

March Of A Nation

■ I was born thousands of years ago. I was reborn on August 15, 1947, marking a memorable epoch in my long history. I am INDIA, that is, BHARAT.

By VENGRAI PARTHASARATHY

In me runs the blood of the oldest civilization. I am the ghost of the millions of Indians who have lived and died in my arms. The blood strains of many communities and castes run in my veins. I am BHARAT MATA.

I remember the sepoys uprising, the Navy Mutiny. I remember too the 1857 struggle which marked the first clarion call for Independence. I remember the Quit India movement spearheaded by Gandhiji and the thousands of satyagrahis who went to jail. I remember the day when I awoke to Freedom. I remember the pomp and splendour, which marked the first Independence Day 55 years back.

On 26th Jan I became a Republic and my people gave me a birth certificate—the Constitution of India. I am the Ashoka Pillar. I am peacock, the national bird of India. I am Jana Gana Mana, Vande Mataram, and Saarey jahan se acha...

I am Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the frail Indian who shook the mighty British Empire by his non-violent means. I am Jawaharlal Nehru who 'discovered India' and led her to a 'Tryst with Destiny'. I am the intrepid Subhas Chandra Bose who challenged the British from a foreign land to free his motherland. I am Lala Lajpat

Rai. I am Sardar Vallabhai Patel who brought the princely India to accede to the Indian Union. I am Bhagat Singh, whose gun shot was heard throughout the British Empire. I am Vinobha Bhave, Kripalani, Rajaji, Satyamurthy, Kamaraj, Abul Kalam Azad, and Ambedkar.

I am Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa, I am Swamy Vivekananda who took in his embrace the people of all religions as 'Brothers and Sisters'. I am Aurobindo Ghose. I am Rabindranath Tagore, 'whose mind was without fear and head held high'. I am Sarojini Naidu the Nightingale, Subrahmany Bharathi. I am Raja Ram Mohan Roy, the reformer. I am Sivananda

I am all this and more,
much more. I am a Billion
people. I am you.

and Ramana Maharishi.

I am Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, the Trinity. I am Ganga, Jamuna Saraswati, The Triveni. I am the Tricolour which flutters proudly over the Rashtrapati Bhavan. I am Cauvery, Krishna and Godavari. I am Himalayas and Cape Camorin.

I am Taj Mahal, a royal lover's poem in marble. I am Ajanta, Ellora, I am Mecca Masjid, Kutb Minar and Char Minar. I speak myriad languages and dialects. I am Sanskrit. I am Sanatana Dharma. I am Adi Granth. I am Buddha, Jain, Allah, and Christ.

I am Harappa where a glorious civilization lies interred. I am Mahabalipuram, Nagarjuna Sagar, Halebid, Golden Temple and Dakshineswar. I am Varnasi, Madurai, Tirupathi, Srirangam,



Badrinath, and Rishikesh. I am Sravanabelagola and Golconda. I am Shivaji and Rani of Jhansi, Ashoka, Chandragupta and Kattaboman.

I am Jallianwala Bagh, a mute witness to British barbarity.

I am Tara Singh. I am Maurya, Gupta, Maratha, Chera, Chola, and Pandya.

I am Varnasi, Amritsar the Holy of Holies. I am Raga, Tana, and Pallavi, Bharata Natyam, Bhangra, Kathak, Kathakalli and Odissi.

I am the Parliament, the Executive and the Judiciary. I am the ballot paper, and the village panchayat. I am big. My arms embrace the Arabian sea, Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean. I cover over three million square kilometers of farm land, mountains, deserts, forests rivers and plateaus.

I am Dusshera, Pongal, Ramzan, and Christmas. I am a million lights that sparkle everywhere on Diwali day.

I am Ramanuja, Sankara, Madhwa, Manavala mamuni and Tiruvalluvar. I am Gita, the Upanishads, the Vedas. I am the Bible, the Zend Avesta, the Qur'an, and the Kural. I am Dwarka, Ayodhya. I am Andal and Meera.

I am all this and more, much more. I am a Billion people. I am you.

Yes, I am the Nation, the Indian Nation. I salute you as you salute me, on this your, my and every Indian's Republic Day.