

# NMS CONNECT

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

## From the Editor's Desk

BY ARYAN LUNIYA

India will mark its 74th Independence day on August 15. We will once again dedicate the day to remembering our freedom fighters and their relentless struggle for independence as ceremonies will be carried out across the country. But amidst the celebrations, have we ever paused and reflected over how fortunate we truly are to have the gift of Independence? Definitions may vary and evolve, and with time, the meaning of the term independence. Today, it is rare for two people to have the same idea of what independence is.

What is independence? Is it living life the way you want to? Is it not restricting yourself to

traditionalist views? Is it your own country's identity? Or is it the ability to achieve your dreams? The truth is, there is no right or wrong answer. Independence is relative and different for each individual.

The pandemic has allowed us to recognise the core values of humanity - mutual care, personal growth, and unity. Independence does not necessarily mean driving your way alone; instead, it means driving your own way, together. In lieu of the upcoming Independence Day, this issue is a call to take a step back and understand what independence means to you, your community and the world. This issue is a bridge to help you realise your goals and achieve independence, together, with students of NMS, as we move on to the next chapters of our lives



# Freedom, was it Really Free?

BY KARTIKEYA AGARWAL

The expression 'freedom begins from the heart' captures the essence of what it means to be truly free - not bound by anything. The colonial era in India was one of the most gruesome and inhumane periods in Indian history, and I believe that to be truly free, we need to know where we come from, and only once we understand the sacrifices that were made to achieve this freedom, can we be truly free. The stories of freedom, independence and survival are heart-wrenching but they are important to know and preserve.

One such story being from Sonakhan, a small village in Chattisgarh. There, in the 1850s, a limit was reached. Near famine conditions were pushing matters to the brink, and that's where Veer Narayan Singh came into the picture. He started by asking merchants to open the godowns and to allow the poor to eat. When they did not, he led the poor to seize and distribute the grain. He sought no charity, but the desire for freedom from injustices of daily life fueled his actions. He was hanged by the British in 1857 in Raipur.

The British crackdowns on small villages holding pro-independence meetings were also thinning the patience of the people. In Saliha, a crackdown was met with the fury of the locals. A girl, barely 16, whose father was shot in the leg during the crackdown rose and fought against the colonial officers who had come to ravage their home. Demathi Dei Sabar took to the streets when she heard that their village was being burnt down. She gathered at least 40 women, and attacked the officers with lathis and drove them away.

These stories are telling of just a bit of the incredible courage with which people in the rural parts of India fought for their freedom. It showcases the tremendous strength of the people and brings to light the incidents of fearlessness, grit and determination. Time may have passed, and we may have entered a modern era, in which we take things for granted, but the values of courage and sacrifice remain with us still.

## What's in a Date?

BY SHRIDA RAWAT

When we hear or think about the date 'August 15', a mélange of emotions come rushing to us, that of patriotism, pride and glory most importantly. After all we fought a long and hard battle to get independence but the price we were made to pay for it can also not be forgotten - the bloodshed, the destruction, the hostility that we were subject to. Whatever stirrings the day invokes, its significance cuts across our differences and ties us into one entity, as part of a whole, that of being a proud Indian.

We all know why this day holds significance - it marks the transfer of power from the British state to the Indian nation; but not many know why this particular date was chosen. The then British Prime Minister Clement Atlee had initially decided to end the British rule on June 30, 1948; it, however, did not go as planned. Lord Mountbatten, the last viceroy of India was the reason behind choosing August 15 and not June 30 as the date.

"The date I chose came out of the blue. I chose it in reply to a question. I was determined to show I was master of the whole event. When they asked if we had set a date, I knew it had to be soon. I had not worked it out exactly then-I thought it had to be about August or September and I then went out on the 15th August. Why? Because it was the second anniversary of Japan's surrender," said Lord Mountbatten, as quoted in Freedom at Midnight.

Even though the British were coerced to leave India, they were unwilling to be any less of an authority, by choosing a date when a great power such as Japan had been forced to surrender before Great Britain; they wanted to portray to the world how strong a power they were, how dominating they were and why they deserved to head the imperialist club. It was difficult for Britain to swallow its pride and accept defeat to India; and choosing this date was an attempt to mask this loss.



North Korea, South Korea, Republic of Congo, Bahrain and Liechtenstein also celebrate Independence day on August 15



# How Independent are our Women?

BY FIONAA THAWANI

"Freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression," Nelson Mandela once said. As India marks its 74th Independence day this year, it is time for us to reflect on how independent the women of our country really are. Be it women being scrutinised over their choice of clothing or just the way they speak. Instances of misogyny are present at every level in our society. Despite that, we are often told that women are increasingly being empowered. But is that really true?

The clothes a girl chooses to wear is continuously policed. It is a common belief that the dignity a lady deserves depends on how conservative her dressing style is. Not long ago, a state leader made a remark that Bengal Chief Mamata Banerjee showing her legs in a saree was inappropriate. The distasteful comment only goes to show the mindset of the people of our country which still exists.

Gender discrimination is still prevalent in our society and specially at workplaces whether it is in matters of recruitment, promotions or even pay. Women have to struggle to manage both - their office demands and household needs, if they wish to be financially independent. A lot of homes still do not give support to ambitious women. Moreover, if a woman's husband gets transferred, she is expected to relocate to a new place with him and make her work adjustments in keeping with her husband's, in most cases.

Individual safety of women in our country is still a big question. Brutal gang crimes continue to make national headlines. Not long ago, a prominent woman leader said that giving girls cell phones will increase the rate of



Representational Image

*"Gender discrimination is still prevalent in our society and specially at workplaces whether it is in matters of recruitment, promotions or even pay "*

assault crimes. The fact that a woman herself is making such comments shows that there are lots of bumps in the road leading to our final destination - that of treating women as equals.

33% seats in government bodies have been reserved for women. Almost every Indian state has a Women's Commission to protect the rights of women. There is no doubt that steps have been taken to better the conditions for women. There is, however, still a long way to go.

Women have taken a stab in almost every field but have succeeded. Three sisters from Hanumangarh recently cleared the Rajasthan Administrative Service or RAS test. Indian female cricketer Harleen Deol Kaur recently went viral after she took a sensational catch in the first T20 International against England. The more we keep educating ourselves about gender inequality, the more we will inch closer towards our goal of giving women their due in all spheres of life.



Our national flag was officially adopted on 22nd July 1947 and hoisted on 15th August 1947



# Why We Revolt

BY DEVANSH DHABHAI

Revolutions, independence struggles, uprisings - when gleaning through world news, it's impossible to not come across these terms. With the recent Spring Revolution in Myanmar, I couldn't help but question what justifies these phenomena? Why do people need to revolt?

To answer that question, let's look at society as a contract. Before society, we inhabited a state of war - one punctuated by animalistic, survival-of-the-best characteristics. To evade this unorganised form of living, we, as humans, entered into a contract. A contract wherein all of us surrendered our abilities to use force – against each other – to a higher authority in return for our safety and protection. This contract, therefore, granted the higher authority in question a certain power - derived from the responsibility to shelter its people from force and injustice.

This higher authority is, in fact, none other than the state. We relinquish our innate, barbaric tendencies to the state, and the government (the tangible manifestation of the state) ensures that we receive the all-important safety in return. With the progression of time, this contract has, in fact, evolved to include more than just the safety of life. It now encompasses the protection of all humans' civil rights and liberties as well.



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*"But what happens when the state and those representing it (the government) turn against the people? "*

But what happens when the state and those representing it (the government) turn against the people? What happens when the state, itself, begins compromising its citizens' civil rights and liberties? Do the citizens just accept it?

Well, both rational thought and political theory say NO. When the state and the government turn against the people, they breach the contract mentioned above. In such a scenario, it is the people's right –and more so their duty– to fight for themselves, rebel against those running the state and re-establish the contract with a more responsible authority. One which will give them the safety and protection that the contract entails. And that is why humans fight for independence against an oppressive authority - or in other words, engage in revolution!



The Indian National Flag was designed by Pingali Venkayya who was a freedom fighter from Andhra Pradesh





"If one is free to serve the mankind, the ultimate goal of a human being, while respecting others' views, then one is Independent."

- **Pallavi Sharma, Teacher**

"Tagore's 'Where the Mind is Without Fear' truly resonates with my idea of independence. Being able to act righteously for the good of others and rightfully ask for mental, emotional, financial and spiritual cooperation - all inclusive and encompassing for the well being of one and all."

- **Nili Sharma, Teacher**

"Independence of women is true independence to me. Women who are financially independent can not only contribute to the everyday expenses of the household, but also help to meet the family's financial goals. To feel responsible and boost morale: Financially independent people are capable of taking their own decisions and don't have to depend on anybody."

- **Velina Bhagchandani, Teacher**

Independence means being myself: undaunted and spirited.

- **Keya Sharma, Teacher**

"Independence is the freedom of the soul, a perception of the mind and a feeling

understood by the heart. This freedom, perception and more importantly, this feeling is that of liberation, patriotism, self-dependence and other such things. When all such terms are put together and imposed upon the majority, it becomes a big responsibility on the youth of that nation and on those who create it. We Indians, embrace that responsibility."

- **Kashvi Singhal, Student**

"Independence is not only about being economically or mentally self-sufficient, but it is also about the extent to which one is being influenced by others. Even people who make their own choices or earn their own money might be influenced by others and they won't even realise it. So, for me independence is achieved when you can overcome that invisible influence from others."

- **Kavita Choudhary, Student**

"When I hear the word independence, the first thought that comes to my mind is free will. When an individual is free to think anything, do anything and speak anything, he/she is independent.

Also, independence is when one does not need someone else to rely on, and is self-sufficient."

- **Sneha Tatiwala, Student**

"Independence is the ability to do whatever you want without any pressure and with the support of the government. Working towards the overall development of the nation is a crucial part of

independence. However, that does not mean we should misuse our freedom; instead, we should be patriotic and improve India through our independence."

- **Karnit S. Rathore, Security Guard**


"Independence and freedom are simply being

happy and achieving basic life goals such as a happy family, educating children with good jobs, and taking care of them while ensuring growth"

- **Saga Sen, Helper**

"Independence is the ability of every person to live life in their own way as this ensures personal and societal development."

- **Bhagwaan Singh Rajawat, Hostel Security Guard**



## What does Independence mean to you?

***The NMS Community reflects on the idea of independence and what it means to students, teachers and school workers on a personal level***



## NMS Charcha

*ALL THAT TRANSPIRED IN THE NMS  
COMMUNITY AND MORE*

### **Flying High: NMS students' outstanding IB results**

NMS students Pranjal Gehlot, Ayush Jain, and Khushmita Dhabhai scored a perfect 45/45 IB score. Riya Agarwal and Charchit Agarwal scored 44/45. In all, 44 percent of the class scored above 40 IB points with 65 perfect 7/7 scores across different IB subjects.

### **Iowa State University(I-FIT) program**

NMS students Jahnvi Karnani, Ketaki Agarwa, and Samya Goyal won the 2nd runner up and People's Choice award for their video on 'Redesigning the future of schools'. They were awarded \$500 for their video which showcased how students' emotional intelligence can be built through technology.

### **NMS Literary Fiesta**

The NMS Literary fiesta, an initiative by Rhea Saxena, was the school's first ever literature festival. The event, which took place on 23rd and 24th of July, opened doors to literature enthusiasts and provided them with an opportunity to witness insightful discussions by various authors and panelists. Workshops to learn new skills related to literature and its complementary fields, such as scriptwriting and illustration, were also offered to students and culminated into a two-day zealous symposium.

### **Trees of NMS**

NMS student Ananya Solanki started an initiative "Trees of NMS" with the aim of making important information about trees easily accessible. For this, the trees on campus have been digitized by placing a unique QR code next to each tree on campus. Students can access the botanical name, properties and other information regarding the tree just by scanning this code.

### **Research Bootcamp**

The Alumni Mentorship Program (AMP) conducted a Research and Professional Development Bootcamp to give students of NMS direction regarding the process of exploring their interests, designing their project, navigating roadblocks, and publishing their work! Organized by Sudhi Mathur, Pavas Gupta, and Ria Golecha, the 7-day long bootcamp provided valuable insights into different academic fields.

### **Teachlyne**

NMS student Ishita Goyal created a one-stop platform called "Teachlyne" to make teachers' lives easier during the pandemic. The platform allows teachers to come together to discuss problems and identify solutions on the forum, access specifically catered library of resources, and attend interactive webinars. On July 24, Teachlyne held a culinary workshop to explore quick and easy recipes with renowned Chef Rajiv Khullar.

### **Carbonet Workshop**

A 1.5 hour online workshop on Carbon Literacy was conducted for students of class 7 and class 8. Students were taught how to calculate their personal carbon footprint and know the impact it has on the environment. The workshop was conducted by Sunita Rajesh, co-founder of Only planet.

## Upcoming Events

### **Jaipur Debate**

NMS will host the 7th edition of the Jaipur Debate from 12th to 17th August. The Jaipur Debate is an inter school debating festival that puts the most talented young brains to a battle of words on topics ranging from politics, international affairs, economics, culture and society. The debate follows "the Asian Parliamentary format" of debating and will be held virtually this year.

### **NMMUN**

NMMUN 2021 is set to be scheduled on 27th to 29th August. Neerja Modi Model United Nations is an annual event that has been hosted by Neerja Modi School for the past twelve years. This student-run conference brings delegates together to deliberate on global issues, ethics and ideals while allowing them to showcase their strengths and perspectives on important matters.

### **Vaccination App**

NMS students Ananya Solanki, Pakin Pongpaiboon and Eklavya Tyagi will launch an app with the aim to spread awareness about the COVID-19 vaccination. The app will provide users with resources ranging from engaging cartoons to info graphics as well as blogs and essential updates and information regarding vaccines.



## NMS Musings



(Representational Image)

## Paradise of freedom

BY ETASHA TIWARI

They shed their tears,  
Their blood they sacrificed.  
They conquered their fears,  
For their motherland's rise.

They travailed in anguish for the freedom of their nation,  
They ceded their ecstasy for their country's salvation.  
The people stood as one and fought for each citizen's breath.  
They rejected the tyranny and willingly embraced death.

Our country they liberated,  
Our people they saved.  
Actual valour and love for one's country they did truly demonstrate,  
A path filled with the radiance of life; for us they paved.

We shall forever be indebted to those heroes and to them we thank and pray.  
For sacrificing their tomorrow for our today.  
Our gratitude is immeasurable for their heroism,  
For making our country a paradise of freedom.

## What's Making News

### National News

As of 29th July, India recorded 43,509 new cases and 640 new deaths in 24 hours, recovery rate stands at 97.38%

India extends curbs on international flights till August

Indian journalist Danish Siddique, a Pulitzer prize winner, died in a crossfire on the borders of Afghanistan

### International News

Israel becomes first nation to give third Covid vaccine shot to people over 60

Delta variant has triggered the fourth wave in the Middle East, says WHO

### Sports News

Tokyo Olympics 2021: Men's hockey team, P V Sindhu march into quarters; Mary Kom bows out after losing 3-2 to Ingrid Valencia. Lovlina Borgohain assured bronze for India after storming into semi-finals.

Argentina defeats Brazil in the historic Copa America final, ending Messi's national trophy drought while Italy overcame the odds against England in the shootouts to be crowned the European champions

Novak Djokovic triumphed over Matteo Berrettini to win his 6th Wimbledon trophy and equalling the 20 Grand Slams record of Rafael Nadal and Roger Federer.

India, under the captaincy of Shikhar Dhawan, beat Sri Lanka by 7 wickets in the first ODI held on Sunday, 18th July.

### Science News

International Space station thrown out of control by misfire of Russian module, says NASA

Czech researchers have succeeded in converting water into a metallic state and managed to keep it in that state for a few seconds.



## Understanding Independence Through Classics

WRITTEN BY AAIRA GOSWAMI

Whether it is the “independent” character of Elizabeth Bennet from *Pride and Prejudice*, or it is the lost sense of freedom in George Orwell’s famous *1984*, independence and its various interpretations have been seen in numerous classics. So, on the occasion of our country’s 74th Independence Day, let us talk about independence through classics.

George Orwell wrote *1984* to show that the USSR, a powerful communist state, was not exactly the correct representation of socialism. He believed that the USSR was a controlled society, in fact a totalitarian one. Hence, he wrote *1984*, as a satire. The fictional world of *1984* is a “surveillance” one. Big Brother has his eyes on everyone. It is a society where the government observes and controls each and every step of an individual. There is not only a psychological manipulation, but also a physical one, where “a tiny facial twitch could lead to an arrest.” Thus, independence in its true sense is lost.

Another famous dystopian classic, *Brave New World*, by Aldous Huxley, displays a society where the liberty of choosing a loved one or having emotions has been robbed. It is a world where people are controlled by technology. The World State is against the idea of individuality and considers it to be a barrier to productivity. Independence, and the essence of life has been completely taken away. However, many are oblivious to this.

In Jane Austen’s famous *Pride and Prejudice*, we get glimpses of ideas similar to independence through the prominent themes, and especially through the character of Elizabeth Bennet. At a time when gender roles were rigid, Elizabeth was an unconventional character. She was open-minded, free and did not abide by the conventions of the times. She was independent.

In contrast, in the book, and in that era, the society was built on a framework where the middle-class or someone like the Bennet family, had to constantly worry about their status and their reputation, which made them dependent on the society’s absurd system, and the theme of individuality, and liberty, was forgotten.

Even Margaret Mitchell’s *Gone with The Wind*, expresses the idea of independence through the character of Scarlett O’Hara. Scarlett O’Hara, whose sole purpose was to find a husband, had to take matters into her own hands, at the mere age of 19, when Tara, her family’s plantation land, was destroyed by the Yankees, during the Civil War. Her widower father was too heartbroken to work, leaving matters to Scarlett’s inexperienced hands. Scarlett O’Hara demonstrated independence by becoming the head of the household, managing the plantations and the slaves, and doing tasks she would have never dreamt of doing otherwise.

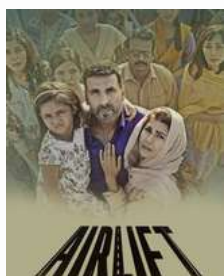
So, through fiction, through satires and through unconventional characters, classics have portrayed various interpretations of independence and the meaning of the word independent.



# Five Movies to Watch This Independence Day

BY ADITI KUMAR

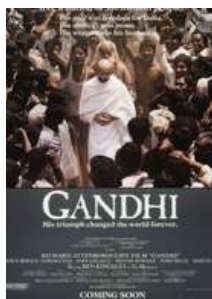
Since month of August is filled with activities revolving around Independence Day, why not watch some cinematic masterpieces to get a deeper look into the feeling of being free?



**Airlift** is the story of a successful Indian businessman, Ranjit Katiyal, who leads a normal and happy life until Iraq invades Kuwait and he decides to save his stranded countrymen. This movie features one of Akshay Kumar's best performances and also has excellent actors as supporting characters. It beautifully celebrates our flag which leaves us on a happy note.



**Margarita with a Straw** follows the life of Margarita, an aspiring writer who doesn't let her circumstances affect her confidence or stand in the way of her dreams. After shifting to New York for a semester, Margarita goes on a life-changing self-discovery journey to transcend her disability. The movie is a hidden gem with moving performances by Kalki Koechlin and Sayani Gupta.



**Gandhi** is a period biographical film based on the life of Mahatma Gandhi. This movie is an ode to India's struggles for independence and makes you appreciate the freedom we enjoy today. It is a great family watch for this Independence day and one that will leave you filled with pride and gratitude.



**The Forgotten Army - Azaadi Ke Liye**, is based on the true story of Indian soldiers who marched towards the capital, with the war cry 'Challo Dilli', to gain Indian independence from colonial rule. Kabir Khan does an excellent job as the director of this series, which is filled with heartfelt nationalism and makes it a worthwhile watch. This series will definitely make you feel a part of our history and will leave you feeling grateful for the strong soldiers who fought for our country's independence.



The hit Broadway musical "Hamilton" follows the life of the forgotten founding father, Alexander Hamilton, and his role in the American Revolutionary War. The music keeps the audience entertained throughout the play while also educating them about the struggles for freedom from a fresh perspective. It also tackles a lot of current topics such as racism. The incredible rapping performances by Daveed Diggs and Anthony Ramos will simply blow your mind.

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