

January 2025



# Indian Constitution

## Celebrating 75 Years of the Republic

### **MANN KI BAAT**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Address to the Nation



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# Prime Minister's Address



## My dear countrymen, Namaskar

Today is the first 'Mann ki Baat' of 2025. You surely must have noticed something. Every time 'Mann ki Baat' takes place on the last Sunday of the month, but this time, we are meeting a week earlier on the third Sunday instead of the fourth Sunday. As next week, 'Republic Day' is on a Sunday. I wish all countrymen a very happy 'Republic Day' in advance.

Friends, this year's 'Republic Day' is very special. It is the 75th anniversary of the Indian Republic. This year marks 75 years of the Constitution coming into force. I salute all those great personalities of the Constituent Assembly, who gave us our sacred Constitution. During the Constituent Assembly, long deliberations were held on many subjects. Those discussions, the thoughts of the members of





the Constituent Assembly, their words, are our great heritage. Today in 'Mann ki Baat' it is my endeavour to make you listen to the original voices of some great leaders.

Friends, when the Constituent Assembly embarked upon the task, Baba Saheb Ambedkar had said something very significant with regard to mutual cooperation. This Address of his is in English. I will make you listen to an excerpt of it—



*"So far as the ultimate goal is concerned, I think none of us need have any apprehensions. None of us need have any doubt, but my fear which I must express clearly is this, our difficulty, as I said, is not about the ultimate future. Our difficulty is how to make the heterogeneous mass that we have today, take a*

*decision in common and march in a cooperative way on that road which is bound to lead us to unity. Our difficulty is not with regard to the ultimate; our difficulty is with regard to the beginning."*

Friends, Baba Saheb had been emphasizing on the fact

\*\*\*\*\* ♦ \*\*\*\*\*

## Dr. B.R. Ambedkar



(14th April, 1891– 6th December, 1956)

- Knew 9 languages, including French, German, Pali and Persian.
- First Minister of Law and Justice in Independent India.
- Pursued higher education in the U.S. and the U.K. despite social barriers.

\*\*\*\*\* ♦ \*\*\*\*\*


that the Constituent Assembly should be united, have one opinion and work together for the common good. I will make you listen to another audio clip of the Constituent Assembly. This audio is of Dr. Rajendra Prasad Ji, who was the President of our Constituent Assembly. Let us listen to Dr. Rajendra Prasad Ji—



*"Our history shows us and our culture teaches us that we are and have always been peace loving. Our empire and our conquests have been of a different kind. We have never tried to shackle others in chains, be they of iron or gold. We have bound others with us by a silk thread that is stronger than iron chains but more beautiful and pleasant and that bond is of religion, culture and knowledge. We will continue to tread the same path and we have only one desire and wish; that wish is... we can help in establishing happiness and peace in the world and give the world the infallible weapons of truth and non-violence which have brought us freedom today. There is something in our life and culture that has given us the strength to survive despite the blows of time. If we keep our ideals before us, we will be able to offer a great service to the world."*

\*\*\*\*\* ♦ \*\*\*\*\*

## Dr. Rajendra Prasad



(3rd December, 1884 – 28th February, 1963)

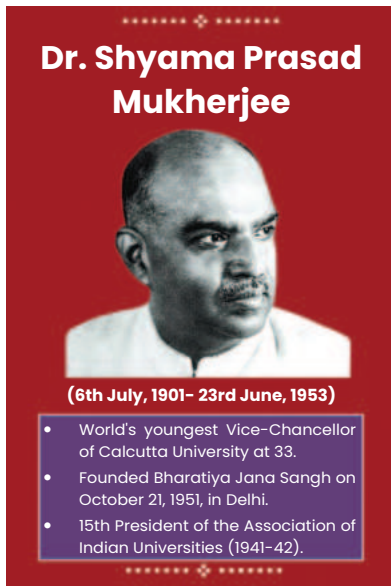
- India's first President (1950–1962).
- Founded Bihar Students Conference (1906).
- Known for simplicity and dedication to public service.

\*\*\*\*\* ♦ \*\*\*\*\*

**Friends, Rajendra Prasad ji had spoken about the country's commitment towards human values. I now make you listen to the voice of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee. He raised the issue of equality of opportunities. Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee had said—**



*"I hope that we shall go ahead with our work in spite of all difficulties and thereby help to create that great India which will be the motherland of not this community or that, not this class or that, but of every person, man, woman and child inhabiting in this great land irrespective of race, caste, creed or community. Everyone should have an*



equal opportunity so that he or she can develop himself or herself according to best talent and serve the great common motherland of India.”

**Friends,** I hope you too would have liked listening to this original audio from the debates of the Constituent Assembly. **We, the citizens of the country,** taking inspiration from these

thoughts, have to work towards building such an India that even the makers of our Constitution would be proud of.

**Friends,** a day before Republic Day, the 25th of January is National Voters’ Day. This day is important because on this day the Election Commission of India was established. Our constitution makers have accorded a very important place to our Election Commission in the Constitution and equally to people’s participation in democracy. When the first elections were held in the country in 1951-52, some people were doubtful whether the country’s democracy would survive. But our democracy proved all the apprehensions wrong – after all, India is the Mother of Democracy. In the past decades as well, the country’s democracy has strengthened and prospered.

I would also like to thank the Election Commission, which has

modernised and strengthened our voting process from time to time. The Commission has used the power of technology to give more power to the power of the people. I congratulate the Election Commission for its commitment to fair elections. **I would like to urge the countrymen to use their right to vote, always, in maximum numbers and also become a part of the country’s democratic process and strengthen this process.**

**My dear countrymen, the Maha Kumbh has commenced in Prayagraj.** An unforgettable sea of humanity, incredible visuals and an extraordinary confluence of equality and harmony! This time, many a divine alignment is also converging at the Kumbh. **This festival of Kumbh celebrates**

**the festival of unity in diversity. People from all over India and the world congregate on the sands of the Sangam. There is no discrimination, no casteism anywhere in this tradition which has been going on for thousands of years...** People from the south of India, from the east and west of India arrive here. In the Kumbh, the rich and the poor come together as one. All of them take a dip at the Sangam, dine together in the bhandaras, receive prasad – that is why the Kumbh is the Maha Kumbh of unity. The Kumbh event also tells us how our traditions bind the whole of India together. The ways of adhering to the beliefs are the same from north to south. **On the one hand, the Kumbh is organised at Prayagraj, Ujjain, Nasik and Haridwar;**



**Chunav Ka Parv, Desh ka Garv**





on the other, in the southern part, Pushkaram is organised on the banks of Godavari, Krishna, Narmada and Kaveri rivers. Both these festivals are connected with our holy rivers and their beliefs. Similarly, from Kumbakonam to Tirukkad-Yur, from Kood-Vasal to Tiruchera, there are many such temples whose traditions are connected with the Kumbh.

**Friends**, this time you must have seen that the participation of youth in the Kumbh is very extensive, and it is also true that when the young generation connects with its civilization with pride, its roots become stronger, and then its golden future is also ensured. This time we are also witnessing the digital footprints of the Kumbh on such a large scale. This global popularity of the Kumbh is a matter of pride for every Indian.

**Friends**, just a few days ago, the 'Ganga Sagar Mela' was also organised on a grand scale in West Bengal. On the auspicious occasion of Sankranti, lakhs of devotees from all over the world took a dip at this fair. '**Kumbh**',

'Pushkaram' and 'Ganga Sagar Mela' – these festivals of ours are festivals that enhance our social coalescence, harmony, unity. These festivals connect the people of India with the Indian traditions and just as our scriptures have emphasised on Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha in the world, our festivals and traditions also empower every aspect – spiritual, social, cultural and economic.

**Friends**, this month we celebrated the first anniversary of the Pran Pratishtha Parv of Ram Lalla on the day of 'Paush Shukla Dwadashi'. This year 'Paush Shukla Dwadashi' fell on the 11th of January. On this day, lakhs of Ram devotees had a darshan of Ram Lalla in Ayodhya and received his blessings. This Dwadashi of Pran Pratishtha is the Dwadashi of the re-establishment of the cultural consciousness of India. Therefore, this day of Paush Shukla Dwadashi has also become the day of Pratishtha Dwadashi in a way. While walking on the path of development, we have to preserve our heritage

and move forward taking inspiration from that.

**My dear countrymen**, in the beginning of 2025 itself, India has attained many historic achievements in the field of Space. Today, I am proud to convey that an Indian Space-Tech Startup, Bengaluru based Pixxel has successfully launched India's first private satellite constellation – 'Firefly'. This satellite constellation is the world's topmost high-resolution hyperspectral satellite constellation. This achievement has not only made India a leader in modern space technology, but is also a big step towards a Self-reliant India i.e. Aatmanirbhar Bharat. This success is a symbol of the growing strength and innovation of our private Space Sector. **On behalf of the entire country, I congratulate the team**

**of Pixxel, ISRO and IN-SPACE for this achievement.**

**Friends**, a few days ago, our scientists marked another major achievement in the Space sector. Our scientists have undertaken space docking of satellites. When two spacecrafts are connected in Space, this process is called Space Docking. This technology is important for sending supplies to Space Stations and crew missions in Space. **India has become the fourth country to have achieved this success.** Friends, our scientists are also making efforts to grow plants in Space and make them survive. For this, ISRO scientists chose seeds of cow pea. These seeds, sent on the 30th of December, germinated in Space itself. This is a very inspiring experiment which will pave the way for growing vegetables in Space





## From Docking Satellites to Cultivating Life

### India's Cosmic Innovation

in future. This shows how far-sightedly our scientists are working.

**Friends, I want to tell you about another inspiring initiative. IIT Madras' ExTeM Centre is working on new technologies for manufacturing in Space. This Centre is conducting research on technologies like 3D-printed buildings, metal foams and optical fibres in Space. This Centre is also developing revolutionary methods like concrete construction without water. This research of ExTeM will strengthen India's Gaganyaan mission and the future Space Station. This will also open new avenues of modern technology in manufacturing.**

**Friends, all these achievements are proof of how visionary India's scientists and innovators are, in providing solutions to future challenges. Today, our country is setting new benchmarks in Space**

**technology. I extend my best wishes to India's scientists, innovators and young entrepreneurs on behalf of the entire nation.**

**My dear countrymen** many a time, you must have seen pictures of amazing bonding between humans and animals; you must have heard stories of animals' loyalty as well. Whether it is a pet or a wild animal, their relationship with humans sometimes amazes us. Animals may not be able to speak, but humans can understand their feelings and their gestures very well. Animals also understand the language of love and live by it too. I want to share an example from Assam with you. There is a place in Assam called Nagaon. Nagaon is the birthplace of our country's great luminary Srimanta Shankardev Ji. This place is very beautiful. It is also the habitat to a large number of elephants. Many incidents were being noticed in this area

where herds of elephants used to destroy crops, farmers used to get upset, on account of which people of about 100 villages in the vicinity were facing hardships. But the villagers also understood the elephants' helplessness. They knew that elephants were intruding the fields to satiate their hunger, so the villagers thought of finding a solution to this. A team of villagers was formed, which was named 'Haathi Bandhu'. Haathi Bandhu, displaying their wisdom, made a unique effort on about 800 bighas of barren land. Here the villagers together planted Napier grass. Elephants like this grass very much. The result was that the elephants lessened straying towards the fields. This is a matter of great relief for thousands of villagers. This effort of theirs has been liked by the elephants as well.

**Friends,** our culture and heritage teaches us to live with love with the surrounding

animals and birds. It is a matter of great joy for all of us that in the last two months, two new Tiger Reserves have been added in our country. One of these is Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve in Chhattisgarh and the other is Ratapani Tiger Reserve in MP.

**My dear countrymen, Swami Vivekananda ji had said that only the person who is passionate about one's idea is able to achieve one's goal.** Our passion and dedication are of utmost importance to make an idea successful. The path to innovation, creativity and success is certain to come up through complete dedication and enthusiasm. **Just a few days ago, on the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda ji, I got the privilege of being a part of the 'Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue'. There I spent my whole day with young friends who had come from every corner of the country.** The youth shared





their ideas on various sectors like startups, culture, women, youth and infrastructure. This program was very memorable for me.

**Friends, just a few days ago, Startup India has completed 9 years. More than half of the startups that have been formed in our country in these 9 years are from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, and when we hear that, every Indian's heart is delighted with the fact that our StartUp culture is not limited to just big cities.** And you will be surprised to know that more than half of the startups in smaller cities are being led by our daughters. When we hear that cities like Ambala, Hisar, Kangra, Chengalpattu, Bilaspur, Gwalior and Washim are becoming centers of StartUps, the heart is filled with joy. In a State like Nagaland, the registration of StartUps has increased by more than 200% last year. Waste Management, Non-Renewable Energy, Biotechnology and

Logistics are the sectors in which the most number of Startups are being noticed. These are not conventional sectors but our young friends also think beyond the conventional & that is why they are achieving success.

**Friends,** 10 years ago when someone used to talk about entering the field of Startups, one had to listen to many kinds of taunts. Some would ask after all, what is a Startup? Others would say, that will not lead you anywhere! But see, how big a change up has come in a decade now! You too should take full advantage of the new opportunities being created in India. If you believe in yourself, your dreams will also soar to new heights.

**My dear countrymen,** work done with good intentions and selfless spirit reaches far and wide through word of mouth. And our 'Mann ki Baat' is a huge platform for that. In our vast

country, if someone is doing good work even in remote areas and lends utmost importance to one's sense of duty, this is the best platform to bring one's efforts to the fore. Deepak Nabam ji has set a unique example of the spirit of service in Arunachal Pradesh. Deepak ji runs a Living-Home here, where mentally unwell, physically challenged people and the elderly are served; drug addicts are taken care of here as well. Deepak Nabam ji, without any help, started a campaign to support the deprived people of the society, violence-affected families and homeless people. Today his service has transformed into an organization. His organization has also been honoured with many awards. The work of K. Hindumbi ji, who works as a nurse on the Kavaratti island of Lakshadweep, is also very inspiring. You will be surprised to know that she retired from government service 18 years

ago, but even today she is engaged in serving people with the same compassion and affection as she used to do earlier. The efforts of KG Mohammad ji of Lakshadweep are also amazing. The marine ecosystem of Minicoy Island is getting stronger through his hard work. He has written many songs to make people aware about the environment. He has also received the Best Folk Song Award from the Lakshadweep Sahitya Kala Academy. After retirement, KG Mohammad is also working with the museum there.

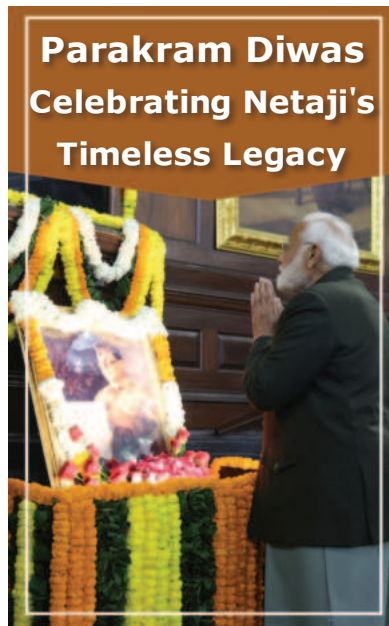
**Friends,** there is another piece of very good news from Andaman and Nicobar Islands too. Virgin coconut oil in Nicobar district has recently received the GI Tag. After the GI Tag, another new initiative has been undertaken for virgin coconut oil. Self-help groups are being formed by organizing the women associated with the production



of this oil. They are also being imparted special training in marketing and branding. This is a big step towards economically empowering our tribal communities. I am sure that in future, the virgin coconut oil of Andaman-Nicobar is going to be a newsmaker in the world and the biggest contribution in that will be of the women's self-help groups of Andaman and Nicobar.

**My dear countrymen,** imagine a scene for a moment. It is January in Kolkata. The Second World War is at its peak and anger against the British is at its peak in India. Because of this, policemen are deployed at every nook and corner of the city. The police presence is more vigilant around a house in the middle of Kolkata. Meanwhile, a man wearing a long brown coat, pants and a black hat comes out of a bungalow in the dark of the night in a car. Crossing several heavily guarded checkpoints, he reaches a railway station called Gomo. This station is now in Jharkhand. From here, he catches a train and moves on. After this, he reaches Europe via Afghanistan—and all that happens despite the impenetrable fortifications of the British rule.

**Friends,** this story may seem like a film scene to you. You may be wondering what kind of mettle this person embodied, to



display such courage! **Actually, this person is none other than our country's great personality, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. We now celebrate the 23rd of January, his birth anniversary, as 'Parakram Diwas'.** This saga related to his bravery also gives a glimpse of his Parakram. A few years ago, I went to that very house from where he escaped after dodging the British. That car of his is still present there. That experience was very special for me. **Subhas Babu was a visionary.** Courage was ingrained in his nature. Not only that, he was also a very efficient administrator. At the age of 27, he became the Chief Executive Officer of the Kolkata Corporation and after that he also took over the responsibility of Mayor. He

did many great things as an administrator as well. His efforts related to schools for children, arrangements for milk for poor children and cleanliness are remembered even today. **Netaji Subhas also had a deep connection with radio. People eagerly waited to listen to him on Azad Hind Radio, that he had established.** His speeches lent a new strength to the fight against foreign rule. News bulletins were broadcast on 'Azad Hind Radio' in English, Hindi, Tamil, Bangla, Marathi, Punjabi, Pashto and Urdu. I salute Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. **I urge the youth of the country to read as much as possible about him and constantly derive inspiration from his life.**

**Friends,** every time, this programme of 'Mann ki Baat'

connects me with the collective efforts of the nation; with the collective willpower of all of you. Every month I receive a large number of your suggestions and ideas and each time I see these ideas, my faith in the resolve of Viksit Bharat rises further. All of you should continue to make efforts to make India the best through your work. That is all for this edition of 'Mann ki Baat'. We will meet again next month with new stories of achievements, resolves and accomplishments of Indians. Thank you very much. Namaskar.

Scan the QR code to listen to 'Mann ki Baat'.





# MANN KI BAAT

*Special Mentions by Prime Minister*



# Women Architects of the Indian Constitution

“ I salute all those great personalities of the Constituent Assembly, who gave us our sacred Constitution. During the Constituent Assembly, long deliberations were held on many subjects. Those discussions, the thoughts of the members of the Constituent Assembly, their words, are our great heritage.”

–Prime Minister Narendra Modi  
(in 'Mann ki Baat' address)

“The first step towards creating the Indian Constitution began with the establishment of the Constituent Assembly in 1946. The assembly was composed of elected representatives from the provinces, princely states, and other territories, and its primary responsibility was to formulate the Constitution for the newly independent nation.”

– A Surya Prakash

Former Chairman, Prasari Bharati

The Constituent Assembly was formed on December 6, 1946, for the monumental task of drafting the Constitution of India. The assembly was initially composed of 389 members, later reduced to 299, including 15 women members. Coming from diverse backgrounds, these 15 leading members made remarkable contributions not just during the drafting of the Constitution, but before and after that too.

Among them were politicians, freedom-fighters, and lawyers who debated and strongly put forth their views and opinions in the Assembly.

**Ammu Swaminathan** was a fearless social worker and politician. She played a key role in setting up Women's Indian Association



(WIA), which advocated for addressing social issues like child marriage and devadasi practice; and demanded voting rights for women.

She emphasised that the Constitution rests on the pillars of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles, ensuring freedom of worship and equal rights for women.

**Annie Mascarene** was a prominent leader in the movement for integrating princely states into India. She



was among the first women to join the Travancore State Congress and later served on the Constituent Assembly's select committee for the Hindu Code Bill. She was the first woman from Kerala to be elected as an MP.

**Dakshayani Velayudhan**, the only Dalit woman in the Constituent Assembly, emphasised the need for dignity and equality for all citizens, urging



India to move beyond caste-based discrimination. Her speeches often highlighted the importance of a united nation built on democratic principles and equal rights.

**Begum Aizaz Rasul** was the only Muslim woman member of the Constituent Assembly. She discarded the purdah in 1937 to win her first election. A passionate advocate of women's sports, she played a key role in popularising women's hockey.



**Durgabai Deshmukh** was a social reformer and freedom fighter who actively participated in Mahatma Gandhi's Salt Satyagraha and was imprisoned multiple times by British authorities. She emphasised the need for Family Courts in India after studying similar systems abroad.



**Hansa Jivraj Mehta** was a committed advocate for women's rights who insisted

on replacing "all men are created equal" with "all human beings are



created equal" in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the United Nations. On August 15, 1947, she presented the national flag to the Constituent Assembly on behalf of the women of India.

**Kamla Chaudhry** was a writer and political activist who participated in the Civil Disobedience



Movement in 1930, and was imprisoned by the British. She served as a member of the Provincial Government after the adoption of the Constitution. She wrote on the themes of gender discrimination, exploitation of peasants and poor condition of widows.

**Leela Roy** was a politician and reformer, and a close associate of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. She extensively worked for girls'



education. She resigned from the Assembly in protest against the partition of India.

**Malati Choudhury** was a prominent social reformer, freedom fighter, and Gandhian leader. She



actively participated in the Bhoodan Movement led by Vinoba Bhave. She founded the Utkal Congress Socialist Party (1938), Naba Bharat Yuvak Sangha (1934), and Baji Rout Chhatravas (1948).

**Purnima Banerjee** was a fearless activist and a key member of the Congress in Allahabad. In



the Assembly, she contributed to discussions on the Preamble, preventive detention, and the qualifications of Rajya Sabha members.

**Rajkumari Amrit Kaur** was instrumental in establishing AIIMS and the Lady Irwin College as India's first



woman cabinet minister. She contributed to shaping the provisions on public health in the Directive Principles of State Policy.

**Renuka Ray** was a resolute advocate for women's inheritance rights and made significant contributions to debates on minority and women's rights in the Assembly.



She also played an important role in the All-India Women's Conference.

**Sarojini Naidu**, known as the 'Nightingale of India', was a poet, activist, and freedom fighter.



She became the President of the Indian National Congress and later served as the first Governor of the United Provinces. She was arrested multiple times during the freedom struggle.

**Sucheta Kriplani** is an integral figure in the Quit India Movement who made history as India's first woman Chief

Minister. Her rendition of Vande Mataram during the Independence Session of the Assembly remains legendary.



**Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit** was a diplomat and political leader who became the first woman President of the United Nations General Assembly (1953). She represented India at the UN and was a key voice in projecting India's image as a newly independent democratic nation on the global stage.



**Conclusion**

These 15 women architects of the Constituent Assembly laid the foundation for a just and inclusive democracy. Their courage, determination, and intellect not only shaped India's Constitution but also paved the way for generations of women to actively participate in the nation's political and social development.

Their legacy continues to inspire the nation.

# The Making of the Indian Constitution: Legacy and Impact



**A Surya Prakash**

Former Chairman, Prasara

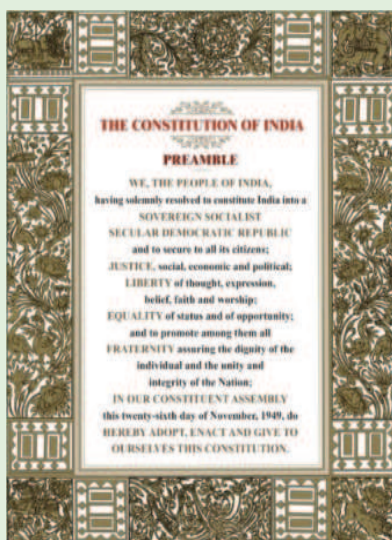
Bharati

The Constitution of India's Preamble reads:

WE, THE PEOPLE OF INDIA, having solemnly resolved to constitute India into a SOVEREIGN SOCIALIST SECULAR DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC and to secure to all its citizens: JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and of opportunity; and to promote among them all FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity

and integrity of the Nation;

IN OUR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY this twenty-sixth day of November, 1949, do HEREBY ADOPT, ENACT AND GIVE TO OURSELVES THIS CONSTITUTION.



Such is the legacy of the Indian Constitution that it stands as a monumental document which not only defines the governance structure of India but also embodies the aspirations of a diverse, democratic, and pluralistic society. Its creation, shaped by the confluence of various historical, social, and political forces, marks one of the most

significant achievements in the nation's modern history. In short, it epitomises the truth that India is civilisationally democratic and in harmony with diversity.

The process of drafting the Constitution, which spanned over two years, eleven months, and eighteen days, was an extraordinary feat of constitutional engineering, undertaken by the Constituent Assembly of India, which was entrusted with the task of framing the law of the land post-independence.

The Indian independence movement, led by exemplary figures such as Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel, and Dr BR Ambedkar, laid the groundwork for the need for a Constitution that would be reflective of India's values, aspirations, and historical experiences. Upon gaining independence in 1947, India was in a state of transition, with colonial rule giving way to self-governance. The question of how best to structure the Indian state to ensure justice, equality, and liberty for all citizens became a pressing concern.

The first step towards creating the Indian Constitution began with the establishment of the Constituent Assembly in 1946. The assembly was composed of elected representatives from

the provinces, princely states, and other territories, and its primary responsibility was to formulate the Constitution for the newly independent nation. The assembly was charged with the difficult task of reconciling the diverse ethnic, linguistic, and religious groups within India while ensuring the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms for all its citizens.

One of the most pivotal figures in the creation of the Indian Constitution was Dr BR Ambedkar, who served as the Chairman of the Drafting Committee. His leadership and vision were integral to shaping the final document. Dr Ambedkar's advocacy for the rights of marginalised groups was reflected in the Constitution's provisions for social justice, affirmative action, and the abolition of untouchability.

Additionally, the Constitution enshrined the principles of equality, liberty, and fraternity, which were crucial in addressing the long-standing social and political inequities faced by various sections of Indian society. As Dr. Ambedkar observed while summing up the debate on the Constitution in the Constituent Assembly on November 25, 1949: "These principles of liberty, equality and fraternity are not

to be treated as separate items in a trinity. They form a union of trinity in the sense that to divorce one from the other is to defeat the very purpose of democracy. Liberty cannot be divorced from equality, equality cannot be divorced from liberty. Nor can liberty and equality be divorced from fraternity. "Without fraternity, equality and liberty will be no deeper than coats of paint".

Further, he had warned mere political equality would not do. We would need to strive for equality in the social and economic planes as well.

The text of some provisions in the Indian Constitution is drawn from various international sources incorporating elements from the British, American, Irish, and Canadian systems of governance. But the marma or the core values and essence is derived from Bharat's civilisational experience. For example, this land and its people have lived in harmony amidst diversity and plurality of thought from the days of the Rig Veda which said: "Ekam Sat, Vipra Bahudha Vadanti", meaning the truth is one, but the wise perceive it differently. In other words, the Constitution speaks the language of India's

cultural heritage and is uniquely tailored to the Indian context, with provisions that considered the country's historical, cultural, and social realities.

Dr Ambedkar specifically mentioned India's democratic heritage in the Constituent Assembly when he referred to democratic and parliamentary practices prevailing in the Hindu kingdoms and Buddhist Sanghas over 2500 years ago.

"It is not that India did not know what is Democracy. There

was a time when India was studded with republics, and even where there were monarchies, they were either elected or limited.

They were never absolute. It is not that India did not know Parliaments or Parliamentary Procedure. A study of the Buddhist Bhikshu Sanghas discloses that not only there were Parliaments—for the Sanghas were nothing but Parliaments – but the Sanghas knew and observed all the rules of Parliamentary Procedure known to modern times. They had rules regarding seating arrangements, rules regarding Motions, Resolutions, Quorum, Whip, Counting of Votes, Voting by Ballot, Censure Motion, Regularization, Res Judicata, etc. Although these rules of



Parliamentary Procedure were applied by the Buddha to the meetings of the Sanghas, he must have borrowed them from the rules of the Political Assemblies functioning in the country in his time".

These observations of his will help us clear many misconceptions about where and when we derived our democratic and parliamentary traditions and respect for plurality which is central to the democratic ethos.

Therefore, the values embedded in the Constitution emerge from the incorporation of fundamental rights, directive principles of state policy, and the system of federal governance were all reflective of India's democratic ideals. The idea of a republican form of government dates back to four or five millennia when India had several republics and everyone including the head of state was elected. Further, the Directive Principles of State Policy in Part IV of the Constitution which nudges the government to adopt policies to help the poor, the working class, the deprived sections of society, women and children can be found in Kautilya's Artha Shastra dating back to the I-III century AD.

The impact of the Indian Constitution has been far-reaching and profound. Upon

its adoption on January 26, 1950, it provided a sense of stability and order, offering a legal framework for the governance of the nation. The Constitution has served as the bedrock for India's democratic institutions, guiding the evolution of its political, social, and legal systems. Over the decades, the Constitution has been a powerful tool in advancing the cause of social justice, empowering marginalised groups, and ensuring the protection of individual rights. To conclude, the making of the Indian Constitution represents a legacy of vision, commitment and consensus-building. Its impact has been transformative, shaping the trajectory of India's development as a sovereign, democratic republic. The Constitution continues to serve as a dynamic and evolving document, adapting to the changing needs of Indian society while remaining rooted in the foundational principles of justice, equality, and freedom. The vision of the framers of the Constitution remains as relevant today as it was in 1950, providing a timeless guide for the future of the nation and ensuring the unity and integrity of India.

# Republic Day 2025

Republic Day Parade 2025 was an exceptional blend of India's cultural diversity and military prowess, with special focus on 75 years of adopting of the constitution and Jan Bhagidari. The President of the Republic of Indonesia, Mr Prabowo Subianto was the Chief Guest of the parade.

This year, 31 tableaux from various States, Union Territories, and Central Government Ministries/ Departments participated, showcasing the theme "Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas."



# Art of Calligraphy in Constitution of India

The art in the Constitution of India honours the nation's rich socio-cultural heritage. The hand-painted illustrations were created by Nandalal Bose, Principal of Kala Bhavan, Santiniketan, and his team.

## National Emblem and the Slogan of Satyameva Jayate



The Constitution begins with an illustration of the National Emblem and the slogan 'Satyameva Jayate' (Truth Alone Triumphs). The emblem, Symbolising national pride, is based on the Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath, now housed in the Sarnath Museum near Varanasi.

**Artist:** Dinanath Bhargava

## Mohenjodaro Seal



**Artist:** Kripal Singh Shekhawat and Beohar Rammanohar Sinha

The first part of the constitution starts with a popular seal-mark, the bull from the Harappan civilisation. The bull seal is a recurrent motif in objects of the time.

Objects like this seal, validate the significance of the historical past, endorse the idea of trade and commerce and cue a sense of progress and evolution.

## Gurukul Scene from Vedic Ashram



**Artist:**  
Kripal Amala  
Sarkar and  
Nandalal Bose

Part II of the Constitution, which deals with citizenship, opens with the illustration of an ashram with ascetic figures offering prayers and performing yajnas. The scene appears nestled in a verdant context with the presence of many trees.

## Scene from Ramayana



**Artist:**  
Jamuna Sen

Shri Ram, Sita Mata, & Shri Lakshman, symbolising the victory of dharma over adharma, are depicted in a scene from the Ramayana in Part III of the Constitution that deals with the critical component of Fundamental Rights.

# Inclusivity in Voting

## How India Ensures Representation for All

“ I would like to thank the Election Commission, which has modernised and strengthened our voting process from time to time. The Commission has used the power of technology to give more power to the power of the people. I congratulate the Election Commission for its commitment to fair elections. I would like to urge the countrymen to use their right to vote, always, in maximum numbers and also become a part of the country's democratic process and strengthen this process. ”

—Prime Minister Narendra Modi  
(in 'Mann ki Baat' address)



### Inclusivity in Voting: How India Ensures Representation for All

On January 25th, the eve of Republic Day, India celebrates National Voters' Day, commemorating the establishment of the Election Commission of India. As highlighted in the Prime Minister's 'Mann ki Baat', this day underscores the pivotal role of the Election Commission in upholding democracy. Since the first elections in 1951-52, India's democracy has evolved into an inspiring example of people-driven governance, for the world. As the Prime Minister aptly noted, democracy thrives when every individual exercises their right to vote.

India, as the Mother of Democracy, places great emphasis on inclusivity in its electoral process.

Recognising that true democracy requires representation for all, the country has implemented policies and initiatives ensuring that marginalised, differently-abled, and remote communities

are not left behind.

### Educating the Citizens

Initiatives like SVEEP (Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation), a flagship program of the Election Commission of India, were launched in 2009 for voter education, spreading voter awareness, and promoting voter literacy in India. Since its inception, it has been working towards preparing India's electors and equipping them with basic knowledge related to the electoral process, especially those from marginalised communities.

### Ensuring Access for Differently-Abled Voters

The Election Commission has prioritised making elections accessible for Persons with Disabilities (PwDs). Braille-enabled electronic voting machines (EVMs), ramps at polling stations, and sign

language interpreters are just a few of the measures ensuring their participation.

The Election Commission also provides facilities like wheelchairs, pick-and-drop services, and accessible toilets at every polling booth during elections, simplifying the process for differently-abled citizens.

### Inclusion of Senior Citizens

For the first time in Lok Sabha history, the Election Commission of India introduced a Vote-from-Home facility for senior citizens aged 85+ and Persons with Disabilities (PwDs) during the 2024 General Elections. This groundbreaking initiative benefitted over 81 lakh senior voters and 90 lakh PwDs across the country, ensuring greater inclusivity in the electoral process.

Democracy in the Heart of the Forest Is another remarkable





demonstration of India's commitment to democracy, a polling booth was set up deep inside Gujarat's Gir forest for a lone voter, Mahant Haridas, a temple priest. Election officials undertook a two-day journey through rough terrain to ensure he could cast his ballot, showcasing the Election Commission's dedication to ensuring every vote counts.

#### Youth as the Pillars of Democracy

With a large youth population, efforts to engage first-time voters are crucial. The Mera Pehla Vote Desh Ke liye campaign, initiated by the Government of India, encouraged young voters to register and participate in elections, featuring interactive drives, voter education programs, and motivational

messages to highlight the importance of their first vote in shaping India's future.

#### Pink Booths in Elections

The Election Commission's initiative to set up 'Pink Booths,' all-women managed polling stations, aims to promote gender equality and enhance women's participation in the electoral process. In the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections in Odisha, the commission established 10% of polling booths as 'all-women centers' in every assembly seat. This move follows successful trials in states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, and West Bengal, where women-run booths have led to increased female voter turnout and empowerment.

#### Leveraging Technology

Voter registration has been simplified through online portals, and initiatives like the

cVIGIL app allow voters to report election-related malpractices. Additionally, live webcasting at polling stations ensure transparency and build trust in the process.

India's democracy thrives on the principle of representation for all. Through persistent efforts to include every citizen—regardless of their physical ability, location, or gender—the Election Commission has set a global example.

As we celebrate Chunav ka Parv, let us remember the Prime Minister's call to vote in maximum numbers and become active participants in the democratic process. Together, let us continue to build a stronger, more inclusive democracy, where every vote matters and every voice is heard.



# The Evolution of the Voting Process in India

## VOTE!

India, the world's largest democracy, has seen its voting process evolve significantly over the decades. Here's a timeline capturing the key milestones:

From Ballot Boxes to Electronic Voting Machines

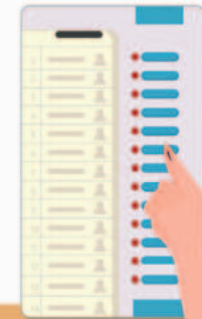
### 1951-52: The First General Elections

India's first general elections marked the beginning of its democratic journey. Voters cast their votes using ballot boxes, where ballot papers were manually dropped into sealed boxes designated for each candidate, identified by their election symbol.



### 1982: The First Trial of EVMs

Electronic Voting Machines (EVMs) were tested for the first time in Paravur Assembly Constituency in Kerala. However, legal and technical hurdles prevented their widespread adoption.



### 1962: Introduction of the Marking System

From the 3rd General Elections in 1962, the Election Commission introduced the marking system of voting. Voters used a common ballot paper listing the names and symbols of all candidates. They marked their choice using an arrow cross-mark rubber stamp, and the marked ballots were then placed into a common ballot box.



### 1990s: The Era of Transition

The Election Commission of India (ECI) introduced EVMs on a larger scale, starting with experimental use in select constituencies during the 1998 Assembly Elections in Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan.

### 2019: Full VVPAT Coverage

For the 2019 General Elections, VVPAT machines were deployed alongside EVMs in all constituencies, ensuring greater voter confidence in the electoral process.



### 2013: Introduction of Voter-Verified Paper Audit Trail (VVPAT)

To enhance transparency, the VVPAT system was introduced in select constituencies. It allowed voters to verify that their vote was cast correctly. The ECI gradually expanded its use in subsequent elections.



### 2004: Nationwide EVM Implementation

In a historic move, India became the first country to conduct its entire general elections using EVMs in 2004. This marked a shift towards faster, more reliable, and tamper-proof elections.

### Future Innovations

The Election Commission continues exploring new technologies like remote voting systems and blockchain-based voting to make elections even more inclusive and accessible for India's vast and diverse population.

India's journey from ballot boxes to EVMs showcases its commitment to strengthening democracy through innovation and adaptation. Each step reflects the nation's dedication to ensuring free, fair, and transparent elections for its citizens.

# How Rivers in India are Connecting Spirituality and People

“The ways of adhering to the beliefs are the same from north to south. On the one hand, the Kumbh is organised at Prayagraj, Ujjain, Nasik and Haridwar; on the other, in the southern part, Pushkaram is organised on the banks of Godavari, Krishna, Narmada and Kaveri rivers. Both these festivals are connected with our holy rivers and their beliefs.”

—Prime Minister Narendra Modi  
(in 'Mann ki Baat' address)



“When Indra slew the demon, he removed the cloud covering the sun—the source of water. The liberated rivers ran upon the earth like mother cows, eager to suckle their young.”  
Rig Veda 1.61.10

India is a land where nature and spirituality intertwine seamlessly, and rivers hold a sacred place in this connection. These water bodies are not just sources of life and sustenance but are also deeply embedded in the religious, cultural, and social fabric of the country. From the sacred Ganga to the mighty Brahmaputra, rivers in India serve as divine entities, pilgrimage sites, and centers of human civilization.

Throughout history, great civilizations flourished along the banks of mighty rivers, which provided abundant water for agriculture. This symbiotic relationship reinforced a cultural ethos of reverence and gratitude towards rivers, considering them as nurturing mothers. The Mesopotamians thrived by the Tigris, the Egyptians by the Nile and Euphrates, and the Chinese by the Huang He. In India, the

Indus Valley Civilization emerged along the Indus, while the Vedic civilisation prospered along the Ganga. Given the vital role rivers played in sustaining life, it is no surprise that Hindu mythology reveres them as sacred, living entities with divine powers.

The Rigveda's early hymns frequently praise the Indus and the Saraswati, while later ones often glorify the Ganga. Hindu texts frequently mention the concept of Sapta Sindhu, or the seven sacred rivers; the most commonly cited are the Indus, Saraswati, Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Narmada, and Cauvery.

One story from the Rigveda recounts how the Danava Vritra, the embodiment of drought, imprisoned the rivers. To free them, Indra waged a battle

against Vritra for 360 days.

Ultimately, he shattered Vritra's 99 fortresses and struck him down with Vajra, a thunderbolt forged from the bones of Rishi Dadhichi.

In Hindu mythology, some rivers are considered incarnations of divine beings. The Kosi River, once known as Kausiki, is believed to be the transformed form of Satyawati after her death. Satyawati, the elder sister of the revered Rishi Vishwamitra, belonged to the Kushak dynasty. Similarly, the Ganga is personified as a goddess and, in her earthly form, was the wife of King Shantanu and the mother of Bhishma.

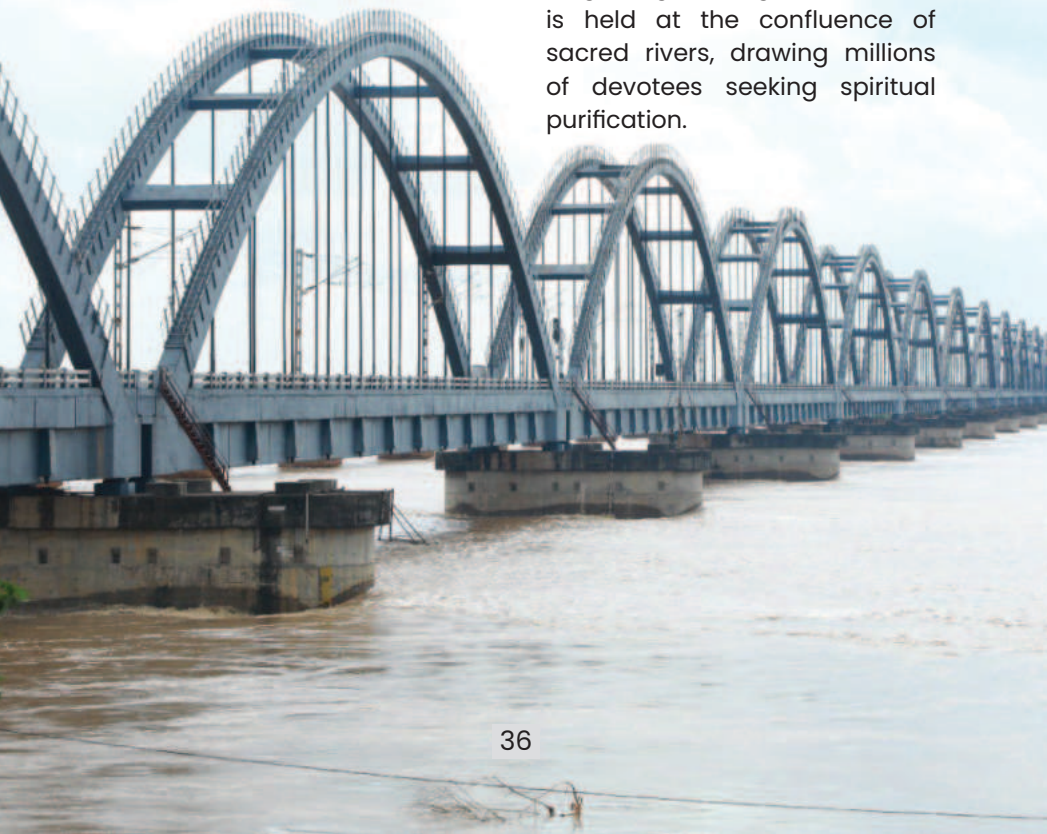
According to Hindu mythology, the Ganges is believed to have descended from heaven to purify the souls of the dead and provide





liberation (moksha). Pilgrims flock to riverbanks to perform rituals, take holy dips, and seek blessings. The idea that rivers cleanse sins and bring salvation strengthens the spiritual connection between people and water bodies.

Many major pilgrimage sites in India are located along rivers. Cities such as Varanasi, Haridwar, Prayagraj, and Rishikesh owe their spiritual significance to the Ganges. The Kumbh Mela, one of the largest religious gatherings in the world, is held at the confluence of sacred rivers, drawing millions of devotees seeking spiritual purification.



Rituals like cremation on the ghats of Varanasi and offering prayers at the banks demonstrate the integral role rivers play in religious practices.

Numerous festivals in India, for example, the Chhath Puja, dedicated to the Sun God, the Pushkar Mela, held on the banks of the Pushkar Lake, and many more, are organised around and in rivers, reflecting their significance in Indian traditions. These festivals enhance social coalescence, harmony, and unity by bringing people together in collective celebrations of faith and tradition.

The reverence for rivers also brings with it a sense of duty

towards their conservation.

Many spiritual leaders and environmentalists advocate for the protection of rivers from pollution and degradation. Campaigns such as the Namami Gange project aim to restore the purity of the Ganges, emphasising that taking care of these rivers is both a spiritual and ecological responsibility. The belief that harming rivers equates to disrespecting divinity reinforces efforts to preserve these vital water bodies, as the rivers in India are much more than physical entities; they are bridges connecting spirituality, culture, and human life.

# The Divine Rivers

## Festivals that Bind a Nation

*"Kumbh', 'Pushkaram' and 'Ganga Sagar Mela' – these festivals of ours are festivals that enhance our social coalescence, harmony, unity. These festivals connect the people of India with the Indian traditions and just as our scriptures have emphasised on Dharma, Artha, Kama, Moksha in the world. Our festivals and traditions also empower every aspect – spiritual, social, cultural and economic."*

**PM Modi in his 118th 'Mann ki Baat' address**

Festivals celebrated around rivers in India hold deep cultural, religious, and ecological significance. Rivers are considered sacred and are often personified as deities in Hinduism, believed to purify the soul and sustain life. Many festivals revolve around expressing gratitude, seeking blessings, and performing rituals along riverbanks.

### Kumbh



Held four times within a 12-year cycle, the Kumbh Mela rotates among four sacred locations in India: Haridwar on the Ganges, Ujjain on the Shipra, Nashik along the Godavari, and Prayagraj at the confluence of the Ganges, Yamuna, and the mythical Sarasvati.

### Pushkaram

Pushkaram is a festival celebrated in India once every 12 years, dedicated to worshipping the 12 sacred rivers. Associated rivers are: Ganga, Yamuna, Godavari, Krishna, Kaveri, Bhima, Tapti, Narmada, Saraswati, Tungabhadra, Sindhu and, Pranrita.



### Gangasagar Mela



Gangasagar Mela is a yearly Hindu pilgrimage and is held at the meeting point of the Ganges River and the Bay of Bengal on Sagar Island in West Bengal, India. It is the second-largest gathering of devotees at a sacred confluence, following the Kumbh Mela.

### Chhath Puja

Chhath Puja is an ancient Hindu festival dedicated to the worship of Surya, the Sun God, and his consort Usha, also known as Chhathi Maiya. It is primarily observed in the Indian states of Bihar, Jharkhand, and eastern Uttar Pradesh, as well as in Nepal's Madhesh region.



### Ganga Dussehra



Ganga Dussehra celebrates the descent of the sacred river Ganga from heaven to Earth. It is observed on the tenth day (Dashami) of the waxing moon in the Hindu month of Jyeshtha (May–June). Devotees take a holy dip in the Ganges, believing it washes away sins and grants salvation.

# India's Space Milestone

## Docking Satellites and Growing Plants in Space



**Dr V. Narayanan**  
Secretary, Department of Space,  
Chairman, Space Commission  
Chairman, ISRO

The Government of India has recently outlined an expanded vision for the Indian space programme during the Amrit Kaal that envisages an Indian Space Station (Bharatiya Antariksh Station) by 2035 and Indian Landing on the Moon by 2040. An indispensable technology in accomplishing such complex and challenging missions is the capability in the field of space docking. At a very broad level, it is the ability to bring together two separate

spacecraft such that they continue in orbit as a single entity. The expertise in such a technology paves the way for building space infrastructure one mission at a time.

Space docking is undoubtedly a very challenging endeavour although it may look pretty straightforward in videos. What is to be appreciated is that the two spacecraft that are to be docked would be travelling at around 27000 km/hr, orbiting the earth every 90 minutes. Even the minutest error can result in missing the opportunity to dock. This is because, unlike bringing together two objects along a straight line, the spacecraft movement is entirely different. The movement along the three axes is coupled, and any residual disturbance in one axis would affect the other. Hence, the alignment of the spacecrafts with respect to each other has to be within very strict tolerances. It is essential that both the spacecraft should be in nearly perfect harmony vis-à-vis their velocity and trajectory. The capability to dock hence requires clockwork-like precision from all the systems without any room for error.

ISRO's journey for docking capability started with the SPADEX mission. It was conceived as a foundational demonstration with an objective to progressively build space docking capability. The demonstration required meticulous mission planning and development of a host of technologies and multiple associated challenges. SPADEX spacecrafts named Spacecraft-A (SDX-01) and Spacecraft-B (SDX-02), each with a mass of approximately 220 kg, were launched from First Launch Pad, Sriharikota, by PSLV to a precise orbit of 475 km altitude at 55-degree inclination on December 30th, 2024.

The key pillars to accomplish the docking are accurate navigation, advanced sensors and guidance system, and the docking system. Together these systems would ensure that the spacecrafts are perfectly aligned and measure distances in real time for docking to

happen. The mission was planned with multiple waypoints where the spacecrafts were held together at a priori determined distances. During the final phase, the spacecrafts are brought further close to each other after being captured and then finally form the composite spacecraft. Various challenges were faced in each phase of the docking, and each of the issues was meticulously addressed, and the spacecraft were successfully docked on January 16th, 2025. India, thus, became one among a few countries to demonstrate this complex technology.

The successful demonstration of the in-space docking experiment is a forerunner for autonomous docking and crucial for India's future missions for assembling modules of space stations for BAS, for transporting crew and supplies to these stations, and for Chandrayaan-4 for bringing the samples back to Earth orbit,



where the modules will dock with a re-entry module designed to withstand Earth's atmosphere.

In the context of global missions seeking to establish new space stations, lunar bases and interplanetary human exploration, the essential docking technology will enable our country to be at par with the international space trends. It has bestowed greater flexibility in mission planning and also would pave the way for increased collaborations in very complex and challenging missions that continue to expand the horizon. These complex technology missions pave the way for leveraging international partnerships to exchange expertise and expand applications of docking



technology in satellite servicing, resupply missions and deep-space explorations in the global space arena. For short-duration human spaceflights, food and water for the crew are transported from the earth. However, for long duration flights, such as in space stations, it is desirable to cultivate food materials in orbit. For interplanetary missions, creating one's own food is an absolute necessity, as replenishment from the ground is not practical. One major breakthrough with respect to experiments on growing plants in space conducted by ISRO was achieved in ISRO's PSLV-C60. In this specific experiment, aptly titled 'Compact Research Module for Orbital Plant Studies (CROPS)', ISRO has successfully demonstrated seed germination, plant growth and its sustenance in space.

The CROPS module was designed as a fully automated system and was accommodated in the PSLV PS4 Orbital Experimental Module (POEM). As the first phase of CROPS, a 5 to 7-day experiment was conducted in POEM to demonstrate seed germination and plant sustenance till the two-leaf stage in a microgravity environment. The experiment was envisaged to grow 8 numbers of cowpea seeds in a closed box environment with active thermal control. Cowpea

(*Vigna unguiculata*) is selected as it contains 25% protein several vitamins and minerals. It is a fast-growing, drought-tolerant legume, which can thrive in various soil types and is widely used in food preparations.

Various measurements, including camera imaging, O and CO concentration, RH, 22 temperature, and soil moisture monitoring, were also built into the module. Temperature and pressure were automatically maintained within the module and at frequent intervals a measured quantity of water was injected into the soil. The seed germination was observed on the fourth day of the experiment. Later images showed the formation of green leaves, indicating successful commencement of photosynthesis. The impact of the space environment on its yield and growth is also being studied.

As we move towards setting up our own Bharatiya Antariksh Station (BAS), in situ plant cultivation is a critical technology we need to master. Having food production on board would help the crew members to reduce their dependence on Earth. There are many other collateral benefits as well, due to plant cultivation onboard. They consume carbon dioxide and release oxygen due to photosynthesis, controlling humidity also in the process. These processes help in managing the cabin environment. In addition, having green plants in the space habitats creates much better ambience and creates a very positive psychological impact on the crew during all phases of spaceflight.



# Beyond Gravity

## India's Leap into the Future of Space-Tech

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Friends, all these achievements are proof of how visionary India's scientists and innovators are, in providing solutions to future challenges. Today, our country is setting new benchmarks in space technology. I extend my best wishes to India's scientists, innovators and young entrepreneurs on behalf of the entire nation.

—Prime Minister Narendra Modi  
(in 'Mann ki Baat' address)



India's space sector is soaring to unprecedented heights, driven by groundbreaking innovations and a thriving private ecosystem. From the successful launch of Pixxel's 'Firefly'—India's first private hyperspectral satellite constellation—to ISRO's remarkable feat in space docking and experiments in growing plants beyond Earth, the nation is rapidly cementing its position as a global space-tech leader. Adding to this momentum, IIT Madras's ExTeM Centre is pioneering futuristic manufacturing technologies for space missions. These advancements are not just milestones in scientific progress but also a testament to India's commitment to self-reliance and innovation in space exploration.



”  
The special thing about the Fireflies is that they are the world's highest resolution hyperspectral satellites. Hyperspectral data enables us to see things in a 50 times richer detail per image compared to normal satellites. For example, if you are looking at an agricultural farmland, you will be able to identify not just the fact that it's a farm, but be able to identify what are the soil nutrients; if there is any crop disease or pest infestation.



— Awais Ahmed, Founder & CEO, Pixxel Space



”  
One of the nice things about space technologies is that you're actually thinking very differently. For the development of technologies on earth, we have all the resources around us, like water and other materials. But boundaries in space are very different, for which we have to think in a different way. For example, we will develop new technologies which we have never thought of.

—Dr Sathyan Subbiah, Professor, Department of Mechanical Engineering, IIT Madras



# Tiger Reserves of India

## Shining Example of Wildlife Conservation



India is known worldwide for its lush, dense forests and the countless animals inhabiting them. The forests in India are the natural habitat of tigers, and to protect them, many

Tiger Reserves have been set up in the country. Under 'Project Tiger,' which started in 1973, there has been a significant increase in the population of tigers. While there were only 1,411 tigers in India in 2006, their numbers increased to 3,167 in 2022.

Today there are 56 Tiger Reserves in India. In the last two months, two new Tiger Reserves, Guru Ghasidas-Tamor-Pingla Tiger Reserve (Chhattisgarh) and Ratapani Tiger Reserve (Madhya Pradesh) have been added. Ghasidas-Tamor-Pingla Tiger Reserve is Chhattisgarh's second Tiger Reserve, spread over 2,829 square kilometers. The area of Ratapani Tiger Reserve, which was already the home of tigers, has now been officially declared a Tiger Reserve.

Our culture and heritage guide us to live harmoniously with the animals and birds around us. In this context, the declaration of these new Tiger Reserves makes it amply clear that India is constantly trying to protect its wildlife.

Corbett National Park in Uttarakhand was established in 1936 and is the country's oldest national park. The dense green forests, flowing rivers, and mountains here are the ideal habitat for tigers.

If you are fortunate, you can see tigers roaming freely here during the jungle safari.

Kanha National Park of Madhya Pradesh is very famous. This is the same forest that inspired Rudyard Kipling's iconic novel 'The Jungle Book.' Apart from tigers, deer, leopards, and wild dogs can also be seen in the forests here.

Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve is also in Madhya Pradesh, known for inhabiting the highest number of tigers. The forest here is dotted with hills and old forts, which makes its view very panoramic.

Tadoba-Andhari Tiger Reserve is the oldest and largest tiger reserve in Maharashtra. It is considered one of the best places to see tigers. The dry and open forests here make it easier to see tigers during safari.

Bandipur Tiger Reserve of Karnataka in South India is famous for elephants and tigers. The green foliage and tranquil environment of this Reserve makes it distinct.

Manas National Park in the Assam state of North-East India is also a UNESCO World Heritage site. Along with tigers, elephants and one-horned rhinoceros are also found here. This forest, located near the Manas river, is known for its unique beauty.

'Project Tiger' was launched in India in 1973, and today, it has achieved an unusual degree of success. India is home to 75% of the world's tigers. As a result of the conservation efforts of the government and the people, the number of tigers is continuously increasing today.

Tigers are not just animals but they are the splendour and grandeur of our forests. If we do not take steps to conserve them, the ecological balance of the forests will be disturbed. That is why we should make every possible effort to save tigers and the forests which they inhabit. If we succeed in this, the coming generations will surely be able to hear the roar of big cats and enjoy their magnificent beauty.



# Convergence of Nature and Progress

## Elephants of Assam and coconuts of Nicobar become symbols of change

Our culture teaches us to maintain a balance between man and nature. We consider the environment and wildlife as resources and a significant part of life. This spirit is reflected in the inspiring stories of Assam and Andaman-Nicobar, where communities have come together and set a new direction.

The Hati-Bondhu group in Nagaon, Assam, has solved the problem of conflict between farmers and elephants. They grew Napier grass on 800 bighas of barren land, which provided food to the elephants and saved the farmers' crops. It is an excellent example of the co-existence of man and wildlife.

Self Help Groups in Andaman and Nicobar are making women self-reliant. After Virgin coconut oil acquired the GI tag, women are now exporting their products to the global market. These efforts are examples of conservation and empowerment, manifesting collective efforts' power.



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The tribal people have played a pivotal role in the success of the Virgin coconut oil initiative. Their faith in the healing power of virgin coconut oil has been instrumental. With the oil reaching the market, its production is set to increase. The tribal people's understanding that there are buyers for this oil has boosted their confidence. We can take this initiative further with the government's support. The Prime Minister's discussion in 'Mann ki Baat' has been a source of great joy. It has increased our hope that we, the tribal people, can earn from our traditional knowledge and generate income for our families.

Rasheed Yusoof  
Head of tribal council

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In a remote area, we are trying to protect crops and elephants. The Prime Minister is also aware of this endeavor. We thank the Honorable Prime Minister on behalf of 'Hati Bondhu.' The habitat of elephants has suffered a lot. This effort of Hati-Bondhu to reduce the conflict between elephants and humans can become a model for the whole of India... If we keep elephants safe, other animals will inevitably be safe.



Binod Dulu Bora, Field  
Director, Hati-Bondhu



# Startup India

## 9 years of transforming the nation's entrepreneurial landscape

“ Friends, just a few days ago, Startup India has completed 9 years. More than half of the startups that have been formed in our country in these 9 years are from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, and when we hear that, every Indian's heart is delighted with the fact that our Startup culture is not limited to just big cities.”

—Prime Minister Narendra Modi  
(in 'Mann ki Baat' address)

India, a nation with 65% of its population under 35, needed a structured platform to channel entrepreneurial aspirations. On August 15, 2015, Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the 'Startup India' initiative, which was formally launched on January 16, 2016. His vision was to create job providers rather than job seekers, a vision that has since transformed India's startup ecosystem. Today, India boasts over 1.5 lakh startups and more than 118 unicorns.

### Evolution of India's Startup

The success of Startup India stems from strategic policies that provided financial aid, tax exemptions, and funding avenues like the Mudra loan scheme (up to Rs 20 lakh) and a Rs 1 lakh crore research fund. The ecosystem expanded beyond metro cities, reaching over 600 districts and covering sectors such as agriculture, textiles, medicine, transport, and space.

From a mere 500 startups in 2014, India has become the world's third-largest startup ecosystem.

In recognition of this growth, National Startup Day was introduced on January 16, 2022. India's global standing

was further cemented through Startup-20, a dedicated G-20 group formed to amplify India's presence in the global startup space. A notable achievement is the successful launch of a private rocket under India's liberalised space policy, reflecting the government's commitment to fostering innovation.

### Startups as Pillars of Viksit Bharat

Startups have not only propelled economic growth but also contributed to India's ambition of becoming a developed nation (Viksit Bharat) by 2047. Initiatives like iDEX (Innovation for Defence Excellence) have led to the establishment of around 1,000 defence startups, boosting India's defence exports by 30% in the last decade. Similarly, the AYUSH sector, valued at \$3 billion in 2014, has surged to \$24 billion, with over 1,250 startups contributing to this growth.

Programs such as Mudra Yojana have empowered over 8 crore individuals to start businesses, significantly enhancing employment opportunities. The journey from a handful of startups to a thriving ecosystem with more than 1,54,000 startups underscores the transformation enabled by government initiatives.

### Women-led Startups

The Women Capacity Development program supports women-led startups by fostering a conducive learning environment and facilitating the exchange of best practices and experiences.

Additionally, a series of startup workshops have been conducted for entrepreneurs and students from the North-East region, with a special emphasis on women entrepreneurs. To further promote women's participation in the Indian startup ecosystem,

“This is India's time. Not just for big cities, not just for men, not just for the privileged. It's for everyone with an idea and the courage to pursue it. And that, to me, is the true spirit of Startup India.”

—Nikhil Kamath

Investor and Entrepreneur





the Super Stree video podcast series has also been launched, strengthening the foundation of women entrepreneurship.

### **The Rise of Unicorns**

In May 2022, India achieved 100 unicorns, valued at over \$330 billion (Rs 25 lakh crore). These unicorns span diverse sectors, including e-commerce, fintech, edutech, and biotech. To sustain this momentum, Atal Tinkering Labs have trained over 75 lakh students in cutting-edge technologies, nurturing a new generation of innovators.

### **Empowering the Northeast Through ASCEND**

The Accelerating Startup Calibre and Entrepreneurial Drive (ASCEND) initiative was launched to cultivate entrepreneurship in Northeast India. The MAARG (Mentorship, Advisory, Assistance, Resilience and Growth) mentorship program offered over 190 hours of masterclasses, enhancing marketing and business acumen. ASCEND startup webinars provided mentorship to disseminate essential information on topics such as DPIIT recognition, tax

exemptions, seed funding, intellectual property rights and government platforms, thereby significantly contributing to building a strong startup ecosystem in the northeastern states, empowering local talent and encouraging innovation-driven growth. These efforts have significantly strengthened the startup ecosystem in the region, empowering local talent and fostering innovation.

### **Conclusion**

India's startup revolution, fuelled by visionary policies, financial incentives, and a thriving innovation ecosystem, is paving the way for a dynamic economic and technological future. With a strong emphasis on digital transformation, skill development, and global competitiveness, the nation is steadily rising as a startup powerhouse. As India advances towards becoming the world's third-largest economy, its startups will be at the heart of this remarkable journey—driving growth, shaping industries, and inspiring the next generation of innovators.

# Startup India at 9

## Empowering Small Cities and Bold Dreams



**Nikhil Kamath**  
Investor and Entrepreneur

When I think about entrepreneurship in India today, it feels like watching a new story unfold—one that's nothing like the one I grew up with. Back in the 80s and 90s, the idea of taking risks meant getting a government job with job security or choosing between engineering and medicine. Anything beyond that felt like diving into the deep end without

a life jacket.

Fast forward to today, and I find myself surrounded by a generation that doesn't just dive in—they're building the pool while swimming. The 9th anniversary of Startup India isn't just a milestone; it's a testament to how far we've come. We're no longer a country known for just executing ideas from the West. Young India is stepping up, solving uniquely Indian problems, and creating solutions that the world can learn from.

Look at the data from WTFund, which received nearly 4,000 applications across its first two cohorts.

The average applicant?.. 22.5 years old. Some as young as 16. These kids are out here starting companies, not just in Bengaluru, Mumbai, or Delhi, but in cities like Ambala, Hisar, Kangra, and Bilaspur. About 35% of applications came from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. This isn't just a metro phenomenon anymore; it's a nationwide movement.

And here's the part that really stands out: over half of these startups in smaller cities are led by women. That's not just progress; it's a revolution. We're seeing women not just participate but lead in sectors like waste management, biotechnology, and logistics—areas once thought to be male-dominated. They're not waiting for permission; they're setting the agenda.

Knowledge is now democratised. You don't need to be in Silicon Valley to learn how to build a company. The internet has flattened the learning curve, and young Indians are leveraging this like never before. Entrepreneurs are

the new heroes, not because they wear suits or raise millions but because they dare to dream and execute in ways that impact lives directly.

What's even more fascinating is the mindset shift. Over 60% of WTFund applicants are working full-time on their startups. Many started while still in college, leveraging everything from faculty mentors to college incubators. Some even skipped job placements because they believed more in their own ideas than the security of a steady paycheck. That takes guts.

Startups have become the ultimate equalizers. They don't care where you went to college or even if you went to college



at all. It's merit that wins, not credentials. Young India now has access to what was once reserved for the privileged few: capital, talent, and knowledge. The barriers that used to exist—whether based on geography, education, or social standing—are crumbling. If you have an idea and the determination to see it through, the playing field has never been more level.

India's startup story isn't about copy-pasting models from the West anymore. It's about creating solutions that are uniquely Indian. Whether it's building vernacular solutions for Bharat, developing sustainable pet food, or even pioneering DNA storage technologies, young entrepreneurs are proving that

innovation doesn't have a pin code.

So, if you're reading this wondering if you should start that idea you've been sitting on, here's my advice: Don't wait for the perfect moment. It doesn't exist. Take the risk. Build. Fail. Learn. And maybe, just maybe, you'll create something that not only changes your life but also inspires someone else to take their own leap.

This is India's time. Not just for big cities, not just for men, not just for the privileged. It's for everyone with an idea and the courage to pursue it. And that, to me, is the true spirit of Startup India.

# Unicorns Empowered by #startupindia

Did you know?

A unicorn startup is a privately-held company valued at over \$1 billion. Under the Government of India's Startup India Initiative, these startups have flourished through benefits like tax exemptions, funding support, and mentorship.

Since its launch in 2016, the initiative has propelled the country to become the world's third-largest startup ecosystem, with over 100 unicorns.

## INDIA'S revolution



As highlighted by the Prime Minister in this month's 'Mann ki Baat', India's startup culture has expanded beyond major cities, with Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities like Ambala, Hisar, and Gwalior becoming thriving hubs.

### Zomato

Transformed food delivery and restaurant discovery through technological innovation.



### Unacademy

Revolutionised online education by making quality learning accessible to millions, helping students prepare for competitive exams.



### Lenskart

Modernised eyewear retail with online and offline models and AR technology.



### Ola

Redefined urban mobility through ride-sharing and electric vehicle ventures.

### BharatPe

Launched India's first UPI QR code for merchants empowering small businesses with easy credit access and digital payments, fueling its growth.



### Nykaa

In 2020, Nykaa became the first Indian unicorn Startup led by a woman to successfully launch an initial public offering (IPO). Since then, Nykaa has dominated the beauty and wellness sector with a strong e-commerce presence.



### Freshworks

Emerged as a global SaaS leader, providing innovative customer engagement solutions.



### Meesho

Empowered small sellers by creating a robust e-commerce platform for Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.



# Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose

## An Indomitable Voice Against Colonial Rule

“ We now celebrate the 23rd of January, Netaji's birth anniversary, as 'Parakram Diwas'. This saga related to his bravery also gives a glimpse of his Parakram...Subhas Babu was a visionary. Courage was ingrained in his nature...I urge the youth of the country to read as much as possible about him and constantly derive inspiration from his life.”

—Prime Minister Narendra Modi  
(in 'Mann ki Baat' address)

In his 'Mann ki Baat' address, Hon'ble Prime Minister Narendra Modi painted a gallant picture of Subhas Chandra Bose. Such was his personality that he resembled a hero straight from a movie. One of the most influential leaders of India's Independence movement, Netaji is celebrated for his bold strategies and unyielding determination to free India from British colonial rule. His efforts were multifaceted, and his initiatives extended beyond conventional political activism, touching various domains that significantly shaped the fight for freedom. His efforts related to schools for children, arrangements for milk for poor children and cleanliness stand out as remarkable examples of his visionary leadership during the struggle for Independence.

### **Azad Hind Radio: A Voice of Revolution**

One of Subhas Chandra Bose's most innovative contributions was the founding of the 'Azad Hind Radio' in 1942, during his leadership of the Indian National Army (INA) in Southeast Asia. The radio station became a powerful tool for spreading nationalist ideas and rallying the masses to the cause



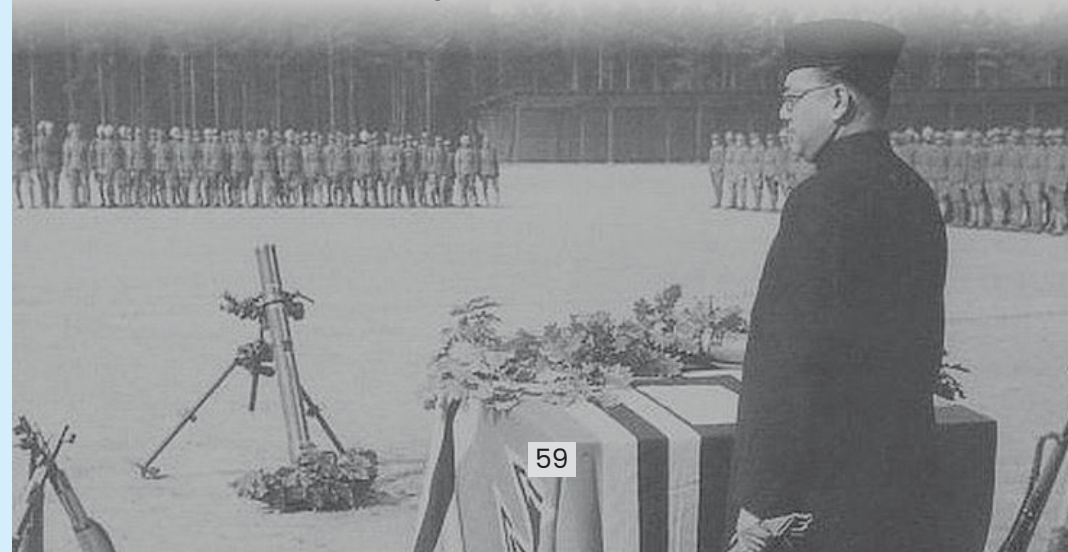
of Independence. Broadcast from the Japanese-controlled territories in Southeast Asia, Azad Hind Radio aimed to inspire Indian soldiers, civilians, and patriots with anti-colonial rhetoric and called for an uprising against British rule. Through its broadcasts, the station encouraged Indians to join the INA and participate in the struggle for freedom.

Bose himself made several broadcasts, addressing not

just the Indian diaspora but also Indian soldiers under the British command, urging them to rise against their colonisers. The radio also served as a platform for disseminating news and events related to the Indian National Army and Bose's leadership, establishing his presence as a symbol of resistance. By leveraging the power of mass communication, the 'Azad Hind Radio' became an integral part of Bose's efforts to inspire and mobilise the civilians and armed forces.

### **Kolkata Mayor: Championing the Cause of the Masses**

Before his association with the Indian National Army and his rise to prominence on the international stage, Bose made his mark on the political landscape of Kolkata (then Calcutta). In 1930, he was elected as the Mayor of Calcutta, a position that allowed him to address the city's pressing social issues. His tenure as mayor was short but impactful. Bose focused on improving the quality



of life for the working class and the marginalised sections of society. He made substantial efforts to improve public health, sanitation, and infrastructure.

Bose was also instrumental in organising educational reforms during his time as Mayor, working towards the betterment of schools and institutions under municipal control. His leadership was marked by a vision that emphasised social welfare, and he sought to integrate progressive ideas into local governance. Despite being an advocate for nationalist movements, his tenure as Mayor was pragmatic and demonstrated his deep concern for the day-to-day needs of the common people, something that made him popular among the masses of Kolkata.

#### **National Planning Committee: A Vision for Economic Self-Reliance**

Another pivotal initiative by Subhas Chandra Bose was his involvement in the formation of the National Planning Committee (NPC) in 1938, while he was the President of the Indian

National Congress. The NPC was an ambitious economic project aimed at laying the foundation for an independent and self-reliant India. Under Bose's guidance, the committee sought to develop a comprehensive economic plan that would address the country's industrial, agricultural, and social needs post-independence.

The NPC proposed ideas for industrialisation, the creation of a modern education system, and policies for equitable distribution of wealth. Bose, drawing inspiration from socialist and nationalist thought, envisioned India free from the economic exploitation of the British. He believed that India's independence was incomplete without economic autonomy. The National Planning Committee's work laid the groundwork for many economic policies that would later be adopted after Independence, although the committee was dissolved after Bose's resignation from the Congress leadership in 1939.

#### **Indian Legion: The Armed Struggle for Freedom**

Perhaps one of Bose's most



audacious moves in the struggle for Indian Independence was the formation of the 'Indian Legion' (also known as the 'Azad Hind Legion'). In 1942, while seeking support from Axis powers during World War II, Bose convinced Nazi Germany to support India's fight for freedom. The Indian Legion, initially composed of Indian prisoners of war captured by the Germans in North Africa, was established for organising a military force that would aid in the liberation of India.

Under Bose's leadership, the Indian Legion was trained and mobilised to fight against British forces.

Although the Legion never saw significant combat operations in its early days, it symbolised Bose's unorthodox approach to achieving independence. The creation of the Legion demonstrated his willingness to explore every possible avenue, even collaborating with adversaries of

Britain, to break India's colonial chains.

The Legion later became part of the Indian National Army (INA), which Bose led with an unyielding belief in the possibility of armed resistance to British rule. The Indian Legion remains a testament to Bose's commitment to the cause of freedom and his capacity to think beyond conventional means in the fight for India's Independence.

**Conclusion:** Subhas Chandra Bose's initiatives during the freedom struggle demonstrate his exceptional leadership, foresight, and commitment to India's liberation. His larger vision to unite Indians, inspire resistance, and prepare for the country's independence continues to inspire generations, making him one of the most respected figures in India's history of resistance against colonial rule.



# Echoes of Kindness

## Unsung Changemakers of India lauded in Mann ki Baat



"My dear countrymen, work done with good intentions and selfless spirit reaches far and wide through word of mouth. And our 'Mann ki Baat' is a huge platform for that. In our vast country, if someone is doing good work even in remote areas and lends utmost importance to one's sense of duty, this is the best platform to bring one's efforts to the fore."

**– Prime Minister Narendra Modi (in 'Mann ki Baat' address)**

The Hon'ble Prime Minister highlights the importance of the 'Mann ki Baat' platform, where the selfless deeds performed by laymen of the country, passionately rendering their services to mankind are acknowledged and lauded.

The mentions include Arunachal Pradesh's Deepak Nabam who runs a living home for the homeless and deprived; Lakshadweep's native nurse, Hindumbi K, who's serving the people in need even after her retirement; and Minicoy Island's KG Mohammed who's been relentlessly working for the conservation of nature and culture.

"I have received full support from my colleagues in the MDS (Maliku Development Society), the villagers, and the traditional fishermen. I would like to thank our Hon'ble Prime Minister for praising me in his 'Mann ki Baat'."

**– KG Mohammed, Conservationist, Minicoy Island, Lakshadweep**



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"In the past, Lakshadweep had very limited facilities. There were no operation theaters. Surgeries and other treatments were carried out under the light of petrol lamps. I had the opportunity to work alongside doctors and actively participated in such operations. No matter what the treatment or medical emergency is, we must be ready to wake up and respond, even if it is in the middle of the night."

**– Hindumbi K, Native Nurse, Kavaratti Island, Lakshadweep**

"It is beyond my imagination that the Prime Minister of our country shows his concern and acknowledges our efforts by mentioning our name. This is a message for all how the Prime Minister values the dignity of the deprived and marginalised sections of the society."



**Deepak Nabam, Chairman, Deepak Nabam Living Home, Arunachal Pradesh**

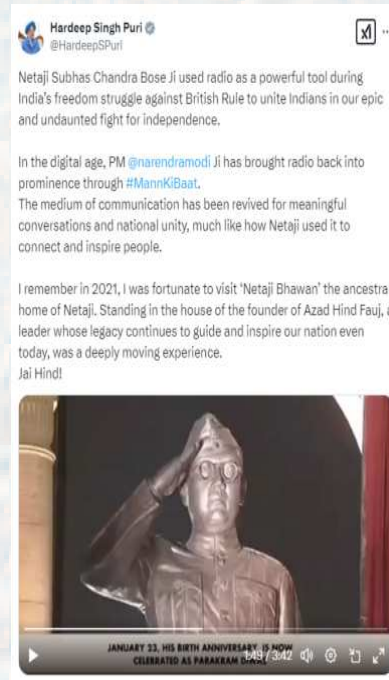


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# MANN KI BAAT

*Media Scan*







# EC used tech to strengthen people's power, committed to fair polls: PM

**PM Narendra Modi**

At a time when the world is witnessing a technological revolution, India is leading the way in the use of technology to strengthen the power of the people, committed to fair polls: PM Narendra Modi.

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# आयोगामुळे लोकशाही बळकट

**नृत्तसम्रा, नवी दिल्ली**

विद्युत्कालावधीत लोकशाही बळकट करणे ही आमची जबाबदारी आहे, असे म्हणत पंतप्रधान नरेंद्र मोदी यांनी आज रात्री देशभरातील मतदान केंद्रांना भेट दिली. यावेळी त्यांनी मतदान यंत्रणेच्या कामकाजाबद्दल तपासणी करत असतानाच मतदान केंद्रांना भेट दिली. यावेळी त्यांनी मतदान यंत्रणेच्या कामकाजाबद्दल तपासणी करत असतानाच मतदान केंद्रांना भेट दिली.

# गणराज्य 'मन्न की बात' निर्वाचन आयोगाच्या कामकाजाबद्दल तपासणी

गणराज्य 'मन्न की बात' निर्वाचन आयोगाच्या कामकाजाबद्दल तपासणी. गणराज्य 'मन्न की बात' निर्वाचन आयोगाच्या कामकाजाबद्दल तपासणी. गणराज्य 'मन्न की बात' निर्वाचन आयोगाच्या कामकाजाबद्दल तपासणी.

# Maha Kumbh celebration of unity, says PM, cites several other ongoing melas

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# PM Modi praises EC for its commitment to fair polling

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# PM Modi praises startups from Ambala and Hissar

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# بیٹیاں چھوٹے شہروں میں اسٹارٹ اپ میں آدھے سے زیادہ کی قیادت کر رہی ہیں: سوदी

بیٹیاں چھوٹے शहروں में स्टार्ट अप में आधे से ज्यादा की क्वालिटी कर रही हैं: सुदी. بیٹیاں چھوٹے शहروں में स्टार्ट अप में आधे से ज्यादा की क्वालिटी कर रही हैं: सुदी. بیٹیاں چھوٹے शहروں में स्टार्ट अप में आधे से ज्यादा की क्वालिटी कर रही हैं: सुदी.

# PM Modi praises startups from Ambala and Hissar

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# अमर उजाला

**PM Modi: महाकुंभ एकता, समता और समरसता का संगम; युवाओं के जुड़ने से स्वर्णिम भविष्य सुनिश्चित', पीएम मोदी बोले**

# Excelsior

'Mann Ki Baat' | This Republic Day Is Very Special, Says PM Modi



'मन की बात' के 118वें एपिसोड में पीएम मोदी ने संविधानसभा से जुड़े महापुरुषों को नमन किया - PM MODI MANN KI BAAT

# INDIA TV

**PM Modi highlights Republic Day, National Voters' Day, Mahakumbh in 118th episode of Mann Ki Baat**

# The Indian EXPRESS

**Mann Ki Baat: Modi lauds Election Commission's 'commitment to fair elections'**

# moneycontrol

**Mann Ki Baat: महाकुंभ मेला पूरे भारत को एक सूत्र में बांधता है, यह दिव्य और अलौकिक है - पीएम मोदी**



आज मुझे गर्व... मन की बात में पीएम मोदी ने स्पेस सेक्टर में हुए कार्यों को सराहा, देश के पहले प्राइवेट स्पेसशिप का किया जिक्र



PM Modi honours Netaji in Mann Ki Baat 118th episode



118वीं मन की बात में पीएम मोदी ने कहा- यह गणतंत्र दिवस बहुत विशेष है

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Mann Ki Baat: "Unforgettable crowd, unimaginable scene and extraordinary confluence...", says PM Modi on Maha Kumbh 2025



'We need to keep our heritage intact': PM Modi in 118th Mann ki Baat

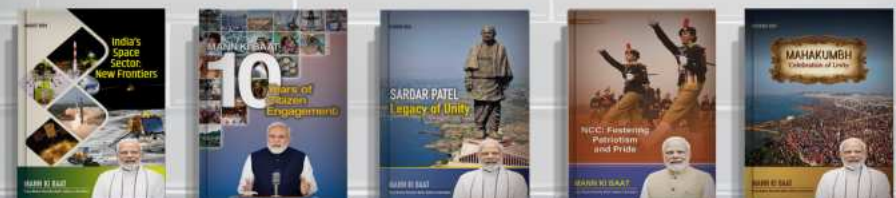


THE TIMES OF INDIA

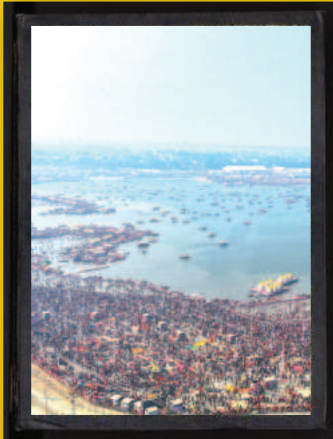
PM Modi mentions IIT Madras research work in Mann ki Baat



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**'Mann ki Baat',**  
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सत्यमेव जयते

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