if you read between the lines, you will understand how beautifully the film captures the resignation of the Indians, and their unwillingness to fight.

When watching a movie set in this time period, and created so many years ago, it is always important to analyse whether the movie holds true for today's world as well, and in all honesty, I feel it does. The careful advances of a nation aimed at securing power, however held back by legal barriers, the submission of the people, the indifference of those with power, even the neglect of those around you due to materialistic things, all of which are depicted thoroughly in the movie, I feel are still prevalent in today's society.

All in all, the movie is elegantly crafted and while it may not give you the sitting-on-the-edge-of-your-seat experience that you desire, I am certain you will appreciate it for its underlying brilliance.

Sahil Armaan Kumar, 11

CABLE COMBAT

Technology faces advances on a daily basis. But sadly, what takes technology merely twenty-four hours to achieve has taken public service broadcaster, Doordarshan more than thirty years.

Its black and white screens have screamed government propaganda since the late 1950s. What started off as an informative channel for the masses soon suffered under the influence of the government, not only causing the entire channel's regime to revolve around the incumbent's agenda but causing it to wither under certain obligations of the government that included promoting cultures from around the country, giving essential information like monsoon forecast to farmers with programs like Krishidarshan; dull concepts that the masses were clearly not interested in. Successfully boring its audience, Doordarshan was barely able to stand on its own two feet causing them to lose revenues and become a loss making enterprise. Unlike other private media channels, Doordarshan never escaped its socialist garb. With shabby and old-fashioned sets they made their intention to steer away from glamour pretty evident, only making the arrival of present day media a more refreshing change.

It became so refreshing to have a point of view that had not been influenced by the establishment. The audience is now able to receive global news and feel connected to the world through the better means of modern and slick technology and equipment the new media has been able to offer.

Yet, sadly today in terms of content, the media channels have also started towing the line on promoting government programs and initiatives to stay on the right side of the establishment so as to get political favours and more government advertising revenue.

The lines are being blurred between Doordarshan and the supposedly independent media channels causing the real losers in this scenario to be the viewers who are being forced to watch fabricated news influenced by the government's agenda.

Harnoor Singh, 10

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