

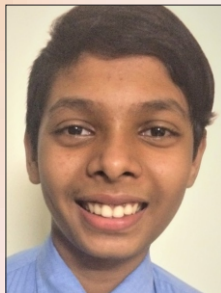
MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL

We are all aware that 'Independence Day' is just not the day our country was liberated but also a freedom from all mental barriers around caste, creed and religion. This issue is dedicated to our valiant freedom fighters, National leaders and National monuments symbolizing struggle and victory. Grade 7 reporters even interviewed some of their teachers to get their insight on India's Freedom Movement and The Independence Day. Do read and like!

INTERVIEW

A tête-à-tête with my Geography Teacher, Ramya ma'

One of our most important days of the Indian history is "Independence Day". To enjoy the freedom, and to remember the many sacrifices and struggles to attain such freedom and Independence, this big day is celebrated. Although this topic is common, everyone has their own thoughts and perspectives about this important day. It's the glory, the respect, the celebration; the pride of this day remains in our hearts and will be forever. Now let us have the opinion of our beloved our Geography teacher, Ramya ma'am



Ramya ma'am:

Q1. What is the significance of celebrating Independence Day in your opinion?

"The people who have gone through the whole struggle might have the greater emotional connect. We, the later generations never experienced the real pain of independence. I can imagine the struggle and pain which had taken place during that time.

It is a day to celebrate it, to remember the valor of our freedom fighters, most importantly to preserve the freedom. The beauty of our country is that every citizen is independent. For example each one has the right to express their views, right to travel, practice any religion etc. I am thankful that our Independence is achieved through a concrete manner and any human has the basic fundamental right. We have a very strong government laid out to maintain our welfare and the social and economic equality of the citizens.

Freedom is defined concretely in our constitution in the form of fundamental rights and economical rights to our people. Most important character of our country is diversity, it is not just geographical diversity but we have to cultivate the diversity in our thoughts. There can be a majority opinion that crushes the minority opinion. We need to protect the diversity, take middle ground to protect all the citizens. Taking steps to imbibe that value in next generation is more important. So the significance of celebrating Independence Day is remembering all the National heroes, their sacrifices as well as celebrating the rewards and privileges we gained.

Q2. There are many National leaders who fought and worked hard to gain Independence in their own unique methods. Whose method of gaining freedom had the greatest impact on you?

"Personally my favourite National leader is Mahatma Gandhi. The non-violence method of obtaining freedom was very clever as it was a strategy adopted by him to oppose the British. More than the movements led by Gandhi Ji, it is the basic character of him that inspired me the most. The most favourite incident was when Gandhi Ji could not travel through the train as his color was not appreciated even though he had the right to. This incident was a very embarrassing moment, but he turned it into an inspiring moment. I think it takes a lot of courage to do that and this showed his strong character. Gandhi ji was very smart and could understand the concept that the unity of India was the most powerful weapon against the British. He would blend in with the common people of the country. His way of non violence had a great impact on me and that is why Mahatma Gandhi is forever my most favourite."

Q3. Usually, we students go to schools, play some skits, hoist our flag etc. Now, in this current pandemic situation, how do you think we can celebrate our day?

"In my opinion since this pandemic situation has taken up the entire world, and classes are done through a virtual medium we all should recall and visualize the struggle and pain of obtaining Independence with the help of a documentary or any other source of information. The documentary could help us understand more about the hardships and struggles which the people had gone through during the rough situation."

Interviewed by Pranesh

THE PEOPLE'S FESTIVAL

Independence Day, the day when India had established its freedom from the Britishers. The year 1947, marked the end of the British rule in India allowing the citizens of the country to rule as per their choice.

When I had asked my History teacher Ms. Smitha Menon ma'am about her views on the importance of Independence Day, she shared multiple facts that made me feel proud to be an Indian. Here is the interview-



Q1. Can you please tell me why India is so proud of the sacrifices made by our honourable soldiers?

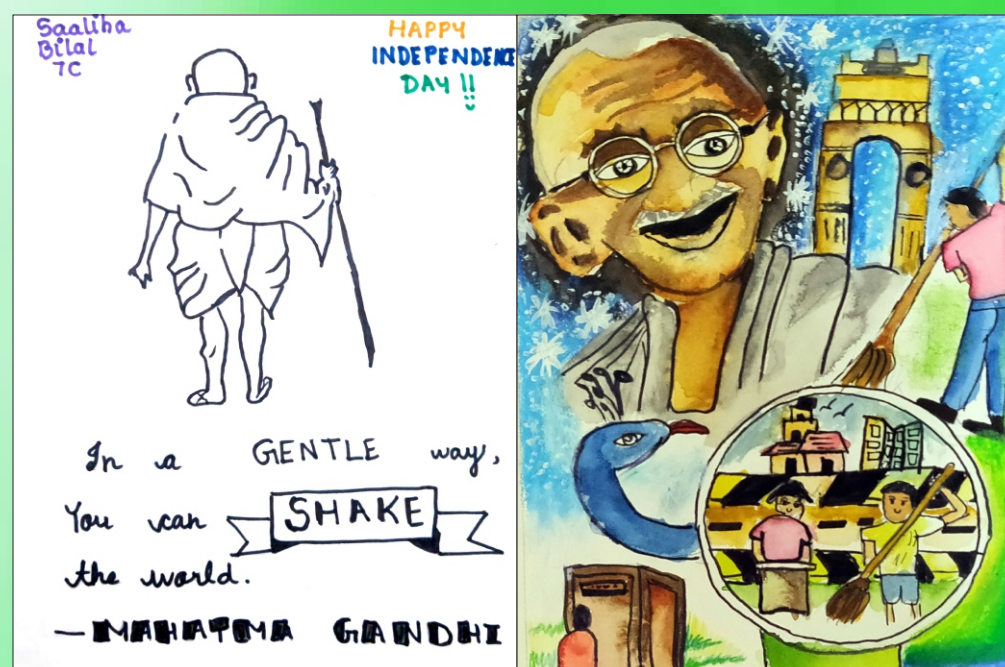
Independence Day in India is celebrated on 15th August annually to remember the sacrifices made by our soldiers. It is a day to pay tribute towards our freedom fighters who had sacrificed their lives for our country; without whom we would have still been under the rule of the British. It is also a day when all the citizens of the country forget their cultural differences and unite as one.

Q2. Please share some thoughts on the first general of India and other important figures who contributed to our freedom.

There is a reason why the date is 15th August- It was chosen by the last viceroy and first Governor General of India, Lord Mountbatten. It was on the same date that Japan surrendered to him in 1945 after World War II.

India's path to independence from British rule was spearheaded by the work of Mahatma Gandhi, who organized and led a series of nonviolent protests. Independence Day is not only a day when India became an independent nation but also about the sub-division of the Indian-subcontinent into two parts – India and Pakistan. Other important figures include Mohammed Ali Jinnah, the leader of the All India Muslim League and Pakistan's founder, and Jawaharlal Nehru, a follower of Gandhi and India's first prime minister.

- Madhura (7A)



MY INDIA

India is the country with unity in diversity;
there is a unique charm in every city!
We are all brothers and sisters;
In India there are very caring ministers!
Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Hindus;
I have a very good Jain friend her name is Bindu!

Jammu and Kashmir is the state with beautiful mountains;
People wear Phiran and look at the Chasmeshahi fountain!
Under the loose Phiran are kept Kangri the earthen pot;
In the Dal lake there moves Shikaras with snacks so hot!

In Himachal Pradesh men wear colourful caps;
Oh, going to Dharmshala has such a long map!
There goes a toy train from Kalka to Shimla;
There are trees full of apples, peaches & green amlas.

In Punjab sip the yummy butter milk;
And buy a souvenir such as phulkari duppta made of silk!
Eat the parathas full of butter;
And don't forget to go to mustard farms & see the birds flutter!

In Rajasthan I will visit the Thar dessert;
I will also buy a ghagra their traditional skirt!
This city is land of kings;
I will like to wear Rajasthan ring!

In Karnataka I will learn to speak Kannada;
While I am there I will stay in a hotel called Ramada.
Kerala has lovely backwaters, which are very pretty;
My friend stays there with her cute kitty!

Tamil nadu has many temples;
Perumal and Murugan temples are few of the examples!
In Goa there are spectacular beaches;
And some juicy peaches!

In Sikkim see the wildlife;
Then have orange juice with ice.
In Assam see the green tea gardens;
Then buy kiwi and take them home in cartons.

In Arunachal Pradesh see the Brahmaputra river;
And see the fierce cobra snake and shiver.
In Meghalaya visits the beautiful city of Shillion;
Do sightseeing for long!

In Nagaland visit the Triple falls;
Then see some movies in the theatre halls.
In Manipur enjoy shopping at Emma bazaar;
Then visit the Kangla fort in a big car.
In Mizoram visit the Phawngpui hills;
Eat in the tasty food in restaurants and don't forget to pay the bills!

- Japleen Kathoor- 6C

POEM: MEMORABLE TOMBS

Love after death, in Mughal reign,
Shown by building monuments, was a culture with great fame.
From 1556 and 1631 two legends we retain,
Reason and story the same.

The story of Humayun's tomb,
Built by his wife the first;
Using her own fortune,
Where resides even her tomb.

Taj Mahal built by Shah Jahan for his beloved,
Gave her life to bring to the world their 14th child
Mumtaz Mahal for whom t'was envisioned;
Stand there now two tombs immortalized.

Arani Jain- 8D

THE MAN WHO KEPT ON WALKING

Have you read the poem '*The Brook*' by *Alfred Tennyson*? It's in my English textbook this year and I suggest you should read it. It's about a stream that describes itself and its colourful journey in first person. It is an inspiring poem that depicts the beauty of nature and compares the brook's eternal flow to the impermanence of man life.

Here is an extract from the poem-
*'I wind about, and in and out,
With here a blossom sailing,
And here and there a lusty trout,
And here and there a grayling.*

*And here and there a foamy flake
Upon me, as I travel
With many a silvery water break
Above the golden gravel.*

*And draw them all along, and flow
To join the brimming river,
For men may come, and men may go,
But I go on forever.*

I am sure you will be thinking why I am talking about this poem. I am comparing the brook to our great freedom-fighter, **Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi or Gandhiji**. In the above stanzas, the brook is carrying along all the flowers, water creatures, the foam created etc. with itself to the final destination, the river. Similarly, a leader carries the team to progress and development. Gandhiji carried the entire nation in his heart, like the brook, and led us to freedom. He carried the principles of non-violence, honesty, simplicity and determination till the very end and changed our mindset forever. And just like the brook deposits some sand and silt on the sides, Gandhiji also left behind untouchability and caste system, on the journey.

In the last line of the poem, the brook is ever-flowing and never dies. Similarly, the principles taught by Gandhiji are still within us, in our hearts. I feel that no good man, ever dies until everyone forget him. Just like Dumbledore's quote from Harry Potter- "*I will have only truly left the school when none here are loyal to me.*" Even Gandhiji said it- "*When there is love, there is life.*"

Both, the brook and Gandhiji are an inspiration for us to keep going on. They motivate us in the difficult times and tell us to face the obstacles in life.

- Sanika Agrawal – 7B

ARTICLE: MEMORABLE TOMBS

We all might know that ancient Indian rulers practiced polygamy. Do we know that multiple wives did not change their respect and love for their wives and vice-versa from the wives? Below are few examples which prove the same.

Shah Jahan's favourite of his 6 wives died while giving birth to their 14th child on 17th June 1631. This did not stop her from being his favourite. He got the Taj Mahal, one of the current world's 7 wonders as her mausoleum. In the present time, this wonderful monument costs about 70 billion rupees. He did not stop there, after his death even his tomb was placed next to Mumtaz Mahal's.

Humayun had 3 wives. After his death on 27th January 1556 his first wife Bega Begum dedicated her whole to get the monument Humayun's tomb built. It cost 1.5 million which she paid herself. She was herself tombed there after her death.

Arani Jain-8D



RAJENDRA CHOLA – THE SWORD OF SOUTH INDIA

Rajendra Chola was the emperor of the Chola empire and the successor of his great father, Raja Raja Chola I. During his rule the Chola empire reached its greatest area of rule. He ruled the whole of South India, huge parts of Odisha, West Bengal etc. He had a strong navy and had under him the Malay peninsula and even parts of Indonesia, Ceylon, Thailand etc. He named himself 'Gangaikonda Chola' (he ruled places surrounding river ganga) as he defeated Mahipala, the emperor of the Palas. He named his new capital Gangaikonda Cholapuram. He built many temples such as the Brihadeshwara temple, the Gangaikonda Cholapuram temple etc. Rajendra Chola was born on the occasion of South Indian festival of Thiruvathira in the Tamil month of Margalzi Thingal. He fought a great many battles. His first battle was against the Rashtrakutas. He dies in Brahadesam now a part of North Arcot district. He is considered one of the greatest rulers of South.

- Manas Pande - VII B



THE CELLULAR JAIL

India is a country known for its rich culture and history. The country had gained independence from the British a little more than half a century ago in the year 1947. The struggle behind this great victory is not something that is little known. Before India got its independence, it was a whole different country. Filled with patriotism, almost all Indians had their eyes on one thing; freedom from the British.

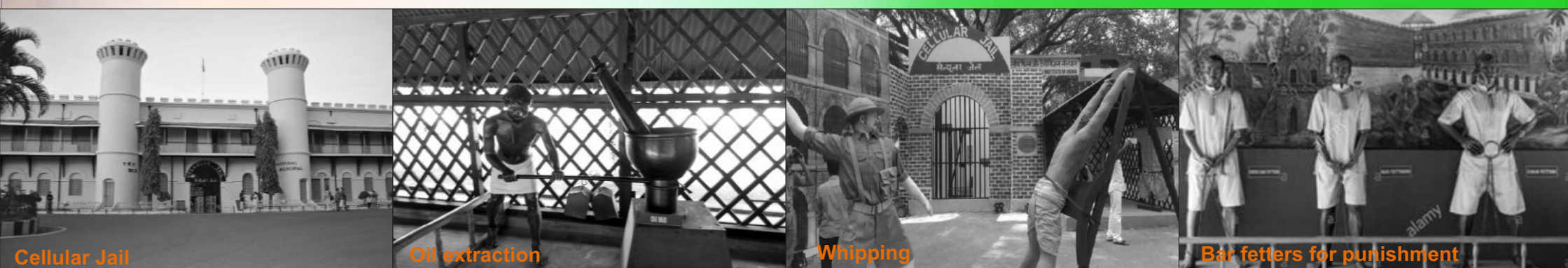
The British, however, tried to put down these revolts ruthlessly, for almost two centuries. Part of these attempts to control the fierce determination of the Indians was the mass transportation of the leaders who lead these Indians towards glory, to somewhere far, far away. The Andaman and Nicobar islands was one such island, desolate, and uninhabited by Indians- seemed fit for the job. Huge buildings were set up, which were meant to serve the purpose of a jail for any Indian who dared to cross the line of obedience set by the British. Freedom fighters- including Veer Savarkar, were transported in masses to the islands. The horrible treatment of the prisoners that took place there led the islands and the seas around it to get the name of 'Kaala Pani', which means 'black waters'. Many freedom fighters such as Batukeshwar Datt, Yogendra Shukla, Vinayak Savarkar were imprisoned and tortured here.

Prisoners could only use the washroom once a day, were made to wear torture devices, and had to work continuously every day-they had to extract oil from coconuts manually. Those who misbehaved were often whipped; and sometimes, even hung.

An extract from one of the various resources:

"The British Raj sent Indian dissidents and mutineers to a remote island penal colony in an 'experiment' that involved torture, medical tests, forced labour and, for many, death." It is estimated that of the total 80,000 political prisoners, the British Raj held at the **Kalapani**, a very few survived." Today, after decades, the monument still stands at Port Blair, as a popular tourist attraction, Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a memorial, it represents a vital part in India's struggle for independence; even consisting of a museum housing several artefacts. I myself have been there, and I assure you, that if you ever visit the place, you will definitely see the plight of our brave revolutionaries and what exactly they sacrificed, right before your eyes, and will return with pride towards your nation at its peak.

- Aishani Bose 8A and Anvi Agrawal 7D



KONDHANA

This fort was named after the Great Sage "[Kaundinya](#)". The Kaundinyeshwar temple which is built inside this suggests that the fort is built thousands of years ago. Kondhana was also a strategically important fort in the Deccan. Like Delhi, it was also said that if you capture Kondhana you would capture the whole Deccan. It's first reference in history was in 1327 A. D.



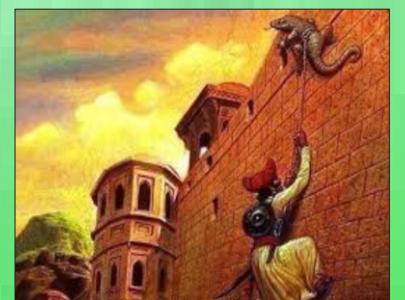
During the rule of Aurangzeb, fort was under him. In 1647, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj captured the fort winning the battle with Siddi Amber, one of the Adil Shahi sardar. To get the fort back, Adil Shah imprisoned the father of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, Shahaji Bhonsle. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj had to trade Kondhana with Adil Shah for leaving Shahaji Bhonsle free. Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj captured it again in 1656. But in year 1665, the fort was passed to the Mughal's with Shivaji signing the "Treaty of Purandar". Over the next two years after the miraculous escape from the house arrest, Shivaji had captured almost all the 30 forts except the Kondhana.



This fort was hanging off a lonely cliff of Sahyadri ranges and is 1,132 m above sea level. It has an area of 65 acres. The walls and check posts were built at only specific places as it gets its safety from the steep sides surrounding it. The fort was guarded by the brave Rajput Udaybhan Rathod. He had around 2000 soldiers with cannons surrounding on all sides. It had two doors "Pune" and "Kalyan" heavily guarded by soldiers. Only one side had no soldier or cannon. This side had a sheer vertical climb and was nearly impossible to climb through this way. It was also very difficult to win this fort due to its elevation.



This challenge was welcomed by two great men "Tanaji Malsure" and "Shivaji ". Tanaji said that it was his duty and responsibility to step up in the battlefield before the King does. So, he on Shivaji's command left Raigad with only 300 soldiers, brother Suryaji and his uncle Shelar. He divided the army into two parts, one in Tanaji's command (150 soldiers) and the other with Suryaji and Shelar uncle (150 soldiers). Tanaji using his pet monitor lizard "Yashwanti" climbed the overhanging vertical cliff on the night of 4 February 1670. They attacked the fort and opened the Kalyan and Pune doors. Through this came the left 150 soldiers pouring in.



Udaybhan Rathod and Tanaji had a fierce battle and Tanaji while fighting with him injured Udaybhan gravely but lost his life. His uncle Shelar Kaka and Suryaji took over the lead and killed Udaybhan Rathod. After hearing the death of his close friend Shivaji said "*Gad aala pun Sinha gela*" (The fort came but the lion is lost")



From this day onwards this fort is known as "**Sinhagad**" or the "**Lion's fort**" which still exists in Pune.

Ameya.D (7C)

THE CONFUSED GENIUS - Muhammad Bin Tughlaq

The confused genius was Muhammad Bin Tughlaq (1325-1351) and this is the topic I will be talking about. He was a very good administrator, Capable ruler and also a good scholar. He always thought about the time ahead and not the time that was going on at the given time. He always hurried to finish his plans and never took time to carry out the plan properly. He was a part of the Tughlaqs. Now I am going to tell you all about all the major projects carried out by him.

A) Shifting the capital-He wanted to shift the capital from Delhi to Daulatabad which was about 1400KM away from Delhi. This project failed due too-Firstly, he ordered the entire population to shift to Daulatabad so this caused a hardship for the people...He left Delhi exposed to all the intruders he then realised his mistake and again changed the capital back to Delhi again causing hardship to the people.

B) Token Currency-He issued coins that were made of brass and copper that were stamped with silver. This resulted in fraud the people of the empire started making the coins at home as the stamp on the coins were very easy to copy and there were no people to check the coins so this was a failed plan again. He then withdrew this currency and exchanged all of the tokens for silver coins. Muhammad bin Tughlaq was very confused but he surely was a very famous ruler because of all the furrore he created in the society.

- Compiled by Avyan – 7D

JHANSI KI RANI

Jhansi Ki Rani was born in the year 1828. Her father's name was Moropant Tambe and mother's name was Bhagiradhibai. Her original name was Manikarnika. When she got married, she was given the name Lakshmibai. This is a saying on Lakshmibai which is very common in India: -



Khoob ladi mardani woh to Jhansi wali Rani thi.

Manikarnika lost her mother when she was 4 years old. She used to attend her school as well as martial arts like shooting and horse-riding. When she grew up, she married King of Jhansi, Raja Gangadhar Rao Newalkar in the year 1842. In the year 1851, they had given birth to a son, who unfortunately could not survive after 3 to 4 months. Recently after this her husband, Raja Gangadhar Rao Newalkar, died of a disease. Before this tragedy happened, they had adopted a son in the year 1853. After this in the month of January, year 1857 'The war of Jhansi' began. She assured her kingdom that no harm will arise upon them. She had called for armed forces and she was successful. She had even assembled women in her armed forces. She fought with valor, heroism and courage. She had knotted her son on her spinal.



Poem:

The Warrior Heart of Jhansi,
Ate a fruit named Calamansi!!
She is merciful and truthful,
But also, beautiful!!
She is affectionate,
But also, stubborn, as in obstinate!!
I think her hair is curly,
But that doesn't mean she is surly!!
Hope I fulfilled your expectation,
With my dedication!!



- Ishita Pathak 5D

MEHRANGARH FORT - A LEGENDARY LIVING FORT

Mehrangarh fort is built in the blue city of Jodhpur, Rajasthan and is considered one of the biggest forts in India. It is one of the last fully living forts of India. It was built by Rao Jodha in around 1459 CE. It is protected by one of the thickest and sturdiest walls and is situated on a hill at about 410 m above sea level. It is built almost completely (outer part) by red sandstone. A beautiful and scenic road leads a person from the city to the fort via Jaswant Thada (another monument). The fort is so sturdy that marks of cannon balls are still seen but the fort has never got destroyed. Inside the fort there are many elephant howdahs, palanquins, armoury, priceless paintings etc. all the points of attraction inside the fort are very well maintained. The museum exhibits the heritage of the Rathores in arms, costumes, paintings and decorated period. After one visits this amazing fort (like me), he would go on suggesting people to visit. One should surely visit this massive monument.

- Manas Pande VII B

THE GOLDEN TEMPLE

The Golden Temple, or Golden Gurudwara is the holiest shrine of Sikhs. It was built in late 16th century by Sri Guru Arjan Dev ji, and a copy of the Sikh scripture was placed inside the Gurudwara in 1604. Its sanctum walls were covered in marble and the dome was decorated with gold foil by Maharaja Ranjit Singh in the 19th century. More than 100,000 people visit this monument every month.



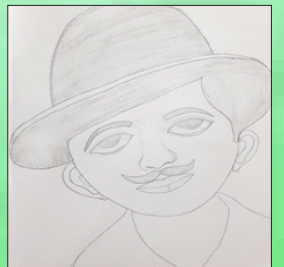
One of these buildings in the complex is the Sri Akal Takht, the highest religious authority for Khalsa Sikhs. Another building is the langar, where a free simple vegetarian meal is served to all without any discrimination. The Gurudwara is a place of worship for men and women from all walks of life and all religions to come and worship God. The four entrances (representing the four directions) to get into the Harmandir Sahib also symbolise the openness of the Sikhs towards all people and religions.

The present-day Gurudwara was rebuilt in 1764 by Jassa Singh Ahluwalia with the help of other Sikh Misls. In the early nineteenth century, Maharaja Ranjit Singh founded the Sikh Empire and covered the upper floors of the Gurudwara with gold, which gives it its distinctive appearance and its English name. It contains the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, the Sikh scripture. In June 1984 the Golden Temple complex was blown apart by tanks, snipers, grenades and rocket launchers by the Indian military and government. It was once again attacked at a smaller scale by the Punjab Police, National Security Guard and Border Security Force in 1986 as part of Operation Black Thunder 1 from April-July 1986 and Operation Black Thunder 2 in May 1988.

- Japleen 6C

BHAGAT SINGH – THE MAN OF COURAGE

I am inspired with Bhagat Singh's heroic acts towards freedom movement. Hats off to him. Bhagat Singh was born on the 28th of September 1907 to a Sikh family, Kishan Singh and Vidyavati Kaur of Punjab province of British India. Bhagat Singh, better known as 'Shaheed Bhagat Singh' was a brave freedom fighter and revolutionary of the Indian Independence movement.



When the Jallianwala Bagh incident occurred, Bhagat Singh was just 12 years old. He immediately left the school and went straight to the place of the tragedy to collect the mud mixed with the blood of Indians and worshipped it every day. The turning point in his life was the killing of freedom fighter, Lala Lajpat Rai. He could not tolerate the injustice and killed British Official John Saunders and bombed the Central Legislative Assembly. Bhagat Singh surrendered himself after carrying out these incidents. He coined a powerful slogan 'Inquilab Zindabad' which became the slogan of India's armed struggle. He was eventually hanged by the British government an hour ahead of the official time on March 23, 1931. One of his famous slogans really touched me - "They may kill me, but they cannot kill my ideas. They can crush my body, but they will not be able to crush my spirit". He inspired hundreds to take up the cause of the freedom movement.

- Alekhya K 5D

JALIANWALA BAGH

Jallianwala Bagh is held close to our hearts. Due to the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, it became a place of revolutionary stance revered throughout India. On the morning 12 April 1919, military drums were beaten to gain the attention of people around the city. General Dyer had come to the city after being appointed the general of the Amritsari troops and had placed rules to be followed. He banned processions, gatherings more than four, none could leave the city without permission, and curfew was enforced after 8 pm. General Dyer failed to notice that many people hadn't heard it as it was announced during sweltering heat. On 13 April 1919, when he was informed that people were planning to gather in Jallianwala Bagh, he ordered his men to stop the gathering. It was after this that the fateful Massacre occurred with the fatalities in the hundreds and the casualties in the thousands. The Massacre created a revolutionary spark in Indians but when they protested for their freedom they were put down violently. The Jallianwala Bagh is a symbol of revolution by Indians against the oppressive nature of the British and their policies. It stands as a reminder of our painful and fateful past.

- Nikilesh 8C

KONARK TEMPLE

KONARK Temple – Where the language of stone surpasses the language of man



The Konark sun temple is a beautiful temple and a famous tourist attraction of Orissa. The intricate designs carved all over it makes it a UNESCO world heritage site. The word Konark (*Arka Kshetra*) is derived from the term *Kona* and *Arka* meaning corner and sun. It is also known as Black Pagoda since it is made with black granite. It was built by king Narasingha Deva from the Ganga dynasty in 1250 AD to celebrate his victory on the Muslims. The temple is dedicated to god Surya or the Sun God – It was constructed over 12 years by 1200 artisans. There temple architecture represents the sun god's chariot having 24 wheels pulled by 7 horses. In the temple, there are three images of the Sun God, positioned to catch the rays of the sun at dawn, noon and sunset. The structure visible today is only the entrance. The main temple with the god is demolished as of today. Konark is the pride of not only Odisha but also India and all over the world. The sun temple at Konark is a place where every stone speaks, if you are ready to listen to them.

- Pragati Rajan, 6D

“ A Boy by Age , A Freedom Fighter at Heart ”

Most of us have heard of **Chandrashekhar Azad**, who fought valiantly against the British and was, sadly martyred at the young age of 24 while fighting the British, they were so afraid of even his lifeless body that they shot it once again to confirm he was dead. But the story of India's youngest martyr goes beyond that, he was only half of Chandrashekar Azad's age when he became a martyr, 12. This is his story-Baji Rout, born in the small village of Dhenakal, Odisha in 1925, soon lost his father when he was only a little kid and was raised by his mother, he was a part of the children's wing of the local party, focused on liberating the people of the region from the tyrannical rule of the local king, who was seeking the help of the British to suppress the voice of the people. A massive manhunt was launched for the leader, Baishnav Charan Pattnayak, who was hiding in Baji Rout's village. On that dark night of 11th October 1938, Baji Rout had been asked to ensure no one is ferried across the river. Coincidentally, a handful of British soldiers wanted to cross the river and asked Baji Rout to ferry them across the river. Baji Rout, 12 years old at that time, was unmoved by their harsh command and refused. What followed is beyond the imagination of evil for most of us. A British soldier hit him on the head with the rear of his gun and broke his skull, the boy mustered all his strength and screamed loudly, alerting the villagers of the local troops. A second and a third soldier injured his head with the bayonet and shot him. Thus, he attained this untimely martyrdom, at such a tender age but after all, age is just a number.



- Shrey Gupta 8B

TAJ LAKE PALACE



India is a curious place that still preserves the past, religions, and its history. No matter how modern India becomes it's still a very old country. The Palace situated amidst the scenic Pichola Lake offers a heavenly view to the Onlooker. The stunning Aravalli Hills on one side and soaring palaces on the other, make the perfect background to this beautiful Lake Palace. Taj Palace is one of the 4 palaces of the Royal Dynasty of Mewar. Taj Lake Palace is built on a man-made island surrounded by the Lake Pichola of Udaipur. The Lake Palace was built between 1743-1746 under the rule of Jagat Singh II (62nd successor to the royal dynasty of Mewar) of Udaipur as a summer palace. It was at that time called Jagniwas or Jan Niwas after its founder.

-Shreya Debnath 7E

THE PEARL OF INDIA - TAJ MAHAL

The crown of the palace lies near the southern bank of Yamuna in the city of Agra for 388 years. This beautiful monument made of ivory marble that stands 73m tall was built by the Mughal emperor Shah Jahan. He started the construction in 1632 as a shrine for his favorite wife Mumtaz Mahal and it was used as a shrine for Shah Jahan also.



The construction of the Mahal acquired 32 million rupees, 20,000 craftsmen and 10,000 elephants to complete this complex shrine in 1653. It covers 42 acres which includes a mosque and guest house with a garden surrounding it by 3 sides. The garden surrounding the Taj Mahal contained trees with fruits, daffodils etc., but when the British raj took rule they made it according to their likings-lawns of London.

It is said that the monument looks Pinkish in the morning, White in the evening and Golden in the night.

It is the great symbol of India's rich history. This beautiful monument of India is the Unesco World Heritage Sites and attracts 7-8 million tourists all over the world every year.

Now you will agree why it is called the Pearl of India.....



A Poetic Tribute by Saloni Gupta of 8C

Built by the powerful king,
This monument is the thing
Sandstone covered in white,
It looks very nice and bright.

In the memory of his wife,
Carvings done on stone with the knife.
Years and years it did take,
To make this monument beside the lake.

The king did not make one,
He made many other till they are done.
Filled with gardens and butterflies,
In the middle, the Taj Mahal lies.

Now some got washed away,
Pollution growing day by day.
People who came to look,
Wrote them in their books.

It is sad when we think,
How many monuments disappeared in a wink.
Let's not let it become a memory,
Let's all take an oath to preserve this
As these are all our Nation's bliss.

-Tanvi.D (5A)

GIRMITYA - A lesser known story of India's struggle for Independence

When the British colonized India, they also colonized many other countries around the world. To make money, they established plantations of many kinds in these colonies. However, they needed cheap labour. So they took men and women from India by promising them regular wages, good jobs, and secure life. They were also promised that they can return home after 5 years. These contracts that the British made with labourers were called 'Girmit' or agreements, and the labourers were called 'Girmityas'. Many Indians signed these contracts to escape the drought condition and the lack of jobs in India. Many were even kidnapped and forced to join. Thousand such labourers then undertook treacherous journeys to reach far off lands (Fiji islands, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, South Africa, Mauritius to name a few) which unknown to them would become their homes for the rest of their lives.



Life on these distant lands was anything but what was promised - harsh living and working conditions, extremely long work hours, bare minimum wages and abuse at the hands of their employers. Those who wanted to return in 5 years had to pay for their journey back home. Those who could not afford were offered a free trip back if they worked for another 5 years. To encourage the labourers to stay longer, they were even promised a piece of land in these British colonies. Eventually, the majority of labourers ended up spending their entire lives in these countries.

Fast forward many generations, even today a huge Indian Diaspora lives in these countries as a direct result of this exodus. These people struggle with an identity crisis. They do not know which country they really belong to. Is it the distant homeland of which they have only heard tales of or the land they were born in, that even today treat them as outsiders. To you and me, being called an Indian is a big part of our identity and sense of belonging. This is an aspect of India's independence from the British rule that the descendants of the Girmityas may never know or enjoy.

- Kiera S Thomas 5A

THE LEGEND OF SHAHEED-E-AZAM

23rd March is celebrated as Shahid Diwas in the memory of Shahid Bhagat Singh. It was on this day that Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru were hanged to death by Britishers. There is a lot to learn from him. Born on 27th September 1907 in Lahore, Bhagat Singh was a true Patriot. At the age of 12 he was deeply grieved by the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre. When he was 13, he began to follow the non-cooperation movement. He formed the Naw Jawaan Bharat Sabha and later joined Chandreshkar Azad. He loved his nation above anything and left his home and family to fight for the freedom of India. Bhagat Singh was Fearless! He carried out many attacks to derail Britishers. In one such attack, he planned to throw a bomb in the Parliament without hurting anyone and got himself arrested. He and his friends went on a hunger strike continuously for 63 days to protest against the unhygienic treatment with the fellow Indians in the jail. They all were almost beaten to death and threatened but nobody gave up till their demands were met. Bhagat Singh was sentenced to death which he accepted happily. He sacrificed his life when he was 23 years old and gave the slogan 'Inquilab Zindabad'. As we celebrate the 73rd Independence day, learning from his life is a true tribute to our hero!

- Advay Jalan 7D



UNSUNG HEROES OF INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE WAR

We all know that India received independence on the 15th of August, 1947. When we think about independence, we think about Gandhiji, Bhagat Singh, Bal Gangadhar Tilak and many more famous freedom fighters. But, they were not the only ones fighting for independence. There were many unsung heroes who gave up their life for our nation's independence. Let us honour these heroes.

1. The trio of Benoy, Badal and Dinesh.

Benoy Basu, Dinesh Gupta and Badal Gupta were very young when they decided to be a part of India's independence war. They targeted a ruthless Inspector General of Police, Colonel Simpson. They disguised themselves, by wearing European outfits, and they entered The Writer's Building and killed the inspector. When they were captured, Benoy took a cyanide pill whereas Dinesh and Badal shot themselves. This is how they fought for our freedom and proudly gave up their life for the sake of the nation.



2. Mantagini Hazara (commonly known as Gandhi Buri)

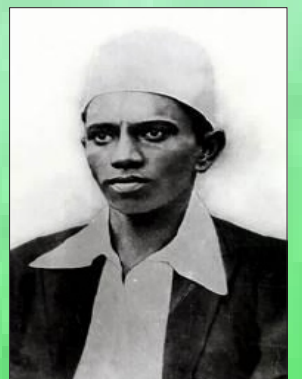
Unlike Benoy, Badal and Dinesh, Mantagini was very old when she took part in Quit India Movement and the Non-Cooperation movement. She was shot thrice while participating in the movements, but that did not affect her at all. She still continued fighting with immense courage. She kept shouting "Vande Mataram". Hats off to her courage and effort.



3. Tirupur Kumaran

Tirupur Kumaran, a young gentleman was the founder of the Association named Desa Bandhu Youth Association. The Flag of Indian nationalists was banned by the British. He led a protest march holding the same against the colonial government on 11 January 1932.

He was fearless and did not care about anything apart from his nation. Although, he succumbed to injuries, he was found dead holding the flag. We salute these heroes for their immense efforts in order to save our nation. If it were not for them, our nation would still be struggling. "Jai Hind!"



- By Syna Sharma 7C

THE MAJESTIC PAST IN OUR MIDST

While present day Bengaluru is synonymous with India's IT industry, there is a part of history in the remains of forts silently nestled in and around the garden city.

Bangalore Fort – Originally built as a mud fort in 1537 by Kempe Gowda I, it was transformed into a stone fort by Hyder Ali in 1761. The fort was damaged during the third Anglo-Mysore war in 1791. All that remains today is the Delhi Gate.

Devanahalli Fort- It is located 35 kms north of the city of Bangalore. It was the birthplace and residence of the great warrior Tipu Sultan. During the Mysore war in 1791 the fort fell into the hands of the British.

Skandagiri fort- Also known as Kalavara Durga, it is one of the several small forts in Bangalore. It houses a small temple, where locals come to pray.

Nandi Durga Fort- Situated atop the Nandi Hills, it was traditionally considered to be impregnable until the storming in of the British army led by Cornwallis in 1791. It is believed to have been built by Tipu Sultan who used it as his summer palace.

Channarayana Durga Fort- Located at 100 kms from Bangalore, it was constructed by a local king Chikkappa Gowda. It was a strategic fortress and the control of the fort changed several times between Marathas and the Mysore Wodeyars until the British took over and finally abandoned it.

Makalidurga Fort- Perched at an elevation of 3664 feet, Makalidurga Fort is situated around 60 kms from Bangalore. There is a Lord Shiva temple in the vicinity of the fort that in legend is said to be the place where [Markandeya](#) Rishi performed penance and held this Shiva linga and won over death.

- Aaryan Iyer 8A