



PRIME MINISTER

MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER

INDIA INDEPENDENCE DAY 2021

I send my warmest greetings to the people of India, and their friends and family in Australia, on the occasion of the 74th anniversary of Indian independence.

In 1947, Jawaharlal Nehru described India's independence as the continuation of an '*unending quest*' — for the peace and prosperity of the people of India.

The decades since have born countless achievements. India's growth and development has helped to realise the economic aspirations of millions of its citizens. Today, India is a proud democracy.

Australians have been heartbroken to see the severe impact of COVID-19 in India. The intense pain of separation has been felt by Australians of Indian descent.

We look forward with hope and confidence to our people coming together once more. When that day arrives, Australians will extend welcome and *maitri* as more of our Indian friends, family, students and residents return to our shore.

Our *maitri* endures because we have so much in common. As proud democracies, we are bound by a commitment to respect, responsibility and the rule of law. We believe that the dignity of our people lies at the heart of who we are.

Ours is an Indo-Pacific partnership, committed to openness, freedom and prosperity. We aspire to advancing the common good of our region.

I pay tribute to India's efforts in providing critical COVID-19 vaccinations across the Indo-Pacific — a project Australia has joined with a shared sense of urgency and responsibility.

This year, Independence Day celebrations will be subdued as we continue to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

We look forward to the 2022 celebrations — India's 75th year of independence — which I hope will be a time when we can joyfully join one another in celebration.

On this anniversary we are grateful for our Indian friends and extend our best wishes for a safe, optimistic and hopeful Independence Day.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Scott Morrison', is positioned below the text. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial 'S'.

The Hon Scott Morrison MP
Prime Minister of Australia

August 2021