



EMPOWER INDIA—NEWS DIGEST

Volume 3, Number 3, August 15, 2013,

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Inform, Inspire, Impact

Dear IDCA Member or Friend,

We are pleased to share the following News summary from some of our members for your information. Please join them and support their efforts to serve less fortunate people in India. Today is India's 67th Independence day. We salute all the freedom fighters who gave their lives. In these last 66 years much has been done but much more remains to be done. A vast majority of India's citizens still are not yet able to meet their basic needs. We all must resolve to change this pathetic condition soon by eradicating poverty. There is still a debate going on what should be realistic poverty line. Let us hope policy makers define it correctly this time. Jai Hind! Let us all resolve to sacrifice a little and serve all those who make our lives possible.

Upcoming IDCA Events:

August 24, 2013: India Healthcare Forum, Indian Prairie Library, Darien, IL, from 1:30 p

Speakers: Dr. Munish Raizada, Mission India Foundation, IL, Dr. Khusroo Patel, Gram Seva Foundation, IL, Dr. J. G. Patel, Sevalia Hospital Foundation, IL

The 11th International conference on October 12-13 in Chicago—Register NOW!

The 4th West Regional Conference on November 16, 2013 in San Jose, CA

The 10th International Conference in India on January 11-12, 2014.

We invite NPO/NGO leaders to make presentations at these conferences. Please write us ASAP for your interest. Areas of work should include one of the following: Water, Education, Healthcare, Livelihoods, and Climate Change.

You can learn about the upcoming IDCA events and register at: <http://idc-america.org/events>

You can support our efforts to serve you all by joining as a member. to learn how you can join us, please click: <http://idc-america.org/membership> . We welcome your feedback.

Does Independence Day Still Carry Its Meaning? (From India West)

• By [Pragya Saxena](#)

• Aug 14, 2013

• [Rate This](#)



Indian schoolgirls wave their national flags during a rehearsal for Independence Day parade celebrations in Amritsar on Aug. 13, 2013. (Getty Images)

• *United States*

With India's Independence Day right around the corner, a lot of Indians are being reminded of the pride and bonds they have for and with their country. A lot of 40 plus people are sitting around thinking back to the time they raised money for whichever war effort, or when they had to go from one city to the next but were stopped by a government curfew during riots. India is young, and it's post revolutionary history is rich and still fresh—in the minds of those over 40. What about the younger generation? How many Indians out of the younger generations are genuinely aware of the strife those living in the country faced during and after the revolution? With the prominence of Bollywood, and the obsession with western culture, it seems that those sentiments have more or less become lost to most Indians under the age of 30, and along with those sentiments, so has the genuine feeling of celebration for Independence Day. What remains are questions: is the loss of feelings that compel one to celebrate Independence Day necessarily so despicable? Does it actually entail the loss of Indian-ness?

To think about such questions, first the notion of Independence Day must be criticized to a certain extent. As most Indians that don't have an incredible amount of special feelings

towards India's Independence Day are living in America, a relevant place to begin would be with consideration of America's Independence Day. America's Independence is older than India's. 200 odd years later, Americans still celebrate on July 4th, and what's more, they celebrate their patriotism again and again on national holidays such as Veteran's Day, and President's Day. Supposedly. However, if one is to really look at these celebrations, rather than exclamations of pride and rejoices over freedom, these national holidays are more of a celebration of a day off and 50-75% of furniture, shopping appliances and jewelry at your neighborhood department stores. Painting the town red, white, and blue and getting mindlessly drunk, though it does create an odd sense of unity, hardly seems like a sincere observation of the lives that were lost and the family's that were broken when America sought it's independence back in the 1700's. The point is, the Independence Day here has devolved into some sort of excuse to party, and though America and India are fundamentally different, this devolution is still relevant when discussing India's Independence Day and the Indian Americans, and young Indians who are no longer entirely sure what it's about.

Western culture is flooding into Indian every day life, India's obsession with Bollywood is hardly helping the country keep from falling into a superficial oblivion, and it is at this time when the younger generations are beginning to lose a sense of the importance and meaning behind Independence Day. In fact, the devolution of India's own Independence Day is easily seen during the parades and festivals offered here in American cities. Rather than being affairs of cultural relevance that offer a celebration of traditional dances, foods and values, they have devolved into sponsor-based events organized for what seems to be sheer capital gain. There are no longer community performances or children's activities, but rather people flood in to the venues hoping to catch a glimpse of whichever Bollywood star or starlet slated to make a short appearance. However, India's Independence Day is still young and there are still people who feel the effects of dislocation and loss of life that were incurred during the revolution. Those wounds are not so far in the past and so Independence Day still means something; but as the times change and the younger generations forget, it's becoming into something that is far from noble, honorable, or even desirable. Absent-mindedly Indians are letting the anniversary of this sober and bitter victory turn into a rather mindless affirmation of the capitalistic and superficial side of our culture.

Independence Day isn't necessarily something to be celebrated. If anything, the reason celebration comes up at all is because under all of the oppression, subjugation, and harsh conditions, India prevailed and asserted itself. But India isn't anywhere near finished asserting itself. Horrific problems plague every aspect of Indian life from the economy and government to education. However, under the guise of a celebration of a freedom that was gained half a century ago, contemporary issues are thrown under a rug, and Indians delve into a pop culture induced complacency. The celebration of Independence Day is beginning to no longer represent any real feelings of pride or nationalism towards India. Rather those feelings would be more sincerely expressed by actual actions in order to work towards understanding and alleviating India's contemporary issues. However, the lack of actual involvement towards India is not something that is just exhibited by the younger generations, or just by Indian Americans. They are being exhibited by all Indians, as infanticide, government abuse, domestic abuse and poverty continue to be ongoing problems with no fathomable end.

So as the younger generations grow up and forget why Indian's celebrate Independence Day, is the real issue the fact they are not celebrating Independence Day or that they've grown up so they have no compulsion to the culture of their roots? That lack of compulsion isn't a construct of their own design though, and has rather been a result of the general trends in popular culture that are absently embraced by most. Recognizing this is the beginning of addressing the real issue. One day, no one will have any real feelings towards Independence Day just because no one will have been there during the strife, and everyone will have moved so far in time that their issues won't even remotely relate to India's independence. However, even at that time, their experience will still be an experience of being Indian, and as at this time our existences are also Indian experiences, we must redefine ourselves according to our own terms. Pride? Nationalism? Tradition? Those are all things that mean something different to each person, but to get stuck in the past is the truth of all folly. India's problems are real and current, and the fight is going on even now, so rather than pretending it's all over with a samosa for a good cause at the local Indian Festival, actually getting involved with the issues and doing something about them would be much more cause for celebration

Read more at http://www.indiawest.com/news/12863-does-independence-day-still-carry-it-s-meaning.html?utm_source=Newsletter+-+2013+-+August+14&utm_campaign=DNL+-+August+14%2C+2013&utm_medium=email#FzxCxDOgsYAOl5FX.99

Mere desh ki dharti sona ugale, ugale heere moti

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WiYscnj_L7A

Watch Today's Independence Day Broadcast

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fv4RY36b4PM>

Dear IDCA Member or Friend,

We are pleased to invite you to participate in the 11th International conference, being organized in Chicago area on October 12-13, 2013. We hope you will be able to find time in your busy schedule and join us.

IDCA aims to help eradicate poverty, by improving and promoting education, healthcare, livelihoods, social harmony, environmental protection, and renewable energy to mitigate climate change in India.

Here are some details of the conference:

The 11th International Conference in Chicago

Date: October 12-13, 2013,

Conference theme:

Finding Innovative Solutions for Poverty Eradication and Climate Change Mitigation

**Time: 8:30 AM to 8:00 PM (October 12)
8:30 AM to 4:00 PM (October 13)**

**Venue: Illinois Institute of Technology,
Rice Campus,
Wheaton (Chicago), Illinois**

We are planning for 5 sessions of 90 minutes each covering Education, Healthcare, Water, Climate Change, and Livelihoods followed by a 90 minute concluding session.

We have invited several distinguished speakers from India, US , and Canada to inform, inspire and empower you to make a difference in the lives of less fortunate people in India.

Confirmed speakers are:

Mrs. Shukla Bose, Founder, Parikrma Humanity Foundation, Bengaluru
Mrs. Chandrakala Bhargaw, Founder, Adarsh Mahila Grah Udyog, Latur, Maharashtra
Dr. Avinash Balasaheb Pol, Trustee, Satara Rural Development Trust, Satara, Maharashtra
Professor Kamal S. Bawa, Founder, Ashoka Trust for Ecology and Environment, Boston, MA
Mr. Ram Krishnan, president, Akash Ganga Trust, St. Paul, Minnesota
Dr. Nitin Chouthai, President, Pioneer Health Research Foundation, MI
Dr. Subhash Jain, president, International Human Benefits Services, NJ
Dr. Suri Sehgal, Chairman, The Sehgal Family Foundation, Captiva, FL
Mr. John Paul Kusz, president, John Paul Kusz, Ltd, IL
Dr. B. P. Agrawal, president, Sustainable Innovations, MD

Registration:

Early Registration to August 31: \$50.00, Students: \$25.00. Regular to September 20: \$75.00 (member: \$60.), Student: \$35.;
Late after September 20: \$95.00 (member \$75), Student: \$50. Spouse or Friend: \$50.00 only.

You can register online or by mail at: <http://idc-america.org/events>.
REGISTER EARLY and SAVE!!! More information will be posted on our website. Please visit as often as possible.



India Development and Relief Fund

A 501(c)(3) organization

(5821 Mossrock Dr , North Bethesda, MD 20852 USA , 301-704-0032 www.idrf.org)

Let's Rebuild Uttarakhand Together

Two months after a Himalayan tsunami hit Uttarakhand, thousands of villagers remain in misery. With your help, India Development and Relief Fund will put them on the path to rehabilitation. After careful deliberation, we have identified 3 promising programs. We need your donations today to carry them out!

Transitional Housing

This disaster destroyed thousands of homes in Pithoragarh District, in NE Uttarkhand on the borders of Nepal and China. But building a new home on this mountainous terrain can easily take a year. Villagers urgently need transitional houses - for safety, privacy, and protection from the monsoon. We will work directly with Manav Seva Sansthan, a well-established local NGO, to build them.

The houses will be made of galvanized iron sheets and bamboo poles, with sloped roofs and raised floors.

Each family will also receive a solar lantern and water purifier. **You can provide a durable shelter for a family of five for just \$1,050. 100 families are in urgent need; our goal is \$105,000. We cannot succeed without your generous contribution!**

Home Furnishings

Villagers also lost their most basic belongings. IDRF aims to fund at 300 beds & 600 bedding packets for families in Pithoragarh. Each packet includes a bed, mattress, quilt, sheets, pillows and a mosquito net. Our partner SCALE is a highly credible organization with more than ten years of local experience. **A gift of \$550 will provide ten complete units (including beds). A safe warm place to sleep will mean so much to these people, as they rebuild their lives. Our goal is \$26,000.**

Village Rehabilitation

IDRF intends to collaborate with our long-time partner, Uttaranchal Daivi Apda Peedit Sahayata Samiti, to rebuild communities in Uttarkashi District, in the northwest of the state on the borders on China. The flood destroyed a hostel that we co-financed years ago, and we are looking into building a newer and better facility. Other plans under consideration include women's income-generation, such as computer skills, tailoring, and food-processing.

With 25 years of experience and a development expert on the ground as our consultant, IDRF will use your hard-earned money effectively and responsibly.

Please donate now. *All donations are tax-deductible in the US.*

☐ **Check:** Mail a check payable to "IDRF," with memo "Uttarakhand" to IDRF, 5821 Mossrock Drive, North Bethesda, MD 20852
Please include your email address.

☐ **Online:** <http://goo.gl/D8f75> Please add a note that says "Uttarakhand."

☐ **Corporate match:** Ask your company's HR office if they will match your donation to India Development and Relief Fund, Inc. (EIN 52-1555563). We are already approved by dozens of leading companies! (see pictures on last page)

Water

IRRAD Recognized for Integrated Water Resource Management

Federation of India Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), gave the First Prize (Water Initiatives by NGOs) of the 2013 FICCI Water Awards to the Institute of Rural Research and Development (IRRAD), an initiative of S.M. Sehgal Foundation, on 6 August, 2013. [more...](#)

<http://zunia.org/post/irrad-recognised-for-integrated-water-resource-management>

<http://www.smsfoundation.org/pdf/FICCI%20Award%20to%20IRRAD%20August%206.%202013.pdf>

Learn more about India Water news at: www.indiawaterportal.org

From Danielle Nierenberg—Food Tank

As water supplies face [mounting pressures](#) from growing populations, climate change, and an already troubled food system, analyses of “water wealth” and “[water security](#)” are laying the groundwork for future cooperation and stability. **In order to meet all municipal, agricultural, and ecological needs for water, it is crucial to develop innovative water saving systems for the future of food production.**

Here are seven strategies for reducing water waste in the food system:

1. Eating Less Meat

According to Sandra Postel of the Global Water Policy Project, it takes roughly 3,000 liters of water to meet one person’s daily dietary needs, or approximately 1 liter per calorie. The amount of water needed to produce one kilogram of red meat can range from 13,000 to 43,000 liters of water; poultry requires about 3,500 liters of water; and pork needs about 6,000 liters. Eating more meatless meals, even one or two days a week, can help conserve water resources.

2. Using intercropping, agroforestry, and cover crops

Soil health is critical to water conservation. Diversifying farms by including cover crops, planting trees on farms, and intercropping can help keep nutrients and water in the soil, protecting plants from drought and making sure that every drop of water delivered by rainfall or irrigation can be utilized.

3. Implementing micro-irrigation

Approximately 60 percent of water used for irrigation is wasted. Drip irrigation methods can be more expensive to install, but can also be 33 percent to 40 percent more efficient, carrying water or fertilizers directly to plants’ roots.

4. Improving Rainwater Harvesting

Since the 1980s, according to the International Food Policy Research Institute, farmers in Burkina Faso have been modifying traditional planting pits known as zai, making them deeper and wider and adding organic materials. As a result, the pits retain rainwater longer, helping farmers to increase yields even in years of low rainfall.

5. Using mobile technology to save water

Santosh Ostwal is an innovator and entrepreneur in India who has developed a system that allows farmers to use mobile phones to turn their irrigation systems on and off remotely. This helps reduce the amount of water and electricity wasted on watering fields that are already saturated.

6. Planting perennial crops

Perennial crops protect the soil for a greater length of time than annual crops, which reduces water loss from runoff. According to a report from the Land Institute, "annual grain crops can lose five times as much water and 35 times as much nitrate as perennial crops."

7. Practicing Soil Conservation

Soil conservation techniques, including no-till farming, can help farmers to better utilize the water they have available. According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), studies have shown that no-till techniques improve water-retention capacity and improve water use efficiency in crops.

Education

9:31am Aug 12

Voice of America (VOA) TV news channel had visited IRRAD's radio station, Alfaz-e-Mewat and the village Moolthan school to cover the broadcast of Galli Galli Sim Sim Radio phone project. IRRAD's partner Sesame Street had put us in touch with the TV channel to do this joint partnership story

Here is the YouTube link to the VOA TV story for their news bulletin on the GGSS Radiophone project on Alfaz-e-Mewat community radio station

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h7lZ88y5CXM>



Radio Bridging Education Gap in Rural India

The American non-profit Sesame Workshop creates educational programming for children around the world...

Learn more at:

www.prathamusa.org

www.educatethechildren.org

www.shikshantar.org

www.ekal.org

www.wakeupcall.org

Healthcare:

Deploy tech solutions in healthcare, Narayana Murthy says (Times of India)

TNN Aug 10, 2013, 12.53AM IST

BANGALORE: The statistics are alarming: only 0.7 physician and one nurse are available for every 1,000 people in India. And, 65% of physicians live in urban areas, while the countryside is home to 65%-70% of the population. Over 50% of rural Indians travel at least 100km for medical care.

Citing these statistics at the golden jubilee celebrations of St John's Medical College here on Friday, NR Narayana Murthy, executive chairman, Infosys, said: "Effective use of technology is important to deliver healthcare. By leveraging technology, you can bring down lack of access and cost of healthcare."

Learn more at:

www.gramseva.org ,

www.sewarural.org ,

www.samvedana.org

www.mifusa.org

Climate Change:

From: Dr. Ramesh Jalan: UNDP, New Delhi,

“Climate change challenges for cities in developing countries”.

<http://www.evidenceondemand.info/briefing-paper-cities-in-developing-countries-and-their-development-in-response-to-climate-change-and-resource-scarcity>

<http://www.evidenceondemand.info/briefing-paper-cities-in-developing-countries-and-their-development-in-response-to-climate-change-and-resource-scarcity> .

China and India are building welfare States at an unprecedented rate in human history: <http://www.oxfamblogs.org/fp2p/?p=15309>

“Green agenda on track”. <http://www.thehindu.com/sci-tech/energy-and-environment/green-agenda-on-track/article5007290.ece> .

July Update: <ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/clmt/upd/clmt-update-44-010813.pdf>

Energy for All Newsletter: <http://www.energyforall.info/subscribe-for-newsletter/>

Introducing a New Book: "To India, with Tough Love" By Jaya Kamlani

Visit jayakamlani.com for videos, photos, and important social issues news feeds

Watch "book trailer" now on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ug3333333333)

Buy at: To India, with Tough Love @ [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

After reading the book, the readers can post their reviews on the Amazon website: <http://amzn.to/13a6M5W>

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This bulletin was compiled and edited by: Mohan Jain



Uttarakhand Flood Damage, donate at: www.idrf.org

