



15TH AUGUST 2008 INDEPENDENCE DAY

INDIA

PERSPECTIVES





TRYST WITH DESTINY

Speech delivered by the first Prime Minister of Independent India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in the Constituent Assembly, New Delhi, August 14, 1947, on the eve of the attainment of Independence.

Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge, not wholly or in full measure, but very substantially. At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom. A moment comes, which comes but rarely in history, when we step out from the old to the new, when an age ends, and when the soul of a nation, long suppressed, finds utterance. It is fitting that at this solemn moment we take the pledge of dedication to the service of India and her people and to the still larger cause of humanity.

At the dawn of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her success and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength. We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again. The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?

Freedom and power bring responsibility. The responsibility rests upon this Assembly, a sovereign body representing the sovereign people of India. Before the birth of freedom we have endured all the pains of labour and our hearts are heavy with the memory of this sorrow. Some of those pains continue even now. Nevertheless, the past is over and it is the future that beckons to us now.

That future is one not of ease or resting but of incessant striving so that we may fulfill the pledges we have so often taken and the one we shall take today. The service of India means the service of the millions who suffer. It means the ending of poverty and ignorance and disease and inequality of opportunity. The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but as long as there are tears and suffering, so long our work will not be over.

And so we have to labour and to work, and work hard, to give reality to our dreams. Those dreams are for India but they are also for the world, for all the nations and peoples are too closely knit together today for any one of them to imagine that it can live apart. Peace has been said to be indivisible so is freedom, so is prosperity now, and so also is disaster in this One World that can no longer be split into isolated fragments.

To the people of India, whose representatives we are, we make an appeal to join us with faith and confidence in this great adventure. This is no time for petty and destructive criticism, no time for ill-will or blaming others. We have to build the noble mansion of free India where all her children may dwell.

I beg to move, Sir,

“That it be resolved that:

(1) After the last stroke of midnight, all members of the Constituent Assembly present on this occasion do take the following pledge:

‘At this solemn moment when the people of India, through suffering and sacrifice, have secured freedom, I,, a member of the Constituent Assembly of India, do dedicate myself in all humility to the service of India and her people to the end that this ancient land attain her rightful place in the world and make her full and willing contribution to the promotion of world peace and the welfare of mankind’;

(2) Members who are not present on this occasion do take the pledge (with such verbal changes as the President may prescribe) at the time they next attend a session of the Assembly.”

(Source: Jawaharlal Nehru's Speeches, Vol 1, 1946-1949, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India)

PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY

“
Democracy must in essence mean the art and science of mobilising the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of all the various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all.
”

Mahatma Gandhi



FOREIGN RELATIONS

“

The objectives of our foreign policy are the preservation of world peace and enlargement of human freedom. Throughout her long history, she (India) has stood for peace and every prayer that an Indian raises, ends with an invocation to peace... But even when preparing to resist aggression, the ultimate objective, the objective of peace and reconciliation, must never be lost sight of and heart and mind must be attuned to this supreme aim and not swayed or clouded by hatred or fear.

”

Jawaharlal Nehru





NATURE'S GIFT

“

India is a world itself, it is too vast, too diverse for any complete description. It is in the midst of a great transformation. ...India is a sub-continent with immense variation in geography, climate, manner of life, language and taste. The mountains, the plains, the rivers, the forests, the deserts and seas, even these bring together in rare proportion a geographical unit. Isn't this diversity a marvel and even more so the fact that it has led not to division but to synthesis and unity? ...India has always been an enigma.

”

Indira Gandhi







PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS

“

I do not want my house to be walled in on all sides and my windows to be stifled. I want all the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off my feet by any.

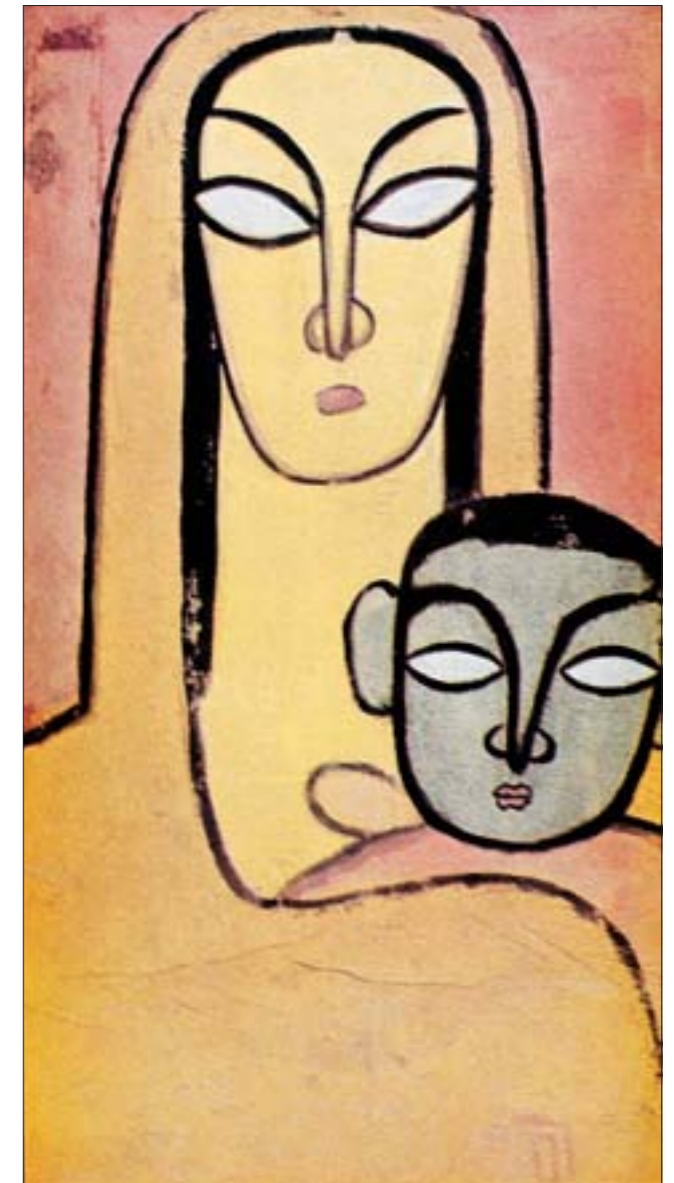
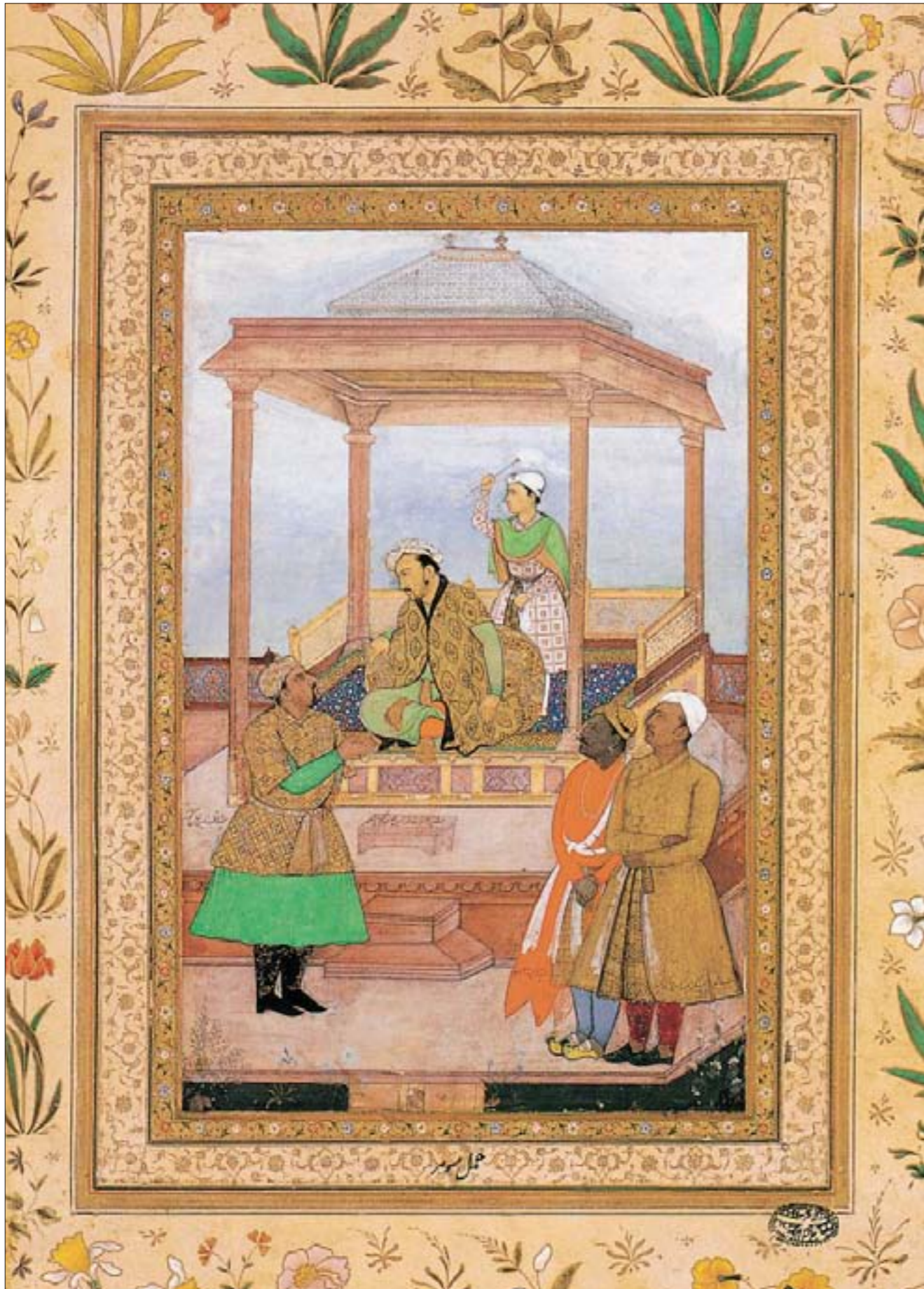
”

Mahatma Gandhi









INVESTING IN CHILDREN

“
True education is that which helps us to know the atman, our true self, God and Truth. To acquire this knowledge, some persons may feel the need for a study of literature, some for a study of physical sciences and some others for art. But every branch of knowledge should have as its goal knowledge of the self.We carry on numerous activities with that aim in view. All of them are, in my sense of the term, true education.

”
Mahatma Gandhi







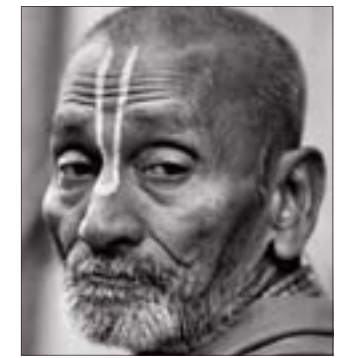


FACES

“
*Ultimately what we really are matters more than
what other people think of us.*

”
Jawaharlal Nehru







HEALTH FOR ALL

“
... a meticulous sense of cleanliness, not only personal, but also in regard to one's surroundings is the alpha and omega of corporate life. Where the rules of personal, domestic and public sanitation are strictly observed and due care is taken in the matter of diet and exercise, there should be no occasion for illness or disease.
 ”

Mahatma Gandhi





TRANSPORT & INFRASTRUCTURE

“
The country as a whole deserves world class infrastructure and greater engagement with the global economy. This is an agenda we have set ourselves. ...I would like to see world class power generation, world class highways, world class ports and airports and world class banking and communications infrastructure. We must raise our standards, our benchmarks of performance and expectations. We must replace our “make-do” attitude with a “can-do” spirit.
”

Dr. Manmohan Singh

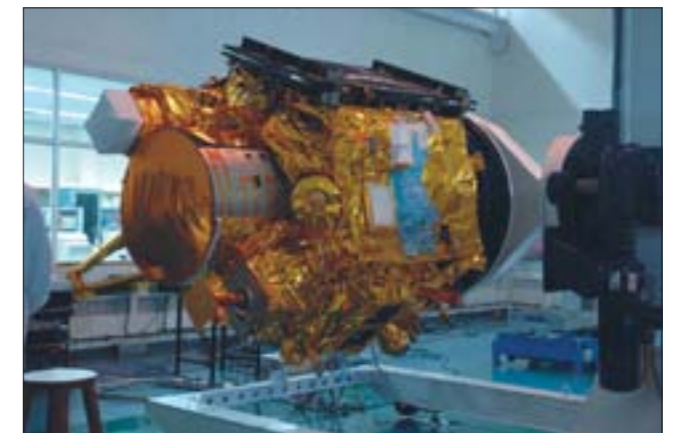




SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

“
It is science alone that can solve the problems of hunger and poverty, of insanitation and illiteracy, of superstition and deadening of custom and tradition, of vast resources running to waste, or a rich country inhabited by starving poor... Who indeed could afford to ignore science today? At every turn we have to seek its aid... The future belongs to science and those who make friends with science.

”
Jawaharlal Nehru



INDUSTRY

“

It is equally clear that the rapid development of large scale machine industry is an urgent need of the country. Without industrialization no country can have political or economic freedom... Without industrialization the rapid and effective raising of the standard of the people is not possible. Key industries, defence industries and public utilities must be developed on a large scale.

”

Jawaharlal Nehru







SOCIETY & LIFESTYLE

“
*I believe that the civilisation into which
India has evolved is not to be beaten in the world.
...India is sound at the foundation.*

”
Mahatma Gandhi



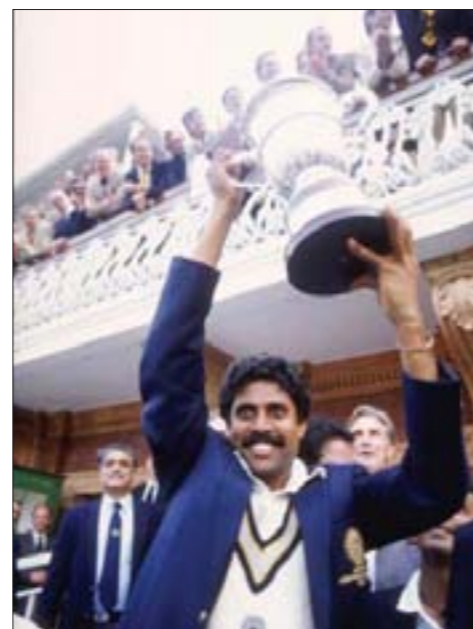














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Amit Dasgupta
Editor

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